UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF LAW, ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

School of Education

An Inquiry into the Suitability of Organisational Change Theory to Embed Optimum Change Process and Academic Acceptance at a UK University

by

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ABSTRACT

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AN INQUIRY INTO THE SUITABILITY OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE THEORY TO EMBED OPTIMUM CHANGE PROCESS AND ACADEMIC ACCEPTANCE AT A UK UNIVERSITY.

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This thesis explores the relationship between organisational change theory and the perceptions and reactions of both academics and their senior management to workplace change, within a British post-1992 predominately teaching university. UK universities are currently undergoing momentous change generated by both global and national drivers as the sector moves to servicing a mass student market, through business oriented institutional policies. This has resulted in profound changes in workplace roles, relationships and culture. The objectives are to illustrate the impact of change policy and process on the academic working environment and then compare these perspectives to those of the senior management team who design such change. The goal is to establish how and why these reactions occur and to discover if organisational change theory can provide tools to better embed change and establish best practice as defined by the Higher Education Change Implementation Model (Caswell 2006).

The study uses an interpretive phenomenological philosophy with an inductive qualitative design using the Caswell model as an advocacy lens. It represents action research in a case study format and utilises seventeen academic and six senior management in-depth interviews.

Findings are mostly contrary to the Caswell model as the university uses a top-down change implementation approach, resulting in academic resistance to unexplained change. Academics respond to their lack of change ownership with re-interpretation strategies and disengagement. The senior management acknowledge academic change concerns but lack a true understanding of how they are generated. Poor communication systems within the university and lack of reward for new behaviour exist. Recommendations include the development of strategies to counter disengagement and encourage academics to participate in the development of change policy, through clearer communication of both the purpose of change and overall corporate goals and providing a public forum, to involve academics in change design and not just implementation. Further that the need to encourage new behaviours should be factored into the reward scheme.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 FOREWORD

Higher Education in the UK is undergoing profound change as the sector reacts to the global pressures and mission reforms driven by sociological change and political targets. This new global political climate creates an emphasis for the first time on efficiency, cost effectiveness and value for money in the Higher Education sector (Obholzer and Roberts 1994). Vaira (2004) cites Torres and Morrow (200) and Newton (2003) concurs that universities are subject to overwhelming processes of globalization and the result is dramatic change and increased pressure in the experience and culture of Higher Education.

"In sum, Higher Education is witnessing a process of deep institutional change that involves the deinstitutionalization of its rooted policy and values framework and the parallel institutionalization of new ones."
Vaira (2004) p. 485.

Evolutionary change is not only part of the human condition but a necessary business process; as one cannot stop change, only learn to use it to advantage. As Huczynski & Buchanan (1991) state, organisations that cannot adapt to change will not survive in this brave new world. Johnson (2001) agrees that change is continuous in Higher Education, battling for control of the structure, mechanisms and culture and how the people within them behave. These changes are succinctly described by Parker (2001) citing Tilling (2001) as the industrial revolution of Higher Education. Jarvis (2000) reminds that while Higher Education must change, it is not changing as fast as the market. The danger here is that if universities fail to fulfill society's current needs, they may be by-passed by new

nimbler international organisations because a modern market does not wait for institutional reformation.

Change is often perceived by humans as a threat and academia is not immune to this perception. Academia senses danger in the loss of the community of scholars, the growth in dictates from 'above' and increasing government involvement in Higher Education (Coaldrake & Stedman 1998). Parker (2001) citing Dawson (1994) however believes that academics must accept that change is here and continuing. It is by its nature complex, unforeseen, painful and stressful to organisation members; this is a given. Empathy, sensitivity and stamina are required by all parties to ensure successful change but theory and practice can differ in how change should be implemented.

This thesis explores the effects of global, national and institutional change processes on the working environment and the academic and senior management players within the confines of a single post-1992 British university, which for the purpose of the study will be referred to as Southcoast University or SU. The term Higher Education will also be represented by the acronym HE.

SU has approximately 14,000 students in six academic schools and is predominantly known as a teaching institution. The author is a Senior Lecturer at SU and consequently is personally experiencing the change process within HE and became aware of the need to study change policy through both her own experiences and informal conversations with colleagues. The primary purpose of this thesis then is to identify, analyze and categorize change processes within a single university with the purpose of offering a positive contribution to one institution's development. In order to add boundaries, this paper has an undergraduate emphasis, as this sector represents the majority of the academic workload.

1.2 SITUATIONAL CONTEXT

1.2.1 Preface

The situational context can best be understood through the application of a marketing audit. This is defined by Blythe (2001) as a review of business objectives and activity to identify strengths and weaknesses allowing future improvements. Such an audit of the HE industry reveals multiple external and global factors at play. Universities across the world are involved in governance change, from Coaldrake and Stedman's (1998 p. 146) historical definition that the "concepts of collegiality, academic freedom and academic autonomy derive from the operation of the university as a medieval guild," to today's professional management.

Parker (2001) argues that globalisation is changing university organisational structures from traditional bottom-up design, to matrix and network configurations that can better implement the more demanding quality and accountability issues, which result in communication structures that are now often top-down. Further that the knowledge-based economy is now articulated through the service sector rather than the university knowledge-generation model and the global exponential expansion in consumer choice has created more discriminating consumers. The impact on academics is the worldwide trend to identify human expertise simply as a commodity for strategic advantage.

Coaldrake and Stedman (1998) warn that for a university to be successful and survive in this brave new world, it must adopt greater variety and flexibility that may be contrary to cherished academic icons. However Jarvis (2000) reminds that universities are inert structures resisting change and it may only be the global threat to their monopoly on accreditation that will force change through on a national level. Currie (1998) agrees that the eventual shift in Europe towards the marketized American HE model is inevitable.

1.2.2 The Current Situation In UK Higher Education

How though do these global factors impact on the UK Higher Education system, with special reference to SU? Change to both is driven by massive HE expansion combined with limited additional resources, accompanied by a general governance move from collegiality to business models to ensure clear quality and accountability. There is also academic role modification, triggered by changes both in student role and society's perceptions of the values university adds to society.

1.2.2.1 Massification of the Higher Education Experience

The growth of HE in the UK has been exponential in the past decade as HE has changed from being the education of choice for the upper and middle classes to a starting work qualification for the masses. The term used for this movement is massification, when widening access is believed by some to dilute standards or increase degree vocationalism (Fox 2002, Bertram, 2003 and Tynjala, Valimaa and Sarja 2003, Mayhew, Deer & Dua 2004.) Participation rates have increased from 14 % of the under 21 cohort in 1985/86 to an estimated 43% of the 18-30 year olds 2004/5, with an intended government target of 50% (HESA 2003 & DES 2005). The impact of top-up fees on this goal has still to be determined.

This change in remit and student character has changed HE irrevocably and could increase academic work pressure. Driven by additional funds on offer, university management is widening the intake to include more international and non-traditional UK students and such students are believed by some academics to generate more work, yet few additional resources are available to help ensure their success (Ryan 2005). As class sizes and the student:staff ratio increases, stress can result. The lecturers' union NATFHE recently polled its members and 80% claimed workload increases, with work with non-traditional students highlighted as a key cause by 60% of respondents (Curtis 2002).

SU has historically attracted white, middle-class students, who reflect the local community. Consequently it was encouraged by government funding initiatives to pro-actively embrace the Widening Participation agenda and each degree has a numeric goal of deprived students to attract, primarily determined by postal code. These goals are still predominantly modest, as the university local catchment has few large areas of deprivation to draw students from.

1.2.2.2 Limited Resources within HE

The low level of prevailing HE funding is believed by some academics to support neither deregulation nor mass HE expansion. Parker (2001) comments that the need for professional managers to attempt to extract constant cost saving and increased revenue from a shrinking resource pool, has atrophied both staffing levels and academic resources and changed the work culture. Academics are experiencing an intensification of work practice (Currie 1998) and the combination of tighter funding yet greater productivity generates academic stress (Coaldrake and Stedman 1998). In addition the management separation between academic staff and financial matters can create distrust, as academics no longer know enough of the big picture to judge if their jobs are financially secure. The Parker study (2001) describes the tension that results internally among staff from the competing needs for the university to both survive in a competitive world and provide academic space free for enquiry and critique.

1.2.2.3 Move to a Business Model

Despite these resource issues, overall HE in the UK is already partially transformed into a business model. Parker (2001 p.11) states "collegial management by committee has given way to professional management by executives". Shelley (2005) goes further and states that all universities are now subject to the forces of marketisation. Vice-chancellors have become Chief Executive Officers with accountability now controlled by senior management rather than academic power structures. This power struggle between the

CEO structure and the traditional academic controlled University Senate/Councils is apparent in many UK institutions. Also to ensure new management structures work, faculties are often amalgamated to decrease the span of executive control, resulting in a removal of established boundaries for academics which, as the thesis later discusses, can cause loss and stress.

1.2.2.4 Quality, Accountability and Loss of Autonomy

This move to business model governance is changing the academic experience; resulting in constant pressure to economize and control academic time through refinements of measures of faculty productivity (Skolnik 1999). Working time must now be accounted for; from measurement of formal course learning outcomes to academic time sheets. This loss of academic autonomy, the right to be trusted to govern oneself, is a key change as academics traditionally accountable only to themselves and their academic colleagues are now accountable to all management layers and the students themselves through unit/degree assessments (Parker 2001 and Mayhew et al. 2004). Slaughter and Leslie (1997) describe this process as the marginalization of academics within their own system.

The mantra of better productivity within tighter funding can create academic stress as discussed and establish a cycle where increased academic workload actually translates into decreased efficiency (Coaldrake and Stedman 1998). It becomes difficult for academics to deal with increasing daily tasks so then impossible to find the time and energy to contribute to change; therefore easier to allow management to fashion the decisions.

The pressure to introduce clear accountability to all facets of university life is also changing the product selection on offer at a university. Traditional programs that have been integral to a university's soul for generations are failing to pass scrutiny with respect to enrollment viability, introducing staff pressure as academic jobs disappear (Gumport 2000). These are often replaced by more marketable degrees that expand the revenue base

and increase enrollment (Parker 2001) but highly specialized staff such as academics often cannot be retrained. What happened to 'jobs for life' ask the academics? Stancato (2000) agrees that this loss of tenure further fuels the loss of academic freedom, as insecurity is added to the equation.

SU, though a vocational institution that may gain from an increased demand for employment related degrees (Gumport 2000), is not immune from changing fashions and some departments are experiencing declining applications and resulting stress.

1.2.2.5 Academic Role

These discussed changes in the workplace are resulting in substantial re-interpretation of academic roles. Coaldrek and Stedman (1998) comment on the implications of unbundling each academic role from the traditional whole, as when teaching expertise is separated from research, there is a clash of priorities. Hodges Percell (2001) agrees that the unbundling of complex work is evident in most other industries, so academia won't be immune. In this brave new world not all academics will be treated equally and the result may be a human reaction to protect current turf. As Daniel (1996) states academic tradition values people for who they are, rather than what and how well they teach. In the new paradigm there may be a re-valuing of academic contribution coupled with a decline in academic social status (Ryan 2005) through lower relative pay (Ryan 2005 and Mayhew et al. 2004). Hodges Percell (2001) believes that academia will be reduced to mere 'McJobs'; the term brought into popular use by George Ritzer in his influential paper The McDonaldization Thesis (1998), which proposes that academic work will be reduced to the standardized, one simple job per person format, exhibited in a McDonald's franchise.

In this changing environment lecturers are often confused about the nature of their job or student expectations. Traditional university teaching methods, such as lectures, are being abandoned by pedagogical theorists, who encourage the use of more instructional media

and student centered approaches (Hannan & Silver 2000 citing Moore and Hunt 1980). These can result in conflict with students preferring a tactical 'teach me what I need to know to pass' approach (Hannan & Silver 2000 citing Silver & Silver 1997). Lecturers are then in the unenviable position of finding that active approaches to learning promoted by the Dearing Report 1997 are rejected by the student.

There is also market demand for changing service provision. UK universities have traditionally provided full time degrees for school-leavers, following a traditional academic year. This format of a 26 week or less teaching year in daytime hours has been another perk of the academic career; but changing customer demand and constituency driven to a certain extent by IT and web development are calling this tradition into question. Many students now need part-time modular units available in the evenings and week-ends when the potential student has down-time. University response to out-of-hour business opportunity is slow (Jarvis 2000) and academic reaction to non-traditional work scheduling could be poor.

1.2.2.6 Student as Customer

These changes in academic roles are related to changes in student roles. If one defines the student as the customer it changes all perspectives in the system (Parker 2001). Silver and Silver (1997) agree that if consumer students now regulate the conditions of consumption, the student has the power to define the terms of service, through consumer-centrism (Skolnik 1999), as the balance of power shifts from educational philosophy to customer satisfaction. This trend was acknowledged by HEFCE (2002) and could be strengthened by the introduction of top-up fees (Ryan 2005). This power shift could be the main driver of change to academic working practices (Dowd 2005).

Many academics though view marketisation as a threat and reject all forms of it; they want a community of scholars rather than a degree factory (Coaldrake, P. & Stedman, L. 1998). Gibbs (2001) argues that HE is a conversation by respectful and involved

colleagues, who develop educational relationships that are not transactional deals; that education is a cultural/social need that belongs outside the market mechanism and is the remit of academics only. Barrett (1996) agrees that true customers have no interest in delayed gratification and education demands sustained, long-term effort so rejects the definition of student as customer.

1.2.2.7 Public Perceptions of Universities

This battle by some academics to maintain the status quo then may have little support from either government or students as debated. Both Daniel (1996) and Slaughter and Leslie (1997) also warn that there is little public support for the traditional HE format, highlighting not just the change in public mood but tax payer unwillingness to support institutions that allocate goods rather than serve customers and that values production methods rather than products. Unfortunately university staff can be viewed by the public as self-indulgent and unresponsive to students, as academics do not enjoy good press (Ritzer 1999). It is interesting that though universities have a public perception for radical thought, the internal reality is that they are conservative and often behind rather than in advance of society (Hannan & Silver 1999 citing Kerr).

The thesis will next examine previous bespoke research in this topic area completed by SU management.

1.3 HISTORICAL WORK SATISFACTION RESEARCH AT SU

SU is aware of the importance of staff job satisfaction and has commissioned previous surveys to obtain staff feedback and workplace policy guidance. These studies are reviewed below and results demonstrate that SU exhibits many of the reviewed change factors and reactions and is thus an ideal institution for further research. In addition, previous research records only limited academic and senior management perceptions and does not attempt to form relationships between the two or establish and recommend formal change management procedures.

1.3.1 SU Psychological and Organisational Hazards, Stress and Well-Being Study (1996/7)

This study on work satisfaction used both interviews and survey methodologies and was considered innovative for the time. Results from the academic respondents that are relevant to this paper included: perceptions of unfair work assignment, lack of support from senior academics and a macho management style. Recommendations included the need to strengthen staff satisfaction levels and improve support and communications between senior staff and academics. This survey resulted in the university establishing a Well-being Policy circulated by the Staff Handbook and a new staff counselling service. In addition the study resulted in a new committee called the Work Environment Advisory Group (WEAG).

The university attempted to update these results by an Internet survey in 1998/1999 but it proved unreliable due to design problems.

1.3.2 2002 SU Staff Survey

The next major study was the 2002 Staff Survey, published in early 2003 and sponsored by WEAG. The survey process was well supported by staff and enjoyed a 50% return. When asked what makes academics feel positive about working for the university, respondents said they enjoyed the friendship and camaraderie of supportive colleagues, the flexibility of independent work and university encouragement for personal development. These are the traditional perks of academic life established previously as under immediate industry-wide threat, so it is encouraging to see they are still recognized by SU academics.

When asked for the top five matters academics believed could be improved, respondents initially concentrated on purely practical items such wanting increased pay and solutions to parking problems. However study of the 156 unclassified comments found evidence of the global and industry wide concerns already outlined in this chapter and thus build the case for studying the change process within this university. Relevant academic recommendations for improvement were that management should exhibit more vision, openness and attention to academic issues and not just costing perspectives, and offer more academic support. Resource issues were also raised such as the need to increase and improve available resources, especially in recognition of the falling academic standards of some new students. Also concerns about workload planning and the need for better career progression and promotion of the competent, with value to be placed on good teaching and not just research. Crucially academics also asked for more academic versus management control of university governance and more staff consultation on change, the topic of this paper.

Academics were further asked for comments on topical issues, which again lend support for this paper. They believed that unnecessary bureaucracy and greater student numbers were increasing the workload, with academics pulled in too many different directions. A greater clarity of work roles was required, with a more transparent sharing of the

increased workload through better management of poor staff performance. Findings again focused on the perception that management were becoming less visible and less aware of the issues concerning academics and that better change management was needed as procedures change too frequently without academic consultation. The survey concluded that management should better harness change ideas and policies.

1.3.3 Further Developments from the 2002 Study

SU has identified key academic concerns from the 2002 study and is developing School based mechanisms to explore and answer the request for workload equity, need for better communication and the perceived lack of transparency and consultation issues expressed. This thesis will add to the evidence obtained and further provide guidance for new strategy. The university further plans to run the 2002 study again to check progress and allow benchmarking with similar institutions.

From these research projects the university has further developed their Well-Being Policy to recognize the importance of workload, group relationships, staff development, promote good communication, work environment and support/resource issues, all through committee mechanisms. Further it acknowledges the negative effects of stress and encourages staff participation in university counselling and workshops.

One could judge these issues though to have been interpreted by the university within a purely practical rather than a change management perspective; by acknowledging and attempting to fix problems on a surface basis rather than seeking methods to better embed change.

1.3.4 The SU Strategic Plan 2002/3

SU developed and published a strategic plan in 2002/3 in answer to identified external change drivers. This document offered academic input and identified strategic goals for the university from a corporate perspective. Complementary to this plan are documents in the public domain, which academics can access that provide the mechanisms for realizing these strategic targets.

The university intends to fulfill the plan by four key strategic mechanisms. First, it is expected that all full-time academic staff will be engaged in funded research and/or enterprise activity by 2006/07. Second, the university intends to ensure all new academic appointees are able to contribute to research and/or enterprise activities in addition to supporting students and learning. Next, SU will support staff development to ensure the delivery of this plan and lastly, will review the effectiveness and efficiency of the University's academic programs and support mechanisms to ensure that provision reflects or initiates best practice across the sector.

Such ambitious plans beg the question of whether these goals are actionable and how will they be implemented; or more importantly how will SU ensure academic support in the necessary change process? A new Vice-Chancellor (VC) entered office in September 2005 and the developmental process for the new Strategic plan for 2006/7 has begun. Both developments further build the case for the importance of this paper.

1.4 AIM OF STUDY

The sector story to date is one of forced but mainly unplanned change and the consequences are starting to reverberate through HE. This thesis intends to study the change process underway at SU, its ramifications to both academics and senior management and, should the need be proven, recommend change implementation mechanisms based on organisational change theory; therefore its primary purpose is to make recommendations for better change process that will benefit the author's institution.

The detailed aim of this study is to illustrate the change process at SU and its impact on the working environment of academic staff. The change processes found and resulting staff reactions will then be compared to change theory. The senior management who designed and implemented the change processes will then contribute their perspectives on both their own and academic reactions to change policy and process. The goal is to establish how and why these reactions occur and to discover if change theory can provide tools to better embed change and establish best practice thus improving the working lives of both the author and her colleagues.

1.5 RATIONALE

In the literature review to follow many papers paint a bleak picture of academics' reaction to change. What is missing in many is a closing of the loop, both an exploration of the senior management understanding of academic perceptions and a methodology to make change positive and welcome. In addition some studies in the public domain which highlight staff dissatisfaction are union funded or have a political agenda that results in bias (Knight and Harvey 1999). Much of the work, especially from the UK, is from the Further Education (FE) sector and the views of academics in HE are often not collected and when they do exist it is rare for such documents to be in the public domain (Knight & Harvey 1999). Further there is a demonstrated shortfall in academic literature on post-1992 former polytechnics (Shelley 2005) and the majority of papers found are from an Australian or North American perspective and although this paper concludes the move to a common global HE model, it does not exist yet.

Parker (2001) cites Hussey (1998) and Davis (2001) suggesting that academics must participate in change and ask themselves where they have been and where they are going. They must proactively plan the journey by keeping some of their past but assume new roles and interpretative schemes. This is basic marketing theory as these are the questions any marketing manager asks before launching or reviewing a new brand direction. Academics need to learn to market themselves to ensure that the sector still needs what they have to offer and take a proactive rather than reactive perspective, to regain some influence over their working lives. Ignoring change in the vain hope that it is an aberration that will pass is not a viable option. Parker (2001) asks can academic 'paradise' be regained? The answer is probably not as academic paradise as defined by some older academics may not have actually existed but new forms of the university 'lifeworld' are still open to construction. Rebuttal and reorientation are not the way to proceed. If academics do not attempt to re-engage the issues then others will redraw the environment for them and they must live in another's world.

Newton (2003) further cites Gibbs, Habeshaw and Yorke (2000) as having concluded from the results of the 1999 HEFC survey that the use of organisational development literature may facilitate better thinking in HE strategic planning and policy implementation. This lack of academic engagement with university strategic missions is also under current discussion by Universities UK (Utley 2003). A study of 34 universities found the existence of communication vacuums in the implementation of strategic change present in most, lending support again to this SU study. Further Dowd (2005) reporting on the Sheffield Hallam University study called Embedding Excellence in Higher Education also cited poor communication as a key change barrier and this conclusion is worthy of triangulation.

