# University of Southampton

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

SOUTHAMPTON BUSINESS SCHOOL

**An exploration into the effects of the nature of change on leader-member exchange relationships, and its consequences for change outcomes in UK higher education institutions: a multiple case study**

by

**TOBY ARTHUR LOUIS SIMPSON-SILO**

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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## <u>Abstract</u>

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Within the leadership literature, there has been general acceptance that leadership behaviours are crucial to change success; however, all too often change fails to be implemented successfully. This thesis proposes a conceptual framework, based upon a review of the extant change and leadership literature that integrates the leader-member exchange (LMX) connection between leaders' behaviour and attitudes and those of followers. It places LMX within a change context, and helps to identify the impact of leaders' behaviours and attitudes, with those of followers, that leads to change outcomes. This thesis undertook a multiple case base approach, by conducting research in three different universities, that formed the basis for these case studies. The reasoning for focussing on universities was due to the changes taking place within the higher education sector, and the increasing demands and expectations placed on universities. Universities have also been perceived as environments in which large scale lasting change is difficult to achieve, as well as being resistant towards change. This meant that the researcher was interested in understanding how and why the nature of the change may impact upon LMX relationships, and change outcomes. A total of 41 interviews were conducted, with both academic and administrative employees who held leadership and non-leadership positions.

This research is qualitative in nature and applied the critical incident technique during the interviews with respondents. The researcher adopted a social constructivist and interpretative perspective when analysing the data.

The key findings that emerged from the data were as follows:

- The change process was influential upon the LMX relationship between leaders and followers, due to the impact from the nature of change. This then impacted the LMX relationship and change outcomes in a positive, negative or neutral way, thereby decreasing followers' level of organisational commitment.
- The impact from third-order change (sector) had a cascading effect upon both the second- and first-order change.
- The attitudes and behaviours of leaders does have an impact upon followers' attitudes and behaviours, but also followers' attitudes and behaviours can have an impact upon leaders.
- The change process can impact upon the quality of the LMX relationship and the responses towards change by those parties within that relationship.
- Lack of involvement and consultation in change implementation had some bearing on both change outcomes (such as organisational commitment), and upon the LMX relationship (such as the quality of these relationships) due to the way change was being implemented.

This thesis concluded that leadership behaviours and attitudes, as well as lack of involvement, are seen to be key fundamental stumbling blocks to organisational commitment, for followers. It is through the LMX relationship that leaders and followers are interconnected and each party within that relationship has a crucial part to play in change implementation. When this relationship breaks down not only is the quality of the relationship affected, but followers' organisational commitment decreases. If this were to happen, this could then inhibit and impact the chances of successfully implementing change. This research contributes to theory by providing insights into leaders' behaviours and attitudes towards change, and explores leader-member exchange within a change context. It also contributes to the methodology by responding to calls for alternative methodological approaches in understanding employee commitment to change. This research also contributes to practice, in terms of identifying that leaders' attitudes and behaviours not only had significant consequences and impact upon followers but also impacted upon organisational commitment. Furthermore, it informs leadership and change management development programmes as to the potential consequences that decisions makers can have upon the organisation community. The propositions suggest an agenda for future research.

**Keywords:** Leader-Member Exchange, leadership behaviour, resistance, commitment, change, approaches, involvement

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# Declaration of Authorship

Print name: Toby Arthur Louis Simpson-Silo

**Title of thesis:** An exploration into the effects of the nature of change on leader-member exchange relationships, and its consequences for change outcomes in UK higher education institutions: a multiple case study

I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

1.  This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2.  Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3.  Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4.  Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5.  I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6.  Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7.  None of this work has been published before submission

Signature:        ...............................................................Date:25 June 2020..........................

# Acknowledgements

# Definitions, abbreviations used

CTC – Commitment to change

IIC – Involvement in change

Fac – Academic follower

Fad – Administration follower

Interviewee – An individual who had been interviewed as part of the case studies

Interviewer – The person conducting the interviews

Lac – Academic leader, a broad term used to identify an individual who may be in charge of a department, school, or may be a Dean of a faculty, but these individuals are academics

Lad – Administration leader, a broad term used to identify an individual in charge of an administration department, for example a finance administration team

LFac – Academic semi-leader; this is not a middle manager position but refers to an individual who reports directly to a leader, but also has some form of line management responsibility

LFad – Administration semi-leader; this is not a middle manager position but refers to an individual who reports directly to a leader, but also has some form of line management responsibility

LMX – Leader member exchange

ORGA – Organisation A – this organisation formed part of a multiple case study

ORGB – Organisation B – this organisation formed part of a multiple case study

ORGC – Organisation C – this organisation formed part of a multiple case study

Organisation – Refers to either an institution or university or both

Researcher – The person who conducted the research and interviews

Respondent – An individual who had been interviewed, as part of the case studies

RTC – Resistance to change

VC – Vice-Chancellor

Definitions, abbreviations used

# Chapter 1　　Introduction

## 1.1　　Introduction to this thesis

This chapter commences with a brief background to this research and justification for it. This is followed by the introduction of a conceptual framework that has provided the focus for exploration and direction for this research, and the mechanisms that are contained with this conceptual framework. Finally, the aims, objectives and research questions will be presented.

The researcher has worked in a number of organisations within both the private and public sector, and has witnessed significant change implementation programmes, for example, everything from a merger between two large organisations, to large restructuring of faculties and schools within universities. The researcher considers people to be extremely complicated in the way they respond to change, and often it can be very different. For example, some people may embrace change and accept it enthusiastically while for others, they may have had negative experiences of change in the past, which makes them wary or even resistant to change. These differing experiences during my career developed my interest in the effects that change management has for employees across an organisation. These experiences meant the researcher wanted to gain greater understanding and insight into the behaviours and attitudes of people, in both leadership positions and non-leadership positions. The researcher believes that this newly-acquired knowledge could be applied to other businesses and organisations which are considering undertaking change within their organisation.

The researcher believes that organisations in general face enormous challenges when embarking upon change. Certainly, change leaders may have admirable intentions for their change programmes and want to future-proof their organisation and look after its people, but somewhere along the way, these good intensions seem to be lost in translation. What the researcher means by this is change can become far more complicated and problematic than originally envisaged, for example a change leader may not have anticipated particular responses towards change. Change also stirs up all sorts of differing emotions that even the individuals concerned may not be aware of until the organisation embarks on change. Universities are no different considering the amount of change in the higher education sector over the past decade or more, and with the ever-increasing expectations from students in this now consumer-driven higher education market.

What this means for universities is they have had to operate more like corporate businesses within the private sector and become financially-viable entities. While at the same time they are having their hands tied behind their back in terms of having to comply and adhere to government dictates and directives, or for that matter other public sector bodies.

Thereby, they are not completely free autonomous organisations like those organisations within the private sector. This in itself puts enormous stains and pressures on universities, due to having to change their operating model, in-order to reflect the situation and environment they now find themselves in. For some individuals within these organisations this may impact their beliefs and ideology as to what universities are all about, thereby increasing the challenges faced by change agents.

## 1.2    A brief background to this research

Today's organisational context is widely seen as being one of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA), (Hall and Rowland, 2016; Rodriquez and Rodriguez, 2015, Higgs and Rowland, 2005). In this complex external context, there is a growing need for organisations to develop a capability to change rapidly and often radically (McFillan et al., 2013; Cheng, 2015). This has meant an increased recognition that, in such a context, people are critical to developing organisational capability in which to respond to these contextual challenges. The reason for this is that people are the ones who have to implement the changes. To meet these challenges, it is important to develop high levels of employee commitment (van Dick et al., 2007). This is certainly true for higher education institutions with the United Kingdom because within learning organisations, leaders have responsibility for building organisations, in particular to individuals and their future (Senge, 1990). Within a university setting, Brown (2013) suggests that innovation strategies that are top-down in the longer term are less likely to work because of the culture within universities, therefore change is difficult.

Over the past decade there has been unpreceded change within the higher education landscape in the United Kingdom (UK). For example, reduced direct funding from government, increased tuition fees and reliance on more unpredictable sources of income, a declining demographic of 18- to 20-year-olds until 2021, Brexit, reforms to immigration policy by the United Kingdom government, or through the introduction of linking fees and outcomes in the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) (UUK, 2017). What this means is the reforms to the immigration policy by the government has affected demand from overseas students, resulting in a slow-down in growth.

Increased competition internationally and higher numbers of alternative providers in the United Kingdom that either have, or do not have degree awarding powers, poses significant challenges (UUK, 2017; MRUK Research, 2015). The uncertainty over Brexit, as to how it may or may not impact higher education institutions in the United Kingdom, is still a concern, particularly in recruiting EU students, accessing resources, research funding, and attracting or keeping academic staff, and these account for 16.9 per cent of all academic staff in United Kingdom higher education institutions (UUK, 2017). Furthermore, the removal of loan support for tuition fees from EU students, and increasing fees that international student's pay could in fact lead to a £40 million decline financially due to a potentially declining enrolment from EU students (UUK, 2017). These are important considerations because universities have to respond to the external, internal environment, and to third-order change, this refers to changes taking place in the higher education sector. These are some of the external and third-order change factors that have an influence upon how leaders within universities decide to embark on implementing change, and the potential implications and impact this may have for those within them, for example academic staff (Bates and Kaye, 2014).

At the same time, an organisation needs to take time to consider the internal environment and the reasoning, justification, and type of change it wants to implement, and to have strategies that address them. Failure to do so could lead to a number of consequences, such as a reduction in effectiveness, depletion of resources, or in the worst-case scenario, the demise or collapse of the organisation (McFillen et al., 2013).

Within the change management literature, the failure of change initiatives has been quoted frequently in academic journals as being 70 per cent (Miller, 2001; Beer and Nohria, 2000; Higgs and Rowland, 2005). Attempts have been made to gain insights as to why this is this the case, but so far, the reasons for high change failure remain "*inconclusive*" (Higgs and Rowland, 2005, p.121). This view is supported by Mellahi and Wilkinson (2004, p.18) who suggest that there is not a *"clear consensus within disciplines"* in terms of how organisational change failure occurs, what organisational change failure is and the consequences of failure. Although the high percentage of change failure is now beginning to be questioned (Hughes, 2011). From both the literature and practice, it does appear that managing change effectively presents organisations with a significant challenge. Despite the growth in the literature on organisational change, there remains a paucity of empirical support and limited or non-existent conceptual models due to the fragmented nature of the literature (Packard, 2013; Fugate, Kinicki and Prussia, 2008; Furst and Cable, 2008).

Despite the ranging scope of literature on change, high levels of failure of change initiatives within organisations remain (Heckmann, Steger and Dowling, 2016). The literature surrounding change suggests that resistance to change is a key factor seen as explaining why change fails (Klonek, Lehmann-Willenbrock and Kauffeld, 2014; Oreg, 2003; Self and Schraeder, 2009). Despite the outputs in terms of research within the change management field, there does not seem to have been an improvement in the reported success of change programs. This highlights the importance of building a better understanding of "*how humans interpret their environment and choose to act*" (Aiken and Keller, 2009, p.101).

The literature acknowledges that change is difficult, change fails, and there is a growing need for organisational change given today's complex environment that organisations now operate in. This suggests there remain fundamental areas of enquiry that require answers that lie within the LMX and change literature. The term 'leader-member exchange' is often associated with the quality of social exchanges between a leader or leaders and employees (Carter et al., 2013; Eisenberger et al., 2010). The LMX literature suggests that the perceptions within this relationship are not necessarily shared (Gooty and Yammarino, 2016). Therefore, the researcher focussed on change in terms of theory, and its potential influence upon organisations, and its members, and incorporated it within LMX theory. This was an important part in creating a conceptual framework in order to see the impact this may have on change outcomes to aid and direct future research, but also to bring a fresh perspective as to why this might be the case.

It has been recognised that in order for change to be successful, communication plays a significant role, which will not only assist in developing change readiness, but also reduce uncertainty and contribute to employee commitment to change (Simoes and Esposito, 2014). The communication process (both formal and informal) may have an effect on reducing resistance to change, that may impact positively or negatively on affective commitment to change (Rafferty and Restubog, 2010). What Rafferty and Restubog (2010) suggest is that it is the quality of the information about change, perceived by individuals, that influences the anxiety levels and affective commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1996) of individuals. Furthermore, Rafferty and Restubog (2010) highlight the relationship between a poor history of change implementation and lower levels of employee commitment. Although communication has its part to play, taking time to understand the experience and situation of individuals who will be affected directly by the change is important (Fronda and Moriceau, 2008).

## 1.3    Justification for this research

The justification for this research is based upon calls for further organisational change and leadership qualitative research within public sector organisations (van der Voet, Kuipers, and Groeneveld, 2016), as qualitative data capturing "*might allow detailed analysis of single relations and interactions between leaders' behaviour and followers' reaction*" (Abrell-Vogel and Rowland, 2014, p.916). They believe that future studies should complement the existing results by conducting single case studies, for example by observation and or interviewing leaders and their team members confronted with major change initiatives. As well as leading change in the public sector (Kuipers et al., 2014), and for leadership research to be conducted in a more "*naturalistic setting*" (Avolio, Walumbwa and Weber, 2009). There has also been a call for future research to include a diversity of different types of organisations and change to expand the population (Lamm and Gordon, 2010). A number of opportunities had presented themselves, firstly to take a qualitative research approach into leadership behaviour, as Higgs and Rowland (2005, p.126) identified that the research by Bass (1995) was "*primarily quantitative*", but failed *"to link directly with the change literature",* but also *"a highly quantitative approach fails to provide insights into the actual behaviours of leaders").* Secondly, more research is needed that explicitly focuses on leading change in a public sector context, for example Kuipers et al. (2014, p.16) identify the need for "*more in-depth empirical studies of the change process within various public contexts*" and to "*provide details of change interventions and the roles and behaviours of those involved in the change process*", and for more *"research that explicitly focuses on leading change in a public sector context" (Kuipers et al, 2014, p.17).* Thirdly, there was a suggestion by Nesterkin (2013) that future research should investigate the effects of both negative affect and reactance at the micro (individual) level, in terms of the change outcomes inhibiting the existing freedoms and volitions of employees.

There appears little research undertaken about change management or different aspects of leadership within universities in the United Kingdom. For example, a Bryman (2007) literature review focussed on effective leadership within the United Kingdom, Australia and the USA higher education establishments at a departmental level. This study did not include the relationship between followers and leadership in terms of behaviours and how this might affect commitment on different groups of people across a university, however Bryman (2007) did refer to how certain behaviours of leaders could damage commitment of academics.

Although some research has been undertaken in the area of leadership within the higher education sector, for example Wang and Berger (2010), Goode and Bagilhole (1998), and in the UK higher education sector, for example, McRoy and Gibbs (2009), Hempsall (2014) and Rayner et al. (2010). Yet the research undertaken in the higher education sector is somewhat limited and therefore there is scope for understanding further specific issues faced by leaders and followers within universities in the United Kingdom.

There have been a number of articles in top rated journals that have reviewed the literature on change, for example, Oreg, Vakola and Armenakis (2011) undertook a 60-year review of quantitative studies with regards to change recipients' reactions to organisational change. Jaros (2010) critically reviewed commitment to organisational change, whereas Ford, Ford and D'Amelio (2008) reviewed resistance to change, Avolio Walumbwa and Weber (2009) reviewed leadership in particular to current theories, research, and future directions, and finally, Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) undertook a review of theory and research during the 1990s about organisational change.

This research seeks to address these calls for advancing knowledge within the field of change management, particularly to the relationship between leadership behaviours and attitudes, and followers' reactance to change, and its impact on commitment within UK universities. The focus of this research will lie within the UK higher education sector, more specifically in relation to three universities. The reasoning behind this shall be explained within the methodology chapter. The researcher believes this research will make a valuable contribution and be of particular relevance as Brown (2013) identifies that the United Kingdom university sector is characterised by resistance towards change that presents a significant challenge to senior management. Taking this into account, conducting research within universities has provided an opportunity to address some of these future directions, as has been discussed earlier. This is particularly important in being able to understand how individuals, whether leaders or followers, react to change imposed upon them, and the consequences from these changes in terms of their commitment, behaviours and attitudes during and after the implementation of change.

In order to respond to these calls, a qualitative approach was taken with the purpose of generating greater understanding and insights into the actual behaviours and attitudes of leaders, and how these may impact upon the attitudes and behaviours of followers themselves. The way this was done was through the exploration of a conceptual framework that had been developed as a result of reviewing the literature.

This research seeks to address these calls for advancing knowledge within a number of differing fields, such as leadership, leader-member exchange and change management, but also within higher education itself. One particular way for advancing knowledge was by understanding the relationship between leadership behaviours and attitudes, and the impact this can have upon followers, in terms of their reactance towards change and the impact upon their level of commitment. This research was conducted within three universities in the United Kingdom and formed the basis for the case studies. The critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954; Chell, 2004) and open style questioning approach was taken when conducting interviews. A total of 41 interviews were conducted with both leaders and followers within academic and administrative disciplines at these three universities, including Vice-Chancellors. A more detailed explanation can be found in Chapter 3 Methodology.

## 1.4    Introduction to a conceptual framework

The purpose of this research was to explore specifically the behavioural and attitudinal aspect of leadership and resistance to change. Leaders or followers can react to change in a variety of ways that can have either positive or negative effects on change outcomes. It may not necessarily be towards *change* per se, but rather it may be the nature of the change, that is the combination of what the change is about (content) and the organisational circumstances or conditions (internal and external context), as this combination has an importance due to influencing human behaviour (Hatjidis and Parker, 2017). The combination of both the context of change (including the historical, past experiences of change and the internal and external environment) and content of change, is the mechanism behind not only the leader's behaviour but also the follower's attitudes. The content of the change also refers to the differing orders of change, for example first-order change (sub-system or organisational process change), second-order change (organisation change) and third-order change (sector change) (Kuipers et al., 2014). The context and content of change are the activities that form part of the mechanism behind not only the leader's behaviour but also the follower's attitudes. This may directly have some bearing on the leader-member exchange relationship that potentially could affect the overall change outcome, whether in a neutral, positive or negative manner. Within a change context, the LMX relationship consists of the leader's behaviour and attitudes as well as those of followers, in terms of how both the leader and follower react to the nature of the change, consisting of both the context and content of change taking place.

The level of resistance or commitment to the change may be determined by how a leader or follower reacts to change taking place, and this may have consequences, not only upon this relationship, but also for change outcomes. Therefore, the proposed conceptual framework (see Figure 1) is different from the existing literature on LMX and leadership behaviour, as it brings together differing perspectives from these fields in order to illustrate potential links in terms of relationships, and how these may impact change outcomes. The conceptual framework is therefore suggesting that the interaction between the context and content of the change creates the nature of change that directly impacts the LMX relationship. The quality of that relationship can either lead to resistance or commitment to change (Furst and Cable, 2008; Boer et al., 2016; Lorinkova and Perry, 2017), both of which have an impact either in a positive or negative way on the outcome of the change itself. The LMX mechanism responds to a change in a number of ways; it can either work, continue to work, or it breaks down. What this means is that the mechanism will either work, or it will not. When it is working and change occurs, the mechanism may or may not breakdown at that point, but when this does not happen, the mechanism is seen to be continuing to work, until such time it breaks down.
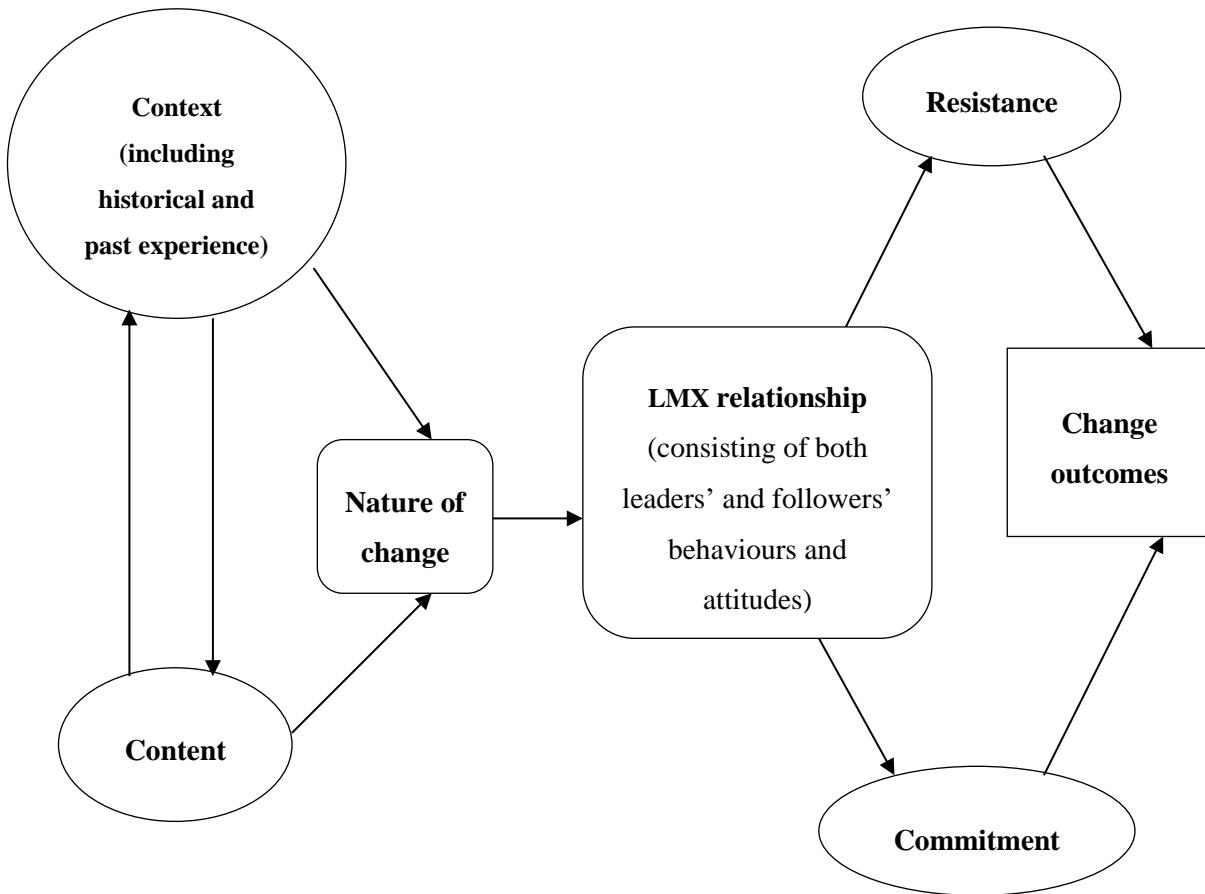


Figure 1      A conceptual framework: the mechanisms that impact LMX relationships and upon change outcomes

Source: Original interpretation of the researcher

### 1.4.1 Mechanisms within proposed conceptual framework

In order to understand the mechanism at play within the proposed conceptual framework, it is important to define what mechanisms are. For example, Machamer, Darden and Craver (2000, p.3) define mechanisms as:

*"Mechanisms are composed of both entities (with their properties) and activities. Activities are producers of change and entities are things that engage in activities. Activities usually require that entities have specific type of properties"*

Entities can be seen as the objects within the mechanism, for example managers (Parjunen, 2008). Parjunen (2008) acknowledges the activities within mechanisms but alludes to the fact that mechanisms not only consist of their component parts, but interact with each other and importantly produce something. Within the proposed conceptual framework, the "*produce something*" refers to the change outcomes.

Figure 2 offers a visualisation of the mechanisms and the interaction that takes place between the activities and entities, and the potential impact this may have upon change outcomes. The activities that form part of the mechanism within the proposed conceptual framework can be the context and content of change, which when combined, forms the nature of change. The level of involvement with change taking place can have an impact upon change outcomes in a positive, neutral, or negative way in terms of commitment and resistance.

**Activities (Producers of change)**

Context of change

Content of change

(*Combine to create the nature of change*)

Involvement in change

**Entities (Specific types of properties that engage in activities)**

Leaders' behaviour

Followers' attitude

Relational leadership

Resistance (defensive and blocking) mechanism

Coping mechanisms

Commitment mechanism

Trust

**Change outcomes**
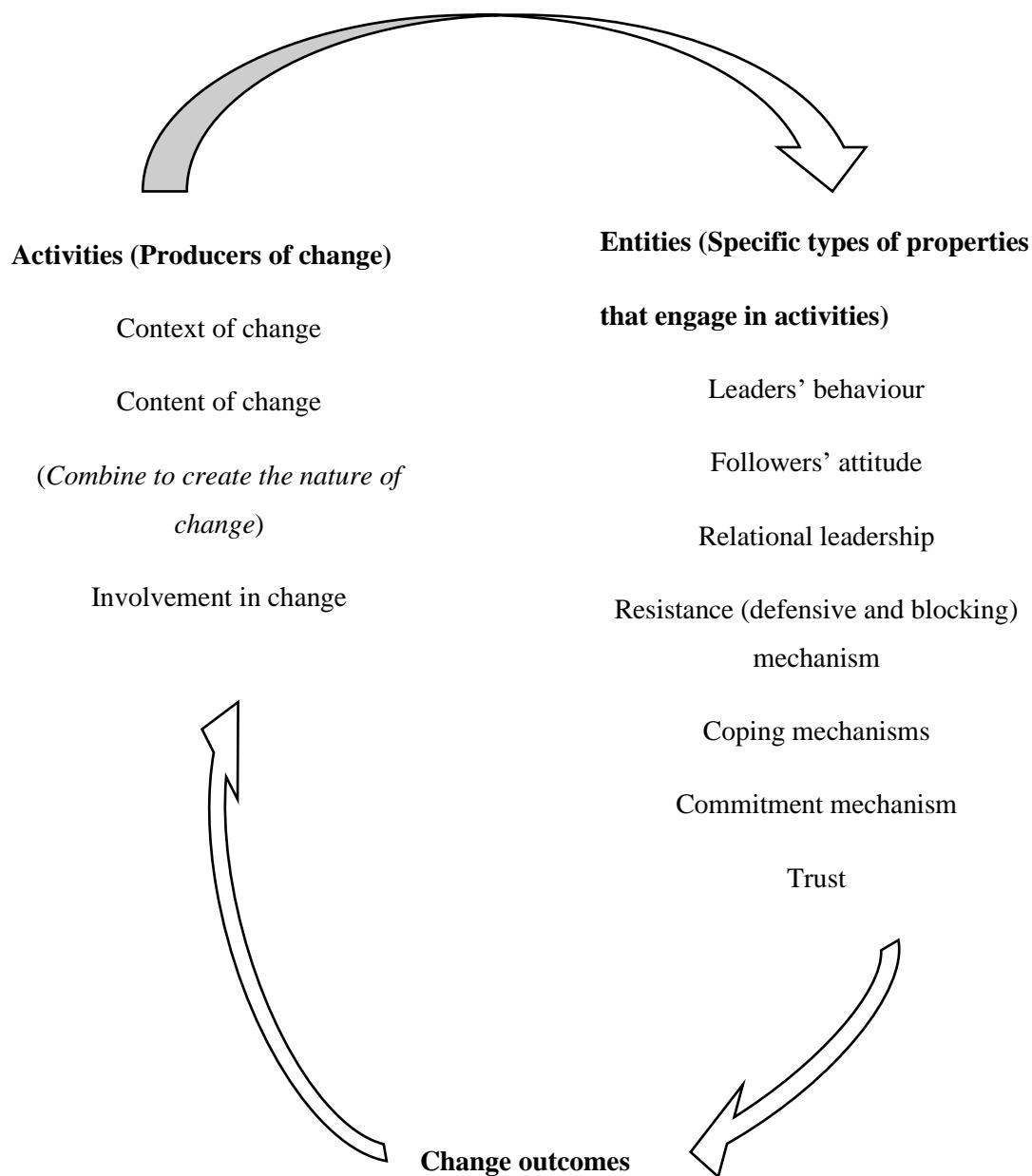
Figure 2    Visualisation of the mechanisms within proposed conceptual framework

Source: Original interpretation of the researcher

In terms of entities within the proposed conceptual framework, trust and affective commitment are mechanisms associated with social exchange, whereas relational leadership is associated with the relationship between the parties concerned and the potential influences that occur depending on the strength of the relationship (Gottfredson and Aguinis, 2017).

There are also defensive and coping mechanisms in response to the situation that individuals find themselves in that may have positive or negative consequences, particularly in terms of outcomes (Ashforth et al., 2014). There are many outcomes that are affected by the LMX relationship, such as turnover intension, attitudinal variables or commitment to the organisation (Lord, Gatti and Chui, 2016; Ilies, Nahrgang, and Kickert, 2007), furthermore Gottfredson and Aguinis (2017) suggest that LMX across the varying leadership behaviours is perhaps a common explanatory mediating mechanism.

It is the combination of the component parts that as a whole activates the mechanism that produces the outcome, rather than a single activity alone (Pajunsen, 2008, p.1463). LMX has a crucial role to play in understanding the mechanisms at work between the leader's behaviour and attitudes as well as those of followers towards change taking place, and the influence this had upon change outcomes. These may be critical in developing and forming a positive, high-quality relationship within the LMX relationship. The proposed conceptual framework shown in Figure 1 suggests that the nature of change may have an impact on the relationship between a leader's behaviour and a follower's attitude to change. This may give an indication as to the level of follower involvement with change, for example, the level of involvement an individual has with the change could lead to greater commitment or resistance depending on the quality of that relationship; one such consideration could be trust, within that relationship (Lorinkova and Perry, 2017; Seo et al., 2018). Furthermore, the form that change takes, its nature and whether change is being done to an individual or individuals, may give an indication as to the level of follower involvement as individuals resist change being done to them, rather than with them (Higgs, and Rowland, 2011).

Before implementing change initiatives, the change (leader) needs to understand both the nature of the change taking place but also the quality of these relationships, with his or her followers (Jones and Van de Ven, 2016; Straatmann et al., 2016). This is pivotal to enabling a change strategy to be developed and implemented successfully (Truckebrodt, 2000; Raineri, 2011; Martin et al., 2016). In other words, the nature of change, incorporating both the change context and historical perspectives, and the content of change may impact upon the LMX relationship (Gill, 2002) and potentially does so by influencing the leader's behaviour, and attitudes, that then influences the followers' attitudes to the change (Choi, 2011). For successful implementation of change, the LMX relationship is pivotal as it determines whether the adaptation to change will be positive or negative.

The quality of the relationship affects the follower's commitment and goodwill, as "*LMX is positively correlated with turnover*" (Truckenbrodt, 2000, p.241), and "*leaders relations and behaviours impact outcomes differentially*" (Boer et al., 2016, p.894). This suggests that if LMX were to breakdown, then this could increase employee turnover within an organisation.

The proposed conceptual framework therefore suggests that change implementation is linked to behavioural and attitudinal outcomes that can be either resistant or committed to the change and have a subsequent effect on the change implementation outcome. It is the LMX relationship that plays an integral role to the success of overall change outcomes, therefore, if resistance can be harvested or even utilised positively, it could have a positive impact on the final change outcomes (Cooke, 2009).

## 1.5     Aims and objectives of this research

The aim of this research is to explore the mechanisms contained in the researcher's conceptual framework within an educational setting to ascertain whether the leader-member exchange relationship impacts the relationship between leaders and followers, and the potential effects this has on change outcomes.

The objectives of the research are as follows.

- To identify the reactions to change of both academic and administrative employees in the higher education sector, and the impact on commitment and resistance to change within the organisation.
- To critically analyse the context and content of change and how this impacts upon the LMX relationship between a leader and follower.
- To critically evaluate the impact leadership behaviour has on follower attitudes and reactions to change.
- To compare the differences between individuals in leadership / non leadership positions in both academic and administrative disciplines in determining how change may impact these LMX relationships.
- To understand the effects the LMX relationship has upon involvement in the change taking place, and the implications this may have on change outcomes.

## 1.6 Key research question

Does the nature of change impact upon the leader-member exchange relationship in terms of behaviour, attitudes, commitment, involvement and resistance to change and if so, are there consequences for change outcomes?

### 1.6.1 Research questions

- How does the leader-member exchange relationship affect member commitment and resistance to change?
- To what extent is the LMX relationship important for successful change outcomes?
- Is it the case that followers take their cues from the behaviours and attitudes of leaders charged with implementing change?
- To what extent do the behaviours and attitudes of leaders influence a follower's own behaviour, attitudes and commitment towards organisational change?
- What can be done to limit the impact of any negative behaviours and attitudes shown by leaders in order to create unity and increased follower commitment?

## 1.7 Outline of the thesis

There are a further five chapters within this thesis.

- Chapter 2 **(Literature review)** explores and discusses the leadership, leader-member exchange, and change literatures, to provide some useful insights as to what is happening within these differing fields.
- Chapter 3 **(Methodology)** explains and justifies the reasoning behind taking a qualitative approach in the design of this research, and explains the researcher's philosophical perspective.
- Chapter 4 **(Findings)** focusses on three case studies within three different universities, and provides a within-case analysis for each of these case studies, followed by the cross-case analysis between them.
- Chapter 5 **(Discussion)** reviews and discusses the findings and offers possible explanations for them by referring back to the literature.
- Chapter 6 **(Conclusion)** consolidates this thesis and provides some propositions as an agenda for future research, and elaborates upon the contribution of this research.

# Chapter 2    Literature review

## 2.1    Brief introduction to chapter

The themes identified within this literature review have been developed from the researcher's area of interest, namely leadership, behaviour, change, resistance and commitment. A number of databases were used, such as Web of Science, Scopus and PsycInfo, as these contained peer reviewed journals and were an excellent source of empirical data. A broad search was undertaken that covered the time frame of 1970 to the present, due to there being an absence in terms of a specific literature review or systematic review related to this particular research. However, there were meta-analysis papers that focussed on LMX and citizen behaviours (Ilies, Nahrgang and Morgeson, 2007) and antecedents and consequences (Dulebohn et al., 2012). This led the researcher to widen the time frame, in order to gain an overview as to what was happening within the literature.

The purpose of conducting this literature review was to identify gaps within the change management and leadership behavioural literature. The reasoning behind that was to bring into focus a direction of travel to enable the beginning of a research project to take shape, that would not only inform the field to new perspectives, but make a contribution to the researcher's area of interest. Furthermore, the literature review enabled the researcher to identify the aims, objectives and research questions.

The table within *Appendix 1* provides an illustration of the steps taken in screening peer reviewed journal articles, as well as the searches that were performed. Furthermore, this table provides a variety of important information, for example statistical information, such as the number of journal articles resulting from these differing searches, as well as the titles of each search, and the inclusion and exclusion criteria. An example of these inclusion and exclusion criteria that journal articles had to meet was as follows: subject matter – namely resistance to change, leadership, leader, behaviour, change approach, commitment, followers, and change management. However, these articles had to be not overly specialised, but be within the researcher's field of study. Articles that were of a medical, engineering, or health related nature, and purely opinions or discussions that didn't provide useful insights were eliminated. Furthermore, articles had to be either quantitative, qualitative or mixed method. Meta-analysis papers were also included, when considering the suitability of journal articles.

Once the filters and criteria had been applied, as shown within ***Appendix 1***, the following steps were taken.

- Journal article titles were screened for their relevance of the subject and whether they contained keywords as indicated above; those that did were then selected for step two.
- Abstracts were read from the journal articles that had been selected based on title of the articles.
- Abstracts that were deemed as being not applicable based upon the selection criteria were then discounted.
- Articles that had relevant abstracts were read in full, and then either selected for inclusion or excluded based upon the criteria.
- A snowballing approach was undertaken of the references from selected journal articles.
- Once this inclusion and exclusion process had been performed for each of these searches, it provided the researcher with the number of potential articles that were deemed suitable for inclusion.

Having completed the literature review search process, as discussed above, the total number of potential journal articles for inclusion was 193, once snowballing of the references within the journal articles had been accounted for, as citation-searching proved useful in following the development of the literature within the field being studied (Booth, Sutton and Papaioannou, 2016). These articles were then given a category depending on subject matter, for example leadership, behaviour, followers, attitudes, commitment. Then the gaps and themes were identified, and links were created by bringing together differing literature. From linking the differing literature to one another, a number of themes emerged resulting in the identification of LMX as a potential mechanism that links both change (including context and content) and change outcomes together. From these identified themes and gaps, a conceptual framework was developed, as discussed within Chapter 1. As per the line of argument developed within this literature review, journal articles that were considered to be no longer relevant, or no longer met the inclusion criteria, were discarded accordingly, resulting in a reduction of actual journal articles that were included within this literature review to 112 journal articles.

This literature review provides empirical support and background behind not only a proposed conceptual framework, but the mechanisms within that framework as discussed in Chapter 1. This chapter commences with the complexities of change and proceeds to explore the differing aspects of that framework and the theories associated with it. Finally, this chapter concludes with a summary of the gaps and questions arising from this review of the literature.

## 2.2 Complexities of change

The challenges and complexities of organisational change can be seen as being *"a notoriously complex phenomenon*", with differing perspectives contributing to the *"debilitating fragmentation of organisational change theories*", that can be either contradictory or complementary (Jacobs, van Witteloostuijn and Christe-Zeyse, 2013, p.773). This view regarding the complexity of change is supported by Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) who acknowledge the difficulties and danger that initiating change brings with it, particularly when there is no guarantee of success. Furthermore, Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) also assert that often change implementation is avoided by organisation managers, due to their fears of lacking the ability to actually implement change. This suggests that there are both external and internal forces that create and inhibit change within organisations, which creates a level of difficulty that needs addressing, and highlights the importance of planning or pre-planning change carefully before implementation. Perhaps this is a result of the uncertainty, ambiguity or diversity faced by organisations today, due to changes taking place within society, economic and advancements in technology all contributing to the complexities faced by organisations (Endres and Weibler, 2017).

Organisations face numerous challenges in terms of change, such as "*recognising the need for change*" and "d*eploying strategies to implement change effectively*", which seem sensible as it could be argued that these two challenges go hand in hand, and are intertwined in some way (Self and Schraeder, 2009). People can be difficult during times of change, contributing to this level of complexity, for example, Lamm and Gordon (2010) refer to psychological empowerment (empowerment theory), which looks at how both the environment and individual elements "*interact*" and how this interaction influences the behaviour of the individual (employee). For organisations to survive and overcome these complexities, leaders need to help build an individual's identification with the organisation; one such way of achieving this is argued to be through involvement, thus strengthening commitment (Truckenbrodt, 2000).

At the same time, leaders need to be aware of employees' or followers' attitudes to change, as the literature suggests these are key to change success (Oreg and Berson, 2011; Caldwell, Herold and Fedor, 2004). This highlights the importance in having both competent and confident people in place to initiate and implement change, particularly as each change situation is likely to be different, therefore the techniques employed to deal with change will be different in each organisational setting, as will the departments themselves (Stanleigh, 2008).

It is important to maintain employee (or follower) engagement for change initiatives to succeed (Holten and Brenner, 2015). Having a follower who is actively engaged means that the follower would put more effort in completing the tasks necessary for the change to be successfully implemented, as this would engender a sense of belonging to the organisation (Appelbaum et al., 2017). If the reason for change has not been explained sufficiently enough in terms of why it is in their interest to change, then people maintain the status quo, and continue working in the same way, but also if people are content with the status quo, they will *"fight to protect it"* (Cooke, 2009, p.3). This implies that if previous experience of change by individuals were negative, such as poor implementation of change initiatives, or of change per se, then individuals will be more likely to resist change until such time they are persuaded that change will be carried out correctly the next time around (Jones and Van de Ven, 2016; Vakola, 2016).

Furthermore, if employers or agents of change are expecting resistance to take place, then in a way there is an element of self-prophesy, and so if resistance is expected, those in charge of change will be looking for it and inevitably find it (Thomas and Hardy, 2011). Ford, Ford and D'Amelio (2008) make a similar point by suggesting that change agents contribute to the shaping of the phenomenon by looking for it, and upon finding it, confirm its existence, thereby adding credence to the notion that people resist change. This means that if a leader or change agent sets out looking specifically for the negative aspects associated with resistance, or indeed expect some form of negativity they will find it. However, it could also be argued that if a leader or change agent sets out to find the positives associated with resistance, they will inevitably find that too. Once the leader or change agent has found what they were looking for, this reinforces their pre-conceptions that people either resist or support change. This is dependent on how change agents view resistance, as this is likely to help determine or influence the shape or form it takes, but also inform their approach, in how they tackle or address the type of resistance being encountered.

Another aspect to why people resist change is in terms of ambivalence that Piderit (2000) sees as being the starting point for the formation of attitudes towards proposed change. Piderit (2000, p.790) suggests that the level of ambivalence shown by individuals, could have either "*desirable*" or "*undesirable consequences*" for the organisational changes being proposed. To prevent the change momentum being impeded, more attention is needed from both managers and scholars towards the acknowledgement and sustainment of ambivalence. Ambivalence may present individuals with an opportunity to reflect on how they see their working life, in order to gain an understanding of what the change may present for them (Randall and Proctor, 2008).

There are dangers for organisations of not taking into account ambivalence, such as not interpreting the reactions of employees towards change correctly, particularly as employees may have strongly-held views that have been misperceived as indifferent (Oreg and Sverdlik, 2011). There are a number of advantages to understanding ambivalence, for example the discomfort felt by employees can be addressed by providing guidance and support to meet the needs of employees during the change process, and also provide useful insights about the change that may be beneficial to the change agents during the designing and implementation of the change.

The reason being is that implementing change often comes from people within organisations whether "*collectively*" or "*individually*" and understanding resistance and inertia from these groups would be useful in exploring the psychology behind this (George and Jones, 2001). The next section explores further the concept of resistance to change and the reasoning behind people's resistance towards it.

### 2.2.1        Resistance to change

From reviewing the change literature, there does not appear to be a widely accepted definition of how to actually define resistance. This view is supported by Bruckman (2008, p.211) who suggests that there is not a standardised definition of the term "*resistance to change*" due to the variety and type of changes, some of which are embraced or not resisted, therefore suggesting the assumption that people resist change is inaccurate. For example, Peccei Giangreco and Sebastiano (2011, p188) view resistance to change *"as a form of organisational dissent that individuals engage in when they find the change personally unpleasant or inconvenient"*. They go on to suggest that dissent can take the form of publicly speaking out against the changes taking place, or undermining the changes that are trying to be implemented.

The two main areas in which resistance is viewed, as identified by Thomas and Hardy (2011), is as being either demonizing or celebrating but these do not tackle the issue of "*power*", and the implications that can arise from this. For Thomas and Hardy (2011, p.325) they view celebrating and demonizing *"as approaches, maintain a distinction between change agent and change recipient and privilege the former. It is the change agent who decides what constitutes resistance, who can be resistant, and how resistance should be dealt with"*.

Some scholars, for example Cook (2009), believe that overcoming resistance is not the correct course of action as this implies that fighting something will be necessary so that it can be overcome, but also what is being resisted will be persist. Cooke (2009) seems to be suggesting that weakening the resistance from within the organisation can remove the cause of the employee resistance. Dent and Goldberg (1999) take the view that the term resistance to change (RTC) should be "*dispensed*" with, and with the aid of new and helpful models, RTC can be redefined. They go on to suggest that people do not resist the change itself, but they may resist what the change represents, such as reduced or "*loss of status*", "*pay*" or "*comfort*".

One further point to make is that people resist change being done to them, rather than with them, as Higgs and Rowland (2008, and 2011) suggest that working with people in implementing change is likely to increase the chances of change succeeding.

Within the research paper by Self and Schraeder (2009, p.168) they refer to Hultman (1995) and the "*active*" and "*passive*" dimension of resistance. Actively refers to an individual's character traits, such as the spreading of rumours or in criticising and being selective with the available information or in sabotaging the change. Whereas passive resistance is associated with withholding support or information and procrastination, or in not implementing the required change. In support of the active and passive perspective of resistance, Bouchenooghe (2010) suggests that passive forms of resistance can take the form of people voicing concerns that they have either by "*blocking*" or impeding change by opposing it vocally, or demonstrating regressive types of behaviour to illustrate their rejection of change. There are other types of resistance such as overt (collective in nature, namely, strikes, industrial actions) and covert (milder and more subtle behavioural form of resistance by individuals) (Giangreco and Peccei, 2005), whereas Fronda and Moriceau (2008) distinguish between three forms of resistance to change, which are: revolt, withdrawal and discreet resistance.

Resistance may come in the guise of a sense of *loss* when employees struggle to detach themselves from the previous state of that organisation, and all that it encompassed in its original form (Jones et al., 2008). An alternative perspective, for example Davidson (2002), suggests resistance is everywhere regardless of the situation, place or context, and in a sense is commonplace, even normal. Davidson (2002) also recognises that fear of what is yet to come contributes to people's resistance. This would appear to add to the confusion as to what resistance actually is.

The literature has given it many different labels, often seen in a negative light, or seen as a "*refusal to do what is required*" (Smollan, 2011, p.3), or "*refusing to comply or participate*" (Appelbaum et al., 2015, p74). It is seen as a *"fundamental block to change"* and a key aspect as to whether change is successful and is actually implemented (Mabin, Forgeson and Green, 2001, p.169). Instead of using the term resistance, reactance to change may be a better fit, or sit slightly more comfortably in terms of behaviours of individuals and leaders. These varying perspectives on resistance seem to contribute to the contradiction that lies within the literature and the use of terms when referring to resistance, such as it being "*unavoidable*", a "*natural behavioural response to the perceived threat of change*", or that it can be seen to be "*politically motivated*", only adds to these contradictions (Mabin, Forgeson and Green, 2001, p170).

This may in part be due to how resistance has been conceptualised, thereby obscuring the phenomenon's complexity. In fact, Piderit's (2000) re-conceptualization of resistance as "*multidimensional*" in particular in relation to employees' attitudes towards change is certainly intriguing, as multidimensional seems to encompass and sum up the complexities that resistance represents. Furthermore, Piderit (2000) alludes to how labelling of resistance can lead to the dismissing of employees' points of view regarding the proposed change that may have some legitimacy.

### 2.2.2    Why people resist change

Within the organisational behavioural literature, much attention has been given to why people resist change. There are factors such as "*self-interest and politics, psychological reasons, emotional reasons, the change approach taken, recipient perceptions, cultural bias, or historical organisations factors*" (Balogun and Hailey, 2008, p.249). Depending on the situation and the nature of the change taking place, these may contribute to how an individual may or may not react to change taking place, or about to take place, for example Kotter and Schlesinger (2008, p.3) refer to "*parochial self–interest*", which is when individuals believe they are losing something of value because of the changes within an organisation, and hence individuals will resist accordingly.

Then there are factors such as how individuals cope with the uncertainty of change, and their level of tolerance, and their evaluation of the benefits and costs of change, or misinterpretation of the reasoning behind change that may be taking place (Huczynski and Buchanan, 2013). It would be sensible if some consideration were given to the organisational aspect that may be contributing to this resistance towards change, such as the perception of credibility in terms of both the organisation and the change agents, and in terms of how change has been handled by the organisation before (Self and Schraeder, 2009). Furthermore, Bovey and Hede (2001) found that individuals who were more likely to resist change possessed higher levels of irrational ideas compared to individuals who exhibited less thoughts of an irrational nature.

Alternatively, it could be down to an individual's personality (Oreg, 2003). Oreg identified six sources of resistance which are: reluctance to lose control, cognitive rigidity, lack of psychological resilience, intolerance to the adjustment period of change, preference for low levels of stimulation and novelty and finally reluctance to give up old habits. What Oreg (2003) found was those who reported their difficulty in being able to work in an effective way and were more distraught by change had an inclination to be inordinately resistant to change. According to Stanley Meyer and Topolnytsky (2005), cynicism and scepticism could be used as a way of predicting the intensions of individuals who may be more likely to be resistant to change and be non-compliant towards requests for their behaviours to change by management.

### 2.2.3    Antecedents of resistance to change

There is a growing consensus as to the importance of a recipient's reactance to change and the role it plays in whether or not change will be successful (Oreg, Vakola and Armenakis, 2011). Within their 60-year review of quantitative studies that focussed on change recipients' reactions to change, Oreg, Vakola, and Armenakis (2011) consider reactance to change to be one of the key theoretical perspectives of resistance, and identified a number of pre-change antecedence. This is shown within Table 1, but this table also provides an indication of the types of antecedents from several scholars as a way of illustrating the different perspectives in this field. The purpose of this table is to reinforce and support the complexities surrounding change, which was discussed earlier in this chapter. The identification of differing antecedents that had been identified by Dulebohn et al. (2012), provided a way for helping determine the nature of the leader-member exchange. Therefore, when there is an engagement into these behaviours by leaders, it sends a signal to followers as to the willingness of leaders to put additional effort into the relationship, thereby encouraging the likelihood of being reciprocated by followers by providing more to their leader than was expected (Dulebohn et al., 2012). As

a consequence, for the researcher it highlighted the importance as to the way scholars in leadership explored and measured these relationships within leader-member exchange, particularly concerning leaders' behaviours.

Table 1          An example of different types of antecedents associated with resistance

| Authors | Associated literature | Types of antecedents associated with resistance |
|---------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Dulebohn et al. (2012) | Leader-member exchange | Follower characteristics, Leader characteristics<br>Leader behaviours, perceptions and personalities |
| Oreg, Valoka and Armenakis (2011) | Resistance to change | Pre-change (change recipient characteristics and internal context)<br>Change antecedents; change process<br>Perceived benefits / harm<br>Change context |
| Vakola (2016) | Based upon Oreg et al. 2011 | Dispositions – differing reactions by individuals<br>Impact of change; internal context<br>The change process, the way change is introduced and implemented and its knock-on effect in terms of reactions |
| van der Smissen, Schalk and Freese (2013) | Based upon Oreg et al. 2011 | Type of change; impact of change<br>Success of past changes or change history<br>Attitude towards change |
| Morin et al. (2016) | Resistance | Necessity of change for continued organisational change success<br>Implementation legitimacy<br>Support of employees in order for them to cope effectively with the demands for change |
| Jones and Van de Ven (2016) | Resistance | Supportive leadership; organisation fairness; moderating impact of time |
| Appelbaum et al. (2015) | Organisational outcomes of leadership style and resistance | Strategic (vision, importance, scope, employee buy-in, senior management support)<br>Role factors (involvement, autonomy and significance)<br>Anxiety, attitude to change, commitment, mostly affective and normative), perceived benefits and involvement in change |
| Peccei et al. (2011) | Commitment | Perceived benefits of change, and involvement in change |
| Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) | Commitment | Compliance (focal behaviour); cooperation (discretionary behaviour) |

Source: Original interpretation of the researcher

The antecedents identified by Jones and Van de Ven (2016) suggest that during change, consequences that are negative and not accounted for can lead employees to be fearful because of the potential threat and ambiguity of the change taking place, leading up to change implementation. They go on to suggest that supportive leadership has potential in decreasing the threat caused by the nature of the change taking place by being able to empathise with their employees, but also resistance towards change will be less if an organisation is fair to its employees.

However, they surmise that over time the relationships between these antecedents and change resistance become stronger due to the experiences and continued threat individuals had had during the later stages of the change process, thereby entrenching individuals' resistant positions.

This seems reasonable that grasping the fundamental concepts of undertaking change and building understanding in how to go about this is important when implementing any kind of change initiative, as failure to do so has the potential to contribute to change resistance, such as "*reduced employee morale*" or "*diminished commitment*" (Self and Schraeder, 2009, p.168).

Perhaps what can be concluded from Table 1 is how interconnected LMX, resistance and commitment are to each other, and considering the scope and variety of antecedents, not only supports the conceptual framework within Chapter 1, but illustrates the complexities in terms of mechanisms that appear to interact with each other.

### 2.2.4    Types of resistance

The literature is rich in how the different types of resistance are discussed and this suggests that there is not one simple type of resistance, but a variety of types that not only form resistance, but the way that resistance is understood. For example, Ford, Ford and D'Amelio (2008) suggest one such way to understand resistance to change is as a dynamic among three elements, these being: recipient action, agent sense-making and the agent-recipient relationship. There has been identification by Pieterse Caniels and Homan (2012) of two key themes that emerge from the resistance literature, namely, power (whether this is unequal power, or restraining force, or how ideologies and cultural socialisation make people comply with the existing order, without explicit force or as a productive force and an integral element of all human relationships), and discourse, in other words, the view that organisations are made up of discourse, in terms of written or spoken communication. This implies when people come together, whether in a formal or informal setting, inevitably discussions will take place in which individuals will imply meaning to what is taking place or being said that is particularly poignant to change, due to the potential resistance that may arise from these interactions.

Viewing resistance behaviour solely negatively can affect goodwill and important relationships within an organisation, as well as missing a learning opportunity in how to implement change more effectively in the future, and to gain vital feedback (Ford and Ford, 2010). Ford and Ford (2010) suggest that amongst managers, it has become socially accepted to blame employees for displaying resistance type characteristics. It also provides a functionality in terms of obtaining extra resourcing and support that otherwise may not have been possible in obtaining. Resistance has provided managers leverage in their justification for additional resources, which they may not have been able to procure previously. It also provides managers with a convenient and believable excuse to blame their short coming or issues they are facing on resistance. Piderit (2000) makes the point that when individuals display resistant type attitudes, they would have considered the implications of doing so. This suggests that people would have thought through the reasoning behind their resistance, and what it could mean for them if they were to display such attitudes.

Perhaps these attitudes and behaviours displayed by managers or a senior management team are part of the high failure rate of change, and a hindrance to encouraging commitment to change by individuals, as well as missing a chance to tap into the opportunities being presented by having change-resistant individuals. Ford and Ford (2010) believe that outspoken people to proposed change are the ones who often are genuine about their care in ensuring things are right, as they tend to be closer to the coalface or interworking of that organisation and therefore may be able to see flaws within the planned change initiative, hence their objection to it. This view is supported by Appelbaum et al. (2015) who argue that positive outcomes can arise from resistance, such as assisting organisations in identifying aspects that may not be as strong as other change initiatives thereby aiding organisations to maintain their stability, resulting in additional provision of energy to the process of change.

There is also the emotional perspective of resistance whereby people who are not at ease with the change being inflicted upon them resist the change because of the perceived view of management's lack of concern for their feelings, therefore this emotional reaction can be one that is either illogical or a logical (Werther, 2003). Werther suggests that assumptions are made by leaders when implementing change in terms of resistance to change and their employees, and so the way leaders tackle resistance can in fact lead to further resistance because the emotional issues by those affected by change are not being resolved, particularly from past change initiatives.

From the socio-technical perspective of resistance, the objective is to make the best use of the social/human relationships within an organisation and the specific technology that is used (Soetanto et al., 2003). Soetanto et al. (2003) suggest that inevitably when an Information Technology (IT) system is introduced into an organisation then change is being imposed, therefore this can impact the social system.

Furthermore, Pries-Heje (2008) acknowledges the importance of user participation and involvement when implementing Information and Communication Technology ICT systems, as from the socio-technical perspective there is a common interest in the development of computing systems that are useful to both employers and employees. Lapalme and Conklin (2015) identify some concerns for both the social and technical systems in terms of integration between the system and people. This would suggest that for ICT systems to be accepted and have a positive impact, the people who use the systems on a daily basis must have an input into its design so that the system is fit for purpose.

## 2.3    From resistance to commitment

There is the suggestion made by Jones and van de Ven (2016) that time plays a significant part with regards to resistance and its negative effect towards commitment to change shown by employees, and how this relationship becomes stronger (rather than weaker) over time, suggesting festering effects of resistance to change. They go on to suggest that supportive leadership and fairness on change can help to reduce resistance over time, therefore at the start of the change process fairness has a most crucial role to play. At the same time, organisations that have employees who are committed to the forthcoming change should not neglect their interests or exclude them in the process of the impending change, as having "*committed employees*" and an "*effective approach*" to how change is managed are both key factors in the reduction of resistance (Peccei, Giangreco and Sebastiano, 2011, p.199).

Within the quantitative research paper of Pecci, Giangreco and Sebastiano (2011), they brought together in a single study, both the aspects of organisational commitment and resistance to change theory. They looked at how commitment effects resistance to change, but also the effects organisational change (OC) might have on resistance to change (RTC), along with other antecedents of resistance. They saw resistance as *"a form of organisational dissent that individuals engage in when they find the change personally unpleasant or inconvenient"* (Pecci, Giangreco and Sebastiano, 2011, p.187). They undertook a survey questionnaire within the Italian national electric company (enel), and distributed 359 questionnaires, of which 322 were returned.

They used a number of scales to measure resistance and its antecedents. They also included a three-factor partial mediation model, which had organisational commitment between perceived benefits of change (PBC) and involvement in change (IIC), which links directly to RTC. In addition to this, is a model that looked at OC as a moderator of the PBC/IIC – attitudes to change (ATC) relationship.

What they found (Pecci, Giangreco and Sebastiano, 2011, p.198) was *"extending the two-factor model to include OC didn't significantly affect the indirect effect that the perceived benefits of change and involvement in change have on RTC through their effect on attitudes towards change"*.

From a commitment perspective, Bassistelli et al. (2014) refer to two differing types: affective commitment (desire to work toward the change), and normative commitment (sense of duty or responsibility for supporting it), and how employees who have higher levels of concern for change that is taking place can result in reduced support for change and increased resistance.

This suggests that there is the possibility of a link between employees' concerns and the level of commitment shown towards the change, and so therefore a psychological state is represented by commitment to change. Leadership has a crucial function to play within private and public organisations in terms of implementing change in the first instance if affective commitment to change is to be encouraged (van der Voet, Kuipers and Groeneveld, 2016; Higgs and Rowland, 2005). van der Voet Kuipers and Groeneveld (2016) suggest that if planned and emergent change is to be stimulated, an appealing vision of the organisation's future state provision is needed.

This suggests that having a clear vision of direction of travel for the organisation has potential to inspire employees, and generate a compelling case for them committing to the desired changes by the leader. Swailes (2004) identifies four bases of commitment that bind people to organisations and the reasons for their commitment:

- attitudinal (towards or beliefs in the goals and values of the organisation)
- continuance (economic and social ties to the organisation)
- normative (loyalty and obligation towards the organisation)
- behavioural (past behaviour of the individual)

This suggests a link between an individual's profile, as well as to their level (base) commitment towards the organisation. Swales (2004) argues that when individuals identify with those things that are meaningful to them, this will lead to commitment. This is because new values and norms are usually pursued when a new culture is evoked because of the need for organisational change, and using cultural values can help in interpreting the beliefs, actions and how individuals define their identities. There are challenges to building commitment as when organisations go through change, creating balances of fairness in terms of workload, job positions or resources for the parties affected by the change, is not always possible (Fuchs, 2011). However, Fuchs (2011) continues to suggest that for an employee to be in support of change and complete the necessary associated tasks, there has to be a belief as to the benefits that the change will bring to the organisation. Therefore, an emotional tie to an organisation exists, meaning that there is an affective element that is in support and committed to that change.