Through its internal research process to date, SU has shown itself to be pro-active in employment issues and this study will clarify and add to the work already achieved. SU has already isolated some academic perceptions of change in the work environment and these preliminary findings require triangulation and expansion through stronger evidence. The Strategic Plan is an ambitious document and this study will aid in embedding the changes required for full achievement of the current plan and formulating the 2006/7 version.

It is crucially important for SU academics to understand and contribute to their change process rather than accept or react to change that is 'done' to them as the well-being of the university is at stake. Organisational theory offers mechanisms to encourage change acceptance that could prove of value, allowing organisational change theory and lessons from the literature to be applied. The university may be able to profit from lessons provided by this literature review such as Marris (1996) who advises isolating the changes that will lead to bereavement in advance and then setting up systems to assist the bereaved and prevent isolation, thus creating a change process which allows both expressions of conflict to give people the chance to react and allows time for the changes to bed down. Alternately the solutions of Coaldrake and Stedman (1998) may be applicable. They propose that staff need time allocation to both accommodate and

contribute to change and that staff will accept the need for change if worthwhile value can be demonstrated. This thesis is an opportunity to review the application viability of such ideas in a real world context.

In conclusion all stakeholders at SU must understand both the change process and the intended and unintended results. Obholzer and Roberts (1994) advise that change must be implemented in a positive, professional manner or negative consequences could impact and that even the best run institutions have pockets of irrationality and behaviour that can undermine the work; an anti-task process that the institution can fall prey to. So the institutional starting position is often imperfect before the change process begins.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews both existing theory and previous studies relevant to change in Higher Education and is divided into three main topic areas.

The first, encompassing sections two to four, discusses human behaviour, HE culture and academic role. These factors are proposed as the main building blocks of academic change reaction. The review starts with an evaluation of human behavioural theory, how human systems work and why people react as they do to change in any context with the fears, coping mechanisms and barriers that inevitably result. The thesis then studies the impact of HE culture in change acceptance or rejection and identifies the problems with and theories for embedding cultural change. This discussion leads into the literature on changing academic roles, the resultant increase of academic stress reported and previous recommendations from the academic perspective to implement successful role change.

Sections five and six then explore the main premise of organisation change theory and its applicability to HE. Three theories to embed general organisational change are discussed: Kotter (1996); Beer, Eisenstat and Spector (1990) and Hamel (2000). This discourse is then extended into the university environment and Trowler's (1998) Academic Response to Change Model considered. This thesis also aims to capture the perceptions of senior management to change process so key relevant studies are reviewed. Several authors have previously applied organisational change theories to HE and the models of Fullan (1991), Bobcock and Watson (1994) and Dearlove (2002) are critiqued and then summarized.

The chapter finishes in section seven with a proposed model, Higher Education Change Implementation Model (Caswell 2006), against which SU results will be discussed and finally the research questions developed from the literature will be presented.

2.2 THE IMPACT OF HUMAN BEHAVIOUR THEORY ON CHANGE.

2.2.1 System Change

Universities are staffed by humans and to understand human reaction one must understand human behaviour, so this seems an ideal topic to commence this discussion. Reed & Palmer (1972) explain that humans are all members of systems, each consisting of numerous inter-dependent parts. Surrounding each system is the external environment, with a boundary between the two. The system survives due to regulated exchanges between itself and the environment. In the HE context the system could be the university at large, a department within it or each academic. Humans control their behaviour in their own open system through the human 'ego'. Reed and Palmer (1972) cite Freud (1955) as describing that the ego controls external events with four set coping mechanisms. Firstly, there is the storing up of experience of events in the memory for future action and second, avoiding excessive stimuli to the ego through flight, thus avoiding the situation. Then there is dealing with moderate stimuli through adaptation and lastly, learning to bring about appropriate modifications in the external world that will suit one's own advantage. Adaptation is the reaction needed in HE today but this is generated when the stimulus can be defined as moderate rather than excessive.

Skynner and Cleese (1993) suggest that a university's success with implementing change will depend on whether it fits the definition of a healthy or unhealthy system. A healthy system is one that provides a firm but flexible structure, where the individuals share a clear mental map of reality and staff can cope with change. An unhealthy system is one that has an autocratic and inflexible structure where individuals have a distorted map of reality and they cannot cope with change. The problem is that the first model cannot be obtained by fluke; it has to be deliberately created through change policy.

Reed and Palmer (1972) explain that humans function by using mental relationship maps, our expectations about experiences and relationships. Some are detached and easily

changeable but others cannot be modified without emotional upheaval. The sum total of these relationships equals our sense of identity. New experiences such as profound change in the work environment are often translated into identity threats. The human dilemma is to maintain this sense of identity yet be open to new experiences through change, which can be difficult because, as Bocock & Watson (1994) claim, change within a university usually results in a sense of loss for academics. Hill (2000) obtained similar results while exploring academic experience of change in the Further Education sector when lecturers were asked to comment on their employment experience and work relationships. The conclusion was that staff had experienced a violated psychological contract, with loss of trust and decreasing work performance, which was impacting negatively on the institution.

2.2.2 Human Reaction to Change

Organisations consist of people and rapid change can have severe psychological consequences, as when a familiar pattern of relationships is disrupted it will provoke fundamental reaction from the humans involved (Marris 1986). Huczynski and Buchanan (1991) agree, saying that resistance to change is caused by parochial self-interest, misunderstanding and lack of trust and contradictory assessments; also that there is a low tolerance of change in the UK due to the traditional class structure.

Fullan (1993) cites Block's (1987) belief that cultures get changed in a thousand small ways, not by dramatic announcements from the boardroom. Negative reactions to work change can include turf fighting to maintain status quo positions and the pretence that everyone is behind a collective strategy, thus creating the appearance of a cohesive team. The problems with these change reactions is that with time people with serious reservations start to state them publicly so cohesion becomes a fraud and either joint decisions become watered down or compromised, or one person's view is foisted on the group. Such scenarios do not embed change and can create a blame culture (Dowd 2005).

With humans conservatism is a natural though sometimes irrational survival instinct. The will to adapt to change has to overcome an impulse to restore the past and human need to assimilate new experiences by placing them in our familiar construct of reality. In order to restore the 'way things were' people tend to ignore or avoid events that fail to match their understanding or try to control the deviation from expected. If these techniques are unsuccessful, people will then try to isolate the innovation by segregation as human survival depends on our ability to predict events (Marris 1986). Hirshhorn (1988) agrees that people all have assumptions about the future that are crucial to their current identity. The loss of these assumptions equals a loss of identity and a bereavement response for what should have been. So the management of change seems to depend on the articulation of conflicting impulses, which must be allowed to work themselves out. Humans must value their work and believe that development is progress (Hirschhorn 1988).

These thoughts close with a quote from Fullan (1991) p. 30;

"*We almost never stop to think what it means for others around us, who might be in change situations. The crux of change is how individuals come to grips with this reality.*"

2.2.3 Coping Mechanisms

Humans react to change by implementing coping mechanisms; Hirschhorn (1990) states that people who face uncertainty and feel at risk set up psychological boundaries to contain anxiety and perceived threats. Since organisations function by drawing and maintaining these boundaries, change thus generates anxiety. People respond to this anxiety by retreating from the border, often causing psychological injury to colleagues in the process. Since humans can only function by understanding and accepting their task boundaries, the difficulties generated by rapid and constant boundary change can be understood.

Another coping method is the use of social defences, the rituals undertaken to avoid personal anxiety, Hirschhorn (1988). This means that one follows established rules to allow disconnection from a threatening situation. So anxiety results when the rules change. Group social defences can create a disturbed relationship between one group and others in the external world and result in a culture of scapegoats as they project blame to protect their threatened egos. As Senge (1990) affirms people will always find and blame an enemy as humans often do not learn from their experiences, because generally the consequences of their actions occur elsewhere. This defense mechanism of blame can only be breached by understanding the world outside a group environment. Yet universities seem so immersed in implementing new paradigms quickly that little effort is put into fence building exercises or obtaining group consensus and in itself bureaucratic process can create the most pervasive form of social defense. This reaction is applicable to the results published in numerous papers on university change including Spencer-Matthews (2001), Deem, Fulton, Hillyard, Johnston, Reed and Watson (2000), Bathmaker (1999) and Bobcock & Watson (1994).

The failure of coping mechanisms coupled with very rapid organisational change equals an increase in personal and interpersonal stress. Institutions pursue unconscious tasks alongside their conscious ones affecting both their efficiency and degree of staff stress. The result is that groups under threat often strengthen the emotional ties which bind them and their coping response is often to withdraw from reality Obholzer and Roberts (1994).

"Humans are notoriously resistant to change, even if the change is minor or those concerned have ostensibly agreed to it. Managing change inevitably requires managing the anxieties and resistance arising from the change process."
Obholzer (1994) p. 206

2.2.4 Barriers to Change

Spencer–Matthews (2001) reminds that change has two elements that need to be obtained from academics: both technical (behavioural) change and cultural (attitudinal) change. The key defense to both forms of change is to erect barriers to acceptance and implementation. Spencer-Matthews (2001) cites Dyer's (1984) report that participants erect change barriers due to their assumed superiority in terms of experience, age, qualification or social position and warns of the dangers of pseudo-acceptance – lip service that only results in superficial change. Carroll (1997) is also cited with the belief that the principle barrier is institutional cynicism, the belief that nothing can ever be changed.

Jermier, Knights & Nord (1994) discuss the power struggle played out in a university and that there are always irreducible interrelationships between employee resistance and managerial control; as knowledge is often contested and managers seek to retain and restrict information to enhance their control over an organisation. Workplace resistance may seek to challenge, disrupt or invert prevailing assumptions, discourse and power relationships. It is interesting that employees will resist despite their subordinate and insecure organisational position and with full information or knowledge of future consequences. So the problem with implementing change in the academic community rests with the complexity of human response to their environment.

2.3. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ACADEMIC CULTURE ON CHANGE

2.3.1 Definitions

The result of organisational change is a change in our working culture, which is difficult for humans to accept without perceiving a threat and is defined by Schein (1985, p.9) as:

"Culture is a pattern of basic assumptions – invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external and internal integration – that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems."

Bush & West-Burham (1994) propose that culture is socialisation during the training process that leads to a common set of values and that these values result from discussion processes, which build a consensus and create a sense of ownership. Bush (1995) p.130 refers to the many models of organisational structure in HE including collegial and cultural;

"Cultural models assume beliefs, values and ideology. Individuals hold certain ideas and value preferences, which influence how they behave and how they view the behaviour of other members. These norms become shared traditions, which are communicated within the group and reinforced by symbols and rituals."

2.3.2 University Cultures

Academics regard work values and culture as significant issues (Benmore 2001). Unfortunately the impact of culture on the change process is further complicated in that there are always multiple cultures present in a university, all seeking to promote and maintain their own values. The result is an ongoing web of conflict and tension as each

group tries to protect their way of life leading to the development of balkanized sub-cultures, where loyalty to the sub-group supersedes loyalty to the university (Sergiovanni 1984 cited by Bush 1995). Applying this analysis to SU one notes that the academics are members of six separate subject Schools, all divided again by numerous degree groupings and each degree and sub-discipline units. So each academic does indeed have multiple memberships in different groups and conflicting loyalty issues may arise.

Attempting to manage and change sub-culture reveals the vast depth of the challenge in changing existing overall organisational culture. Prichard and Willmott (1997) support this concern on p 298;

"Departments have amazingly different cultures and these seem to persist through thick and thin rather like family identities – incredibly democratic, very hierarchic, anarchic, just competent, angry or very polite. They seem to have persisted because of ...the power of departments in universities."

Shelley (1998) cites Rutherford (1992) that a further complication can exist in that most managers at universities are themselves academics, so this may explain the persistence of these cultures and therefore the relative ability of universities to absorb pressure internally and nullify overall change. Further Findley (2005) warns that though the culture of the leadership is likely to dominate actions at the top, down in the operational level, other cultures prevail as universities are not mono-cultural.

Humans need the comforts of culture to function in the work environment. Schein (1985) proposes that work cultures solve two basic problems. Firstly, shared culture allows people to survive and adapt to the external environment by sharing an understanding of mission, consensus on goals, means and authority systems, measurement criteria, appropriate repair or remedial strategies. It is this external environment that academics perceive as threatening now. Secondly, culture allows us to integrate internal processes to ensure the capacity to continue to survive and adapt, so culture reduces the human

anxiety previously discussed. People resist cultural change as surrendering the assumptions that stabilize the world can generate anxiety, even though different assumptions might be more functional (Schein (1985). West-Burham in Bush (1994) defines the bureaucratic versus the professional interface as the authority of position versus the authority of knowledge. So for the academic the claims of the individual to exercise personal judgment in an autonomous manner and the claims of the organisation to insist on conformity to common values, purpose and activity constitutes a cultural threat.

In support of these theories, Silver (2005) produced a seminal study on university culture involving fifteen UK institutions and several hundred respondents from all academic levels including SM. These respondents did define culture in terms of their immediate environment and equated culture with intrusive and constant change, a point to be revisited later in this chapter.

2.3.3 How to Encourage Cultural Change in the University

It is not then possible to implement university cultural change without the support of the multiple academic groupings. McInnis (2001) cites Clark (1998) on p. 46;

"An integrated and positive entrepreneurial culture by which a university might transform itself into an institution that reworks its processes and structures is only possible if it is underpinned by an understanding of the academic heartland. "

Clark proposes that only academic groups can ensure that academic values guide transformative programs and that without academic participation, all change will fail due to non-development of a work culture that embraces change. One problem is that entrepreneurialism is commonly associated with individual effort and universities require collective action. Academics need to see the value of a change and believe that the new

work meets their core interests and is to their benefit (Martin 1999). McInnis (2001) agrees as to the importance of incorporating academic values and work habits into the intended culture change or they will become obstacles. When individual academics face major change or redundancy they can indeed transform but fear is not a good motivator. Universities need academic engagement but must understand that academics are to a certain degree self-centered in that they satisfy intrinsic motives and can be less motivated by rewards outside of the work itself. Research oriented staff for example are motivated by peer recognition and obtaining publication related status (Shelley 2005).

Recommendations for embedding cultural change in HE are available in the literature. McInnis (2001) cites Amabile (1997) that intended change needs to have clearly defined project goals, illuminated by frequent feedback, so staff know the state of play and necessitates the amendment of the established reward system to reward and recognize creative ideas. The intrinsically motivating factors are just as simple, to create excitement around the new work so it is perceived as challenging and important by academics and to ensure that it retains a degree of autonomy.

These thoughts on cultural change are further developed by McInnis (2001) who offers the following institutional management strategies to transform academic work roles. First, there is the need to recognize the multiple identities of academics, as not all academics can meet new goals in their endeavours all the time so an element of compromise must be available. Secondly, establish support strategies to enable and reward the growth of new skills and interests that will foster the new collective identity of the new generation of academics entering the profession today. Lastly is a point already discussed, that academic values must be built into strategic plans and linked to the new culture through the reward system.

2.4 THE EFFECTS OF CHANGING ACADEMIC ROLES

2.4.1 Role Definition

The main impact of cultural change is role modification in daily work, as it is within the work environment that people use role to help define them. Reed (2001) states that the word role can have different definitions in the HE environment; there is role as a position in an organisational tree (thus equivalent to personal status), a job description against which a person will be judged and the expectations people have about someone's behaviour due to the role they occupy. All of these definitions though are static; they do not reflect the reality of a changing context, as in reality role is dynamic as circumstances are always changing and boundaries are always being withdrawn. Further Reed (2000) believes that one's current understanding of the system is a major factor in fashioning the role. If this perception changes because the system has changed, roles will be transformed and behaviours will modify.

2.4.2 Role Changes in Higher Education

Many of the global changes discussed in Chapter One impact on academic role change in UK Higher Education. As academic roles change, so do other surrounding roles, because change in academic role is itself adapting to change in student role in a somewhat causal relationship (Hirschhorn 1988). Traditionally academics see their role as teaching, research and administration but it is the combination of research and teaching only that forms their sense of identity (Henkel 2000). In addition, academics can suffer from low morale caused by the current proletarianization and un-bundling of their traditional job functions that could result in a 'work for hire' model of intellectual production (Hodges Percell 2002 and Newton 2003). Further the scholarly guild concept can conflict with union authority and power resulting in role conflict (Halsey 1992). Barnett (2002) concludes that academics no longer even know what a professor or course leader is today.

Though this all paints a depressing picture of poor reaction to role change, Shelley (1998) presents a more positive perspective with academics in this study content with their roles and, while exhibiting a general knowledge of management forces at work, noting no personal impact. Many authors do believe that academic acceptance of role change is differentiated by discipline (Willmot 1995 cites Fulton 1998; Deem et al. 2000 cite Clark 1987; Becher 1989; Huber 1990 and Staniforth & Harland 1999). In comparison Fulton (1998) and Henkel (2000) believe that professional values on the balance of teaching and research and views about university management appear constant across disciplines.

Key factors in role change are the move to managerial governance models by universities and the introduction of 'need to know' management practices (Watson & Crossley 2001). Such approaches can generate sectional interests that lead to internal conflict and a lack of accountability to shareholders (Bush & West-Burnham 1994). The result is that academics may not have enough institutional financial information to either understand or accept proposed change (Bobcock and Watson 1994). This rise of management systems is also believed by many to have curtailed academic autonomy, a principal characteristic of academic identity and defined by Henkel (2005) citing Neave (1988) as the right of academics to determine the precise nature of their work. Henkel continues that the two determiners of academic identity are the discipline and freedom which create meaning, self-esteem and personal values. Nixon (2001) however disagrees and proposes that promoting academic freedom in an attempt to protect the interests of a particular occupational group is inward looking and self-referential and thus obsolete in modern practice. Nixon (2001) cites Barnett (1997) who proposes that, though academic freedom is difficult to practice today because of the limited manoeuvre room in the reward and accountability systems, it still exists within new institutional differences and just not the traditional departmental differences. Barnett (1997) also believes that the old enjoyment of academic freedom was illusionary and it has not been taken away entirely, just the opportunities to use it are reduced and a new version of academic autonomy needs to be created within the new academic role. One interesting development under the new market system is that some academics have become 'stars' whose pulling power outweighs the

capacity of the university to manage them as regular staff (Deem et al. 2000 cite Slaughter and Leslie 1997).

Dissonance is exhibited in HE about the teaching/research split in academic responsibilities (Taylor, Gough, Bunrock & Winter 1998; Nixon 1996; Staniforth & Harland 1999). Traditionally teachers tend to be seen as the proletariat, including the excellent practitioners, though this pattern may be changing as the government increasingly recognizes the value of HE teaching. In addition, all academics now have explicit contracts involving the wider expectations of output in terms of scope and contact (Bathmaker 1999), as per the SU Strategic Plan. Questions though must be raised about the contribution or lack of same made to these contract demands by the academics concerned. Henkel (2000), Shelley (2005) and McInnis (2001) found that academics are now reassessing their workloads and feel penalized that often good teaching and administration go unrecognized and such staff can carry an uneven burden. The Henkel study notes that attitudes are hardening towards colleagues who do not contribute fully but insist on maintaining their old roles and Shelley (2005) provides further support, having found that the poor management of weak academic performance demoralizes those who believe they are shouldering more than their fair share. Both these studies again triangulate the findings from previous SU research. Bocock and Watson (1994) describe new academic roles as more divisive, with multiple responsibilities, but warn of the lack of training already apparent to support the role change, an employer responsibility already noted by SU.

Role change is further complicated by the changing employment nature of academics as at many universities the full-time academic is in the minority. This has the effect of dividing academics into two camps, the full-time tenured professional (fast track) and the underclass of teachers and researchers on short-term contracts, with each labour division exhibiting different interests. The apparent success of this employment change has demonstrated to university management the feasibility of increased casualisation, though

for some parties the anticipated result will be increased change resistance of both the covert and organized variety (Willmott 1995).

2.4.3 Academic Stress in the Workplace

An unfortunate byproduct of role change is work-related stress, which has a considerable body of literature, including Mahony (1997) which confirms the increase in academic workplace stress in both Australia and the UK. Kinman (2001) studied the causes of academic stress and cites Kahn (1964) that stress is created by lack of job control, time constraints, role ambiguity and job insecurity, all of which were triangulated by Shelley (2005). Further research from Australia by McInnis (1999 & 2000) reports that academic stress is increasing due to increasing demands for committee work, providing academic and pastoral support for students, the pressure to seek outside funds to support research and developing course material for new computer distributed courses. Thorsen's (1996) study supports these results and proposes that the root cause of stress is the rate of change being faster than academics can adapt to.

These findings are further corroborated by Kinman (2001) citing Winter (1998); Winter, Taylor & Sarros (2000); Abouserie (1996) and SU (2002) which all report academic distress created by role overload and the academic perception that workload, particularly administration responsibilities and working hours are increasing. Academics also believe that HE today does not offer either opportunities for advancement or official support for personal research. Much of the blame for stress is assigned by academics to unsatisfactory management practices such as poor internal communications and lack of academic input into university decision making. Academics report that they do not feel valued by management and this results in low levels of both job satisfaction and psychological well-being. Overall respondents in these studies conclude that stress is the direct result of working under managerial conditions.

2.4.4 Recommended Academic Response to Role Change

The literature recommends that instead of fighting role change that is driven by factors beyond the control of individual universities, academics should grasp the opportunity to be proactive in re-making their roles. Opportunities can include the choice to work in non-traditional time frames that suit individual academics, and continuous staff development particularly as it pertains to multi-media literacy (Johnston 1999). This proactive theme is continued by McWilliam, Hatcher and Meadmore (1999) who invite academics to produce new identities. Aronowitz (2000) exhorts academics to act now to gain control of role change, as systematic centralisation of decision making in administration hands has disempowered staff at all levels through aligning with students to regain dominance in governance; as the task of HE cannot be mere training or globalization pressures will drive such jobs down in status, availability and pay. Deem et al. (2000) citing Henkel (2000) agree that role change is well underway and that British academics are actively engaged in 'reprofessionalism', re-articulating and strengthening core values around the centrality of research and the value of teaching. Henkel (2005) concludes that academic identity remains strong but the meaning is in flux and academic agendas need to be considered against competing rights, as academic identities now exist as multiple relationships within the organisation. Hirschhorn (1988) agrees that to escape a perceived threat people will step out of role and cross a boundary. By taking a new role we limit the consequences of our own fear by accepting these new boundaries, allowing academics to move on to new roles rather than clinging to out-dated ones

2.5 ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE THEORY

2.5.1 Introduction

The rate of change is so fast that nothing less than the capacity to thrive on chaos is required today (McWilliam, Hatcher, Meadmore 1999 cite Peters in 1989). Unfortunately though, not only change but human resistance to change is also a fact of life (Marris 1986). Huczynski and Buchanan (1991) cite Toffler's (1970) belief that the rate of current life change is now out of control and society is doomed to a massive adaptive breakdown called Future Shock, the disease of change; which is basically a by-product of the industrialization process, so currently applicable to HE. Constant change is a given and universities will have to learn to adapt to change rather than ignore or attempt to negate it. Fullan (1991) cites Levin (1976) that there are three directions from which pressures for change arise: natural disaster, external forces and internal contradictions. It is these last two that concern HE, with the internal contradictions defined as cultural problems, a discrepancy between values and outcomes.

2.5.2 Organisational Change Theory

A university is an organisation and thus is subject to organisational theory. Huczynski and Buchanan (1991) state that organisations are social arrangements for the controlled performance of collective goals but that only the people in them have goals; so for organisational goals to be achieved, staff must share and further them. Organisational dilemmas exist when the goals the individual member seeks are different from the collective purpose of the organisation's activity and this cross-purpose is identifiable in HE today. Huczynski and Buchanan (1991) believe that two basic organisational structures/cultures are often present and in conflict simultaneously. The first culture, called Organizers, proposes that effectiveness, precise plans, improved monitoring, behaviour control, specialization of function, standard procedures and clear lines of authority benefit an organisation. In comparison the second category, called Behaviourist

theory, maintains that continuing control is self-defeating due to functioning rigidity, resulting in performance apathy, attempts at revolution and internal conflict. Both of these theoretical views could be present at SU and probably most HE institutions.

Spencer-Matthews (2001) cites Whiteley (1995) defining organisational change as;

"Organisational change is the negotiation or the renegotiation of shared meaning about what is to be valued, believed in and aimed for. Organisational change constitutes a renewal of parts or even the whole of organisational culture, structures, processes and relationships with the outside environment.

This paper aims to identify and find coping mechanisms to better implement this process, although staff must acknowledge that the price of organisational membership is always the loss of personal freedom (Huczynski and Buchanan 1991). The argument is how much loss and in return for what type of work experience?

Huczynski and Buchanan (1991) propose that organisational change can be identified by common features; firstly, agreeing with Levin (1976) that change is caused by internal or external triggers and that in the case of HE it is a global impetus and secondly, that the various parts of the organisation are interdependent. Change on one will impact on others thus the impetus for universities to implement change as a whole. Finally, that change will always generate conflict and frustration and is inevitably an untidy procedure with time lags. The two key issues are control and accountability of the structure, which due to its size can suffer wide gaps between policy creation and implementation (Scott 1994). Parker (2001) cites Dawson (1994) as proposing that there are three major constituents of change. First is the substance, the type and scale of change and second is the context in which the change takes place, the internal, external and historical environment, which conditions current practice. Lastly, there are the political activities of consultation, negotiation, conflict and resistance, occurring within and beyond the organisation.

The paper has established that change is the result of triggers. Parker (2001) cites Laughlin's (1991) work in how organisations react to external triggers by seeking to establish a new equilibrium point via one of two major pathways, typified as first or second order change. These two change pathways exhibit different routes through three dimensions of an organisation: adjustments to its interpretative schemes (culture); its design archetypes (organisational structures, communication systems) and its subsystems (tangible elements such as real estate). First order or morphostatic change is experienced when the organisation adapts to the disturbance by rebuttal or re-orientation to some degree which impacts on the design and subsystems only and does not lead to deep change.

Second order or morphogentic change is more profound. Here the interpretative schemes of the organisation are changed, usually in one of two ways, by either the disturbance being addressed directly by organisational members who agree changes to their interpretative schemes (evolutionary change). This is considered the desirable route. Alternately the disturbance may be more pathological and led by a small agency of stakeholders. This type of deep change, referred to as colonisation, may impact first upon the changing design archetypes and then force corresponding changes in the interpretative schemes. For organisation change to be embedded it must be morphogentic. Parker (2001) has applied this theory to university change and believes academics have attempted both rebuttal of change and reorientation, accepting some procedural change while avoiding deep changes in core values. The popular route of change in HE today is likely to be colonisation by management, when discourse-induced evolutionary change would offer the best prospects for academic futures.

2.5.3 How to Embed Organisational Change

Having reviewed organisational change theory and human change reaction, this paper now reviews the theory applicable to methods of managing organisational change. Theory so far has recommended that for change to be successful it needs to be both

organic and wanted by those affected. These concepts are further supported by Fullan (2001) citing Mintzberg et al (1998) as believing that the best way to manage change is simply to allow it to happen, the organic theory and Fullan's (1993) proposal that when personal purpose is present in large numbers, organisations can achieve deep change. Forced change is often unsuccessful, subsequently creating a crisis of re-integration. No attempt to pre-empt conflict will work as the impulse to reject will always occur and must be allowed to play itself out. Unfortunately often those in power make the mistake of assuming that only explanation is needed and when that fails to produce required results, characterize the opposition as ignorant or prejudiced, interpreted as contempt of others. Successful change always allows time for debate and assimilation (Fullan 1991 citing Marris 1975); however successful implementation of change is unfortunately often impeded by poor or multiple interpretation and lack of a single focus at source (Scott 1994).

To implement general organisational change there are three proposed theories available. First, Fullan (2001) explains Kotter's (1996) Model of Top-Down Change, which is easily recognizable as a common change methodology in HE. This model is driven by management and Vaira (2004) believes is magnified by global drivers.

Establish a sense of urgency

↓

Create guiding coalition and develop vision and strategy

↓

Communicate change vision

↓

Empower broad- based action

↓

Generate short-term wins

↓

Consolidate gains and produce more change

↓

Anchor new approaches in culture

↓

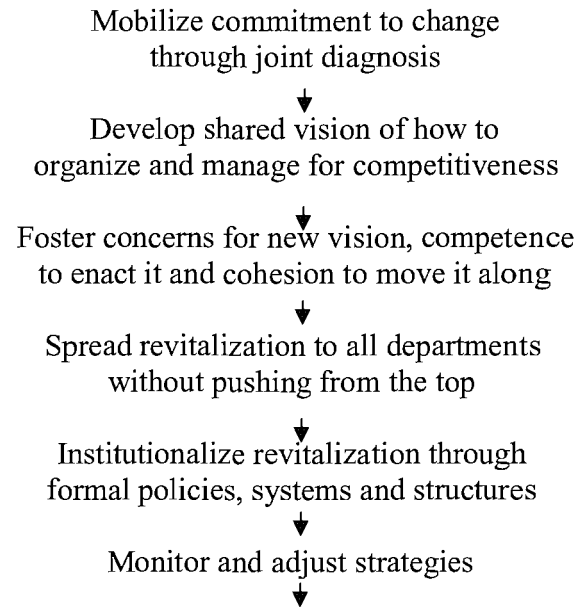
RESULT ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

Kotter (1996) Model of Top-Down Change

Figure 1

A simplified version of top-down change by Beckhard and Pritchard (1992) concentrates on the power of the inspirational vision and the need to align people and their position to this overall vision, agreeing with the need for strong leadership from Dowd (2005) and a finding from previous SU research. This theory concentrates on a three-step process: the creation; the communication and the building of commitment to the vision. Other key points are the need to reward desired behaviour, change recruitment policy and orient staff development in the direction of the desired change vision.

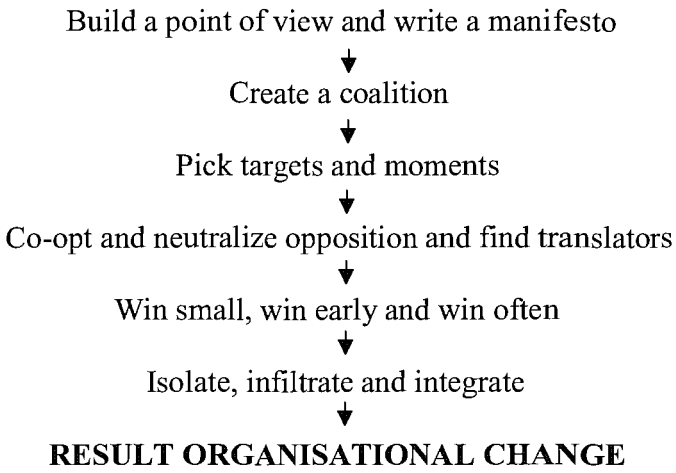
Alternatively Beer, Eisenstat and Spector (1990) propose the Bottom–up Organisational Change Model as cited by Fullan (2001), which fulfills the requirements for change to be both organic and personal. According to theory such change should be easier to embed as it is driven in this scenario by academics.



Beer, Eisenstat & Spector (1990) Model of Bottom–Up Change

Figure 2

Finally, Fullan (2001) cites Hamel (2000) on how to implement an Own Seer Change Process, which places a leader out front, rallying the troops; therefore a more developed version of the Beckhard and Prichard (1992) model.



Hammel (2000) Own Seer Change Process

Figure 3

So from an overall organisational perspective there are three basic routes to change: Top-down; Bottom–up and Own Seer. These directions will be further developed and applied to the HE environment in section six of this chapter, then summarized further in the theoretical framework.

2.6 CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION IN UNIVERSITIES

2.6.1 Introduction

According to numerous articles in both the daily and HE press, academic reaction to change within universities has generally been negative and defensive, resulting in anger and poor morale. There has been little union support for 'modernization' and universities are in the news for poor change procedures and process. Baron (2000) cites Trowler (1996) in asking why there has not been more rebellion by UK academics. Trowler believes this is simply the British way, they are more polite, having more or less obeyed management changes and tried to make new arrangements work, whereas EU academics by comparison have reacted more forcefully, using union clout as a counter. Periodicals aside, there has been little academic study on this topic, with Trowler (1998) claiming that the study of change in Higher Education is at a theoretical dead-end.

The contrary nature of a university is summarized by Dearlove (2002) p.263;

"Universities are innovative when it comes to piecemeal and incremental change, but deeply conservative when it comes actually to implementing systematic change across a whole institution."

In support DePauw (2003) believes that universities in the 21st century must be willing to 'dance with change' and that academic responsibilities include change. DePauw (2003) cites Kennedy (1997) that academic change responsibility means to challenge professional and personal assumptions, to work in an interdisciplinary manner, empower and ignite social change and to express the meaningfulness of work to connections in the real world. Bocock and Watson (1994) agree that academics must be willing to change, as change cannot be done without them. Parker (2001) states that change can result in opportunities both for academics and the university as the push to research collaboration with outside bodies can offer access to materials, funds and sites otherwise closed to them. Further outsourcing of services can improve quality and that improved

responsiveness to the community, which results from being outward facing, may enhance internal communication.

The challenge for academics is to balance and manage threats to the university life-world, while seizing opportunities and enhancing their interpretative schemes. Care is needed to ensure that academics are not seduced by opportunities into dysfunctional changes in core values, as every opportunity may include a latent threat. Parker (2001) concludes that change discourse alone is not sufficient to safeguard the academic. It requires our active engagement from debate to implementation as academics must actively participate in the management of change.

2.6.2 Academics' Reaction to Change

This chapter has concluded that the academic reaction to change at work has often been poorly managed, resulting in a negative experience. Towler cites Esterby-Smith (1987) that staff values create barriers to change and that changing values is difficult and dangerous. If you simply attack current values, you destroy an individual's sense of purpose and create a demoralised organisation. If values are to be shifted it has to be done in a way that allows the retention in some form of the current value, leaving people with their pride. Martin (1999) reports that it is difficult to encourage academics to change their perspectives, as they tend to be people with robust opinions and if status and reputation are their most valued assets, any threat to either will be a challenge to manage. In addition Silver (2005) reported hostility towards innovators that can result in their isolation.

The Hill (2000) NATFHE study is typical of the union financed change studies published. This study reported that lecturers perceive violated psychological contracts and a loss of trust at work, which results in a deteriorating work performance, though there may be some bias in the findings.

Doring (2002) cites the work of Martin (1999); Ramsden (1998) and Trowler (1998) in resolving that academics experience one of three responses when facing an environmental change. Some will demonstrate an enthusiastic commitment to role change in response to the universities changing demands; while a second group with more somber enthusiasm, will attempt to change through partial involvement in the change process in response to institutional pressure and the need for future survival. The final group is adamantly committed to teaching but become disillusioned as they see others make a successful transition and often develop a victim mentality. Henkel (2000) found academics reacting to changes in quality policies by further compartmentalization of their role – passing the responsibility outside the academic circle. Also by acts of sabotage such as myth generating to create opposition and treating quality as a game, learning the rules, then playing to win in their own fashion. The second Henkel paper (2005) further supports these conclusions, finding the major strategy for change resistance to be one of accommodation, defined again as interpretation and translation accompanied by a preference for surface change that accommodates change to existing frameworks without disturbing deeper values and agenda. Few of these reaction strategies are judged likely to result in embedded change.

Trowler (1998) has published extensively on this subject using the term 'actors on the ground' to refer to fellow academics; and cites Fullan (1993) as resolving that most academics react passively to change; the 'rabbits in headlights' scenario. Trowler has developed the Academic Responses to Change Model as outlined on the next page.

	Accept Status Quo	Work Around or Change Policy
Content	swimming	policy reconstruction
Discontent	sinking	using coping strategies

Trowler (1998) Academic Response to Change Model

Figure 4

The swimmers do fine in the new world but they are usually in the minority. Sinking is the most extreme reaction and is expressed by staff leaving the university, developing stress/illness or going onto a fractional contract. Other strategies include constant harking back to the 'golden days' or total passivity. Coping strategies are used when staff nominally can accept the change but only on the surface; within they are discontented and simply amend their own framework to take the innovation into account, even working to rule, leading to system collapse. The last reaction is policy reconstruction where academics are outwardly content with the change but add their own personal touches, becoming the movers and shakers that will manipulate the policy for curriculum and syllabus innovation. They are involved in Henkel's (2000) re-professionalism. All these responses attempt to wrest an aspect of control back and reduce workload.

Trowler's work has been developed or supported in subsequent studies. Baron (2000) found that more academics swam than sank with change and also reported policy reconstruction. Benmore (2001) was also supportive, though referring to the four change reaction strategies as exit, re-interpretation of the effort-reward bargain, self-development and conformity. Again, confirmation of Trowler was offered by Henkel (2000) who found academic reaction to quality policies as a choice of reflection, ambivalence, accommodation or adaptation. Further to this, Martin's study of 1999 reported a change reaction from staff of mainly minimal compliance or cynicism, while Shelley (2005) found an unfair reliance by a university on 'goodwill' resulted in rigid behaviours such as working to contract. Overall the literature describes negative reactions.

2.6.3 Change Direction in Higher Education

Previously this thesis reviewed both Kotter's (1996) and Beckhard and Pritchard's (1992) models of organisational top-down change, which managerial practice may inadvertently promote in HE, as more time efficient to execute. The response to this practice in research papers is mixed. Beckhard and Pritchard (1992) - who promote evangelical change through the sharing of the vision - believe it can be successfully implemented by first changing the behaviour of leaders to the direction of the new vision and then cascading change down the management hierarchy and key players. So elements of Own Seer (Hamel 2000) implementation can also be present. Beckhard and Pritchard's (1992) next key step of rewarding the desired behaviour may be difficult to realise in HE, as reward is often not linked to new behaviour and such strategy may conflict with unionised labour demands for reward to be linked only to time served. Implementation problems may also lie in their last step of improving the flow of information to generate feedback. Numerous studies, including Dowd (2005) and SU research highlight a lack of communication as a crucial barrier to change implementation.

Dearlove (2002) disagrees, believing that top-down change is often unsuccessful due to the design of a university as a consent-based organisation of professional employees. Change failure can lead change managers to blame the 'luddites' on the bottom, rather than the lack of a coherent and shared planning process. Thorsen (1996) shares these concerns and believes that decision making by hierarchical administration results in a sense of powerlessness and resultant stress among academics. Taylor et al. (1998) outline numerous academic worries that they believe result from change without staff contribution and conclude that academic staff react to top-down changes in HE with concern and a dismal assessment of future prospects. Finlay (2004) concurs, finding but rejecting top-down change in his institution.

Trowler (1998) presents a more balanced perspective on top-down change by incorporating bottom-up elements such as the need to communicate a clear rationale in support of the change, allowing the resulting manipulation of cultural elements to be seen

as important. Staff must contribute and be part of the process or the result will be limited development, with a minority of staff only seen as important due to their innovator or resistor status and the majority of staff ignored.

Trowler (1998) continues with a discussion of bottom-up change as proposed by Beer, Eisenstat and Spector (1990). Such change models are also referred to as backward mapping, mutual adaptation or multilateralism in the literature. First, there are the practical concerns as to whether such systems are practical in the university environment and secondly are they even applicable considering that most change in HE is government triggered. Whichever change direction is elected, Trowler (1998) stresses the importance of a two-way communication system where one can track individual and group behaviours, processes and cultures after implementation. Such a system would show not only how these factors are affected but how they affect the implementation process in return.

Hellawell & Hancock (2001) studied collegial decision-making, the traditional bottom-up model, and imperfections on collegiality were found to include negative individuals attempting to gain control of slow, cumbersome processes, which were purely reliant on management persuasion for action. Such results clearly demonstrate why collegial procedures are often now bypassed in change implementation. These authors though still consider bottom-up to be the most appropriate decision making process as academics must be won over if the change is to flourish.

2.6.4 Change Implementation Problems in a University

Change implementation is a challenge for any organisation, but particularly so for a university because of both its internal structure and the external environment. As Kerr 1994 cited in Doring (2002) reminds the Government makes the rules on accountability and performance and few universities have the resources to resist or refuse to play. So management must find ways to encourage the academics to participate in the game for the collective well-being of the whole. The major problem with change implementation is

that there are no rules and little guidance, as HEFCE advises on planning change but not on implementing it (Dearlove 2002).

Change implementation is not a neat process, it frequently goes wrong and people prefer not to take individual responsibility for it, plus often initiatives run into sand because of the sheer size of the structure (Prichard & Willmot 1997). Knight and Trowler (2000) cite Fullan (1991) p. 78;

"One of the basic reasons why planning fails is that the planners of change are unaware of the situations that potential implementers are facing. They introduce change without providing a means to identify and confront the situational constraints and without attempting to understand the values, ideas and experiences of those who are essential for implementing any changes."

This quote flags the issue of poor communication, which the literature agrees is both the principal problem and, by resolving it, a possible solution. Bathmaker (1999) commented on the need to have an insight into the changing psychological contract between lecturers and management, concluding that there is a gap in understanding in the interpretation. Good management needs to take account of the need to reciprocate and obtain fit between the perceptions of the work agenda. Academics report a lack of consultation of change, with change just appearing in their lives (Martin 1999; Dowd 2005). Silver (2005) found that the constant flux of change is a permanent feature of academic life. The Adams (2000) study concurs that poor communication is key, with academics complaining of a lack of access to decision-making information and communication barriers. Academics perceive that these barriers, combined with time restraints, compel them to opt out of the decision making process and consequently to lose power. The increase in work commitments resulting from change may ensure that tenured academics do not have the time to engage in embedding change, or practice self-reflectivity on an on-going basis to encourage change acceptance (Trowler, Fanghorel & Wareham 2005). These authors further conclude that deep reflectivity is often only a result of crisis such as student under–recruitment. These time pressures are such that academics are choosing to

withdraw from administration to concentrate on the research element that brings promotion, so they avoid a commitment to governance Dearlove (2002).

Another problem in implementing change is that the very nature of academic work makes it hard to control by management, as academics need unscheduled time to be creative; much of their output depends on serendipity and self-motivation (Dearlove 2002). Additionally, academics do not necessarily want to please their management because they gain status from their relationships with their students and other academics inside and outside their organisation (Prichard and Willmott 1997 cite Parker and Jary 1995).

Many writers adopt a binary model of all academics versus all management but neither is a homogenous group. The manageristic model sees academics as passive victims of change rather than contributors, albeit in ways unforeseen and perhaps unwanted by managers, but many of the implementation costs of change fall on the academics. Management must consider the potential of academics to subvert change (Trowler 1998 cites Beckhard & Pritchard 1992; Martin 1999). In addition, reaction to change is dependent on discipline taught, as the discipline equals categories of knowledge which impact on the logic, identity and very rationality of the academic (Staniforth & Harland 1999; Trowler 1998 citing Clark 1987).