Perhaps despite the perceived unfairness of the redistribution of work and jobs, if the emotional state displayed by employees is such that they believe the impending change is for the benefit of the organisation, then commitment may be able to be obtained. Fuchs (2011) suggests that relationship building or fostering of it between leaders and employees in terms of identification with the change, has the potential to reduce resistance and opposition towards the change initiatives by employees.

Actively involving employees during the change process and looking after employee interests has the potential to increase and strengthen employee organisational attachment instead of eroding or undermining commitment (Peccei, Giangreco and Sebastiano, 2011). On the other hand, Simoes and Esposito (2014) suggest that communication plays a key role in reducing resistance to change and building commitment by employees due to being able to re-evaluate the meaning given to change. Producing communication structures that are two way creates dialogue in terms of involvement and "*inclusiveness*" by employees, and gives them an opportunity for them to put forward their views and concerns.

To increase employee commitment, Shin Taylor and Seo's (2012) research indicated that employees should be offered long-term, high levels of both tangible and intangible inducements before change takes place, such as material and developmental awards. They felt that this may increase commitment, compared to increasing inducements that were purely monetary, as they believed it would not be as influential upon the attitudes and behaviours of employees. Therefore, longer and broader term rewards should be considered, compared to shorter-term, narrowly-defined rewards.

Another aspect of building commitment between individuals and the organisation is the concept of prosocial motivation that is based upon the concept of wanting (desiring) to support other people (Lazauskaite-Zabielske, Urbanaviciute and Bagdziuniene, 2015). They go on to suggest that when providing new employees with the necessary support and help, that in fact prosocial behaviour may be strengthened as a result of the positive citizenship climate (this is a specific issue with public sector organisations). This is in terms of the socialisation of the incoming employee by the various mentors, co-workers and managers, thereby demonstrating organisational citizenship behaviour.

They also suggested that to motivate employees, being able to create positive work-related interpersonal relationships in the job design of the employee may play a crucial role in prosocial motivation, thereby making a prosocial difference in terms of caring for the welfare of fellow workers, clients and caring about positive changes.

Within the research paper by Grant Dutton and Rosso (2008), they support this view by suggesting that creating opportunities to "*give*", provides the opportunity to enable both the organisation and employees to become more prosocial in terms of construction of identities that are of a caring nature, therefore resulting in caring individuals and a more caring institution. They also suggested that these giving behaviours that employees engage in with their organisation have important implications with regards to their affective organisational commitment, therefore organisations should consider their treatment towards employees.

It would seem that creating the right environment from the very first moment a new employee starts within an organisation could encourage positive prosocial behaviours and enhance commitment to change. Esteve et al. (2015) make a poignant point that depending on whether or not individuals act pro-socially, or are dealing with those who are themselves prosocial, they act accordingly, but do not act in favour of those who are not showing prosocial behaviour.

Perhaps it could be argued that like-minded people behave similarly towards each other, compared to those who aren't like-minded, in a sense the 'chalk and cheese' effect. Bovey and Hede (2001) argue that the human factor is not given the consideration that may be needed, and at times only superficially and instrumentally as change is managed mostly from a technical perspective. Perhaps if the human side was taken more seriously and more attention given to people, then perhaps prosocial behaviours could be encouraged and nurtured particularly for those who do not currently display such behaviours.

There seems to be some disagreement with regards Allen and Myer's (1996) three component model, in terms of whether affective and normative commitment are truly distinguishable forms of commitment, and whether continuance commitment is a unidimensional construct (Meyer and Hervscovitch, 2001). Within their paper they believe that a general model of commitment should be used due to being in a better position in predicting outcomes of organisational commitment when the behaviour of interest is specified, plus the advantages it brings in terms of continuing to view commitment as entities and courses of action that are work related. They argue that commitment can take numerous forms therefore contributing to the complexity that is within the relationship in terms of commitment and behaviour. They made an addition to the general model that was compliance, as they see this to be a form of resistance, in terms of failing to comply or cooperate.

The findings produced two unexpected results for Herscovitch and Meyer (2002), firstly, there had been a stronger than expected relationship between continuance commitment to both the organisation and to the change itself, and secondly that individuals who were not committed were in general willing to comply with organisational change.

## 2.4     Approaches to change

There appear to be two main approaches to change: planned and emergent change (Kuipers et al., 2014). They explain that a planned change approach starts by looking at the current (undesirable) state of the organisation in order to establish the desired future state of the organisation, which tends to be planned ahead of change taking place, whereas an emergent approach takes place as "*change itself occurs*". However, there is the suggestion within the literature that planned change is under constant conditions and that stakeholders within the organisation will be prepared to participate in its implementation, and that agreements can be achieved (Cheng, 2015; Kuipers et al., 2014; van der Voet, Kuipers and Groeneveld, 2016). Giangreco and Peccei (2005) argue that involvement and perception of the cost of change can have a significant effect on individuals' attitudes towards the change that may be displayed through their reactions. Therefore, if resistance to change is to be reduced, it is imperative that change is carefully planned, communicated, as well as implemented, employing involvement and participation.

However, By (2005, p.374) suggests that organisational change is more of an *"open-ended and continuous process"*. The emergent approach has a number of functions – to understand the organisation as a whole, for example, in terms of people, strategy, structure in an in-depth and extensive way, but also to understand how these particular aspects can impede change or act in such a way that encourages the change process in an effective manner (By, 2005). There exists within the change literature a variety of approaches in which to understand organisational change, such as from a micro, macro meso perspective or adopting all three approaches, such as the study by Bailey and Raelin (2015), and Shin, Taylor and Seo (2012). Within their paper, Higgs and Rowland (2005) identified four change approaches: directive (simple), master (sophisticated), self-assembly (DIY) and emergence. What they found was that "*both directive and DIY approaches were negatively related to success, and master change tends to be associated with complex, externally-driven change, and emergent change seemed to be associated with long-term internally driven change"* (Higgs and Rowland, 2005, pp.136-137).

There has been a move from looking at the factors than hinder change from a micro analysis to a macro analysis (George and Jones, 2001). They go on to suggest that minimisation in the change process of a person's role takes place because of analysis being undertaken at the macro level, but also where stable routines exist, this allows in the short term an organisation's chances of survival because of institutionalised actions of the organisation, due to inertia being seen as a powerful force. Perhaps an alternative approach would be to consider the long-term future of the organisation instead of the short term, particularly where people are concerned, due to the central role they play within any organisation.

Within the organisational change literature, much attention has focused on what is involved in change in terms of content that can range from the macro level, such as reforms and new policies, to change at the micro level such as new structure formation or procedural change (Kuipers et al., 2014). They argue that implementation of change within organisations and how this is done receives less attention, compared with the abundant background descriptions of what perspective of change is within a particular sectorial, national or political environment, but also that there is a close interconnection between the change context and content. Jacobs, van Witteloostuijn and Christe-Zayse (2013) also identify the fragmented nature of change perspectives at the micro (psychological aspects of organisational change and its impact on human beings), macro (organisations fitness and competitiveness, mortality hazard of organisations) and meso (organisational context) level of analysis.

Despite this move from the micro perspective to a more macro perspective, Lamm and Gordon (2010) suggest that there is a lack of research that focusses on organisational change at a micro level of analysis. From these different perspectives, the major influences upon institutional and cross-country culture are often ignored within organisational change research, therefore what may work within one organisation or in terms of culture or country may in fact result in failure within another organisation, country and culture (Jacobs, van Witteloostuijn and Christe-Zayse, 2013).

## 2.5    Theories in which to understand organisational change

Within the organisational change literature, there are numerous theories that explore particular aspects of change. For example, Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) undertook a review of theory and research in the 1990s and considered change-related issues with regards to content (organisational structures), context (experiences of previous change) and process (individual level). On the other hand, Packard (2013) identified the key theories of organisational change to be: lifecycle theory, evolution theories, neo-institutional theory, stakeholder theories and rational adaption approaches.

In a systematic review of the public sector change management literature, Kuipers et al. (2014) saw institutional and change management theory as the dominant frame for change research.

### 2.5.1    Alternative theoretical underpinnings

There are many alternative theories within the organisational change literature but the purpose of highlighting the different theoretical perspectives was to illustrate the complexities and differing theoretical perspectives that are within this particular field, and also to help build insights as to why change failures are so high. These varying theological perspectives within the literature may present change agents with a challenge as to which particular perspective to use or incorporate when implementing or instigating change. For example, attribution theory can provide insights as to the reactions people have because of the perception they may have to the causes of the events that have taken place (Bouckenooghe, 2010). Perhaps the use of this particular theory may be helpful in understanding an individual's reactions when an organisation undergoes or initiates change.

Individual difference theory may also be a useful theoretical frame for exploring individual attitudes and behaviours during change. This was identified by Madsen, Miller, and John (2005), who suggested that individuals react differently towards the same change message because reactions are based upon a number of different factors ranging from an individual's personality, to past work and life experience, as well as the culture within an organisation or the logical disposition of the individual. Even though a change message is the same, individuals react differently due to the experiences that they may have had, both professionally and privately in their lives, but also depending on their personality.

Therefore, being able to understand how individuals react to the same change message/s may assist leaders undertaking change initiatives and increase the success rate of change taking place. It would seem that people resist change being done to them, compared perhaps with taking an active role in terms of shaping and having an input in the change initiative/s, implying that if an individual's assumptions about the world they live and work is challenged, they are more likely to resist (Werther, 2003). For organisations to survive and overcome these complexities, leaders need to help build an individual's identification with the organisation. One such way would be through involvement, thus strengthening commitment (Truckenbrodt, 2000).

At the same time, leaders need to be aware of employees' or followers' attitudes to change, as the literature suggests this is key to change success (Oreg and Berson, 2011; Caldwell, Herold and Fedor, 2004). Oreg and Berson (2011) suggest there is a tendency of employees to resist the implementation of change due to change being done to individuals rather than with them.

Perhaps by encouraging individuals to take an active role to input into the shaping of the initiatives may be helpful, as employee attitudes can be influenced by policies and norms that have been shaped by the values of the leader, or leaders. Therefore, knowledge may be seen from a socially constructed and socially distributed perspective (Uhl-Bien, 2014). In other words, people (employees) make their own meaning of the unfolding change within their organisation and what it means for them if a compelling vision is not communicated accordingly.

Another aspect of leadership and resistance to change are consequences and the way in which a leader uses these, whether directly or indirectly, to sufficiently persuade employees' behaviour towards the desired behaviours for that organisation (Geller, 2003). Heimlich and Ardoin (2008) undertook a review of the literature, in which they identified a number of theories related to behaviour.

These included logical behaviourism, and informal behaviourism (liberal stimulus-response theory, radical behaviourism, relationship frame theory, theory of reasoned action, theory of planned behaviour, social cognitive theory, theory of interpersonal relations and subjective culture, and social learning theories) (Heimlich and Ardoin, 2008). In addition to the theories on behaviour, there are different concepts in which to understand behaviour that Heimlich and Ardoin (2008) identify, such as overt and covert behaviours, classical behaviourism, cognitive behaviours, emotions, attitudes and intentions, as well as discernible behaviours. There are also reflective behaviours, casuistic behaviours, rule governed behaviours, default behaviour, and rational seeming behaviours, which in particular is linked to certain identities an individual may have.

In addition to the formation of identity, an individual's personality traits, such as conscientiousness, openness, agreeableness, extraversion and neuroticism have a central role to play in their contribution towards an individual's identity (Lounsbury, Levy, Leong and Gibson, 2007). They argue that there are multiple connections between the relationship of personality traits and the sense of identity, but not purely associated to only one of the five big traits. What this is illustrating is the consistency within the theoretical literature that links identity with multiple personality connections, but also provides an indication as to how diverse these connections are. It would be sensible therefore to ensure great care is taken by the leader as to how these attitudes are shaped within the employees concerned.

A poignant point that Oreg and Berson (2011) make is that the vision a leader has for the future of an organisation can not only lower the uncertainty for the change taking place within the organisation, but decrease the likelihood of the situation being misinterpreted by individuals. Giangreco and Peccei (2005) believe that a central part of the resistance to change analysis is attitudes towards change because they view involvement and change perceptions of resistance as being key factors that have a mediating impact.

## 2.6    Leadership of change

From a leadership theory perspective, leadership behaviour can be seen as potentially a fundamental cause for the failure of change (Higgs, and Rowland, 2005). Avolio, Walumbra and Weber's (2009) research paper undertook a review of the current theory and research in leadership. They identified a number of different leadership theories, such as self-concept theory, cognitive science leadership, implicit leadership theory, complexity and traditional leadership theories, substitutes for leadership theory, authentic leadership development, LMX theory and charismatic and transformational leadership theories.

What is particularly interesting is the cognitive science leadership and the wide range of approaches that help to explain the way in which leaders and followers think and process information, which would be particularly useful to understand when it comes to understanding change.

A less understood aspect of leadership is the relational perspective, because relational leadership theory as a term is relatively new, and being able to assign a specific meaning to it is still unclear (Uhl-Bien, 2006), thus, the essential nature of leadership as a relationship is less understood (Cunliffe and Eriksen, 2011). Cunliffe and Eriksen (2011, p.1434) suggest that relational leadership is "*not a theory or model of leadership*", but rather a way of viewing who leaders are in comparison to other people, and the way in which leaders may interact with others "*within the complexity of experience*".

This suggests that relational leadership is an interconnected relationship with a wide range of people, and being able to recognise this is important. However, the term relational can be viewed from differing perspectives such as: entities, subject-object, or even socially constructed, or socially distributed (Uhl-Bien, 2006; Cunliffe and Eriksen, 2011). From this particular perspective, understanding how individuals form their organisational world view from relationships with others, particularly leaders, may provide new insights into the mechanisms at play between reactance to change through to change outcomes. Hinojosa McCauley Randolph-Seng and Gardner (2014) argue that "*relationship specific attachment styles*" can develop between a leader and a follower during times of uncertainty, which the literature suggests is caused by change.

A leader in such times would provide support, security and comfort to followers. Attachment styles may be influenced by past historical events with other people and formed by these relationships (Jones et al., 2008). Therefore, it is important to maintain employee (or follower) engagement for change initiatives to succeed. Having a follower who is actively engaged means that the follower would put more effort in completing the tasks necessary for the change to be successfully implemented, as there would be a sense of belonging to the organisation (Appelbaum et al., 2017). Change success or failure for organisations, "*can be attributed to the power of relationships, and not to the strategy, systems or processes*" (Weymes, 2002, p.320). Weymes (2002) also argues that having an "*inspirational dream*" that is adopted by all within an organisation can be powerful in developing shared values and vision, can aid trust, and commitment in order to make that passionate dream a reality, as passion can help in binding people harmoniously and closely due to its contagious nature.

From a social exchange theory perspective, if an organisation adopts positive practices in the treatment of employees, then employees are more likely to respond in kind, by displaying positive attitudes in terms of their support (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). This is an important consideration or factor during times of organisational change (Fuchs and Prouska, 2014), and building high-quality relationships (Ilies et al., 2007). From a perceived organisational support theory perspective, if followers felt obligations to care (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, 1986) for the organisation for which they work in terms of the organisation's welfare and achieving the objectives, then favourable outcomes should ensue, such as increased job satisfaction and "*increased affective commitment*" (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002, p.699). Fuchs and Proucha (2014) suggest that if a positive experience of change is to be achieved from employees, then the organisation must play its part in terms of providing the necessary level of support needed to reinforce this positivity when the employees evaluate how the overall experience of change was for them.

In a similar vein, Abrell-Vogel and Rowold (2014), allude to the fact that the affective behaviours of leaders, for example being supportive and caring towards follower's, might have a positive impact upon them in terms of relationship building and attitudes, such as commitment to the change taking place.

### 2.6.1    Leadership behaviours

The generally accepted view within the literature is that a leader's behaviour can influence resistance and commitment to change with their followers, therefore a leader's behaviour is "*crucial*" during organisational change (Jones et al., 2008; Miller, 2001; Jones and van de Ven, 2016; van der Voet, Kuipers and Groenveld, 2016). This suggests it's evident there is a relationship between these factors, but what is unclear from the literature is the mechanisms at work that relate a leader's behaviour to followers' attitudes (Giangreco and Peccei, 2005), and how the relationship between leaders and followers' impact upon change outcomes.

What has also yet to be explored within the literature are the mechanisms that enable involvement with the change. For example, Behrendt, Matz and Goritz (2017) argue that leaders should encourage individuals to contribute to the progress of the group based upon their values, personal interests, or competencies, and at the same time permit autonomy and the ability to influence collective decisions. Behrendt et al. suggest that a relations-oriented leadership behaviour not only increases engagement within groups, but increases contributions that are appropriate at an individual level, thereby promoting cooperation.

Within the change literature there are a lot of assertions that leaders are important in terms of change implementation, but there is little empirical work that explores the way in which leaders' behaviours impact on change (Dinh et al., 2014; Walumbwa et al., 2010; Aiken and Keller, 2003; Zoller and Fairhurst, 2007). However, Higgs and Rowland (2005, p.121) suggest that the way in which a leader behaves, may be a "*root cause of change failure*". Leaders are fundamental in driving change and in being a role model to others. Their particular style of leadership can impact upon followers' change appraisal due to the relational nature of the interaction between the leader and follower that grows over time through these interactions (Holten and Brenner, 2015). Behavioural literature suggests that the way in which leaders behave can have a positive effect on the way in which employees commit to the change being instigated, therefore a leader's feelings toward the impending change may directly influence the attitudes of the employees faced with the change (Abrell-Vogel and Rowold, 2014).

One area that has received little attention is around followership and its impact on leadership, as follower attitudes have tended to be treated as outputs instead of inputs in terms of outcomes of the leadership process (Avolio, Walumbwa and Weber, 2009). The literature suggests that leaders do not take sufficient account of the central role that individuals play in contributing to the change process (Giangreco and Peccei, 2005; Choi, 2011).

Leaders can play their part in preparing followers for change, namely in creating readiness for change, but by taking into account experiences followers have on the immediate change situation, rather than from the master plan they may have in place (Choi, 2011; Madsen, Miller and John, 2005). Choi (2011) argues that the change situation and experiences of the individual help shape attitudes towards the change, due to their perception of reality, rather than by objective reality. Perhaps an argument arises here that by building high-quality social exchanges, consequences may arise that are of a positive nature between the leader and follower (Khan and Malik, 2017; Ilies et al., 2007; Martin et al., 2016; Dulebohn et al., 2012). Thus, encouraging both the follower and leader to interact with each other openly in order to plug any holes in knowledge that may be needed for both change implementation, and the creation of transparency between the leader and follower (Alavi and Gill, 2017). This would suggest that a leader's behaviour does have an impact on follower attitudes to change, and in turn, on its implementation.

Within the leadership literature there is the suggestion that the way in which leaders behave can have a positive effect on the way in which employees commit to the change that is being instigated, therefore a leader's feelings toward the impending change may directly influence the attitudes of the employees faced with change (Abrell-Vogel and Rowold, 2014). They argue that for leaders to become or be successful role models, they need to have developed a positive bond to change-taking, as well as being aware of their own change commitment. This would suggest that if a leader does not react positively or embrace the changes taking place, the outcome to the change initiative or transformational change is likely to result in failure, but also in increased resistance from the employees in terms of negative attitudes towards the change. Abrell-Vogel and Rowold 2014 also suggest that leaders need to ensure that employees are supported individually, and relationships built whether or not there is or not major change taking place, so that employees know that in challenging times of change, they are secure in the knowledge of support being there when they need it.

If an organisation is looking after their employees in a positive way, employees are more likely to respond in kind by displaying positive attitudes in terms of their support, which is important during times of organisational change. Fuchs and Proucha (2014) make the argument that for employees to experience and incorporate change into their "*cognitive change schemata*" positively, then employees need to feel that adequate support has been received from their organisation. This perspective is supported by Abrell-Vogel and Rowold (2014) who suggest attitudes towards commitment to change may have a positive impact if a supportive and caring relationship is being built with followers at an individual level.

If leaders are resistant to change themselves in their attitudes towards individuals, then individuals would respond accordingly in terms of their own resistance towards the change. There would appear to be a link between leadership commitment and employee commitment to change, verses a leader's resistance to change and an employee's commitment to change.

There is the view that transformational organisation change is often resisted by leaders out of fear, thereby posing a risk to the organisation with its planned or unanticipated change (Bruckman, 2008). It could be argued that the response or action taken by the leader or members of the organisation to the unfolding events taking place within the organisation can speak volumes in terms of the type of "*beliefs and attitudes*" that is expected by the members of an organisation (Oreg and Berson, 2011). For those who have responsibility for an organisation's strategy and policy understanding, the consequences of decisions made by senior leaders as to the beliefs and attitudes of their charges is of particular importance (Oreg and Berson, 2011).

For leaders, understanding the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators and consequences is important, particularly if change is to beneficial, as they can assist with an employee's belief that the role they performed within the organisation is important, and thereby provide "*indicators of personal success*" (Geller, 2002).

Having an understanding of psychological issues faced by employees within an organisation will assist leaders by enabling them to take "*corrective action*" in the reduction of resistance (Appelbaum et al., 2015). Appelbaum et al. (2015, part1, p.76) go on to state: "*Such leaders affect the organisation's readiness as the willingness of the organisation's members to accept change*". They also allude to fact that depending on the environment of an organisation, the way in which a leader adapts their style can indirectly affect followers' (employees') commitment, thus reducing the resistance to the change. Therefore, leaders should be directly involved with the essence of change to enable this lowering of resistance but also to regain the confidence as being a credible leader.

This suggests that the leader should be fully visible during the change and engaging fully with people within the organisation. If resistance is being demonstrated by individuals, there may be good reason, and so a leader must carefully consider the reasons for the resistance being displayed, and ascertain the merits behind them. By listening to the concerns of individuals and acting accordingly, it could reduce the level of resistance in the longer term and for following change initiatives because legitimacy has been shown to ease individuals' concerns for changes taking place.

At the same time, leaders are key to successful change and Miller (2001) identifies a number of character or behavioural traits, such as: personal adaptability, strong beliefs of the success that will be had in the change being undertaken, and focus on the cost of failure as opposed to benefits realisation. A reason for this is perhaps they have learnt from experience of past failures and are acutely aware of the impact that failure can bring. Miller (2001) suggests that in times of turbulence and stress, leaders need to be highly adaptable due to the tremendous demands that are placed upon them. Leaders with low adaptability were more likely to block change due to having not made the transition at a personal level that is often associated with major change. Thereby implying that with successful change, leaders are the ones who are not distracted in their quest or pursuit for change, as they are the ones who are driving the change forward.

Leaders within organisations often neglect the key role individuals play in the change process when implementing change, thus employee's attitudes towards change are formed by the experiences and situation they find themselves in (Choi, 2011). Thus, by neglecting individuals in the change process, resistance increases, perhaps in the form of not cooperating, or undermining the change implementation (Peccei, Giangreco and Sebastiano, 2011). If leaders were to include individuals, then perhaps the individual's perception of change benefits may increase, thus lowering resistance and resulting in a more positive change attitude that may result in an increased commitment to change (Giangreco and Peccei, 2005), therefore enhancing or increasing the chances of change success for the change initiatives. It would be sensible therefore for leaders to understand how these attitudes have taken shape or been formed by employees or followers. A poignant point that Oreg and Berson (2011, p.636) make is that the vision a leader has for the future of an organisation can not only "*reduce uncertainty*" for the change within the organisation, but "*leaves less room for individual interpretations of the situation*". This implies people make their own meaning in terms of the unfolding change within their organisation and what it means for them if a "*compelling vision*" has not been conveyed or communicated to them.

Another aspect of leadership relates to leaders being conscious of their own level of commitment when it comes to change, particularly if they are to be seen as successful role models, they need to adopt positive position towards the change (Abrell-Vogel and Rowold, 2014). This suggests that if a leader does not react positively or embrace the changes taking place, then the change outcome is likely to result in failure and increased resistance from the employees in terms of similar negative attitudes towards the change.

Leadership behaviours and resistance to change are seen to be key fundamental stumbling blocks to successful change within organisations (Furst and Cable, 2008; Higgs and Rowland, 2005; Mehta, Maheshwari and Sharma, 2014). Both leaders and followers have their part to play in change implementation and are interconnected through the relationship. It can be argued that in circumstances in which the relationship is misaligned, the likelihood of change failure increases (Ford and Ford, 2010). Furthermore, followers may bring with them negative experiences of previous change, which based on this review can be argued to increase a follower's resistance, or cause followers to have adverse reactance to change. By acknowledging and being supportive of followers, and allowing them to engage through their involvement with change and building high-quality relationships with them, there is a greater chance of achieving commitment to the change (Giangreco and Peccei, 2005; Erwin and Garman, 2010; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Thus, reducing resistance and increasing the likelihood of positive and successful change outcomes.

Change outcomes have been discussed in such a way that they have been included within the body of this literature review. The reason for this was to encapsulate a range of factors that contribute to particular outcomes of change, whether they are positive or negative, therefore a separate section relating to change outcomes has not been included. The leader-member exchange literature has illustrated how the quality of relationships between leaders and followers can help to determine critical outcomes (Dulebohn et al., 2012). This is particularly important for not only the success or failure of the implementation of change, but for future change an organisation plans to implement, and for commitment towards change (van der Voet, Kuipers and Groeneveld, 2016).

Furthermore, the external environment and the market in which organisations operate in are seen as being crucial for not only organisational outcomes, but also individual ones, for example leadership styles have been shown to affect an organisation's financial performance or innovation (Oc, 2018). Perhaps this suggests that leaders' decisions and influence upon others are seen to be influential in determining the fate of their organisation (Dinh et al., 2014).

## 2.7    Leader-member exchange (LMX)

The reasoning behind focusing on LMX, is the crucial role it plays in helping to increase our understanding of the mechanisms that link both leader behaviours and attitudes, and those of followers towards change, with outcomes. For example, the literature suggests that leaders do not take sufficient account of the central role individuals play in contributing to the change process (Giangreco and Peccei 2005; Choi, 2011). Furthermore, the literature suggests that LMX affects many outcomes, for example performance, the quality of LMX relationship (Martin et al., 2016), turnover intensions, satisfaction of working conditions, organisational citizen behaviour, attitudinal variables and organisational commitment (Lord, Gatti and Chui, 2016; Ilies et al., 2007). Therefore, how a leader and follower interpret their relevance within the LMX relationship can have some bearing on their behaviours and attitudes, thus leading to the suggestion that LMX relationships may be at the centre as to how an organisation actually functions (Dulebohn et al., 2012).

It is generally seen that LMX is an example of the broader relational leadership theory, where both parties in the exchange bring something of value (Brower, Schoorman and Tan, 2000) and therefore, from a relational leadership perspective, the quality of relationships between a leader and a follower is "*crucial*" in terms of the experiences followers have with the work they do (Boer et al., 2016).

Moreover, understanding the relationship between the leader and follower or "*employment relationship*" has an important part to play in terms of promoting employee acceptance and involvement. Thus, it is crucial for encouraging commitment to change (Parish, Cadwaller and Busch, 2008), highlighting the importance of having an understanding of relational leadership theory. Furthermore, LMX is seen to be a *"dyadic model of relationship quality between leaders and followers"* (Gooty and Yammarino, 2016, p.916; Martin et al., 2017; Lunenburg, 2010; Graen and Uhl-bien, 1995). In other words, leaders develop a differing exchange relationship with each of their subordinates (Anand, Vidyarthi and Rolnicki, 2017).

One of the central aspects of LMX theory relates to how leaders adopt differing approaches in the treatment of their followers, and this helps determine the quality of the relationship between the leader and the follower (Martin et al., 2016). The LMX literature frequently refers to two types of quality LMX relationships: 'high' and 'low' (Martin et al., 2017; Tsai et al., 2017; Lord, Gatti and Chui, 2016; Dulebohn et al., 2012). Low LMX relationships are often associated with a focus on contractual employment arrangements and task completion (Martin et al., 2016), whereas high LMX relationships focus on "*engendering feelings of mutual obligation and reciprocity*" and are inclined to be "*more social in nature*" (Dulebohn et al., 2012, p.1717).

These high-quality relationships include aspects of obligation, mutual respect, loyalty, high trust, and interaction (Martin et al., 2017). Martin et al. (2016) suggest that the term 'leader follower' is associated with expectations of how a leader and a follower should behave, or conform. Interestingly, trust is central to the construct of LMX (Martin et al., 2016), but this should not come as a surprise as there has to be an element of trust from both sides when building relationships, as the level of position a leader holds produces different outcomes in terms of trust.

However, trust brings with it many challenges, for example a leader may trust their followers but the follower may not trust the leader and vice versa, perhaps based on differing perceptions, or attitudes the follower may have developed because of the leader's behaviour (Thundiyil et al., 2015; Zhu and Akhtar, 2014; Brower, Schoorman and Tan, 2000). This suggests there is a reciprocal relationship that develops between a leader and follower, but in terms of understanding the mechanisms that underpin behaviour, Heimlich and Ardoin (2008) suggest that exploring the cognitive and affective components is important as these are practically inseparable. For example, the follower's beliefs or feelings about the behaviour or attitude of that leader, or towards a particular issue that may be taking place within the organisation, may be either positive or negative, depending on the information held by an individual.

If promises were to be broken by leaders then trust can be eroded, resulting in the possibility of less trusting employees (Kannan-Narasimhan and Lawrence, 2012), which could have a bearing on social exchanges and perceived organisational support (Nienaber, Hofeditz and Romeike, 2015; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002; Martin et al., 2016; Ilies et al., 2007). In addition, Martin et al. (2016) suggest that LMX can affect outcomes but also point to the possibility of a recursive relationship in which outcomes may affect the quality of the LMX relationship. At the same time, it is how the characteristics and perceptions of both the leader and follower are combined in which "*critical outcomes"* are determined, therefore, the quality of this relationship comes into play (Dulebohn et al., 2012).

The quality of the leader-member exchange relationship may also have some bearing on both affective and normative commitment to the organisation (Allen and Meyer, 1996), as the leader can encourage and convince followers to be committed to the organisation. In addition, in high-quality LMX relationships, followers may be "*attached to their leader"* from a loyalty perspective (Dulebohn et al., 2012, p.1727). At the same time, followers may behave in either a positive or negative way because of how they may be feeling or thinking about the change, thus characterises an individual's overall attitude, which then may influence the outcome of the change either as being successful or a failure (van der Smissen, Schalk and Freese, 2013).

The leader-member exchange literature suggests that LMX affects outcomes, for example performance, but also outcomes may impact on the leader-member exchange relationship quality (Martin et al., 2016). Giangreco and Peccei (2005) suggested that there were strong indicators that an individual's attitude and level of resistance to change had some bearing on change initiative outcomes depending on the perceptions of the individual, namely, would they gain or lose something personally because of the change.

There are many outcomes that are affected by the LMX relationship, such as turnover intentions, satisfaction of the working conditions, organisational citizen behaviour, attitudinal variables, or organisational commitment (Lord, Gatti and Chui, 2016; Ilies et al., 2007). Therefore, LMX has a crucial role to play in understanding the mechanisms at work between the leader's behaviour and followers' attitudes to change, on change outcomes, as that may be critical in developing and forming a positive, high-quality relationship. Therefore, if leaders themselves are resistant to change in their attitudes, then individuals may respond accordingly in terms of their own resistance towards the change (Zoller and Fairhurst, 2007; Erwin and Garman, 2010). However, these previous experiences of change from a follower perspective can help a leader to build knowledge, and offer valuable insights as to why change may have gone so badly wrong on previous occasions (Smollan, 2011; Bruckman, 2008; Ford and Ford, 2010).

A number of criticisms exist within the LMX literature ranging from how LMX is measured, to failing to "*conceptualize the social context in which leaders and followers are embedded*" (Avolio, Walumbwa and Weber, 2009, p.434). Although Avolio et al. (2009, p.433) highlighted that LMX research has been extended from looking at "*antecedents and consequences*" to looking at the "*quality of the relationship between leader's and followers*" in terms of performance. Furthermore, Uhl-Bien (2006) suggests LMX has enhanced opportunities to ask legitimate questions around the relationship between leaders and followers, in order to offer guidance in terms of directing leadership research.

How a leader and follower interpret their relevance within the LMX relationship can have some bearing on their behaviours, thus leading to the suggestion that LMX relationships may be at the centre to how an organisation function's (Dulebohn et al., 2012). It is relationships and not just processes, strategies or systems that have the ability to cause change success or failure for organisations (Weymes, 2002). Weymes (2002) argues that having a dream that is inspirational and adopted by all within an organisation can be powerful in developing shared values and vision, and can aid trust and develop commitment in order to make that passionate dream a reality, as passion can help in binding people harmoniously and closely due to its contagious nature.

What has emerged from this literature review is that within the change literature, there have been many assertions made about how leaders are important in terms of change implementation. However, there appears to be little empirical work that explores the way in which leaders' behaviours and attitudes actually impact on change (Dinh et al., 2014; Walumbwa et al., 2010; Aiken and Keller, 2003; Zoller and Fairhurst, 2007), or in how change may directly impact a leader's behaviour or attitude. Furthermore, relationships and the quality of these relations have an important role to play in terms of commitment and resistance towards change, and upon change outcomes.

Having completed this literature review, the following series of gaps had been identified.

- When individuals are neglected in the change progress does resistance actually increase, and if this were to be the case, what types of resistance is this applicable to?
- Understanding how individuals form their world view from relationships with leaders may provide new insights into the mechanisms between reactance to change through to change outcomes.
- Leader-member exchange is associated with affecting a number of change outcomes, such as commitment, but there is an opportunity to explore whether other types of outcomes are affected by LMX when change takes place, within the public sector.

- Another gap that emerged from this literature review was in connection with the power of relationships in determining the success or failure of change, and whether this is actually the case.

Having identified these gaps, this led the researcher to ask the following rhetorical questions.

- Does the LMX relationship impact upon commitment, and if so, how, and why is this the case?
- Does commitment change over the period when change is being implemented, and if so, how, and why is this the case?
- Why are individuals' previous experiences of change an important consideration when implementing change?
- Why and how is involvement in change an important consideration when implementing change?
- Does the nature of change contribute to how an individual reacts towards change taking place?
- Are employee attitudes and behaviours reflected or defined by their level of resistance?
- Does a leader's behaviour and attitude have an impact upon followers' attitudes and behaviours, and if so, why might this be the case?
- What are the actual behaviours and attitudes of leaders from a qualitative and change oriented perspective?
- Are there other types of change outcomes that are impacted by LMX, and if so, what are they, and why do they have an impact?

The following methodology chapter explains how the researcher set out to address many of these questions through using a multiple case study approach, and the philosophical underpinnings that informed the approach taken when conducting and analysing the data.

# Chapter 3    Methodology

## 3.1    Introduction to chapter

Following on from the literature review and the identification of gaps and questions that emerged from undertaking that review, the following key research questions underpinned the design of this research methodology and its implementation.

Q) What are the actual behaviour and attitudes of leaders engaged in implementing change?

Q) Are individuals' previous experiences of change an important consideration when implementing change?

Q) Does a leader's behaviour and attitude have an impact upon followers' behaviours and attitudes during the implementation of change?

Q) Are there different types of commitment that change over the period of change implementation?

Q) What does the LMX relationship impact upon?

Q) Does the nature of change impact upon the LMX relationship?

This chapter discusses the philosophical perspectives of qualitative research and those of the researcher, and then explores and justifies the research design and data collection methods. The remainder of this chapter examines how data was analysed and coded, and the ethical considerations and implications associated with this research. Finally, a brief summary will be given at the end of the chapter of the key points.

## 3.2    Epistemology and ontology

The researcher's epistemology, ontology and axiological perspectives has shaped this research, as there were a number of assumptions made in terms of **epistemology,** and how knowledge can be found (Myers, 2016; Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). The researcher took an interpretative approach to understanding the respondents' differing perspectives. Applying the critical incident technique (Vakola, 2016; Mayhew, 1956; Flanagan, 1954; Saunders et al 2016) allowed respondents to tell their story from their particular perspective.

Furthermore, face-to-face interviews helped the researcher to lessen the distance between himself and that being researched. The critical incident technique will be discussed a little later within this chapter.

The interpretative approach was shaped by the **ontology**, namely, what is the reality of nature (Yilmaz, 2013). The researcher's view is that respondents' reality is not only subjective but multiple, therefore the researcher used the actual words of the respondents through the use of quotations and themes. Furthermore, the researcher told the respondents' story through differing perspectives, for example from a leader, semi-leader and follower world view, but also within differing disciplines such as academic and administration perspectives. The term semi-leader refers to an individual who, although being in a leadership position with followers under them, still reports directly to a leader, for example a team manager reporting to the department manager. From an **axiology** perspective, the role of values, and acknowledging that biases are present is important (Yilmaz, 2013), as such, the researcher "*assumes that knowledge is not independent of the knower, but socially constructed and that reality is neither static nor fixed*" (Yilmaz, 2013, p.317).

There are a number of underlying philosophical assumptions within a qualitative research design, such as interpretative or critical epistemologies (Saunders et al., 2016; Myers, 2013). From a critical perspective, researchers lay out their assumptions about their investigation from the very beginning, thereby ensuring no one is confused about either the political or epistemological baggage a researcher brings to the research field (Karatas-Ozkan and Murphy, 2010). Furthermore, critical researchers make assumptions that "*social reality is historically constituted and that it is produced and reproduced by people*" (Myers, 2013, p.43).

Another consideration is within-case study research (discussed a little later in this chapter) in that it allows for a number of different epistemological orientations, such as a relativist or interpretivist, compared to a realist perspective (Yin, 2014). A relativist's perspective is that both the researcher and the object / subject being researched are "*interactively linked*", so that as the research proceeds, the findings will be literally created (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p.110). From an ontology perspective, relativists view realities as "*apprehensible, in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature, and that constructions are alterable, as are their associated reality*" (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, pp.110-111). From a realist perspective the assumption is reality exists but is only "*imperfectly apprehensible*" due to the intellectual mechanism of humans being flawed. In other words, "*do the findings from the research fit with pre-existing knowledge?*" (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p.110).

The assumption is that social reality is historically constituted and produced and reproduced by people, and can be constrained by numerous types of denominations, such as cultural or social, and so critical researchers set out to challenge those beliefs or values that may be prevailing or taken for granted by those being studied (Myers, 2013).

It can be argued that often business situations are perceived as being complex but also unique, due do particular circumstances taking place within (Saunders et al., 2016), but also individuals would come together "*at a specific time to create a unique social phenomenon*" (Saunders and Lewis, 2012, p.107).

After careful consideration of the alternative perspectives as discussed earlier, the researcher felt that an interpretative approach was the most suitable and relevant paradigm to use, particularly as this research overlaps with the field of organisational behaviour and human resource management (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). Furthermore, an interpretative strategy is well suited for qualitative research on leadership, such as organisational symbolism and sensemaking (Bryman, 2004). From an interpretative perspective, attempts are made to not only offer interpretative explanations, but to understand these subjective realities that are meaningful to the respondents who have taken part in this research (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2014). Another consideration is that due to the complexity within the leadership literature, an interpretative approach attempts to account for this by collecting what is meaningful to the researcher's respondents (Saunders et al., 2016). The researcher was very mindful of their role, in other words as an outside observer and being involved through participant observation. This was an important consideration when interpreting the data, due to not only the "*complex human process*", but also as the data collection and analysis involved the "*subjectivity of the researcher*" (Walsham, 1995, p.77).

Therefore, common sense *"knowledge rather than ideas must be the central focus for the sociology of knowledge. It is precisely this knowledge than constitutes the fabric of meanings without which no society could exist. The sociology of knowledge therefore must concern itself with the social construction of reality"* (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, p.27). In terms of constructed realities, how people understand or know the world in which they exist (live) comes from conversations passed on by others, rather than direct experiences. Thus being able to distinguish between hearsay and the actual experiences of individuals is critical for interpreting the meaning of those being interviewed (Ford, Ford and McNamara, 2002).

Qualitative research designs assume that knowledge is not independent of the knower, but socially constructed and that reality is neither static nor fixed. The reason for this is that there are multiple realities that different cultural groups construct on the basis of their world view or value system, and there are multiple interpretations or perspectives on any event or situation (Yilmaz, 2013).

To understand the phenomenon being explored requires the researcher to become the research instrument, thereby the researcher must be able to observe behaviour and interview people face-to-face. Furthermore, qualitative researchers are inclined to believe that the social world is complex (Bennett and Elman, 2006).

The strength of qualitative data is its "*richness and holism*" and has tremendous potential for revealing complexity within research as Miles and Humberman (1994, p.10) state:

> "*Qualitative data, with their emphasis on people's 'lived experience', are fundamentally well suited for locating the meanings people place on the events, processes, and structures of their lives [and] for connecting those meanings to the social world around them*".

There are a number of ways in answering whether knowledge exists, "*dogmatism (yes), agnosticism (no) or scepticism (maybe)*" (Gummesson, 2000, p.7). Case study research can be used to contribute to knowledge about individuals, or organisations, and helps to address the desire to understand complex social phenomena, and therefore being able to focus on the case in hand would allow for retaining a holistic and real-world perspective (Yin, 2014).

## 3.3    Research design

The researcher has adopted an interpretative approach using a case-based method, and therefore assumes that "*access to reality is only through social construction of shared meanings*" (Myers, 2013, p.39). It is therefore imperative to try and make sense of those meanings within any given situation in which people find themselves, in order to understand that reality, due to the differing interpretations people assign to those situations.

In conjunction with the interpretation from respondents, the researcher has included their own interpretation of the phenomenon being explored, thereby providing the evidence to support these differing interpretations. An interpretative philosophy has frequently been associated with qualitative research. The reason for this is that researchers have to make

sense of the subjective and socially constructed meanings of the phenomenon being studied from the perspectives of their respondents within the research.

It is this reliance on social interaction that makes qualitative research elastic, complex and varied, compared to the data associated with quantitative research (Saunders et al., 2016). Furthermore, from a social constructivist perspective concerning relational leadership, reality is seen to be socially and culturally influenced, thus the focus is on interpreting this social reality that emerges from this interaction *(*Endres and Weibler, 2017*)*.

Through using an interpretative approach, the assumption is that "*knowledge is gained or at least filtered, through social constructions, such as language, consciousness and shared meanings*" (Rowlands, 2005, p.81).

The researcher discounted taking a phenomenological approach due to not undertaking focus groups or trying to understand particular group experiences, but instead concentrated on individual experiences of change from both a leader and follower perspective. Furthermore, it is commonly used in clinical psychology, that has specific procedures and methods associated with it. In a similar vein an Ethnographic approach was discounted as the researcher was not looking specifically at processes, culture or long-term fieldwork.

### 3.3.1    Multi-case and interviewing

A cross-sectional interpretative multiple case study design was undertaken within three UK Universities because this allowed the building of theory from case studies as Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) suggest that more than one case is needed to create theoretical constructs or propositions that are rich empirical descriptions or particular instances of the phenomenon, based upon differing data sources.

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken where both leaders and non-leaders were asked to recall and describe: specific change events in which they were directly involved or affected by change, how they reacted to change, and the impact this had on them, in terms of their attitude and commitment to change within their institution.

The attractiveness of using the critical incident technique is its "*flexibility*" as Flanagan (1954, p.355) states:

> *"Its two basic principles may be summarized as follows: (a) reporting of facts regarding*
> *behavior is preferable to the collection of interpretations, ratings, and opinions based on*
> *general impressions; (b) reporting should be limited to those behaviors which, according*
> *to competent observers, make a significant contribution to the activity".*

Although the researcher had conducted interviews before, having open-ended questions and ready probes not only helped the researcher focus on what the respondent was saying, but also with structuring the interviews (Charmaz, 2006). This type of interview provides a great deal of information, which aims to acquire more insight into an issue (van der Velde, Jansen and Anderson, 2004), but at the same times allows for the omission of some questions, and the flexibility to include additional questions as the interview progresses (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Furthermore, using open-ended questions in the interview meant respondents were not limited in what they discussed in relation to their experiences (Jones et al., 2008) within their organisation, or with their differing relationships.

Within the literature, the length of interviews varies, for example Higgs and Rowland's (2011) interviews lasted between 60–90 minutes, Shum Bove and Auh (2008) 45–90 minutes, and Randall and Proctor (2008) 90 minutes. The researcher allowed up to 75 minutes to conduct each interview. The tables within ***Appendix 2*** provide a full breakdown of the length of each interview within each of these three organisations. The interview protocol in Appendix 1 was followed when collecting data, as this "*reinforces reliability*" (Shum, Bove and Auh, 2008). The researcher (interviewer) had to be mindful of their own disability, namely, poor working and short-term memory. The researcher (interviewer) decided to develop a series of semi-structured interview-style questions that could act as prompts. Again, these were linked to a proposed conceptual framework (see Chapter 1). These prompts or development of semi-structured interview style questions were put in place as an *'aid de memoire'*, in case the researcher needed to use them as a point of reference, to help guide and steer the conversation as and when necessary.

This additional preparation by the researcher to manage and to take account of his disability in the preparation process for conducting interviews was useful. The researcher incorporated a clarification sheet within the interview protocol, to provide an additional opportunity to capture data in terms of clarifying some of the responses from the respondents. This consisted of ticking the boxes that were most appropriate for the respondent (see ***Appendix 3***). Examples of how this collected data was collated and presented is illustrated in ***Appendices 26, 27 and 28***.

As the interviews were being recorded, the clarification sheet provided an opportunity for respondents to elaborate on the responses they had already given, or for the respondents to provide some fresh insights to perhaps withheld information earlier in the interview, but also, if there had been some responses that needed further clarification. The researcher asked the respondents to explain why they had ticked the boxes they had. The data, once collected, was incorporated within a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and each organisation was colour coded.

A rag colour coding system was also used for attitudes towards change (pre, during and after change) such as, positive, neutral or negative, and the level of involvement, (pre, during and after change), and whether this was none, some, or a high level of involvement in change.

The researcher also made field notes in terms of observations during each interview, and as he walked around the organisation and its campuses. These field notes were typed up alongside each transcript.

The researcher manually transcribed 34 audio recordings from conducted interviews with the aid of transcription software called Voice Base. The quality of the transcripts varied using Voice Base, that is, the software in most cases didn't easily pick up the words of the respondents, particularly if English was the second language of the respondent. This resulted in the researcher manually writing the transcript using the original recording. Although some time had been saved, using Voice Base was still a laborious process. In addition, seven of the longest interview audio recordings that were between 51–70 minutes in duration were sent off to an external transcription company that had been recommended by the researcher's institution. When the transcripts were returned from the external company, the transcripts were manually checked with the original recording. The quality of the transcription was an accurate reflection of the original audio recording. Once the transcripts had been written up these were emailed to the corresponding respondent for validity purposes, and confirmation that the transcript was a true account of the conversation that had taken place. Amendments to the transcripts were undertaken based upon the feedback from the respondents, and sensitive / identifiable data was removed from the transcripts such as faculty, or school name, or name of the university.

### 3.3.2    Sampling: Organisation and participants

### 3.3.2.1    Organisations

The researcher used a simple purposive sampling approach when selecting potential universities to be case studies, for example, universities had to be either in the process of commencing change or were currently undergoing change. A snowball sampling approach was taken to aid the selection of the institutions due to difficultly in identifying eligible institutions (Saunders et al, 2016). An opportunity arose in which the researcher approached the Vice-Chancellor of their institution to see if they knew of any institutions that met the researcher's criteria and would be willing to participate. The Vice-Chancellor suggested a number of universities and provided some contact names. The researcher approached those universities that met the above criteria and commenced data collection.

Case study research can be used in order to contribute to knowledge about individuals, or organisations, and helps to address the desire to understand complex social phenomena, and therefore, being able to focus on the case in hand would allow for the retaining of a holistic and real-world perspective (Yin, 2014). *"A Case study is an in-depth inquiry into a topic or phenomenon within its real-life setting, the case in case study research may refer to a person, group, an organisation, a change process, or an event"* (Saunders et al., 2016, p.184). Furthermore, a case study can be interpretative in nature, and therefore relies on both interpretive and constructivist epistemology in terms of social reality being socially constructed (Myers, 2013). A narrative inquiry approach could have been taken, as it also incorporates an interpretative and social constructive perspective, however the focus of the case study was not predominantly on the individuals and their stories, but rather on the issue with the individual case that had been selected in order to understand an issue (Creswell et al., 2007).

Case study research involves building an in-depth contextual understanding of the case, using multiple data sources, rather than just individuals as per narrative research (Creswell et al., 2007). Furthermore, grounded theory was discounted as it avoids using a priori codes (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). As the researcher had a priori codes contained within a proposed conceptual framework, as illustrated in Chapter 1, grounded theory was not selected. Coding will be discussed a little later in this chapter.

As this research is addressing the 'how' and 'why' type explanatory questions, the case study approach was appropriate. Also being able to study the particular phenomenon within natural surroundings, namely going to the participants in their own environment, also added weight to undertaking a case study (van der Velde, Jansen and Anderson, 2004). Thus, case studies aim to understand information contextually by drawing from in-

depth multiple data sources. The strength of case studies is its "*ability to deal with a full variety of evidence, such as documents, artefacts, interviews and observations, beyond what might be available in a conventional historical study*" (Yin, 2014, p.12).

There is also the prospect of novel theory being generated (Eisenhardt, 1989, p.546), which has promise in terms of its empirical validity. Another advantage of using a case study approach is that data can be collected in different ways about the same phenomenon, as well as provide: "*deeper insights into the ways in which people and departments respond to each other, have mutual expectations about each other and accommodate their behaviour to each other*" (van der Velde, Jansen and Anderson, 2004, p.79).

Although there is the disadvantage of case studies that the results are "*not statistically generalisable*"*,* due to the validity of the "specific situation of the individuals who are being studied" (van der Velde, Jansen and Anderson, 2004, p.79), as the research is focussing on the change experience of individuals, the statistical generalisability becomes less important. There are weaknesses that exist, for example, the theory generated may be detailed richly, but may lack the "*simplicity of overall perspectives*", or the theory may be "*narrow and idiosyncratic*" (Eisenhardt, 1989, p.547), however, this can be overcome by obtaining a variety of perspectives from different positions and strands within organisations.

The strength of case studies is its "*ability to deal with a full variety of evidence, such as documents, artefacts, interviews and observations, beyond what might be available in a conventional historical study*" (Yin, 2014, p.12). The case study allows for a number of different epistemological orientations, such as a relativist or interpretivist compared to a realist perspective (Yin, 2014). Another advantage of using a case study approach is that data can be collected in different ways about same "*phenomenon*", as well as providing "*deeper insights into the ways in which people and departments respond to each other, have mutual expectations about each other and accommodate their behaviour to each other*" (van der Velde, Jansen and Anderson, 2004, p.79).

The disadvantage in using a case study strategy is that the conclusion of the research being carried out "*cannot be based entirely on the interviews as a source of information, as the research would be transformed into an open-ended survey and not a case study*" (Yin, 2014, p.92), and that the results are "*not statistically generalizable*"*,* due to the validity of the "*specific situation of the individuals who are being studied*" (van der Velde, Jansen and Anderson, 2004, p.79). The reason for using a multiple case study design is that research can be used in order to contribute to knowledge about individuals, or organisations, and helps to address the "*desire to understand complex social phenomena,*

*and therefore being able to focus on the case in hand would allow for the retaining of a holistic and real-world perspective*" (Yin, 2014, p.4).

In order to build theory from case studies, more than one case is needed to be able to create theoretical constructs or propositions, and thus are rich empirical descriptions of particular instances of a phenomenon, based on a variety of differing data sources (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Furthermore, being able to study the particular phenomenon within natural surroundings, that is, going to the participants in their own environment, adds weight to undertaking a case study (van der Velde, Jansen and Anderson, 2004). Each interviewee (where appropriate) was asked to think of a couple of change stories, in which they had been involved / or had experienced.

This research adopted a case-based approach, using an interpretative perspective that focused on the social construction of meaning. Through the use of a case-based approach across a number of universities, the perspectives obtained by within-case and cross-case analysis, was crucial in addressing the research questions, and in achieving the aims and objectives of this research.

### 3.3.2.2    Participants

The researcher wanted to conduct interviews with both academic and administrative staff (those in leadership / non leadership positions), as well as three Vice-Chancellors. Figure 3 provides an illustration of the relationships between the participants. It also reflects both academic or administrative departments, in terms of structure and relationships between those individuals interviewed. The purpose behind this was to provide a richness to the data, and to enable a variety of different perspectives as to the experiences of change that had been / was taking place. Furthermore, the snowballing technique was used strategically once the researcher had identified and secured interviews with leaders. The reasoning for this was the researcher was interested in the LMX relationship between leaders, semi-leaders and followers, and therefore asked these particular participants for recommendations as to who they thought might qualify for participation, therefore leading to referral chains (Robinson, 2014). Furthermore, the interviewees within these organisations had detailed knowledge of the personnel with their teams, so the researcher felt that this would be an effective way of obtaining volunteers (respondents) for this study, but also believed that respondents may not have responded in the same way to a cold calling approach, as had been the case in a number of Universities. Therefore, this referral approach, where respondents (leaders or semi-leaders) gave their permission to use their name when making the approach to potential respondents, had been successful. Furthermore, a number of leaders interceded on my behalf, and approached potential respondents themselves, and contacted the researcher directly.
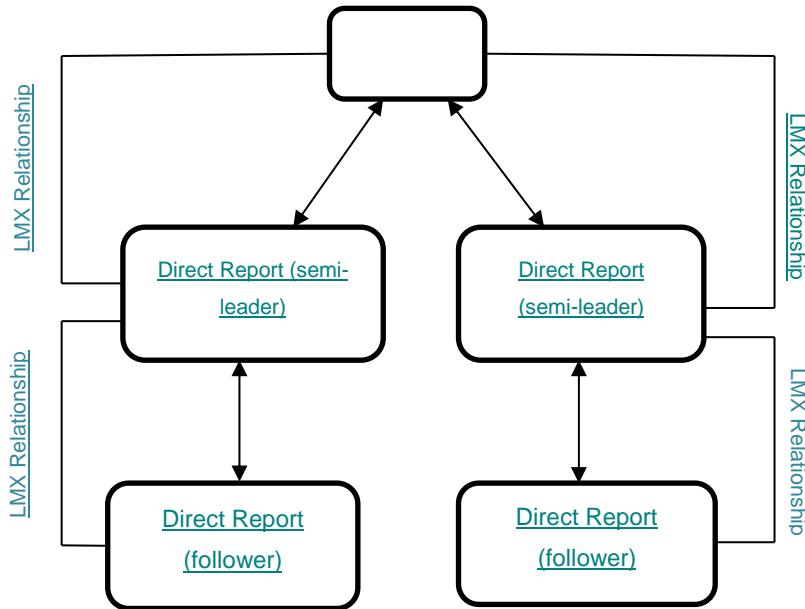
Figure 3 Representation of differing LMX relationships (whether Academic or Administrative)

Once the inclusion and exclusion criteria had been taken into consideration, this supported the justification in the selection of the organisations that became the cases. The next consideration was selecting and deciding which departments, faculties and people to participate in this research. The researcher adopted purposive sampling strategy that relied upon the judgement of the researcher. As Saunders et al (2016) suggest, cases are selected that will enable the research questions and objectives to be met. Participants were selected by the researcher, through visiting each organisations website. The participant selection criteria applied, namely, participants had to be in a leadership, non-leadership position, or be wither academic or administrative disciplines. The reason for this was that the researcher was interested in gaining an understanding into these differing perspectives, as from the researchers experience these disciplines had often worked closely together.

Within academic literature and across social sciences, rarely do qualitative researchers justify their sample size, thus providing limited guidelines as to estimating sample size (Marshall et al., 2013; Boddy, 2016). Therefore, the justification for the sample size in terms of participants will be based on transparency and sufficient depth and breadth of the data collected in relation to the purpose of research (Saunders and Townsend, 2016). The researcher experienced the challenge of determining sample size, however Marshall et al (2013) suggested that for single case studies, 15–20 participants would be appropriate, whereas Saunders and Townsend (2016) suggest when choosing participants from multiple organisations, 50 participants would be suitable. Taking into account these

differing sample size perspectives, the planned number of interviews conducted for this study had been 48.

Despite non-attendance and declination by interviewees, the sample size was 41 in total. Part of the interview strategy had been to identify potential individuals via their biographies on the organisation's website, and then to select a leader at random, and then to email that individual using the contact details provided. It is important to mention that within two organisations, the Vice-Chancellor's executive or personal assistant offered to send a generic email, attaching details of the researcher's study. This produced some positive responses, and interviews were achieved with a variety of leaders in differing capacities. The snowballing technique was used to identify individuals who reported directly to these leaders, or to act as signposting to different individuals who may be willing to participate.

On a number of occasions different respondents (interviewees), of their own accord, signposted the researcher to individuals they felt would be beneficial to this research. A maximum of two direct reports were needed for each leader. The researcher on one occasion, at a leader's request, delivered a presentation about the research to their team to aid in the selection of suitable respondents.

If all 48 interviews had been conducted, this would have resulted in 15 interviews being conducted within each university, plus the Vice-Chancellor in each institution, thus 16 interviews for each university. The purpose of interviewing the Vice-Chancellors had been to gain an understanding of the context behind the change taking place, the key milestones and change outcomes, and how these change outcomes will be determined, as well as who determines the content of change within each of these organisations. The interviews with the Vice-Chancellors had been crucial in setting the scene, and to understanding the reasoning behind why change was deemed necessary from their relative perspectives. Interviewees had been selected from different schools or faculties within each university randomly and from an administrative department, whether this was centrally or within a school.

Tables 2 and 3 illustrate the number of respondents interviewed within each organisation.

Table 2     Summary table of interviewed respondents in each organisation

| Organisation | Participation numbers |
|---|---|
| Organisation A | 12 |
| Organisation B | 12 |
| Organisation C | 17 |
| *Total number* of participants interviewed | *41* |

Table 3          Summary table of non-responses, or declined to participate respondents

| Organisation | Non-participation numbers |
|---|---|
| Organisation A | 7 |
| Organisation B | 16 |
| Organisation C | 8 |
| *Total number* of non-response or declined to be interviewed | *31* |

### 3.3.3      Approaches to analysis

A number of authors refer to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) trustworthiness within qualitative data, through credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, for example, Yilmaz, 2013; Pandey, and Patnaik, 2014; and Shenton, 2004. There are a number of key criteria to ensuring this research has credibility, such as the depth and scope of the data that had been collected, as well as their suitability and sufficiency for depicting empirical events (Charmaz, 2006, p.18).

Creating rapport with the interviewees was crucial, due to the risk of access being lost that may have had a knock-on effect if further interviews or observation in particular institutions needed to be conducted.

The strength of qualitative data is its "*richness and holism*" and has tremendous potential for revealing complexity within research, as Miles and Humberman (1994, p.10) state:

> *"Qualitative data, with their emphasis on people's 'lived experience', are fundamentally well suited for locating the meanings people place on the events, processes, and structures of their lives", and "for connecting these meanings to the social world around them".*

By taking the time to understand the participants' experiences through their perspective or world lens, the researcher was demonstrating their respect to that individual. Furthermore, "*careful interpretive understanding marks classic qualitative studies and represents a stunning achievement*" (Charmaz, 2006, p.19). This research could be transferred and applied within differing types of organisations due to the subject matter, and the relational nature of this research. In terms of dependability, this research could be repeated using the interview protocols and interview questions, but the individual situations and social constructed meaning may be different depending on the meaning individuals taking part in alternative studies place on the events as they see them.

In terms of the researcher maintaining their neutrality, this was achieved by allowing respondents to tell their story during the interview process, through the use of open-ended questioning. This enabled their story to be told and interpreted through the perspective of each respondent.

Through adhering to the chosen methodology and procedures that are part of the method, this increases the credibility associated with that method, however if different methodologies were mixed up, and only certain procedures followed and not followed, then credibility could be eroded (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Furthermore, being clear at the very beginning of the research as to whether the aim is description or theory building is important, as "*the value of any research is study lies in the substance, depth and innovation of the product that is generated*" (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p.303).

The researcher was made aware of their own biases and assumptions when interpreting the findings by writing memos about their reactions and feelings during the collection, and analysis helped the researcher to identify their influence on the research as well as the influence the research has on themselves (Corbin and Strauss, 2008).

Another consideration is the reliability of this research in terms of replication and consistency (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). The researcher addressed this through memo writing of their actions and reflections throughout the research, in order to promote stability in the way in which data was coded, analysed and interpreted. The researcher believes that if this research was replicated and repeated by a different researcher using the same data collection method and analytical procedures, they would produce consistent findings. The researcher ensured that when conducting interviews, a private office, or space, such as an empty classroom was used, to avoid the conversation being overheard, thereby helping to reduce participant bias. The researcher took frequent breaks when analysing and interpreting the data, ensuring that the researcher had time to reflect upon the data but also there was time to prepare thoroughly for each interview. Furthermore, using the study protocol and creating a case study database enabled the researcher to be as consistent as possible (Yin, 2018).

The researcher had initially set up a pilot project using NVivo qualitative data analysis (QDA) software to code three transcripts in relation to the Vice-Chancellors who had been interviewed. The researcher wanted to assess whether using this software would be beneficial or if this approach would raise concerns, or create difficulties, once the rest of data had been collected. For the researcher this was a suitability and scrutiny test. The researcher quickly realised that through using NVivo he had become visually impaired, due to being unable to holistically see because of the differing layers within the software itself.

Furthermore, the researcher felt too far removed and distant for the data, so took the decision to abandon NVivo and analyse the data manually. Although the research method and qualitative data analysis was extremely holistic in nature, the researcher felt that the QDA software was unable to mechanise the kind of approach the researcher needed, therefore the researcher relied on their own judgement and intuition when analysing the data. The researcher believed that he would become "*too bogged down in the detail of coding*" (Myers, 2013, p.177) and therefore miss the bigger picture.

Therefore, the researcher's personal preference was that he felt more at ease using flip chart paper, highlighter and marker pens spread over his desk, due to having worked this way successfully over a number of years. This method gave a tangible quality to the research as it made identifying emerging themes less problematic, but provided an overview (cognitively and literally) of the data that allowed connections to be made (Blair, 2015).

The critical incident approach involved asking respondents to discuss events or incidents that the researcher had deemed to be very important and pertinent to their research. This approach provided a systematic way to gather data that respondents attached particular meanings to. These were then analysed together to check whether there were any commonalities within these incidents (Myers, 2013). As the critical incident interview technique, was a proven approach for conducting qualitative research (Hughes et al., 2007), helped to obtain different perspectives in order to encapsulate an overall perspective from individuals in similar job role positions within organisations. This was achieved by using a multiple case study design as this had a proven track record in qualitative research, in terms of being able to collect and analyse data about human activities and their significance of the people involved, due to the step-by-step practical approach of this technique (Hughes et al., 2007). The critical incident technique was applied when conducting the interviews.

The researcher then built upon the answers, or responses from the respondent, trying to unravel or drill down as the respondent's change story unfolded. There were occasions where follow-up questions entered the researcher's mind, so he took the opportunity to ask them, as the "*ah-ha question that makes a great project*" (Jacob and Furgerson, 2012, p.5).

### 3.3.3.1    Coding

The researcher used a case study approach incorporating iterative, a priori, and an emergent approach to coding, as this enabled the researcher to code and analyse data through categorisation, themes, concepts or theory that the data produced (Neale, 2016). The reasoning for this multiple approach is that iterative categorisation is not just a standalone method when it comes to analysing qualitative data, and so can be compatible with supporting existing analytical approaches, for example, thematic analysis, interpretative phenomenological analysis, or with inductive or deductive codes (Neale, 2016). Furthermore, the researcher felt that having established some codes or themes prior to the analysis that were based upon theory from the literature was an important aspect of their research and should be included. Codes had also been established through some preliminary examination of the data (Stempler, 2001; Blair, 2015). This approach was taken in order to assist in shaping the initial design of theory building, due to having firmer empirical grounding for theory to emerge (Eisenhardt, 1989). Once the researcher had referred to the literature with regards the proposed conceptual framework, some prompt questions were developed to assist the researcher during the interviewing of respondents.

However, these prompt or initial draft questions were then reviewed very carefully to identify any potential leading or bias within the questions themselves, so that they were neither too positive nor negative in their construction. The questions were amended so that they were as open and non-closed as far as possible. There were a separate set of question prompts for the Vice-Chancellor's within the organisation, as well as for leaders and followers. Where a respondent was both a leader and a follower, question prompts were used from both the leader and follower question prompt sheet, to enable capturing as much information that may have been of relevance to this particular research project. The respondent's name was replaced with a code, and each transcript was then coded using the Charmaz line-by-line coding system (Charmaz, 2006). Although the researcher was not using grounded theory, the line-by-line coding approach provided a useful structure to coding. The reason for this is that line-by-line coding enabled the researcher to actively engage with their data, and see the data anew (Charmaz, 2012).

The initial codes or first-order codes were derived from a proposed conceptual framework (as shown within the introduction chapter), that the researcher had developed based upon the literature review, and these initial or first-order codes were built on from the responses to the questions being asked to respondents. It also aided in the development of open-ended questions that supported the research questions. Table 4 identifies first, second

and third-order coding, as well as themes that had developed from those initial themes because of the codes from the transcripts or that had emerged from the coding.

Table 4    Illustration of the differing orders of codes and themes

| Sequencing | Approach taken | Number of themes and codes |
|---|---|---|
| *First-order coding* | From reviewing literature, a conceptual framework was developed. This provided the initial themes<br><br>Identified codes within transcripts for each organisation, using Charmaz line-by-line coding approach (NB grounded theory not used) | ***Initial themes***<br>1) Context<br>2) Content<br>3) Nature of change<br>4) LMX relationship<br>5) Resistance<br>6) Commitment<br>7) Change outcomes<br><br>***Number of initial themes = 7***<br>***Initial codes***<br>Organisation A = 30<br>Organisation B = 45<br>Organisation C = 40<br><br>*Total number of codes = 115* |
| *Second-order coding* | Combined initial themes with questions from open-ended prompt question sheet, that created second order themes<br><br>Identified common and linking codes across all three organisations | ***Second-order themes***<br>1) Context<br>2) Content<br>3) Nature of change<br>4) LMX relationship<br>5) Resistance<br>6) Commitment<br>7) Change outcomes<br>8) Involvement in change<br>9) Experiences of change<br>10) Reactions to change<br>11) Attitudes and behaviours<br>12) Impact from leaders' behaviour and attitude<br>13) Leaders' perception of followers<br>14) Followers' perception of leaders<br><br>*Number of second-order themes=14*<br>*Number of second-order codes = 43* |

| Third-order coding | Most of the 43 second-order codes were naturally accounted for, as they sat within particular second order themes, or formed part of an existing code, for example, involvement and role in change merged together. For those codes that did not naturally merge into an existing theme, new themes therefore were created as this was something that had emerged from the data **The number of codes that were used to create new themes was three.** This now means all codes have been accounted for, and also themes have reached saturation | **_Third-order themes_** As second-order coding, except for the addition of these three themes: Changes in responses towards change Changes in organisational commitment Length of change project **_Therefore, the total number of themes was 17_** |
|---|---|---|

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

The researcher used the questions that were asked to respondents, to create the basis for a set of codes, as "*codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning*" (Meyers, 2013, p.167). The initial codes were from the proposed conceptual framework that had been developed from the literature, and the researcher's own research interests.

The second set of codes had been derived from some of the questions that were actually asked to the respondents, and then the responses from the respondents within each transcript were coded. The researcher selected one organisation at a time and then coded each transcript for that particular organisation, and then noted the codes that were identified and recorded any thoughts or reflections. This resulted in Organisations A, B and C having a set of unique codes that were applicable to that institution. The next step was to assign a number to each code within each organisation, although it must be noted that the number given to a code had no significance or particular relevance, but was purely for accountability and administrative reasons, in other words it was an approach for the researcher to keep track of codes for use at a later stage. Once a code had been accounted for, the number given to a particular code was marked off. The numbering of these codes enabled the researcher to easily identify similarities and make comparisons between the codes across all three organisations. The purpose of this approach was to create a generic set of codes that were both applicable and relevant to all three organisations.

The numbering of the codes also allowed for the identification of unallocated, or unaccounted codes. The researcher made a note of the remaining codes that had not been accounted for, and created a new code called 'change, miscellaneous'. This new code enabled the remaining unaccountable codes to be placed where there was not a natural fit within the other codes. For example, the pace of change, benefits of change and other unallocated codes were placed under the generic miscellaneous change code.

The clarification sheet (refer to *Appendix 3*) provided the researcher an opportunity to look at the data in a holistic way, as this sheet was to clarify responses from the respondents in a visual way. The clarification sheet identified a series of contextual factors that the research had identified from the change and leadership extant literature. It enabled the respondents to select from a number of different context factors that were most relevant to themselves and their experiences of change. It is also an additional data source. Furthermore, it served a number of purposes. Firstly, it provided the researcher an opportunity to collect additional data, thereby contributing richness to the data. Secondly, it allowed the researcher to clarify any comments the respondent made during the main part of the interview. Thirdly, it allowed the respondent to elaborate or add to previously made responses to earlier questions. Fourthly, when the respondent marked their response to a particular question, the researcher asked the respondent the reasoning for their selection. The responses to the clarification sheet questions were also audio recorded and formed part of the interview.

The data collected from using the clarification sheet was transferred into Microsoft Excel, as this enabled the researcher to look at the data in a number of different ways, as well as look at differing themes, either solely, or with other ones. A colour coded scheme was applied, for example Organisation A was assigned the colour blue, Organisation B, red, and Organisation C, yellow. This was for ease of reference when analysing the data. Respondents were asked to identify the boxes that were most applicable to their experiences of change. The interviewer asked open questions, such as why and how type questions for a more in-depth reasoning behind the selection of the answers the respondent had made. This was also audio recorded as it was conducted as part of the interview with respondents. Then a red, amber or green (rag) colour system was applied. For example, the question relating to attitudes to change (pre, during or after), where a positive had been given as an answer, it was given a green colour, neutral was given an amber colour, or negative was given a red colour.

Therefore, the responses themselves were colour coded, due to respondents mixed responses. This provided a way for identifying and interpreting the data through this colour scheme. The same approach had been applied for the level of involvement in change (pre, during and after). The particular response words were coloured coded, for example, none was coded red, some was coded amber, and high was coded green. The clarification sheet assisted in being able to identify patterns and differences that emerged from the data, between not only respondents within organisations, but also across differing organisations. The results from the clarification sheet were used in conjunction with the transcripts to provide clarity and meanings as to respondent's choice selection, but also in terms of being able to interpret the data.

It must be noted that the Vice-Chancellors in each of these three organisations were not asked to complete the clarification sheet, as the researcher felt it was important to set the scene in terms of understanding the reasoning behind why change was taking place. It was interesting that all three Vice-Chancellors during the interviews identified the historical perspective, in terms of past experience of change within their organisations, as well as the internal and external environment as factors for the approach and reasoning for change. External environment factors that seemed to be consistent across all three organisations included government funding, student fees, student recruitment, the office for students, and increased competition.

The next step was to identify links, differences or similarities between the three different organisations and respondents, for example, involvement in change and attitudes towards change, and looking at patterns between respondents. For example, does a respondent who is positive in terms of attitudes have a higher level of involvement that someone who was negative, and so forth.  In addition, if respondents had ticked three boxes in terms of their responses, were there other respondents who had also ticked three boxes? Were there similarities or differences within their change stories, and if so why? Therefore, the clarification sheet was utilised to identify what emerged from the data. The researcher narrowed down and identified the core themes that emerged from the data from the respondent responses within and between all three organisations, whether these were between fellow leaders or followers from an academic or administrative perspective, or whether there had been specific differences between them.

Once a particular theme had been identified as being relatable to the majority of transcripts across each of these three organisations, each transcript was again scrutinised. This was to ensure all relevant subject matter relating to that particular theme was placed together. The reason for this was respondents discussed a number of different aspects of the researcher's questions to some degree within their response to differing

questions that had been put to them the respondents would often be answering a previous asked question.

In identifying where this had taken place meant that the response could be captured and placed under an appropriate code and this helped to streamline or incorporate some codes together as respondents spoke interchangeably. For example, behaviours, attitudes and reactions to change were placed together as one code, instead of three separate codes. This helped with the flow of the dialogue, as when the respondent attempted to separate them into different themes, the captured information seemed disjointed and hard to follow in terms of understanding what was actually happening. This approach also meant that the themes emerged from the data in a much more holistic way, making the identification of the themes simpler and more transparent.

### 3.3.3.2    Within-case and cross case analysis

Within-case analysis is central to generating insights from data as patterns are allowed to emerge across the various cases, through the detailed write-ups of each unique case. Although the write-up of each case is descriptive, this is of paramount importance for insights to be created (Barratt, Choi and Li, 2011). The benefit of taking this approach was for the researcher to become very familiar with each case, so cross-case comparisons can be accelerated (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Cross-case analysis involves looking at the patterns that emerge from these write-ups and then undertaking a comparison and contrasting view between these patterns (Barratt, Choi and Li, 2011). The crucial aspect of this was to look for patterns that were similar to each other, and if differences appeared. These were not to be discounted but clarified in order to understand what may have been included for there to have been a difference (Barratt, Choi and Li, 2011).

In addition, cross-case analysis had the potential to capture unique findings that may lie within the data generated by undertaking this type of analysis (Eisenhardt, 1989). Once each interview had been audio recorded and transcribed, the advantage of doing this was the ability to capture the actual words of the respondents. This meant that vital data was not missed, compared with making handwritten notes, however field notes were taken during these interviews. A top-down approach was used, where concepts that the researcher used stems from the research literature (Myers, 2013) that had been used to create a conceptual framework in the first instance.

This conceptual framework was the starting point in which to analyse the data, due to having initially identified some themes in which to attach codes. Therefore, a deductive approach had been taken as the data analysis began with theory (Potter and Levine-Donnerstein, 1999). Furthermore, the research also applied a bottom-up approach, where concepts emerged from the detailed analysis of the data that had been collected. An inductive approach came into play when all the data had been collected and analysed (Potter and Donnerstein, 1999).

This meant that both approaches were adopted and used to some extent, as the researcher saw this to be a continuum between two extremes, so iterated between top-down and bottom-up (Myers, 2013). Although the bottom-up approach tends to be used within grounded theory (Gheondea-Eladi, 2014), the researcher took this approach to identify potential emergent themes that may emerge from their data. During the data analysis stage, memos were made of the researcher's ideas and thoughts, because this helps to "*capture ideas*" and develop lines of thought in both the data in terms of emerging theoretical framework, and to existing theoretical disciplinary theory, as well as facilitating the "*composing of initial drafts of documents to be submitted for publication*" (Locke, 2001, p.45). Therefore, memos were written from the commencement of this research detailing the actions and decisions that have been made along the way and the reasons for those decisions, so that a visual track record was created. The role of memos according to Miles and Humberman (1994, p.72) is: *"primarily conceptual in intent. They don't just report data; they tie together different pieces of the data into a recognizable cluster, often to show that those data are instances of a general concept"*.

## 3.4    Research ethics

The key ethical consideration will be that of truthfulness, thoroughness, objectivity and relevance (Myers, 2013). The researcher followed and sought ethical approval via the University of Southampton's ethics approval system. This was duly granted, and the researcher followed the interview protocol as shown in ***Appendix 4**. This protocol addresses ethical issues such as data protection, confidentiality, informed consent, and the rights of the interviewee (respondent). The same protocol was followed and read to each and every respondent to avoid ambiguity, and for consistency and transparency throughout the research.

In summary, this research takes a multi case-based approach from an interpretive and social constructivist perspective. The following chapter explores each of the three case studies using within-case analysis and then finishes with cross-case analysis between each of these three universities.

# Chapter 4    Findings

## 4.1    Introduction

This chapter explores three universities using a multi case-based approach. Each university (referred to as Organisation A, B, and C) forms three case studies, and a within-case analysis approach was taken for each case study. At the end of the within-case analysis, a cross analysis was undertaken in order to compare the differences or similarities between them. Finally, this chapter finishes with an overall conclusion.

This analysis focussed upon three different organisations (universities), referred to as Organisation A (code ORGA), Organisation B (code ORGB) and Organisation C (ORGC), that have embarked upon change within their organisations. To aid the analysis, a proposed conceptual framework, as discussed within the introduction chapter, was used to assist in contextualising what is happening within these organisations in terms of interrelationships within LMX. Each part of the conceptual framework has been numbered between one to seven, to aid the identification of the interrelationships of different aspects of the conceptual framework. There are a number of interrelationships, as illustrated by the differing figures that demonstrate how the conceptual framework has been broken down in order to explore the interrelationships between these differing elements taking place within these organisations. Tables have also been used to present data constructively and for the data to be read easily, not only to aid analysis, but for ease of interpreting the data in a meaningful way. Following these three within-case analyses is a cross-case analysis that compares differences and similarities between these three cases by using figures and tables to not present the data, but to assist in interpreting and describing what is happening within these three organisations.

### 4.1.1    Explanation of categories used within tables

Within tables one to four, specific codes have been given to respondents depending on their level of responsibility, and if they were either an academic or performed an administrative function within the organisation. To protect the identities of individuals, a generic term '**leader**' was given to individuals who held some form of leadership role, whether these individuals were deans of faculties, heads of school, departments, or head of an administration team. Furthermore, individuals were allocated the term **leader** where they had individuals reporting directly to them.

The term '**follower'** was given to individuals who reported directly to someone, or to those in lower levels of responsibility. However, there were some individuals who even though they reported directly to a line manager (leader), had some form of leadership responsibility, for example, line managed a team of administrators, or academic staff, that is, had followers reporting to them. Therefore, they were given the term '**semi-leader'** to make the distinction from those categorised as leaders and followers.

The **semi-leader** category emerged during pre-discussions with respondents, namely, where the researcher explained the purpose of research, went through the interview protocol and clarified any questions that the respondent had prior to conducting the interviews with these respondents. Once the respondent had explained they were responsible for a team with people reporting directly to them, this presented a wonderful opportunity to enrich the data by exploring the experiences that these individuals had had within the change process taking place within their organisations. The researcher believed this may provide potentially unique insights into not only semi-leaders, but also with their direct leader as well. During these interviews, the researcher selected questions from both the leader and follower prompt question sheet, as shown in *Appendix 5*.

The categories that emerged by classifying respondents (as described above) in this way are illustrated within Table 5 below. To assist in clarifying the codes further, that have been used within the tables, the following explanation may be helpful. The number in front of a code refers to the interviewee number, and the code after the number indicates the type of role the respondent performs, for example (02-Lac), illustrates the respondent interviewee number is 02 and that this respondent is an academic in a leadership position.

Table 5      Classification of respondent codes

| *Key* |
| --- |
| VC = Vice-Chancellor |
| Lac = Academic Leader |
| Lad = Administration Leader |
| LFac – Academic Semi-Leader |
| LFad = Administration Semi-Leader |
| Fac = Academic Follower |
| Fad = Administration Follower |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

### 4.1.2     Presentation of each case study

The data within each of these three case studies will be presented in such a way that it reflects the proposed conceptual framework. The reason for taking this approach was to enable a systematic and methodical way of illustrating what was happening within each organisation. Therefore, each case study will commence by explaining the background and reasoning for change. This will then be followed by exploring the context and types of experiences respondents have had of the changes taking place, and so forth, and finishing with change outcomes, and then a brief conclusion.

## 4.2     Organisation A – within-case analysis

### 4.2.1     Background

Organisation A is a university in the south of England currently undergoing a large restructure, and the atmosphere around the campus seems an unhappy one. Walking around the campus when visiting respondents (interviewees), office doors were often closed or empty, which suggested staff have left in large numbers. There seemed to be a general lack of willingness to participate in interviews, due to work pressures and respondents being extremely busy. Organisation A has nearly 25,000 students, and over 20,000 staff, so it is the size of a small town. Primarily the focus has been on research but it is now concentrating on the quality of teaching.

The University commenced its restructuring and change initiatives a couple of years ago, partly due to the changes taking place in the higher education sector in the past decade or more because of government regulation, or regulatory changes such as the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) and Research Excellence Framework (REF). Furthermore, there have been changes in terms of student fees, namely, moving from direct funding to funding via student fees. This has brought about a consumerism perspective, resulting in the culture of the University reflecting this and providing a consumerism service, particularly as there is now an Office for Students (OfS) that this is impacting upon how universities are now being run, resulting in an over-arching focus on the student experience. Furthermore, during the previous restructuring of the University approximately eight years ago, the consequences of this is still being felt, such as staff feeling bruised and unhappy, and it created extreme scepticism within the organisation that is now impacting the current change process, with many of the issues the University is currently facing having been due to the previous restructure.

## 4.3     Context

The previous restructure within this organisation had an impact on followers that found change to be *"pretty horrible"* (16-Fad) and a *"highly negative experience"* (06-Fac) because of the loss of staff and reduced morale. For example, one academic follower (06-Fac) saw this has being due to:

> *"you know the morale in the school over the last two and a half, three years; it's really plummeted. I've been here for nearly 10 years now, and I've never seen morale as low, um, we've lost in a year 22 people from the school with more to go"* (06-Fac)

This view was supported by an administration follower (16-Fad) who saw this being due to:

> *"loss of lots of people with the loss of morale and not knowing whether they are gonna lose their jobs or can or where they're going to be, it's all very unsettling"* (16-Fad)

This suggests that job insecurity is playing a role in the level of staff morale within this organisation. Furthermore, for one academic follower (06-Fac) had this opinion:

> *"It's really the whole leader behaviours, the style of leadership at the school has been very…very autocratic"* (06-Fac)

There was a perception that the previous Vice-Chancellor had:

> *"almost proactively sent the organisation into turmoil by displacing everyone"* (08-Fac)

As a consequence of that (08-Fac) felt that the *"organisation had been in chaos for a number of years"* and the decisions of this previous Vice-Chancellor had financial implications on the University and created a culture of disengagement as well as scepticism and cynicism from employees. This in some ways had informed the current Vice-Chancellor's approach towards change implementation who saw this as being due to:

> *"considerable unhappiness about this restructuring, which even before I came here, I was being told".* (01-VC)

## 4.4 Types of change experience

What appears to have happened is past experience of change is having an impact upon the current change in terms of people's attitudes and behaviours, particularly trust, for example:

> *"we're told it isn't going to affect us but it could well do, we weren't expecting to lose so many colleagues last time"* (17-Fad)

With the reduction of resources, more was expected from people, therefore doing more with less. This was having a negative impact upon the quality of work being performed and in meeting expectations, therefore, this suggests employees were finding that they were unable to cope with this increased workload.

Within this organisation the perception was that there had been a high turnover of staff due to changes in culture, and because of the reduction in the number of faculties causing some concerns and anxieties, in particular, stress. For example, one academic leader (03-Lac) felt that they faced a *"contraction of staff"*, when students numbers were increasing, meaning they had fewer staff to deliver the education and so felt they were:

> "suffering the pain of that now, because some staff are now off sick through stress, other staff have left, other staff are leaving, and you're into a change process of changing" (03-Lac)

### 4.4.1 Consequences

As a consequence, people were considering leaving the organisation or looking for new jobs. The consensus was that the change process taking place had been top-down (05-Fac, 07-Fac, 16-Fad) resulting in a blame culture, where people looked to blame the different layers within the organisation for the change that had been happening at a local level (school level), in order to avoid confrontations. From a leadership perspective, the opposite view had been taken because of being *"privy to certain drivers for that change"* (09-Lac). This suggests consultation had been taking place at a leadership or more senior level. One academic leader (02-Lac) elaborated by suggesting they were:

> *"part of The University Executive, so we are the ones who are leading on the 10-year plan"* (02-Lac)

This also reinforces the perception that leaders have far greater consultation and involvement in change-related decision making.

These changes had an impact upon leaders of schools, such as having to make forced decisions (03-Lac) for example, cutting staff numbers due to reduced resources, even though student numbers increased. There was a sense that leaders have been restricted in what they have been allowed to do, due to a lack of agility and over bureaucratic processes. This suggests that it had taken a long time to accomplish anything, leading to the creation of a culture that was perceived as being stagnated and overly bureaucratic (03-Lac). At the same time, senior leaders and professors had left or were leaving, resulting in the recruitment of junior staff, whilst reducing costs. One academic leader (09-Lac) felt that this could be positive:

> *"bringing in fresh ideas and [people who] are more flexible in their thinking"* (09-Lac)

At the same time, it brings with challenges such as a loss of expertise within leadership and loss of research track record. One of the reasons for some of the issues faced by leaders was power had been drawn back to the centre by the current and previous Vice-Chancellors that was perceived to have had a disempowering and disengaging effect (08-Fac). Decisions had to now go up through the organisation, which made decision outcomes long and cumbersome thereby created a sense that peoples' hands were tied (08-Fac). The organisation had moved away from purely focussing on research to education-focussed league tables, meaning the University was responding to the external challenges, such as financial ones within the higher education sector.

## 4.5    Content

This section will use the differing orders of change to provide insights as to the impact these had upon decision-makers, and the relationships between leaders and followers within this organisation. Furthermore, it seemed appropriate to explore both the ***first and second-order change*** in addition to the third-order change, particularly in relation to how the third-order change had impacted individuals within this organisation. As Kuipers, Higgs, Kickert, Tummers, Grandia and van der Voet (2014) suggest, being able to distinguish between the different orders of change is helpful when analysing the content of change, particularly in terms of unravelling the reasoning behind change implementation.

Within the higher education sector, ***third-order change*** was impacting this university in terms of the types of changes being implemented. For example, with students being seen as consumers and with the creation of (OfS), the student experience had become increasingly important. The external environment had directed impacting universities so it had become necessary to understand the implications of what was happening in the higher education sector, in order to provide some in-depth insights as to why universities, or more specifically why this organisation, was making the decisions it was taking.

Within interrelationship one (***Appendix 6***), each part contained within the interrelationship has been given a number for ease of identification, for example (1) refers to the context, and (2) refers to the content. What is happening within interrelationship one is that the context (1) behind change is interacting with the content (2) of change because of what is happening in the external environment, namely, competition from other United Kingdom and overseas universities. This was a result of the third-order change taking place in the higher education sector. Previous change experiences following the last restructure within this organisation had an effect on the culture, and upon staff. As a result of this and the changes occurring in the higher education sector, the University had to respond to those challenges.

However, because past experiences of change (1 context) had been so bruising for many people within the organisation, it had an impact on the second-order change (organisational level) in terms of aspiration, and loss of collegial spirit. At the same time as changes to culture, performance of employees was being addressed. Hence first-order change (organisational processes, systems, and procedures), and the drive to save money, centralisation of professional services, and non-replacement of staff that left, was a way for this organisation to achieve this. Therefore when (1) context and (2) content, are combined, this created the nature of the change in terms of what the change was, namely, the purpose behind change. It also provided the rationale and justification for the change, although what it doesn't do at this stage is direct how change should be implemented, or the process of change undertaken.

In response to the changes occurring within higher education sector, this organisation was making significant changes to its operation. For example, one academic leader (03-Lac) commented:

> *"There has been a lot of external environmental change impacting on the pressures within xxxx schools and universities, as we've seen student fees go from £3,000 to £9,000, expectations of the student experience dramatically rising, [and] huge pressures on league table positions"* (03-Lac)

Furthermore, this academic leader explained that universities were now having to become more corporate and business focused. It would seem that this restructure had been about changing how the university operated given the financial challenges, such as where funding was coming from, in light of students paying higher fees.

It is therefore important to consider the historical perspective of change taking place within the sector, for example the leader of this institution saw this as being due to:

> *"unprecedented change over the last 15 years or so, driven by a mixture of government regulation changes. So, there are regulatory responses we have to make, for example, and we see this, and academics will see this in the form of things like REF, more recently TEF. A consequence of all that is this affects the way in which universities are funded, and it is bringing it down to basics, and the reason that matters is, it literally affects the way we pay our staff to do the job"* (01-VC)

As a result of changes taking place in the third sector, this organisation restructured, reduced the number of faculties, and streamlined its operation in terms of making it consistent and efficient, in other words cost-cutting. In other words, reducing its resources such as staffing numbers, so when employees left the organisation they were not replaced. The intention was to change its culture, due to the perceived loss of aspiration within this university:

> *"Drivers specifically here at xxxx were that the University needed a change of culture. It was a feeling that the University had lost the collegial spirit, that you would hope for in a university; I think it had lost a sense of strategic direction, and it had become somewhat generic in terms of its approach to excellence"* (01-VC)

This change of culture was also reflected in terms of teaching evaluations, for example:

> *"someone having low teaching feedback scores, for example, previously there was no action taken on these things, and we started to take action on some of these things, I think it was just that we've…we've slowly raised the bar on what is acceptable"* (05-Fac)

This suggests the restructure had focussed on changing the behaviours of employees, and some academics might have found that a difficult adjustment to make due to the attitudes they held when remembering the older higher education model (09-Lac). One school introduced a new appraisal system that focussed on performance in terms of forced distribution of appraisal ratings, however:

> *"most commercial organisations had abandoned that as being damaging to morale some twenty years ago"* (06-Fac)

This academic follower felt their head of school manipulated the answers in terms of their calculation of the five categories. When challenged, their head of school ignored it. As a result when recording the outcome of appraisals, appraisees had to be given a lower score.

There had also been demands on staff that didn't have publications ready for the REF submission and consequently were put on performance improvement plans. As a consequence of that, research time was taken away, causing a negative effect, for example:

> *"it was not good because essentially for me, that was something that killed my chances*
>
> *of progression here or anywhere for that matter"* (07-Fac)

This suggests decisions of leaders had consequences that impacted their followers, and in some instances had resulted in followers leaving the organisation, for example:

> *"as a result of all that I decided I would, finish my term here"* (06-Fac)

## 4.6 Responses to change

This section focuses on how both leaders and followers have responded to change, in terms of their behaviours, attitudes and reactions toward change. Exploring these differing perspectives should provide some useful insights into understanding the extent to which the nature of change may be impacting upon the LMX relationship between leaders and their followers.

***Appendix 7*** (interrelationship two), illustrates that the nature of change was influencing the change progress, in terms of type of change being implemented and the reasoning behind the need for it. It appears that the type of change had an impact upon both leaders' and followers' responses towards it, however for followers, it seemed that depending on their level of involvement and consultation with the change process, it can impact the LMX relationship in either a positive, negative or other way. This suggests that the way change was implemented offers some insights as to determining the quality of that relationship. However, in terms of change outcomes, the LMX relationship can have an impact in terms of whether there had been any change in response towards change.

### 4.6.1 Leader perspectives

In terms of resistance to change, leaders believed that they were not particularly resistant to change, perhaps due to their affective commitment to the organisation. Leaders felt the organisation was a good employer and that it worked for them, but considered it was part of their job to deliver the change agenda. 02-Lac commented:

> *"I completely buy into what this university is trying to do, I think it's slightly perverse for*
>
> *people to sit in a role and specifically and repeatedly beef about their employer, um*
>
> *given the challenges the whole sector is facing"* (09-Lac)

From both a leadership and follower perspective, the circumstances of individuals and type of change, had an impact upon attitudes, behaviours and reactions to change. This had consequences, such as turnover of staff, who had chosen to leave the organisation, or contributing to sickness leave. One academic leader felt they had to make forced cutbacks and quite rapid knee-jerk changes to working practices within their school (03-Lac). Furthermore, change had been viewed as being either good or bad, or whether change would increase workloads or expectation for more work to be taken on (05-Fac;17-Fad). However, there had been a recognition within the organisation that change was needed (02-Lac).

It seemed those in leadership positions were aware change was imminent (09-Lac). This may have had some bearing on the behaviour towards their followers, and they saw this as:

> *"well, as a leader, it's your responsibility to affirm the direction of travel of the strategy, and so, for the community, it's necessary to be positive, upbeat"* (02-Lac)

This is implying that perhaps their behaviour towards or in response to change was perhaps forced, in terms of putting on an act, due to the position they held.

### 4.6.2 Follower perspectives

To offer a contrasting view, followers suggested that they would be told when change was taking place, for example:

*"I suppose I just felt, well, we will be told what's going to happen when it happens, so it's not worth worrying about it now, although you do"* (16-Fad)

This suggests followers are not privy to change decision-making due to a lack of consultation; in principle this should mean followers were protected or shielded from being fearful of change. However, the not knowing, or lack of warning seemed to have an opposite effect, in terms of aiding worrying from the unknown, for example:

> *"just wait and see what's going to happen, and it's getting closer and people are starting to get anxious, it is concerning, and I'm trying not to think about it"* (17-Fad)

It appears that an individual's previous experience from a historical perspective impacted how change was being viewed. Some responses towards change had resulted in a loss of trust, for example, one administration follower (17-Fad) said:

*"we're told it isn't going to affect us but it could well do, we weren't expecting to lose so many colleagues last time and for things to be such a drastic change as they were"* (17-Fad)

There was also a sense of frustration as a result of change taking place due to the continuous nature of the changes, or in terms of being personally impacted from change-related decision making (16-Fad; 07-Fac).

From both academic and administration followers there was a sense of cynicism and scepticism towards change (05-Fac and 06-Fac), resulting in some voicing concerns with colleagues and becoming worried, then viewing change as being inevitable (05-Fac). Followers believed change was impacting their leader's attitudes and behaviour (17-Fad, 18Fad), such as from their more direct supervisor, for example:

*"xxx can come across as being quite abrupt because xxx is concerned about their own position and takes on more work than xxx should do, as is worried about the fact that their job could be in jeopardy"* (17-Fad)

Another administration follower saw this as due to being:

*"apprehensive and also a little bit cynical about the prospect of another restructure"* (18-Fad)

The data suggests that the context and content of change relates directly to both past and present experiences individuals are having within this organisation. This is then having a direct impact upon leaders' behaviour (on a personal level), either in a positive, negative or neutral way. For example, for one administrative follower felt the neutral behaviour and attitude of their leader had a neutral effect on them (18-Fad). Therefore, they would have liked their leader to have been more positive, as it would have been an encouragement to them. For their other managers who were more apprehensive and cynical about the change process, it had impacted negatively (18-Fad). For example:

*'other people's negative attitudes do, yeah, can rub off on me and make me feel a bit down as well"* (16-Fad)

An example of where a leader's positive attitude or behaviour had a positive impact on their follower is:

> *"I tend to be quite anxious at the beginning so having somebody with a firm attitude, reassuring but transparent is really important, to you know to make me feel comfortable"* (11-Fac)

An interesting point made by an academic follower was that prior to them becoming an interim head of group felt they:

> *"were just a lacky, a pee on, so you really get a real sense of things are being done do you, change is being done to you and nobody's really listening to you about it and that was quite demotivating"* (05-Fac)

Since their job role changed and had become more senior, this individual was now having more of say and input into change, which caused a change in their attitude towards change. The data is suggesting the responses to change appeared to have been one of cynicism and scepticism.

To assist in illustrating this point, here are some short quotes from differing respondents: *"oh here we go again"* (17 Fad, 05-Fac), *"what's the underlying agenda here then"* (08-Fac), or with the recruitment of a new VC, *"we get a new one and xxx wants change"* (16-Fad), but also the way change was being implemented *"oh you have got to be joking"* (06-Fac).

The data seems to be suggesting that this level of uncertainty and worry had contributed to the negativity felt by respondents.

### 4.6.3 Differences between leader and follower perspectives

Leaders appeared to be more positive and expressed their enthusiasm and excitement for change and acknowledged change was now continuous, due to no longer being in a steady state anymore (02-Lac), making it difficult to identify where change started or ended. One academic leader enjoyed change and thought it was good for people (02-Lac), whilst another understood why change was needed, and therefore felt broadly positive (09-Lac). One academic leader (03-Lac) though felt: *"a bit blasé*, and in a sense being *"immune to change in terms of a reduction in staff costs"* when change was first mentioned, as their school produced a large surplus for the organisation.

There were a number of followers who could see the benefits, or hoped change would be beneficial, for example one academic follower appreciated the positive consequences rather than the potentially negative ones, in terms of interactions with other institutions and colleagues (11-Fac).

Another academic follower felt positive about the restructure, but believed that had been *"little to no thought about staff and looking after their staff"* (07-Fac) and that it was just about league table positions, and the student experience.

## 4.7    Changes in response towards change

Depending on the type of change, there had been differences in how individuals responded in terms of their reactions towards it. For example, one academic follower's reactions had been to challenge, but when this approach was not welcomed, this individual *"just withdrew"* (06-Fac). Consequently, this resulted in this individual not only refusing to comply, but deciding to leave the organisation. What this is illustrating is that although they had been willing to actively engage in the implementation of change, they were, in fact, inhibited from doing so. For another academic follower who had been positive about the forthcoming restructure, when change had a personal impact, such as having their contract changed and research time taken way, they became *"pretty angry"* (07-Fac). The noticeable aspect concerning this individual was that they had not been at this university very long, and felt a lack of consideration had been given on account of this. This is an illustration that depending on the nature of change taking place, it can have an adverse impact, particularly at the micro (individual) level. Followers who had a better understanding of what the change was, and had some input or involvement in change, could either lead to them being positive or negative towards change. This provides an indication as to whether employees will support or obstruct change, for example one academic follower (05-Fac) commented:

> *"I'm sceptical of change unless I understand it, so my behaviours during the process would typically move around to positive once I've got a better understanding of what it is, and I've got more of a sense that maybe I've had some input into it, so I guess shared ownership for the change, rather than sort of dictatorial, this is what's happening"* (05-Fac)

## 4.8    Process factors

The data suggests the change process is leaning towards being more reactionary and unplanned, as the majority of respondents believed change was still being implemented, therefore, outcomes are perceived as being unknown. The leader of this institution (01-VC) saw the current changes as having been planned due to the varying levels of buy-in and consultations that had been undertaken and the time taken to commence the change programme. Particularly as this individual felt they had been *"recruited as a bit of a change agent"*, therefore would have had a change agenda.

### 4.8.1    Change implementation (involvement)

There was an overwhelming consensus from followers that change had been imposed on people from the university (institutional level). Therefore, there had been little involvement in the change process taking place, meaning people had to do as they were told. The table within **Appendix 8** illustrates that leaders were more involved in the change process and its implementation, for example:

> *"as a head of department that as an individual you're a conduit working on behalf of your staff, and also University Executive board and deanery"* (09-Lac)

When compared to academic or administration followers (as illustrated in Appendix 8), some individuals could only become involved if they *"agreed to do what was demanded"* (06-Fac). However, academic followers in more senior positions seemed to have had more involvement and headed up change initiatives (08-Fac). Overall there appeared to be a lack of opportunity, due to the lack of consultation, as one academic follower saw as *"I don't think they believe in consulting here"* (07-Fac).

It was at the more local level that people had some input, and tended to be within their day-to-day job. From an administration perspective, they were guided or told what to do by their leaders as to what was required from them, or at a group level for academic staff, such as making changes to their programmes, such as revalidating modules, and programmes. For administration staff, the data suggests that existing workloads, and working part time, for some, made involvement difficult, due to not having spare capacity as they were already struggling to cope (17-Fad and 18-Fad). For part time staff, their attitude indicated that they just wanted to come in, do their work and leave. Therefore, they would not have wanted to be involved (16-Fad). The way change was being implemented was having an adverse effect, in terms of negativity and decline in morale because of the "*leaders within the school and faculty*" (06-Fac), and because of the high turnover of staff.

However, some saw change as an opportunity for making improvements (Fac-11), and for streamlining, that would be beneficial, but shared concerns over how change was being executed (07-Fac).

## 4.9    Leadership approach (style)

There were a number of differences between leaders in their leadership approach, ranging from an institutional perspective to a more local level perspective. The institutional perspective provided the vision and used an evidenced based approach as to why change was needed, (01-VC). Whereas the more local perspective is focussed on the operational side that takes place within faculties, schools or administration departments. For example, leading the strategic plan of the University to ensure that schools within the faculty were working on and owning that strategic plan, and ensuring schools were kept on mission (02-Lac). The next step for leaders was to create buy-in for the need for change, one perceived way of achieving this was through a positive change message (03-Lac). These three different tiers of leadership illustrate that change has had a cascading effect with different leaders responding to the requirements from the top. Thereby, demonstrating the change process to be a very top-down approach.

In terms of leader behaviours, the data suggests these ranged from being forced (02-Lac) to a more openness approach (09-Lac) towards proposed change. The reasoning for this was due to their level of responsibility and being part of a collective decision making, but also from knowing change was happening. For other academic leaders, their behaviours ranged from feeling angry, being blasé or immune (03-Lac), to feeling anxious towards some change (02-Lac). This suggests different types of change can evoke different reactions depending on what the change is. ***Appendix 8*** illustrates that for leaders, their attitudes pre-change started off positively and some had a high level of involvement with change. However, two of these academic leaders (02-Lac, 09-Lac) continued to be positive during change and at the same time their level of involvement was also high. For academic leader (03-Lac) despite having high involvement in change, their attitude was negative because of where the University was in terms of its strategy. Furthermore, leaders appeared to see followers in a negative light, or in fact have negative expectations from them. For example, for one academic leader (03-Lac) their first emotional response they had was one of anger, so expected their school executive to have that angry response, that they had. Therefore, this individual felt there was a *"need to shock and awe, almost with the news, and let that sink in"* (03-Lac) and felt that approach would help to get shouting matches and anger out of the room.

Another academic leader (02-Lac) expected change to be good for everybody but expected it to be painful, and felt the people they met with on a regular basis were not too happy about the process, particularly those who had faculty in front of their job description. There was an expectation that the change process would be a cause of worry for people in terms of what change meant for people (01-VC), at both a personal level and in terms of changes to the job that people do. Due to the bruising nature of the previous restructure, there had been an expectation for *"extreme scepticism about change and shape"* (01-VC). Perhaps these underlying preconceptions concerning followers is in fact impacting upon the relationships between leaders and their followers in a negative way, whether on a conscious or subconscious level.

## 4.10    Differing perceptions of LMX relationship

### 4.10.1    Follower perceptions

From an academic follower perspective, they felt their leader had not considered the alternatives, meaning followers had no other choice but to comply with what was being demanded (06-Fac), for example, scholarship allowances had been taken away and reduced to 20 per cent. The perception was the leader took that approach in order to cover the workload from staff members that had left (06-Fac), however, their leader had not stood up for the school's interests. Another academic follower (05-Fac) felt that their leader purely served as being the mouthpiece of the Vice-Chancellor at times during change (05-Fac). This follower felt that with more discussion and forewarning concerning future change, then change may have been handled better. Therefore, the data that is emerging is suggesting the way in which change is being led is impacting upon staff morale and turnover. Furthermore, leaders' behaviours and attitudes had an impact upon followers, such as their level of competence, or skill set (07-Fac). The  perception was that change was in fact amplifying leadership styles from differing leaders, such as becoming more autocratic and bureaucratic (06-Fac), but in terms of their leaders level of compliance and assertiveness in pushing the school agenda (08-Fac), there had been the perception that leaders were being dictatorial, and secretive, by not keeping followers informed and abreast of the change situation. For example:

> *"this is the way it is going to be done, whether you like it or not"* (17-Fad).

From an administration perspective, ***Appendix 11*** helps to illustrate that two out of the three respondents (16-Fad and 17-Fad) were negative pre and during change, and were not involved in change at all, compared to the other administration follower (18-Fad, refer to Table 1). Although this individual was positive pre-change, during change they became neutral and felt they had no involvement pre and during change. This respondent expected to have a high level of involvement after change, in terms of implementing the new ways of working. For followers who had negative attitudes pre and during change, the data suggests they either had no involvement at all, or some, in other words not high levels of involvement at all. Followers who had positive attitudes towards change, generally, had some or high levels of involvement. For one academic follower (07-Fac), although they were positive pre and during change, they had no involvement in change taking place, adding to the suggestion that attitudes towards change depended on what the change was and how it impacted individuals.

### 4.10.2    Leader perceptions

From an academic leader's perspective, 03-Lac and 09-Lac had noticed staff were off work through stress, or had left the organisation, due to viewing change within the school and university negatively, resulting in a greater turnover of staff. From both an academic and administration follower perspective, the negative behaviours and attitudes from leaders had caused them stress due to change taking place, and staff reduction meant workloads were being passed downwards due to pressures from above (17-Fad). Where a leader had a neutral behaviour or attitude, this had a neutral impact upon the follower (18-Fad). The differing levels of leaders within a team, particularly those who were more apprehensive and cynical about the change process, had a negative impact upon followers (18-Fad). The data clearly indicate that change was being done to people and where leaders were not listening. This type of behaviour had a demotivating effect (05-Fac). When people had been involved with change implementation and had a bit more of a say, attitudes towards change changed. Furthermore, the way change was being led and implemented had caused an academic follower to *"decide to leave the organisation"* (06-Fac). This may help to explain the perceived high turnover of staff that had or were about to leave the organisation, or were considering leaving. For one respondent, the positive behaviour from their leader had actually increased their level of trust and sharing attitude (11-Fac).

### 4.10.3    Relationship quality

The table within *Appendix 9* illustrates how leaders and followers perceive the quality of their relationship with each other. Leaders perceived that they had high or other quality relationships, but not low-quality relationships with their followers. One academic leader felt they had received a swell of support (03-Lac), whilst another leader acknowledged that a job had to be done and they were not in their position to be liked, but recognised their role was a custodian one (09-Lac). The language by leaders was one of inclusiveness and such terms such as *"community"* (02-Lac) or "*team*" (09-Lac) were used.

The data though is telling a slightly different story, for example, the different approaches taken by leaders was in fact producing different levels of quality relationships. Some followers felt they had a high-quality or other-quality relationship. One administration follower felt they had a low-quality relationship with a more direct supervisor.

These different approaches from leaders can lead to a low-quality relationship. For example, an academic follower (07-Fac) suggested that due to a *"whole plethora of issues"* with one of their leaders, such as being unable to manage workload, avoiding conversations, incompetence in the role, the relationship was negative in their eyes, and they felt that describing the relationship as being low was being kind. From administration follower perspectives, unanimously they felt the relationship they had with their team leader was a good relationship, due to that leader being helpful, approachable and looking out for their interests. However, for one administration follower, the term *"adequate relationship"* had been used, due to feeling that it was their leader's responsibility to make decisions (18-Fad). Furthermore, where a leader avoided difficult conversations or where wide-ranging issues existed, it can lead to a negative relationship, or where the leader is in namesake only, no relationship exists. When a leader understands their follower's way of working and vice versa, and there was trust in that relationship and the quality was perceived to be high. From academic follower perspectives, they felt their relationship was either, quite good (05-Fac), or friendly enough but on a superficial level (05-Fac; 06-Fac).

Where there is mutual trust and they worked cooperatively as equals, the relationship was perceived to be high quality. Furthermore, where a relationship is reciprocal, supportive, or help was given to followers, and where a follower trusts that leader, the data suggests an indication of a high-quality relationship. Where a leader avoids addressing followers' issues or concerns, and the relationship breaks down there is a clear indication of a low-quality relationship.

Within **Appendix 10** (interrelationship three), a number has been given to each part contained within this interrelationship for ease of identification, for example (3) refers to the nature of change, (4) refers to the LMX relationship. Interrelationship three is illustrating that the nature of change (3) is having an influence upon the change process. Although it cannot dictate how the change should be implemented, it can influence upon the context and content elements, particularly in terms of what is currently happening in the higher education sector. What the change process does do, is impact upon both leader and follower behaviours, attitudes and reactions to change, particularly given past experiences of change. Depending on how either leaders or followers have reacted towards change, it can have an impact upon the LMX relationship (4) in a positive, negative or neutral way in terms of attitudes and behaviours.

Furthermore, how change was being led and the level of involvement or consultation, had some bearing upon the relationships between leaders and followers, particularly in terms of high, low or other type of quality relationship.

## 4.11   Types of commitment

Leaders who initiate change perceive themselves to be complexly committed and have either affective or normative types of commitment, compared with an academic leader (03-Lac) who did not initiate change. For this individual, the impression given was that they had no choice other than being committed towards change. An illustration of these differences in commitment types between leaders that initiate change with those who do not can be found in **Appendix 11**. From a leader's perspective, they felt it was not only their responsibility but also part of their role to be committed to change (02-Lac) and therefore were completely behind change (09-Lac). In terms of building commitment and involvement, leaders believed they had given followers responsibilities and ownership to become a part of the solution, as well as being consultative and making decisions as part of a group in a collective manner (02-Lac; 03-Lac; 09-Lac).

From a follower perspective (refer to table in **Appendix 12**), the opposite seemed to be occurring, thereby contradicting the leaders' perception of this relationship. The data seems to be suggesting leaders and followers had different organisational commitment. Leaders considered the organisation to be a good employer that provided them with different opportunities (02-Lac, 09-Lac), and they had buy-in with what the University was trying to do. This suggests that leaders had affective commitment to the organisation, meaning they remained because they wanted to, and also normative and continuance types of commitment.

For followers, it was slightly different. From an academic follower perspective, the job role they were doing played a part in terms of their commitment and when that changed, followers would move on (05-Fac) due to receiving job offers on a regular basis (05-Fac, 11-Fac). The underlying message here appears to be that for those who receive these frequent offers of work, they could simply resign, and find work in another institution. One academic follower (06-Fac) they felt as if they did not have any commitment to the organisation, but instead commitment to certain people, students and programmes they had taught. There was a sense that people were biding their time and staying put until better opportunities arose. The table within *Appendix 12* clearly illustrates that followers' commitment towards change is generally low, due to that sense of having 'no choice'.

In terms of commitment towards the organisation, this varied from zero and minimal, to affective and a continuance-type commitment. For other followers it is a sense of convenience type of commitment, where it suits followers to remain for the time being. The data is suggesting there is a link between commitment to change, change implementation, the type of change and the level of involvement (06-Fac, 08-Fac). For followers who were in lower grade roles, there was a sense that there was "*no choice but being committed*" to the change process (16-Fad and 17-Fad), so therefore they tried to embrace it, providing there was not a negative impact upon them personally (17-Fad). Depending on the circumstances of individuals, this can influence commitment to change in terms of family ties, or how mobile someone was (05-Fac). The impact from the type of change can have some bearing on someone's commitment, therefore leading to the suggestion that change is viewed on a change-by-change basis (07-Fac). The data suggests that the nature of change was in fact having an impact upon the leader-member exchange (LMX) relationship.

*Appendix 13* (interrelationship four) illustrates how leaders perceived they had high-quality relationships with their followers, whereas some followers perceive the relationship with their leaders as either low or adequate. Some administration followers felt their relationship with the team leader was a high-quality one compared with their immediate senior administrator they reported to. This meant for leaders, their commitment to change and to the organisation was different to followers, due to their level of responsibility, but also because of the level of involvement and consultation that leaders have compared to followers. This meant that the level of commitment and the quality of relationships between leaders and followers did in some way influence the level of resistance.

Academic followers seem to be more resistant to change than administration followers, perhaps due to the nature of the change that was taking place, and the personal impact change had upon them. For administration followers it seemed that due to not having a choice with the change taking place, there was a sense that if they wanted to keep their job then they had better not resist change, particularly due to the voluntary severance scheme taking place.

## 4.12    Change outcomes

There was a realisation that people could not be too resistant towards the change and expect to have a job, particularly as change would take place regardless (16-Fad, 8-Fac, 11-Fac, 17-Fad). So where people were unhappy, they engaged less with that change (08-Fac). Some followers believed they were not resistant to change, suggesting they were unaware of their resistance, particularly when they acknowledged they were sceptical and cynical of change (8-Fac, 11-Fac, 17-Fad, 18-Fad).

As previously mentioned, for many in this organisation there was a greater expectation from them, such as taking on more work, due to less resource being available (16,17,18 Fad). This increased workload resulted in a loss of morale and higher turnover of staff (06-Fac), but also in terms of perceived increases in stress and pressure (17-Fad). There had also been the perception that the negative outcomes had already been achieved, or the change outcomes would be negative (17-Fad), and one academic follower felt it was more a question about costs and benefits (06-Fac). An administration follower felt that when their job was to change, they had needed to say:

> *"I'm not going to be able to do all this, I need some support"* (16-Fad)

This individual was concerned as to whether help would actually be given, due to their colleagues being equally busy. There was a real sense of frustration as a result of change, particularly from leaders. For example, one academic leader felt that their hands had been tied due to not having the resources, such as staffing or flexibility to make things happen quickly (03-Lac). This was particularly poignant for this leader, as the University had wanted this respondent's school in a better position in the league tables.

## 4.13    Conclusion for Organisation A

Depending on the type of change taking place within the external environment, notably third-order change, and the experiences individuals have had within this institution (past experience) can lead decision-makers to making reactionary or unplanned change in terms of process, and implementation. This can then have an impact upon the leader-member exchange relationship in either a positive, negative or other way. That can impact upon change outcomes, in terms of type of change experience for leaders or followers, but also upon relationship quality. This then influences organisational commitment, but not necessarily commitment to change, as there was a general consensus that individuals did not have a choice other than complying with change, unless choosing to leave the organisation. The experiences of change taking place within the organisation appeared to be negative, and for some individuals, depending on their particular set of circumstances, this affected their level of organisational commitment.

## 4.14 Organisation B – within-case analysis

### 4.14.1 Background

Organisation B is a university in the south of England and has over 9,000 students. Primarily the focus has been on teaching, but was now concentrating on becoming a research-active university. The University had been undergoing a major restructure and was in its third year of a five-year strategic plan. This organisation has moved from a faculty structure to a school structure, and has centralised the majority of its professional services.

There seemed a reluctance from employees within the organisation to take part in being interviewed, and even when there was agreement to take part, respondents did not reply to emails in terms of setting up a convenient time or day to meet. In addition, one respondent failed to turn up. The researcher acknowledges that interviews are entirely voluntary and respondents have the right to withdraw at any time. There just seemed a lack of collegiality and a sense of unhappiness as the researcher walked around the organisation. The majority of office doors were firmly closed, suggesting the working environment was a closed one.

This organisation had been relatively static in terms of change as the existing strategic plan had expired and was extended for a period of 12 months but there was an expectation that change would be taking place with the arrival of a new Vice-Chancellor. As previously discussed, (refer to background information for organisation A) the changes taking place within the higher education sector also impacted upon this University. This meant for Organisation B that future-proofing the University was required.

## 4.15 Context

Within this organisation there was a need and expectation for change, for example:

> *"the organisation was not used to change, we are trying to change the culture, so we are values based"* (01-VC)

One academic leader (11-Lac) commented:

> *"there was a lot that needed to change inside the University, you know, there was a lot of repetition, some very old systems, and outdated processes"* (11-Lac)

This suggests that the organisation had been static for some time and having a set of values will help to change the culture within the organisation, but this also implies that the organisation needed refreshing.

The data suggests that the pace of change has been noticeably different compared to previously within the organisation, for example:

> *"The pace of change is the thing I've noticed recently, change was actually very static here, yeah, it was static in terms of personnel"* (14-Fac)

This provides an indication that there had not been a high turnover of staff for a number of years, therefore if the organisation was to change its culture within, then perhaps there was a requirement to review existing resourcing levels, and then to adjust accordingly. There had been consequences due to the changes taking place, such as with the centralisation of services. As a result, it was seen that:

> *"the academic world has suffered a lot with that because resources are much more limited, you've got very small teams, servicing a very large university"* (10-Fac)

What seems to have taken place was that the organisation was downsizing in terms of the number of employees it had, and in doing so, had a significant impact in terms of the increased workload of remaining staff within the organisation (10-Fac). Within the higher education sector and from government, the changes being afflicted upon universities appears to have had an impact, such as:

> *"the government made massive changes to how funding happens that impacted on universities"* (14-Fac)

Furthermore, there appeared to have been other external factors contributing to this perceived level of impact, for example:

> *"the world outside has changed, the demographic, there are less 18-year-olds coming through to come to university, Brexit, visas you name it"* (11-Lac)

This provides some explanation as to thinking behind the decisions that had been made by the University, or more specifically by the Vice-Chancellor of the University, who commented:

> *"We were two years into the new fees regime, so students were paying up to £9,000 for their courses, so that changes the expectations to an extent, the declining demographic, so fewer 18-year-olds, so all of those factors made it very…very clear that the University needed to change, the increased competition, less students, Brexit, which potentially will reduce the number of European students that we have in the future, the increasing challenge of recruiting international students, all of those things mean we have to be operating very differently"* (01-VC)

The evidence from the data was very clear that the external environment has had an impact upon the internal environment, and has provided the rationale behind why change was needed. However, what the external environment cannot do is to provide the best approach in which to implement and lead change, or for that matter provide the interpretation in terms of justification for change. This in many respects may provide an explanation as to the issues the nature of change has upon relationships between leaders and followers.