As mentioned previously, the rewards system is often not incorporated into encouraging academics to adopt and advance new institutional goals. Efforts to move the university to entrepreneurial models are problematic unless leaders understand the skills, passions and outlooks of academics and how their core work performance is influenced by the reward systems (McInnis 2001, McWillaim, Hatcher & Meadmore 1999 citing Ramsden 1998). Berstein (1996) and McInnis (2001) also reflect that change in the university environment is seldom accompanied by changes in the reward system and that work is needed to establish the type of incentives required to get academics to engage constructively in formal quality management systems. Deem et al (2000) agrees, citing the Bett Report (1999) with the fact that carrots work better than sticks at motivating academics but there

are few carrots available today; further Bobcock and Watson (1994) also agree that academic rewards must be linked to the required change.

Varghese (2004) wrote on the power of incentives to motivate change with reference to system strength depending on perceptions regarding the distribution of the arising benefits. The dominant group, normally the professoriate, need to be convinced of personal benefit to change and the design of the incentive must reflect this need and this author concludes that change by compulsion without incentives will result in poor acceptance and compromised success.

2.6.5 How to Implement Change in a University

Implementation of change is much harder than strategic development. It is difficult to get from management speeches to real action (Prichard and Willmott 1997). In fact many believe that the only way of embedding change in a university is persuasion, a longer term and irrational strategy (Deem et al. 2000). The effective university is one that can manage change by studying techniques from other businesses as a university is not intrinsically different from other organisations. Change can be made by inspiring academics to work both independently and collaboratively by effective leadership. The initial pathway to an entrepreneurial university promoted by Clark (1998) was a strengthened steering core embracing both SM and academic departments. Problems can arise due to 'infidels' who obstruct by failing to accept personal responsibility for the standard of their work and a system that protects them from censure. Bobcock and Watson (1994) suggest that there are always two conflicting viewpoints that must be brought together to effect change as management tend to concentrate on context and an undesirable present position, whereas the academics concentrate on the personal and professional consequences of change.

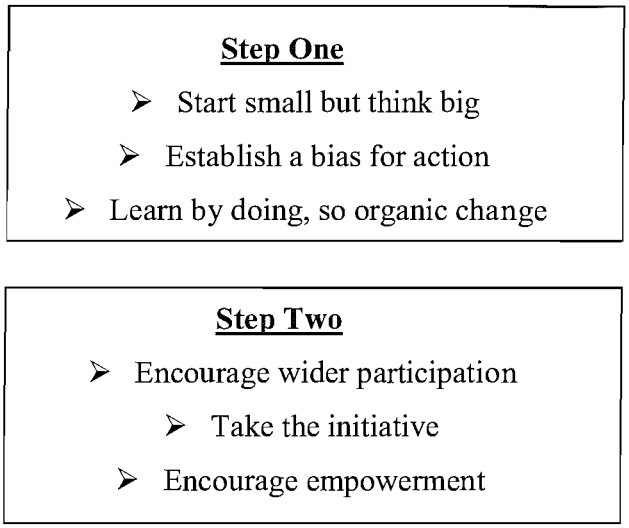
Richie and Thompson citing Tichy (1983) and Dowd (2005) agree that to achieve successful cultural change an organisation has to invest in educating people to inculcate them in the new culture. All people need to be in the communication system, not just a

select few. It is indeed possible to gain support for changes if they are perceived to reduce pressure on the ordinary academic (Pritchard & Willmott 1997). Bobcock and Watson (1994) agree that the answer is in improved communications, teamwork and again staff development. Nixon (1996) also promotes the need for staff development and that academics need to have a sense of the overall strategic direction of the institution and closer consultation on its development in order to freely co-operate. Change needs to be 'joined-up' as otherwise no-one can foresee all the unintended consequences of piecemeal policies (Trowler et al. 2005).

Too often there is an implementation gap between policy objectives and outcomes. This can be due to organisational size/structure or a changing external context. There are management techniques that can be utilized to reduce the gap. First, to recognize if the objectives themselves change over time and understand the relative priority of this innovation compared to others. Does this policy demonstrate symbolic or real expectations of change and has management communicated a clear cause or reason for it (Trowler 1998 cites Cerych & Sabatier 1986). Dowd (2005) reporting on the Embedding Excellence in HE Report, published by Sheffield Hallam University's Centre for Integral Excellence, recommends that it is critical to involve all staff as early as possible and promote flexibility and patience. Further, that it is crucial to get the balance right between short and long term goals.

2.6.6 Change Implementation Theory in HE

There are three relevant theories available to implement change in the HE context that are worthy of examination. The first is the Two Step Sequential Model by Fullan (1991) (Fig 5, p 50) which is developed from the Model of Bottom-Up Change by Beer, Eisenstat & Spector (1990) (Fig 2, p 38) in the previous section. Fullen's work is both organic and incorporates elements of the Own Seer Model (Hammel 2000) (Fig 3, p 39).

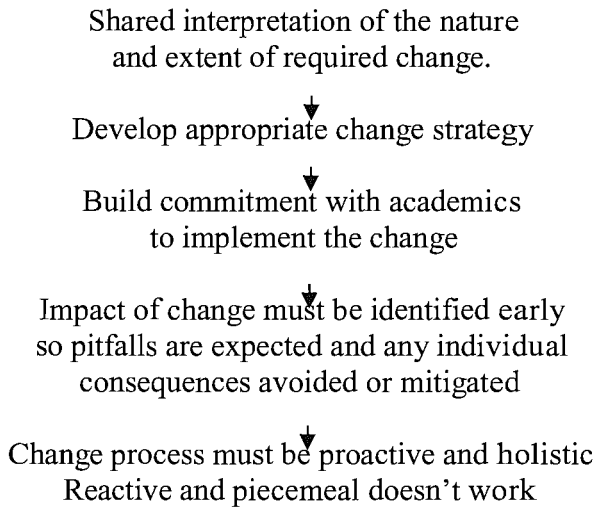


Fullan (1991) Two Step Sequential Model

Figure 5

It acknowledges that though change needs impetus, widespread involvement in the initiation stage often does not work as momentum is better created by a small group. Both pressure and support is necessary for change as there are many counter forces supporting the status quo and not everyone will eventually change to the new policy. People need to change their behaviour first and then change their belief. Successful implementation consists of continual development of the initial ideas, as progress must be measured in steps, though changing the overall culture is the real agenda, not implementing single innovations. Unfortunately, as Fullan admits, step two can also be imperative at the beginning of the change process but in reality is often not activated till later in the operation.

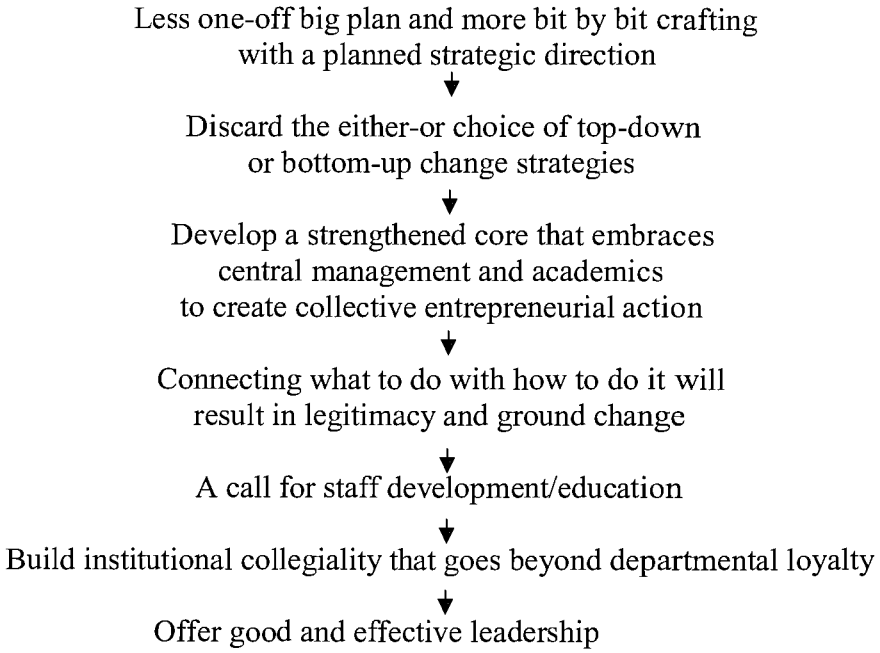
A second study by Bobcock and Watson (1994) recommends managing change by implementing the below top-down model, which shares some elements from Kotter's Model of Top-down Change (1996) from the previous section, but enjoys an element of collective action.



Bobcock and Watson (1994)
Figure 6

Again the concepts of communication, education and holistic intent are recognized and the challenge is building academic commitment. The authors recommend implementing this goal by giving the academics sufficient freedom to enable them to form their own operational response to change within an overall framework. Academic involvement in change will deliver the following benefits; ownership of problem; enjoyable intellectual challenge, working together as a team and the opportunity to have their concerns directly addressed. Transition has to be actively managed, as it won't happen on its own. Any change impacts on resources and these may need to be diverted from other activities, especially academic time allowance (Bobcock and Watson 1994).

Further academic development of HE change theory results in the later third theory by Dearlove (2002) below.



Dearlove (2002)
Figure 7

There are several points in common with the Bobcock and Watson (1994) and Dearlove (2002) models. The action is perceived to be collective; that it is a strategic chipping away at established culture, combined with strong leadership and ongoing communication programs.

Finally, Adams (2000) concluded that to implement academic change one needs to use one of four strategies. You can educate them to accept the change, appeal to their sense of rationality, develop a program of long term persuasion or literally wear the academic down. Without change consultation though the academic will feel no sense of commitment to the new policy so deep change is not achieved.

These theories will be developed into a theoretical framework for this paper in section seven.

2.6.7 Managerial Perspectives

This study will further obtain the management perspective to both academic change reaction and existing change strategies at SU. Newton (2003) cites Welch (1995) commenting that university managers face the challenge of implementing change and establishing accountability systems amongst lethargic and resistant academics. There are previous qualitative studies of the managerial perspective of staff reaction to change, some with markedly low respondent numbers. Benmore (2001) found very varied levels of understanding of academic concerns as managers become increasingly distant, though judged the overall level of understanding to be low. Benmore's management were aware of heavy academic workloads, but believed that the effort-reward bargain at their institution was good in spite of instances of staff working-to-rule. This study concluded on a low sample of three managers that damage existed to the psychological contract between academics and management

The Bathmaker (1999) study also included management reaction to the change process. Lecturers commented that management does not understand that a university is bottom driven and perceived a divide between them and us. Academics complained about a lack of contact with management though some admitted that this had a positive side as well and many believed that academic feedback is ignored and core academic work is unappreciated. The senior managers in turn complained about feelings of powerlessness in the face of external change and agreed that some basic ethical beliefs in fairness and equity have eroded. They also agreed with previous research that there are few incentives to motivate change and that the essential communication process necessary to move an organisation forward is often missing.

Prichard & Willmot (1997) undertook a study of management perspectives. Respondents here noted academic work pressures and commented on instances of academic

withdrawal from committee work, poorer teaching and maladministration by academics. They also reported response of frenetic activity, sullen behaviour or taking refuge in displacement activities by their staff. Unfortunately the management response to academic complaints of competing demands can be further withdrawal of decision making-power, assuming that academics don't have time to contribute anyway. Management also commented that academics are not in a strong position to resist new work demands as they are poorly prepared to defend themselves against widely held public perceptions that they are unproductive and therefore lack public support. Academics often lack the experience of outside employability and this can render them vulnerable to passive acquiescence rather than organize resistance. With resistance ruled out, academics can then resort to a variety of local tactics to evade and subvert, as well as accommodate and appease new demands.

Many of these criticisms of managerialism were also supported by the Deem et al (2000) research, which enjoyed a substantial respondent base of 135 manager-academics at 16 UK universities. This study found some sharp contrasts in narratives supplied by senior managers and other staff who defined their managers as remote and unaccountable, with added emphasis on communication deficiencies and absence of clear policies in change implementation. Managers reported that their change agent ability was hampered by their only tool being persuasion rather than monetary reward.

These studies have some common results regardless of size. Management is perceived to be unaware of academic concerns and tends to respond to pressure by reducing opportunities for academics to contribute to changes process. All studies highlighted communication issues, a need for clear change policy and exhibited an overall negative view by managers of academic contribution to the institution. The academic seems to be perceived as a potential enemy of management rather than a colleague, which does not bode well for the future.

2.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Designing a theoretical framework for this research needs to be in tandem with defining the research questions which follow. The first two sub-questions aim to establish current academic experience, expectations and reaction, but these are not the crux of this paper. Cataloguing such reactions and comparing them to change theories such as Trowler (1998) proposes was the main objective of the Benmore (2001) and Baron (2000) studies.

This research intends to carry such previous research forward and study the actual process of change at SU, to isolate any current use, whether intended or accidental, of organisational change theory. After exploring current process from both academic and management perspectives and comparison to the theoretical framework, the study will then recommend either the continuation of current practice or the introduction of new theory to better embed change.

Although the Literature Review presents a substantial discussion on individual methodologies to promote change acceptance, this paper is exploring group techniques. Research has established that deep change must be of the second order to embed (Parker 2001, citing Laughlin 1991). The preferred method is evolutionary/organic or bottom–up change (Beer, Eisenstat and Spector 1990) but the norm is colonisation by enforcing top-down change (Kotter 1996, Beckhard and Pritchard 1992) which is deemed to be time efficient. So as an organisation does SU fall into either camp and why?
How efficient are the change processes in use?

Developing change theory further, the Literature Review presented three change theories applicable to the HE context (Fullan 1991, Bobcock & Watson 1994 and Dearlove 2002). Although each model demonstrates some variance, they all reject an either-or choice of traditional top-down or bottom-up strategies for successful change implementation. They propose collective action and share the concepts of communication, education and holistic intent.

Building on both the common elements of these models and key themes from the Literature Review, this study has developed a new theoretical framework (see p.56) to be applied to SU current change practice. As recommended by the literature it is neither top-down nor bottom up but a collaborative partnership to ensure deep change; combining the management effectiveness of one, with the organic development strengths of the other. The final purpose of this research is to apply results obtained to this model to compare SU's current practice to best theoretical practice and then develop recommendations for change. The precise sources of each element of this new model are charted below. Note that many themes are common to multiple original model and literature sources.

HE Change Implementation Model Element	**Original Source for Concept**
Pathway One Leadership	Dearlove (2002) Beckhard & Pritchard (1992)
Pathway Two Think big and act small	Dearlove (2002) Bobcock & Watson (1994) Fullan (1991)
Pathway Three Inclusion of all stakeholders in change policy.	Dearlove (2002) Bobcock & Watson (1994) Fullan (1991)
Pathway Four Best practice communication system.	Dearlove (2002) Bobcock & Watson (1994)
Pathway Five Proactively address change impact issues on staff	Dearlove (2002) Bobcock & Watson (1994) Beckhard & Pritchard (1992)
Methodology Through small group policy initiatives to wider involvement.	Dearlove (2002) Fullan (1991)

Sources of Model Elements (Caswell 2006)

Table 1

The resulting new model created from Table 1 by the author is entitled The Higher Education Implementation Model (Caswell 2006) and is designed around five pathways to deep change .

Five Pathways to Deep Change

1. Leadership

Clear corporate, rather than school level, vision and leadership

+

2. Think big, act small

Shared, holistic, long-term strategic direction achieved in logical single steps

+

3. Inclusion of all stakeholders in change policy

Open consultation between top and bottom to build academic ownership of change

+

4. Best practice communication systems

Reasoned inclusive communication for change

+

5. Proactively address change impact issues on staff

Invest in staff development and education in the new culture

Realise that impact of change is as important as implementation of change

Rework reward system to acknowledge successful change implementation

Methodology

Through small group policy initiations to wider involvement

Results

1. Accelerating the embedding of cultural change to the corporate body
2. Encouraging positive academic acceptance of workplace change

Higher Education Change Implementation Model

Caswell (2006)

Figure 8

2.8 RESEARCH PRIMARY QUESTION

What is the relationship, if any, between organisational change theories and the perceptions and reactions of academics and senior management at SU University to changes in the working environment?

2.9 RESEARCH SUB-QUESTIONS

1. What are the current change status quo and the drivers for change in the working environment at the university?

2. How do academics experience and react to change in their working environment?

3. Can organisational change theory be applied to academic change experiences?

4. What level of knowledge is exhibited by senior management about staff experience of change?

5. What are the management perspectives in implementing existing change process and are these applicable to organisational change theory?

6. Can the Higher Education Change Implementation Model (Caswell 2006) be successfully applied to current university change practice?

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This phenomenological study used a qualitative methodology and an action research design, within the case study format. This methodology is designed to meet the aim of exploring a single institution in depth. This reflective chapter considers the importance of sampling which was a key criterion for this research, due to the possible impacts from certain demographic factors as evidenced by the literature review. The techniques for manual collection, coding and analysis are discussed with support on the need to clearly hear the participants' voices, the steps taken to ensure overall credibility. The chapter closes with an acknowledgment of both the research limitations created by a case study and further reflection on the implicit ethical issues and how they were resolved.

3.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

This chapter conforms to the three step research design process recommended by Creswell (2003); the philosophical discussion, followed by the research strategy definition, which further develops into the specific method chosen to obtain the data. Creswell further recommends that the knowledge claim position of change oriented studies must be of an advocacy/participatory nature, where the subjects are given voice.

This interpretive study intends to explore both the actuality of a workplace situation and discover the deeper realities behind the issues found. The author acknowledges a shared workplace and shared realities with participants. When reality is to be studied as a social construct the literature supports a phenomenological philosophy (Easterby–Smith, Thorpe & Lowe 1991 and Remenyi, Williams, Money and Swartz 1998 as cited in Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2000). Creswell (2003) agrees with a phenomenological approach as this study intends to identify human experiences and concerns where participants will describe a phenomenon. Further Saunders et al (2000) cite Schein (1992) who proposed that organisational culture works at three levels and that only a phenomenological philosophy can reach the third level, the reality behind the reality. Saunders et al. (2000) recommend that a phenomenological approach is uniquely suited to management research, where knowledge is complex and unique and especially appropriate to studies of organisational behaviour.

Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe (1991) have developed the phenomenological paradigm into the following research process (Table 2 p. 61), which this study executes. This model supports the practice of reflectivity as the interviewer is acknowledged as part of the due process. Creswell (2003) agrees that an inductive approach is right for new topics and that the use of open ended interviewing also helps the phenomenological identity.

Phenomenological Paradigm

Basic Beliefs	World is socially constructed and subjective
	Observer is part of what is observed
Researcher should	Focus on meaning
	Focus on understanding
	Look at holistic view
	Use an inductive methodology
Preferred methods	Small samples investigated in depth

Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe (1991)

Table 2

3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As recommended by the Easterby-Smith, Thorp & Lowe (1991) this study utilised a qualitative inductive methodology. Traditionally business topics have shown a quantitative research bias but many practitioners now believe that qualitative designs are also suitable (Gummesson 1991). Further support from Daymon and Hollaway (2002 p. 5) states that; *"qualitative research conceptualises reality from a point of view of those involved in it."* which is the intent of this methodology.

The majority of previous studies reviewed within this area employed a qualitative approach. This methodology was employed by Finley (2004), Henkel (2000), Hannan and Silver (2000), Hellewell and Hancock (2001), Deem et al. (2000), Pritchard and Willmott (1997) and Dowd (2005). Bathmaker (1999) in particular recommended qualitative methodology to obtain insights into an interpretative understanding of human activities. This SU study is cross-sectional with ideographic characteristics intended to uncover multiple subjective realities, all to be analysed to obtain an overall direction and this need also strengthens the case for qualitative methodology. Benmore (1999), Shelley (2005) and Trowler (1997) in particular, all key originating paper for this study used an identical methodology.

Although this study is primarily intended as an inductive exercise, a theoretical model, HE Change Implementation (Caswell 2006) (Fig 8, p 57), is developed from the Literature Review and previous change models, and then reviewed against results found. Creswell (2003) agrees that qualitative work can include theory as an up-front explanation or an advocacy lens and this study utilises both approaches. Creswell (2003) further recommends that a theoretical framework can give qualitative work a clear structure and such an approach is particularly suited to studies with a cultural theme, such as this one. The proposed model is then adjusted in line with respondents' views, therefore the aim is not scientific testing but theoretical modification through a qualitative methodology.

Additionally this paper takes advice from Creswell (2003) who recommends that due to its qualitative nature, the intent of the study should be termed research main and sub questions rather than using the objective term.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.4.1 Case Study

The categorising of this research as a descriptive, cross-sectional study to define human reactions and perceptions within the context of a single institution (SU) is supported by the work of both Gummesson (1991) and Saunders et al. (2000). The design is therefore a case study, as required by the aim of this thesis, examined through action research.

Saunders et al. (2000) cite Robson's (1993) definition of a case study as the development of detailed intense knowledge about a single case and that this strategy has considerable ability to answer 'why' questions. Eisenhardt (2002) praises the ability of a case study to focus on understanding environmental dynamics and believes that theory built or confirmed from case study work is likely to be novel though often narrow due to its nature. Gummesson (1991) and Easterby-Smith et al. (1991) propose that case study is a holistic view of a process and Stake (1995) agrees that case study generates academic interest from the combined elements of both uniqueness and commonality.

This link between the use of case study and the development of theory is worthy of further discussion. Gummesson (1991) cites Kjellen and Soderman (1980) as considering that case research can both generate theory and initiate change because of the depth of knowledge obtained from within the case; while Kotnour (2001) agrees that case study is the preferred design answering these research goals of helping an organisation transform itself and expand the body of knowledge. Kotnour further cites Cunningham's (1993) three part procedure which is applicable to this study. First, there is the need to understand management practice, then to provide the theory to the management and finally, to use the results to improve both management practice and the theory, all of which are mirror the research questions.