## 4.16    Type of change experience

The data suggests there were some differences, particularly between academic and administrative leaders, which may in part be down to their position within the University or whether change impacted them on a personal level. One academic leader (11-Lac) commented:

> *"Because I'm a fairly senior manager, my experience has been positive, because I have been able to contribute towards that change"* (11-Lac)

This suggests involvement, or contributing towards change created a more positive experience, particularly if in a senior position. A contrasting set of views from an administration leader (02-Lad) felt that change had been "*a top-down, imposed, this is what's going to happen*" approach. This resulted in this administration leader experience feeling that:

> *"the most recent big change was a very negative experience because of the way it was handled and the speed at which it was done and the lack of care for the people involved"* (02-Lac)

This suggests that for change experiences to be negative there are a number of factors that are present, namely, the type of change, how it is handled, treatment of people within the organisation, and the pace of the change process. This view was supported by an administration semi-leader (03-LFad) who thought:

> "it's been more of a negative experience than a positive one. I saw it more as a political change then a required structural change and then my experience of how I personally was treated by people who I have trusted up to then, was really disappointing" (03-LFad)

This suggests that the way in which people are treated can have a detrimental effect in terms of maintaining and establishing trust. An administration follower felt:

> "the frustration is that change is happening and it's generally imposed and not in collaboration" (08-Fad)

### 4.16.1    Consequences

Following the decisions concerning the change process, one academic leader (02-Lad) felt that there had been severe consequences not only for themselves by for their colleagues, for example:

> "in a very short space of time of less than a month from the first announcement, we had been put at risk of loss of job. I have several colleagues who were off long-term sick, under quite severe mental health problems, which again wasn't really appreciated as part of a consequence by the process" (02-Lad)

What seems to have emerged from the data are the implications of change, as the change process had affected employees in both positive and negative ways, across the spectrum, in terms of employees within leadership and non-leadership positions. For example:

> "it actually led to me being quite ill for a long period and you know I was actually out sick for six months" (03-LFac)

Whereas for an administration follower saw their experience as follows:

> "It was quite a negative experience to be honest, it felt very rushed" (06-Fad)

What is interesting is that from a senior leader's perspective, they seemed to have held completely the opposite view, due to having had high levels of involvement in the change process, for example:

> *"having that opportunity to control your destiny, is a more positive experience than having something forced upon you"* (11-Lac)

## 4.17   Content

This section will be broken down into differing orders of change, commencing with third order to illustrate a cascading effect this can have upon both second and first-order change, as change within higher education sector (third-order change), is currently taking place and is influencing universities.

Within interrelationship one (***Appendix 14***), the context behind change is firstly the internal environment is one that has remained static for a period of time, therefore there was a need for change, and given the external environment, such as increased competition from other universities within the United Kingdom, it has had an impact upon the content of change, namely the three differing orders of change. What interrelationship one is illustrating is a cascading effect that the third-order change is having upon both the second and first-order change. This combination of both the content and context of change is creating the nature of change, namely, the type of change and its influence upon the organisation it terms of the pace of change and approach taken.

Third-order change within this organisation, was very closely tied to the external environment that the University found itself, both politically and regulatory. For example:

> *"we've gone from I suppose, a Labour government, you know, where xxxx was aiming towards 50 per cent of the population going to university, a very positive message, um which a lot of people took up and there's a lot of funding, a lot of positivity, lots of money sloshing around, so it's all very positive and then we went into a more difficult period of time, where the funding was cut or reduced"* (14-Fac)

The data is suggesting each of these differing order changes is in some way interacting with both the internal and external environment that the University had found itself in.

In terms of second-order change, there had been wide ranging experiences of change, but notably it was the changes to the existing culture, for example:

> "we are trying to change the culture, so we are values based, so that we are operating um, collectively, and recognising that people need to be thinking differently and operating differently" (01-VC)

Other types of second-order change, or major change varied from the decentralisation of professional services, into a far more centralised one, for example:

> "the biggest experience of change is where we moved as a faculty-based university with schools within it and imbedded professional services, some centralised but a lot of administrative support from within faculties to, erm, disbanded faculty structure with schools and departments and a heavily centralised professional service model" (09-Lac)

Despite the major changes taking place, the data suggests people had not been suitably informed as to what was actually taking place, and therefore out of the silence, people pieced together their own interpretation of what was taking place, leading to an undesired culture being created. This had brought about its own set of challenges as an administration follower (05-Fad) commented:

> "in the absence of any information people start making up rumours, which can spread in a in a department I think, um and then it just it just produces this culture of people being quite frustrated, which is difficult to shake" (05-Fad)

First-order change taking place within the University was less clear. Certainly there had been changes to the structures and processes within the organisation, for example:

> "there's been wide-scale changes across the whole institution in terms of teaching staff numbers, courses, how teaching staff operate and communicate with central services" (05-Fad)

There was also the suggestion that change milestones played a crucial role within first-order change, in terms of both processes and structures within this organisation, for example:

> "milestones that are set, you need to report, because they're part of the bigger picture of the university structures and processes" (02-Lad)

## 4.18    Responses to change

This section, as with Organisation A, focusses on how both leaders and followers have responded to change, in terms of their behaviours, attitudes and reactions toward change.

Interrelationship two (***Appendix 15***) is illustrating how the nature of change is influencing the change process, particularly in terms of both leaders and followers' response to change and this impacts on the LMX relationship, notably the treatment of staff during the change process. But what is clear is trust is associated with high-quality relationships. What is also interesting is the personal impact that the change process was having on both leaders and followers, in terms of workload.

### 4.18.1    Leader perspectives

The data is suggesting that both leader and followers have different types of attitudes, behaviours and reactions to change, depending on what the change is and how it is implemented, for example, the behaviour of one administration leader (02-Lad) saw this as being due to:

> *"an element of shock, there would certainly be internally and emotional negativity to it because the justification and the reasoning for the change wasn't clearly made"* (02-Lad)

This was then reflected in their attitudes for example:

> *"my perception was very much it was about being done for, almost personal reasons rather than effective reasons"* (02-Lad)

With the arrival of the new Vice-Chancellor, there had been some anticipation of change, for example:

> *"I think my behaviour was probably quite open to it, quite accepting, it wasn't unexpected the actual change itself wasn't unexpected"* (09-Lac)

An administration leader (07-Lad) felt that their reaction towards change was also positive, therefore on the whole, the data is suggesting that leaders were in a state of readiness, or prepared for change to take place.

### 4.18.2 Followers perspectives

From a follower's perspective, this seemed to be quite the opposite, for example one administrative follower (08-Fad) saw their immediate response towards change as being:

*"often a bit despairing, um and end up feeling a bit sort of like, a kind of frustration"* (08-Fad)

This was then reflected in their behaviour, for example:

*"it's very hard to say what my behaviour is, kind of oscillating kind of like shuffling between on the one hand feeling there's no point, on the other hand feeling that something must be able to be done and then just feeling very frustrated and sort of disengaged and then the other part of my behaviour is that it ends up impacting my work"* (08-Fad)

A sense of frustration seems to be an emerging theme coming out of the data, for example for two administration followers (08-Fad and 05Fad), their attitudes appeared to have been quite cynical or even sceptical of change, for example:

*"my attitude is a bit like you know, what in, how is this going to be any different"* (08-Fad)

The other administration follower (05-Fad) commented:

*"I try to remain positive about it, um, and look for the positives in change but when change happens a lot, all the time continuously and you don't ever get a period of...of settling into something that could be quite frustrating"* (05-Fad)

From an academic follower perspective, there was an element of cynicism in terms of the consultation being taken in implementing change, for example one academic follower (10-Fac) commented:

*"has anybody actually spoken to people on the ground operationalising everything first, or was it just a decision that has come out of the ivory tower?"* (10-Fac)

There appeared to be a difference between attitudes and reactions to change, for example one administration semi-leader (03-LFad) felt their initial response was one of interest, in terms of understanding what the change was and the reasoning behind it.

However, to some of the other changes taking place, their reactions had been:

> *"to the big change again, they were getting rid of faculties, going into schools we're taking professional services out of schools and we're putting them into centralisation, my reaction to that is, this is just for someone to make their mark"* (03-LFad)

Furthermore, the change process for followers created some worry and uncertainty in terms of job security, however, change that has taken place has impacted both leaders and followers. The data is suggesting that change agents perceive people as playing a vital role in change, and this is particularly important in terms of the type of desired cultural change for the organisation. However, the change experience from individuals in this organisation tells a different story. From a leader's perspective, they believed:

> *"people were thrown to the sharks almost, and actually just weren't as a university, as a whole, didn't really seem to show much interest and care for people"* (02-Lad)

One administration semi-leader (03-LFad) commented:

> *"the big change that we had going from faculty to centralisation actually ended up having a really bad impact on me; my experience of how I personally was treated by people who I have trusted up to then, was really disappointing, you know it actually led to me being quite ill for a long period"* (03-LFad)

This is illustrating that loss of trust and the way people have been treated creates a negative environment, particularly for cultural change to become embedded and effective, but also for establishing quality relationships between leaders and followers. There was also the physical impact that the nature of change had on individuals. For example:

> *"I can feel, physically feel, that you know the typical symptoms of stress, which is you know, tightening of stomach, you know, feeling sort of tired, more tired than normal"* (14-Fac)

It seems that this type of impact may have influenced the outcome for this individual, however for leaders that held senior positions, their response to change was perceived to be very positive, for example:

> *"it's what we needed for a long time. To be honest, it was quite exciting because I felt as if we had become a little bit static over a period of years and felt suddenly there was a new impetuous, you know to reinvent and move forward and become the university we wanted to become"* (11-Lac)

This level of positivity is perhaps down to their level of involvement and input into the change that has been unfolding within this organisation. The table within **Appendix 16** identifies the changes of attitudes respondents felt towards change and their level of involvement. This has been broken down into those respondents who were positive and negative.

The tables within **Appendix 17** and **Appendix 18** illustrate that attitudes had altered during the process of change, particularly when individuals had been impacted by change in some way. This can be clearly seen and evidenced particularly with the previous examples.

## 4.19    Changes in response towards change

The data is suggesting as the change process progressed this led to a change of response towards it, for example, one administration semi-leader (03-LFad) saw this as being due to having *"had a couple of different, sort of personal responses to change"*, for example:

> *"I no longer have that emotional buy in to the place so whereas professionally I want to come in and do a great job and support my colleagues, then I want to go home put it away and not think about it"* (03-LFac)

This suggests that for this administration semi-leader, they have developed a different type of relationship with the organisation and in a way, they seem to have detached themselves in some way from the organisation.

From an administration follower perspective, (05-Fad) saw this as being due to becoming *"a little bit fed up of it"* and another administration follower (08-Fad) commented:

> *"my attitude was very much change is and can be really good and that things need to be changed, to now feeling very much like change is needed, but the change that's happening isn't what's needed and frustration that's not being recognised. My behaviour then in terms of the trust, it's not just my line manager, I think my trust with these more senior managers is just I don't have any confidence or trust in what they're proposing, or that they understand the impact of the change they're planning"* (08-Fad)

Therefore, the data is suggesting that the longer change progress goes on, combined with the nature of that change, can have an adverse effect upon both attitudes and behaviours of both leaders and followers, but also, upon levels of trust.

## 4.20    Process factors

Within this organisation the data is suggesting that radical and reactionary change was taking place, rather than either planned or emergent, for example, an administrative follower perspective, saw this as:

*"quite knee-jerk reactionary change and it's not long term or planned"* (08-Fad)

Although for a number of leaders, their sentiments towards change had been that the restructure had been the biggest experience of change within this university (11-Lac) and felt the process had been revealing and evolutionary (09-Lac).

This perspective was supported by an administration leader (02-Lad) who commented:

*"if we look at the most recent major change we've been through, it resulted in a new senior manager Vice-Chancellor in the University wanting to, I think stamp their mark on the organisation following their, their arrival, (embarked upon) very quick change"* (02-Lad)

This suggests that for radical change and for an organisation to realise that it is going through change, there are a number of factors. Firstly, the arrival of a new Vice-Chancellor. Secondly, a major shake-up or restructure ensued, including both processes and systems. Thirdly, casualties from the change resulted, for example one academic leader (11-Lac) supported this view and saw:

*"casualties, which there always are. I, we went through huge institutional change, there was a lot that needed to change inside the University, you know, there was a lot of repetition, some very old systems, and outdated processes"* (11-Lac)

Finally, the pace of change seemed to be faster than perhaps with both planned and emergent change. Although the majority of respondents felt change was still being implemented, therefore the outcomes are unknown as to whether or not they will be achieved, however on a micro level these were becoming quite clear.

### 4.20.1 Change implementation (involvement)

The data suggests followers have had little input into change, for example, one administration follower (06-Fad) saw their level of input as being *"not a lot really, never really got consulted too much",* and this view was supported by another administration follower (05-Fad) who commented:

> *"I'm on the periphery really of any changes that need to happen inside of the department I work in, and larger scale changes for the…the big unit that I work for. I have no input into and haven't been asked to have any input into it"* (05-Fad)

One administration semi-leader (03-LFad) perceived the opportunities to input into what was being put forward as "*a bit false, you know there is the feeling that well it's already been decided".* This suggests the involvement opportunities were being viewed as purely a 'paper exercise'. More senior leaders within the organisation felt they had more involvement with change due to their position within the organisation. For example:

> *"I have a position between VCG (Vice-Chancellors Group) and the staff, the academic staff, and have to deliver the change and so I occupy one of those positions where I can contribute both upwards and downward"* (11-Lac)

Whereas for another academic leader, although initially they had little involvement, their level of involvement increased as change progressed, for example:

> *"Pre-change my level of involvement was very limited. There was probably some in how we were going to do it but it was limited. During was high, after has been quite high I think"* (09-Lac)

The tables (refer to **appendices 17 and 18**) provide an illustration as to the level of involvement and attitudes pre, during and after change had taken place. Even though respondents felt they had some or high involvement in change, their attitudes towards change varied. This might be because the opportunities may have been perceived as not being genuine, or they felt it was a foregone conclusion. What has been really noticeable is that most individuals started off positively pre change. As the data suggests there was an anticipation for the commencement of a change process. For those who were negative, there had been some form of personal impact from change, particularly at the pre-change stage.

Where respondents had some level of involvement was within their own job role, so at a more local or team level. For example:

"there are small scale changes within my own job role" (05-Fad)

"the change I get involved with is more to facilitate my provision being operationalised" (10-Fac)

This may provide an explanation and assist in taking account of the 'some' level of involvement from followers, as shown within (**Appendix 17**). It would appear that followers' level of involvement had not been at an institutional level, but rather at a local one.

## 4.21   Leadership approach (style)

For some leaders their approach to change varied, for example, the leader of this institution discussed the current working environment their organisation was operating in and their reasoning for taking this approach had been to identify:

"the variables that were impacting upon the University, but we also went through, ahh, so evidence was gathered through, with regard to the impact of the changing circumstances that we faced" (01-VC)

This evidence gathering approach was also taken by an administration leader (02-Lad) who commented:

"I would like to think that having come through many years as an academic, and a researcher that actually I would like to base decisions on some form of evidence" (02-Lad)

However, for one academic leader (11-Lac) who had responsibility for a number of different departments, their approach to change was more of a cascading one in terms of these departments implementing change within their teams. Although this academic leader had taken a slightly different approach had with their own management team, for example:

"so the way I run my management team is that it is a safe space, where we can talk freely, be critical, you know, question, the purpose or validity" (11-Lac)

The data is suggesting there was not a common approach towards the process or to leading change, which can lead to negative perceptions of the change process, for example:

> *"I feel that it's got to the point where it's become haphazard"* (14-Fac)

This haphazard perception of change may well have repercussions on the outcomes of change at the micro and perhaps even the macro level.

## 4.22    Differing perceptions of LMX relationship

### 4.22.1    Leader perceptions

From a leader's perspective concerning their followers' behaviours, attitudes and reactions towards change, one academic leader believed that people did not like change (11-Lac), while another felt as if followers had all reacted slightly differently (09-Lac). The leader of this institution (01-VC) felt:

> *"I think in the same way that I would anticipate changes received in any organisation, which is a bit mixed really"* (01-VC)

What is emerging from the data is some pre-conceptions and anticipations that leaders are expecting from their followers, and in doing so are already in some ways enforcing a negative perspective. Other leaders believed their followers felt change was being imposed upon them, and there had been a lack of involvement in the change process.

What is emerging from the data is that change was being done to followers, and the perception from leaders had been of followers having an aversion towards change. This should not have come as a surprise if change was being imposed upon them, particularly as there had been a number of consequences from change, for example:

> *"I've definitely seen the fear, um confusion, anger, a lot of anger, I've, you know I witnessed, and a lot of depression as well, a lot of you know, I couldn't even say sadness but real, you know beyond sadness, and deem people as being demoralised"* (03-LFad)

Furthermore, one administration leader (02-Lac) commented:

> *"There were a number of colleagues of people who are now in my team that were made redundant and pushed out as part of that process"* (02-Lac)

This paints a damaging picture as to the state of the organisation, particularly as people play an ever increasing and significant role within an organisation, and importantly to the service they provide to students.

### 4.22.2    Follower perceptions

For a number of administrative followers, their perceptions towards their leaders during the change process varied and they saw their leaders as being:

> "very understanding of um of changes that were coming in, my perception of it is, that they were also quite frustrated" (05-Fad)

> *"supportive, they're positive, but also at the same time a bit, you could tell that they were also a bit sort of anxious, and a bit sort of apprehensive about what was going to take place"* (06-Fad)

What has emerged from the data is that followers were perceiving their leaders to be equally frustrated and apprehensive from change that has been taking place, but due to being in a leadership role had been trying to be positive and supportive towards them. However, from an academic follower's perspective it was slightly more concerning, for example:

> *"I think again they are at a level where you just have to get on with it, because as decisions have been made, you either like it, or if you don't like it so much, there's the door, and it is quite apparent that, that door is as wide open as we would like it to be"* (10-Fac)

This suggests that followers had been expected to do as they are told, or per the imposed change, otherwise they may had found themselves being out of a job, and therefore out of the organisation. Where leaders have been positive and supportive or for that matter anxious or unsupportive towards change, this was reflected in their followers. Thereby supporting the concept that followers do indeed take their ques from the behaviour and attitudes of leaders during times of change, for example:

> *"I think that sort of positive attitude towards trying to make it work did rub off on myself and other colleagues"* (05-Fad)

> *"in the sense like, that's probably where you get your anxieties" (06-Fad)*

One administration semi-leader (03-LFad) had two different leaders, one pre-change and a new leader since the change, one of which had a positive effect and the other had severe consequences, and commented:

> *"since the big structural change, and a change of manager, found that manager to be really supportive. I'm really confident in that manager, and not withstanding that period of time I was ill, that had nothing to do with my new manager, that was an overhang from big change, where my immediate manager under that big change was terrible, absolutely awful and is without a doubt some way responsible for me getting so ill"* (03-LFad)

This just illustrates the severity and implications of how a leader's behaviour and attitudes can be extremely detrimental to their followers.

## 4.23   Relationship quality

The table within **Appendix 18** provides a clear illustration as to the differences in relationship quality from the perspectives of leaders, semi-leaders and followers.

From a leader's perspective, the relationships with their followers was seen to be either high or other type of quality such as: supportive, positive, good or strong. Semi-leaders also perceived their relationship be high or other with their leader, for example being strong or open. What did stand out was the differences in quality relationship that semi-leader (03-LFad) had with a previous leader compared with their current leader. Following a change of leader, this individual found their new leader to be *"absolutely brilliant",* and commented:

> *"you know I could not ask for a better manager, you know I feel very confident and I feel supported by that manager"* (03-LFad)

This was a very clear example of a high-quality relationship. Followers also perceived their relationship with leaders to be either high or other type of quality, such as being fine, or really good.

There were a number of key elements that both leaders and followers felt contributed to a relationship being high quality, for example:

> *"I feel like they are, um very um supportive of me and very positive towards me"* (07-Lad)

> *"it's very strong, um we've all been through that change together"* (04-LFad)

> *"it's been a very collaborative, sharing and open relationship, so yeah I have a really positive relationship"* (08-Fad)

However, some academic followers had a number of different leaders in a short period of time, meaning that the relationship was not perceived as being a high quality one due to the fact that trust had not yet been established, and it was therefore perceived to be a work in progress, for example:

> *"it's a difficult one, because I have had four line managers in four years"* (14-Fac)

## 4.24    Types of commitment

What is emerging from the data is that the longer change goes on, so continuous change can and does impact upon not only change outcomes, but also commitment towards the organisation. As **Appendix 19** illustrates, it seems that a lack of consultation and involvement in change can lead to resistance and hostility-type behaviour and attitudes. Furthermore, the way in which people have been treated during times of change can impact upon the relationship between leaders and followers and vice versa. What **Appendix 19** is illustrating is that individuals felt as if they did not have a choice, other than being committed towards change, as they saw little point in being resistant, due to the changes being implemented anyway. However, employees had a choice in terms of their commitment towards the organisation, they could either stay or leave. The data is suggesting that this was where the level of resistance was having an impact upon the change outcomes, in terms of individuals' attitudes, behaviour and changes in responses towards change. What appears to be happening is that resistance is interacting with commitment, which is then influencing the change outcomes. Perhaps this is where resistance is being formed, at the change outcomes stage. This may be an important consideration for future change processes and its implementation, such as the creation of prior or historical change experiences.

The data appears to be suggesting that depending on what the change was and the reasoning behind it, leaders and followers didn't really have any choice than going along with the change process, for example:

> *"my level of commitment will vary, depending on the reason and the background to the justification for the change"* (02-Lad)

> *"pragmatically there's no choice, I'm either in it or I'm not"* (09-Lac)

> *"if change is going to happen it is going to happen you've just got to get on with it"* (06-Fad)

There was a distinct difference between commitment towards change and commitment towards the organisation, as illustrated by the table within **Appendix 20**, particularly in terms of how these types of commitment had altered during the progress of change. An administration follower had envisaged a long-term career within this organisation, but felt this had changed due to:

> *"more recently, probably within the last six months feeling like that's not going to be possible, so I'm going to be quite stuck, I'm not going to be able to progress and I'm not going to achieve the sort of changes or sort of kind of positive steps that I want to see and it's having an impact on my own wellbeing, so then looking for ways to get out, and so actually you know I plan on leaving, that's related to the fact that I'm not, felt too happy in my job and looking for opportunities to develop elsewhere"* (08-Fad)

It appears that followers had been interested in being developed and wanting to further their career prospects, but felt this organisation had not enabled that to happen, for example:

> *"if something better comes up, to put in bluntly, if something comes up for my career progression, because I came from a different institution to this one, to take a step up in my career I'm quite happy to step away from this University in order to step up again. So I think my commitment to the institution isn't that high, it's more my commitment to my own professional development and if that means going externally then I would"* (05-Fad)

The data suggests the majority of respondents were not particularly committed to the organisation but remained due to personal circumstances, therefore were unable to uproot easily (09-Lac), or because of the impact change had had on individuals, for example:

> *"I really used to feel very personally invested in the organisation, I definitely had an emotional attachment to the organisation, and since my period of illness I've become very detached, so I come in and in fact I think what's changed is I've developed a more professional relationship with the organisation, I no longer have that emotional buy-in to the place"* (03-LFad)

Leaders felt they had either affective or continuance commitment to the organisation, and semi leaders had some commitment, or their commitment had changed. Followers on the other hand varied. Commitment was zero, low and one individual (06-Fad) felt they had normative commitment, a sense of obligation due to being a student at the organisation that gave this individual their first full time job.

The table within ***Appendix 21*** highlights the perceived differences in types of commitment between leaders that initiate change from those who do not. What the data is indicating is that for academic leader 11-Lac there was both affective and continuance type commitment. For leaders who did not initiate change, there was continuance type commitment but their commitment depended on the rationale and justification for change. Although one administration leader (07-Lad) had affective commitment, and was fully onboard with change taking place; again, this depended upon the rationale for change.

Interrelationship four (***Appendix 22***) takes a closer look at the LMX relationship between leaders and followers. Generally, they consider the relationship to be high quality due to trust and support within the relationship, but this is dependent upon the leader. As discussed earlier, one of the administration semi-leader (03-LFad) had a low-quality relationship with a previous leader due to reduced trust and respect, but with their new leader following change felt they had a high-quality relationship. The level of resistance for both leaders and followers had been minimal or none in terms of individuals not recognising their level of resistance. For followers though, there appeared to be resistance towards decision-makers. For both leaders and followers there was a difference between commitment to change, where both parties felt there was no choice, but in terms of commitment to the organisation, for followers it was perceived to be low, where individuals would be looking for opportunities elsewhere, but for leaders there was a sense of both affective and normative commitment towards the organisation.

Furthermore, what is emerging from the data is that the nature of the change that is taking place had created a feeling for being *"battle worn"* (14-Fac) thereby resulting in questioning type attitudes as to whether or not it would be better off working elsewhere (14-Fac). However, one academic follower (10-Fac) saw their reasoning for staying was due to:

> *"students and the people I work with, it has nothing to do with the organisation. I don't have to be here, there are plenty of other jobs out there, and I've got my family"* (14-Fac)

The data is portraying quite a concerning picture in so much as individuals were not particularly committed to their organisation. As a consequence, this may have implications on the type of cultural change the Vice-Chancellor was hoping to have achieved.

## 4.25    Change outcomes

The data is suggesting that depending on how individuals have been impacted by the change taking place, and its nature, this can either lead to positive of negative change outcomes, in terms of behaviour, attitudes and experiences for both leaders and followers within this organisation (*appendices 22 and 23*, interrelationships four and five, are directly related to change outcomes).

An outcome of change from an administration leader's perspective, as 02-Lad commented:

> *"there would certainly internally be emotional negativity to it because the justification and the reasoning for the change wasn't clearly made, the consequences on myself and a number of colleagues were going to be quite severe"* (02-Lad)

Therefore, for this leader, because of not just this lack of justification and reasoning for change but from the personal impact it had upon themselves and colleagues, felt that:

> *"the most recent change big change was a very negative experience because of the way it was handled and the speed at which it was done and the lack of care for the people involved"* (02-Lac)

Although for another administration leader (07-Lad), their perspective was different, even though their job role had been put at risk. In terms of their attitude and behaviour towards change, said they were:

> *"naturally a very positive person, I'm actually a very inquisitive person and I am naturally*
> *sort of keen to move on to the next thing, so change is actually something I can't live*
> *without"* (07-Lad)

Within interrelationship four (***Appendix 22***) and referred to within interrelationship three (***Appendix 19***), the nature of change appears to be influencing the change process in terms of how both leaders and followers had responded towards change. Furthermore, their level of involvement and the treatment they had received during change impacted upon their commitment and resistance towards decision-makers. This also had some bearing upon change outcomes as to whether these experiences were either positive or negative.

For example, ***Appendix 22*** helps to illustrate how leaders' resistance and commitment feeds into the change outcomes, and whether their experiences of change were positive, negative or other. Interestingly, different levels of leaders have had slightly different experiences, mostly negative ones, but for those who can input into change, their experience was positive. For followers, their lack of involvement with the implementation feeds into change outcomes.

Interrelationship five (***Appendix 23***) expands upon interrelationship four (***Appendix 22***) by illustrating the influences that context and content have upon the change process, and change outcomes. Furthermore, interrelationship five (***Appendix 23***) helps to identify differences in the change experiences that respondents have had, and how these experiences impacted upon organisational commitment. The consequences and effects caused by the context and content of change has had an impact upon change outcomes, some of which were mainly negative, however, for a few individuals there had been positive ones, such as having been a recipient of a promotion or provided with developmental opportunities. A further example of a positive attitude, behaviour and experience of change was from an academic leader (11-Lac) who felt this had been the most positive experience of change they had gone through before, due to their senior position within the organisation, but also due to being:

> *"more privy to the shaping of it, and then able to guide its implementation but there was*
> *more negotiation and consultation for this one than I've experienced in previous times"*
> (11-Lac)

Not everyone shared this view. For some, change had been a more negative than positive experience, for example:

> *"the main thing is probably about communication, um communicating or not as the case may be, at an early stage, why there's going to be a change, what's going to change and the sort of approach being taken has been lacking, pretty much in every instance that I've experienced"* (03-LFad)

The data is also suggesting that individuals had become fed up with change taking place. For example:

> *"wears me down a bit when I think about the future or the present changes happening, so my sort of feelings towards it has changed, quite a lot really since the beginning to the point that we're at now, in the negative way"* (05-Fad)

Furthermore, there had been a sense of confusion as to how decision-makers had reached the conclusions in terms of what was being proposed, thereby making some feel more resistant, and saw this as being due to:

> *"not being consulted and also not feeling like the people that are making the decisions really understand the day to day demands and needs, then makes me resistant to kind of listening to what they're proposing"* (08-Fad)

As a result of this perceived lack of consultation, for this individual they felt as if they had become:

> *"more hostile towards new ideas, um or less open to them, yeah because I don't have confidence or trust that it will be delivered properly"* (08-Fad)

## 4.26    Conclusion for organisation B

What emerged from the data was that the nature of the change was not only impacted by both the context and content of change, but it actually influences the change process. It is this influencing of the change process that has had an impact upon both leaders and followers, in terms of their treatment during change. This influenced, or in a way dictated the pace of change, therefore is of particular relevance due to this organisation having been relatively static over a number of years. This had some bearing upon the LMX relationship, although it would appear not in terms of the quality of that relationship as there was a general consensus that relationships were high quality ones, but rather in terms of both organisational commitment and change outcomes. Notably the negative change experiences of both leaders and followers. It seemed that with the voluntary severance scheme in operation and employees not being replaced was perhaps in some ways thwarting resistance, due to the very real threat, or presence of either being made redundant or the organisation being happy to lose people.

## 4.27 Organisation C – within-case analysis

### 4.27.1 Background

Organisation C is a university in the south of England with over 20,000 students and over 1,500 staff, from both academic and administration disciplines. The organisation has been undergoing a major restructure and is in a state of constant change with a number of change projects being undertaken simultaneously. The organisation is implementing a new student record system and restructuring the faculties in order to ensure departments are of a similar size. The administration staff within faculties has been moved into a centralised service, although a few administration staff remain within faculties. In addition, there has been a freeze of recruitment of staff and a voluntary severance scheme is in operation, therefore staff that leave the organisation are not being replaced. It is reviewing its curriculum provision and bringing the courses offered to students up to date, including increasing the visibility of the organisation. Furthermore, the changes taking place within the higher education sector over the past decade and increased pressure from government in their expectations from universities has meant this organisation has had to change due to the environment that it has found itself in. This organisation came across as being more open and there was a greater level of interest in participating in this research compared to the other organisations. What was particularly interesting and surprising for the researcher was that the number of interviews conducted in Organisation C was higher than the other organisations, and illustrated a genuine interest from the interviewees in taking part in the research. When the researcher walked around the campus and in different buildings, employees seemed extremely open, friendly and welcoming, and more notably many of the office doors were open, giving an indication of an open environment.

## 4.28 Context

This organisation has had limited change for over a decade and a half due to the tenure of a previous Vice-Chancellor, therefore, the perception was that this organisation was in particular need for change (07-Lac), as it had been described as being *"stagnant and ossified"* (12-Lad). Another academic leader saw this as being due to:

*"no real review of the departments since around 2000"* (02-Lac)

Due to this lack of change, there had been a need for this organisation to be brought up to date and in a sense to future-proof it (08-LFac). What the data is illustrating is the potential and real danger an organisation can find itself in when it stands still, such as the consequences and impact upon people in an organisation, when it remains static, such as:

> *"there were internal issues, where, departments had grown organically over time, and so a realignment of subject areas was needed"* (03-LFac)

For one academic leader (02-Lac) they felt:

> *"with the change in student recruitment and changing patterns, some departments had become very large and some were smaller, one was almost three times the size of the smallest"* (02-Lac)

This suggests that there were inconsistencies in terms of growth but also in terms of increased workload with having these different sized departments. With this lack of change, when it came to undertaking change implementation this brought its own challenges in terms of people not being used to change. The leader of this institution felt that academic staff in particular, due to the external change, were struggling (01-VC).

Furthermore, one academic leader (02-Lac) explained that in excess of 250 people had been either "*directly or indirectly*" affected by the change taking place, but there were some who were perceived to be very anti-change (08-LFac). For example, during an annual staff away day, employees had *"vented their anger"* (08-LFac) as perhaps they saw this as an opportunity for doing so, therefore this suggests there had been some resistance towards the change. One academic semi-leader (08-LFac) thought this was the Vice-Chancellor's change being perceived as having been significant, due to its continuous nature and the impact it had.

The general consensus emerging from the data is that the higher education sector is going through a period of change, and (07-Lac, 03-Lac) believe:

> *"higher education more generally has changed beyond recognition"* (04-Fac)

As a result of this, many of the changes taking place within this organisation had come about due to the external environment (03-Lac). Therefore, there had been a change of approach towards the external market that the leader of this organisation (01-VC) saw as being due to the following.

> *"Change in universities is a consequence of change in the context in which universities are operating, and that context has changed enormously over the last 10 years, more specifically over the last five years, there is no doubt the sector um faces quite significant pressures, um from government, from wider society, and the expectations of what universities do, um have changed enormously" (*01-VC)

Within the higher education sector the array of change taking place may in fact be having consequences, particularly if there were to have been a change of government as this may impact upon fees paid by students. An academic semi-leader saw this as being:

> *"much more significant because that gives us the resource base to either change what we're doing or not, therefore the organisation is having to be quite mindful of how it's managing its budgets"* (08-LFac)

This seems to suggest that universities are under financial pressures and as a result, the pace of change taking place within this organisation has been perceived to have been quickened, and a performance culture created, in terms of the organisation's position in league tables (04-Fac).

## 4.29   Types of change experience

There had been a variety of change experiences within this organisation, as one academic semi-leader (08-LFac) commented:

> *"we've had a very comfortable time, especially the last five or 10 years of our previous Vice-Chancellor, and we've probably stood still in time"* (08-LFac)

What this seems to be implying is that the existing state of the University needed to be addressed, and for change to be invoked in order to send a ripple effect throughout the organisation due to its size in order to reinforce that change was being enacted. One interviewee commented:

> *"I felt I'd been brought in perhaps on a change agenda but then immediately told to not, to not do anything too much, not to do anything too quickly"* (12-Lad)

This administrative leader felt frustrated due to having the support for their change initiative, but having to implement it slowly. This suggests that even though the University wanted the organisation to know it was going through change, the change agents had to be mindful of the fact that the organisation was not used to change, so had to take that into consideration.

The University was in a significant period of change, both at an institutional and local level as 14-LFad commented:

> *"we are having change at a university-wide level, and so all administrative staff, numerous administrative staff – they looked at which staff would stay in faculty and which would be part of the new centralised administration services"* (14-LFad)

The centralisation of the administration was perceived to have been slightly problematic, as one administration follower (15-Fad) commented:

> *"we thought certain people were going to be in charge and then they got a different role somewhere else"* (15-Fad)

This suggests that the centralisation of the administration services has created opportunities for some people to progress elsewhere within the organisation. Although this could be seen as being extremely positive, it may in fact be seen to have been negative due to the loss of specialist knowledge.

### 4.29.1     Consequences

There have been a number of consequences because of the type of change taking place, particularly for those in academic or administration follower positions, one of who commented:

> *"we've just had voluntary severance issued out as well, and that's not been nice to see some of the regular faces, some of the more senior members that you could go to and say could you clarify this, what do I do with this, and they're going"* (06-Fac)

This seems to imply that people who had worked at this organisation for a long time were in a way being ushered out of the organisation, either because of the 'deadwood' perspective, but perhaps in a cultural sense. For example, if an organisation wishes to have a change of culture then recruiting new people into the organisation who do not have long institutional memories of what has gone on before, would perhaps be more accepting and open to change.

Within this organisation there was the view that employees had to do as they were told (16-Fad), and as a consequence of this, saw this to be:

> *"frustrating, painful, demotivating, I got so frustrated with the lack of opportunities to express myself to get involved in things. I still have passion for changing things, for improving things but I've taken it away from the University and I do it, in my personal life"* (16-Fad)

What this is clearly illustrating is the consequences of having an individual who had been motivated in becoming involved in change, but due this not being recognised by those in authority, meant that this follower resigned themselves to the fact they needed to involve themselves. This resulted in that follower becoming disenfranchised from their organisation, thereby helping to illustrate the negative consequences for lack of involvement.

## 4.30    Content

Within the higher education sector, (***third-order change)***, as well as those taking place in the external environment, a number of respondents felt that change in this sector had been ongoing, and had contributed towards many of the changes that had taken place within this organisation, with the Vice-Chancellor commenting:

> *"some of the external changes that have happened recently are difficult, as they cut across some of peoples, personal views in terms of higher education, as an ideal, and…and how it should be funded and how it should be managed, and of course these things are external that I have no control over, and that part of the change is hard for academic staff, and hard for me too"* (01-VC)

One academic semi-leader (03-LFac) saw this as being due to:

> *"the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework, the introduction of things like the apprenticeship levy, which obviously factors not just in higher education but impacts on quite large organisations. In addition, where, at government level, there's been some uncertainty around tuition fees and how that will be moving forward. The University is having to be quite mindful of how it's managing its budgets. And the University itself is looking to embark on growth of infrastructure, which comes at quite a cost. So, those are are…sort of the factors that have initiated certain aspects of change* (03-LFac)

There had been other types of third order changes that were viewed to have had an impact upon this organisation, such as the recruitment of international students, for example:

> *"there's a lot of international students in this department, we're also very heavily hit in terms of the UKVI (UK Visas and Immigration), the Home Office and the changes there. We can't dictate what the government are going to do, erm, and their policy does impact us significantly"* (14-LFad)

The reasoning and purpose for the change process (second-order change) taking place within this institution had been perceived as being necessary to improve the working life for employees, as the leader of this institution recognised:

> *"you cannot easily change culture and practice, because it doesn't just change in an instant, and it is important that you calibrate the changes you are making to suit the population of the University, their history, their background, and therefore that change is enabled"* (01-VC)

At the same time, what seems to have taken place was the removal of the power base from Deans, as they had been perceived to have been *"incredibly powerful" (08-Fac),* as one academic commented:

> *"first of all, all the finance was drawn back to centre, it decreased the power of the…the Deans, quite considerably, and it also made sure that we were all pulling in the same direction so you couldn't have any local rule that deviates from our strategic plan"* (08-Fac)

It appears that to ensure a change in culture, removing power from those individuals who had been influential, and then replacing that power base with a central command style structure, where edicts, directions and decision making can occur, was considered appropriate.

Within an administration department, the leader of that department felt as if there had been:

> *"a bit of a culture that I find in this department, that people were just a bit like you know, that's fine, that will do, that will do culture, and just kind of like oh well we've got all our data wrong for that report, oh well, next, you know. We have to ask, to be right first time because big decisions are made of, of this stuff and it's your professional reputation, trying to instil all that of kind of stuff"* (12-LFad)

The purpose for this second-order change had been to change the attitudes and behaviours of those who worked in that department. Furthermore, this organisation was trying to change its academic culture, for example increasing the number of staff that held PhDs and conducted research (09-Fac). This suggests that the organisation was trying to improve its professional reputation, and becoming more research focused.

There were a number of process and procedural changes (first-order changes) that had taken place, for example the introduction of a new student record system, for example:

> *"introducing new processes of, PDR, (Performance Development Review), to give people more support, and to try and increase the opportunities for people to progress in the organisation and out of the organisation because we feel we have not been good at succession planning"* (01-VC)

This implies that the institution was attempting to future-proof itself, given the circumstances taking place externally. Taking measures to identify and develop potential leaders and in the event of existing leaders leaving, having internal people equipped to step up into these leadership positions, was seen to be a way of addressing this.

Interrelationship one (refer to ***Appendix 24***) is illustrating how the context behind change within this organisation is due to both the external and internal environment. This is of importance in light of the static or stagnated situation this organisation had found itself in, due to a lack of change implementation for nearly two decades. This meant that the climate within this organisation was one of anti-change, furthermore, the content of change in terms of the differing orders of change had an impact upon the organisation. This was due to the changes occurring in the higher education sector, meaning this organisation had to be brought up to date. It appears to be that the combination of both the context and content of change created the nature of the change that had taken place.

## 4.31 Responses to change

As with Organisation A and B, this section focuses on how both leaders and followers have responded to change in terms of their behaviours, attitudes and reactions toward change.

### 4.31.1 Leader perspectives

From one leader's perspective (07-Lac), they felt that they would have known about any change announcements due to the position they held. For other leaders, however, their responses had been slightly different in terms of underestimating the emotional and physically draining effects change (02-Lad) had on their behaviour, for example:

> *"my behaviour became I suppose more detached during the process, but at the same time having to be very receptive. I think the behaviour, I became, I was incredibly close, I was very directly affected by the evident experience. My behaviour is I...I think I probably became, it's the thing which has taught me more about being a Dean than anything I've done before"* (02-Lac)

A number of semi-leaders recognised and understood the need for change, and had agreed with most of the changes being undertaken, however one academic semi-leader felt as if they were a bit sceptical towards change, and commented:

> *"the rationale from the top hasn't really been explained, it involved probably me thinking well it did make me think, how much work is this going to involve, and actually having done the work, I'm still not sure how I'm going to be rewarded by doing it"* (10-LFac)

What is emerging from the data is that leaders on the whole were more positive towards change, due to understanding the need for it. At the same time, they felt their response towards change depended on what it entailed. The data seems to be suggesting that staff morale had not been particularly high, due to the voluntary severance that was in operation. One administration semi-leader felt that the organisation should have been thinking about the impact of change upon staff and morale, due to the amount of change that had been taking place (14-LFad).

### 4.31.2    Follower perspectives

From a follower's perspective, they tried to stay positive about the changes taking place, as they had felt there had been indicators that change was going happen:

> *"mainly the fact like…when I…just before I got the position here, I had several interviews in other departments, and it gave me an idea. They, obviously, they described what the job would entail, and it gave me an idea of the workload of other departments, I mean, like, an example, one of the jobs I went for, they had a number of Course Administrators, each doing roughly a third of the work that I'm doing over here"* (15-Fad)

One academic follower felt as if they had a large measure of fairly neutral acceptance:

> *"we're told we're going to undergo some change, ok, we will, we must make that happen. That's a very small measure of cynicism, not cynical to the point where I think it's change for changes sake"* (18-Fac)

Interrelationship two (***Appendix 25***) is illustrating how the nature of change is helping to determine or inform the change approach, and creating an environment or culture of continuous change. This is then influencing the change process that then impacts upon both leaders' and followers' responses towards change, and upon the LMX relationship. This is in terms of the quality of these relationships, furthermore, different leaders have had an impact upon their relationship with followers, but also the change process has some bearing upon the quality of the relationship. For example, with followers, the impact can lead to low-quality relationships, but also the level of consultation and involvement is an important consideration.

### 4.31.3    Differences between leader and follower perspectives

There have been differences in how change has impacted some individuals, for example, one academic leader (02-Lac) felt that they had learnt a great deal about their "*own strengths and weaknesses as a leader and manager*". Overall this leader believed the change experience had taught them how to do their job role, and what it meant to be in the position they held. An academic semi-leader (03-LFac) believed change had not personally impacted themselves but had impacted their staff, for example:

> *"obviously my staff would come to me, as their manager and leader, and talk to me about it, and so, you know, I take a responsibility in the fact of my staff's welfare and their wellbeing, so, that's where the negative then impacted"* (03-LFac)

For this individual, what the change process did for them was to question their confidence in their leader, and they felt:

> *"there was a particular time when they were doing a follow-up briefing with staff and they became quite teary during the briefing"* (03-LFac)

This seems to be suggesting that their leader was not handling change very well and it had actually affected them. From a follower perspective, there had been a clear impact, for example one academic follower (06-Fac) felt they had *"really lost my mojo with it all"*, and further commented:

> *"you've now got a Pro Vice-Chancellor who's leaving, it's like a dog, they come in and piss on something, and then they clear off"* (06-Fac)

This seems to be implying that senior leaders within the organisation had tried to put their own stamp on the organisation in order to climb the corporate ladder, and as a result, felt:

> *"I'm exhausted to the point where I don't know if we are coming or going with the change. If anything, it has encouraged me to become complacent and detached"* (06-Fac)

Another academic follower (16-Fac) felt as if they had become more estranged and withdrawn from the organisation, and hence felt they had become more disengaged and said:

> *"since change has started in the University, we've not been consulted, I still find it's, it's very frustrating with my job, it's still the same as it was 10 years ago"* (16-Fac)

These examples clearly illustrate the negative impact change can have upon followers, however, some change initiatives can have a positive impact, particularly when people are involved in the change taking place, for example:

> *"we've had lots of working groups where people from across the organisation have been involved, but the fact that we've been consulted from the very beginning and, our input, it feels like it's being valued, and I think that will mean there's much more buy-in"* (14-LFac)

## 4.32    Changes in response towards change

For a number of respondents their responses towards change had changed, for example an academic follower had a positive response towards change(18-Fac) and saw this as due to being:

> *"more comfortable with the process, because having been here for a while now, and having been involved with curriculum, changes in the past, I'm probably more comfortable with it, than I...I have been"* (18-Fac)

However, for a number of administrative followers their changes in responses had been more negative, for example:

> *"I've sort of withdrawn from the organisation, it's for not being involved in the change, I feel sort of rejected, for not being involved in the change"* (16-Fad)

At the same time there had been a change in attitude towards change, for example, one administration follower (15-Fad) said:

> *"my attitude possibly has been a bit more...stern with the academics, so when they don't understand how tight a deadline is on something, you just go, 'Look, I need this because this is the timeframe I've actually got to work with, and it doesn't help me if you turn up on the last day, at the last minute, and go: 'here it is!'"* (15-Fad)

What this is illustrating is that there had been a negative change in responses to change taking place within that department, due to pressures of meeting deadlines. What seems to be emerging from the data is that where there has been lack of involvement or opportunity to progress within the organisation, a negative change in response to it ensured, compared to individuals who had involvement opportunities, where the change in responses was more positive.

## 4.33    Process factors

The implementation of change within the organisation appears to have been initiated by the leader of the institution, as they had seen their role to be one that set:

> *"the agenda for change, and being able to flex plans in terms of pace of change in order to meet the wider needs of the organisation"* (01-VC)

This seems to suggest that the leader of this institution had tried to plan ahead to ensure change was in keeping with the internal environment in order to bring about the desired change. This perspective was supported by one academic leader (07-Lac) who felt the VC had taken their time to understand the organisation, and understood the challenges that lay ahead when embarking upon change implementation. There had been a recognition that the methodology in which the organisation had been doing things was out of date:

> *"there'd been a piece of work called xxx xxx, which had been a consultation across staff in the University about changing the future of the University so it was kind of the stage had been set for change to happen"* (12-Lad)

There was a general consensus, again from the leaders' perspective, that recognised radical change was taking place within the organisation due to the numerous change initiatives that had taken place (02-Lac), and one academic follower commented:

> *"change now seems to be dictated much more from above, under the guise of collaboration, but actually I think a lot of that is due to an almost, an obsession with standardisation"* (04-Fac)

This suggests that top-down change was being imposed upon employees and that the organisation had moved from a decentralised administrative service to one that was now centralised, in the hope of achieving standardisation across the organisation.

### *4.33.1    Change implementation (involvement)*

There had been some differences in the level of involvement that leaders and followers had had in implementing change. This was reflected in their attitudes towards change, as the level of involvement depended on what change was taking place within the organisation. The leader of the institution (01-VC) thought:

> *"people genuinely want to engage because a lot of people come forward and say I really want to be involved in that, and we will find a way of making people be involved"* (01-VC)

This view was supported by an administration semi-leader (13-LFad) who saw this as an opportunity to make an impact on things that they had perceived to have been issues over a number of years. What is emerging from the data is that for both respondents 13-LFad and 14-LFad, their attitudes were positive and their level of involvement in change was high (refer to *Appendix 26*). From an academic and administration follower perspective, both (06-Fac and 16-Fad) felt that they had little involvement in change, for example:

*"Not a lot, shut up, put up"* (06-Fac)

*"for me it was…was you know, do as you're told"* (16-Fad)

One academic follower (06-Fac) saw that their attitude changed (refer to *Appendix 27*) from being neutral pre-change, to negative after change, particularly in terms of whether they would have liked the opportunity to become involved, and commented:

*"I would like to have done in the beginning, but now, no, I couldn't, I don't have the energy, we seem to have conflicting views of what should be working, well within this place anyway, or this department"* (06-Fac)

Furthermore, one administration follower (15-Fad) felt as if the change process had been very much top-down and had very little involvement. This perhaps goes some way to help explain why their attitude pre-change was negative. Interestingly their attitude (refer to *Appendix 26*) during and after change became a neutral one, in terms of not being particularly positive or negative towards it. Therefore, this leads to the notion of not having a choice but to accept the changes.

What is intriguing are the attitudes of respondents within *Appendix 29* as this illustrates how attitudes have varied pre, during and after change, particularly as these respondents had either some or high levels of involvement. A plausible explanation for this may be to do with the type, or nature of the change, as one administration leader (17-Lad) referred to as *"it depends what it is"*. Although in a sense, some respondents felt as if there had been some consultation:

*"there were a couple of side discussions, and requests for opinions, which I…I gave, sometimes, via email, we were asked for them. I'm not really sure how those things all fed through into the final product"* 03-LFac)

## 4.34    Leadership approach (style)

Within the organisation there appears to have been different approaches taken, for example, the leader of the organisation felt that the strategic plan contained a range of significant key performance indicators, and saw these as ranging from:

> *"performance in student satisfaction, in employment outcomes, to popularity, recruitment, and also our international positioning, which is quite important, which is a whole load of KPIs attached to it"* (01-VC)

From an administration leader's perspective, their approach has been to ensure everything had been evidenced based, ensuring the decisions that had been made could be easily justified and they provided a rationale based on that data, and saw this approach as being:

> *"kind of unquestionable or robust in that sense and so the transform work was split up into phases and the first phase which ran for the first two years had four stages in it and the first couple stages were basically a lot of research internally about how we did, what we did, why we did what we did"* (12-Lad)

## 4.35    Differing perceptions of LMX relationship

### 4.35.1    Leaders perception

A number of leaders perceive followers' attitudes, behaviours and responses towards change in a number of differing ways:

*"people would rather not do anything different, although I think in universities, I think we have a particular problem because I think we tend to be institutions that are historically relatively static, whereas other organisations and people in them are used to a regular cycle of change and adjustment, that is not the case within higher education"* (01-VC)

The leader of this institution had identified academic staff as those who had been struggling with change taking place in the external environment:

*"some of the external changes that have happened recently are difficult as they cut across some of peoples personal views in terms of higher education"* (01-VC)

This may provide some explanation as to followers' and leaders' varying types of attitudes, behaviours and responses towards change. Furthermore, third order change appeared to have had an impact upon the LMX relationship in terms of the attitudes and behaviours between leaders and followers, in terms of both commitment and change outcomes.

One academic leader (02-Lac) felt that their followers' response to change had varied significantly:

> *"some people understood very well the need for change and were quite excited by it, they tended to be the people who were going to be welcoming new people into their, into their existing subject areas, the people who were being asked to move from place to another place were more resistant on the whole"* (02-Lac)

However, one of academic semi-leader (03-LFac), felt that their immediate line manager had gone through "*a rollercoaster*" of attitudes and behaviours, and:

> *"greatly underestimated what was going to happen when they embarked on the change process. They started in a very positive, very much rose-tinted perspective. They became jarred when there was…there were…things were questioned about it, and then, when…when people reacted, they thought, oh, this might be a challenging thing to do, but I think they underestimated how bad the reaction would be. They then became defensive and upset, because, at their core, they are a good person, and what they were hoping to do was a good thing"* (02-Lac)

### 4.35.2     Followers' perception

For one academic follower, they had four different leaders they reported to. Their current one they viewed as being a bully, but identified differences in these differing leaders' behaviours and attitudes:

> *"Two of them play off each other. One of them I have more respect for and then the other one when they're nice actually they're not so bad. I'm finding it very difficult how my fellow colleagues and me, we've been treated, the hypocrisy of knowing xxxx beforehand, a person who wouldn't work an expresso if xxxx wasn't being paid to do it. xxxx wouldn't come in on a Saturday, unless xxxx got time off in the week. So the hypocrisy of all the things xxxx wouldn't do, xxxx expects people to do, and I find that hard"* (06-Fac)

What these examples have clearly illustrated are the differences in styles of leadership, and the consequences leaders' behaviour or attitude can have in eroding LMX relationships, but at the same time shows positive and negative perspectives of leadership, particularly if a leader were not handling a new role they had been given very well, for example:

> *"there is a very different culture within the organisation due to the new head of department, and I think change is being implemented far too quickly, um and I think it's causing an enormous amount of anxiety amongst staff"* (04-Fac)

A change in leader can not only impact upon culture but in fact creates anxieties for staff because of their behaviour and leadership style. As one administration follower (15-Fad) described, their leader's behaviour and attitudes were *"combative":*

> *"They weren't super-happy about the way the chips had all fallen. I think there was…I think there was a certain amount of resentment for certain people being put in charge of certain other people, which, coloured things"* (15-Fad)

What the change process seems to have done is brought division within this team or department, thereby creating jealousy and possible resentment that then had a negative impact upon this follower's relationship with their leader.

### 4.35.3    Consequences and effects

The behaviour and attitudes of leaders and their responses towards change has had both positive and negative consequences and effects on followers, for example one academic semi-leader (03-LFac) *"felt sorry for them",* and therefore felt that their:

> *"attitude in their leadership, my confidence in their leadership did…did decline. my behaviour towards them, I tried to be more supportive, their behaviours there then impacted on my thought, well…it did diminish my confidence in thinking, well, I…I can't go and speak to people"* (03-LFac)

Furthermore, one administration semi-leader (14-LFad) felt that remit-creep became *"quite disempowering".* This then led to tension that continued for a long period of time, resulting in stress for this individual. A consequence of their leader's behaviour and attitude led this administration semi-leader to make a difficult decision, in terms of looking for another job because their:

> *"workload has significantly increased. There is no one factor, and I think that's...that's often the thing when you've got multiple change projects, and I think probably that's not necessarily being recognised"* (14-LFad)

Another example of how a leader's attitude and behaviour had a negative impact was with an administration follower who saw this as being due to their leader being:

> *"disengaged from the whole process, and I'm disengaged from my boss. So it's how disengagement makes me feel from the top of the University, yeah obviously it did make me feel more estranged I think from, yeah and more disengaged from the...from the organisation. I just...just care less for the organisation"* (16-Fad)

One academic follower had found their leaders' behaviours and attitudes to be incredibly challenging, and consequently felt that:

> *"for the first time in you know a long career here, I have started to look elsewhere for other opportunities, and have never felt a sense of frustration coming into work, never felt a Sunday evening dread of coming into work at all, but just frustration at not being able to, I suppose it is lack of control, not being able to control the agenda, and not being able to impact the agenda"* (04-Fac)

This perspective was supported by another academic follower who felt everyone had been demoralised, and saw this as being due to there being:

> *"a lot of contradiction in what is said by them, there is no consistency in what is being said, there is a lot of denial of things having been said, and then xxx retracting, saying no I didn't say that, but you did. You don't know if you are coming and going, but that comes down to the individual, xxxx, people now, not seeing xxxx, unless they have a union rep with them"* (06-Fac)

What is emerging from the data in this example is a leader's behaviour, attitude and response to change having negative consequences upon followers and the organisation itself.

Although a leader's behaviour and attitude can have positive consequences and effects, particularly when an individual has a style that is similar to their leaders', for example one academic semi-leader (08-LFac) commented:

> *"a lot of that is my style of management, which I think is sort of…it can switch to autocratic, but it's mainly democratic and it involves people"* (08-LFac)

When a leader has supportive leadership behaviours, it can have a positive impact in terms of followers learning from their behaviour. For example, an academic follower saw the consequences of this as:

> *"if you like because, um, they show you, it's the psychological contract basically, that they show you how to delegate other tasks to people that are lower or higher ranking than you. So, let's say I imitate in quotation marks their behaviours and sometimes their expressions as well but maybe this is a thing because of the language barriers, so I feel that I'm learning from them, the culture of the country as well"* (09-Fac)

This simply illustrates that a leader's behaviour can be influential in the way their followers behave and can be beneficial, particularly if an organisation wishes to change its culture, as this one had hoped to do.

## 4.36    Relationship quality

The perception of the quality of the relationship from both leader and follower perspectives is shown within ***Appendix 28***. The data is suggesting that leaders believed they had high-quality or other type of relationships with their followers, for example:

> *"I worked quite hard at that over the last few years and I think most people, yes I think they are, that I do have high-quality relationships, I think you know sometimes the level of challenge that you experience is an indication of the esteem in which people hold you, that they bother to challenge you because they think it may be worth it"* (02-Lac)

Furthermore, one administration semi-leader (13-LFad) thought they had an excellent relationship with their leader, and commented:

> *"I feel completely supported by my current boss, the new one. Um the old one just left me to it, I trust this one and I didn't trust the other one, the old one"* (13-LFad)

What is emerging from the data for this organisation is how different leaders can affect the relationship with followers, in terms of trust and level of support given. This view was supported by another administration semi-leader (14-LFad) who acknowledged they had multiple managers, although only one line manager, and felt they had *"a very high-quality relationship"*, due to being trusted and given a lot of autonomy by that line manager. An example of a follower who perceived their relationship as being a high quality one commented:

> *"They meet with that person regularly, if I suggest a way forward, xxxx will xxxx will tend to support that decision, so xxx lets me do my job and supports me in doing it, I think there's a good level of mutual respect"* (18-Fac)

What the data suggests is the level of support given by leaders to followers are strong indicators of a high-quality relationship, but also having mutual respect for one another is another indication of a relationship's quality. One administration follower saw the relationship as being very good with their leader prior to centralisation of their department, as their leader had been mindful of morale within the department. However, since the change process and change in leadership had taken place, now feels as if the relationship had become:

> *"a little more…a little more distant, basically, what the shuffle has sort of done is forced everyone back in their cubicles, like the…because it's disrupted the work environment to such a degree, everyone's sort of like gone back to their little islands of work at their desk and everything"* (15-Fad)

What this is illustrating is how the nature of the change was impacting upon the LMX relationship in a negative way.

Some respondents felt that they had a low quality relationship with their leader, for example, one academic semi-leader (03-LFac) saw this as being due to having "*worked for an awful lot of people",* therefore this relationship was considered to be one of the lowest in comparison to relationships with other line managers previously. This individual commented:

> *"I think because xxx was relatively inexperienced, xxx can be quite…xxxx quite standoffish and xxxx…xxxx…xxxx hasn't got the confidence to have…sort of manager/follower conversations with you. I don't know xx very well. I've worked for xx for nearly 15 months and I don't know xxxx very well at all, and I don't think xxxx knows me very well.  We…we meet once a month for a one-to-one, eh, which is normally 45 minutes, and that's it, so, we don't have what I would…constitute any form of relationship, professional or otherwise"* (03-LFac)

An example of the LMX relationship being perceived as a low quality one, was with an academic follower who commented:

> *"I don't get the impression that they're that concerned about my personal development, the amount of meetings I go to and I'm talked over, I just give up the ghost. I can't take it seriously, if I could say you are so professional 100%, they would have my commitment, my utmost attention whatever you want to call it, but the fact that they have their ways, which I just think are unhealthy. You know lack of confidence, not, if I confide in them with something, you can guarantee by the afternoon it is down the corridor. So they lack that ability to be confidential about information, I don't really respect the people, what they are, what they stand for, what they do, or what they've done"* (06-Fac)

This example is illustrating how a relationship had broken down between a follower and their leader, and the impact this had upon that relationship. What has emerged from the data are 'other' types of quality relationships between leaders and their followers, for example:

> *"a healthy professional relationship"* (03-LFac)

> "*good working relationships*" (11-Lac)

> *"a mixed relationship"* (12-Lad)

One administration leader (12-Lad) believed the size of their department had an effect on the quality of their relationships with their followers, and therefore considered many of their relationship to have been *"one of distance I suppose".* However, in terms of their own executive team considered those relationship as being:

> *"good, particularly the exec team here are fully, very excited about what we're doing and fully behind that, so that's a very good quality"* (12-Lad)

These examples are useful as a way of illustrating the differences in types of relationships that leaders can have, depending on how closely an individual works or interacts with their followers.

Interrelationship three (***Appendix 30***), illustrates the differences between leaders and followers and their perception of the LMX relationship in terms of resistance and commitment. Leaders considered themselves to have had both high and other types of quality relationship. What is interesting is that leaders felt they had met with some resistance from followers, but also some leaders considered themselves to be resistant towards change. Furthermore, followers had not considered themselves to be particularly resistant to change, which is an interesting contradiction, or differing perspective from those of leaders. Where there had been a general consensus between both leaders and followers, the perception was that they did not have a choice but in being committed towards change. However, in terms of commitment to the organisation, this was perceived to be very different, as discussed below.

## 4.37    Types of commitment

Interrelationship six (***Appendix 31***) is illustrating the differences in the relationship that both resistance and different types of commitment has upon change outcomes. What is evident in terms of commitment towards change is respondents felt they had no choice, but this differs from commitment to the organisation, where individuals believed they had a choice. Although individuals felt some resistance, they believed there was no point in being resistant as change would happen anyway, for example:

> *"It's not a question of whether or not one is committed to change...change is...is constant and if you're not, it's not a question of being committed to change but committing to responding effectively to the changes about which you've got no choice then it has to be 100 per cent committed to understanding the implications of that"* (02-Lac)

Although for one academic leader-follower (03-LFac) even though they considered themselves to be committed to the change process taking place, they had some reservations:

> *"I question the process and some of the rationale. I think there did need to be change. I'm just not certain this was…definitely the right change or, at least, was it done in the right way"* (03-LFac)

*Appendix 32* illustrates the differences in types of commitment between leaders who initiate change with those leaders who do not. Those who were leading and implementing change considered their level of commitment to be very high, and saw this as:

> *"for a business reason and the business reason is, this should have all been done progressively over a number of years and unfortunately, we're now doing everything at once"* (12-Lad)

The table within *Appendix 32* clearly illustrates that leaders who initiate change had been positive and fully committed towards change, and therefore had wanted to remain within their organisation, and remained out of a sense of obligation, in order to follow through with the changes they had instigated. Therefore, the data is suggesting for these leaders, the type of commitment was either affective, normative or both of these types of commitment. For leaders who had not initiated change, although one academic leader (11-Lac) wanted to remain (affective commitment), there was also a sense of convenience commitment as it suited them stay for the time being. For the other administration semi-leader (14-LFad), this individual had started to question their level and type of commitment, and was in the process of looking for a different position within this organisation.

In order to gain an overall picture of the differences in types of commitment, *Appendix 33* illustrates these differences between commitment towards change and to the organisation. In terms of commitment towards change, leaders and semi leaders had higher levels of commitment compared to followers, as followers perceived they had "*no choice*" than being committed. Although a couple of followers perceived their commitment as not very high or significant. For leaders and semi-leaders, their commitment towards the organisation was perceived to be affective or normative.

Followers, on the other hand, tell a slightly different story in terms of their organisational commitment that ranged from none, to continuance, or low. Although a couple of followers felt they had affective commitment, this depended on what the change was and level of input they had(18-Fac), but also if an individual believed and understood the reasoning behind it (16-Fad), and change improved their day-to-day working practices or environment (15-Fad). One administration follower (15-Fad) saw their commitment towards change as:

> *"you can't un-fall off a cliff. It's...it's in process, it's happening, best to roll with it"* (15-Fad)

From academic followers' perspectives, a number had not considered their commitment to be particularly significant, therefore they tended to do what had been asked of them (09-Fac). However, one particular academic follower at the beginning of the change process considered their commitment had been very high but had now considered it to be *"4 out of 10"* (06-Fac). This individual considered the reasoning for that was they were:

> *"still to see some return I think on the efforts that have been made in the past, before I actually see an improvement in my own morale and motivation and commitment towards change"* (06-Fac)

This suggests that the historical and past experience of change has had an impact upon this respondent's level of commitment towards change taking place. What appears to be emerging from the data is that organisational commitment was perceived to have been generally high, with respondents wanting to remain. However, for leaders who were committed there was also a sense of obligation, as one academic leader (02-Lac) saw as being due to *"I want to stay and I ought to stay"*, because for them they felt the environment was one that was:

> *"collegial, it's doing extremely well because my colleagues work incredibly hard because they're amazing, and work their socks off, and I ought to stay because it's a kind of ethical and professional responsibility to see through the change that I've implemented and to at the very least see it through"* (02-Lac)

There was a view of seeing the change that had been instigated and introduced by leaders through. For example:

> *"I would like to see from a personal point of view, would like to see those through, from just my own value because I do, otherwise you kind of started it, never finished it, and then I say there was also a feeling, a slight feeling of obligation, that you kind of started this thing you need to finish off"* (12-Lad)

A number of academic respondents considered the organisation to have been supportive, for example in allowing them to pursue research and embark upon a PhD (03-LFac), but another academic saw this as being:

> "*convenient for me to be here at the moment and I am personally not in a position to travel too far away, although I would say I am committed to the organisation, I don't think that's a permanent state*" (04-LFac)

What this seems to be suggesting is that the changes taking place had begun to have an impact upon organisational commitment. However, some followers perceived their commitment as:

> "*I'm committed to this organisation because I want to commit to academia, not because I believe in this organisation but because it represents my knowledge*" (09-Fac)

The relationship some respondents have had with this organisation appears to have changed, for example one administration leader-follower commented:

> "*When I first started at the University, I felt very proud to work here [but now feels that] some of the issues here in terms of department and change have accelerated the fact that I will be looking for a different position, because, I've found the last 18 months quite difficult*" (14-LFad)

This view was supported by an academic follower who felt as if their relationship with the organisation had changed and said *"I think this weekend is the first time I thought I am ready to go"*(06-Fac), and the reasoning behind them having felt this way was because:

> "*I think I am at that next journey in life where I think, before I get to being, you know too old, I've probably got a few years where I could change and be developed to do something else, there isn't a day that goes by that I'm not thinking about new adventures, alternatives, but you kind of get trapped by the pension, trapped by the salary, the places I want to go, don't necessarily pay the salary*" (06-Fac)

## 4.38    Change outcomes

What is emerging from the data with regards to change outcomes concerns respondents'
attitudes and behaviours towards change, and in terms of the type of change experiences
individuals have had within this organisation. For example:

> *"I was incredibly close, I was very directly affected by the evident experience"* (02-Lac)

For another academic leader (11-Lac) saw the outcome of change for them as that they
had moved out of the emotional response towards change and into an area in which they
felt they had been able to continue to work, particularly as they had believed the outcome
from change had to be accepted regardless. From an academic follower's perspective, one
individual felt that they had:

> *"always been very supportive of the department up until the last three to six months, so I*
> *think it's just a personality issue, only because of a new head of department"* (04-Fac)

This suggests that this follower's leader was having an adverse impact. Furthermore,
when respondents have had buy-in in terms of their belief in the change taking place,
attitudes had been positive. For example, one administration leader-follower (13-LFad)
said *"I've always been really…really positive and I can actually see why we're doing what
we're doing"*, but recognised that not everyone shared this view:

> *"I'm very aware that I'm exceptional in that case and there's a lot of fear, a lot of people*
> *are very scared. I mean when we they first announced the xxxxx, so in other words*
> *bringing all the faculty staff in. I actually saw that my job role that I was doing would be*
> *at risk. I don't believe that the grade it was on, it was too high, it was inflated, so I*
> *started applying for various other positions and, I ended up doing a sideways move*
> *initially and then came here, that is really…really good"* (13-LFad)

Perhaps the reasoning for having such a positive attitude is that the change outcome for
them had resulted in this individual moving into a new job role. A different follower's
perspective was:

> *"being very passionate and enthusiastic to now, sometimes thinking you know what, I'll*
> *do the bare minimum that I need to do, to get through"* (06-Fac)

Within interrelationship four (***Appendix 34***) the process of change appears to have had an
influence upon both leaders' and follower's responses towards change, and therefore
upon the LMX relationship. Furthermore, for leaders and followers their level of
involvement in change had some bearing upon the LMX relationship.

For followers, the change for them had been perceived to have been dictated, and was top-down change, and this has had some bearing upon their level of resistance and commitment, which was influenced not only by the quality of these relationships but also by change outcomes.

Furthermore, the change process and the way change had been implemented in terms of the way followers had responded towards change had an impact upon change outcomes. This was in terms of how responses towards change had changed, such as attitudes and behaviours, and whether these changes had been positive, negative, or neutral.

The data seems to be suggesting that when change has not been experienced before within an organisation, it can lead to neutral style behaviours, for example:

> *"I wasn't positive or negative really because I didn't know what went before it"* (18-Fac)

This suggests this individual did not have a long-term organisational memory due to not having had that historical or past experience of change. In terms of experiences of change, this had been quite mixed, for example, one academic leader felt their experience had been a negative one (11-Lac), and for an academic semi-leader, their experience was *"not exactly positive"* (14-LFac) and felt they:

> *"could have been more involved in the consultancy of it, it came down as a rather top-down"* (14-LFac)

From an academic follower perspective, there was a sense of enormous pressures now being upon them (04-Fac), as they had noticed in recent years much higher numbers of younger members of academic staff who had arrived at the institution, left within a short time because of those work pressures, particularly those who had young families. This academic follower believed that:

> *"the result of the change to the outside world will be positive, but I think that may well come at a price"* (04-Fac)

Despite all the changes that had taken place within this organisation, one academic follower felt they had not:

> *"seen any positive outcomes from that, you know, we've got staff leaving, staff taking severance pay, staff leaving, because…, of their own accord because they're not happy"* (06-Fac)

## 4.39    Conclusion for Organisation C

What has emerged from the data is that the change process has had an influence upon the LMX relationship, due to the impact from the nature of the change as a result of this organisation having remained static over a considerable period of time. It appears third-order change contributed towards the creation of the nature of change due in part, to government dictates, for example, through the introduction of TEF, and (OfS). Furthermore, there were external factors, such as competition from other higher education providers, and pressures from recruitment of EU and international students. It would appear that this had a cascading effect upon second order and first-order change, where the change process influenced how each party within the LMX relationship had responded towards change that then had some bearing upon the quality of these relationships.

Although there had been some resistance towards change, this did not seem to particularly impact the level of commitment but did impact change outcomes, in terms of individuals' experiences of change, thereby leading to a number of consequences due to the changes taking place. Notably, it was the commitment towards the organisation that was impacted the most due to these experiences, but the perceived lack of involvement and consultation in implementing change, or being able to input into it, also had some bearing upon not only the change outcomes but the LMX relationship. It would appear that the nature of change can have an impact upon the LMX relationship and upon change outcomes in a positive, negative, or neutral way, thereby potentially decreasing the level of organisational commitment. Change seemed to be having a negative impact upon individual attitudes and behaviours, and may go some way in helping to explain why the nature of change was impacting upon not only the LMX relationship but also upon the change outcomes.

## 4.40　Cross-case analysis between all three organisations

### 4.40.1　Introduction

This cross-case analysis explores the similarities and differences between these three universities, particularly in relation to LMX relationships and the influences leaders' behaviours and attitudes had upon their followers. Furthermore, exploring these similarities and differences should provide some rich and useful insights and perspectives as to whether the nature of change had an impact upon change outcomes. Each of these organisations were based in the south of England and were either undergoing or in the process of undergoing a major restructure.

Each organisation had a voluntary severance scheme in operation, and shared a similar point of view as to the reasoning and justification for change. The main focus for this cross analysis will be to identify the differences between leader and follower behaviours and attitudes towards change, and the influences a leader's behaviour or attitude may have upon followers. The reasoning behind this was to identify differences between each of these within-case analyses, and to explore any differences that exist. Where similarities do exist, these will be briefly commented upon, and illustrated using diagrams or tables.

Table 5 as discussed earlier illustrates how the identification codes for respondents have been broken down, and table 6 below identifies particular colours to represent different organisations that are presented within the various figures.

Table 6 Colour key depicting the three differing organisations

**Colour key** (for arrows within interrelationships, refer to appendices 35 to 37, and appendices 40 to 42)

A= Organisation A

B = Organisation B

C = Organisation C

The varying styles of black arrows refer to common links between all three organisations

## 4.41   Context

There were similarities between all organisations as to the reasoning and justification for change, primarily third-order change had a cascading effect on both second order and first-order change. Within Organisation A, the previous restructure and past experiences had been problematic due to the nature of that change and way it was implemented. Therefore, prior change has formed a crucial part of the ***internal context***, in which change was being implemented. This was due to the bruising effect and impact of the organisation's last restructure, indicating that past experiences were informing not only the change process but also its implementation. Internally for Organisation B the strategic plan had expired, therefore there was a requirement for a new one but also many of the systems and processes were out of date and needed updating due to replication, but also there was a sense that the organisation and people needed to be operating differently. As a result, there was a great deal of resistance from academic staff, but also due to the static nature from a lack of change, departments had grown disproportionately, therefore this had to be readdressed, and the curriculum had to be brought up to date. The pace of change within organisations B and C appeared to be faster than before, therefore change was seen to have become continuous.

These organisations were also responding to the learning needs and demands inside and outside of the organisation. Internally Organisation C was trying to align people's skill set and capabilities with the work they did, but also this organisation was revamping its marketing approach externally in order to improve the visibility of the organisation. There appeared to be a drive from these organisations in becoming more effective and efficient in the way they operate, and the services provided to their students. There were similarities behind the reasoning for change in each organisation as illustrated by interrelationship one (Figure 1). For example, organisations B and C had been static for a long period of time due to long-serving Vice-Chancellors. Therefore, there had been an expectation and need for change to future-proof and bring systems and processes up to date.

Organisation A's previous restructure and employees' experiences of change had been problematic, and this contributed towards the challenges within the internal environment. Within each of the three organisations, it was the culture that had been identified as a key area needing to be addressed and changed. For example, the leader of Organisation A (A01-VC) commented:

> *"The University had lost the, um, collegial spirit", and had "lost aspiration"* (A01-VC)

This individual considered the biggest issue facing any organisation was in trying to change its culture, as it would take a number of years to achieve (A01-VC).

The leader of Organisation B (B01-VC) felt their reasoning behind changing the culture was due to being able to address the need in becoming:

> *"values based, so that we are operating um, collectively, and recognising that people need to be thinking differently and operating differently, if we are going to meet the challenges that we know are coming, that exist now, and we know will come in the next few years"* (B01-VC)

However, during times of change, this can create a culture of uncertainty within departments that can then have an impact such as, *"people sort of get each other riled up"* (B05-Fad) that can easily spread across a department. Furthermore, leaders can have an impact upon a department, in terms of its culture, as one academic follower commented:

> *"Now there is a very different culture within the organisation due to the new head of department, and I think change is being implemented far too quickly, and I think it's causing an enormous amount of anxiety amongst staff"* (C04-Fac)

This suggests that when leaders attempt to change the internal culture, allowing time for this to embed is important. It would appear that some leaders have been trying to impose a change of culture upon individuals in departments that has caused some anxieties.

In terms of the ***external context,*** each organisation was similar in how they had recognised the financial challenges facing the higher education sector. For example, the challenges around student numbers and Teaching Excellence Framework and Research Excellence Framework, but notably the expectations from students was greater than before, due to increases in tuition fees. Since the removal of the student cap had increased competition, Universities competed for business, particularly as there were now private providers of higher educational courses. This has meant that universities have had to become more business and consumer oriented.

## 4.42    Content

Within each of the three organisations ***third-order change*** has had an impact, for example the Office for Students (OfS) and student experience are now considered key priorities, particularly as league table positioning is now seen to have become increasingly important. With greater competition, increased tuition fees, and students now seen as consumers, universities are becoming more corporate and business focussed. Furthermore, the regulatory changes over the past few years, such as REF and more recently TEF, affected how universities were funded. For Organisation A the Teaching Excellence Framework had become a key area to address, particularly as entry tariffs were going up, and it had aspirations of increasing ranking positions within league tables, but also reducing the number of faculties and staffing numbers it had. Organisations B and C were slightly different as they focussed on becoming more research-active, as they had been predominately teaching institutions.

This then had a cascading effect upon both ***second-order and first-order change***. For example, with second-order change each organisation had implemented cost-cutting measures such as when employees left, they were not replaced, or through the organisation's voluntary severance scheme. In terms of first-order change each organisation had planned to update and amend systems and procedures.

One such way organisations B and C were hoping to achieve that, was through a new student record system, and through centralisation of their professional services departments. Organisations A and C had also planned to implement a new appraisal system or new performance development review. All three organisations wanted to increase their research output and to future-proof the organisations. Organisation C had planned to also improve and increase the visibility of the organisation, and one way they hoped to achieve this was through marketing. Change milestones had been set within each of these organisations that formed part of the content for those changes.

The data suggests that it is the combination of both the context and content of change that creates the nature of change. This identifies the type of change needing to be implemented, thereby informing decision-makers who then decide the approach for actually implementing change. Within all three organisations the data suggests change was imposed with little or no involvement or input from followers. The external environment and content of change appears to have been interlinked. Therefore, when considering the competitors, such as other higher education providers, it seems a reasonable and plausible explanation for this interconnectedness, particularly surrounding third-order change, and change taking place in the higher education sector.

Furthermore, the uncertainty over Brexit in recruiting EU and international students has put pressures on universities in how they operate, but also in creating the nature of change, in terms of what the change is about, and type of change is required.

Interrelationships one as within **Appendix 35** illustrates the interrelationships between all three organisations that were similar in terms of content of change, and how the third-order change had a cascading effect upon both second and first-order change. It is the combination of both the context and content of change that creates the nature of change, which then enables the identification of what the change is and provides the justification and reasoning for it. What the nature of change does not seem to do in these organisations is dictate how change should be implemented, or the level of involvement or consultation from employees. Therefore, the nature of change is either shaped, created, or perhaps informed by both the context and content.

## *4.43* **Responses to change**

This section identifies the differences in responses towards change by leaders and followers within these organisations, and explores how responses to change may have had an impact upon relationships between leaders and followers, and their experiences of change. **Appendix 36** helps to illustrate how the nature of change informs decision-makers who decide and have responsibility for the change process. It appears as if the change process had impacted both leader and follower responses towards change, and this may help to explain the implications this has had upon the quality of the leader-member exchange relationship.

### 4.43.1    Leaders' perspective

From an academic leader's perspective, it felt as if the changes had been imposed upon them and had contributed to their staff either being off on sickness leave, or leaving the institution, due to then having to make forced decisions and *"quite rapid knee-jerk changes to working practices"* (A03-Lac), resulting in their behaviour becoming one of anger. For one administration leader, their behaviour was partly one of shock, and being *"emotionally and internally negative"* towards change (B02-Lad) due to the lack of justification and reasoning for it. For another academic leader, their behaviour became more detached during the change process because they had not realised or anticipated how *"emotionally or physically draining"* (C02-Lac) change would be. In these three different leadership examples, the change process had a direct impact upon them, in terms of their behaviours and attitudes.

The data suggests that leaders were aware of the change process prior to the official announcement, perhaps due to their seniority or the position a leader had within the institution. Within ***Appendix 36*** it is the area between the nature of change and the change process that requires careful consideration. This could be achieved through staff consultation and involvement to help inform and shape the change process in order to guide its implementation. Therefore, encouraging greater or wider levels of involvement and consultation may in fact enable decision-makers to make more informed decisions. For employees within these organisations their responses towards change may become far more positive, which is important during a period of change.

### 4.43.2    Followers perspective

From an academic follower perspective, there had been a sense that they had no choice but to comply with what was being demanded, due to their leader not considering alternatives, and they saw their leader's behaviour as *"autocratic and bureaucratic"* (A06-Fac). There was also a sense of cynicism and scepticism towards change, for example, one administration follower had tried to look for the positives but with the continuous nature of change, had become frustrated (B05-Fad).

Furthermore, an academic follower (B14-Fac) saw their level of cynicism as being due to decision-makers not actually speaking with staff at ground level who have to operationalise the decisions. They therefore thought that *"decisions come out of the ivory tower"*. Another academic follower (C06-Fac) was initially quite excited by change, but felt they had not expected the organisation to become quite as corporate-minded as it had. For this individual, it meant the personal touch of what the organisation offered previously had been lost and now there was a sense of bureaucracy. This has some bearing upon the level of resistance and commitment (as per ***Appendix 37***), that then impacts change outcomes. ***Appendix 37*** is illustrating that change outcomes can vary in terms of response towards change, either in a positive, negative, neutral or other way, due to decisions concerning the change process. This meant there was a direct impact upon organisational commitment, although interestingly, not towards the change itself, as individuals believed there was little choice other than being compliant, therefore resistance in general towards change was low. This suggests there was some continuing level of commitment towards change but this in itself doesn't really reflect actual commitment towards change itself.

### 4.43.3    Type of impact upon leaders and semi-leaders

The term semi-leader (LF), refers to individuals who are in a leadership position, where they have direct reports (followers) reporting to them. However, these individuals also had a leader (line manager) they reported to directly, hence the term 'semi-leader'. LFs had a mixed response in terms of level of involvement and attitudes towards change. As with leaders, where individuals had been affected by change and had no or some involvement, their perception was one of limited change success. Where there were positive attitudes and high levels of involvement, the data suggests individuals viewed change objectives as having mostly been met.

There had been mixed reactions towards change from leaders across all three organisations that found change to be emotionally and physically draining. This resulted in behaviours becoming more detached from the change process. For example, where the change process or a semi-leader's attitude and behaviours were negative, it had a direct impact upon the leader's own behaviours and attitudes. Furthermore, across each of these three organisations, leaders' attitudes were varied, particularly in terms of whether they had high, some, or no involvement in change. For some LFs, the behaviours and attitudes from their leaders had serious consequences for them, for example loss of trust, respect and mental health related issues, which resulting in them being off work on long-term sickness.

### 4.43.4    Type of impact upon followers and semi-leaders

The impact upon followers from their leader's behaviours or attitudes varied. For some followers it was a change in priorities or a shift in mind-set, in terms of when deadlines were met. In other words, there was a greater degree of separation from work and life to caring less for the organisation. In a number of instances this encouraged followers to leave the organisation, or look for other positions, but also encouraged cynicism and scepticism thereby indicating lower levels of trust, and the LMX relationship with the leader becoming a low-quality one. Within Organisation A, some academic followers felt that their leader's behaviour and attitudes were amplified in a negative way. For example, in terms of their leadership style, namely increased autocracy and bureaucracy, where a leader did not consider alternative suggestions other than their own. Furthermore, one administration follower perceived their direct supervisor's behaviour and attitudes became more abrupt due to concerns over job security. This meant their supervisor became less cooperative and helpful, causing the follower to become anxious and demoralised.

An academic follower within Organisation B had a series of line managers in a space of 18 months, due to the changes taking place. For example, two of their line managers left – one retired and the other took voluntary severance – and the third one changed school, due to the impact of certain changes. Within Organisation C, for one semi-leader (LF) their leader went through a rollercoaster of behaviours and attitudes during change that were negative in nature, such as defensiveness and becoming disenfranchised with the change process. This caused the semi-leader to lose their confidence in that leader. For others, their leader's behaviour or attitude had created a positive atmosphere within the workplace, or reduced concerns over change taking place that led to increased trust in their leader, thereby indicating that the relationship was a high-quality one.

## 4.44    Perceived quality of the LMX relationship

The table within *Appendix 38* compares the quality of relationships across each of these three organisations, from leader, semi-leader and follower perspectives. Leaders across all three organisations perceived that they had high-quality or other quality relationships (that is, relationships that were not classified as being either 'high' or 'low', for example, adequate, good, supportive, collaborative or various degrees on these themes were classed as other) and not low-quality relationships.

For followers within organisations A and C, the quality of the relationship was either high, low or other quality. Followers within Organisation B felt that they did not have low quality relationships but had either high or other quality relationships, suggesting these relationships were of a more positive nature. This suggests that depending on the type of change taking place, change can impact the LMX relationship in a negative or positive way. For some individuals who had a good or high-quality relationship, the impact from change varied depending on its nature, namely, type of change that was taking place. For example, within Organisation A, an academic follower felt more comfortable and reassured about the change process, compared with an administration follower who considered the relationship to be adequate, as change had had a negative impact due to the apprehension and cynicism from managers. An academic follower who had a superficial but friendly relationship with their leader believed change amplified their leaders autocratic and bureaucratic leadership style, causing the follower to decide that they would leave the organisation.

Within each organisation there were a number of examples of where the LMX relationship changed pre-change and post-change. For one semi-leader (B03-LFac), pre-change this individual had trusted their line manager, therefore suggesting a high-quality relationship, but post change felt disappointed and they lost respect for that individual. The overall consequence for this individual was that their line manager was the major cause for them being off work sick for a long period of time. However, following a change in line manager (leader), they had considered this new relationship to be a high-quality one, as the leader was supportive and they had confidence in that leader. For one administration follower (B08-Fad), they had a high-quality relationship pre-change, but post-change questioned the relevance of their line manager in terms of the proceedings that were taking place. There appeared to be a trust issue, in terms of whether or not their leader had taken issues that had been raised, forward.

Another semi leader (C03-LFac) pre-change felt their leader had a clear vision and therefore had confidence in that leader. Once this semi-leader saw the impact from that particular change on people, and the changes in the behaviour and attitude from that leader, post-change the semi-leader felt sorry for their leader. This resulted in a declining confidence for that leader, which led to the LMX relationship becoming the lowest one this respondent had ever had. For one administration follower, even though they perceived having a high-quality relationship, they felt they got their anxieties from their leader. As the change process continued their leader's attitude changed to one where they took each change as it came. This was reflected within followers' own attitudes and behaviours, in terms of also taking change as it came and sticking by their leader and being supportive as their leader was doing. Within Organisation C, prior to change, one administration follower felt that they had a very good relationship, but since change the relationship had become distant due to reduced support structures, so therefore they had become more anxious and worried.

Figure 4 (overleaf) is illustrating the different interrelationships between leaders and followers, in terms of their perceptions as to the quality of the relationship, and the impact upon change outcomes, and the change experiences individuals have had. Although individuals do not believe they were resistant to change, perhaps this was occurring at a subconscious level, focussed towards decision-makers and then possibly upon the LMX relationship. The type of change experience, in terms of outcome appears to have been a mix between being a factor that impacts upon the level of resistance and upon the LMX relationship.

For example, the change process may encourage resistant-type attitudes and behaviours that then impacts LMX. This then forms part of the outcome for an individual, in terms of creating the past experience of change that then feeds into the internal environment. This then affects the context in some way, at either second or first-order change.
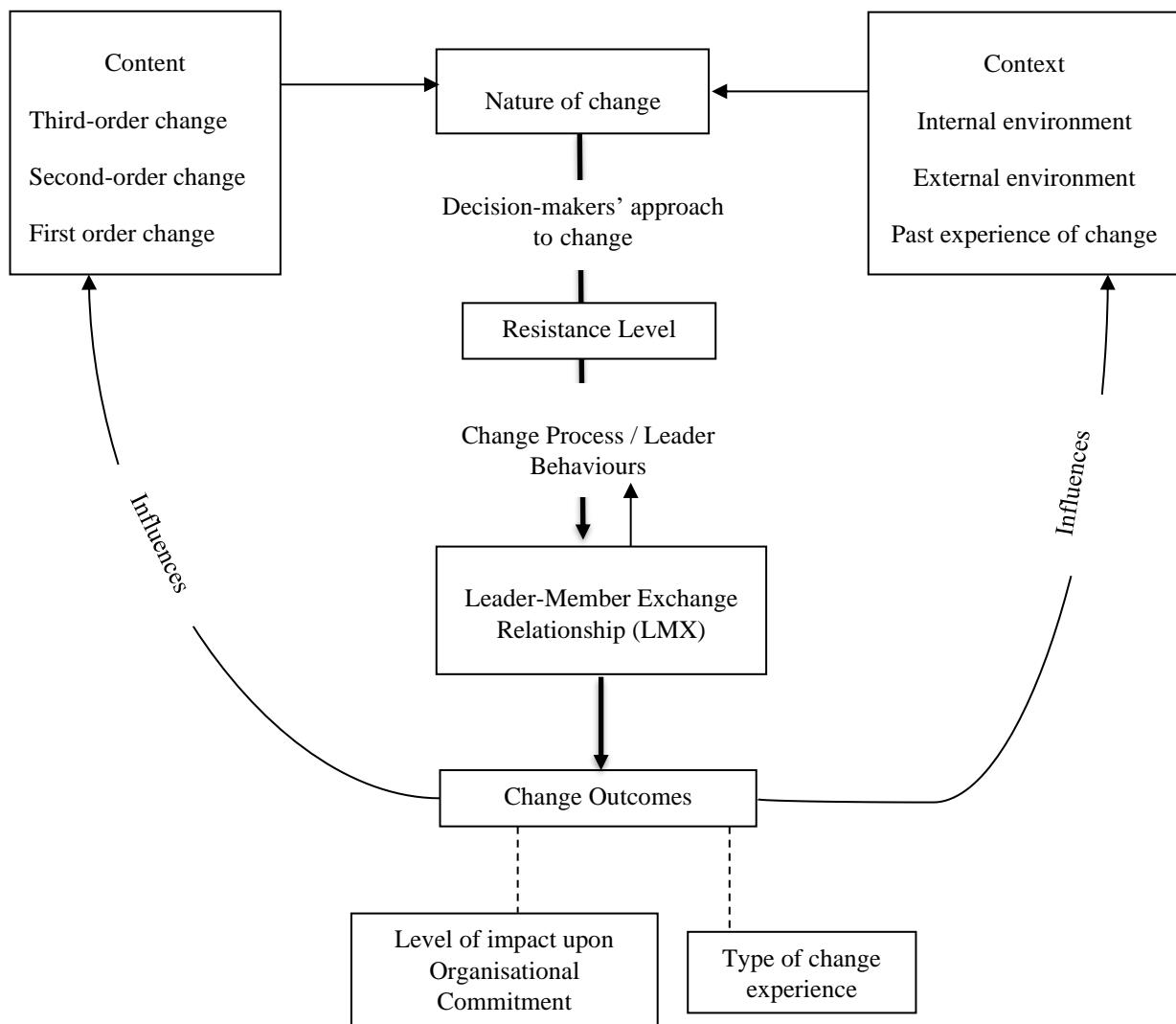


Figure 4    LMX relationship between leaders and followers

(Source: An original interpretation of the researcher)

### 4.45    Changes in response towards change

In all three organisations there had been a change in response towards change, both positively and negatively, and this was also the case for change experiences. However, for Organisation C there was also a neutral change in response or experience towards change. This may partly have to do with the impact the change process had on individuals in terms of their response towards change. For example, a number of academic leaders (A03-Lac and A09-Lac) had noticed employees being off work through stress or having left the organisation, due to viewing the change process within the University or school negatively.

One administration semi-leader (B03-LFad) saw this as being due to the "*big change*" where their previous leader's (line manager's) behaviours and attitudes were responsible for their long period off work through sickness. This was due to how their previous manager had handled the changes, in terms of communicating and supporting this respondent through the change being initiated, particularly as their manager had told them *"how disappointed they were with the process of change, and their own worries".* Furthermore, this administration semi-leader (03-LFac) commented:

> *"Given contradictory information which left me confused as to where I stood and what*
>
> *options were actually available to me, I felt there was no professional or personal*
>
> *consideration given and consequently lost a lot of respect for that person"* (03-LFac)

This suggests that there has been a breach of trust due to the treatment of this individual and illustrates how the change process can have a direct impact upon behaviours and attitudes of leaders. For another academic leader, the change process taught them about their own *"strengths and weaknesses as a leader"* (C02-Lac) and the consequences their decisions had on the people they line-managed. This illustrates that across these three different organisations, leaders have witnessed and experienced the impact caused by change. From a follower's perspective, the change process had an impact upon their attitudes and behaviours, for example, one academic follower felt the change process had made them more *"complacent and detached"* (C06-Fac), due to the decision-makers wanting to further their own career.

What is concerning was how the change process was being perceived as having lessened the significance of the job role an individual did (C15-Fad). The perception was that change was also being done to people, and for some this had a demotivating effect (A05-Fac). Furthermore, the way in which change had been led and implemented made some individuals decide to leave the organisation (A06-Fac).

The lack of involvement and consultation had a negative impact across each of these organisations, for instance, in terms of how an individual's response towards change had changed. Within Organisation C, some followers had withdrawn from the organisation through the lack of involvement (C16-Fad), or attitudes became sterner towards academic staff (C15-Fad). Where involvement opportunities existed, for example within Organisation B, these were perceived as being false due to individuals believing that decisions had already been made (B03-LFad), or that involvement was only permitted if individuals *"agreed with what was being demanded"* (A06-Fac).

What appears to be emerging from the data is that the attitudes of leaders from within each of these three organisations appeared to be far more varied depending on their level of involvement in change. For organisations A and B, leaders and semi-leaders in both academic and administration disciplines were mostly positive pre-change, and had some or high levels of involvement.

Within Organisation B, one leader (B02-Lad) and a semi-leader (B03-LFad) started off negatively pre-change, and B02-Lad was negative during and after change. Although having some involvement, this individual was personally impacted by the change and observed a "*lack of care and treatment of staff"*. Whereas for B03-LFac, their experience at the beginning was very negative because of the behaviour of their previous leader but their attitude became positive during the change process and after change became neutral. Followers were mostly negative in terms of attitudes and their level of involvement in most cases was minimal or none. Although after change there was an expectation within Organisation A and B for either some or high levels of involvement in change, due to them having been expected to implement the desired change. For Organisation C attitudes varied between positive, negative, neutral and mixed. Although it was very clear a number of leaders and semi-leader's attitudes had been positive, their level of involvement had been high pre, during and after change. For those leaders and semi-leaders who were either negative, or neutral, they had either no involvement or minimal input, namely, some involvement. Therefore, the type of change helps to determine attitudes and behaviours towards it.

## 4.46 Types of commitment

The table within *Appendix 39* clearly illustrates the differences in type of commitment across all three universities between leaders who initiate change and those who do not. The data is suggesting that leaders who initiated change, had high levels of commitment towards change, and had either affective, normative or both these types of commitment, compared with leaders who were not initiators of change. For these leaders, their commitment depended on the rationale and justification for change, and they felt they had no choice other than being committed. For some leaders there was a sense of continuance commitment, or affective commitment. One administration semi-leader (C14-LFad) suggested they had started to question the type of commitment they had.

*Appendix 40* illustrates the differences between leaders, semi-leaders and followers in terms of their commitment either towards change, or towards the organisation. For leaders, their organisational commitment appeared to be higher due to their part in the change process and its implementation.

The data seems to suggest that organisational commitment was generally low across all three organisations, depending upon an individual's circumstances and the level of impact from change. Within each of these three organisations there was a deterioration in levels of organisational commitment because of the way change had been handled, that is, implemented. This had an impact on individuals in terms of considering where their future lay within their organisations. A number of academic and administrative followers had made the decision to leave their organisations.

Furthermore, there was a sense that there was no choice other than to comply with change, and some leaders were now questioning their commitment towards the organisation. However, depending on their set of circumstances, there was a sense of continuance commitment. Some leaders who had been at the institution for decades felt a strong sense of organisational commitment. This may have been due to them approaching or nearing retirement age, and they therefore perhaps did not want the upheaval in moving to another institution, suggesting a continuance level of commitment. Furthermore, some leaders across each institution were unable to move due to personal commitments, such as having children, so felt geographically restricted. A number of respondents had displayed some level of cynicism or scepticism type attitudes that suggests perhaps individuals were displaying resistant style behaviours, albeit on a subconscious level, thereby reducing their organisational commitment.

Although what is interesting is that respondents had not considered themselves as being resistant. Across all three institutions the way in which change had been implemented and handled was perceived as being negative. Often change had been seen as being imposed and top-down. Perhaps this was due to the lack of consideration surrounding the operational impact, therefore change came across as being not thought through and was therefore perceived as having been rushed.

## 4.47    Overall impact and consequences

To assist with illustrating the overall impact and consequences that both the context and content of change had upon change outcomes, *Appendix 41* depicts that there had been a mixed change experience in terms of change outcomes. This depended on whether there had been a personal impact upon individuals influenced by the change process. For semi-leaders within Organisation B and C, their change experiences had been negative, although for Organisation C there had been some positive experiences too, perhaps due to new opportunities for development or advancement. However, for followers across all organisations their overall experiences had been either negative or other, but for Organisation C at the pre-change stage there was a sense of positively, perhaps due to the static nature of the organisation, and the recognition for the need for change. What is clear from the data (as shown in Figure 4 above) is that overall, there was an impact upon organisational commitment. Furthermore, there had been a recognition within each organisation of an increase in not only staff sickness, but staff turnover, perhaps due to the cutbacks in resources leading to increased workloads and more pressure that was contributing to low staff morale.

For academic and administrative leaders, the overall impact and consequences seemed to vary depending on what the change was. For example, within Organisation A, leaders appeared to be aware of changes taking place (A09-Lac); at the same time there were staff cutbacks and a loss of 10 full-time members of staff (A03-Lac). Despite student numbers increasing, one academic leader (A03-Lac) was forced to make decisions, while another academic leader (A02-Lac) had been able to contribute to the strategy, due to being on the executive committee. Within organisation B, the change process provided career enhancement opportunities, for example one administration leader's (B07-Lad) role had been put at risk but once they had been offered a new role, they became very positive as for them, the change process was positive, however their workload increased. For other leaders within organisation B, the change process created a broader remit and increased workload overnight, which has been challenging and stressful and therefore negative (B09-Lac).

However, in terms of professional personal development, change was positive as they had a better curriculum vitae as a result. There was also a sense that the change process was being done for personal reasons rather than effective and productive reasons (B02-Lad), and the consequences for this administrative leader was a loss of their job so they had to apply for another role within the organisation. For another academic leader (B11-Lac) the change process has been a most positive experience due to them being able to contribute towards change and shape its implementation and, therefore, they had a sense of being able to control their own destiny instead of having change imposed upon them.

There was a slight difference within Organisation C as a number of leaders felt they had been recruited on a change agenda (C12-Lad, C17-Lad). Although these experiences were slightly different, for example, one administration leader (C12-Lad) although recruited on a change agenda was then not allowed to do anything too quickly, so became frustrated as they had to play politics in order to get people on board. This individual had found the experience to be "*tortuous*" in getting their transform programme off the ground, however for them, this has been a positive experience. Another administration leader (C17-Lad), was recruited to develop a change agenda and therefore was involved in the change process, meaning the change experience had been a positive one.

Within all three organisations a voluntary severance scheme was in operation and had been quite noticeable, for example in Organisation B, one academic follower (B10-Fac) commented:

> *"Decisions have been made, so you either like it, or if you don't like it so much, there's the door, it is quite apparent that that door is as wide open as we would like it to be"*
> (B10-Fac)

Employees leaving or who had left were not being replaced so this was putting a strain on the survivors, or remaining staff members, due to the workload that still needed to be undertaken since it was now being performed with fewer people. Across each organisation an outcome from change appeared to be lower morale and long-term sickness that was impacting upon organisational commitment. Although for a few individuals, the change process had created job opportunities or promotion and personal development. A negative impact had been felt in terms of scepticism and cynicism due to the personal impact from change (as per Figure 4). Furthermore, historical or previous experience of change had had an impact upon employees who had gone through change before. Therefore decision-makers within organisations B and C may find future change implementation more challenging because of the current change process impacting upon LMX relationships.

*Appendix 42* provides an illustration as to the perceived length of these change projects within each of these organisations. The general consensus was that the change processes had been over 18 months, but there had been change projects that had taken up to 12 or 18 months, except for Organisation A where length of change processes had either been up to 12 months or over 18 months. This suggests that there were a variety of change projects or processes taking place. Perhaps this may go some way in explaining the negative change outcomes in change experiences, such as change fatigue, becoming fed up and frustrated with the change process that individuals had been experiencing.

## *4.48* Change outcomes

The data suggests that there were a number of key elements that contributed towards the change outcomes, those being attitudinal ones, the realisation of change goals, and commitment.

In terms of attitudinal outcomes, the data was suggesting both leader and follower responses towards change had changed, either in a positive, negative, neutral or other way, in terms of personal response, such as emotional, self-internalisation, detachment, professional, because of the decisions around change implementation. This was due to continuous change being undertaken across all three organisations that had caused frustrations to increase. The lack of involvement in the change process, as well as leaders' behaviours and attitudes, had a withdrawing effect and increased the level of scepticism and cynicism towards change. For semi-leaders (LF) within organisations B and C, their change experiences had been negative, although for Organisation C there had been some positive experiences too. Perhaps due to new opportunities for development or advancement.

There was a sense of change fatigue within organisations B and C, but for Organisation A this was a little different as the previous restructure a decade earlier had had a "*bruising*" effect on individuals, which was now causing anxieties amongst followers. Furthermore, depending on the length of the change process, the data suggests it was contributing towards negative change outcomes because the longer the change process continued, the more people became frustrated, fed up, or weary, resulting in change fatigue. What the change was and level of impact it had at the micro level can help in determining the outcome from that particular change, for example, contributing to increased sickness leave from employees across all three organisations due to stress, or causing people to actually leave their university. Furthermore, the way in which the implementation of change was handled had affected the way in which people responded towards change.

However, for followers across all organisations their overall experiences had been quite negative suggesting positive change outcomes were yet to be achieved. Although in terms of change goals, the perception within organisations B and C was there had been a mix between limited change success and success in meeting most change objectives. However, within Organisation A, the general consensus was that change had not happened as yet, hence change outcomes or goals were unknown. At the same time, more recent change had caused some followers to decide to either leave or consider leaving their organisation.

The data suggests that employees were unhappier due to the type of change taking place and from more being expected of them. This had led to increased workloads and pressure because employees were not being replaced when someone left an organisation. The lack of involvement and input had contributed to the overall perception from both leaders and followers that morale was low. With the increasing pressure upon academics, younger academic members of staff were leaving very quickly, having just joined an organisation. This suggests that newly qualified academic employees had been put off academia, and if this was a true reflection across the higher education sector, it could have long-term implications for not just these universities, but for others as well.

Across each organisation (as previously mentioned) there had been a sense that employees were unhappier. People's workloads had become much higher than previously, as organisations tried to reduce resourcing costs, with fewer staff doing the work in the hope of becoming more effective and efficient, as well as becoming more agile. However, morale had dropped (A06-Fac) and there was a feeling that *"negative outcomes have already been achieved"*, and one administration follower (A17-Fad) saw the outcome to have been an increase in stress due to the additional workload and increased expectations from staff.

Within Organisation B, one administration leader (B02-Lad) felt the outcome of change to have been a demonstration of power, where the leader of that organisation was establishing their position of power. This individual felt that there had been a number of negative outcomes achieved as a result of the restructuring, for example a loss of expertise. Another example of a negative outcome from change had been a sense that people were much more disconnected and unhappy (B03-LFad), therefore establishing and maintaining professional relationships had become more difficult.

Within Organisation C, staff were equally unhappy (C03-LFac). There was also the sense that positive change outcomes had yet to be achieved due to staff turnover, voluntary severance and unhappy staff (C06-Fac, C08-LFac). One administration leader-follower (C13-LFad) believed that change would never end, and would continue to evolve, but one academic leader (C11-Lac) saw that the change outcome for them was that they moved out of the emotional response towards change. Across all three organisations the perceived impact in terms of change outcomes had been with academics, and how change had impacted them.

## 4.49   Overall conclusion

Where change has had a direct and personal impact upon individuals, there is a sense of resistance towards change taking place, but at the same time a realisation there is not a choice other than being committed to the change process, unless an individual no longer feels able to continue working at their respective organisation and decides to either leave or seek an alternative role within the organisation, as a number of respondents across each of these organisations have chosen to do. In terms of commitment to the organisation, employees have a choice in their course of action, compared to having no choice other than complying with the change process or initiative. Those who have lost a sense of organisational commitment may in fact be displaying resistance style behaviours and attitudes, perhaps at an unconscious level, because most individuals did not recognise themselves as being resistant, or for that matter becoming resistant during the course of the change process. What is emerging from the data is how a leader's behaviour or attitude towards change can have a direct impact upon followers, for example impacting upon an individual's health and causing them to be off work with long-term sickness. This would then impact that organisation not just financially but operationally.

At the same time, a follower's behaviour and attitude can impact leaders in terms of how they respond towards the change process. If the response was negative, it can lead to leaders becoming emotionally and physically drained, as the realisation that their decisions as leaders were in fact having consequences and directly impacting their followers. Therefore, the LMX relationship can be seen as being interconnected, where each party in that relationship is equally important, suggesting that the LMX relationship can therefore be equally impactful.

There was a sense of change fatigue within organisations B and C, for example, one administration leader-follower feels the level of change taking place is coming from multiple fronts, and therefore feels they are becoming fatigued with change, particularly when further change is announced. For Organisation A it is a little different, as the previous restructure had a "*bruising*" effect and is contributing towards their anxieties.

Another outcome from change has been in terms of changes in response towards the change process. For example, across all three organisations there has been an increase in frustration due to the continuous nature of the change and the way in which change had been implemented. Within organisations B and C there was a sense of change fatigue, as many respondents had become fed up and weary of the ongoing or idea of further change. In a sense it seems as if some employees did not know whether they were coming or going with change that was taking place. Within Organisation A individuals seemed sceptical of change unless they understood what the change was, but the perception within the organisation was of employees becoming more cynical towards change, and given the historical perspectives from many respondents, it is perhaps understandable. Within Organisation B the change process had had a direct and negative impact upon individuals, but also for some, on their personal lives outside of the organisation.

What is particularly interesting is that for individuals within Organisation C, the change process had caused a number of follower (academic and administration employees) responses towards change to become more negative, such as to stop caring about their organisation, and their disposition in terms of now doing the bare minimum just to get through. The change process and leader behaviour and attitudes had a withdrawing effect due to the lack of involvement in change. Where individuals had an opportunity to become involved, change was received positively, such as boosting an individual's confidence and becoming more comfortable with the change process.

A number of themes have emerged, namely that both leader and follower behaviours and attitudes can have an impact upon each other due to the nature of change (that is formed or created by both the context and content of change). This then influences decision-makers in how the change process should be implemented. Depending on the change process for a particular change project or initiative, it can have an impact upon an individual's response towards change, and ultimately upon change outcomes, either in a positive, negative, neutral or other way. This can have consequences and impacts organisational commitment due to the impact upon the LMX relationship between leaders and followers.

# Chapter 5    Discussion

## 5.1    Introduction

This discussion chapter aims to address not only the key research question, but also a series of sub research questions, as indicated below. This chapter will focus on the five key findings from chapter four as a basis for answering these research questions. This chapter will finish with a brief summary followed by a conclusion.

*Key research question*

Does the nature of change impact upon the leader-member exchange relationship in terms of behaviour, attitudes, commitment, involvement and resistance to change and if so, are there consequences for change outcomes?

*Sub research questions*

- How does the leader-member exchange relationship affect member commitment and resistance to change?
- To what extent is the LMX relationship important for successful change outcomes?
- Is it the case that followers take their cues from the behaviours and attitudes of leaders charged with implementing change?
- To what extent do the behaviours and attitudes of leaders influence a follower's own behaviour, attitudes and commitment towards organisational change?
- What can be done to limit the impact of any negative behaviours and attitudes shown by leaders in order to create unity and increased follower commitment?

### 5.1.1 Background to discussion

The themes that emerged from this research centred upon the relationships that followers had with their leaders, and the impact a leader's behaviour and attitudes had upon the leader-member exchange relationship. The external environment and third-order change played a significant role in terms of having a cascading effect upon both second and first-order change, as these two factors along with the organisational context influenced decision-makers. Furthermore, by understanding the historical or past experiences of change, in other words the internal environment, an organisation goes some way to understand the social construction of meaning that individuals place upon the change situation unfolding around them. To understand how individuals construct meaning to the type of change they face, the critical incident technique allowed individuals (respondents) to convey their experiences and insights to what they perceived to be unfolding within their institutions (Chell, 2004). It allowed respondents across a diverse population the opportunity to describe specific acts or episodes (Mayhew, 1956) that may shed some light on not only respondents' attitudes and behaviours but also their leaders' attitudes and behaviours, so from multiple perspectives. Another point is that these incidents were studied to understand particular human behaviour in a specific situation (Flanagan, 1954), in the case of this research, universities undergoing change. Within the higher education sector (third-order change), the pressures for change and the pace of change itself is increasing (McRoy and Gibbs, 2009) given government regulations and, policy and initiatives, particularly now students are viewed as being consumers.

These pressures on universities mean they now have to act more like businesses and gain a competitive advantage over their fellow higher education institutional rivals, particularly with the growth of new providers of HE (Kok and McDonald, 2017). For individuals with leadership responsibilities within universities, this means trying to navigate what is increasingly being seen as a complex landscape, one that is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) (Hempsall, 2014). These institutions must be at the forefront of leading change where leaders demonstrate "*exemplar leadership*" (Hempsall, 2014). The researcher goes one step further and argues that the attitudes and behaviours of leaders are of paramount importance when building and sustaining high-quality relationships with their followers. When considering the external environment, the researcher believes that involvement and consultation in not only change implementation but decision making as well, has become of greater importance than before. This is an important consideration given the current political environment and uncertainty surrounding Brexit, which may have implications when the United Kingdom leaves the European Union.

This reinforces the generally accepted view of organisational change being "*a notoriously complex phenomenon*" (Jacobs, van Witteloostuijn and Christe-Zeyse, 2013). This is particularly true as universities wrestle with implementing their perceived necessity for change, given the reduction in financial resources (Palumbo and Manna, 2019).

With this increased competition from both home and away, the behaviours and attitudes of leaders play an increasingly important role in building their followers' organisational commitment. Failure in doing so can have adverse effects, for example resulting in highly-qualified and experienced employees leaving an organisation and joining the competition, thereby impacting negatively not only on the student experience, value for money, but on the institution as a whole, in terms of loss of knowledge, publication prestige, and research output.

This view was shared by Universities UK, 2017 that stated:

*"Emerging and projected demographic, economic, technical and political trends suggest that UK universities face a number of significant challenges if they are to maintain their position and attract the staff, students, funding and partnerships that are central to their success. In particular, the uncertainty surrounding the UK's decision to leave the EU poses a number of concerns and potential challenges for this sector, including increased barriers to recruiting talented European staff and students, damage to international research collaboration and loss of funding for research and innovation"* (UUK, 2017, p.63)

Furthermore, the decline in 18-year-old demographics both in England and European member states (HEFE, 2015) all add to the challenges faced by university leaders. This means universities, in order to maintain their positioning in the market place, must keep up in terms of change within these institutions in order for validity and accessibility to be maintained, but change remains an obstacle at both organisational and individual levels as well as for leaders (Gelaidan, Al-Swidl and Mabkhot, 2018). Given these increased challenges, LMX relationships, between leaders and their followers, needs to be much closer. This is in terms of the quality and trust within these relationships, but also the focus on the relational building side of this relationship. Leaders need to consider their current leadership style, as well as the potential fall out for not doing so. One further point to make, given the current climate for universities, or perhaps what any organisation now faces, the concept of continuous change is considered to be the reality for today's organisations and for the members within them (Morin et al., 2016; Alavi and Gill, 2017). This is perhaps due to shifts in technology or markets creating the necessity for change (Amarantou, Kazakopoulou, Chatzoudes and Chatzoglou, 2018).

Current research within continuous change literature suggests that the likelihood is for it to originate from the bottom up (Wee and Taylor, 2018), and for continuous change to stem from routine change – the idea that continuous change tends to be minor adjustments to work routines. However, from this research, all three organisations have identified change to now be continuous and fast paced but it is imposed top-down.

This is an interesting finding and is different from published research. A possible explanation for this difference is that two out of these three organisations (Organisation B and Organisation C) had been static for a long period of time. These organisations had been static for over a decade or more with little change taking place, therefore the leaders of those institutions perhaps had been preparing their organisations for the realities of change now becoming continuous. From undertaking this research, a number of key findings about the relationships between leaders and followers have emerged, namely there were differences in the relationship between followers and their leaders pre- and post-change that may have profound implications for future research and exploration.

## 5.2 Key findings

### 5.2.1 Key finding one – the change process was influential upon the LMX relationship between leaders and followers

Within the change literature, constant change and continuous change is seen as the norm for today's organisations for them to remain successful, therefore, they must be in a state of continued change readiness (Madsen, Miller and John, 2005). A number of factors were considered to be critical for change success, such as commitment towards change, and issues related to leadership (Santhidran, Chandran and Borromea, 2013). A reason for this is perhaps to allow time for individuals within the organisation to assess both the disadvantages and advantages related to the particular change, in terms of benefits and risks before people engage in behavioural changes (Bouckenooghe, 2010). This would perhaps assist leaders by giving them time to consider and reflect upon their approach towards their followers, in terms of their attitudes and behaviours. Properly planning for change can inhibit the chances of change failure, and aid the prevention of unwanted consequences, such as reduction in staff morale, commitment, or increases in cynicism (Self and Schraeder, 2009; Gilmore et al., 1997). Empowering leadership is seen as a way to positively shape the behaviours and attitudes of employees including their cynicism (Lorinkova and Perry, 2017).

Trust plays a crucial role, as does authenticity and transparency, as it can not only enhance followers' perceptions of benevolence and integrity (Alavi and Gill, 2017). The benefit of this is the increased psychological capacities that have the potential to influence how each other (leader and follower) see the abilities of the other party during the change process (Alavi and Gill, 2017). Perhaps thereby limiting the impact from any negative behaviours and attitudes shown by leaders during times of organisational change.

### 5.2.1.1    Influence upon leadership styles

Aligning specific leadership styles with those within the literature has been complicated by an additional dimension, that being the nature of the change itself and the impact this has had upon leaders and followers. The style of leadership within each of these case studies appeared to be controlled to some degree by the top of the organisation (executive), creating the perspective of hands being tied as to what leaders are actually able to do when implementing change. This is particularly concerning because within the organisational change literature, trust in management and perceiving management as being supportive are seen as being important in terms of co-operation and receptivity towards change (Oreg, Vakola and Armenakis, 2011). This may then have contributed to the actual behaviours and attitudes of leaders within these three organisations. This is of importance because followers believed their own attitudes and behaviours were shaped by their leader's attitudes and behaviours and felt that was where they got their anxieties from.

What has emerged from the data was leaders who shared a similar change experience as their followers and had been personally impacted by it, for example loss of job, build stronger relationships between leaders and followers. The LMX literature suggests followers are more inclined to respond in a favourable manner to leaders who inspire and motivate them (Dulebohn et al., 2012). Therefore, leaders with a shared change experience as their followers may perhaps be inspirational and a source of motivation, particularly as the leader will understand the perspective of their followers. Authentic and relational attributes appeared to be absent from most leaders who were interviewed within the study organisations, although some commented that they tried to lead authentically and perceived themselves to have high-quality relationships with their followers. From the leadership literature, authentic leadership was seen as contributing to the effectiveness of organisational change, particularly when change is complex, and can affect follower beliefs about change, namely, cynicism (Alavi and Gill, 2017).

This may go some way in explaining why and how followers created particular socially-constructed meanings to the change situation that they faced, in terms of not perceiving their leaders as leading authentically or relationally. These differing styles of leadership help to illustrate the complexity behind not only change, but those tasked with leading it.

What has emerged from the researcher's qualitative approach is transformational and transactional leadership styles were not easily identifiable. The reasoning behind this was that the change process was perceived as being reactionary change across all three universities because of third-order change having had a cascading effect upon both second and first-order change.

This is an important consideration because transactional and transformational leadership, although separate leadership styles are often perceived within the literature to complement each other when dealing with organisational change (Holten and Brenner, 2015; Eisenbach, Watson and Pilai, 1999). Transformational leadership provides a role model or focal point for followers and transactional leadership deals with the compliancy and consistency in terms of commitment that may be generated by the leadership behaviour associated with transformational leadership styles (Holten and Brenner, 2015). Leaders may use both of these leadership styles to some degree (Liao et al., 2017).

When these had not been easily identifiable within leaders who had been interviewed, it may go some way in explaining the various perceptions followers had, not only towards the change process but concerning their leaders. For example, the change process was perceived as being unplanned within Organisation A, radical and political in Organisation B, and planned in Organisation C. The perception of leadership styles varied within these organisations, for example within Organisation A some leadership styles were seen as autocratic and bureaucratic, or forced, perhaps due to some leaders becoming angry over the type of change taking place. Within Organisation B there were withholding and unsupportive leadership styles, but also similarities in leadership styles between leaders and semi-leaders who created strong positive relationships, for example a pragmatic leadership style. For Organisation C, leadership styles varied, for example, some were defensive and jarred, bullying, or leaders were going around followers to get things done, and were combative. There was also a perception of contradiction and inconsistency in the expectations and change approach from some leaders.

These case studies provide an illustration as to the actual styles adopted by leaders within these three organisations. Within the leadership literature, there are overlaps between these differing styles of leadership that have, and are being researched, contributing to the problematic situation of construct proliferation (Anderson and Sun, 2017).

Other leadership theories focus on leader or follower traits, styles or behaviours, whereas LMX unit of analyses typically centres around the leader-follower relationship (Martin et al., 2018). Furthermore, LMX is often interpreted from followers' perceptions as to whether they have a positive relationship with their leader (Gottfredson and Aguinis 2017; Dolebohn et al., 2012). Although there were complexities surrounding the many different types of leadership styles and behaviours. The researcher's data has illustrated how differing leadership styles in different types of contexts can be influential upon followers' behaviours and attitudes.