Further support for the use of case study is found in Gummesson (1991), which notes that doctoral theses dealing with marketing, business strategy and organisations, similar to this work, are increasingly based world-wide on case study design.

The Watson and Crossley research (2001) both used and recommended the case study approach and also cited Stake (1994) that case study provides a key opportunity to learn about one's own institution. Ainley and Bailey (1997) agreed that case studies are also a way to generate the increasingly acknowledged necessity for educational institutions to research their own problems and practices. The studies by Trowler (1997), Finley (2004), Benmore (1999), Bathmaker (1999) and Hellawell and Hancock (2001) were all comparable case studies situated in a single new UK university comparable to SU.

A short discussion on the limitations of this method is included in section 3.6.6.

3.4.2 Action Research

The choice of action research as the main research strategy is supported by theory, modern business use and previous change studies. Although many practitioners believe it to be a modern approach, action research was first used in 1946 by Levin. Literature supports both the use of action research within a case study and the special suitability of action research within business studies as it is context bound and addresses real world issues in real time (Gummesson 1991 and Leven & Greenwood 2001). Eden & Huxham (1996) concluded that action research, when well done, is always useful to the client and empowers the participants. It is judged to be especially suited to this study as Kotnour (2001) cites Yin (1989) that action research is useful when the focus is a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context.

Saunders et al. (2000) ascribe three common themes to define action research from other forms of applied research. The first is an emphasis on the study purpose: the management of change. They cite Merick and Watkin (1997) as believing that the

unique strength of action research is its focus on promoting change in an organisation. Kotnour (2001) also promotes the suitability of action research for change purposes provided a theoretically sound, valid framework is developed which reflects the organisations' specific environment, goals, objectives and concerns. This framework can be provided by the author's own model, The Higher Education Change Implementation Model (2006).

The second theme to action research is the active involvement of the practitioners in the co-generating of knowledge; they are not passive objects but active agents, not done to but done with (Leven & Greenwood 2001). Kotnour (2001) cites French and Bell (1999) that the ideal workplace research is indeed collaboration and Saunders et al. (2001) cite Eden and Huxham (1996) that the findings of action search result from the involvement with members of an organisation over a matter of great importance to them.

Action research has ethnographic overtones as the researcher is part of the organisation within which the research is taking place. There is an element of self discovery here as co-operative enquiry means working with people who share the researcher's concerns and interests, in order to understand a common world and activate change (Heron and Reason 2001). The study thus also provides the author with an opportunity to reflect on and compare her own change reactions and reflect on change consequences and where in the change process she finds herself; such reflection also acting as to strengthen validity.

Leven & Greenwood (2001 p 104) add that,
"Action research is a knowledge construction process that involves both researchers and local stakeholders in the same learning process.

Thirdly action research should have implications beyond the immediate project, a larger transfer of knowledge should be intended and part of the aim of this study is to inform SU management. Leven & Greenwood (2001) acknowledge action research as

a knowledge generator, although Heron and Reason (2001) concluded that results should be practical as well as theoretical, as the overall aim must remain assisting people to address issues that are important to them; again a key goal of this paper.

Kotnour (2001) further established a guide to competent action research practice. The primary concern is the ability of the researcher to understand due process and the body of knowledge domain; and then to be able to demonstrate some level of control in the field but not necessarily control over events, an outcome assisted by the reflective practices of the author and the mechanisms such as piloting and question checking used to strengthen result credibility. As a qualitative technique, action research delves into the 'how' and 'why' questions demanded by this study.

3.5 SAMPLING

3.5.1 Introduction

This study has a dual respondent base consisting of academics and senior managers from SU. With case studies the selection of the suitable interviewees to answer the research questions is imperative. The literature review demonstrated the importance of personal, professional and discipline demographics and the need to choose a sample base large enough to promote validity, yet manageable enough to remain controlled. Each of these points requires discussion.

3.5.2 Selecting the Overall Number in the Sample Base

To determine the number of participants required, antecedent studies in the field were reviewed though some studies such as Finlay (2004) with just seven respondents were discarded as insufficient. Benmore's work (2001) serves as a precedent as an ethnographic study in a University College, which gained an insight into how nineteen academics experience their contemporary academic employment relationship. Watson and Crossley (2001) and Bathmaker (1999) also used twenty lecturers. In comparison Hellawell and Hancock (2001), Adams (2000) and Baron (2000) used even fewer, with studies of fourteen to fifteen tutors, and Nixon (1996) used thirty academics. It was therefore resolved to follow the middle ground and base the study on seventeen lecturers, which proven both manageable but generous and resulted in substantial valid data.

The sample base for senior managers was constrained by actual available numbers as only twelve existed. Benmore (2001) interviewed only three managers, which this author judged would not allow a wide enough spectrum of job responsibility within this case study. A sample base closer to the Watson and Crossley (2001) and the Bathmaker (1999) studies with ten senior managers each could have been valuable to obtain a wider range of opinion, although obtaining larger numbers is not a condition

of qualitative research. Based on these previous studies the author concluded that the six senior managers available and willing would suffice and again this number generated considerable data and met the study objectives.

3.5.3 The Importance of Personal Demographics

The majority of previous studies have established that the demographics of the sample can be directly related to responses obtained. As this study was qualitative rather than quantitative, demographics were collected not for purposes of measurement but to ensure a wider participant base, though some interesting and applicable trends were reported. Winter, Taylor and Sarros (2000) cite Copur (1990), Currie (1996) and Wolverton (1999) as establishing that academic demographics define differences in levels of work stress, morale and motivation, all factors applicable to this study.

Winter et al. (2000) used the three personal demographics of age, gender and marital status. Henkel (2000) agreed that age is an important issue in academic management as older academics differ in their career building strategies and management of professional demands. They can be retirement focused and often judge today's work environment to a 'golden age' in academia, though Oshagbemi (1996) reported contrary results on the impact of age on the job satisfaction levels of lecturers and found that older lecturers enjoyed higher job satisfaction. Bathmaker (1999) recommends balancing both age and gender, though of course senior managers will, by social norm, be older and male. Oshagbemi (1996) also reported that women are happier with their jobs then men and to this Trowler (1998) citing Clark (1987) adds that the originating social class of academics is an important influence on cultural flow, the acceptance of beliefs.

The only hard number provided by SU to assist selection was that female lecturers represent 43% of the academic total, so 41% of participations were women.

Academics interviewed were aged 28 to 56, with seven under 40 years and ten over 40 years. Senior management ranged in age from 45 to 61 and all six were all male.

Another demographic of interest is cultural origin. This was not reflected in any previous study yet marketing theory promotes the importance of personal cultural background to change acceptance. Keegan (1989) and de Mooij (1998) believe that ethnic background colors the perception of a message due to whether the respondent has been raised in a high or low context culture. In addition the perception and reaction to conflict and the importance and procedures attached to decision making also are strongly influenced by cultural background. De Mooji (1998) continues that personal cultural beliefs also impact on the concept of time as some cultures follow long-term rather than short-term thinking processes and also have different interpretations and reactions to cause and effect. De Mooji (1998) cites Hofstede's Five Dimensions of Culture that change reactions are also related to whether the society prefers individual or collective decision making, whether they accept or avoid uncertainty and power distance, which measures the acceptance or rejection of authority. To all these points there was also the question of the impact of British residency on academics of differing cultures.

The majority of the SU staff population base is of white British origin so this ethnic origin provided fifteen out of the seventeen academic participates. Of the remaining academics one was from a white European background and the other of Eastern African origin. As the literature evidenced the importance of cultural background, this information was collected from each respondent. All SM participants were of white British origin.

3.5.4 The Importance of Professional and Discipline Demographics

Previous literature found a relationship between respondents' professional and discipline demographics and change acceptance ability. In addition the academics' position within the organisation is important and with reference to both Osahbemi's

findings (1996) that job satisfaction increases through the lecturer ranks and to aid clarity, academic respondents were restricted to a mix of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Principal Lecturer and Programme Leader positions. Middle ranking senior academics were not interviewed as potentially they may not perceive themselves to belong to either intended respondent group.

A related demographic was academic qualifications and university/higher education service history. SU is a post–1992 university and Henkel (2000) found that academics at ex-polytechnics are distinct from redbrick university academics, with different roles and culture, and often lower levels of academic qualification, combined with more professional experience.

The respondent mix chosen reflected the Henkel findings. Approximately 50% of the academic respondents held professional qualifications in addition to academic ones and fourteen of the seventeen had some industry work experience. The remaining three had further education or secondary teaching experience and no academic respondent had worked at a 'traditional' university.

The literature review has already connected staff work satisfaction to the differing roles of teaching, administration and personal research. This association may lead to differences, where more senior academics producing more personal research could exhibit higher job satisfaction. SU is a predominately vocational establishment resulting in few general academics having a formal research role though some do publish for personal satisfaction. The sample chosen reflected this SU teaching and administration emphasis. None of the academic base had a doctorate; ten held a master's degree and six only an undergraduate qualification. Two had no formal academic qualifications. Again this data was collected to ensure appropriate and wide respondent selection.

Winter et al. (2000) found that academic discipline is a key factor in academic response; that academic discipline is a tangible, social and epistemological construct

that is shaped by the School and not the University. Deem et al. (2000) agree citing Clark (1987), Becher (1989) and Huber (1990) as supporting the centrality of discipline to academic identity; whereas the Henkel (2000) study results disproved this assumption. Hellawell and Hancock (2001) used three of nine available disciplines and Nixon (1996) also used wide selection. In contrast Benmore (2001) and Baron (2000) studied only one faculty which this author believes may constitute a limitation. This study is in agreement with the use of as wide a spectrum of academics as possible. This requirement resulted in five out of the six possible Schools participating.

Professional demographic data was also recorded from the Senior Management. They were asked for their qualifications, work history both inside and outside of SU and HE. The senior managers exhibited the same work experiences patterns as the academics, three with mostly academic backgrounds and three with mostly professional backgrounds. None had worked for a traditional university. On the whole they held higher academic qualifications with two doctorates, three master's degrees and one undergraduate qualification.

Their job responsibility within the senior management ranks was also varied. Two were from the Vice Chancellors office, two were Head of Departments and the last two were Head of Schools.

3.5.5 Importance of Length of Employment and Union Membership.

In addition, it was important that respondents have sufficient experience of the SU environment so only academics with 3 or more years experience were asked to participate. This number was generated from the author's own experience that she did not feel knowledgeable about the university as a whole till this point in her employment. The literature also discussed the increase in part-time staffing and suggested a relationship between hours worked and general job satisfaction. In order

to eliminate this difference this study used only fractional point 8 to full-time academic staff. The SM were all on full-time contracts.

The last enquiry made was whether the respondent was a member of a teaching union. Both NATFHE and AUT have policies on change in universities and the author wished to know if these influenced the opinion of the individual member. The majority of academic respondents (eleven) belonged to NATFHE, though in SU as a whole the union represents approximately half the academics. None of the senior management team currently held union membership.

3.5.6 Final Sample Selected

Since the previous section discussing sample selection has multiple considerations, the author has reiterated all the demographics in the below chart to aid reader comprehension.

	Academics (%)	Senior Management (%)
Age		
Under 40	**41**	
Over 40	**59**	**100**
Gender		
Female	**41**	
Male	**59**	**100**
Ethnic Origin		
White / British	**88**	**100**
White / European	**6**	
Arab	**6**	
School		
Environment	**6**	*n/a*
Business / Finance / Law	**29**	*n/a*
Media	**24**	*n/a*
Management	**24**	*n/a*
Engineering and Computing	**18**	*n/a*
Union Membership		

Yes	**65**	
No	**35**	**100**
Highest Qualification		
None	**6**	
BA / BSc or equivalent	**35**	**17**
Masters	**59**	**50**
PhD	**0**	**33**
Professional Qualification Only	**6**	
Background		
Mostly professional	**12**	**50**
Mostly academic	**41**	**50**
Both	**47**	
Active in Governance		
No	**65**	*n/a*
At school level only	**12**	*n/a*
At school and university level	**24**	*n/a*

Final Sample Selected
Table 3

3.6 METHOD

3.6.1 In-depth Interviewing

The chosen research philosophy and strategy support the use of in-depth interviews to obtain data. The method was used in the Benmore (2001), Henkel (2000), Nixon (1996), Hellawell& Hancock (2001) and Baron (2000) studies. Bathmaker (1999) in particular, with similar objectives, used semi–structured interviews to enable dialogue to move beyond the mere exchange of information and promote a better understanding of the meanings that individuals attribute to their social world, through an examination of their belief and value systems.

3.5.2 Data Collection

Two sets of consecutive in-depth interviews took place. The first series was with the academics and this was followed by the second series with the senior managers. Previous research used convenience rather than purposeful sampling, so this study follows suit for the academics. Personal acquaintances within the six SU subject schools were contacted and asked to suggest other academics available during the fieldwork time-frame of summer 2004. This was done to reduce the likelihood of respondents who knew the interviewer and her research topic, adapting their answers to those they thought would suit the purpose. In addition in order to avoid bias, respondents with known extreme opinions were not selected. Selection among the senior managers was logically restricted to those in such a position. Twelve qualified to be included and six were chosen based on availability and willingness to participate, though ensuring that both extremes from OVC to Heads of Schools were represented.

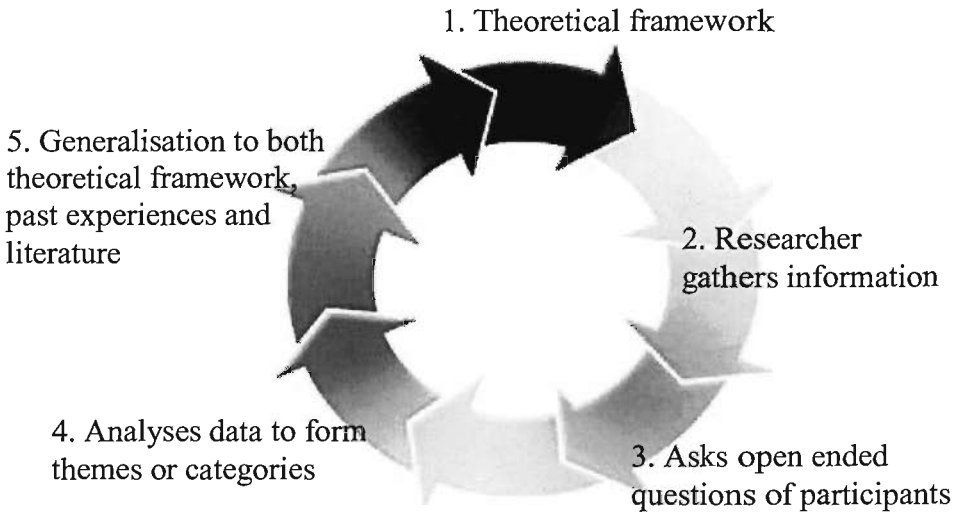
The interviews were held in either the author's or the respondent's private offices for approximately 45 minutes, which proven adequate to obtain full information. The interview was designed to both cover the necessary ground while allowing a degree of

flexibility. During each interview the respondent completed both an interview permission form and a second form with demographic and identity questions. Then the interview commenced with the interviewer making notes and the interview being taped for convenience with the interviewee's permission. The transcripts from the academic round were analysed manually and from the results the interview content for the second series of interviews with the managers was designed.

The author has thought that due to the personal nature and possible employment risks posed by the questions that game mechanisms would have to be used to reach that 'reality behind the realities.' Descriptive techniques such as asking the participant to select set adjectives to describe reactions were prepared but the pilot interviews from both groups proved them to be unnecessary. Both groups talked easily and openly on all questions, which the author assumes was encouraged by their guarantee of total anonymity. All participants appeared interested in the topic and keen to make their contribution.

3.6.3 Data Interpretation

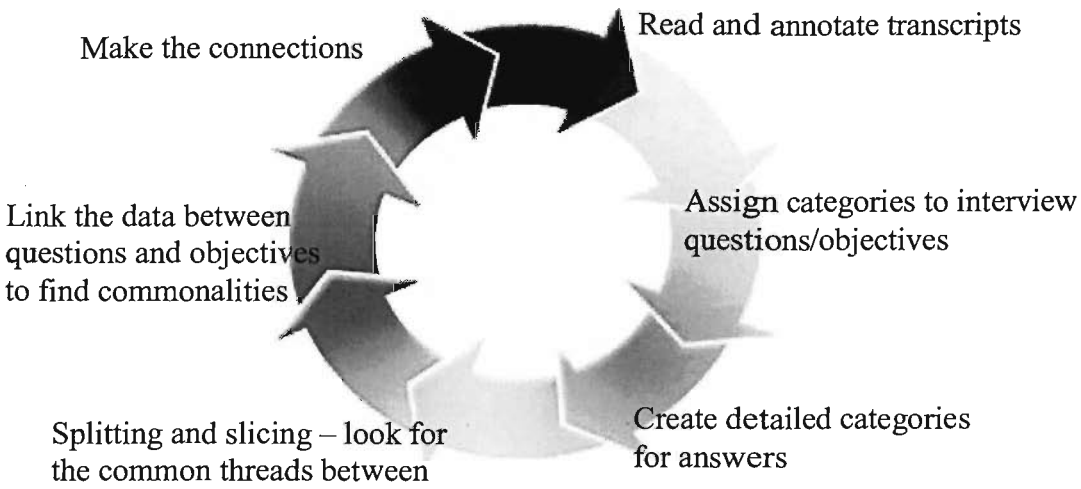
This study adopted the five steps of inductive logic of research in a qualitative study as promoted by Creswell (2003). The stages of this research cycle are clearly identified by the chapters of this thesis and this model provides further support for the methodology decisions made.



Creswell (2003)

Figure 9

Creswell's fourth step of analysing data to form themes and categories is developed further in the Method of Qualitative Data Analysis (Dey 1993), as seen below, which was then applied to this paper.



Method of Qualitative Data Analysis

Dey (1993)

Figure 10

The research soundness of creating, analysing then connecting categories of qualitative data is supported by the literature (Kotnour 2001, Saunders et al. 2000). The second authors believe that data categorisation not only has practical purposes of comprehension and management; but also allows the merging of data from different interviews to identify different key themes and patterns for further exploration. This process logically concludes with the developing or modifying of theory and the drawing of conclusions. Saunders et al. (200) and Dey (1993) further believe that this process of pattern matching and prediction assists validity. Further support for this process is made by Holland in Daymon and Hollaway (2000) whose three step process of reducing the data into patterns, interpretation and then developing the resulting insights was applied.

This system was applied here by first word processing all transcripts and then colour coding all responses both vertically and across the other interviews. Questions and answers were spliced apart and these colour codes were then used to establish data categories and the relevant connections and link responses back to the objectives.

3.6.4 Use of voices

The findings and analysis chapters have been structured around participants' quotes, allowing them tell their own stories. Daymon & Holloway (2002) and Lindlof (1995) recommend that the techniques used have to capture the reader and interest them in the story and this study has an interesting story to tell. Lindlof (1995 p. 243) continues with,

"Analysis is a matter of hearing the voices and deciding which voices should be included and how those voices are to be stitched together."

Dey (1993) also supports the use of respondents' voices, firstly as a management tool that allows corroboration of the evidence and reduces interviewer misunderstanding and secondly, because this is a human story and if the actors speak to the reader, their stories become more accessible. Further, all previous studies in this area have told the stories through the use of respondents' quotes, including the Trowler (1998) and Shelley (2005) research, previously identified as key evidence.

Selection of the actual quotes to use was based on two aims; firstly that the main reaction to a question would be evidenced by the majority of quotes and secondly that the voices of the minority would also be clearly represented but by a minority of quotes.

3.6.5 Credibility

The issues of credibility and resulting generalisability of qualitative research are much discussed in the literature with some authors such as Daymon and Holloway (2002) questioning whether the concepts of reliability and validity are even appropriate to qualitative work. In contrast Eden and Huxham (1996) believe that an action research strategy is always a one-off so reliability could be weak. Certainly mechanisms must be found to strengthen the credibility of this study within the admitted confines of the single university setting. The topic of generalising ability from single case studies is an important one, which will be explored further in the limitations segment which follows.

Saunders et al. (2000) cites Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, Lowe (1991) as defining qualitative reliability as if similar observations would be made by different researchers on different occasions. Daymon and Holloway (2002) disagree proposing that qualitative studies cannot be replicated. Of course, until this study itself is replicated, it is a difficult question to answer but positive steps were taken to minimise potential threats. Subject error and bias were defused by piloting work with both respondent groups to provide an interview instrument and structure that would assist in a clean interpretation of findings and the author used reflective practices throughout.

These steps were further supported by Maxwell (2002) who recommends that for qualitative research to be valid it must demonstrate three levels of validity. It must be factually accurate and prove interpretive validity; that the researcher understands what observed behaviours, beliefs and values actually mean and thirdly, that an evaluation framework has been applied to the objects of the study to ensure evaluative validity. In measuring this study against these requirements value is found due to the position of the interviewer as a fellow academic and employee of the institution under study. The interviewer was in the position of knowing and applying the facts and fully

understood the comments given and behaviour exhibited. The questionnaire itself was a proven framework. Daymon and Holloway (2002) propose that some measure

of reliability results from keeping an 'audit trail', a record of data, methods and decisions made during the project and this advice was implemented.

A few validity threats were found but countered or acknowledged. There was a history element (Saunders et al. 2001) in that some interviews were in Schools where possible redundancy may colour response. In addition there was unresolved ambiguity exhibited about causal direction. Does the change management process or lack of same, engineer poor academic reaction, or vice-versa? Certainly a key requirement was to ensure that the appropriate respondents were found.