### 5.2.1.2    The influence of the change process

The health and wellbeing of not only the organisation, but its customers and stakeholders can be affected by the quality of these complex LMX relationships (Parish, Cadwaller and Busch, 2008). Therefore, leaders or managers who are supportive are often more committed to their organisation (Johnson et al., 1990). Seo et al. (2012) suggest that employees' affective commitment early on in the change process impacts affective and normative commitment, in both the early and later stages of the change process. Assumptions have to be questioned as to whether commitment is a psychological state, attitude or behaviour, particularly when individuals believed they had no choice other than being committed to change taking place (Klein, Molloy and Brinsfield, 2012).

This is an important point that Klein et al. (2012) raise, as this sense of "*no choice*" has emerged from the researcher's data, and will be discussed shortly. These three components have remained embedded within the revisions of the model conducted by Meyer and Herscovitch, (2001), based upon Meyer and Allen's (1991) earlier version of the three-component model. Klein et al. (2012) also raised concerns about commitment being attached to all bonds, and instead view commitment (Klein et al., 2012, p.137) as "*a specific type of psychological bond between an individual and a target",* due to the socially constructed state of the psychological bond. The term "*target*" used by Klein et al. (2012) refers to specific foci to which a bond is formed, for example employing organisation, supervisors, decisions, values, or goals. In this context, the researcher could extend the term target to include the LMX relationship, impact from type of change, behaviours and attitudes of leaders, change outcomes and so forth.

### 5.2.1.3 Follower perspectives

In terms of commitment towards change by followers, the researcher's data supports the points raised by Klein et al. (2012) in terms of there being a sense of "*no choice*", or having had minimal commitment. However, other followers felt they had zero commitment, or none. Even for administration followers within organisations A and C who reported high levels of commitment towards change, their commitment to the organisation was either minimal, or low.

Within Organisation A, some followers felt that they had either affective commitment or both affective and normative commitment, compared with Organisation B having normative or continuance commitment towards the organisation, due to either having had a sense of obligation, or would consider leaving if a better opportunity presented itself. The data suggests individuals who remain is due to the positive impact change had on them, such as receiving a promotion or opening up a new job role opportunity; also some leaders felt the organisation has invested in them, and so had formed a bond with the organisation, as suggested by Klein et al. (2012).

Commitment has been linked not only to a range of positive outcomes, such as positive behaviour intension of individuals, but also their actions in achieving organisational change, such as new structures and working methods (Swailes, 2004). What has emerged from the data is two out of the three organisations (organisations B and C) had been static for nearly two decades and these organisations were not used to change. The past experience of change within Organisation A had a negative impact due to the way change had been implemented. The data suggests that most followers within these organisations were not prepared for change due to the lack of consultation and involvement in decisions being made about the change process, but also in how it was to be implemented.

### 5.2.1.4 Leader perspectives

From a leader's perspective, the general consensus was that they were aware change would be taking place but some leaders were not prepared for the impact it would have. For example, effects on their school, or for another, not anticipating the fast pace of change, resulting in a loss of job for themselves and other colleagues who held similar positions. Furthermore, leaders who encouraged active involvement and were supportive of followers developed high-quality relationships.

This is important for encouraging and improving organisational commitment (Jones and Van de Ven, 2016). However, the data suggests that not only leader behaviour and attitudes were having a negative impact, but the type of change and its continuous nature was impacting upon organisational commitment. Therefore, when leaders and followers are equally prepared and supported for impending change, and are actively involved in the decision making and its implementation, it may increase organisational commitment (Jones et al., 2008). This perhaps may stave off any need for negative behaviours and attitudes from leaders, and enhance positive reactions from followers towards change. These were some examples in which the LMX relationship affected commitment towards change. It also highlighted how the impact from negative attitudes and behaviours from leaders can be limited or reduced.

### 5.2.2 Key finding two – the cascading effects from third-order change

For individuals and the organisation, the external environment and market organisations and leaders operate in can impact change outcomes (Oc, 2018). For example, how leaders perceive a particular situation (Desmet, Hoogervorst and Van Dijke, 2015). At the organisational level, leadership styles have been shown to affect the organisation's financial performance or innovation (Oc, 2018).

The organisational change literature suggests that as change makes its way down through the organisation, it has different implications at different levels, and therefore is perceived differently (Bouckenooghe, 2010). Within these three universities, the leaders of these institutions had been future-proofing their organisations, such as downsizing through staff cutbacks, and restructuring initiatives (second and first-order change). This was to make the organisations more competitive, and to respond to changes taking place within the higher education sector (third-order change). The cascading effects from third-order change has an impact upon the change process in terms of how change was being implemented, but also upon change outcomes. For example, within the resistance to change literature, organisational outcomes can be a result of the level of resistance towards change, mediated by the business landscape (Appelbaum, Degbe, Macdonald and Nguyen-Quang, 2015). Resistance to change from employees is often seen to be one of the causes of change failure (Amarantou et al., 2018; Ford et al., 2008), due in part to the way change has been implemented, or in terms of power gain or loss (Amarantou et al., 2018). Another perspective of resistance is that it is a socially constructed reality, and therefore will vary in the form it takes depending on the nature of its construction (Ford, Ford and McNamara, 2002).

Within the LMX literature, it was evident that high-quality relationships had a bearing upon a number of positive outcomes for not only followers, but for leaders and organisations in general (Martin et al., 2016; van Breukelen, Schyns and Le Blanc, 2006; Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). For example, reduced turnover intension, career advancement, protection, job latitude (Ballinger, Lehman and Schoorman, 2010). Furthermore, LMX influences many outcomes, again stemming from third-order change, such as satisfaction with working conditions, citizenship behaviour and turnover intensions (Lord, Gatti and Chui, 2016; Green et al., 1996; Ballinger, Lehman and Schoorman, 2010). It also plays an essential mediating role in critical organisational outcomes, such as organisational commitment or job satisfaction (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Boer et al., 2016).

The LMX literature suggests that a change in leader during the change process may be considered to be a loss, and that creates negative affective reactions, particularly when an individual considers the existing relationship quality to be high (Ballinger et al., 2010). This then may help to explain how the attitudes and behaviours from leaders were shaped or informed by third-order change taking place within the higher education sector.

### 5.2.3 Key finding three – the attitudes and behaviours of leaders does impact upon follower attitudes and behaviours

The behaviours and attitudes of leaders had a negative impact in terms of disengaging followers from not only the change process, but also from the leader as well, causing individuals to feel estranged and disengaged from the organisation and care less for the institution. Furthermore, these attitudes and behaviours from leaders had caused some followers to leave or to consider leaving their organisations, due in part to the way change was being led and implemented. The organisational change literature suggests that organisations do not prepare employees or those being affected by the change adequately enough, and tend to move directly to implementing the change (Jones, Jimmieson and Griffiths, 2005). Perhaps this lack of change readiness also affected the quality of the LMX relationship. The resistance to change literature also suggests how change is carried out, and its outcomes upon individuals, can influence how employees react to the change taking place (Garcia-Cabrera and Hernandez, 2014).

The researchers' data suggests the longer the change process goes on, the more likely it is that attitudes and behaviours towards it become more negative. Furthermore, the change process had brought changes to follower reporting lines. This created more distant LMX relationships due to the disruption to the working environment.

### 5.2.3.1      Influence upon commitment

The data is suggesting is that the nature of the change (that is, the type of change) had either a positive, negative, or neutral impact upon the LMX relationship. The impact of the nature of change was to the level of commitment towards change and the organisation. Those individuals who were not particularly committed to their organisations remained due to being unable to uproot due to personal circumstances. For semi-leaders, their commitment to the organisation was no longer perceived as being a permanent state because of their leader, but also because the nature of the change had meant they were looking for a different position.

From an academic follower perspective, some felt that they were ready to leave the organisation but felt trapped by the salary and pension, hence indicating continuance commitment. The relationship leaders had with their followers, particularly in how they viewed followers' response towards change, was an important factor in determining commitment. For example, within each organisation there was the perception by the Vice-Chancellors and various leaders that people did not like change and would prefer that the status quo be maintained.

Within Organisation A, some leaders felt they had to make forced decisions, such as cutting staffing numbers. Leaders within each of these three organisations had a sense that power was being drawn back to centre, and believed this had a disempowering and disengaging effect. The perceptions from leaders and academic followers was that decisions now went up through the organisations, creating a sense that hands were being tied.

### 5.2.3.2      Impact upon followers

The data suggests administrative followers who normally had a positive relationship with a direct supervisor felt their supervisor's behaviour and attitude became more abrupt due to their concerns over job security. Therefore, they became less helpful and cooperative, causing followers to become anxious and demoralised. The organisational change literature suggests that as individuals consider the possible effects change may have on them at a personal level, it can elicit negative feelings (Seo et al., 2012). For other individuals it had been the nature of a particular change, such as leaders implementing cost-cutting measures, that left some individuals feeling demoralised and demotivated. As a result, the data suggests that morale had not only decreased but organisational commitment had also been impacted. Individuals had considered leaving their organisation or had actually left the organisation.

Furthermore, where individuals had left, they were not being replaced. This impacted those who were unable to leave due to personal circumstances, suggesting those who remained had continuance levels of commitment. For these organisations, having individuals who were not particularly committed to the organisation may have long-term implications, particularly for their customers internally and externally. This means organisationally it has associations with a number of negative outcomes at the micro and macro level (Holten and Brenner, 2015). The above illustrates the extent in which the LMX relationship is important for successful change outcomes. Therefore, this is an area the researcher believes requires urgent attention and needs addressing.

Within the organisational change literature, behaviours have been associated with different types of resistance being displayed by individuals within organisations, ranging from supportive to covert or even active and passive (Giangreco and Peccei, 2005; Bovey and Hede, 2001; Self and Schraeder, 2009). Resistance also goes beyond the behavioural dimension (how individuals behave during change) and can be perceived as being seen as multi-dimensional, that is, cognitive (what individuals think about change) and affective (how individuals feel about change) (Oreg, 2006; Erwin and Garman, 2010). Or resistance can operate in each of these dimensions simultaneously (Piderit, 2000). Lines (2004) suggested that instead of resistance being viewed from a value-laden perspective, thoughts, feelings and behaviours could be seen as either being positive or negative. An important consideration that aligns with the researcher's data is that due to the multiplicity of responses from individuals at different levels, in other words, leaders, semi-leaders or followers within academic and administration disciplines across these three organisations, behaviours cannot automatically be classed as being resistant (Zoller and Fairhurst, 2007; Larsen and Tompkins, 2005).

Resistance is often viewed negatively within the change literature, therefore one-sided, however resistance can also be viewed more positively in terms of its contribution in enhancing the chances of change implementation being successful (Ford, Ford and D'Amelio, 2008; Thomas and Hardy, 2011). Resistance is also seen in terms of ambivalence, namely, positive and negative attitudes in response towards an object (Piderit, 2000; Oreg and Sverdlik, 2011), or to the balanced and accurate descriptions and perspectives that can provide valuable perspectives on change implementation that would be beneficial to change agents (Oreg and Sverdlik, 2011). The data across each of these organisations suggests that a leader's behaviour and attitude influenced their followers' responses, not only towards change but upon the LMX relationship; thereby encouraging cynicism and scepticism towards change.

When leaders had been directly impacted by change, such as being put at risk of losing their job, that led to a shocked reaction. This created an internal and emotional negativity towards change due to the lack of justification for the change that was taking place. What seems to have emerged from the data was that a leader's behaviour and attitude does impact upon followers' own attitudes and behaviours. This may help to explain why leaders are perceived to be the driver behind relationship-building with their followers, particularly when these behaviours had a direct impact. Followers perhaps felt unable or unwilling to engage in building this relationship. One possible explanation may be that the quality of the relationship itself made it an impossibility, or reduced their desire to do so.

Perhaps the frequent changes in leaders made it unfeasible or unreasonable for followers to take the initiative in being the driving force in relationship building. Data from this research highlighted a number of followers who had had a number of different leaders in a short space of time due to the type of change that had taken place. This created barriers in which to build meaningful relationships with their leaders.

Within the organisational change literature there was evidence to support an individual's affective reactions during the change process, which represented two key dimensions of the affective experience; namely positive and negative affect, or activation (Seo et al 2012; Watson and Tellegen, 1985; Watson et al., 1999). Due to the varying experiences respondents had during the change process, they thought about the effects change might have, either in a positive or negative way (Seo et al., 2012).

However, some scholars have suggested that there is some fusion between actual leadership behaviours and those perceived by followers (Dinh et al., 2014). Therefore, if these leadership behaviours and their effects cannot be easily distinguished from perceived ones, then establishing precise causal models becomes problematic (Behrendt, Matz and Goritz, 2017). The researcher argues that from a social constructivist perspective, how leaders perceived their behaviours and attitudes to be and how followers actually perceived their leaders' behaviour and attitudes, was determined by these individuals within the LMX relationship, which brought or assigned meaning to a given situation or environment. Therefore, the researcher's view differs from those scholars as the researcher perceives behaviours and attitudes as an area of subjectivity that can be seen from multiple perspectives. Furthermore, reality is *"socially and culturally influenced",* and focuses on the *"interpreted intersubjective social reality that emerges from interaction"* (Endres and Weibler, 2017, p.215).

As the purpose of this research was to explore the relationship followers had with their leaders, interpreting the behavioural and attitudinal aspects within these relationships was seen as being critical. This was due to the socially constructivist approach in interpreting these social interactions within the LMX relationship. This may also explain the extent to which followers took their cues from the behaviours and attitudes of their leaders within each of these three case studies.

The behaviours and attitudes from some leaders had a direct impact upon the LMX relationship, but also upon change outcomes and organisational commitment. Often it has been reported within the leadership literature that due to the quantitative approach to research, insights into actual behaviours of leaders had not been provided (Higgs and Rowland, 2011). Furthermore, models of leadership have dominated the leadership literature until fairly recently and so the value for having them is being seen as being limited, particularly given the complexities that organisations find themselves in today's world (Clarke, 2013).

### 5.2.3.3　　　Consequences from change approach

This research has shown that the perception of respondents, both in leadership and non-leadership positions across all three organisations, was that change had been imposed and had been so very much top-down. The consequences of such a change approach had impacted a number of leaders in different ways, for some positively, while for others negatively. This may go some way in explaining the differences in leadership styles. The importance of this is that leaders can have significant impact upon the lives of their followers and upon their wellbeing (Tuncdogan, Acar and Stam, 2017).

There is a body of research that focusses on the role of genetics, psychology and endocrinology as a way of understanding and explaining different types of leadership behaviours and traits, for example Tuncdogan, Acer and Stam (2017). Although this provides useful insights into the phenomenon, it does not seem to address the impact change had upon leaders or even semi-leaders. A possible reason for this was due to the fragmentation of the differing streams of literature, but also their paper focussed on individual differences and not specifically on LMX relationships. This would have been helpful in addressing the research questions. Furthermore, that particular line of enquiry was outside the scope of this particular research but may prove useful for future research direction.

### 5.2.4 Key finding four – the change process impacts the LMX relationship quality and responses towards change

#### 5.2.4.1 Responses towards change

Although this research had not set out to explore emotions in general, what seems to have emerged from the data was the emotional responses towards change and the impact this had upon individuals in terms of their relationship towards the organisation. Within the higher education literature and for that matter within the change literature, negative emotions have been examined, such as anxiety, fear, denial, anger or depression (Dasborough, Lamb and Suseno, 2015; Oreg et al., 2011; Zell, 2003; Paterson and Cary, 2002), but there has been limited progress concerning positive emotions towards change that would assist in completing the picture. The reasoning for this is that positive emotional responses towards change have been linked to perceived change success (Bartunek et al., 2006). This should perhaps not be too surprising due to the central role they play within the change process, particularly at the initial stage, as well as contributing to individuals' sense-making towards the change taking place (George and Jones, 2001). It can also be argued that these emotional responses or reactions from individuals influence their behaviours either directly or indirectly (Seo et al., 2012).

Although the literature was useful in providing thought-provoking insights into emotions, the researcher felt that consideration had not been given to how differing types of change can bring on different emotions. The researcher's data revealed a number of differing emotions, for example, within Organisation A, there was anger towards change due to a leader not anticipating their school being affected by change, that is, having to reduce staffing numbers, and making inhouse operational changes.

A semi-leader within Organisation B had an emotional response towards change because of their leader, the political nature of change and because of the leader of that institution, but had also encountered anger, depression, and beyond sadness due to the nature of the change taking place. Within Organisation C a number of leaders and followers had experienced emotional responses towards change, particularly as this organisation had been static for some time.

From the change literature, the perception was that employees' responses towards change may be influenced by the content, process and context of change (Armenakis and Bodian, 1999), and leaders and co-workers provide "*cues*" that enable people to construct and interpret change events due to an individual's immediate social environment (Rafferty and Restubog, 2010).

Furthermore, Rafferty and Restubog (2010) and Oreg and Berson (2011), suggest that barely any research has explored an individual's reaction towards change based upon their perception of their own change story within an organisation. Oreg and Berson's (2011) multilevel quantitative research found that leaders' traits, values and behaviours were actually reflected in the way followers reacted to organisational change events. In the change process, the role of leaders is seen as being crucial to change success but also their behaviours have been linked to how their followers behave and perform (Higgs and Rowland, 2005; Seo et al., 2012). It appears that the challenge lies with the LMX theory, as the focus is still on leaders being seen as the driver in building relationships with followers, rather than followers building the relationship (Uhl-bien et al., 2014).

### 5.2.4.2    Importance of relationship quality

The table within *Appendix 38* illustrates the perceptions of how leaders, semi-leaders and followers perceive the quality of the relationship to be. What emerged from the data was that leaders (both academic and administration) did not perceive they had low-quality relationships but high or other quality relationships, for example, positive, supportive, good, or strong, and so forth. In terms of both academic and administration followers, the data was extremely interesting as the perception within organisations A and B was split between high-quality or other quality, except where individuals had different line managers, and Organisation C ranged from high, low and other.

Once again leaders' attitudes and behaviours had been cited as having deteriorated in these relationships. Within the LMX literature it has frequently been reported by scholars that leaders differentiate their treatment towards their followers that leads to different types of quality relationships between leaders and followers (Martin et al., 2016; Dansereau, 1975). There appeared to be no evidence of this from these three case studies.

Furthermore, high-quality relationships are associated with high levels of liking and effect, which can lead to increased commitment for both the organisation and the leader (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Boer et al., 2016), but a supervisor's available time and resources can inhibit high-quality relationships with followers (Eisenberger et al., 2010). A differing perspective was that leaders try to build as many high-quality relationships as they can with their subordinates (Lunenberg, 2010). On the other hand, low-quality relationships tended to be within the confines of specified contractual resources, in other words within the bounds of the employment contract, for example, job performance (Liden and Graen 1980; Brower, Schoorman and Tan, 2000). In terms of low-quality relationships, the data differs from the literature.

What emerged from the data was 'other type of quality relationship', in which respondents had not acknowledged or perceived the relationship to be either high or low, perhaps implying an absence of a relationship. The differences in the quality of these relationships had often been down to the attitudes and behaviours of leaders, for example, hypocrisy of leaders, or leaders not handling their new role well. This may offer an explanation as to reasoning behind the way followers had been impacted by these differing attitudes and behaviours, and in terms of matters related to trust.

### 5.2.4.3 Implications of trust

What has emerged from the researcher's data is that respondents in general felt that there was "*no choice*" and little point in being resistant towards change as it would happen anyway. Trust does not seem to address the resistance towards change issue, but may have a part to play in terms of organisational commitment. Trust in management was also seen as being an essential requirement for reducing or lessening workers' resistance towards change (Vakola, 2016). Trust is not a new concept in terms of influencing the leader-follower relationship (Hakini, van Knippenberg and Giessner, 2010), particularly in building high-quality LMX relationships, and is seen as being central within the construct of LMX due to being defined as a trust building process (Martin et al., 2016; Anand, Vidyarthi and Rolnicki, 2017; Seo et al., 2018; Brower, Schoorman and Tan, 2000). Within Organisation C, a leader who was perceived as having leadership styles that were open, honest, trustworthy, or confidential created a positive relationship, and therefore supports the literature.

### 5.2.4.4 Effects on commitment

A number of followers across these three organisations had not been particularly committed to their organisations, and were waiting for an opportune time when they could leave and develop their career elsewhere. For some academic and administration followers, an outcome from change had been becoming battle-worn and fed up by change being continuous, and led to them questioning their organisational commitment and reason for remaining. This is concerning as the change literature suggests it has become vitally important to organisations that its people are *"able to undergo continuous change"* (By, 2005, p.371), but it also recognises that apprehension in employees may in fact increase due to their concerns about work-related procedures and social norms (Carter et al., 2013). This may help to explain why some followers wanted to remain because of their students and work colleagues, but not for organisational reasons due to their realisation as to their employability. Therefore, they did not have to remain at their respective organisations. Within each of these organisations has been a deterioration of organisational commitment due to the personal impact change had upon individuals.

When there was a positive impact, such as new career or role opportunities (promotion), organisational commitment was extremely positive and more affective, but there was also normative type commitment, particularly when individuals felt the organisation had personally invested in them. Another outcome from change has been a negative change in attitudes and behaviours towards other people, such as becoming sterner with academics due to workload pressures caused by fewer staff, as a direct result of change.

It therefore appeared that the longer the change process went on, the more it had a deteriorating effect upon attitudes of respondents towards change. The resistance literature suggests that over time resistance increases, particularly upon relationships, in a negative way in terms of an employee's commitment towards their organisation (Jones and van de Ven, 2016).

### 5.2.4.5    Effects of LMX upon resistance

What has emerged from this research is that most respondents within each of the three organisations did not recognise themselves as being resistant towards change. The reasoning for this, was due to there being a perception of "*no choice*" other than complying with change process, as change would have taken place regardless. What this suggests is that resistance is a far more complicated concept to that within the literature, but it also raises self-awareness issues for leaders to take account of during times of change.

Within these three case studies, resistance towards change did not appear to be the issue but rather the nature of the change taking place, and the behaviours and attitudes of leaders to it. Where resistance was evident was in terms of organisational commitment, and this had a diminishing effect compared to pre-change. From the data, the majority of respondents' pre-change were in fact displaying ambivalent type attitudes and behaviours due to their desire in becoming involved in change, but during change became more resistant. This influenced their level of organisational commitment.

Individuals who were openly resistant towards change saw this as being due to a lack of involvement and how change was being implemented, but also attributed it to their leaders' behaviour and attitude. This differs from Giangreco and Peccei (2005) who had not identified leaders' behaviours as contributing to followers' resistance to change. Individuals who did not recognise themselves as being resistant to change believed there was "*no choice*" other than complying and being committed to change taking place, therefore being resistant towards it was viewed as pointless. A number of respondents had a change in leader, on occasions up to three different leaders.

Followers and semi-leaders who considered their relationship to be low quality were positive to have had a new leader (line manager) due to the deterioration or breakdown of the previous LMX relationship. Within the psychology literature concerning change, a number of cognitive (intensions to quit) and behavioural outcomes (sick-time used, and voluntary turnover) have emerged, for example the relationships between coping and employee withdrawal, either from their job or the organisation (Fugate, Kinicki and Prussia, 2008; Hanisch and Hulin, 1991). These outcomes can be problematic and costly for organisations, and the data from this research has highlighted that a number of respondents are struggling to cope with the increased workload following cuts in resources, but also because of the behaviours and attitudes from leaders that have had a withdrawing effect in terms of individual intensions in leaving their organisation, or in actually leaving. For others, their leaders' behaviours and attitudes had severe psychological consequences, resulting in being off work for a long period of time. This helps to illustrate the extent to which leaders' attitudes and behaviours influence their followers' attitudes and behaviours towards organisational change.

### 5.2.5    Key finding five – lack of involvement and consultation in change implementation influences change outcomes and LMX relationships

#### 5.2.5.1    The LMX relationship and its impact upon commitment

***Appendix 39*** illustrates two distinct differences in types of commitment from leaders who initiate change and those who did not, in each of these organisations. ***Appendix 40*** compares the differences between academic and administration leaders, semi-leaders, and followers, in terms of their commitment towards change and the organisation. The data suggests the majority of leaders who initiated change were highly committed toward change, and had either affective, or normative, commitment. For some leaders there was a sense of convenience commitment, that is, it suited them to remain with their organisations at this moment in time. Within the change literature, organisational commitment is often considered to have three components to it: affective (desire to remain and support change), normative (sense of obligation) and continuance (having to remain, and support change, to avoid costs of not doing so) (Morin et al., 2016), with employees being involved in these three components to some degree (Meyer and Allen, 1991; Gelaidan, Al-Swidl and Mabkhoy, 2018).

Commitment was seen to be one of the crucial factors concerning employees supporting change initiatives and being compliant with the change requirement, otherwise it is considered a form of resistance (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002). Affective organisational commitment has been linked with employees' emotional attachment, which is perceived to reduce absenteeism and turnover as well having implications for the physical and psychological wellbeing of employees (Eisenberger et al., 2010; Jayasingam, Govindasamy and Singh, 2016).

Within **Appendix 39** the table clearly illustrates the differences between commitment towards change and to the organisation. For leaders who make decisions and initiate change, the data shows these individuals having high levels of commitment towards change. Their level of commitment is reflected in their commitment towards the organisations. Therefore, leaders who had been directly involved in change and decision-making had far more of a positive response towards change and their organisational commitment was perceived to be higher. This supports the literature referred to above, to some degree, however for those non-initiators of change, the data tells a different story. Some leaders felt they had no choice and change was inevitable, or felt their commitment was generally strong, or depended on its reasoning, but would be fully on-board if it was change for the better. In terms of commitment toward the organisation, leaders' commitment varied as it was either affective, normative, or continuance.

Although this supports Meyer and Allen's (1991) perspective on commitment, there were some leaders who had affective and continuance commitment, or affective and normative commitment. This was an interesting finding as the data suggested leaders did not to some degree go through all types of commitment as suggested by the literature, except for one leader who was a decision-maker (change initiator) who confirmed had a mix of all three. For semi leaders within Organisation B, commitment towards change and the organisation was not as high as those semi-leaders within Organisation C, perhaps due to the reasoning behind change but also on how much an individual has been invested in. In Organisation C on the other hand, semi-leaders considered themselves fully committed and as having high levels of commitment towards change.

### 5.2.5.2    Level of involvement and consultation influences negative or positive change outcomes

What has emerged from the researcher's data was that change had been imposed on people at the university level, meaning followers had to do as they were told. Given the increased workloads, as discussed earlier, followers felt they did not have spare capacity to take on anything else, making involvement more difficult, particularly from part-time individuals. This supports the organisational change literature, except for the expectation of employees being expected to cope with these additional workloads (Seo et al., 2012). It appears that the expectation that employees "*must*" be able to cope seemed to have created a negative experience of change for followers, because their perception was that they had had little input into change and were not consulted about the change process or its implementation. Employees who had negative attitudes pre and during change had minimal or no involvement at all in change, compared to those who had some or high levels of involvement and were more positive. For example, leaders had greater levels of involvement in change but were not immune from change being imposed from the top.

Within Organisation B, leaders within more senior roles had a greater level of involvement in change at an institutional level, and this for some leaders created a more positive experience due to having had the opportunity to input into and influence the change process. However, for those semi-leaders and followers who had the opportunity to be involved, these opportunities were perceived as false, and therefore perceived negatively due to the impression that decisions had already been made. The change literature supports this perspective, in terms of when change has been imposed there is a sense of autonomy and right of expression being restricted, and expressions of conformity and commitment to the change agents increasing (Oreg and Sverdlik, 2009). However, followers felt that they had been able to implement and make changes at a more local level, within their own job role. That had positive effects upon the relationship they had with their line manager (leader).

For some followers, the lack of consultation had created more resistant attitudes, in terms of no longer being willing to listen to further change proposals. Within organisation C, the lack of involvement was proving to be frustrating, painful and demotivating, due to having to do as they were told. There had been little involvement from both academic and administration followers. When followers had been consulted, these individuals felt valued and it created more buy-in to what was trying to be achieved.

The data suggests where an individual had been involved in change, it enabled them to become more comfortable with the change process, thereby supporting the change literature, which states that the form involvement takes is important. Direct consultation is often seen to be a better approach than indirect, due to the development of trust by employees with senior management (Morgan and Zeffane, 2003). Employees who participate in implementing change can be a mechanism for creating commitment to change, therefore employees who have high involvement or participation in change are often assumed as having accepted and being supportive towards the change taking place (Rafferty and Restubog, 2010; van der Voet, Kuipers and Groenveld, 2016). It is also argued that not only involvement in the change process, but the perception of the positive benefits of change, can enhance and reinforce an individual's organisational commitment once change has commenced, thereby reducing resistance (Peccei, Giangreco and Sebastiano, 2011).

LMX literature suggests that individuals who have higher levels of organisational commitment will be less likely to leave, due to the psychological bond they have made with their organisation (Seo et al., 2018). Often organisational change is frequently perceived to be outside the control of most individuals within an organisation. This can lead individuals to loosen their affective attachment and cause their identity they hold with the organisation to diminish, due to the emotions and attributions held by individuals (Jones and van der Ven, 2016).

### 5.2.5.3    Resistance as an outcome

Resistance in terms of behaviours and attitudes has been discussed earlier in this chapter but resistance as a change outcome is a little different. Within each of these three organisations, resistance manifested itself in the level of organisational commitment individuals held. This research suggests respondents believed there was little point in being resistant towards change as it would be implemented regardless. This led respondents to believe they had no choice other than being committed and compliant with change, due perhaps to the perceived cost to an individual for not doing so, such as the risk of losing a job or redundancy.

Most respondents who were interviewed felt that they had not been resistant towards change, but some academic followers freely discussed their resistance towards it, in terms of the way it was being implemented and handled. Administration followers had concerns over their jobs if they were to be resistant towards change.

An individual's personal circumstances affected organisational commitment in terms of inhibiting them geographically to move to another institution, or due to financial implications if they left, such as their pension, or salary, so they therefore had continuance type commitment. This supports the organisational change literature that suggests people in general are loss and risk adverse and therefore tend to remain in their current set of circumstances (Nesterkin, 2013).

Within the change literature it has been suggested that employees are committed to change for a variety of reasons, such as perceiving it as being part of their employment contract, or out of fear of letting their co-workers down, which could then damage their reputation (Jaros, 2010). However, other respondents felt they had more of a choice and were prepared to leave and seek employment elsewhere, therefore contradicting the literature to some extent. Resistance was towards the organisation or towards their current job role, but not towards change per se. For example, how respondents enacted their resistance was by deciding upon a particular course of action, either to work elsewhere, so actually leave the organisation, consider leaving, or apply for other opportunities within their respective organisations. As a consequence, turnover of staff was perceived to have been higher than respondents had ever known it, particularly from those who had worked at the university for a long period of time. If only one person had raised this it could be queried, but the number of respondents in both leadership and followership multi-discipline (academic and administration) positions who had discussed the turnover of staff raises some very significant concerns that need to be addressed. Given these two differing areas of resistance, namely behaviours and attitudes towards change, and as a change outcome, resistance can be perceived as multifaceted due perhaps to how individuals have socially constructed its reality from their world view perception.

### 5.2.5.4 Scepticism and cynicism as an outcome

An outcome from change within each of these organisations had been an increase in cynicism and scepticism, as well as increasing levels of frustration within these three organisations. This may help to explain changes in organisational commitment from individuals who had been positive about the organisation to one where individuals had become sceptical.

This was due to the behaviours and attitudes from leaders, but also from increases in workloads, and remit creep. This sense of scepticism can be attributed to a function of both resistance and cynicism due to the similarities between these two constructs, owing to the specific attitudes towards organisational change (Thundiyil et al., 2015; Stanley, Meyer and Topolnysky, 2005).

Within the literature, scholars suggest that individuals can have a growing sense of frustration towards change (Caldwell, Herold and Fedor, 2004), and cynical employees are not necessarily negative people (Johnson and O'Leary-Kelly, 2013) but have developed cynical attitudes due to their experiences. There are elements of frustration that are a part of cynicism (Lorinkova and Perry, 2017), and therefore can be seen as being a useful construct, particularly in terms of organisational behaviour, due to the consequences being seen as real (Cole et al., 2006). Furthermore, cynicism takes into account an individual's scepticism towards a particular change initiative (Thundiyil et al., 2015). However, within the context of this research, it was the continuous nature and type of change that had created cynicism within individuals, along with past experiences of change, as had occurred within Organisation A. This created attitudes that were deeply cynical and sceptical as to how the change process would differ from what went before.

### 5.2.5.5 Negative outcomes

What has emerged from the data was that negative outcomes arose, in terms of individual responses towards change and the organisation becoming more negative, and the relationship some individuals had with their organisation. A noticeable and important outcome was from those individuals who were not involved in change, in terms of losing their desire to be involved. Previously they had been positive about becoming involved in change implementation. A number of negative outcomes emerged from the data across all three organisations, for example, low morale, sickness, increased staff turnover, and increased workloads due to reduced staffing levels (cutbacks). This was seen as having contributed to increases in stress and pressure due to the perceived higher expectations from staff. An outcome from change for some had been a change in the relationship they had with the organisation. The organisational change literature supports this view, as employees cope with what seems to be impossible increases in workloads following a loss in staff, whilst at the same time the organisation tries to maintain its existing activities, and implement new ones (Seo et al., 2012).

## 5.3    Summary

The nature of change that had taken place within these organisations had an impact upon the LMX relationship in terms of the attitudes and behaviours of leaders impacting upon followers' attitudes and behaviours. Resistance appeared to be in the form of individuals' commitment towards their organisations and not towards change per se, due in part to the lack of involvement and consultation, but also the way people had been affected by their leaders' behaviours and attitudes. The perception of individuals within each of these universities was that negative outcomes had been achieved, and the nature of change had severe consequences that impacted their level of organisational commitment.

## 5.4    Conclusion

The changes taking place within the higher education sector (third-order change) has had a cascading impact upon both second and first-order change. This has influenced the nature of change taking place within each of these three universities in terms of the change process. Universities can no longer stand still and be static due to the challenges of trying to implement change, and the responses to those changes from employees. Building high-quality relationships between leaders and followers is even more important now due to the current deterioration in organisational commitment for each of these universities. This means increasing involvement and consultation in change implementation and decision-making will be crucial for addressing many of these issues identified in this chapter.

This research combines the leader and follower relationship with attitudes and behaviours of leaders, differentiating it from other leadership literature. Furthermore, it looks at both the relationship perspectives from a leader's point of view and those of followers. It would appear that change management, leadership, psychology as well as leader-member exchange relationships are interwoven, particularly within a higher education setting. The purpose of this discussion chapter had been to highlight the importance of the LMX relationship and why the attitudes and behaviours of followers must be taken into consideration before implementing change, as the dangers for not doing so can be severe. Furthermore, leaders have a crucial role to play not just in implementing change, but through their behaviour and attitudes in aiding the reciprocal nature of LMX. The frequency of change can also make relationships more difficult to maintain (Carter et al., 2013). The organisational change literature suggests that depending on the impact from change, it can affect experiences and attitudes and behaviours towards the change situation, such as commitment (Choi, 2011; Fedor, Caldwell and Herold, 2006). This offers insights into how the LMX relationship effects commitment and resistance to change.

# Chapter 6     Conclusion

This chapter will commence with providing answers to the research questions as shown in chapter 1, followed by a reconceptualization of a proposed conceptual framework as illustrated in figure 1, following the analyses of the data.

### 6.1.1     Key research question: Does the nature of change impact upon the leader-member exchange relationship in terms of behaviour, attitudes, commitment, involvement and resistance to change and if so, are there consequences for change outcomes?

The nature of the change itself, and the impact this has had upon leaders and followers is particularly concerning. The reason for this is within the organisational change literature, trust in management and supportive management are deemed important in terms of co-operation and receptivity towards change (Oreg, Vakola, and Armenakis, 2011). It appears that the nature of change did in fact contribute to the actual behaviours and attitudes of leaders within this multiple case study. This is of importance because followers believe their own attitudes and behaviours are shaped by their leader's attitudes and behaviours and felt that is where they got their anxieties from.  The data shows that leaders who shared a similar change experience as their followers and are personally impacted by it, such as fear of redundancy, or in the treatment they received during change, actually strengthened LMX relationships between leaders and followers.

The impact from the nature of change appeared to affect individuals' level of commitment towards change and the organisation. Those individuals who were not that committed to their organisation only remained due to being unable to leave because of their personal circumstances. For other individuals it was the nature of a particular change, such as leaders implementing cost cutting measures that left some individuals feeling demoralised and demotivated. As a result, morale had not only decreased, but also organisational commitment had been impacted, for example, individuals either considered leaving their organisation or were in the process of leaving the organisation.

Trust does not seem to address the resistance towards change issue but may have a part to play in terms of organisational commitment. Trust in management is seen as being an essential requirement for reducing or lessening workers resistance towards change (Vakola, 2016). Although trust is not a new concept in terms of influencing the leader follower relationship (Hakini, Van, Knippenberg and Giessner, 2010), and in building high quality LMX relationships. It is seen as being central within the construct of LMX, due to LMX being defined as a trust building process (Martin, Guillaume, Thomas, Lee and

Epitropaki, 2016; Anand, Vidyarthi, and Rolnicki, 2017; Seo, Nahrgang, Carter and Hom, 2018; Brower, Schoorman, and Tan, 2000).

The behaviours and attitudes of some leaders had a negative impact in terms of disengaging followers from not only the change process, but also from the leader as well. This caused individuals to feel estranged and disengaged from the organisation, in terms of caring less for the institution. Furthermore, these attitudes and behaviours from leaders caused some followers to leave or to consider leaving their organisations, due in part to the way change was led and implemented. Where a leader worked collaboratively with their followers, this was reflected in the perceived quality of that relationship by both parties within it.

As a consequence of the responses from both leaders and followers towards the nature of change, a number of negative outcomes emerged from the data across all three organisations. For example, low morale, sickness, increased staff turnover, increased workloads due to reduced staffing levels (cutbacks). This was seen as having contributed to increases in stress and pressure, due to the perceived higher expectations from staff. Therefore, an outcome from change for some had been a change in the relationship they had with their organisation.

### 6.1.2 How does the leader-member exchange relationship affect member commitment and resistance to change?

The data suggests that the emotional responses individuals had towards change affected their relationship with the organisation. This was due to leader-member exchange relationship being disrupted because of the change process. It can also be argued that these emotional responses or reactions from individuals were influencing their behaviours either directly or indirectly (Seo, Taylor, Hill, Zhang, Teslukand, and Lorinkova, 2012).

Across each of these three case studies, the changes being implemented affected leaders in a number of differing ways, that had a number of consequences. For example, leaders that had an angry response or negative outlook towards change expected their followers to be equally angry. These leaders were in a sense subjecting their followers to their own level of insecurities and negativity towards change, and therefore resistance towards change.  For some leaders this increased their level of autocratic and bureaucratic style of leadership, and also led to withholding information from their followers.

Some leaders were also cynical and sceptical towards the nature of change, namely from those decision makers above them, such as those at the top of their institution. This suggests a controlling type of behaviour, and resistance type attitudes that did in fact

impact upon followers due in part to the approach they took when implementing change and their attitudes when leading change.

The data illustrates that pre-change the majority of respondents were displaying ambivalent type attitudes and behaviours due to their desire in becoming involved in change. The data also shows that during change respondents became more resistant, which influenced their level of organisational commitment in terms of them making decisions whether to remain or leave the institution in which they work. Individuals that were openly resistant towards change were so due to a lack of involvement in change and also in how the change was being implemented. They also attributed their resistance to the behaviours and attitudes of their leaders in times of change.

For leaders (within an LMX relationship) who were directly impacted by change taking place, such as the possibility of losing their job, this led to their reaction towards change being one of shock. This created an internal and emotional negativity towards change, due to the lack of justification for the change that was taking place. LMX relationships as change made its way down through the organisation had different implications for leaders and followers, at different levels, and therefore was be perceived differently (Bouckenooghe, 2010).

For followers within these differing institutions, the consequences of their leaders behavioural and attitudinal responses towards change had severe and dire repercussions. For example, the decisions leaders took in the wake of their responses, such as removing research time from followers, or through lack of consultation, reduced a followers promotional and career prospects, at the same time having a deteriorating effect upon organisational commitment. The result of this was an increase in employee turnover. For different followers it caused long term sickness such as severe mental illness. What is clear from the data is the deterioration in organisational commitment, and upon LMX relationships. For some followers it had caused them to lose respect and confidence in their leaders, resulting in low or the lowest type of quality relationship. This simply illustrates how LMX relationships are reciprocal in nature, with each party within them bringing something of equal value to it. When this does not happen, in terms of one side being top heavy this causes the relationship to become unstable, or unbalanced, and therefore having consequences upon organisational commitment and quality of these relationships.

The level of cynicism or scepticism from leaders has an eroding effect upon LMX relationships, as followers may copy or replicate these resistance type attitudes. These are important considerations as commitment is seen to be one of the crucial factors, concerning employees supporting change initiatives, and being compliant with the change

requirement, otherwise it is considered a form of resistance (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002). This means that commitment is linked not only to a range of positive outcomes, such as positive behaviour intension of individuals, but also their actions in achieving organisational change such as new structures and working methods (Swailes, 2004).

The data suggests administrative followers that normally had a positive relationship with a direct supervisor, felt their supervisors' behaviour and attitude became more abrupt due to their concerns over job security. Therefore, the supervisors became less helpful and cooperative, causing direct reports to become anxious and demoralised. The organisational change literature suggests as individuals think about the possible effects change may have on them at a personal level can elicit negative feelings (Seo et al, 2012).

It appears that the type of change can elicit different types of responses towards change, that then has implications upon LMX relationships, as discussed earlier. When LMX relationships are disrupted it effects organisational commitment, and the level or type of resistance felt by individuals towards change taking place. This has both positive and negative consequences for change outcomes.

### 6.1.3 To what extent is the LMX relationship important for successful change outcomes?

Within the LMX literature, it is evident that high quality relationships have a bearing upon a number of positive outcomes for followers, leaders and organisations in general (Martin, Guillaume, Thomas, Lee, and Epitropaki, 2016; Van Breukelen, Schyns and Le Blanc, 2006; Graen, and Uhl-Bien, 1995). The data shows leaders (both academic and administration) did not perceive they had low quality relationships, but either high or other quality relationships, (examples of other types of relationship are, positive, supportive, good, or strong, and so forth). However, the data clearly shows that the attitudes and behaviours of leaders has had a deteriorating effect within the LMX relationship This may help to explain the emergence of 'other' type of quality relationship. An "other" type of quality relationship is one where respondents did not acknowledge or perceive the LMX relationship to be of either high or low quality. The differences in the quality of these relationships had often been down to the attitudes and behaviours of leaders. For example, hypocrisy of leaders, or leaders not handling their new role particularly well. The data across each of these organisations suggests that a leaders' behaviour and attitudes influenced their followers' responses, not only towards change but upon the LMX relationship quality, thereby encouraging cynicism and scepticism towards change.

The data shows an outcome from change to be an increase in cynicism and scepticism, and increased levels of frustration within these three organisations. This may offer an explanation for the change in organisational commitment among individuals who were initially positive about the organisation but then became sceptical. This is because of the similarities in constructs between resistance and cynicism that then form specific attitudes within an individual towards organisational change (Thundiyil, Chiaburu, Oh, Banks and Peng, 2015; Stanley, Meyer and Topolnysky, 2005).

Within the context of this research, it was not only the continuous nature and type of change that had created cynicism, but also the historical perspective in terms of past experiences of change. This contributed to the creation of attitudes that were deeply cynical, and sceptical as to how the change process would differ from previous changes.

The data shows that change had been imposed on people at the university level, meaning followers had to do as they were told. Given the increased workloads followers felt they did not have spare capacity to take on anything else, making involvement more difficult, However, followers felt they were able to implement and make changes at a more local level, i.e. within their own job role. That had positive effects upon the relationship with their line manager (leader). However, for some followers, the lack of consultation created more resistant attitudes, in terms of no longer being willing to listen to further change proposals. The data appears to show that for individuals involved in change became more comfortable with the change process. Direct consultation is often seen to be a better approach than indirect, due to the development of trust by employees with senior management (Morgan, and Zeffane, 2003). This suggests that involvement in the change process, and the perception of the positive benefits of change, can enhance and reinforce an individual's organisational commitment. Thus, illustrating the importance within the LMX relationship of collaboration, namely inputting into the change process as well as the implementation of that change.

### 6.1.4    Is it the case that followers take their cues from the behaviours and attitudes of leaders charged with implementing change?

The data shows that leaders' behaviours and attitudes do appear to impact followers' own attitudes and behaviours. The reason for this is due to the reciprocal nature of the LMX relationship between leaders and followers. Thereby supporting the argument that leaders have a crucial role to play in not just the way in which they lead the implementation of change, but also through their attitudes and behaviours.

The data clearly illustrates that followers felt their behaviours and attitudes were shaped or informed by those of their leaders. For example, when leaders displayed negativity or anxiety type behaviours and attitudes this is reflected in how followers behaved and by their attitudes towards that leader and the organisation.

An important point to make is that when leaders displayed positive, supportive, or collaborative behaviours and attitudes, this created a positive atmosphere in the workplace, or helped to reduce change related concerns. What it also did was to increase trust within LMX relationships, thereby enhancing the likelihood for those relationships becoming a high quality one.

The data also shows how a leaders' behaviour or attitudes towards change has a direct impact upon followers. For example, leaders voicing their negative views and concerns towards impending change led to their displaying non-supportive type behaviours or withholding information from followers. These types of behaviours and attitudes have an i effect upon individual's health and cause them to be off work with long term sickness. This has negative implications for the organisation not just financially but operationally. At the same time a followers' behaviour and attitude can impact leaders, in terms of how they respond towards change process. If the follower's response is negative, for example sceptical or cynical, that can then lead to leaders becoming emotionally and physically drained, due to realising the decisions they have made as a leader is having consequences and directly impacting their followers. Therefore, the LMX relationship can be seen as being interconnected, where each party in that relationship is equally important.

For some followers their leader's behaviour and attitude, and style of leadership is a crucial factor in their decision to leave the organisation. This may help to explain why leaders are perceived to be the driver behind relationship building with their followers. As the data suggests followers take their cues from their leaders, particularly when their leaders behaviours have a direct impact. A plausible explanation is that followers perhaps feel unable or unwilling to engage in building this relationship. Perhaps this is due to some individuals lacking the desire in building a relationship, or it is simply an impossibility to the current state of an existing relationship. Alternatively, it may be due to the frequent change of leaders (managers), namely those that have left that job role and then that job role being filled by someone new that a follower would then report to. This perhaps made it unfeasible or unreasonable for followers to take the initiative in being the driving force in relationship building, with that manager (leader), due to the frequent turnover of occupants that perform that role.

The data from this research highlights a number of followers that had had a number of different leaders in a short space of time, due to the type of change that had taken place. Thereby creating barriers in which to build meaningful relationships with their leaders.

This section has provided some insights as to behavioural and attitudinal implications of leaders upon followers, and its effect on LMX interactions and potential barriers between these two parties, because of the type of change taking place. It is therefore crucial for the organisation and leaders with line management responsibilities to be aware of such issues, to reduce turnover of employees, and in building high quality relationships.

### 6.1.5    To what extent do the behaviours and attitudes of leaders influence a follower's own behaviour, attitudes and commitment towards organisational change?

The behaviours and attitudes from some leaders directly impacted upon the LMX relationship, but also upon change outcomes and organisational commitment. This was due to change having been imposed from the top down. The consequences of such a change approach impacted a number of leaders in different ways, for some positively but for others in a negative way. The importance of this is that leaders can have significant impact upon the lives of their followers and upon their wellbeing (Tuncdogan, Acar, Stam 2017). Within each of these three organisations resistance manifested itself in the level of organisational commitment individuals held. This research suggests respondents believed there is little point in being resistant towards change, as it would be implemented regardless. For individuals this created or formed the perception of having no choice other than being committed, and compliant with the change.

The data suggests that resistance was towards the organisation or towards their current job role, but not towards change per se. For example, where respondents enacted their resistance by considering whether or not to leave their institution, or in their decision to work elsewhere, namely externally, or by applying for alternative positions internally. As a consequence, respondents felt that turnover of staff was higher than it ever had been. However, the data also suggests that not only leaders' behaviour and attitudes were having a negative impact, but the type of change, and its continuous nature was impacting upon organisational commitment.

### 6.1.6 What can be done to limit the impact of any negative behaviours and attitudes shown by leaders in order to create unity and increased follower commitment?

The data suggests that leaders who encouraged active involvement in the implementation of change, and were supportive of followers, developed high quality relationships. This is important for encouraging and improving organisational commitment (Jones, and Van de Ven, 2016). Therefore, when leaders and followers are equally prepared and supported for impending change, and actively involved in the decision making and its implementation, organisational commitment will increase (Jones et al, 2008). This may stave off any need for negative behaviours and attitudes from leaders and enhance positive reactions from followers towards change. By allowing individuals within an organisation adequate or sufficient time to assess both the disadvantages and advantages related to a particular change being considered, may enable changes in behaviour to be accounted for and addressed earlier.

The following steps could be taken to reduce any negative impact from leaders' attitudes and behaviours. For example, by properly planning for change one can inhibit the chances of change failure and prevent unwanted consequences such as reduction in staff morale, commitment or increases in cynicism (Self, and Schraeder, 2009; Gilmore et al, 1997). Trust plays a crucial role, as does authenticity and transparency, as it can not only enhance followers' perceptions of benevolence and integrity, but those of leaders (Alavi, and Gill, 2017). The benefit this brings is the potential to influence how each other (i.e. leader and follower) see the abilities of the other party during the change process (Alavi and Gill, 2017).

## 6.2 Conclusion

Following the responses to the research questions earlier in this chapter, it has been possible to reconceptualise the originally proposed conceptual framework as shown in figure 1, within chapter one. This section provides some insights into this reconceptualised framework following the research, as drawing on the leadership and change literature. The revised conceptual framework is shown within figure 5 below.
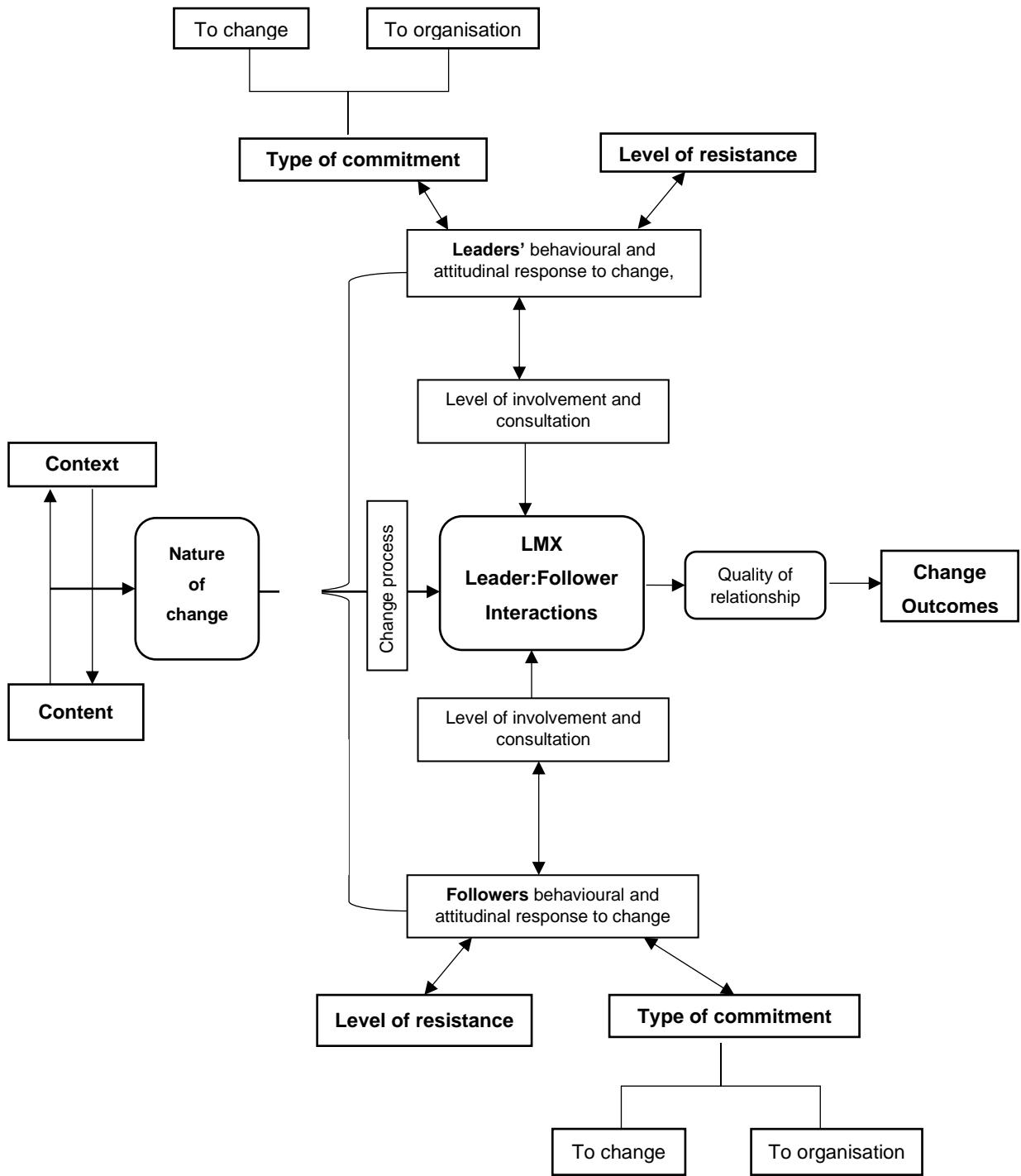
Figure 5 Reconceptualization of original conceptual framework following research

Leadership behaviours and resistance to change are seen to be key fundamental stumbling blocks to successful change within organisations (Furst and Cable, 2008; Higgs and Rowland, 2005; Mehta, Maheshwari and Sharma, 2014). Both leaders and followers have their part to play in change implementation and are interconnected through the LMX relationship. When leaders acknowledge the value that both parties bring to the LMX relationship and are supportive towards followers by allowing them to engage and become involved in change, not only can high-quality relationships be built but there is a greater chance of achieving commitment to the change (Giangreco and Peccei, 2005; Erwin and

Garman, 2010; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002), and to the organisation. This reduces resistance and increases the likelihood of positive and successful change outcomes. This study has indicated that for successful implementation of change, there is a dimension that is pivotal, which is the LMX relationship and how that adapts to change in a positive or negative way to change that is taking place. The reasoning for this is the quality of the relationship effects "*followers' commitment and goodwill*", as "*LMX is positively correlated with turnover*" (Truckenbrodt, 2000 p.241), and "*leaders' relations [and] behaviours impact outcomes differentially*" (Boer et al., 2016, p.894).

The study suggests that it is the LMX relationship that is pivotal to the success of the overall change outcome. In a sense, leader-member exchange is a partnership, based upon this relationship between all parties within it. For a partnership to work and be successful, all parties have to play their part in contributing to its success.

The nature of change incorporates both the change context (historical perspectives and past experiences of change) within these three organisations, and the content of change, in terms of the cascading effect third-order change has upon the leader-member exchange relationship (Gill, 2002). It does so by influencing leaders' behaviours and attitudes in the way a leader responds towards the nature of the change that is being implemented or introduced (Choi, 2011). This then has an impact upon followers' attitudes and behaviours towards change. In a way, followers are mirroring or copying these leaders' behaviours and attitudes.

The data from this research supports the reconceptualised framework (refer to Figure 5 overleaf), in the way in which change is implemented, and the way behaviours and attitudes of leaders impacts upon change outcomes. These outcomes can be resistance or commitment as the data supports the view that followers' organisational commitment is affected by the behaviours and attitudes of leaders.

If the LMX relationship breaks down there is an increase in the likelihood of resistance towards change, thus reducing commitment to the organisation. It is this relationship that is pivotal to the success of the overall change outcome. Therefore, an argument can be made that in circumstances in which the LMX relationship is misaligned, the likelihood of change failure increases (Ford, and Ford, 2010).

The data suggests that both the context and content of the change creates the nature of the change (Bouckenooghe, 2010; Packard, 2013; Armenakis and Bedeian, 1999). It is this combination that seems to be the focal point in terms of its impact upon a leader's behaviours, and follower attitudes to the change that develop or form over the period where change is being implemented.

Furthermore, this research indicates that followers' negative experiences from previous (past) change increases their resistance in terms of cynicism and scepticism or causes them to have adverse reactance towards change. If leaders were to take the time to understand their followers' previous experiences of change, this could enable them to gain valuable insights as to why change implementation may have been problematic on a previous occasion. At the same time, these insights may enable leaders to develop and build up their own knowledge when deciding to embark on future change initiatives (Smollan, 2011; Bruckman, 2008; Ford and Ford, 2010).

This research has illustrated that leaders or followers react in some way or another to change (Oreg, Vakola and Armenakis, 2011; Bouckenooghe, 2010). Their reaction may not necessarily be towards "*change*" per se, but rather towards the nature of particular types of the change (Bruckman, 2008). This perhaps then provides some clarity or insights as to the mechanism behind a leader's behaviour and attitudes towards their followers. Both leaders and followers have to deal with not only the nature of the change as it progresses through the different decision-making levels of an organisation (Bouckenooghe, 2010), but also the reactions each member within the LMX relationship has had to the change initiatives. This directly impacts the leader-member exchange relationship, particularly the quality of that relationship that then affects the overall change outcome in a neutral, positive, or negative way. However, where there has been a shared change experience that has impacted or affected both leaders and followers, this creates a bond, a sense of unity that can lead to high-quality relationships, as was the case within one of these three case studies.

The generally accepted view within the literature supports the notion that a leader's behaviour and attitude can influence resistance and commitment to change with their followers. Therefore, a leader's behaviour and attitude are absolutely crucial during organisational change (Jones et al., 2008; Miller, 2001; Jones and Van de Ven, 2016; van der Voet, Kuipers and Groeneveld, 2016).

If resistance can be harvested or even utilised, this could have a positive impact on the final change outcomes (Cooke, 2009). Before implementing change, the agent in charge of change (leader) needs to understand the nature and quality of relationships with his or her followers (Jones and van de Ven, 2016; Straatmann et al., 2016). This is pivotal to enabling a change strategy to be developed and implemented (Truckebrodt, 2000; Raineri, 2011; Martin et al., 2016) so the maximum benefits can be elicited from this relationship in order to increase the chances for change outcomes to be positive.

Given the complexity within the leadership literature, there does not appear to be a 'one size fits all' approach to addressing LMX relationships, or for that matter leadership or even followership. For the maximum benefits to be realised and achieved leaders must take their time in understanding or determining the current state or quality of the relationship with their followers, before embarking upon change implementation programmes. The reasoning for this is this will allow leaders time to reflect and build higher quality relationships. At the same time enabling followers time to reflect and give consideration as to the type of quality relationships' they have with leaders themselves. One way this could be achieved is through consultation and involvement in shaping and implementing change. With resources being squeezed and having to do more with less, this increased pressure and workload eventually takes its toll upon employees, such as in the form of sickness leave. This perhaps is contributing to the pressure cooker state that universities are operating in and in the long term, does not make sound financial sense.

Instead, investing time and resources in building high-quality relationships built on trust and collegiality, and contribution and involvement in change processes is perhaps becoming critically important in relation to building organisational commitment. This research has highlighted the dangers for organisations that remain static for long lengths of time, but also the implications of top-down dictated change. Change within these three organisations is now seen as being continuous and many respondents within these three case studies have become change fatigued. This in itself presents a number of challenges for organisation leaders and those tasked with making change-related decisions, particularly for future change implementation programs, or strategies.

In summary, figure 5 illustrates that the combination of both the context and content of change contribute to the creation or formation of the nature of change that then informs decision makers as to the change process. The LMX leader:follower interactions influence both attitudinal and behavioural responses towards change, depending upon the decisions taken concerning the nature of a particular change. The level of involvement and consultation in the change process and its implementation has implications on the attitudinal and behavioural responses for both leaders and followers. This in turn has a bearing upon the quality of that relationship, that has direct consequences for change outcomes.

## 6.3 Contribution

This research makes a contribution in a number of ways, firstly to theory, secondly to methodology, thirdly to practice, and finally to future research suggestions.

### 6.3.1 Theory

After careful reflection and consideration of not only each of these chapters and the findings from the data, but on the change and leadership literature, the researcher believes their contribution to theory is as follows.

Firstly, this research has been conducted through the eyes and lived experiences of differing respondents within three organisations.

This is an important contribution to theory as this research enhances understanding as to the real experiences individuals have had towards change taking place (van der Smissen et al., 2013), and in building a better understanding as to the consequences leaders' behaviours and attitudes can have upon not only their followers, but also upon organisational commitment (Abrell-Vogel and Rowold, 2014).

Secondly, this research goes beyond the relational and social exchange theory and literature associated with leader-member exchange (Uhl-Bien, 2006; Tse et al., 2018), and incorporates the fields of psychology, leadership and change management (Madsen et al., 2005). It brings these under one umbrella, thereby not only bringing the literature up to date but by offering an alternative perspective through a social constructivist perspective.

Thirdly, this research provides insights into leaders' behaviour and attitudes during times of change, and addresses calls for further qualitative studies that provide further insights into the phenomenon in a wide range of contexts (Higgs and Rowlands, 2011).

Fourthly, it contributes to theory through the development and exploration of a proposed conceptual framework, as discussed within the introduction chapter. Fifthly, it contributes to the field of change and leadership by placing LMX within a change context. In doing so, it helps to identify the impact that leaders' behaviour and attitudes have had upon followers' attitudes and behaviours towards change, and how these impact on change outcomes (Santhidran et al., 2013). Finally, this research increases the understanding of the mechanisms at play (Morin et al., 2016) between a leader's behaviour and attitudes and how this impacts followers' attitudes and behaviours towards change, but also how change outcomes may be affected. In other words, this research aids scholars in their understanding of the relationship between followers and leaders, and how the nature of change impacts upon this relationship and change outcomes.

### 6.3.2 Methodology

This research was conducted in response to calls for further research using alternative methodological approaches into understanding employee commitment to change, and the impact upon organisational commitment (Jaros, 2010; Abrell-Vogel and Rowold, 2014). Jaros (2010) suggests that literature concerning commitment to change (C2C) has reached a peak in terms of formal meta-analysis. This presented the researcher with an opportunity to take a qualitative approach in order to provide additional insights. This was seen as appropriate given the research was focussed around the leader-member exchange relationship and the impact change may have upon commitment and resistance towards change.

Furthermore, the researcher was responding to calls for further qualitative studies including gaps identified in the field, and approaches into leadership behaviours as Higgs and Rowland (2005, p.126) identified that the research by Bass (1995) was "*primarily quantitative*" but failed *"to link directly with the change literature"*. There have been criticisms that this highly quantitative approach fails to provide insights into the actual behaviours of leaders. In addition, Muller and Kunisch (2017) argue that the context as well as change needs to be more deeply understood in terms of their interrelationship, whereas Anderson and Sun (2017, p.90) stated *"Overlaps exist among leadership styles, therefore 'a major reorientation' of leadership research is necessary"*. In order to address these calls, a qualitative approach had been adapted. Furthermore, this research focussed on a wide population within three differing universities, for example leaders and semi leaders in both academic and administration roles, but also followers in both academic and administration disciplines.

The reason for this was to respond to the need (as identified by Jones et al., 2008) for research to obtain data from differing organisational levels and groups. The approach adopted was to provide cross representation from differing levels and perspectives within these three different universities.

### 6.3.3 Practice

This research has shown that leaders' attitudes and behaviours can not only have significant consequences and impact upon followers, but also upon organisational commitment. This is an important consideration given the increased competition from not only other United Kingdom universities, but from overseas universities. When these impacts and consequences come to fruition, it may in fact result in or cause a migration of academic employees moving elsewhere.

This is of fundamental importance given the current challenges facing not only the higher education sector in the United Kingdom but also the pressures from government upon universities. This emphasises the importance of having high-quality relationships rather than disgruntled employees who could easily take their expertise and knowledge elsewhere.

Given the current climate there are uncertainties around Brexit and what this may mean for the recruitment of both EU and international students, in terms of visa requirements and perceptions from these students as they decide whether or not to study in the United Kingdom. The data illustrated that there had been a high turnover over of employees, such as academic staff, with a number reporting that they were considering leaving their organisation.

What would happen to the student experience if highly experienced and regarded academics within their fields decided to leave an institution and move to a competitor? This is yet another important consideration considering the cutbacks taking place within each of these institutions, particularly when employees are not being replaced. Taking all this into account, having leaders who are supportive and allow for high-quality relationships to be built, based on trust, collegiality, and consultation, where both parties within the LMX relationship can equally be involved in implementing change, has become of far greater importance.

There is a danger for leaders who become purely focussed on performance in relation to their expectations from their followers, as this may inhibit or reduce an individual's creativity thereby inhibiting fun or inspiration from the working environment, thereby adding further pressure that could lead to an individual burning out. There is increased competition from other higher education institutions within the EU and further afield that teach courses in English, whether at an undergraduate level or postgraduate level. The increase in performance pressures may in fact expedite the migration of academics, thereby adding further complications and challenges to universities in the United Kingdom.

Given the current situation in terms of third-order change (changes in the higher education sector) and the external environment, it has become increasingly important for involvement and consultation from all employees in developing high-quality relationships within LMX. Particularly for the relationships between leaders and followers, in order to reduce the potential haemorrhaging or mass exodus of employees from higher education institutions in the United Kingdom to competitors overseas, such as academics, if this is not addressed in the near future.

This is important when considering cost-cutting, resource-saving, and increased workloads that are being forced upon existing staff. This research has illustrated the importance of building organisational commitment in reinforcing collegiality culture, and improving morale, but also for positive change outcomes to become more achievable. A possible mechanism for addressing some of these issues, is through the development of leadership training programmes that focus on relationship building with their charges, and encouraging and nurturing their teams (followers) to reach their potential. In a similar vein, creating development for followers in terms of how to build relationships with their leaders, and targeted development for individuals who want to become involved in change related projects. What the researcher is really saying is investment in people at all levels is what is really needed, and then utilising the internal resources for the benefit of all within the organisation. This research also provides an opportunity in which to lobby government to reduce the amount of interference and involvement that they have in how universities operate and are governed, in order for them to become autonomous institutions.

The conceptual framework could be adapted or applied to a number of sectors, such as private, voluntary, or public including the higher education sector, or used in other countries. The flexibility of the conceptual framework could potentially allow future researchers to focus on alternative LMX relationships such as PhD supervisors and postgraduate researchers, and how change may impact upon this relationship in terms of change outcomes. This flexibility is an additional contribution that this conceptual framework offers future researchers and the wider research field.

The conceptual framework could bring benefits to the field of change in practice by enriching it with a fresh perspective, thereby not only aiding a reduction in failure rates to change but by contributing to the building of better relationships between leaders and followers, thus reducing resistance and increasing change commitment. Despite the breadth of knowledge within the change and leadership literature, there is still a high percentage of change failure being reported. Therefore, another contribution from this research is offering suggestions to reduce the percentage of organisational failure by focussing on LMX relationships and increasing understanding of how and why the nature of change impacts this relationship and that of the change outcomes.

This research hopes to encourage investment in people, particularly in terms of the relationship between leaders and followers, thereby opening up new avenues of research across disciplines, rejuvenating debates within the academic community and reducing employee recruitment costs, due to either natural wastage or enforced wastage.

This research argues that organisations should build stronger relationships between leaders and followers, and increase involvement and consultation opportunities in implementing and inputting into proposed change. A long-term solution to address this would be to create a collaborative, open and sharing culture, built on trust and group or team problem-solving. However, in the short term, a possible solution would be for an organisation's top senior management team and those at the bottom of the organisation to work together to formulate a best practice solution.

One way of achieving this could be through utilising existing expertise in house, or bringing in expertise externally that focussed on training and developing employees at all levels. A second short-term solution may be for local events at a departmental or team level, where both leaders and their followers meet regularly to discuss jointly and openly future or current change initiatives, where project groups can be created and owned by followers. This would involve a concerted effort and willingness from both parties in the LMX relationship to work in this way to bring down the traditional barriers of a 'them' and 'us' mentality.

Perhaps by being real as to the challenges faced by both parties within this relationship with regards to the consequences of change, it may in fact start to foster high-quality relationships. The researcher believes this has the potential to not only enhance the internal culture to one that is more collegial, but also aid in reducing unnecessary and costly staff recruitment due to the high turnover of employees. At the same time, taking this approach could help in building stronger organisational commitment and reducing employee sickness, which runs the risk of placing huge financial burdens on universities.

### 6.3.4 Limitations

There were a number of limitations, firstly, three universities were used within this research and it was a snapshot of the experiences of change that respondents went through at a particular moment in time. There is scope to broaden this research to include additional universities across the United Kingdom and from private providers of higher education, to see if patterns emerge in relation to the impact from leaders' behaviours and attitudes within differing contexts and situations. Furthermore, this study is cross-sectional in nature and future research could usefully be conducted on a longitudinal basis to ascertain whether this changes over time. For example, comparing leaders' behaviours and attitudes and changes in reactions between the start and end of an academic year, and identify whether this makes a difference.

Although this research set out to capture a wide range of actors and change stories, there is still scope to broaden and capture experiences from differing members of the organisation, for example maintenance teams, and differing administration teams, such as technical support or finance teams.

Thirdly, bias from the researcher. The researcher had experienced change first-hand on a number of occasions both within public sector organisations, such as universities, but also within a private sector organisation. Unfortunately, these experiences had been negative ones, however, the researcher was guided by not only the literature, but the critical incident technique, and asking open-style questions allowed respondents to tell their stories and experiences of change. This approach aided in counterbalancing potential biases and assisted in portraying as balanced a view as possible to ascertain what had been unfolding within each of these three universities.

Finally, from reviewing the multitude of perspectives that lie within the leadership, leader-member exchange and change management literature, the researcher created a conceptual framework. This conceptual framework was a generalised one that did not specify which change outcomes may have been impacted by the LMX relationship so there is scope to adapt the conceptual framework and focus on specific outcomes.

### 6.3.5 Areas for future research

There are a number of propositions that can now be suggested, having analysed and discussed the findings from the within-case and cross-case analysis, that may be pertinent to future research, which are as follows.

**Proposition 1:** The reason why the nature of change can impact on the LMX relationship is because it could cause a breakdown of the relationship or relationships between the leader and followers. This was due to there being a relationship in stasis that a change can disrupt (Jaros, 2010), and the nature of that change could determine, or is likely to determine, the impact that the change has on the relationship. The nature of the change is determined by a combination of the context (including historical and past experiences) and the content (van der Smissen, Schalk and Freese, 2013).

**Proposition 2:** The attitudes and behaviours of leaders has an impact, not just upon the LMX relationship with followers, but on the quality of that relationship.

**Proposition 3:** The LMX mechanism responds to a change in a number of ways – it can either begin to work, continue to work, or break down. The occurrence of a change can have an impact on the LMX relationship (Self and Schraeder, 2009; By, 2005), so the nature of the change can impact on the LMX relationship.

The breakdown of the LMX relationship leads to failure to implement the change, as it determines critical outcomes (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Ford, Ford and D'Amelio, 2008). The impact of the change in terms of change outcomes can range from positive, through to neutral and negative. Therefore, one of the causes of a change failure can be the breakdown of an LMX relationship.

**Proposition 4:** For successful implementation of change, there is a dimension that is pivotal, which is the quality of the LMX relationship and how that adapts to change in a positive, negative, or other way to change (van der Voet, Kuipers and Groeneveld, 2016). Part of making that a positive adaptation is to really understand the elements of that relationship in order to adapt behaviours. Change implementation is linked to attitudinal or behavioural outcomes (Erwin and Garman, 2010; Kuipers et al., 2014) and these outcomes can be changes in response towards change or reduced organisational commitment.

**Proposition 5**: Third-order change has a cascading effect upon both second and first-order change that sets off a chain of events or consequences, such as impacting the nature of change that in turn has an impact upon the LMX relationship.

These propositions provide not only an agenda but suggestions for potential future research avenues, perhaps within a variety of organisational settings, and multiple disciplines.

### 6.3.6 Alternative methods for pursuing the propositions

These propositions provide both quantitative and qualitative opportunities for future research, and provide opportunities in which to explore and develop the conceptual framework, as illustrated within the introduction chapter. Future researchers could also strengthen scholars' understanding of how to engage followers effectively in order to build high-quality relationships between leaders and their followers, so that followers become involved with the change initiatives, which enhance the likelihood for them becoming more deeply committed to change taking place within an organisation.

### 6.3.7 Other areas for future research

Future research could compare other higher education providers overseas within Europe or internationally, for example the USA, with universities in the United Kingdom, to see whether differences exist and then explore why this might be the case, or whether the phenomenon is just within higher education sector in the United Kingdom.

This research provides new avenues for research and to collaborations with European and international institutions on partnership research into leaders' behaviours and attitudes, and the consequences they have upon followers. The number of universities could be increased and extended to other parts of the United Kingdom to see whether this phenomenon is country-wide or localised to certain parts of the country, or indeed just to these three organisations in the case studies.

Another suggestion for future research that emerged out of the data was how newly-qualified academic staff were leaving academia within a short period time, having just joined an institution. This was outside the scope for this particular research but exploring this in greater depth may prove to be of great value, given increased pressures and expectations from academic members of staff. If newly-qualified academic employees are in fact leaving academia, what does the future landscape for higher education look like, when highly experienced scholars (teaching and research) retire? Who will replace them and what are the implications if this were to arise for higher education within the United Kingdom?

Finally, what has emerged from the data, but not explored in any depth as it was out of the scope of this research, was the emotional responses towards change by leaders and semi-leaders and the impact this has had upon the LMX relationship. Future research should explore this further within a higher education setting, such as universities, as Gelaidan, Al-Swidi and Mabkhot (2018), Dasborough, Lamb and Suseno (2015) have argued that emotional responses have been ignored in the literature to a large extent.

## 6.4 In conclusion

At present there does not appear to have been either qualitative or quantitative research undertaken that incorporates LMX with the change literature, using a multiple case-based approach, that is a key contribution of this research.  Secondly, this research suggests future researchers should test this conceptual framework and undertake further qualitative research within the field. Thirdly the proposed conceptual framework and related propositions provide an agenda for further academic debate and discussion to take place around the implications of the LMX relationship for change implementation.

Finally, the conceptual framework has implications for practice in bringing a fresh perspective in terms of developing change leadership capabilities, thereby contributing to the building of better relationships between leaders and followers and reducing resistance and increasing change commitment.

# Appendix 1    [Search terms and statistics for literature review]

| Title of search | Search Engine | Initial results total | Filters applied | New results total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Different types of resistance to change | **Search 1**<br><br>Web of Science | 6,500 | Management, Psychology, Behavioural Sciences | 252 |
| Resistance to change and change process | | 22,373 | Business, Management | 327 (of which 25 were broadly topic related) |
| Leadership behaviours and resistance to change | | 48 | Management, Business, Psychology applied | 23 (of which 4 deemed to be of particular relevance |
| *Combined search 1 results* = 28,931<br>Once filters applied reduced to 602 journal articles<br><br>**Title of articles read = 602**<br>**Abstracts read = 182**<br>**Excluded = 145**<br>**Potential inclusion = 37** | | | **Inclusion criteria**<br>Peer reviewed articles, overview of resistance to change, generalised overview, and both qualitative and quantitative research<br>**Exclusion criteria**<br>Medical journals, engineering, health care | |
| Leadership and resistance to change | **Search 2**<br><br>Scopus | 540 | Business, Management & Accounting, & Psychology | 156 |
| Leadership commitment to change | | 292 | N/A | N/A |
| Leadership change approaches to resistance | | 153 | Business, Management & Accounting | 51 |
| Behaviour approaches to resistance to change | | 1,638 | Psychology, Business, Management & Accounting | 145 |
| *Combined search 2 results* = 2,623<br>Once filters applied reduced to 352 journal articles<br><br>**Title of articles read = 352**<br>**Abstracts read = 152**<br>**Excluded = 128**<br>**Potential inclusion = 26** | | | **Inclusion criteria**<br>Peer reviewed articles, scope of papers, that included leadership, generalised papers, as well as included both leadership and resistance<br>**Exclusion criteria**<br>Medical journals, engineering, health care | |
| Leadership commitment to change | **Search 3**<br><br>PsycInfo | 749 | Academic journal only | 378 |
| Change approach & resistance to change | | 1,185 | Academic journal only | 751 |
| Does a leader's behaviour impact on extent of change | | 2 | N/A | N/A |
| Different types of resistance to change | | 210 | N/A | N/A |
| *Combined search 3 results* = 2,146<br>Once filters applied reduced to 1,129 results<br><br>**Title of articles read = 1,129**<br>**Abstracts read = 372**<br>**Excluded = 326**<br>**Potential inclusion = 46** | | | **Inclusion criteria**<br>Peer reviewed articles, subject related and interconnected, ie behaviour, commitment and leadership, and incorporating resistance<br>**Exclusion criteria**<br>Medical journals, engineering, health care, cancer treatments | |

Appendix 1

| Title of search | Search Engine | Initial results total | Filters applied | New results total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| Leader-member exchange | **Search 4**<br><br>Web of Science | 2,707 | Management, Business, Psychology, highly cited in field | 28 |
| *Search 4 results* = 2,707<br>Once filters applied reduced to 28 results<br><br>**Title of articles read = 28**<br>**Abstracts Read = 26**<br>**Excluded = 4**<br>**Potential inclusion = 22** | | | **<u>Inclusion criteria</u>**<br>Qualitative and Quantitative, journal articles, generalised articles, peer reviewed articles<br>**<u>Exclusion criteria</u>**<br>Medical journals, engineering, health care, performance | |
| Involvement in change | **Search 5**<br><br>Scopus | 70,351 | Business, Management and Accounting<br><br>**Additional filters applied – was to article keywords:**<br>Organizational change, change management, employee involvement, leadership, organization, management, human resource management, behavioural research, employee attitudes, engagement | 1,839<br><br>Reduced to 182 |
| *Search 5 results* = 70,351<br>Once all relevant filters applied, number of articles was reduced to 182 results<br><br>**Title of articles read = 182**<br>**Abstracts read = 87**<br>**Excluded = 48**<br>**Potential inclusion = 39** | | | **<u>Inclusion criteria</u>**<br>Peer reviewed journals, change management, leadership, followers, qualitative and quantitative research<br>**<u>Exclusion criteria</u>**<br>Medical journals, engineering, health care | |
| **<u>Summary</u>**<br>Potential journal articles for inclusion within literature review from these searches = **170**<br>Snowballing technique applied for reference searching, providing a further **23** potential journal articles for inclusion, therefore:<br>**Total number** of potential articles for inclusion within literature review = **193** | | | | |
| ***Actual number*** of articles used within this literature review **= 112**<br><br>**NB** As the line of argument developed within the literature review, articles were naturally deselected from the potential number of articles depending on the relevance to the points being made. | | | | |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 2 [Tables illustrating respondent interview data for each organisation]

**Table of interviewee participation from Organisation A**

| Position of interviewee within organisation | Interview set of questions, eg VC, leader, follower, or both leader and follower | Code given to interviewee | Length of interview |
|---|---|---|---|
| VC | VC | ORGA-01-VC | 50:17 |
| Head of Faculty | Leader | ORGA-02-Lac | 61:39 |
| Head of School | Leader | ORGA-03-Lac | 70:21 |
| Direct report to ORGA-03 | Follower | ORGA-05-Fac | 42:44 |
| Direct report to ORGA-03 | Follower | ORGA-06-Fac | 32:34 |
| Direct report to ORGA-05 | Follower | ORGA-07-Fac | 42:47 |
| Direct report to ORGA-03 | Follower | ORGA-08-Fac | 42:47 |
| Head of School | Leader | ORGA-09-Lac | 44:34 |
| Direct report to ORGA-09 | Follower | ORGA-11-Fac | 46:23 |
| Administration | Follower | ORGA-16-Fad | 34:52 |
| Administration | Follower | ORGA-17-Fad | 47:32 |
| Administration | Follower | ORGA-18-Fad | 38:04 |

***Total number of respondents for Organisation A=12***

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

Appendix 2

## Table of interviewee participation from Organisation B

| Position of interviewee within organisation | Interview set of questions, eg VC, leader, follower, or semi-leader | Code given to interviewee | Length of interview |
|---|---|---|---|
| VC | VC | ORGB-01-VC | 32:35 |
| Head of administrative department | Leader | ORGB-02-Lad | 46:56 |
| Direct report to ORGB-02 | Semi-leader | ORGB-03-LFad | 31:16 |
| Direct report to ORGB-02 | Semi-leader | ORGB-04-LFad | 35:36 |
| Direct report to ORGB-03 | Follower | ORGB-05-Fad | 31:27 |
| Direct report to ORGB-04 | Follower | ORGB-06-Fad | 28:54 |
| Head of administration team | Leader | ORGB-07-Lad | 25:31 |
| Follower in administrative team | Follower | ORGB-08-Fad | 40:20 |
| Head of subject (Former leader of ORGB-10 and ORGB-14 | Leader | ORGB-09-Lac | 40:33 |
| Former direct report of ORGB-09 | Follower | ORGB-10-Fac | 45:16 |
| Head of School | Leader | ORGB-11-Lac | 45:23 |
| Former direct report of ORGB-09 | Follower | ORGB-14-Fac | 50:54 |

*Total number of respondents for Organisation B=12*

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

**Table of interviewee participation from Organisation C**

| Position of interviewee within organisation | Interview set of questions, eg VC, leader, follower, or semi-leader | Code given to interviewee | Length of interview |
|---|---|---|---|
| VC | VC | ORGC-01-VC | 29:12 |
| Head of Faculty | Leader | ORGC-02-Lac | 53:23 |
| Direct report to ORGC-02 | Semi-leader | ORGC-03-LFac | 69:21 |
| Direct report to ORGC-03 | Follower | ORGC-04-Fac | 42:23 |
| Direct report to ORGC-04 | Follower | ORGC-06-Fac | 51:19 |
| Head of Faculty | Leader | ORGC-07-Lac | 57:44 |
| Direct report to ORGC-07 | Semi-leader | ORGC-08-LFac | 59:09 |
| Direct report to ORGC-10 | Follower | ORGC-09-Fac | 48:56 |
| Head of Subject | Semi-leader | ORGC-10-LFac | 27:57 |
| Head of Department | Leader | ORGC-11-Lac | 46:54 |
| Head of administrative department | Leader | ORGC-12-Lad | 54:25 |
| Direct report to ORGC12, also linked to former boss ORGC-17 | Semi-Leader | ORGC-13-LFad | 41:06 |
| Direct report to ORGC-12 | Semi-leader | ORGC-14-LFad | 66:28 |
| Administration | Follower | ORGC-15-Fad | 59:57 |
| Administration Department | Follower | ORGC-16-Fad | 45:20 |
| Manager (Leader) of ORGC-13 | Leader | ORGC-17-Lad | 56:37 |
| Direct report to ORGC-11 | Follower | ORGC-18-Fac | 45:48 |

***Total number of respondents for Organisation C=17***

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

*Summary table of interviewed respondents*

| Summary | Participation numbers |
|---|---|
| Organisation A | 12 |
| Organisation B | 12 |
| Organisation C | 17 |
| *Total number* of respondents interviewed | *41* |

## Coding table guide

| Coding index | Meaning | Description |
|---|---|---|
| ORGA | Organisation A | |
| ORGB | Organisation B | |
| ORGC | Organisation C | |
| 01, 02 etc | Interviewee / respondent number | This number is given to respondents and comes after the organisation identifying code, for example ORGC-*10,* ORGA-*02,* ORGA-*07 etc* |
| VC | Vice-Chancellor | Leader of the University |
| Lac | Academic leader | This refers to a person who is an academic member of staff and is in a leadership position |
| Lad | Administration leader | This refers to a person who works in an administrative department / role and holds a leadership position |
| Fac | Academic follower | This refers to a person who is an academic member of staff and is in a non-leadership position |
| Fad | Administration follower | This refers to a person who is an administrative member of staff and is in a non-leadership position |
| LFac | Academic semi-leader | This refers to a person who is an academic member of staff and is both a leader and follower, ie has direct reports and reports directly to someone |
| LFad | Administration semi-leader | This refers to a person who is an administrative member of staff and is both a leader and follower, ie has direct reports and reports directly to someone |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 3  [Clarification Sheet]

**Interviewee number:**

**Organisation number:**

**Context factors**

**Who is key driver behind change?** – this is to identify who interviewee sees has the key driving force behind change taking place within the university

**Key driver**

| VC | Leader of department/faculty | Other |
|----|------------------------------|-------|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**Reactions to change** – how interviewee rated their response to change, following announcement that change would be taking place

**Reactions**

| Low | Med | High |
|-----|-----|------|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**Attitude toward change** – how interviewee rated their attitudes before, during and after change implementation

**Pre-change**

| Positive | Neutral | Negative |
|----------|---------|----------|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**During**

| Positive | Neutral | Negative |
|----------|---------|----------|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**After**

Positive   Neutral   Negative

☐          ☐          ☐

Involvement in change – level of involvement interviewee had prior, during and after implementing change.

**Pre-involvement**

None        Some        High

☐          ☐          ☐

**During**

None        Some        High

☐          ☐          ☐

**After**

None        Some        High

☐          ☐          ☐

**Length of change project** – for each story– up to 12 months (**1**) up to 18 months (**2**) over 18 months (**3**)

**1**          **2**          **3**

☐          ☐          ☐

**Source of change** – the intention is to identify if change has been initiated (internally directed) within a specific department or faculty, or directed internally within the whole university or has been directed due to external factors such as a third party source, namely, government directed change.

| **Within specific department** | **Within whole university** | **External to university** |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**Individual or team-led** – change implementation led by an individual leader or whether the change implementation was led by a team

| **Individual** | **Mixed** | **Team** |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**Change outcomes**

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Failed to achieve all change objectives | Failed to achieve any significant change objectives | Limited change success only | Succeeded in meeting most change objectives | Succeeded in meeting all change objectives |

# Appendix 4    [Interview Protocol]

**Protocol for UK university interviews**

1. Background to research and positioning

Each interviewee will be sent a participant information sheet containing the following information:

- Details of research and purpose of research
- Expectations from interviewee, namely, participants will be asked to recall their experiences of change within their organisation
- Audio recording
- Confidentiality and rights
- Interviewees will receive a summary of findings and a copy of transcripts to review and add comments, and to confirm validity of discussion

In addition to the above, interviewees will be asked to recollect some of the following:

- Context of change
- Behaviour related questions – how participant reacted to change
- Commitment to change
- Level of involvement in change
- Consequences of the decisions they took on the outcomes of change

2. During the interview

- The researcher will guide the interviewees in sharing their experiences of change
- A neutral position will be taken by the researcher, that is, the researcher will not comment / respond to comments made by the interviewee, with the exception of asking the interviewee to clarify / expand, or provide further details on what they may have said
- The researcher will ask questions on a number of themes such as, behaviour, commitment, why and how change came about, reactions to change, attitudes toward change, level of involvement, relationship a leader or follower has with each other
- The researcher will ask the interviewee about outcomes / consequences that may have resulted from the interviewee's behaviour
- Notes will be taken in addition to the audio recording of the interview

3. <u>Ending the Interview</u>

- The researcher will explain the interview is drawing to a close
- The interviewee will be provided with an opportunity to ask additional questions that may be of benefit to the research, or to suggest additional questions that the researcher may not have thought about in order to enrich the research
- Interviewees will be asked if it would be possible to clarify the context of change and change outcomes (see details on next page)
- The researcher will explain about next steps, in terms of a verbatim transcript being created, and expectations from the interviewee (details of which can be found in the 'Information for Participants' form
- The researcher will thank the interviewee for taking part, and will explain that interviewee will receive a summary of the findings
- The researcher will provide contact details so that the interviewee can make contact. The following email address will be given:
  t.a.l.simpson-silo@soton.ac.uk

4. <u>After the interview</u>

- The researcher will review the audio recording to check that the interview has been successfully recorded, if not, the field notes will be reviewed and typed up, adding additional details that can be recalled

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 5 [Sample question prompt sheet for interviewees]

### *A - VC*

1) Please tell me how change in this organisation came about, what is the context behind this change?

2) What are your key milestones for this change? How will you know they have been achieved?

3) What are the key areas you hope to address?

   - Business as usual

   - How people perform / perform in a different way

4) What is your role during the change?

5) How is the content of change decided or enacted – who drives the content once change has been announced and the context given

6) What is your role during the change?

7) How has change been received by people in this organisation?

8) Why have people reacted this way?

9) Has support been given to them, and if so, what form does this take?

10) How are people in the organisation informed about the changes taking place?

11) What opportunities are there for people to become involved in the change, and how?

12) How are these opportunities perceived, are they taken up?

13) What change outcomes are you hoping to achieve?

14) How will you know that the change outcomes have been achieved, how will this be known? How will a determination be made as to whether the change initiatives have been successful or not?

Q) Is there anything you would like to add to what you have already said that you think will be beneficial to this research?

**Or**

Q) Tell me, are they any additional questions that I have not asked, or may have missed, which you believe may be beneficial to this research?

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

### *B – Leaders*

1) Please tell be about your experiences of change in this university, how and why did it come into fruition (that is, come about)?

2) What was / is your role (can be asked to either L or F) during change?

3) Content of change – describe your input into delivering change?

4) Please tell me about your milestones for this change. How will you know you have achieved them?

5) Describe your behaviour following the announcement that change would be taking place?

6) How did you react to change when it was announced? And what is your perception of the forthcoming, or current change taking place?

7) How would you describe your level of commitment to change taking place in this institution (affective, normative, continuance, convenience)

8) How did your followers react to the change, was their attitude / behaviour affected, if so how?

9) Did you encounter any resistance to change, if so how, and why?

10) Please describe how you managed / handled their reactions to change?

11) How would you describe your relationship with your followers?

12) How do you encourage involvement / commitment with your team (followers)?

13) How is this / was received by followers?

14) **QUESTION ON CHANGE OUTCOMES** – What do you perceive the change outcomes to be? How will you know if they will be achieved?

Q) Is there anything you would like to add to what you have already said, which you think will be beneficial to this research?

**Or**

Q) Tell me, are they any additional questions that I have not asked, or may have missed, which you believe may be beneficial to this research?

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

### *C - Followers*

1) Please tell me about your experience of change in this university organisation
2) What was / is your role (can be asked to either L or F) during change? implementation
3) Describe your attitude and behaviour following the announcement that change would be taking place
   - Has your behaviour / attitudes changed during the change process, if so, please describe how this has changed?
4) How did you react to the announcement that change would be taking place in your organisation?
5) Were you resistant to the change taking place, if so, why was this the case, and did your level of resistance alter during the change process at all?
6) How would you describe your relationship with your leader (immediate boss)?
   - If supportive, in what way?
   - If not supportive, in what way?
   - If other – how and why is this so?
7) How would you describe your level of commitment towards change taking place?
8) Please describe how your leaders' (boss) behaviour / attitude was during change
9) Did this have an impact on you? If so how?
10) What was the result of this on you?
11) What opportunities have you had to become involved in change taking place?
    - Is this something you would like to do?
12) **QUESTION ON CHANGE OUTCOMES** What do you perceive the change outcomes to be? How will you know if they will be achieved?



Q) Is there anything you would like to add to what you have already said that you think will be beneficial to this research?

**Or**

Q) Tell me, are they any additional questions that I have not asked, or may have missed, which you believe may be beneficial to this research?



Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 6    [ORGA Interrelationship one]

Consisting of: 1) context, 2) content, 3) nature of change.

**1) Context**

-Internal environment (current culture, and situation of organisation)

- External environment (competition, Brexit, government)

-Past experience of previous restructure

**3. Nature of change**

Combination of 1) context and 2) content, that helps determine;

- What the change is
- Circumstances behind change
- Justification and reasoning for change

**2) Content**

Third-order change

- Change within higher education sector eg TEF, REF, government regulations
- Student (fees, funding, experience, consumerism, OfS)
- University becoming more business and corporate oriented

Second-order change

- Reduction of number of faculties (reducing costs, streamlining operation to become more effective and efficient) because of change in HE sector and students becoming core focus
- Culture change (university lost aspiration, and strategic direction, collegial spirit)
- Change in behaviour (focus on teaching quality), because of TEF

First-order change

- Appraisals focussed on performance
- Centralisation of professional services

Non replacement of staff

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 7    [ORGA Interrelationship two]

Consisting of: 3) nature of change, 4) LMX relationship, 5) resistance, 6) commitment, 7) change outcomes.
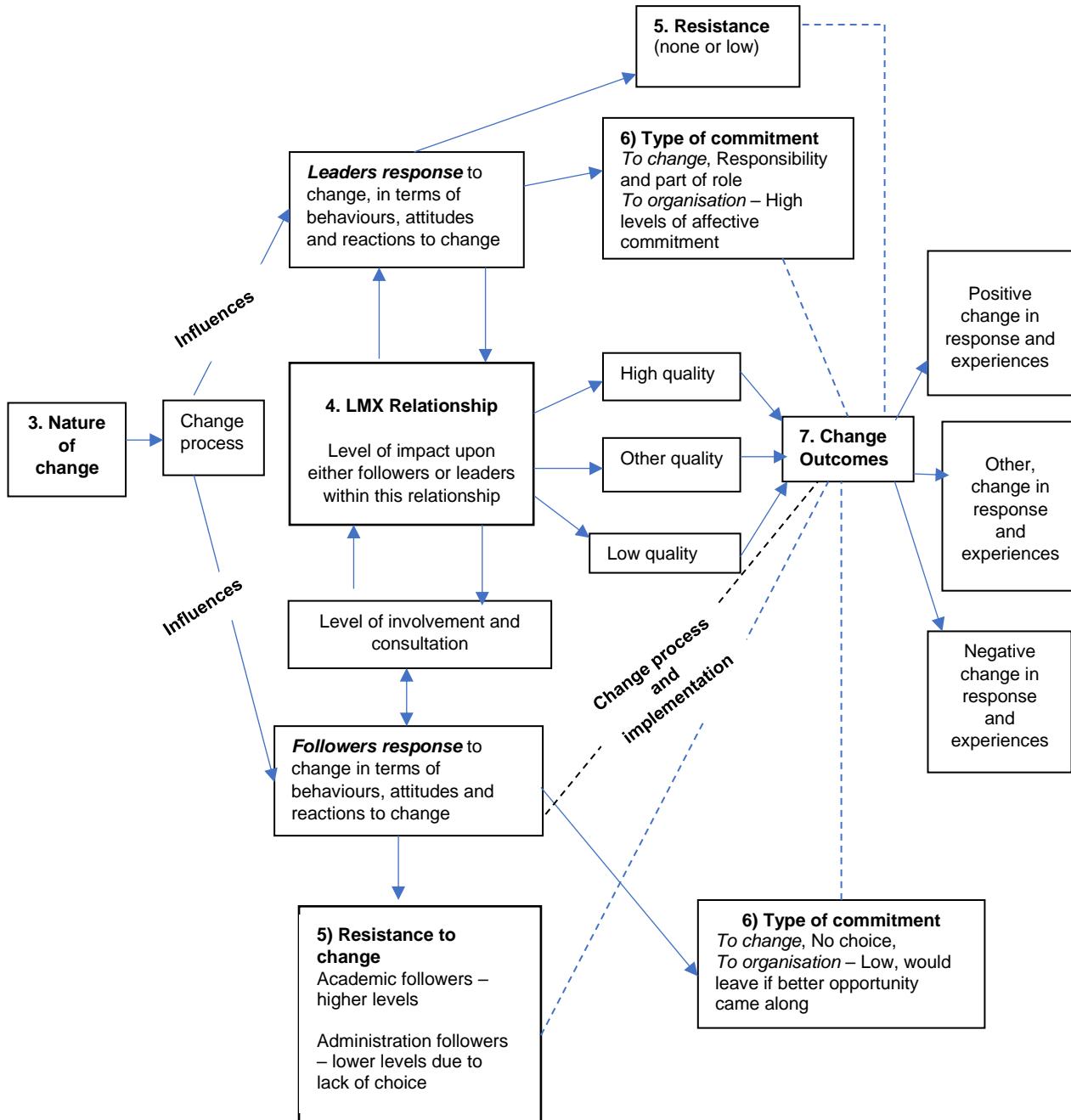


Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 8 [Tables illustrating the differences between leaders' and followers' attitudes towards change and their level of involvement]

| Positive - (Changes in positivity of attitudes towards change and the level of involvement) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Organisation | Respondent code | Attitude (pre, during and after change) | Involvement (pre, during and after change) |
| A | Lac02 | P-P | H-H-H |
| A | Lac03 | P-N-P (worried) | S-H-H |
| A | Lac09 | P-P-P | S-H-H |
| A | Fac07 | P-P | N-N |
| A | Fac08 | P-P+Ntl+N-N | N+S-S+H-H |
| A | Fac11 | P-P-P | S-S-S |
| A | Fad18 | P-N-ongoing | N-N-H |
| **Breakdown of respondents** | **Key**<br>Lac = Leader academic<br>Fac = Follower academic<br>Fad = Follower administrator | **Key**<br>P = Positive; Ntl = Neutral; N= Negative<br>S = Some; N= None; H = High | |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

*(NB – Negative changes on next page)*

| Negative – (Changes in negativity of attitudes towards change and the level of involvement) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Organisation** | **Respondent code** | **Attitude (pre, during and after change)** | **Involvement (pre, during and after change)** |
| A | Fac05 | N-N-between P and Ntl | N-S-S |
| A | Fac06 | N-N-N | S-N-N |
| A | Fad16 | N-N-N | N-N-N |
| A | Fad17 | N-N-still ongoing | N-N-H |
| A | Fad18 | P-N-still ongoing | N-N-H |
| **Breakdown of respondents** | Fac = Follower academic<br>Fad = Follower administrator | **Key**<br>P = Positive; Ntl = Neutral; N= Negative<br>S = Some; N= None; H = High | |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 9    [Table illustrating differences in perception of LMX relationship quality]

| Organisation code | Leaders with their followers<br>*Key:*<br>Lac = Academic Leader<br>Lad: Administration Leader | | | Followers with their leaders<br>*Key:*<br>Fac = Academic Follower<br>Fad = Administration Follower | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | High | Low | Other | High | Low | Other |
| A | *09-Lac* | N/A | *03-Lac* (supportive) | *08-Fac*<br>*11-Fac*<br>*16-Fad*<br>*17-Fad* | *17-Fad* (with direct supervisor) | *05-Fad* quite good<br>*06-Fac* friendly and superficial<br>*07-Fac* mixed (with different leaders, ranging from no relationship, to low/poor, to high with current leader)<br>*18-Fad* adequate |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 10 [ORGA Interrelationship three]

Consisting of: 3) nature of change, 4) LMX relationship
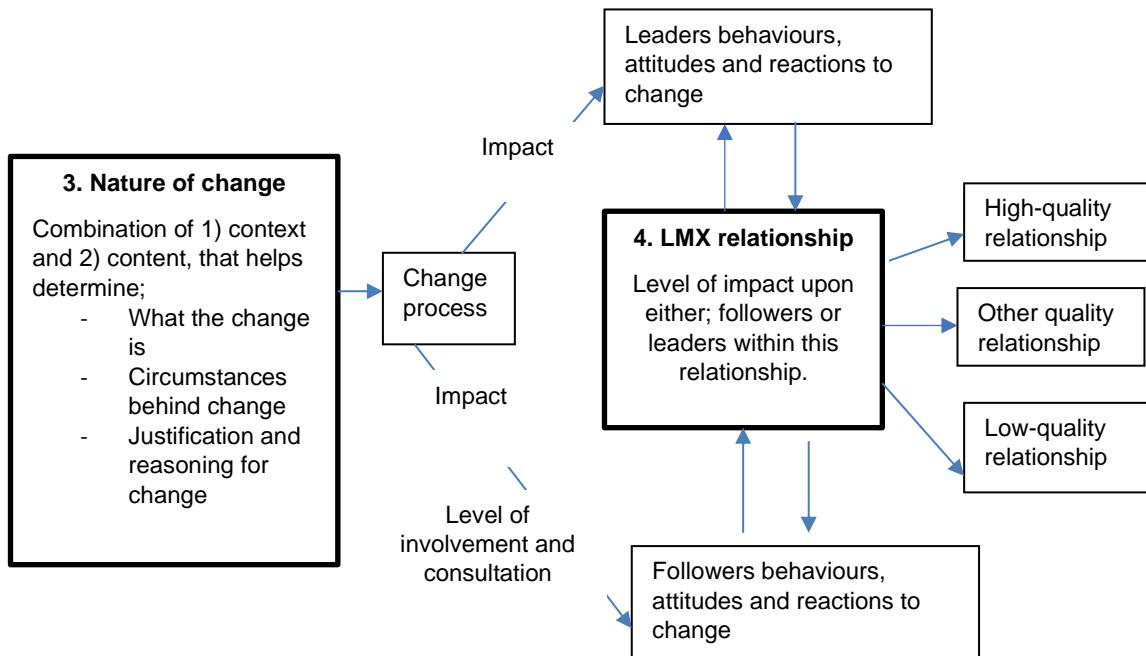


Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

## Appendix 11   [Table illustrating differences in commitment between leaders who initiate change with those who do not]

| Organisation | Leaders who initiate change | Type of commitment | Leaders who do not initiate change | Type of commitment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A**<br><br>**_Key:_**<br>**Lac =**<br>Academic Leader | 02-Lac<br>09-Lac | ***02-Lac***-total commitment towards change, normative commitment<br>***09-Lac*** - affective commitment | 03-Lac | ***03-Lac*** - the impression given was that there was no choice other than being committed |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 12 [Table illustrating the differences in ORGA between commitment to change and commitment to the organisation]

| Differences in respondents type of commitment | Organisation A | |
|---|---|---|
| | To change | To organisation |
| **Leaders**<br><br>_Key:_<br>DM = Decision-maker - change instigator<br>Lac=Academic Leader<br>Lad=Administration Leader | **_02-Lac (DM)_** high | **_02-Lac_** mixed between, affective, normative and continuance<br>**_09-Lac_** affective commitment |
| **Followers**<br><br>_Key:_<br>Fac= Academic Follower<br><br>Fad= Administration Follower | **_05-Fac_** –low, flexibility in moving on<br>**_06-Fac_** – zero commitment<br>**_08-Fac_**, not 100%<br>**_11-Fac_**, fairly committed<br>**_16-Fad_**, no choice<br>**_17-Fad_** no choice<br>**_18-Fad_** high | **_05-Fac_** convenience<br>**_06-Fac_**, zero commitment<br>**_07-Fac_** affective commitment<br>**_11-Fac_** affective and convenience<br>**_16-Fad_** continuance and affective<br>**_17-Fad_** Affective<br>**_18-Fad_** minimal |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 13   [ORGA Interrelationship four]

Consisting of: 4) LMX relationship, 5) resistance, 6) commitment



**High-quality relationship with followers**

High levels of trust (mutual trust) support
High levels of involvement or consultation

Leaders perspective

**6) Type of commitment (high levels)**

To change- responsibility and part of role
To organisation – High levels of affective commitment

Depending on relationship between each other

**4. LMX relationship**

**5) Resistance to change**

None or low

Followers' perspective

**6) Type of commitment (low) levels**

**To change** – No choice
**To organisation** – Low, would leave if better opportunity came along

**Low-quality relationship with leader**

Lack of trust, support, no or minimum level of involvement or consultation
Level of competency
Dictated, top down
Change approach

**5) Resistance to change**

Academic followers – higher levels
Administrative followers – lower levels due to lack of choice

**Other quality relationship with leader**

Adequate, superficial

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 14   [ORGB Interrelationship one]

Consisting of: 1) context, 2) content, 3) nature of change

**1) Context**

-Internal environment (static not used to
change, current culture, need for change)
- External environment (competition,
Brexit, government, changes to funding,
declining demographic)

**3. Nature of change**

Combination of 1) context and 2)
content, which helps determine;

Pace of change
Academic staff affected
Limited resource
Approach taken
Type of impact

**2) Content**

Third-order change

- Change within higher education
  sector, eg TEF, REF, government
  regulations
- Student (tuition fees, funding,
  experience, consumerism, OfS)
- University becoming more
  business and corporate oriented

Second-order change

- Change from faculty structure to
  school structure (reducing costs,
  streamlining operation to become
  more effective and efficient)
  because of change in HE sector
  and students becoming core focus.
- Culture change (values based)
- Changes in behaviours (changing
  way people think and operate)
- (focussing on research, increasing
  number of staff with PhD third -
  order changes),
- Investing in buildings
- Pace of change - Fast

First-order change

- Milestones for change
- Centralisation of professional
  services
- Systems and procedures being
  updated
- Non replacement of staff
- Voluntary severance scheme

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 15   [ORGB Interrelationship two]

Consisting of: 3) nature of change, 4) LMX relationship

*Response to change*

```
┌──────────────────────┐
│ Leaders behaviours,  │
│ attitudes and        │
│ reactions to change  │
└──────────────────────┘
```

```
┌──────────────────────────┐
│ 3. Nature of change      │
│                          │
│ Combination of 1)        │
│ context and 2) content,  │
│ that helps determine:    │
│ -What the change is      │
│ -Circumstances behind    │
│ change                   │
│ -Justification and       │
│ reasoning for change     │
└──────────────────────────┘
```

Personal impact
and treatment of
leaders

```
┌──────────┐
│ Change   │
│ process  │
└──────────┘
```

```
┌──────────────────────┐
│ 4. LMX relationship  │
│                      │
│ Level of impact upon │
│ either; followers or │
│ leaders within this  │
│ relationship.        │
└──────────────────────┘
```

Trust

```
┌──────────────┐
│ High-quality │
│ relationship │
└──────────────┘
```

```
┌──────────────┐
│ Other quality│
│ Relationship │
└──────────────┘
```

Physical impact,
eg stress,
workload

Treatment of staff
(involvement &
consultation)

```
┌────────────────────────────┐
│ Followers behaviours,      │
│ attitudes and reactions to │
│ change                     │
└────────────────────────────┘
```

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 16   [Changes in positive attitudes towards change and the level of involvement]

| Positive | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Organisation | Respondent code | Attitude (pre, during and after change) | Involvement (pre, during and after change) |
| B | 04-LFad | P-Ntl-Ntl | S-S-S |
| B | 05-Fad | P-N-Ntl | N-S-S |
| B | 07-Lad | P-P-P | H-H-H |
| B | 08-Fad | P-Ntl-N | N-H-S |
| B | 09-Lac | P-N-P | S-H-H |
| B | 10-Fac | P-N-unknown | S-S-not there yet |
| B | 11-Lac | Ntl-P-P | S-H-H |
| B | 14-Fac | P-P+N-unknown | N-S-not there yet |
| **Breakdown of respondents** | **Key**<br>Lac = Leader academic<br>LFad = Administration Semi-Leader<br>Fac = Follower academic<br>Fad = Follower administrator | **Key**<br>Attitudes: P = Positive / Ntl = Neutral / N= Negative<br>Involvement: S = Some / N= None / H = High | |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 17   [Changes in negative attitudes towards change and the level of involvement]

| Negative | | Attitude (pre, during and after change) | Involvement (pre, during and after change) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Organisation** | **Respondent code** | **Attitude (pre, during and after change)** | **Involvement (pre, during and after change)** |
| B | 02-Lad | N-N-N | S-S-S |
| B | 03-LFad | N-P-Ntl | N-N-S |
| B | 06-Fad | N-Ntl-Ntl | N-N-N |
| **Breakdown of respondents** | Lad = Leader Administration <br> LFad = Administration Semi-Leader <br> Fad = Follower administrator | **Key** <br> <u>Attitudes</u>: P = Positive / Ntl = Neutral / N= Negative <br> <u>Involvement:</u> S = Some / N= None / H = High | |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 18   [Table illustrating different perspectives of the LMX relationship quality]

| Organisation code | Leaders with their followers *Key:* Lac = Academic Leaders Lad: Administration Leaders | | | Semi-leaders with their followers and leader *Key:* LFAC = Academic Semi-Leader LFad = Administration Semi-Leader | | | Followers with their leaders *Key:* Fac = Academic Follower Fad = Administration Follower | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | High | Low | Other | High | Low | Other | High | Low | Other |
| B | *09-Lac* | N/A | *02-Lad* positive and good *07-Lad* supportive and very positive *11-Lac* pretty good and strong | *03-LFad* (with current leader) | *03-LFad* (with previous leader) | *04-LFad* good, strong, open (with leader) | *08-Fad* *14-Fac* | N/A | *05-Fad* really good *06-Fad* fine *10-Fac* fine |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 19   [ORGB Interrelationship three]

Consisting of: 5) resistance, 6) commitment, 7) change outcomes
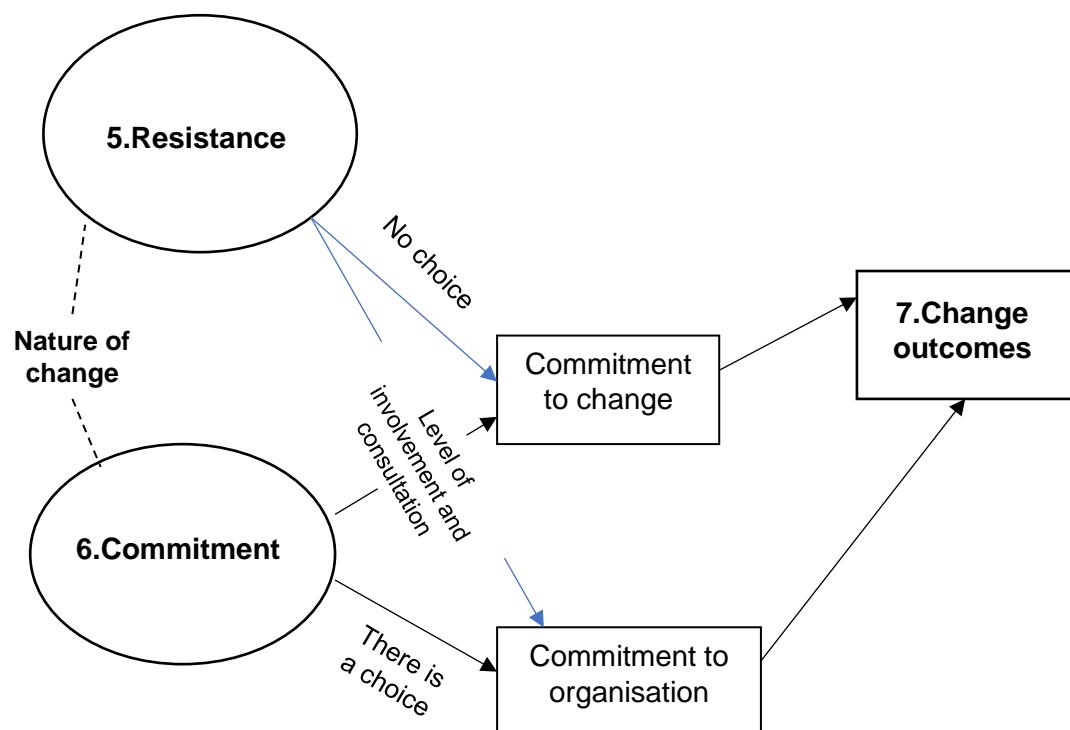


Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 20 [Table illustrating the perceived differences in ORGB between commitment towards change and to the organisation]

| Differences in respondents type of commitment | Organisation B | |
|---|---|---|
| | To change | To organisation |
| **Leaders**<br><br>*Key:*<br>DM = Decision-maker - change instigator<br>Lac=Academic Leader<br>Lad=Administration Leader | ***02-Lac*** depends on reasoning<br>***07-Lad***, fully on board with change for the better<br>***09-Lac*** No choice | ***02-Lad*** affective and continuance,<br>***07-Lad*** affective<br>***09-Lac*** continuance |
| **Semi-Leaders**<br><br>*Key:*<br>LFac= Academic semi-leader<br>LFad = Administration semi-leader | ***03-LFad*** depends on how much invested, and reasoning<br>***04-LFad***, very committed | ***03-LFad*** commitment changed, no longer emotionally attached<br>***04-LFad*** some |
| **Followers**<br><br>*Key:*<br>Fac= Academic Follower<br>Fad= Administration Follower | ***05-Fad***, high due to having to adhere to governing regs<br>***06-Fad***, paid to do a job<br>***08-Fad*** quite committed<br>***10-Fac*** no choice, due to so much change happening<br>***14-Fac***-100% committed | ***05-Fad*** low<br>***06-Fad*** normative<br>***08-Fad*** None<br>***10-Fac*** Zero<br>***14-Fac*** changes during change |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 21   [Table illustrating types of commitment within ORGB between leaders who initiate change, with those who do not]

| Organisation | Leaders who initiate change | Type of commitment | Leaders who do not initiate change | Type of commitment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **B**<br><br>***Key:***<br><br>*Lac =* Academic Leader<br><br>*Lad =* Administration Leader | 11-Lac | ***11-Lac*** - affective commitment, and sense of continuance due to length of service | 02-Lad<br>07-Lad<br>09-Lac | ***02-Lad*** commitment varies depending on justification, commitment to student experience, continuance commitment, but not committed to senior management of organisation<br><br>***07-Lad*** -fully on board depending on rationale, affective commitment<br><br>***09-Lac*** - No choice, continuance commitment |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 22   [ORGB Interrelationship four]

Consisting of: 4) LMX relationship, 5) resistance to change, 6) commitment

**High-quality** relationship with followers

High levels of trust (mutual trust) support
High levels of expectation
Work democratically, discussions

**5) Resistance to change**

None or low

**6) Type of commitment (high levels)**

*To change*- No choice, depends on reasoning and justification, some very committed
*To organisation* – High levels of affective commitment, some normative commitment, (personal circumstances)

*Leaders perspective* (including semi-leaders)

**4. LMX relationship**

Generally quite positive relationship supportive

*Followers' perspective*

**High quality** relationship with leader

Administrative followers, mostly high, due to their leader support

**5) Resistance to change**

Some towards decision-makers
Generally low, but ultimate decisions being made

**6) Type of commitment** (low) levels

*To change,* No choice, depends on what change was, nature of job role
*To organisation* – Low, would leave if better opportunity came along Lack of progression opportunities

**Other quality** relationship with leader
Academic follower, work in progress, establishing a relationship

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 23   [ORGB Interrelationship five]

Consisting of: 3) nature of change, 4) LMX relationship, 5) resistance to change, 6) commitment, 7) change outcomes



Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 24   [ORGC Interrelationship one]

Consisting of: 1) context, 2) content, 3) nature of change

**1) Context**

-Internal environment (static for over 15 years, current culture, anti-change, size of departments,)

- External environment (change predicated, HE sector, wider society)

**3. Nature of change**

Combination of 1) context and 2) content, that helps determine;

- What the change is
- Circumstances behind change
- Justification and reasoning for change

**2) Content**

Third-order change

- Change within higher education sector, eg introduction of TEF, management of budgets, imposed by government
- Student (fees, funding, experience, consumerism, OfS)
- Home office requirements, recruitment of international students
- University becoming more corporate

Second-order change

- Reduction of number of faculties, (reducing costs, streamlining operation to become more effective and efficient) because of change in HE sector, and students becoming core focus.
- Culture change, calibration of change
- Power drawn back to centre
- Attitude and behavioural changes from administration staff
- Increasing number of teaching staff with PhDs, becoming more research focussed
- Change in behaviour (focus on teaching quality), because of TEF

First-order change

- Introduction of new PDR system
- Out of date systems and processes
- Succession planning
- Centralisation of professional services
- Non replacement of staff

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 25   [ORGC Interrelationship two]

Consisting of: 3) nature of change, 4) LMX relationship

*Response to change*

**Leaders & semi-leaders behaviours, attitudes and reactions to change**

Level of scepticism and cynicism from leaders

**3. Nature of change**

Combination of 1) context and 2) content, that helps determine or inform:
- Change approach
- Continuous change
- Reasoning behind and type for change

Awareness of change
Personal impact

Differences between leaders

Trust

**High-quality relationship**

Change process

**4. LMX Relationship**

Level of impact upon either followers or leaders within this relationship.