Though Kotnour (2001) proposes the use of action research itself addresses many validity issues, Heron and Reason (2001) make recommendations to promote action research validity further, all of which were applied to this study. The author employed their techniques of empathy, openness to possible meaning, emotional competence and practised self-reflection throughout. If meaning was in doubt questions were often rephrased or an approach found to illicit the answer in a more sympathetic manner. Heron and Reason (2001) also promote such reflection as a natural progression from action research. Leven & Greenwood (2001) continue that the credibility/validity of action research knowledge is measured by whether actions that arise solve workplace problems and increase participants control over their own situation; and the intended aims of this study fulfilled this requirement.

3.6.6. Limitations

Limitations arising from this research design have been acknowledged throughout this chapter and are further discussed in chapter seven as they inadvertently create concepts for future research recommendations. The author acknowledges that the aim of this study was to examine a process and make recommendations within a single

institution (case study) and that the snapshot method used captured the situation within a short time frame only. However these sharply defined barriers have reduced

the research challenge into a limited format suited for the shorter word count required by a Doctorate in Education.

The major limitation is the question of the legitimacy of any attempt to generalise from a single case study format, which is by its nature inconsistent with the requirements of statistical sampling (Schofield in Gomm, Hammersley and Foster 2000). Academics are divided on this issue. Stake (1995) suggests that case studies such as this one can lead to small generalisations or the modifying of established ones but not creating grand generalisations. He further referred to this process in Gomm, Hammersley and Foster (2000) as the creation of 'naturalised' generalisations defined as the ability to recognise the similarities of objects and issues, in and out of context and that such limited generalisability is especially suited to an educational setting. Schofield in Gomm, Hammersley and Foster (200) states that generalizability is not a qualitative goal so unnecessary and this belief is shared by Daymon and Holloway (2002). These same authors propose that should generalisability from a case study be required, that theory formed from the findings and literature review can be applied. This would allow a degree of generalisability claims for the author's HE Change Implementation Model. The author thought intended to assist her own institution only so no wider generalisability claims are made.

The author's own participation in her own institution could also be considered a limitation should she inadvertently project her own opinions and reactions onto the data (Schofield in Gomm, Hammersley and Foster 2000). The author actively countered this danger by regularly reflecting on the impact of her involvement and utilising the techniques previously discussed to ensure both the validity of her instrument and interview technique.

The nature of a case study also presents other problems. Firstly as a contemporary method it represents a moving target so findings can quickly become dated and participation boundaries can be difficult to define. Case studies are also naturally descriptive but their value can be strengthened by proven connections and contrasts to previous work as practised throughout this paper.

In addition since no purposeful sampling was undertaken the final tally of participants exhibited a higher percent of union membership than the institution as a whole and this could have biased the findings. In the event these unionised participants did not follow union doctrine in their responses.

3.7 RESEARCH ETHICS

It was judged unnecessary by SU for this research to be formally approved by the University Ethics Committee since it was based totally within the university and involved only non-vulnerable adults, who all freely consented to be interviewed.

There are however ethical issues that need to be considered both in the research design and communication to the respondents. Firstly, one cannot assume access; it was the individual's right to choose whether or not to participate and all were told they could withdraw at any point. Consent must be informed and confidentiality guaranteed, otherwise respondents may have perceived risks in discussing job-related issues. It was the respondents' right to be told exactly what the purpose of the research was and the ownership and dispersal of the data. Since time is an issue in academia, the interview process aimed to be time efficient and prospective respondents clearly advised as to the time required to participate. All of these reflections were implemented.

Following these guidelines, respondents were told that the interview was to discuss the work environment in the modern university and all expressed a keen interest to participate. Since the discussion may result in negative comments being recorded, all

respondents were promised full anonymity so as not to prejudice their answers. The author believes that this guarantee was instrumental in the frank responses obtained. They were further told that the purpose of the study was a Doctorate in Education thesis, which could be published and would also be available to interested parties through the university libraries of both SU and the institution where the author studies; also that the management of SU University could be reviewing the finished paper. Also, each respondent was guaranteed the opportunity to individually review the transcript of their interview prior to analysis and to negotiate final transcript content. This member checking not only reassured the participant but also assisted in strengthening the overall validity. In reality all participants read their transcripts but only two asked for minor changes. All respondents were also informed that they had the right to retire from the project at any time and that there was no access by any other member of the academic community to any raw data. All this information was handed to each respondent to read and all clearly signed acceptance of the agreement.

CHAPTER FOUR

ACADEMIC FINDINGS

Opening thought

"I think they (we) have become very reactive to change because we are in a process where we are not encouraged to think ... We are encouraged to do stuff. And so we are not encouraged to think in the long term because that is the job of people who produce strategy and policies." A1

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to explore any relationship between organisational change theory and the perceptions and reactions of academics and senior management at SU to changes in the working environment. The first respondents were 17 academics from mixed Schools within the university and the first three sub-questions were applicable to this respondent group. To ensure anonymity each respondent was assigned a code which is used to identify their quotes.

Some of the demographics were found to be central to responses and require reiteration. Four participates had or were facing potential redundancy and one has recently suffered a personal loss. These personal experiences may have negatively clouded their responses; in addition all five were union members, this organisation represented eleven of the seventeen academics. Six were from mostly professional backgrounds and the remaining eleven from mostly academic or teaching backgrounds. Of the six female participants, three had been recently promoted which may account for their more positive responses. Note that the number six does not refer to the same academics, it just happens to be the line of division on multiple important demographics.

4.2 WHAT ARE THE CURRENT CHANGE STATUS QUO AND THE DRIVERS FOR CHANGE IN THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY?

4.2.1 Change in the HE Sector

The first questions were intended to explore academic perceptions of overall change in the HE sector. All academics in the study acknowledged that HE was changing rapidly and constantly, though some expressed doubts about the validity of the change.

"There appears to be a tremendous amount of activity or change ... but whether there's real change is a moot point. Fundamentally we're still talking about three terms, we're talking about three years taught and the structure has remained much the same. So at that level there's been minimal change." A6

"I'd say it's changing but not as rapidly as some people think it is and certainly not as rapidly as some people think it ought to. There isn't a smooth transition and there's some movement back." A14

When academics were asked to be more specific about the work changes impacting on HE many common themes emerged, though a few respondents initially declared no interest in politics and attempted to remain insular. The primary change noted was with students: that increased numbers require servicing from a smaller resource base and that students have higher expectations of their HE experience, placing pressure on their tutors to deliver. Parental involvement in the degree purchase decision was also commented on. The 50% participation goal of the present government, the drive to increase the number of international students and widening participation goals were all mentioned; as the more diverse ability of such students at entry was perceived to result in more work for academics. These ideas were particularly supported by unionised and male academics and magnified further by respondents from a school facing cut-backs.

Overall this perception of heavier work in HE was the second most mentioned sector change after massification. Academics believed that policies and procedures were becoming more complex and that increases in both administrative duties and bureaucracy erode their time.

Academics also worried that standards may be compromised and the traditional HE goal of self-improvement through learning was disappearing in a more vocational HE world. Academics have also noted the shift to an HE business model and were aware of the problems emerging from increased competition within the sector. This fear was magnified for some by personal insecurity generated by declining recruitment on their own more traditional degrees and they feared student migration to degrees with sexier handles. The need for more flexible delivery for part-time study and rising expectations in tutor IT ability were also mentioned.

When academics were asked what was causing these changes little current knowledge about the state of play within UK and global HE was noted, though participates from management based Schools exhibited a better overall grasp. A few respondents were politically astute enough to realise the government/external drivers active in HE change and they remarked on changes to the funding model. Over half the respondents believed the responsibility for HE rested exclusively or mostly with UK government policy and funding decisions. A minority saw some global link but mostly in relation to competing for international students.

"So there is a global competition but I think the changes are short-term, they are changes in government policy, which is driven by issues of public funding, which in turn is driven by changing ideologies, which probably has something to do with the global market." A9

An academic with a different perspective contributed;

"I'd say that the change is fundamentally because we are now starting to think and act like consumers in this area." A14

Academics were then invited to position their overall perception of sector change on a mostly good to mostly poor scale. General opinion was mostly split between mostly good or neutral. Those that saw the advantages of sector modernisation commented;

"Definitely good, I feel comfortable, I think it is right that universities need to act more like businesses and need to become more commercially focused." A3

"I'm comfortable that because it's a very dynamic environment it makes my job more interesting." A13

Such academics perceive HE as improving accessibility, providing a better deal from the students' perspective and presenting some positive challenges to staff. Other positive observations were that such change should help both the employability and learning ability of students. Overall positive dimensions were mentioned most frequently by the female respondents and those without union affiliation.

Those that saw HE change as mixed were concerned about issues such as a perceived unjustifiable 50% participation target set by government that, though a socially appropriate policy, still in their opinion did not ensure fair access. Academics expressed concerns that you really cannot accomplish more and more with the same resources.

Poor perceptions of sector change included worries that change is too rapid, with no time for consolidation of change. Some believed that universities are now pitted against each other for funding and that the financial implications of privatisation could dilute the

experience of university life. All those who had been identified as facing redundancy or had suffered loss were quite negative in their assessment.

4.2.2 Changes at SU

The interview then focused on the SU environment. It was obvious that most respondents were more comfortable talking about their own experiences and more material was obtained. The majority of respondents believed that their working environment was constantly changing with many of the discussed sector changes also noted as present at SU. Again the most complete responses were from those in management based Schools. There were three main categories of change comments: student type and number, quality of service and outside events.

Comments in the student-generated change category were the most common response, especially from union members, although of course many are a direct result of government policies. Academics assigned mostly positive responses to student demands for better services, as many respondents commented that this has resulted in improved courses, unit delivery and feedback, plus their personal IT skills were much improved. Some academics felt more professional in their approach and image.

"I think that students are more aware and therefore they are questioning the system more and when in the good old days it was more come and go as you please, it just wouldn't work now. So I think it had to change." A11

"Numbers have increased. We're much more accountable to the students now. They seem to be punters rather than students." A2

"The teaching numbers are more or less the same but the number of students we are servicing is probably three times more than 20 years ago. And our workload in terms of operating materials in particular and mostly marking is substantially higher than it used to be." A6

"You've got to watch your back all the time ... So we find ourselves in a ... it's not pleasant at all knowing that I've got to record the conversation because a student might get back to us with criticisms." A4

The quality-generated change comments included acknowledgment that the university did need to upgrade its quality procedures but also a definite belief that many improvements were excessive. Again academic realised that many of these initiatives were linked to government policy.

"Yes I mean there are those changes. I tend to sort of ignore them until they jump up and bite me generally speaking. We've had some classic examples of recent additions, qualitative aspects where I think on one occasion I counted eleven different emails from different people all saying basically the same thing but nobody actually taking responsibility for ensuring that it happened." A7

"I mean a lot of it has to do with the process, sort of ADQ and things like that and there's all the teaching and learning elements. So it seems like a new initiative is put in place so we have to have loads of meetings about it which we don't necessarily need and we get a lot of junk email every day and when you are finished there's always more than ever." A8

"There's a lot more pressures and I think the other thing that is changing an awful lot is that there is now so much paperwork, so many protocols, so many forms to fill in or things like that." A11

In the last category of outside–generated change, many respondents sensed that the university was becoming more business-like and this had a mixed reaction.

"Yes I perceive changes all the time particularly in the media school. We're struggling to find our position I guess in terms of whether we are research oriented or practice based oriented or teaching, in the light of the White Paper." A5

"When I first came here they were very keen on research ... by the end of my first year they'd switched to being keen on enterprise. By the middle of last year they'd decided that knowledge transfer was the new thing. There doesn't seem to be any rationale for this. It's all driven by the government I suppose." A17

Some believed that the WP initiative has resulted in increased academic work due to a wider spread of student ability, which creates challenge. Others were concerned at government-generated paperwork;

"We have got to the point where I am absolutely sure there's a large number of secretaries that when they don't get (government documents) back, just fill in the details from last year; which means that the information going to the government is entirely meaningless because unless there's some value associated with these activities, people don't do them or bypass them. I mean I teach systems and I know what happens to a poor system, people completely work around it." A12

4.2.3 Overall Change Reaction

When asked for their overall reaction to work-based change the consensus response was a combined belief that time allowed to complete tasks had decreased, coupled with an increase in work pressure and information overload. Again the views from a School and academics with recruitment challenges were markedly more negative at SU based change.

"I'm putting in more hours definitely compared to 5 years ago even, although my role hasn't changed enormously in that time. I am finding that my colleagues are getting more and more sceptical and cynical and unwilling to provide goodwill to the same extent as they did in the past.... and I think that's because they think they are being taken advantage of." A13

"I mean I think it is a society change for everybody right across, not just here, but if you consider the levels of communication we have now. You know, each morning you come in, you've probably got maybe an hour or two, sometimes, of email to get back to, full of jobs. You're got your normal post. You might have voice mail messages left. You're got notes under the door from students. But you can't possibly cope with that and that's just a side of all business ... everywhere." A15

Some academics were unsure as to why their work and role was in flux.

"There does seem to be too much change or change for no reason or change that seems to have no reason." A17

"The sense that we don't really know what's going on." A16

When respondents were asked to define the sources of these changes, most, especially those aged over fifty, identified outside pressures, especially for strategic change and their response to this is mostly resignation.

"Obviously all academics make changes within their disciplines but many changes are being imposed on us from outside." A2

"Where (changes) are coming from are never easy to identify." A7

"I don't know really. I presume some of it comes as feedback from students and a lot seems to come from ADQ and we seem to get a new quality thing from them nearly every other week at the moment. ... But the annoying thing is that we never seem to get any justification as to why these things are coming through. It's just 'here's another edit.'" A8

"None of the changes I have mentioned are within me at all I have made changes to what I teach and the courses that I am directly involved with and I feel I've contributed to and made positive changes. But those are, if you like, sort of fine tuning and updating, keeping on top of the job." A9.

"I develop coping strategies to work within the confines that are set around me. And survive in that sort of way. It is very difficult to shape your own destiny within the structure of the organisation." A1

Some academics did report a sense of internal determination for smaller change that resulted in an opportunity for personal development. One respondent felt the drive for change to result in an increased personal responsibility to maximise their efforts to the students;

"Every individual has to make their own decision as to whether they want to change or stay the same and I suppose I take the view that you have to change as events change and as the organisation changes and as the culture changes." A13

Academics were again asked to quantify their overall reaction to change within their own work environment. Most could see both positive and negative attributes within their current environment, with a few mostly negative responses but no mostly positive comments.

"I think the university doesn't always know which direction it's going in. It doesn't know whether it wants to be an establishment noted for its teaching quality, whether it wants to be involved in research, or whether it wants to be a money maker and a feeder into industry." A2

"I think that these changes and the workload ends up effecting some people and not other people in a very extreme way, so some people have lots of work to do and others no work to do really." A5

"I still like to get in the classroom...what I consider essentially I am paid to do. They are trying to change that now. This year especially, they're bringing in these read and return approach, student directed learning, which I must admit I do have trouble with." A7

A number of staff felt outside of the loop and believed that workplace change had no effect on them or that the increase in students, their expectations and the cascade of change it brings are inevitable so why bother reacting to them.

Positive attributes included a stronger sense of corporate identity, better presentation skills in class and a greater focus on outcomes, teaching and learning. Such comments were common from the three female academics who had recently been promoted.

"But I think there is a measure of good in some things now, because I don't think there's room for...how can I say this, perhaps freeloaders. I'm not sure whether that's the right word, but people just drifting along not doing very much. I think the space for them has disappeared." A11

"A bit of both. I think it (change) pushes me...that you end up very genuinely pressured and if you want to do your job you basically have to say 'Well this is the level of quality that I'm going to stick too'. I feel very often that the way the university manages its time

actually goes against what we are trying to do and that it's only through the efforts of the staff that we manage to retain any quality at all." A12

Both I'm happy for change. I do question change and if I see them as really not being right and negative in terms of impact on my or the students or my colleagues experience, then I'll try to fight against them. But if they're not, fine, I'm happy with it." A14

4.2.4 Colleagues' Reaction to Change

Having expressed their own reaction to change in the workplace, the respondents were invited to comment on their perceptions of changes to colleagues' roles or work experiences. The majority agreed that change was just not their experience but happening across the board with the males respondents reporting more impact. The younger respondents believed that they were adapting better than others, particularly older staff. The business and management Schools strongly believed that their roles were in flux and this was a negative outcome.

In total these perceptions seem to lead to some resentment on unbalanced workloads. Anger at colleagues who fail to fairly contribute was wide-spread. It was present with the academics suffering possible redundancy or personal loss and also noteable with all of the women and most of the schools.

"The ones that do are the ones that can. The ones who have the capacity to change with the changes, adapt to the changes, take on the burden of responsibility and the workload, and the ones that don't seem merely to exist alongside in an increasingly wider workload and responsibility gap." A5.

"Everyone is affected by change. I have colleagues who honestly, I might be doing them a real disservice, but I can't see that they have changed much in 10 years...and who seem untouched by what is going on around them. But increasingly these people seem to be isolated in all senses of the word and so I think that everyone is being affected. I think that some people respond positively to that challenge and if not embrace it; maybe embrace it with one arm. And other people accept it grudgingly and move along." A13

The two key phrases that are starting to appear in answers to any question are lack of time and workplace pressure.

"There is a high level of anxiety and stress within the department which I am sure somebody, somewhere is aware of, given the sort of questionnaires we're getting about stress levels and pressure levels. And that has an overall effect on the atmosphere...it's not a happy bunny place to work you know, it ought to be." A7

This question was then expanded to ask if change impacts on relationships between academics and the majority of respondents believed that change pressure does impact on their work relationships. A common observation was that heavier workloads result in no opportunity for socialisation, academic discussion or small meetings to handle the growing number of team-taught units. The point was made that due to timetabling pressures even Wednesday afternoons are now often not available.

"In the past, the summer was fairly quiet and we used to meet and chat, it was much more relaxed. Now some of my colleagues work all summer with their foreign students. That means they are very pressed, very rushed and we don't talk." A4

"There's less time to talk with people. People are visibly stressed...sometimes I include myself in that stressed, so that you find you don't have time to talk even about work. So we don't have many opportunities to get together as a group, it's quite rare." A16

Others felt like the proverbial piggy in the middle, especially those with Programme Leader responsibilities.

"I believe in supporting my colleagues and at the same time, in terms of self preservation, it's often better to surround yourself with positive people who are able to deliver in terms of the work they are doing. And so it can be quite difficult." A1

"Yes it does in the sense that not everyone agrees to what is being imposed. The contribution is to bring about the change, but the input elements, are very weak." A7

"I think day to day it doesn't. But I think some of the changes have made people less co-operative, more sort of 'Well I'm not paid to do that sort of thing' attitude has crept in amongst some colleagues, which hasn't impacted on me personally." A9

There were minority opinions from both sides of the spectrum. Some academics proposed that everyone makes personal change decisions so are masters of their own destiny, to the opposite view that since staff have 'no control over the edicts' they are all presumably in the same position together.

4.2.5 Change as a Burden

Academics were then asked to consider if change is or can be a burden. Most respondents did perceive change to be a burden, especially what they described as 'change for change's sake.'

"It's a burden if it's not perceived as being necessary and it impacts on the way that people feel comfortable about doing thing, yes. I mean change for change's sake is not necessarily good and there does seem to be a lot of it in Higher Education." A7

Resentment that those who initiate the change are not those who will be directly involved was present. Some academics thought that the burden was more fairly described as the getting used to change rather than the change itself and again the belief that the assignment of the burden can be unfair surfaced.

"I always find that change is never ... it never simplifies things. A change equals more complexity . . . mostly change means more work for everyone." A4

A few respondents had a more positive perspective.

"No I personally like change and uncertainty. I sometimes worry that I'm not keeping up with it, you know, and performing and doing the right things but I haven't got a problem with change itself." A10

"I think there is a burden of change to everything, you know. I don't think it is limited to education or anything. I think if you are out in the business world it's just as cut-throat and we are starting to move towards that." A15

4.2.6 Relationship with Senior Management

Academics were asked to describe their relationship with senior management. On the whole most believed they had a good relationship with their line managers and Head of School but not past that point. Participates with a professional background all agreed that they did not have any relationship with SM. Reaction though was definitely linked to whether the academic was active on any school or university committees or expressed political interests.

"I know the immediate ones that matter to me but I don't necessarily know higher up the line, the higher echelons and I think some of those administration people are quite distant." A2

"My direct manager is fine... after that it's the great divide." A4
"Very often you feel like you are working against them (senior management) and there's no communication going backwards and forward." A12

"No I don't know them but I don't need to. I mean occasionally I have dealings with ADQ and then find they are human and reasonably helpful but for most of my work, they don't impact on me at all." A9

A minority of the respondents thought that senior management were now less remote then in previous years and were making an effort to connect with staff and be more supportive.

4.3 HOW DO ACADEMICS EXPERIENCE AND REACT TO CHANGE IN THEIR WORKING ENVIRONMENT?

4.3.1 Individual Tolerance of Change

First it was necessary to establish how each respondent tolerated and coped with change in their personal life. An assumption was made that there may be a relationship between this topic and their comments so far about reaction to change at the university. The seventeen academic interviews were divided into three categories; ten whose comments so far were slightly too strongly negative, four respondents who were judged to be neutral and a last category of three academics who were judged slightly too strongly positive. It should be noted that, contrary to the literature, all age groups were represented in each group, although the negative respondent group did contain six out of the eight academics aged over fifty. This negative group also contained two academics with redundancy fears and one who had sustained a heavy personal loss.

The slightly to strongly negative cohort when asked about personal response to change showed no set behaviour patterns, contrary to their previous mindset. A number admitted to liking change as it adds interest to life, provided it is not impulsive or unexpected. Change to them is a forward move as long as they are prepared and in control and it is not what they term 'change for change's sake.'