**Low-quality relationship**

**Other quality relationship**

Awareness that change was going to happen

Involvement and consultation

Impact of change process

Impact of change process

Impact of change during process

**Followers' behaviours, attitudes and reactions to change**

Source: Original Interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 26   [Tables illustrating changes in positivity and negativity of respondents' attitudes towards change and the level of involvement]

| Positive changes in positivity of attitudes towards change and the level of involvement | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Organisation | Respondent code | Attitude (pre, during and after change) | Involvement (pre, during and after change) |
| C | 02-Lac | P-challenging-P | H-H-H |
| C | 07-Lac | Ntl-P-P | H-H-H |
| C | 12-Lad | P-P-P | H-H-H |
| C | 13-LFad | P-P-P | H-H-H |
| C | 14-LFad | P-P+N-ongoing | H-H-H |
| C | 04-Fac | Ntl-P-P | S-S-S |
| C | 18-Fac | Ntl-P-Not there yet | N-H-S |
| C | 16-Fad | P-N-P | N-N-N |
| **Breakdown of respondents** | **Key** <br> Lac = Academic Leader <br> Lad= Administration Leader <br> LFad= Administration Semi-Leader <br> Fac = Academic Follower <br> Fad = Administration Follower | **Key** <br> Attitudes: P = Positive / Ntl = Neutral / N= Negative <br> Involvement: S = Some / N= None / H = High | |

Source: Original Interpretation of the researcher

*NB -Table illustrating negative attitudes towards change, and level of involvement on next page*

| Negative - changes in negativity of attitudes towards change and the level of involvement | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Organisation** | **Respondent code** | **Attitude (pre, during and after change)** | **Involvement (pre, during and after change)** |
| C | 11-Lac | N-N-N | S-N-S |
| C | 15-Fad | N-Ntl-Ntl | N-N-S |
| **Breakdown of respondents** | Lac = Academic Leader Fad = Administration Follower | **Key** Attitudes: P = Positive / Ntl = Neutral / N= Negative Involvement: S = Some / N= None / H = High | |

Source: Original Interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 27   [Table illustrating neutral attitudes towards change and the level of involvement]

| Neutral | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Organisation | Respondent code | Attitude (pre, during and after change) | Involvement (pre, during and after change) |
| C | 10-LFac | Ntl-Ntl-Ntl | N-H-S |
| C | 06-Fac | Ntl-Ntl-N | N-N-N |
| C | 09-Fac | Ntl-P-Ntl | N-H-S |
| **Breakdown of respondents** | LFac = Academic Semi-Leader Fac = Academic Follower | **Key** Attitudes: P = Positive / Ntl = Neutral / N= Negative Involvement: S = Some / N= None / H = High | |

Source: Original Interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 28   [Table illustrating the differing perspectives within ORGC of the LMX relationship quality]

| Organisation code | Leaders with their followers | | | Semi-Leaders with their followers and leader | | | Followers with their leaders | | |
| | Key:<br>Lac = Academic Leaders<br>Lad: Administration Leaders | | | Key:<br>LFac = Academic Semi-Leader<br>LFad = Administration Semi-Leader | | | Key:<br>Fac = Academic Follower<br>Fad = Administration Follower | | |
| | High | Low | Other | High | Low | Other | High | Low | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **C** | *02-Lac*<br>*17-Lad*<br>(change in relationship | N/A | *07-Lac* collaborative<br>*11-Lac* good working relationship<br>*12-Lad* mixed<br>*17-Lad* good | *08-LFac* with leader<br>*10-LFac* with leader<br>*13-LFad* with leader<br>*14-LFad* very good working relationship with direct leader | *03-LFac* with leader<br>*14-LFad* with another leader | *03-LFac* with followers<br>*08-LFac* with followers<br>*10-LFac -* pretty positive with followers<br>*13-LFad* alright | **18-Fac** | *06-Fac* hypocrisy of leader<br>*16-Fad* differences professionally from leader | *04-Fac* was positive, now challenging<br>**09-Fac** good<br>**15-Fad** from very good to one of distance (ie from High to Low) |

Source: Original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 29   [Table illustrating mixed attitudes towards change and the level of involvement]

| Mixed | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Organisation | Respondent code | Attitude (pre, during and after change) | Involvement (pre, during and after change) |
| C | 03-LFac | P-Ntl+N- not there yet | S-S-not there yet |
| C | 17-Lad | P+Ntl+N for pre, during and after | H-H-H |
| C | 08-LFac | Ntl-P-N | H-H-H |
| **Breakdown of respondents** | *LFac* = Academic Semi-Leader<br>*Lad* = Administration Leader | **Key**<br>Attitudes: P = Positive; / Ntl = Neutral; / N= Negative<br>Involvement: S = Some; / N= None; / H = High | |

Source: Original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 30 [ORGC Interrelationship three]

Consisting of: 4) LMX relationship, 5) resistance, 6) commitment



**Other quality** *relationship with leader*

Distant healthy & professional, mixed, good working relationships

**High-quality** *relationship with followers*
High levels of trust (mutual trust) support
High levels of expectation
Work democratically, discussions

***Leaders perspective***
(including leader-followers)

**6) Type of commitment (high levels)**

*To change*- No choice, questioning, change is constant
*To organisation* – High levels of affective commitment, some normative commitment, continuance commitment

**4) LMX relationship**

Generally, quite positive but mixed

**5) Resistance to change**

Some, particularly from followers

***Followers perspective***

**High-quality** *relationship with leader*
Administrative followers, mostly high, due to their leader support

Pre change

**Low-quality** *relationship with leader*
Contractual obligation

during change

**Other quality** *relationship with leader*
Academic follower, work in progress, establishing a relationship

during change

**5) Resistance to change**

Some dissatisfaction
Generally low, but ultimate decisions being made
Inward resistance
Resistance from fellow colleagues

**6) Type of commitment (low) levels**

*To change,* No choice, depends on what change was, no high
*To organisation* – Low, considering leaving commitment to students, and academia

Source, Original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 31   [ORGC Interrelationship six]

Consisting of: 5) resistance, 6) commitment, 7) change outcomes
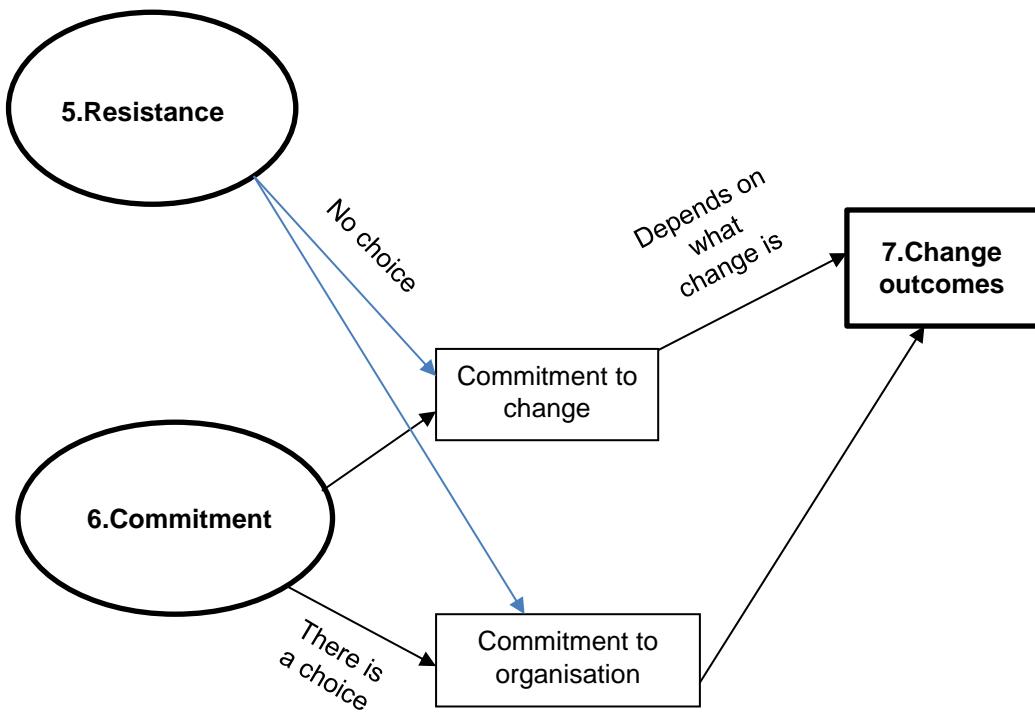


Source: Original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 32   [Table comparing commitment types within ORGC between leaders who initiate change with those who do not]

| Organisation | Leaders who initiate change | Type of commitment | Leaders who do not initiate change | Type of commitment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **C**<br><br>***Key:***<br><br>Lac = Academic Leader<br><br>Lad = Administration Leader<br><br>LFad = Administration Semi-Leader | 02-Lac<br>07-Lac<br>12-Lad<br>13-LFad<br>17-Lad | ***02-Lac*** - commitment to responding effectively towards change, no choice other than 100% commitment, affective and normative commitment<br><br>***07-Lac*** - very committed towards change, sees as positive, mixed organisational commitment<br><br>***12-Lad***- very committed, affective commitment<br><br>***13-LFad***, affective commitment<br><br>***17-Lad*** - strong, fully committed | 11-Lac<br>14-LFad | ***11-Lac*** - affective and convenience commitment<br><br>***14-LFad*** - looking for different position, questioning type and level of commitment |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 33 [Table illustrating the differences within ORGC between commitment towards change and to the organisation from multiple perspectives]

| Differences in respondents type of commitment | Organisation C | |
|---|---|---|
| | *To change* | *To organisation* |
| **Leaders** <br> **_Key:_** <br> DM = Decision-maker - change instigator <br> Lac=Academic Leader <br> Lad=Administration Leader | *02-Lac* No choice <br> *07-Lac (DM)* high commitment <br> *11-Lac* Inevitable <br> *12-Lad* (DM) High <br> *17-Lad* generally strong | *02-Lac* affective and normative <br> *07-Lac* affective <br> *11-Lac* affective <br> *12-Lad* affective normative <br> *17-Fad* High, affective |
| **Semi-Leaders** <br> **_Key:_** <br> LFac =Academic semi-leader <br> LFad= Administration semi-leader | *03-LFac*, fully committed <br> *08-LFac*, very high <br> *10-LFac* gets on with it <br> *13-LFad* high <br> *14-LFad* what employer pays them to do | *03-LFac* affective and normative, <br> *08-LFac* some <br> *10-LFac* affective <br> *13-LFad* affective <br> *14-LFad* was high, now questioning their level |
| **Followers** <br> **_Key:_** <br> Fac = Academic Follower <br> Fad = Administration Follower | *04-Fac* generally supportive <br> *06-Fac* not high <br> *09-Fac* not significant <br> *15-Fad* no choice <br> *16-Fad* high <br> *18-Fac* depends on change | *04-Fac* continuance and affective, but this is changing <br> *06-Fac* none, except continuance <br> *09-Fac* limited <br> *15-Fad* affective <br> *16-Fad* convenience, low <br> *18-Fad* affective |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 34   [ORGC Interrelationship four]

Consisting of: 3) nature of change, 4) LMX relationship, 5) resistance, 6) commitment, 7) change outcomes
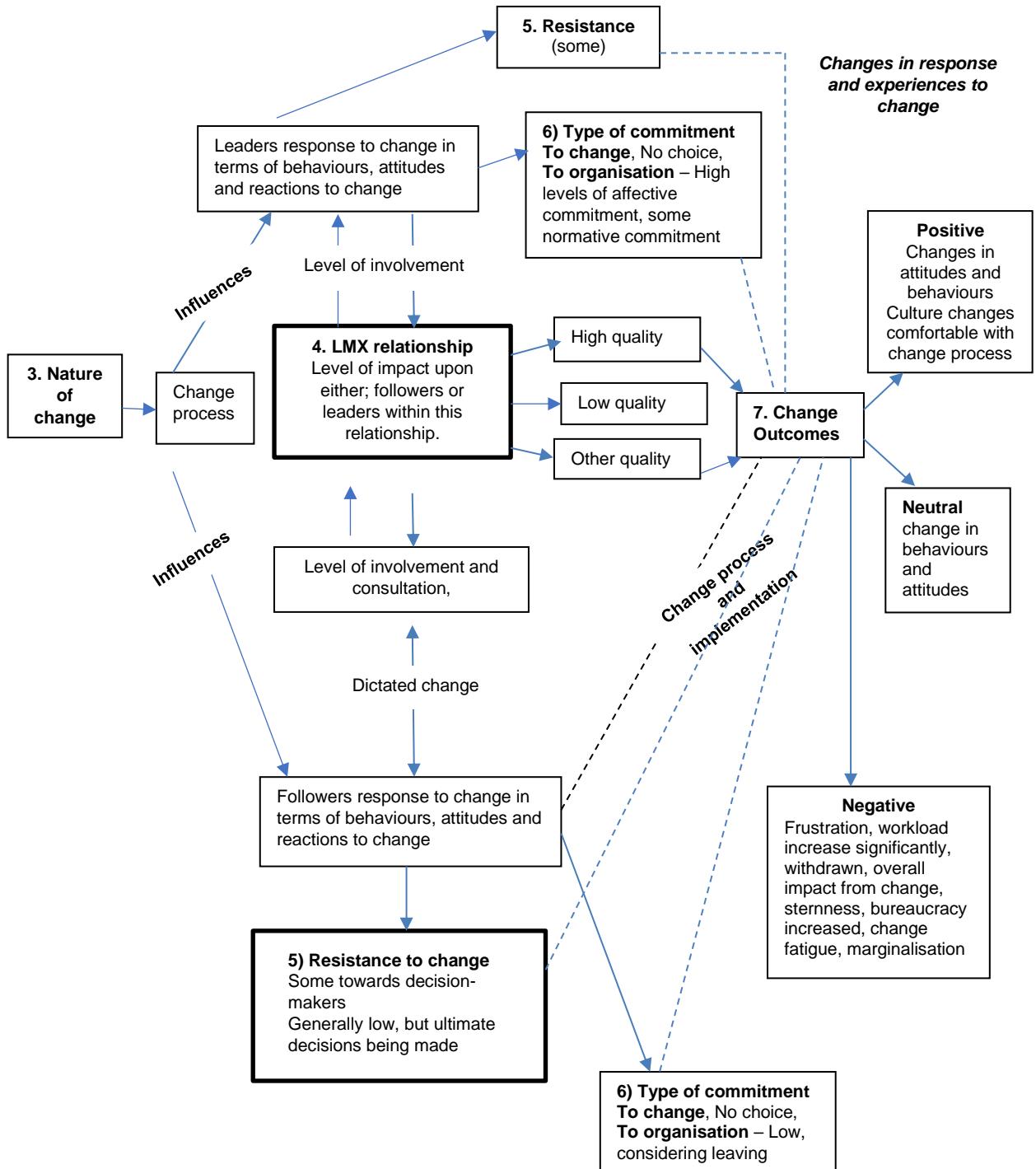


Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 35   [Interrelationship one]

This is illustrating the relationship between the context and content of change, and how this creates the nature of change

**1)   Context**

*Internal environment* (Org B & C static over long period of time, current culture, anti-change, size of departments, faculties,)

Past experiences of change (Org A impacted by this)

*External environment* (change predicated, HE sector, wider society)

**3. Nature of change**

Combination of 1) context and 2)

content, that helps determine:

- What the change is
- Circumstances behind change
- Justification and reasoning for change

**2) Content**

*Third-order change*

- Change within higher education sector, eg introduction of TEF, management of budgets, imposed by government
- Student (fees, funding, experience, consumerism, OFS)
- Home office requirements, recruitment of international students
- University becoming more corporate

*Second-order change*

- Reduction of number of faculties, (reducing costs, streamlining operation to become more effective and efficient) due to changes in HE sector, students now core focus.
- Culture change
- Power drawn back to centre
- Attitude and behavioural changes
- Increasing number of teaching staff with PhDs, focus either on teaching research or both
- Change in behaviour (focus on teaching quality), because of TEF

*First-order change*

- Introduction of new PDR system
- Out of date systems and processes
- Succession planning
- Centralisation of professional services
- Non replacement of staff (VS in operation)

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 36   [The interrelationship between nature of change and the LMX relationship]
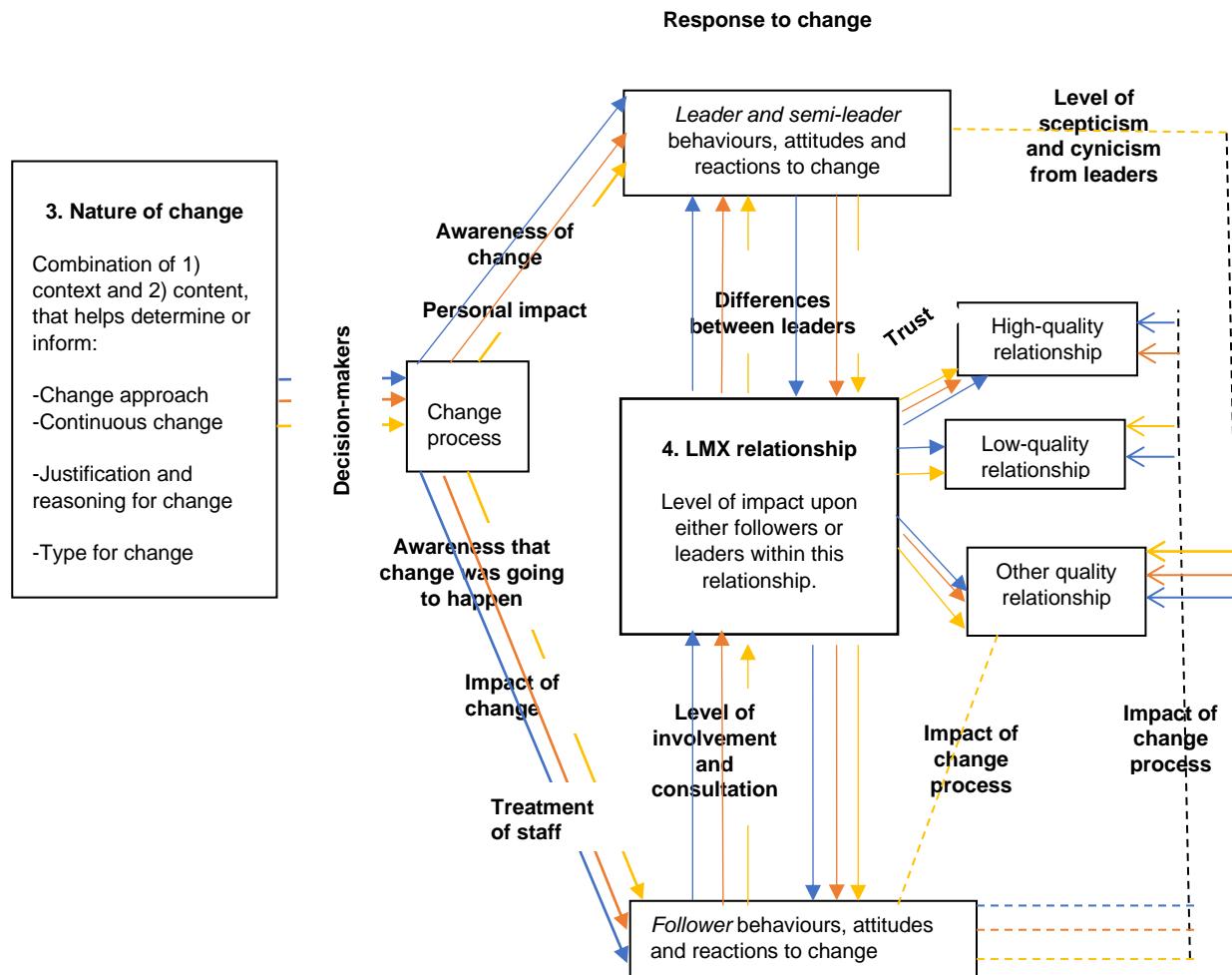


Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 37 [Interrelationship three]

Consisting of: 3) nature of change, 4) LMX relationship, 5) resistance, 6) commitment and

7) change outcomes
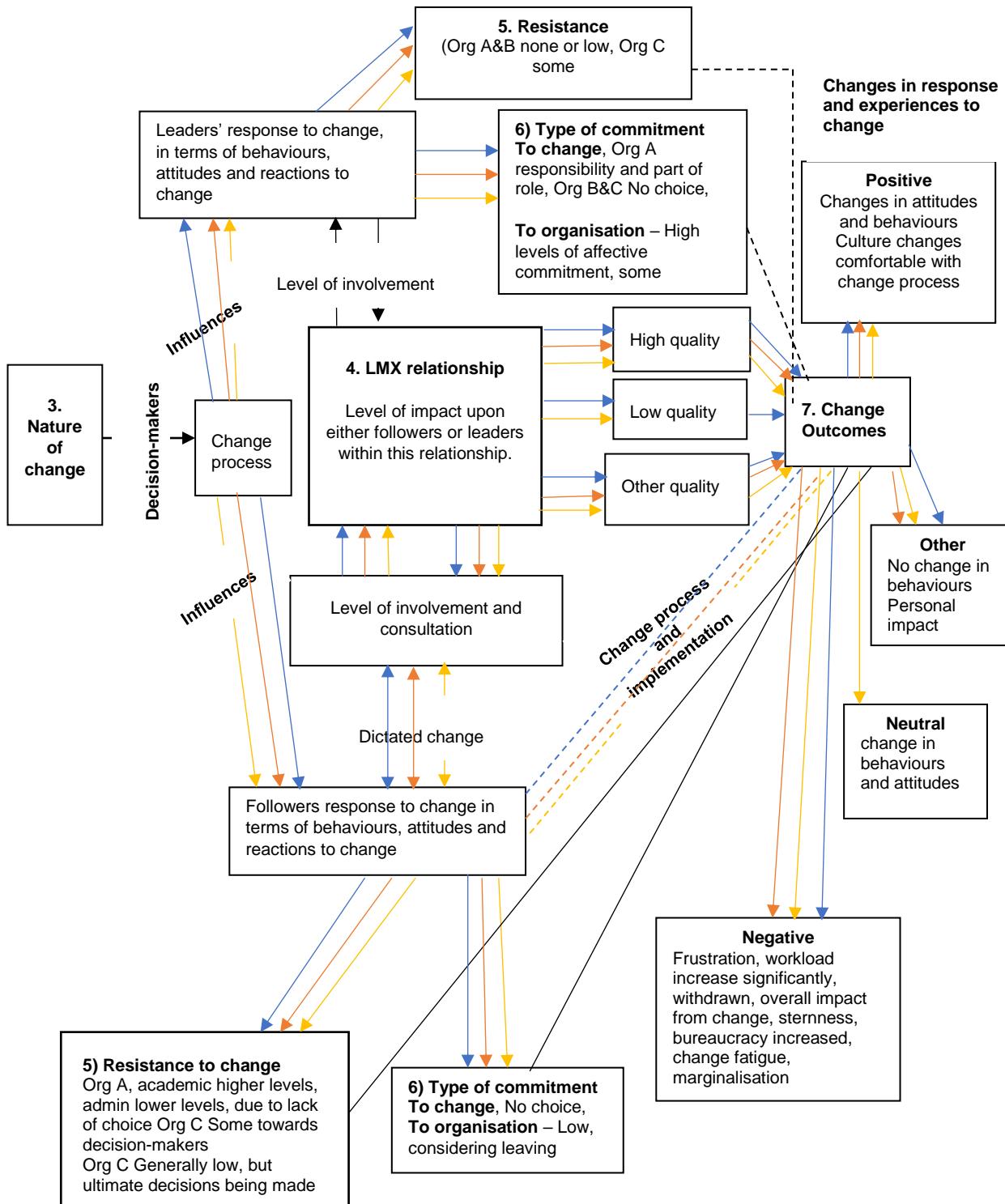


Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 38   [Comparisons of LMX relationship from multiple perspectives]

| Organisation code | Leaders with their followers<br>*Key:*<br>Lac = Academic Leaders<br>Lad: Administration Leaders | | | Semi-Leaders with their followers and leader<br>*Key:*<br>LFAC = Academic Semi-Leader<br>LFad = Administration Semi-Leader | | | Followers with their leaders<br>*Key:*<br>Fac = Academic Follower<br>Fad = Administration Follower | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | High | Low | Other | High | Low | Other | High | Low | Other |
| **A** | *09-Lac* | N/A | *03-Lac* (supportive) | N/A | N/A | N/A | *08-Fac*<br>*11-Fac*<br>*16-Fad*<br>*17-Fad* | *17-Fad* (with direct supervisor) | *05-Fad* quite good<br>*06-Fac* friendly and superficial<br>*07-Fac* mixed (with different leaders, ranging from no relationship, to low/poor, to high with current leader)<br>*18-Fad* adequate |
| **B** | *09-Lac* | N/A | *02-Lad* positive and good<br>*07-Lad* supportive and very positive<br>*11-Lac* pretty good and strong | *03-LFad* (with current leader) | *03-LFad* (with previous leader) | *04-LFad* good, strong, open (with leader) | *08-Fad*<br>*14-Fac* | N/A | *05-Fad* really good<br>*06-Fad* fine<br>*10-Fac* fine |
| **C** | *02-Lac*<br>*17-Lad* (change in relationship | N/A | *07-Lac* collaborative<br>*11-Lac* good working relationship<br>*12-Lad* mixed<br>*17-Lad* good | *08-LFac* with leader<br>*10-LFac* with leader<br>*13-LFad* with leader<br>*14-LFad* very good working relationship with direct leader | *03-LFac* with leader<br>*14-LFad* with another leader | *03-LFac* with followers<br>*08-LFac* with followers<br>*13-LFad* alright | *18-Fac* | *06-Fac* hypocrisy of leader<br>*16-Fad* differences professionally from leader | *04-Fac* was positive, now challenging<br>*09-Fac* good<br>*15-Fad* from very good to one of distance (ie from high to low) |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 39 [Table illustrating differences in type of commitment between leaders who initiate change with those who do not]

| Organisation | Leaders who initiate change | Type of commitment | Leaders who do not initiate change | Type of commitment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A**<br><br>_Key:_<br>Lac- Academic Leader | 02-Lac<br>09-Lac | **_02-Lac_**-total commitment towards change, normative commitment<br>**09-Lac** - affective commitment | 03-Lac | **_03-Lac_** - the impression given was that there was no choice other than being committed |
| **B**<br><br>**_Key:_**<br><br>_Lac_ = Academic Leader<br>_Lad_ = Administration Leader | 11-Lac | **_11-Lac_** - affective commitment, and sense of continuance due to length of service | 02-Lad<br>07-Lad<br>09-Lac | **_02-Lad_** commitment varies depending on justification, commitment to student experience, continuance commitment, but not committed to senior management of organisation<br>**_07-Lad_** -fully on board depending on rationale, affective commitment<br>**_09-Lac_** - No choice, continuance commitment |
| **C**<br><br>**_Key:_**<br><br>Lac = Academic Leader<br><br>Lad = Administration Leader<br><br>LFad = Administration Semi-Leader | 02-Lac<br>07-Lac<br>12-Lad<br>13-LFad<br>17-Lad | **_02-Lac_** - commitment to responding effectively towards change, no choice other than 100 % commitment, affective and normative commitment<br>**_07-Lac_** - very committed towards change, sees as positive, mixed organisational commitment<br>**_12-Lad_**- very committed, affective commitment<br>**_13-LFad_** commitment has not due to being positive person, affective commitment<br>**_17-Lad_** - strong, fully committed | 11-Lac<br>14-LFad | **_11-Lac_** - affective and convenience commitment<br>**_14-LFad_** - looking for different position, questioning type and level of commitment |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 40   [Table illustrating differences in commitment towards change verses to the organisation]

| Types of commitment | Organisation A | | Organisation B | | Organisation C | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | To change | To organisation | To change | To organisation | To change | To organisation |
| **Leaders**<br>*Key:*<br>DM = Decision-maker - change instigator<br>Lac=Academic Leader<br>Lad=Administration Leader | *02-Lac (DM)* High | *02-Lac (DM)* mixed between, affective, normative and continuance *09-Lac* affective commitment | *02-Lac* depends on reasoning *07-Lad* fully on board with change for the better *09-Lac* No choice | *02-Lad* affective and continuance, *07-Lad* affective *09-Lac* continuance | *02-Lac* No choice *07-Lac (DM)* High commitment *11-Lac* Inevitable *12-Lad (DM)* High *17-Lad* generally strong | *02-Lac* affective and normative *07-Lac (DM)* affective *11-Lac* affective *12-Lad (DM)* affective normative *17-Fad* High, affective |
| **Semi-Leaders**<br>*Key:*<br>LFac = Academic semi-leader<br>LFad = Administration semi-leader | N/A | N/A | *03-LFad* depends on how much invested, and reasoning *04-LFad*, very committed | *03-LFad* commitment changed, no longer emotionally attached *04-LFad* some | *03-LFac*, fully committed *08-LFac* very high *10-LFac* gets on with it *13-LFad* High *14-LFad* what employer pays them to do | *03-LFac* affective and normative, *08-LFac* some *10-LFac* affective *13-LFad* affective *14-LFad* was high, now questioning their level |
| **Followers**<br>*Key:*<br>Fac= Academic Follower<br>Fad= Administration Follower | *05-Fac* –low, flexibility in moving on *06-Fac* – zero commitment *08-Fac*, not 100% *11-Fac*, fairly committed *16-Fad*, no choice *17-Fad* no choice *18-Fad* high | *05-Fac* convenience *06-Fac*, zero commitment *07-Fac* affective commitment *11-Fac* affective and convenience *16-Fad* continuance and affective *17-Fad* affective *18-Fad* minimal | *05-Fad*, high due to having to adhere to governing regs *06-Fad*, paid to do a job *08-Fad* quite committed *10-Fac* No choice, due to so much change happening *14-Fac*-100% committed | *05-Fad* low *06-Fad* normative *08-Fad* None *10-Fac* Zero *14-Fac* changes during change | *04-Fac* generally supportive *06-Fac* not high p.107 *09-Fac* not significant *15-Fad* No choice *16-Fad* high *18-Fac* depends on change | *04-Fac* continuance and affective, but this is changing *06-Fac* none, except continuance *09-Fac* limited *15-Fad* affective *16-Fad* convenience, low *18-Fad* affective |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 41   [Overall impact and consequences upon change outcomes]
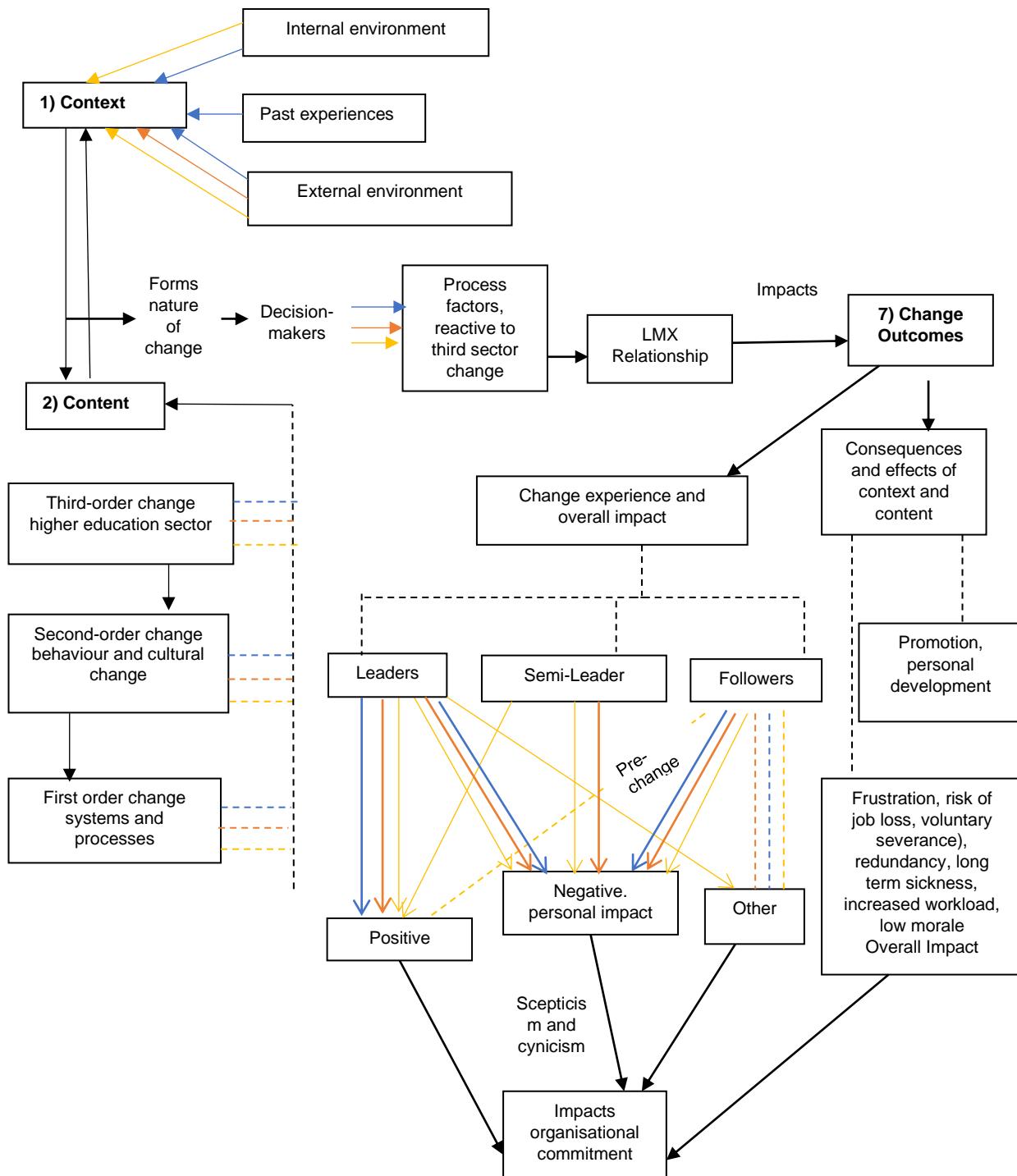


Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 42   [Table illustrating perceived length of change projects]

| Comparison of perception of length of change projects | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Length of change processes | Up to 12 months | | | Up to 18 months | | | Over 18 months | | |
| Organisation code | A | B | C | A | B | C | A | B | C |
| Respondents code | 06-Fac<br>07-Fac<br>16-Fad<br>17-Fad | 04-LFad<br>06-Fad<br>07-Lad<br>08-Fad<br>10-Fac<br>11-Lac | 07-Lac<br>17-Lad | | 10-Fac<br>11-Lac Initial stage 18 months, Stage 2 consolidations, perpetual change | 08-LFac<br>09-Fac<br>17-Lad | 02-Lac<br>03-Lac<br>09-Lac<br>05-Fac<br>08-Fac<br>11-Fac<br>18-Fad | 02-Lad<br>03-LFad<br>05-Fad<br>07-Lad<br>08-Fad<br>09-Lac<br>10-Fac<br>14-Fac<br>11-Lac | 02-Lac<br>03-LFac<br>04-Fac<br>06-Fac<br>07-Lac<br>10-LFac<br>11-Lac<br>12-Lad<br>13-LFad<br>14-LFad<br>15-Fad<br>16-Fad<br>18-Fac |

Source: An original interpretation of the researcher

# Appendix 43   [An example of a coded transcript (ORGB 05-Fad)]

ORGB-05-Fad

Interviewer

*Thank you very much for agreeing to take part today in the interview. I would like to start by asking you, if I may, about your experience of change that is taking place in this university.*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

So at the ==moment there's lots of change== going on  and there seems to have been a lot of change changed since ==I started here in 2014==, with the introduction of the ==new Vice-Chancellor== really, you know we ==went from faculties== to schools and as an admin person, that meant going from a ==faculty to a central service== and so that was a ==change for me personally== but there's been ==wide-scale changes across the whole institution==  in terms of ==teaching staff numbers==, ==courses==, how teaching ==staff operate and communicate with central services==, um and it seems to be ongoing you know, this interview taking place in 2018, ==four years down the line since I started== and there ==hasn't been any period of non-change during that time== so I know they say ==change is continuous== um but it feels like it's been ==a long old slog since I started== here in terms of change, so.

**Interviewer**

*What was or is your ==role== during the change implementation that is taking place here*?

**ORGB-05-Fad**

So my job role, are we talking about job role, sorry, or my part in the change?

**Interviewer**

*Yes, your part in the change taking place here*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

I had , I didn't really get involved in the change in terms of decisions etc because I received a letter from HR telling me that my job changed and where I would be going, who my line management would be and who my colleagues are or were going to be, um when it, when the change initially started the big bang change and then as a result of that we've had to change policies and processes and how we work and my experience of that is I have little impact on how, how I can influence change and my role as a xxxx administrator – um, I sort of, I'm on the periphery really of any changes that need to happen inside of the department I work in, and larger-scale changes for the big unit that I work for. I have no input into and haven't been asked to have any input into so they are small-scale changes within my own job role I've been sort of invited to take part in and, but I have never been a key decision, I just sort of input into decision making.

**Interviewer**

*So could you describe your attitude and behaviour to me following the announcement that change would be taking place?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Of course, so I don't want to put myself in that sort of resistant to change, resistance to change sort of category of you know when you first hear about change most people go oh my God here we go again, you know, I try to remain positive about it, um, and look for the positives in change but when change happens a lot, all the time continuously and you don't ever get a period of settling into something, that could be quite frustrating.

And I think that's what people tend to think when they see change coming, that it's going to go on for some time but that certainly is my opinion of it, how long it's going on for, what affect is it going to have on me and I guess that can be frustrating, I guess is the term I'd use for it.

Um in that it's just uncertain and that uncertainty um, then creates a culture of uncertainty in departments and people sort of get each other riled up and that's very easy just to sort of spread, so um but for me I try and as I said, I try to look to the positives when I was first told about change and continue to try and keep my mindset on the positives, err despite other people and other opinions that seem to come forward, so.

**Interviewer**

*Thank you. Has your behaviour or attitude changed during the change process, and if so, could you describe how this is has changed?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Yeah, if we are talking about the changes that started in 2015 for the University, um, I'm a little bit fed up of it to be honest with you, it's been going on for so many years and I understand that they did a big band change to start with and then we knew that behind that there was going to be staggered change following, but it just feels now like it's gone on for a long time and, um sometimes change isn't really communicated or if it is, it doesn't get down to the level which I'm working at, and um, I can't remember what the question was.

**Interviewer**

*I was asking about your behaviour and attitudes – has it changed during the change process?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Oh yes, so as I said for the question just before this, you know, I'm always positive about change or I look for the positives but because of the length of time that this change has been going on for it's sort of, it wears me down a bit when I think about the future or the present changes happening, so my…my behaviour and my sort of feelings towards it has changed, quite a lot really since the beginning to the point that we're at now, in the negative way, yeah

**Interviewer**

*So when you mention this change in a negative way could you just elaborate just a little bit more?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Yeah, so I'm sort of bored of change really, um, it's frustrating people don't tend to know what's happening. In the absence of any information, people start making up rumours which can spread in a department I think, um and then it just it just produces this culture of people being quite frustrated which is difficult to shake so that's what I'm really referring to, I think it's just. There's no sort of. It doesn't appear to be an end to the change and I think people just remain consistently frustrated because of that.

**Interviewer**

*Thank you. How did you react to the announcement that change would be taking place within your organisation?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Um, well I joined after some change had been announced um, but again when the big bang change for this organisation from September 2015, um I only sort of got bits and pieces from different people.

So I was sort of a little bit frustrated again I guess that I didn't have the full picture whether or not it was meant to be communicated at that time, I was sort of picking up bits and pieces. But if we're talking about when I was told about the change, I was quite relieved personally only because I wasn't going to be line managed by the same person, which I don't think has anything to do with change but I welcomed that.

Um, and I welcomed moving into a new team I welcomed moving into a pooled resource of colleagues who did the same job as me but from across different faculties I was quite pleased to be getting into that environment but, so yes but I don't know if that is slightly skewed because I was I…I welcome the change because of my line manager at the time.

**Interviewer**

*Thank you. How would you describe your relationship with your leaders, so your immediate boss?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Um, I have a really good relationship with my immediate boss, um xxx a friend outside of work, and the friendship built from relationships within work I didn't know before I worked here, um but now I consider to be a friend, um xxx very good at the um, the pastoral I guess side of management in that you can go for to xxx for advice guidance if you have a problem with something like that's…that's work related xxx won't take it from you and deal with it xxx advise you on how best to deal with the problem.

Therefore you learn those skills rather than it just being taken away so I have a really good relationship with my immediate line manager really as a sort of as a xxxx administrator xxx gives me that autonomy to manage my own workload to do my own stuff, um meet the deadlines set deadlines lines so I'm very…very much left to get on um, with my work, um but I know that if I have an issue I can talk to her.

**Interviewer**

*That is really interesting, thank you. You've mentioned your previous experience in working in a different team before the change happened and you've suggested that it has been a very positive move for you. What was that relationship like previously compared to this one now?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

So my line manager previously, um didn't really share information and um I would be asked to do a, complete a task with very little information and go off and do it as best as I knew.

I was able to ask questions as I went along and then when I produced the final product it was sort of, I feel like it was marked as if I was at school. So I would have red pen over it and stuff like that and there wasn't really the support and guidance up front. That meant I couldn't do my job properly whereas if we have a process that we need to follow or process that has changed.

Currently we get a briefing this is how it's going to work this is what you need to do. Off you go and do it, whereas in my previous role it was here you need to do this task, go. And so I didn't really feel supported in that previous role really.

**Interviewer**

*Thank you and how would you describe your level of commitment towards change taking place, not only at a department level but within the organisation?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

So, I appreciate it from a wider picture perspective with the change in higher education sort of landscape. This is especially in terms of (the area in which I work and) activities and um, so I know that there are a lot of changes that are required for institutions to remain competitive and being that working in a xxxx environment that's going to be key in my role so because of that side of things I'm my commitment is high because you have to adhere to those sorts of governing and regulatory changes.

But my commitment to how this institution might interpret those regulations and how they might choose to operate and work based on those, I am committed to it but I don't often have a lot of faith in it, because the way this institution seems to interpret policy and then procedures underneath that, to me seems very wishy washy compared to other institutions that I have worked for, um, so, yeah.

**Interviewer**

*Thank you and I'd just like to just ask a couple more, another question on commitment, so when you're here at this institution do you stay within the organisation because you want to, or you feel there's an obligation to stay, or perhaps you feel there's no choice but to stay because of perhaps there would be a personal risk by moving on?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Um, at the moment I am looking to progress in my career and whether that is in this institution or another one it doesn't bother me. So I guess what you could get from that is I'm not that committed to this institution.

If something better comes up, to put in bluntly, if something comes up for my career progression because I came from a different institution to this one to take a step up in my career, and I'm quite happy to step away from this university in order to step up again so I think my commitment to the institution isn't that high, it's more my commitment to my own professional different and if that means going externally then I would.

**Interviewer**

*Could you describe how your immediate boss's behaviour or attitude has been during change?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Yeah, they were very understanding of um of changes that were coming in so you know people like to have a little bit of a moan or a negative um, sort of moment where they can have a moan and they were sort of understanding of that.

You know, sort of, we would make some jokes about change and they sort of roll their eyes and go I know, sort of, change is coming, um but generally they were very positive about the change they were, um they were quite clear in…in how we would operate as a team under change. Who…who would do what role under the change, that was quite clearly communicated. We have a lot of one-to-one sessions when change was announced about how that would fit in with, how we do our day to day jobs.

So yeah so I was quite pleased with how they, the leaders managed, the leadership team in my department managed that.

**Interviewer**

*So would you describe their behaviour and attitude as very supportive as a notion to you as a very positive attitude?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

It was a positive attitude towards how we would operate. I don't think my perception of it is that they were also quite frustrated about change, um, but in terms of moving in a everyone or most people tend to have a moment don't they when change comes. Where they have a bit of a moan but once they sort of start moving towards that change, yes very supportive their attitude towards change but you know they'd have a joke about oh more change sort of thing but it was never, um meant horribly or you know they're attitudes were still very positive towards the change itself we were just able to have a joke about it really.

**Interviewer**

*Thank you. And did their behaviour and attitude as you just described impact on you, and if so how?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

I think that sort of positive attitude towards trying to make it work did rub off on myself and other colleagues. I think we realised that in our immediate department we were all shifting the same way, we were working for the same goal, um so that gave us a sense of camaraderie really in that we were working towards, um you know, common goals.

Um and I think what I was saying about them having the humour about rolling their eyes and saying about change that sort of made the people who were working underneath that leadership team feel like they would have been listened to when they had concerns and things like that.

Um, and I think that there was a, um there was a push to sort of, um go in the same way by the leadership team and I think everyone bought into that, so it was positive.

**Interviewer**

*Thank you. So what was the result of this on you would you say?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Um, I was as a result of their sort of positive attitude, it made me feel positive about a change to start with you know new ways of working, better ways of working there was more resource at the time so yeah it had a very positive impact on me to start with and as I said in the previous answers. As time has gone by, although you know people are still very positive about changes, it's just going on for such a long time that it's just becoming frustrated because you don't really know where you are so when the changes were bought in, yet the effect it had on me was I bought into it as well.

**Interviewer**

*Thank you. We only have a few more questions left, so what opportunities have you had to become involved in the change taking place?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Um, varied, so we had to change a lot of policies when we underwent change, and that's a different team in our setup, that is to write the policy but they do it in consultation with us, the sort of operational team, and we were able to sort of, um contribute towards that.

Sorry what was the question again?

**Interviewer**

*What sort of opportunities have you had to get involved?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Oh, yeah so we were, part of my thing was to look at a specific policy and process so I was assigned to a couple of policies and processes they would look at the high, I was able to look at the high level policy and put forward suggestions for changes, and how it would work operationally.

I didn't have the final say, but I was consulted, so that element was good but that's within department. Other changes across the institution on a wider scale, very little, um we have we have a staff survey, um which you know we complete and it sort of goes down to your department level but in terms of top level management change very little involvement in I mean, um consultation.

You know there was nothing advertised on our intranet about, um changes as far as I can see and I may have missed it, um so it's varied really in sort of local department level changes, yes quite involved. University level changes nothing.

**Interviewer**

*It is something you would like to do in terms of university level to become involved in change?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Yeah, that is an interesting question actually, because at an away day recently, four of our bigger departments or xxxx xxxx department, they asked for expressions of interest into working groups for various things, one of them is to set up a sort of professional development training suite and another thing was to do with communication by how we best communicate and I put myself forward for that, but that's the first working group or sort of improvement group I've been invited to or has been available to me to put myself forward for, you know and I've been working here for four years.

Whereas in a different higher education institution I worked for, you were frequently invited or invited to express your interest to get on to work in groups and you put yourself forward for key working groups that would affect your area of work, and that is an aspect of my job that I really liked, and it doesn't seem to happen here.

It seems to be very top level. This is what we're doing and it just gets rolled out whereas, um, other places where I've worked they've had sort of working groups and consultations with people to be able to really flesh out the details of change rather than just go and do this now [laughed].

So yes, I would be very interested to answer the question in getting involved in influencing change, I just don't think here is the opportunities are available to people at my level. It seems to be the next sort of level up the management, the managers of people, um seem to get involved in, um putting forward ideas for change and not really the people who operate the stuff on the ground really.

**Interviewer**

*Thank you I only got a couple questions left. This next question that I am going to ask is about change outcomes, you know, what do you perceive the change outcomes for this organisation to be?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

The ==outcomes==, um seem to be ==cost saving==, um and um ==streamlining== which is a ==business buzz word that I can't stand==, um being ==more agile== that's another one. Um so that's ==the buzzwords you hear== when you hear about ==making changes== is being more like that but I think ==underneath the surface==, that is, that usually means ==I'm cutting back on resources==, whether it be people or err, ==products== in our case ==courses== and they're trying to make, um, you ==know two people's jobs into, um, one and a half person's job== and ==it's just one person doing it== seems to be, um, that is my own personal understanding of what I think the outcome is.

I think for the ==University it's all about cost saving==, and ==I think on the ground==, um ==its more duties, um with less resource==. But I don't know if I have answered the question.

**Interviewer**

*This follow up question may unpick that a little bit more. How will you know if they will be achieving these change outcomes in your view?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

I have ==no idea== if we're talking ==sort of top-level university changes==. ==I don't know how they would be achieved==.

**Interviewer**

*So what for you would be a success change outcome?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Um, I think ==better ways of working==, um would be a successful outcome, um I appreciate that ==resources== is probably going to be… most people's answers ==is more resources== but I think there is an element of ==better ways of working==. I think would be a good outcome for me or smarter ways if, um in terms of change outcomes.

**Interviewer**

*Thank you. I would just like to clarify a few things with you, if I may*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Yep

**Interviewer**

*So I'm looking at some of the context factors here, who in your view would you say is the key driver behind change, looking at these options?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

I'd say the Vice-Chancellor

**Interviewer**

*And reactions to change, how would you rate the response to change following the announcement that change would be taking place - how would you react?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Um, medium,

**Interviewer**

*And your attitude towards change, how would you rate it, pre-change, during change, and after change?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Pre-change, positive, during change negative, and after I guess depends on the outcomes, I want to say, neutral, um, honestly neutral, I think.

**Interviewer**

*That is interesting, why did you select neutral for that one?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Because I guess it depends what the outcome are, from change, you know, if , um if it's the fact they have to save X amount of money and therefore lots of people are going to lose their job, that doesn't create a good culture of, sort of as a result of, err change so, but if it was improved ways of working then I would be very pleased.

**Interviewer**

*How would you, rate your level of involvement from pre involvement, during and after change*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

So ==pre-involvement==, ==none==, ==during== I would say ==some==, and ==after== I would say ==some== as well, because we ==sort of reviewed==, like ==locally in our department==, we when we've done changes I ==was involved during some of the time== and then ==we were reviewing what changes we made== after it had run, so yeah, some.

**Interviewer**

*And what was the ==length of the change project==, would you say?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

==Over 18 months==

**Interviewer**
*OK, number three.*
*And the source of the change would you say here?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Within the ==whole university==


**Interviewer**

*And would you say this is individual, team led or…?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

My perception of it is that it was ==individual as in the Vice-Chancellor== but one would assume that there was ==xxx team of management== would do it so I think I would say individual because I think xxx might have started it.

**Interviewer**

*So you think it would be individual?*

*==Change outcomes==. I am not going to read these out, as I don't want to influence your thoughts.*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

I'm going to say ==limited change==.

**Interviewer**

*So number three?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Yeah, number three.

**Interviewer**

*So what are your thoughts and reasoning behind this selection?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

It's my own sort of personal perception really in that I think that the bringing together of academic services, um, was a, um decent move because it pooled together um, key people and keep people resources and key knowledge, but limited because the effect that had on schools, the academic schools, I think was quite negative in that they had a faculty support team who any of the academic staff could just walk in and ask a question and someone was able to answer it, and, now they don't know where to go. They have to email a generic inbox or walk into an office say, they don't really know who's in there and so I think that the change for the academic colleagues, it hasn't worked, um well for them.

**Interviewer**

*And a final question, can you think of any additional questions that I may not have asked during the interview that you feel may be beneficial to this piece of research I'm doing?*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

Um, no really I think, that the, my sort of answers have been…been based on two things really, one is the top-level management change and the other one is sort of local change.

So I don't really know, that isn't really a question, but most of my answers it's been varied depending on…on those questions you've asked, so I don't think there's anything else.

**Interviewer**

*Thank you*

**ORGB-05-Fad**

That's alright.

**Interviewer**

*Thank you very much indeed.*

# Glossary

## A

**Across-case analysis** – Identifying similarities and / or differences in data or themes that have emerged between cases, and then interpreting and providing an explanation for the possible reasoning why this may be so.

**A priori –** Reasoning or knowledge that has come from theoretical deduction rather than experience or observation, or uses general principles as a way of suggesting likely causes.

**A priori coding** – This is where codes have been created beforehand, such as within a conceptual framework, then applied to the particular text, for example transcripts. Where codes are created beforehand and then applied to the text.

**Axiology –** The part or area of philosophy that is concerned with values and ethics within the research process.

## B

**Bias** – Prejudice that influences the departure from truth at either a conscious or unconscious level, and can lead to one-sidedness during the interpretation of the results.

**Bibliography** – A list of sources in alphabetical order that were used or consulted, to form ideas and inform thinking about a particular subject matter, but not referred to directly within the text.

**Bottom-up analysis** – Also known as inductive, this is when theory or construct emerges from data.

## C

**Case** – An organisation, person or persons who is the main focus of inquiry in a case study or studies.

**Case study** – A research method within the social sciences used for investigating in depth a phenomenon within a real-world context.

**Code** – A short phrase, single word, or number used to assign meaning to data, such as text or segments of text, and / or to represent a respondent and their responses.

**Coding** – A process in which to label data, where a code is used to symbolise particular meaning to data.

**Conceptual framework** – An interpretation of differing perspectives within a particular academic field taken from empirical data, such as peer reviewed journal articles, that is then presented visually, by way of connecting various subject matters together in order to create a new concept or idea.

**Conclusion** – This is a section of the thesis where judgements are made, instead of facts being reported, where no new material is introduced.

**Consent form** – A written agreement between the researcher and a respondent signed by both parties, in which the respondent agrees to take part in the research and allows the data to be used for specific purposes.

**Critical incident technique** – A technique in which respondents are asked to describe in detail a particular incident or number of incidents that is important to the research question or questions being explored.

**Change outcome** – Following the process of change, this is the outcome from that process at an individual or organisational level. An outcome may be varied, for example, positive or negative, but this is dependent on the particular situation being experienced.

**Confidentiality** – Concerns in relations to access of information that respondents have in relation to the data that has been provided, and the promises made by the researcher to not reveal their identity, or to present the data is such a way that would disclose a respondent's identity.

**Content of change** – The form that shapes the change process, for example differing orders of change, such as first-, second- or third-order change

**Context of change** – The reasoning and background behind change that takes into consideration both internal and external factors, as well as organisation ones, for example historical perspectives, and past experiences of change, by individuals within an organisation.

**D**

**Data** – Information, facts, and opinions that have been collected and recorded for the purposes of analysis.

**Data analysis** – The breakdown of data into its key parts so that clarification and interpretations can be given as to the relationships that may lie within the data that has been collected.

**Dyspraxia** – Often referred to as a specific learning difficulty, it is one of a number of cognitive processing differences.

**E**

**Epistemology** – An area of philosophy that focusses on assumptions about knowledge, at what makes this knowledge valid, legitimate and acceptable, but also how it can be communicated to others.

**Ethics** – Governing principles that influences an individual's conduct and their morals.

**F**

**Field notes** – The notes of the researcher during the time of carrying out field work. These can be notes, drawings, or other forms of narrative or non-verbal material.

**First-order change** – This refers to system or structural-type changes, for example within a certain part of an organisation, and this type of change tends to be incremental.

**First-order codes** – Initial codes generated from the sources of data, for example text within transcripts.

**Follower** – Refers to an individual who is in a subordinate position and  reports directly to a superior, and forms part of the LMX relationship.

**G**

**Generalisability** – The research study findings able to be applied in other settings, and the extent in which that can be done.

**I**

**Interview** – A collection of verbal responses, conversational in nature, from respondents who are part of a case study.

**Interviewee** – A term used for an individual participating in an interview that forms part of a case study.

**Interview protocol** – A procedure or set of instructions that the researcher adheres to for the purposes of consistency and reducing bias. The researcher followers the same procedure for each respondent.

**Introduction** – The commencement of the thesis, where the researcher sets out the aims, objectives and research questions, and the central issues concerning the research. Furthermore, the structure of the thesis is also explained.

**Informed consent** – Once participants (respondents) have been fully informed about the nature and purpose of the research, and how their data will be used, and their role within it. Furthermore, this is when a respondent freely gives their consent to participate.

**Interpretivism** – A philosophical position that suggests humans and physical phenomena are different from each other due to the way in which meanings are created. Therefore, they cannot be studied in the same way due to the complexity that has to be accounted for.

**Iterative process** – A process that is reflective in nature and therefore not seen as a repetitive mechanical task. The purpose is to generate insights and develop meaning from the data. Therefore it is a process of continual meaning making. It can also be seen as a rigorous and transparent technique for analysing qualitative textual data.

**L**

**Leader-member exchange (LMX)** – Also referred to as the vertical dyad linkage theory, it views leadership as consisting a number of dyadic relationships that link the leader with a follower, and the quality of that relationship is reflected accordingly.

**Line-by-line coding** – This involves going through textual data one line at a time, and then comparing incidents to each other in the data. The purpose of doing this is to minimise missing important categories and to verify and saturate categories.

**Literature review** – An analysis and review of the literature that demonstrates what is known within a particular field of study, or topic being researched.

**M**

**Mediator** – A variable that helps to explain the relationship between other variables.

**Memo writing** – The researcher's thoughts and comments on the research process, as well as ideas and reflections.

**Methodology** – The research approach taken and the theoretical and philosophical assumptions on which the research is based, and the implications of the adopted method chosen.

**Moderator** – A variable that influences the strength of a particular relationship between other variables.

**N**

**Nature of change** – Forms part of a conceptual framework within this thesis, located in the introduction chapter. It consists of, or is made up of, the context and content of change that then creates its nature, ie type of change.

**O**

**Observation** – A way of recording and describing observed people's behaviours that is interpreted and analysed, for example the behaviour of interviewees (respondents).

**Ontology** – An area of philosophy concerned with the assumptions about the nature of reality.

**Open questions** – Allows respondents (interviewees) to answer questions freely in their own way.

**P**

**Paradigm** – Assumptions that are taken for granted or basic that form a way of theorising, or provides a frame of reference.

**Participant information sheet** –Document explaining the purposes of the research to respondents in order for informed consent to be given.

**Participant** – Refers to an individual who has agreed to take part in the research, for example agreed to be interviewed and for their data to be used.

**Q**

**Qualitative data** – Data that is non-numerical or has not been quantified.

**Qualitative interview** – Collection technique for generating qualitative data through using semi-structured or unstructured interviews.

**R**

**Research design** – The plan for the research to be carried out that is logical but also links research questions with evidence needing to be collected, then analysed within a case study.

**Research question** – This is the core focus and can be seen as the driving force for case study research, and is likely to address the how and why type questions.

**Respondent** – A term that can be used when a questionnaire is being answered, but in this research the term refers to the participant being interviewed.

Glossary

## S

**Second-order change** – This refers to changes taking place within an organisation.

**Second-order coding** – The next stage in the coding process. This is the phase in which codes are reduced from those generated from the initial codes, or first-order codes.

**Semi-structured interview** – The researcher starts with a set of interview themes but allows variation in the order in which questions are asked. New questions are included during the interview depending on the context of the research situation.

**Social constructionism** – The way in which people interpret meanings or events that may be occurring around them, so it is therefore dependent on human cognition. The reasoning for this is that meaning within qualitative research is dependent on social interpretation. Therefore, the philosophy for this type of research is that that the social world is seen as being socially constructed.

**Snowballing** – A sampling procedure that is not connected with probability, as subsequent respondents are obtained through information collected by particular respondents.

## T

**Table** – A visual way for summarising data in an easy to read and interpret format. Furthermore, a table contains a number of specific values.

**Theme** – A category incorporating a number of codes that appear to be related to one another, and gives an indication of its importance in relation to the research question.

**Third-order change** – This refers to changes taking place with the sector an organisation is operating, for example the higher education sector.

**Third-order coding** – Final phase of coding and theme generation. This is the phase involving the collapsing and removing of irrelevant or non-applicable codes.

**Top-down analysis**– Also known as deductive, where the research starts with theory or as within this research, a conceptual framework that the researcher wants to explore.

## V

**Validity** – The extent to which the method for collecting data has been adhered to.

**Verbatim transcript** – A word for word written text of the respondent, often taken from a digital audio recording during an interview.

## W

**Within-case analysis** – In depth exploration of a single case as an entity that stands alone, and becoming familiar with that case in order to identify any patterns or processes that emerge.

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