"I mean I have always prided myself on being an innovator of change. I mean in industry that was really what my job was, to bring about change. I like it if I understand the rationale behind it and I saw, I think like most people, how it was going to benefit." A7

"It's something I'm trying to do all the time, force myself to do it because you have to change otherwise you don't develop." A12

Others admitted to a lower tolerance for personal change with more emphasis on coping mechanisms such as concentrating on the detail, rather than worrying about the long-term plan or having an escape route pre-planned. The three of the academics who had suffered employment or personal loss showed, not unsurprisingly, the least tolerance for personal change and described themselves as risk averse;

"I probably find it difficult. But at the moment I think it is the pace of change that is the problem. We all have so much change, so fast. I feel as if consolidation is needed." A2

The neutral group were more cohesive in their beliefs. They described themselves as not averse to change in their personal lives, more willing to 'go with the flow' and 'get on with it'. However their comfort levels were also dependent on seeing the change coming so they could prepare for it.

"I certainly don't like having change done to me. I prefer to be involved in it or instigate it myself. Generally in my life I would say that I have a reasonably high tolerance of change." A13

The three academics who were slightly to strongly positive about change not only encourage change at work but are happy to experiment in their personal lives. They have high change tolerance and find change exciting and an antidote to a boring life. Although they sometimes plan for change in advance, they are not averse to unexpected change controlling them.

"Personally I like change and uncertainty and I am aware that's a personality type as well. I sometimes worry about keeping up with it, you know, and performing and doing the right thing but I haven't got a problem with change itself." A10

The results also showed that on the whole change is more likely to be welcomed by non-union academics and male colleagues claimed to control change. .

4.3.2 Recent Strategic Change Experiences

When asked about their recent change experiences at work, only a few were able to understand the term strategic change and answer this unaided. The majority of the respondents had nothing front of mind or immediately replied at the micro degree level. Prompts then had to be made to raise the discussion to a higher level of change, including inquiring about quality issues, widening participation and the enterprise/research/teaching decision. It was interesting that some academics had such limited knowledge of the larger picture in their own institution.

"I'm probably more involved in the nitty gritty actually. As I say I try to distance myself a little bit from the big stuff." A16

"Strategically there's talk about trying to prioritise between research, teaching and sort of industry relations and consultancy, which I can't actually say has actually done anything that I'm clear about. ... I think that's interesting but it actually hasn't impacted on me." A9

After prompts, respondents noted changes in institutional mission and the teaching/ research/ enterprise decision, although only one person admitted to having read the current University Strategic Plan. Widening participation has impacted on academics and the issues arising from poorer prepared students on entry and the growth of additional learning needs were mentioned especially by the women. The major prompted change was a belief in workload increase created by strategic changes to assessment regulation and ADQ paperwork. Un-prompted policy or procedural change observations included an expanding teaching and learning agenda, the push for knowledge transfer and the concept of flexible learning; although staff did question where the resources for these developments would be found. One academic mentioned an increase in staff development workshops and another noted the green parking policy.

Academics were then asked to categorise these strategic changes according to how embedded they believed them to be. Opinions were spread evenly, often with the same academic believing changes to be both profound and mere window dressing, depending on the actual change under discussion. There was a strong belief that many change initiatives are government inspired so the university has no choice but to implement.

"I think that universities are naturally cautious about government initiatives as they know that governments change and that government administrators change and so on. So I always feel that if there's anything being pushed from government level, that universities to some extent, go through the motions and can be seen to be responding, but can pretty quickly change if they need too. So that's sometimes why it looks like window dressing." A13

"I think most of them are profound, embedded change...I don't think there is any way that we are going back on them ... perhaps a change in government would spring things differently. They'll come out with a different agenda and some of these things will go by...but I suspect that quality is here to stay." A11

There was also strong support for the window dressing theory, especially from the men..

"I think that sometimes they are window dressing but they are used for other purposes. They get more used for political purposes than actual practical ones. So the strategies that we've got are mainly marketing perceptions." A12

"I imagine that the senders think they are profound. Most of us receivers think that they are...no, that's not all the time...much of it is window dressing and much of it misses the real point and it becomes another paper chase." A14

Other opinions included that the changes are simply natural progression within the organisation taking us forward. Overall many academics have no quarrel with 'real' quality issues, it is the paper chase involved in events like quality audits which raises suspicions. Another academic pointed out that the number of actual changes proceeded with is always only a small percentage of those proposed; so perhaps everyone should concentrate on executed change only. There was also the belief that change is just 'buzz words', everyone talks about it but it never quite materialises.

4.3.3 Strategic Change Coping Strategies

When asked how they cope with strategic change, five of the respondents had no comment but of the twelve that answered, the majority countered with either cynical or negative coping methods. Only two respondents were positive and of these one proactively tries to be involved in the change and the other commented on the reflection possibilities.

"Well I think you have to be (reflective) and I think that the one thing that I can do, is that I do think strategically about it. Bear in mind that my little area might be quite small when you talk about the university as a whole but it is looking at everything in a holistic manner as well and how the pieces will fit together." A15.

The more cynical academics described how they sorted through the changes to establish which potentially affected them and which they were willing to implement or made a conscious decision to delay implementation until the change was judged to have actually happened. This response was common from both the redundancy and loss participates and the business discipline academics.

"It depends on the nature of the specific change that's coming through and if it has a direct impact on me given the position I am in, I will address what I have to do, if it doesn't I largely ignore it. I just have too much stuff to try and process another quite badly written policy document on some aspect of something." A1

"I question some of them yes. But it depends where they've come from and by what means they've come by.... I have learnt that if a guidance note comes out to tell you to write your ARPM and include A, B and C, just do it because that is the best way to do it." A11

Strongly negative comments included the perception that change is simply extra work with no extra time allowance, that change equals workplace stress or that it is simpler just to delete the change request, then wait and see if it comes back.

"Implement them yeah, sometimes grudgingly because it's just more work. I mean this is what I don't like here, they always seem to come at the wrong time of year ... usually at the beginning of term when you are at your busiest." A8

"I buckle, I can cope with a certain amount but I tend now to switch off. And because I know a little bit about stress and what's happening to me I can respond fairly early you know, getting down to the doctors and getting whatever they are on this week, you know." A7

"Email is probably the worst communication invention so far developed by man. There are on average 96-100 emails coming through a week of which maybe three or four are relevant to you and demanding attention. And you know darn well that if you delete the rest of them nothing is going to happen until something gets critical and it's urgent. Then you do it." A7

On a positive note all academics believe that change is part of their job, in fact for most change is part of any job and that academics should by their nature be at the cutting edge of knowledge. Four academics had reservations about blanket change acceptance.

"Yep. Just as I see being critical of everything that's presented to me as being part of my job and that includes those who present change." A14

"Yes but I think it is part of the job of the younger version of an academic rather...than some academics that have been around in one institution for quite a long time. They don't like change and want to do the same thing every year." A5

"Yes change is necessary. But the pace of change has to be manageable." A2

"I think that part of my job as an academic is to question everything and to adapt to change .... However there are some changes that you need to fight because of injustice and because they are not right. And it might be because they are fundamentally unjust or it might be because they are just badly implemented, in which case fight is a bad word. It is more work with people to try and see a better way of doing things." A1

One academic had a definite contribution to future change expectations.

"There's a certain sense of dread because very often we feel that those things haven't been thought through. They're just somebody's idea and rather than say 'Should we look into whether we should do this?', people go ahead and do it and it causes chaos....The management will say 'We're going to do this and we're going to discuss it with you' ... And then we get these questionnaires. You look at the questionnaires and you say 'No, they have already decided to do this. It doesn't matter what I write down here." A12

4.3.4 Change Influencers

When asked if any third party influences academic reaction to change, only three mentioned the union, but only in general terms, without a prompt, with three sating that they would consider the Union position. When probed further over half the respondents described the union's position as irrelevant or that they were unaware of official policy. Eight respondents, mostly non –union, over fifty years old or from professional backgrounds claimed that no one or body influenced their reactions, while five would listen to colleagues. Spouses and students were mentioned as the other change influencers in a minority of cases.

When the question was turned and academics were invited to comment on how their colleagues react to work place change the overall response was not as well as the academic being interviewed. So these responses may be given with somewhat coloured glasses.

"Academics hate change I think. You know I am in charge of self-managed learning ... and the minute you suggest change, straight away it's no. They don't even ask why. It's no." A4

Again four that had personal difficulties were strongly negative and again, especially from a single school, there was the belief that older academics find change harder to handle, perhaps younger colleagues believe return to industry is closed to them due to age.

"Some of them find it impossible to change. It breaks them. It has impacts in terms of stress and you have to learn to manage the stress." A1

A minority believed their colleagues to be more accepting of change.

"I suspect they embrace change a little more readily than me and perhaps see change more as an opportunity than I do." A16

Others don't class colleagues with a mass reaction.

"I think the lot that I work with are quite good at change. I don't think they ever like it being imposed on them. Some people though don't like change. People as a whole I think from a psychological point of view like to be in an area where they have structured rules and they know what they are doing." A12

"Can you generalise? There are people who grumble and resist and sort of retreat and don't co-operate. There are others who jump on the bandwagon and use the buzz words and try and be associated with the side that is winning." A9

4.3.5 Assumed University Expectations from Academics

When asked how they expected the university to want them to act when faced with strategic change the opinions were mostly negative, with nine academics believing that senior management simply wants implementation without question. There were a couple of responses that implied disengagement, as the respondents did not believe that such decisions impacted directly on them. There were also a couple of positive opinions that the university is actively seeking participation and feedback, wants to encourage staff flexibility and opportunity.

"Well I imagine they would ideally want me to do as I am told. They would prefer me to have the kind of relationship I had in the commercial world, where I was less able and therefore less critical of people more senior to me. ...A traditional management model, a commercial model is being implemented in many universities now...and I would say probably in this one." A14

"I had a conversation with a current member of OVC recently and voiced an opinion that the VC (previous holder) *doesn't like people to stand up and argue ... and his view was that was wrong and he really did believe that the VC wanted people to voice criticisms. ... I would hope that they want you to accept (change) but also offer an opinion and if necessary an alternate view about how to do it maybe. ... So I guess that what they want is not so much to be challenged on the strategy but maybe have ideas on implementation." A13*

"Their way but I feel part of the process because I m involved in a committee." A5

When asked why they thought the such a reaction was expected, the main perception was that senior management prefer not to receive feedback or 'are not really interested in us'. Other lines of reasoning were that the university could be actually frightened of academic participation in change or that management assume academics know more about the reasoning behind a decision then they actually do. Overall there is the perception that change decisions affecting the individual have been imposed without discussion.

"Because the fact that there is ... seems to be so little real interest in what we, as individuals, and as a group are doing from the top." A16

"Toe the line. Well obviously it makes life easier for them doesn't it? But academics by tradition are a stroppy bunch. They're critical. They like to question. They don't want to accept what's imposed on them." A2

4.4 CAN ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE THEORY BE APPLIED TO ACADEMIC CHANGE EXPERIENCES?

4.4.1 Top-Down or Bottom–Up Change Drivers

When asked for their perception of the direction for change, respondents were evenly divided. The majority ascribed change as emanating from a top-down direction only, while five others perceived the process as more multi-directional, with strong support for a sideways driver from external forces such as the government. Two academics believed that one of the drivers would be student demand and only one saw academic input into strategic change.

"The kind of policy change we are talking about is entirely top-down because they are about efficiencies. They are also about pleasing external stakeholders like the government." A9

"I think some change is a push from outside because of what is happening either at government policy level or generally in the world. I think as well it is top down in saying, 'Well OK how do we cope with the environment, these are the sort of things we need to do.' But I think as well bottom up. People can see how we can improve and if they are the champions of certain things, it can be bottom up as well." A10

When asked how policy change happens there was a mixed response. Some academics proposed that change trickles down from government, through senior management and then through the Schools. Some academics further believed that the university does try to consult but many academics are simply too busy to be involved and systems must change quickly to match the exponential growth of the university. Others see change implementation as more of an imposition; an email dictating a course of action or a survey that doesn't seem to create an impact.

4.4.2 Academic Contribution to the Change Process

When asked if academics currently participate in the change process, the majority of staff perceived an influence only at the micro level such as IT requirements or within degrees. The women though mentioned that there is the opportunity to make a larger contribution through school and other committees. The male respondents disagreed. Overall many academics saw themselves as having an implementation or compliance role, though the point was made that academics may have more change influence through their outside roles such as consultancy and research. A few comments were more negative; that the opportunity to contribute is always too late as the decision has already been made and that academics are not known for volunteering. Union participants blamed academic disengagement.

"No, there's not the participation or encouragement for participation. Academics could be very effective." A6

"The decisions are made for academics like me anyway, without my having any input. The consultation stage comes too late because the decision has already been taken." A16

"So there are mechanisms for example Senate, School Committee. But the mechanisms are, as with all these things I think, there's an in-built majority if you like of management ... the system itself is built to support the system, which is the management system not the academic one." A14

When asked what they liked or disliked about the change process the overwhelming concern was a perceived lack of communication, with academics complaining that changes seem to have no justification and the benefits of the change are often unclear. The respondents from an industry background were used to being part of the decision making process and believed that the lack of open forums prevents the university benefiting from their contribution, resulting in a lack of academic input. Others are

concerned that strategic decisions are being made where the implementation implications have not been fully thought through or that the process is fine, the only problem is the number or pace of changes.

On the plus side non-union academics pointed out that it makes it easy for them not to be involved, if that is their preferred response. The minority view was that the opportunity for academic involvement was there but that leaving the process with senior management does ensure both direction and focus. The job gets done, the decision is made and it translates to less work for academics; as academics are not that competent and lack the time to be involved. These respondents believed that any better ideas from academics would be considered by management.

"Maybe the person at the top does have a bigger picture. I think the danger is that if you are top-down and have a more draconian style of management, you'll actually manage to ostracise the people that are working for you. I think the positive aspect though is they (senior management) might have a better view because they get time to study what is actually happening in the higher education market. Whereas an average lecturer who's actually too busy trying to deliver won't have that view but that's probably down to the fact that we can't achieve excellence because we are overloaded. If you look at things like the way that Japanese management models work ... they're based around giving people time to actually interact with the process and be able to feed things back to a management. How do we feed things back to management if we don't have the time?" A12

"I think there are genuine attempts to have meetings and explain policies and that type of thing. The trouble is that a lot of us haven't the time or let's be honest, the motivation to go to many of those." A9

"Perhaps the fact that it is coming from the top and therefore we are required to implement change and we don't always get a say in how it is put together. But, on the other side of that, the other lesson I've learnt, is that if you keep raising your head above the parapet and question things you might get involved in the work of the Quality Committee. That's not always wise. I've done it a number of times." A11

When asked why the change process happens this way some respondents were unable to articulate an answer so fewer responses were obtained. The two most common answers were firstly, that this structure is the way the university is organised, with respondents from one School solidly proposing that only SM have the necessary big picture. Secondly, that academics do not have the time, interest or ability to be involved in change process. More considered responses included concerns that senior management are no longer either part of the academic world or have no real commercial understanding of how business works, so are incapable of implementing a proper change process. More sympathetic voices proposed that the current change system is simply reactive to outside pressures, too dependent on leadership or that it is truly organic.

"Well if it's coming up from academics we're going to do it badly. It's not the sort of thing that academics are good at ... as I said people aren't changing or trying not to change what they are doing, they're just changing how they disguise it. Change being from above, they're just complying the easiest way possible." A17

"Well again when it's top down the person in charge has the overview which we don't necessarily have. If everybody did what we want ... well it would be chaos really. So we need someone accountable hopefully who takes the overall decisions. But that said in an ideal world it would be a consensus." A4

In response to whether respondents believed they were an integral part of the change process or that change was imposed on them, roughly half insisted that change was imposed, even with the comfort of deciding the 'small stuff' for themselves and defined

their role primarily as implementers of change. A few professed both reactions depending on the nature of the change and a minority claimed total disengagement. Three respondents volunteered that they gained some ownership of the change by actively making the decision to participate or reinterpreting the change to suit their own needs. On a demographic basis those with professional backgrounds believed themselves imposed upon however many of the women disagreed and felt integrated into the change process.

"I think it depends on how you decide to view the world that doesn't it. I mean I feel that we are parts of a process occasionally, yeah, after you sort of say 'Well, you know, this is beyond anything that we're got a choice about and we have to deal with it.' But on the whole you know, even then it's about how you implement it and that's up to you at the end of the day." A15

4.4.3 Should Academics Contribute to the Change Process?

The findings have already established that the majority of the academic respondents overall do not feel included in the change process, so this question explored whether they would like to. Eight respondents, including the fifty plus group and the redundancy and loss group, believed strongly that academics should contribute. Reasons given were that change should be a two-way process, that the key skill to managing change is involving those it will impact on and that academics have experience and knowledge to contribute to the process and deserve to be listened to. When asked why they believed fellow academics do not participate, lack of time and motivation were mentioned particularly by union members and men.

The minority view was that strategic change is a management function in the HE world of today and academics do not have the institutional overview needed for these decisions. Also, academics may by their nature be unsuited for the job due to the effort often required to obtain agreement. This view was prevalent amongst the professional background group.

"Yeah definitely. It's the only sensible way to run a university. It would probably take more to push them to actually change. But that might be a good thing seeing as the system now is so reactive and keeps changing every year. It might be sensible to have a bit of resistance to change and then we'll do it when we actually have to." A17
"I think so, yeah, because we're the ones at the coal face doing all the work and again we sort of, you know, we'll say things. The problem with lots of academics together in a room is that they all have their own opinions and they will defend them to the ends of the earth." A8

4.4.4 Academics and the 'Big Picture'.

Some academics especially the women and the over fifty group, admitted to not knowing enough about the big picture to contribute to strategic change, though many younger academics and those in high technology based Schools pointed out that the information is available to those that require it. When asked why so few made the effort to research the HE environment, time restraints were again mentioned.

"I think some people do, yes I think if they are interested in it they do. I think I don't. I think it is quite difficult to have a very solid teaching role or a major research role, to be honest, and also get involved in these big issues. I don't think the two are compatible." A16

"I might not know enough about all of the big picture issues but I would feel confident enough to know that I could know quite easily, if that makes sense. ... There's quite a lot of transparency here I think. But it's a bit like 'I've got this beautiful transparent thing but no-one looks through it.'" A14

Surprisingly enough, when asked who speaks for them in these matters, no academic mentioned the union, although the majority were members. The most common response from women was that they felt represented by Senate, committee representatives and school management, although five respondents, all younger men, did not believe they had a voice at the university and called for a 'real voice' rather than a 'talking shop' with more dissent. A minority claimed that they spoke for themselves or that their achievements such as personal or student success spoke for them.

4.4.5 Recommended Improvements in Change Processes

Academics were very vocal on recommended modifications to the change systems. They, especially the women, believed the primary problem was poor communication particularly between the levels in the hierarchy. To prevent disruptive rumours the non-union academics suggested that more explanation has to accompany change, especially an emphasis on academic benefits from co-operation. Further there needs to be more visible consultation processes scheduled earlier in the change process and more carrots to get academics involved, of which the main currency according to the union members is time and resources.

They propose that management must realise that there is simply too much change and even changes to changes not yet fully implemented. Respondents report information overload and that the pace of change is so fast it creates insecurity. Their preference is for gradual change that they believe will better embed within institutional culture. There is also the perception that change demands can be poorly scheduled, arriving at the busiest times of the year and can be minute in nature.

Academics also suggest that senior management should be more visible about campus to reduce barriers and share their vision.

"It's difficult because I mean it's almost like politics isn't it. But if you try to over simplify and dramatise it you're accused of spinning and sound biting and the rest of it. But if you just sort of have jargon laden consultation documents you're accused of sort of obscuring it and encouraging apathy. You could look again at the sort of hierarchy and communication down the hierarchy and whether you've got levels of management that actually slow up the communications process and create a sense of un-involvement or disempowerment. But that in itself would be a change." A9

"I feel there are lots of decisions taken at strategic level without seemingly very much consideration for implementation and operational consequences of that strategic decision ... caused by an unwillingness in my view for the people at the higher end of the university – the strategic end to want to get involved in the minuti of implementation and thinking through the detail." A13

4.4.6 Relationships between Rewards and New Behaviour

With only two exceptions, academics across all demographic sub-groups, do not believe that the current pay system rewards change implementation; in fact they believe it totally discourages new behaviour. Women were particularly vocal here. The concept of pay by performance has support and even the few academics that entered the profession for a better quality of life in exchange for lower wages, believed that their traditional bargain was stretched. Respondents have noted that more work or an adherence to preferred behaviour does not result in extra reward, so why bother?

Without pay by performance, appraisals were described as farcical and the belief that no fair award system exists was repeatedly stated. Some academics, especially the younger ones, would be happy with time remission or intrinsic reward such as recognition but the perception is that carrots go with seniority and not change implementation. Interesting to note that, even with the majority of the respondents being union members, again the union's position on this matter was not mentioned.

"I think that ultimately if we are going to be bringing in more funding, the remuneration structure should also changed because at the moment the problem is if you keep a low profile and are not particularly good at your job, then nobody will ask you to do anything so you will be less involved in change. If you are really good ... then you are more likely to be asked and you will work many more hours and you would be paid no more." A3

"You should have obvious rewards for those that do well. But there also should be a cut-off point too, you know, where those thresholds are for those that really want to do the bare minimum as well." A15

The minority opinion was;

"Abolish incentives. Because it's not working at the moment and everything they try...actually disincentivises the people who get it. Go back to a community of equals who are respected and applauded for what they do. I think it works better in this environment when it is a collaboration of equals rather than a stratified system of incentives." A9

Closing thought

"More involvement ... that's the biggest thing that could come here, having the majority of academics who felt that 'It's a part of my job to get involved in this and contribute in whatever ways it might be.' Not as an add-on, not as 'Oh well I'll volunteer for that begrudgingly or whatever but because it is part of the job. That can be facilitated if people really thought it was good by, as they do at Aston, giving you some time to do it, your contribution to the wider university as opposed to just being expected to do that in addition to the X number of hours you work." A14

CHAPTER FIVE

SENIOR MANAGEMENT FINDINGS

Opening thoughts from respondents:

"But I think that Southcoast is going through quite significant change and it is challenging and difficult and for some people painful." SM1

"I think that managing change is, I think it is the biggest challenge and we've got to get it right. We've got to. Well I think the bottom line is we've got to take people with us and in order to do that we've got to communicate." SM4

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The second respondent group was six SU Senior Managers referred to by the short form of SM. Again a number has been assigned to each respondent to ensure anonymity and allow identification of which quotes share the same source. These interviews explored sub-questions one, four and five. The interviews first established SM perceptions of the current state of change policy within the sector and university. They were then invited to comment on the academic experience of change as noted from their management perspective, to allow comparison with the actual academic opinions. Finally the study explored their attitudes to the change implementation process and applied organisational change theory to the evidence found.

5.2 WHAT ARE THE CURRENT CHANGE STATUS QUO AND THE DRIVERS FOR CHANGE IN THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY?

Every SM agreed that the HE market was undergoing substantial change. Although all agreed such change was in response to government policies, their perceptions of the reasoning and results differed. A common root cause mentioned though was massification of HE, resulting in government initiatives such as widening participation and the merging of the binary line between FE and HE. SM believed these changes lead to increases in bureaucracy that they then pass down the line; also that the more diverse resulting student profile, coupled with decreasing funds per student were impacting on the sector.

The introduction of market disciplines into the sector was also discussed by several respondents; resulting in SU's need to emphasis activities, such as research and enterprise, which are potential earners. This market concept is believed by the majority of SM to result in the application of consumer behaviour by both students and their parents as 'he who pays the piper calls the tune.' Also as one respondent remarked, 'The problem is that the goal posts are moving all the time.'

"In other words the disciplines which apply in other areas of the economy and society are being introduced into universities. I don't think that people working in universities are terribly happy about that." SM3

"I think the other major change that is impacting on HE ... is the social changes that I would crudely term consumer behaviour. And that can manifest in terms of a more litigious society about consumers, the customers and clients knowing their rights or claiming to know their rights." SM6

When asked if they believed that the main change drivers were global or UK based, opinion was split. Half the respondents described the changes as only or mostly UK driven. Two more saw global elements active and the remaining SM believed it was world-wide change. All welcomed these changes to the sector or described their reaction as mainly positive. One respondent though did warn that too much change was negative;

"I do not believe in working in a sector where there isn't a degree of trust. And I think you have to earn trust. But I mean the accountability burden is out of all proportion and the constant change for the sake of change is across the whole of the educational structure. We have to pick up the pieces in our sector. We obviously see the ramifications of change, which is a separate subject in particular and that has a direct impact on what we do. So I think the plethora of Government initiatives doesn't help at all." SM4

5.3 WHAT LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE IS EXHIBITED BY SENIOR MANAGEMENT ABOUT STAFF EXPERIENCES OF CHANGE?

5.3.1 Academic Reaction to Change

SM were then invited for their perceptions of how workplace change impacted on academics. Overall there was a recognition that changing demands can create pressure, change reluctance and underlying resentment, all of which potentially could result in an 'us versus them' scenario. The two SM from the OVC said that it was hard to judge, as in their daily lives they experienced little contact with academics. Two others stated that it could be difficult for academics to move from teaching only to research and enterprise agendas but that a more frenetic workplace was impacting on all staff; also that academics need to think more corporately and stop priorising their School. Other opinions suggested that academic discontent may be more than change related and more likely a response to poor salaries and status and a lack of perceived rewards such as recognition.

"I think a failure to think corporately is ... it does hold us back. I think the way the university's constituted in six Schools, who much too easily put their wagons in a circle and sit behind the academic ring fence. I think there are positives to this, there are good reasons for doing it, some of them political, some of them not. But there is a downside as well and it's difficult to get people to think and act corporately from behind ring fences." SM2

"I do find the culture is one of stability and not an appetite or experience of significant change. It's always a relative joke, the relative thing about how big is change, well it's as big as it seems. And for an organisation that's not experienced much change, although it itself thinks there's been significant change, it's not. Compared with outside the university it is not." SM6

SM were then asked to revisit this question from the academic perspective and the majority of responses assumed a negative academic reaction. They believed that academics found their workplace more bureaucratic and that increases in academic infrastructure and changes to policies and procedures, generate perceptions of heavier workloads. Single responses included that staff may have reservations about the suitability of some HE candidates or could feel pressured over the need to generate income. The only positive response received was the hope that some academics may discern opportunities in change.

"I imagine their perception is that they are running faster to stand still and when you look, yeah, it's not just the paper trails as it were, but they have to double mark and things like that. You know each of these in themselves are not necessarily a bad thing but the combination of them all and with the Head of School saying 'Yeah, but we've got income generation work to do and the number of hours in a day doesn't increase. So something has to give." SM4

"Some I hope would be positive about better opportunities in terms of being able to engage in research and some even, maybe a minority, in terms of exploring the technology and stuff like that. I mean much more interesting ... but I suspect we have quite a number who would be quite concerned about the way things are going." SM5

SM then commented on where the academics thought change drivers originated. There was agreement that academics do understand that the university is reacting to the outside pressures applied by government policy and funding agencies. Several expanded these thoughts and specified that academics should realise that what they think are drivers are actually frameworks, written not by outside forces but by the sector, for the sector.

5.3.2 Relationship with Academics

When requested to define their relationship with academics, three SM from either the OVC or Department Heads were hesitant in answering as they genuinely did not know, with ' I don't have more time to talk with academics,' or 'my role is too remote,' or 'one of the problems of sitting up here is that I don't come into contact with many academics' as common responses. Direct academic contact was though not part of the job of the one of these. All three SM with a professional background defined themselves as management figures but hoped they were still considered a team player and a point of connection for academics.

SM also found it difficult to judge if strategic change at SU had impacted on their ongoing relationship with academics, particularly as most of their change discussions were channelled through the union or they believed there was minimal academic feedback, either positive or negative, to make a judgement on. When pressed most believed that strategic change had made no difference to this relationship, however tenuous, but the minority sensed more tension and 'imagined a degree of scepticism' from academics.

"Yeah, I think the need to move things on quickly creates some tension because of course there are university agendas that we need to move fairly quickly and some staff need time to understand the motives, what we see as being forward." SM1

"I like opportunities to talk to people about where we are coming from and why we are doing this. And when we do get those opportunities, I usually say to people 'What would you change? What would you get rid of? And I don't usually get an answer." SM2

The interview then inquired as to whether SM believed that recent changes have impacted on academics relationships with each other. Three general responses without demographic trend resulted: yes, honestly do not know and a probable neutral effect.

Singular further views included the thought that perhaps strategic change had not really impacted enough on relationships but it should, to the worry that change was indeed bound to create tension which could work destructively.

"Yes I do (think change impacts on inter-academic relationships) because some of them (academics) will see the value of change and will actually embrace it because they believe that something's happening and that the universities' role in society is being more clearly defined. In other words they will broadly support change. Others will take a different view and not be happy with change because it may disadvantage them or they may do well but they don't agree with it. So it depends what their views were of their working environment and the nature of the university to start with." SM3

"I mean this is anecdotal but my perception will be that those of our academics who have come in, perhaps, from a professional or business background, will have a different view from those who've come through a more traditional route. And so some of these former may be less tolerant of what they see as resistant to change amongst some of the latter. I don't know that this is a huge issue really and it's probably of course over-simplification because I am sure many people who have been here a long time as academics, quite a number of them have actually changed and developed and are just as ahead as anybody else really." SM5

5.3.3 Change as a Burden

The majority of SM agreed with the premise that changes can be interpreted as a burden, though some quantified their response by adding that it does depend on the individual academic. Of the two Head of Schools one proposed that the burden was not so much the change but the fear of change and the other commented that change was also an opportunity.

"It's whether or not you welcome change or whether you see it as a threat and I suppose the challenge is for people to see change as a good thing. Certainly I've worked in environments where change is constant and then it becomes less threatening and is seen as generally a good thing. I think there is quite a degree of inertia in this university ... They're not very keen on change in the light of that. There are also people in various stages of their careers. So I think that change is not always welcomed." SM1

"There'll be the 25% of people who encourage, enthuse and are hungry for change. There will be 25% who will be resistant to change and will always find it difficult and some of those may never really be able to accommodate change. There will be 50% in the middle who will be ambivalent about change and if they see the change is going to take place, then they will move in that direction and if they think, 'No this ain't going to happen,' then they will be more in the camp of the resistors. It's a very broad generalisation but yeah, I'm sure, for some, change is seen as a burden." SM6

5.3.4 Academic Experience of Change

SM then addressed the question of change experience from the academic perspective. Responses were very mixed but the primary thought was that academics may believe that workload and bureaucracy has increased, though one disagreed with the validity of this view. One SM believed that academics worry about 'dumbing-down' and the need to maintain academic standards. Many responses were around the teaching/research/enterprise agenda, with comments that academics do not understand the need to build the research profile and engage in knowledge transfer, so view both as enforced changes, or worry that teaching is to be devalued. A single OVC respondent said that academics do appreciate that change is driven by the Strategic Plan and that they are mostly concerned at present about new parking charges.

"But if the university's strategy for diversification beyond learning and teaching has not yet touched everyone in the university a year after the Strategic Plan, ... then we haven't been very effective in delivering our Strategic Plan." SM6

5.3.5 Academic Reaction to Change

SM then commented on their expectations of academic response to change. Two of the professional background respondents proposed that since academics are not a generic category, they doubted if there would be any consensus in what they think. An OVC participant said it was hard to judge as they don't get negative feedback directly. Overall SM doubted if all academics welcome it, suggesting that younger staff may be more positive and older staff may find change threatening. Some staff, they believe, preferred to focus on teaching and learning, while others never see change as affecting them.

"I think the vast majority, rather like the British Army, grumble but do it and do it in the most efficient manner possible." SM3

"... if you sit people down in front of you and say we can go on as we are or we can do something different, round about 50% is likely to say' I'm pretty suspicious of change because I've been here before and it's never quite as painless as it's pointed out to be.' I don't expect people to embrace change and development." SM3

"Let's see which way things are going. How do the runes run? I would expect that there will be a small percentage that will always be able to accommodate a larger workload or whatever. In fact it's the same old thing, if you want something done, give it to someone who's busy. And I would expect there would be a significant number who will feel put upon, who will feel resistant to an increased or more diverse workload." SM6

Theory suggests that academic reaction to change is usually one of four strategies: fight; flight; reinterpret or comply; so SM were asked which category they would apply to SU academics. The two participants with the strongest academic qualifications believed one would find groups of staff in each category. Overall though, most would expect the majority to reinterpret the change with flight from the problem as the second choice.

"I can well imagine, and indeed I think I have seen some evidence of it, that academics of all people, will take the framework for change and re-interpret or misinterpret it or put their own personal views on what change is about. And so the importance of leadership and clear communications is critical in that sort of environment." SM6

5.3.6 Preferred Academic Response to Change

This expectation of reinterpretation also featured in the next question when SM observed how they would prefer academics to react to change. All proposed a process that commenced with a general welcoming of change, followed by attempts to understand the rationale and actively engage with the change process. Academics should work within the team and allow the change to cascade down the due process and although discussions and debates were fine, reinterpretation was not encouraged. It was clear that individualistic reinterpretation of required change was perceived to be a major problem, though one respondent believed that the problem may be self-made as, 'we may have devolved too much to Schools and need to rein back some of that devolution to regain effectiveness.'

"I think one of the most disappointing things for me is the new Strategic Plan that was developed by OVC (Office of Vice Chancellor) and all the Heads of School as a team with lots of consultation and discussion. But within the Schools the level of consultation and the level of commitment from the Heads of Schools were disappointing. So I think that it is reinforcing the unimportance of strategic change to others. Staff cannot support if they don't know why the change was necessary. It is a very difficult thing to buy into." SM4

"But I think it is always dangerous when people interpret change in their own way because the way I was reading that is that you get some colleagues who interpret something in a particular way, which means they go back to the way they were before, which is not always helpful." A1

"Try and understand the thing. Try and look at it in the context of why it is happening and if it is actually perceived to be for the benefits of students then hopefully embrace it." SM5

5.3.7 Embedded or Surface Change Strategies.

Overall SM suspected that academics view much change as window dressing or just today's good idea, although the two PhD academic background respondents disagreed, one believing that academics view most change as embedded and the other admitting to being unsure. The one who supported a deep change description argued that academics view current change strategies as evolution from the previous strategic plan and that this promotes acceptance.

The majority though believed that SU's history of numerous change directions, a lack of understanding of the rationales behind much change and the fact that major current change was still in progress, would all support a surface descriptor from academics. There was also the general belief that academics often exhibit a short-term view, whereas SM had a longer-term perspective.

Some of them will believe that they have been here before and nothing will happen if they just keep quiet and keep their heads down." SM3

"They could see it (change) as short term because and in part they would be right because a lot of changes are followed, then are changed again in response, first of all to our own learning, realising that things could be done better .... We have a policy which says we will frame policies, we will frame regulations. We'll frame procedures and we will only add to them if the variation of practice within the original regulation has become unacceptably wide so as to put students, standards or quality at risk. And there will be further changes because life goes on, because we learn and because external constraints and external developments require us to respond." SM2

5.4 WHAT ARE THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVES IN IMPLEMENTING EXISTING CHANGE PROCESS AND ARE THESE APPLICABLE TO ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE THEORY?

5.4.1 Top-Down or Bottom-Up Change Process

Respondents were asked for their own perspective as to whether the change process at SU demonstrates top-down or bottom-up change theory. Three stated that change was top-down but with extensive academic consultation. The use of top-down strategies was required to respond to government and external agency directives and there were simply times in organisations when change led by management must occur. The other respondents supported a mixed model descriptor due to the consultative process prior to the Strategic Plan and a belief that devolution to the Schools has introduced more of an organic factor.

"If an army moves across the ground very fast it's because they all know where that are going and share a common goal. And therefore I think it is a good idea for all institutions contemplating change to try and ensure that people have had the full opportunity to get engaged in the process of debate and discussion which precedes change." SM3

"Well I think it comes back to best practice in managing change and I think that increasingly I've felt, you know, and a number of people have said this to me but academics and non-academics, that perhaps the OVC in time should be more prescriptive in terms of the way we do things ... and not leaving it for the Schools to interpret things. You run the risk of that interpretation being different." SM4

"... it's a bit of a mixed mode because some of it as well is coming in and driven by external factors still, but a lot of it, I think is being driven at School level and hopefully by academics at School level. I think our feeling, certainly in OVC is that we probably need to have some sort of greater corporate input in the future." SM5

"But it is more top-down then bottom-up. I don't sense there is a lot of, if I can put it in these terms, a lot of grassroots hunger for change, pushing for change. There are one or two bits of excellence in terms of trying to drive change forward from the bottom up." SM6

When asked for the negative or positive points of top-down change, respondents rated efficiency for a large organisation as promoting top-down change, as the alternative could create chaos. There was also a sense that academics do not realise the significance of the Strategic Plan or are not engaged with it. One OVC commented that though the intention to consult was good, ensuring the consistency of this was problematic;

"It's not the committee structures that are wrong. It's the way we use committees. In a way people are not representing the institution on those committees. They're coming in without having had a discussion with the School and then they're going back without stimulating discussion in the School ... They just come to the committee meetings and that's it." SM4

"So I'd like to think that individuals would believe that they can make a difference and I think that many of them have made a huge difference. But some will take the view that, whatever they do, nothing will happen, which I think is a mistake." SM3

The majority believed that academics perceive change to arrive by top-down means. Two of the professional background respondents though suggested different directions. One believed that academics sensed the mix of directions and the other that academics believed change to be within the remit of the Schools rather than the university..

5.4.2 Academics Contribution to Planning Strategic Change

When asked if academics contribute to planning strategic change the consensus was that some academics do contribute but at a minimal level or that the opportunity is there if they wish to get actively involved. A collective reason given for academics not being more active in change design was a belief that academics prioritise busy home lives. Two professional background participants believed that academics do contribute and indeed many initiatives come directly from the staff, particularly in their own work areas. The Heads of Schools were definitely believed to be contributing by management. One SM with an academic background again referred back to the Strategic Plan consultation exercises as an example of academic contribution.

"But I think a lot, and I think this is where we have to work more, I think a lot depends on the way it is managed, the work and the rest, and whether the academics feel that they have been acknowledged." SM4

"I think there are a number of different agendas and I think there are some academics that are in a state of denial with regard to the reality of the academic and commercial world we live in now. And going back to the past is really not an option." A1

I'm thinking about some of the business fellows for example, who are now driving forward a significant part of the enterprise agenda in their own work areas, their own Schools. And they are really bringing about meaningful change in what we do. What I don't have a strong feel for is how strong are the ripple effects from that across the whole academic community and are they actually only touching 20% of all academics. Are there actually 80% who just carry on doing what they were doing two years ago, five years ago, whatever." SM6

The question was then turned and the respondents invited to answer from the academics perspective. The majority believed that the majority of academics probably do not consider themselves as contributors to planning change but they should participate in some form.

"There should be opportunities for them to contribute. But I am not so open that I would say let's go into a big consultation every year about what we should be doing. No I think it needs top-down leadership. But then there should be an active contribution from everybody." SM6

All SM, except for the two Heads of Schools, generally do not believe that academics know enough about the 'big picture' to be able to contribute fully in this complex work environment but that the information was available to them if they truly wished to locate it. Again all were aware that disengagement was present with some proposing that the cause may be academics not recognising that information used for change planning originally derived from academic sources. One commented that cultural factors may be responsible for this noted lack of interest by some, in that both the HE business and the British character could be described as insular. Positive ideas to re-engage included more opportunities for discussion and, as raised before, that committee representatives should deliver more feedback to their constituency.

"I think if people did (avail themselves of the opportunity to learn the big picture) and they did get involved in these discussions ... they might be surprised at how well they are listened to. At least they might be aware that changes really do come from the products of thought and consideration and that they had a rationale answer for them." SM2

"To be honest when we go on and do road shows for OVC I mean the attendance is pretty limited and even the trade unions will say that getting people interested is a struggle." SM5

"We gave a session on strategic targets and how we were doing against our Strategic Plan. We realised afterwards that it was the first that many people had heard about our progress against strategic since the plan itself was launched, thirteen months previously. ... A lot of people probably had received a copy of the Strategic Plan with their August payslips and had put it on the shelf. And they probably, unless they could remember what they read at the time, had probably not had much contact with what the plan was trying to achieve." SM6

5.4.3 Academic Participation in the Change Process

All but one SM believed that academics probably feel change is simply 'done to them' but commented that when participation opportunities were offered, many academics decline the challenge. An academic background respondent reasoned that poor take-up could be due to an academic's preference to working alone, rather than in teams, and most were concerned that some academics may feel like change victims but not understand why.

SM were then asked how they believed the academics responded to the question of whether or not staff had a voice in planning change. The academic background sample all said that they honestly did not know how the academics answered but they guessed staff to have mixed reactions or perceive of themselves as voiceless. The professional background sample meanwhile connected a lack of academic voice to disengagement evidenced by few academics volunteering for committee work or proactively accepting involvement opportunities.

"I think one of the issues that is genuinely puzzling is that when you give academic staff I suppose in particular, an opportunity to engage or find out more, or to be involved more, there is a marked reluctance." SM5

5.4.4 Strategic Change Process Improvement Possibilities

SM responded with a solid yes as to whether the current change processes could be improved, defining visible leadership, better overall communications and reaching the non-unionised majority of academics directly as the three key improvements required. Some voices tempered this response and indicated that SU was competitively disadvantaged so quick decisions are necessary to compete with other institutions, resulting in insufficient time to develop gradual organic change methods. The situation is further compromised by the economic reality that change always requires resources and those were in short supply.

"I think that it's ensuring that discussion has taken place. I know that it (another institution) went through the same sort of exercise, consultations on the Strategic Plan. So there was a sort of check that discussion had taken place and that people had been reached. Here I took that on trust." SM4

"One of the things that bothers me is in terms of the official representation of staff....NATFHE, I don't know how many members they have but it's probably in the order of about 200 from 650 academics ... I actually know that I'm not really talking to genuine representatives ... they represent a particular point of view but they would admit to themselves that they could not claim to represent the whole staff. I believe we need to try and find some way of engaging more directly with staff ... It's not going to be easy to do but I do think we need greater buy-in and probably even better communication would help us to do that." SM5

When asked if academics need anything to help them adapt to change, all respondents proposed better communication between themselves and academics. SM believed though that communication is a two-way process and to respond academics need the opportunity

to understand the operational context and better exposure to the rationale behind the change decisions. In effect academics need to proactively engage more. The SM majority observed that the communication process has started to improve but needed further enhancements. Minority opinions included the acknowledgement that academics need time and support to engage, neither of which they have and that the modern reliance on email may actually impede communication. Also some noted again the thought that academics need to identify less with the discipline or School and more with the university.

"I think there are great opportunities for improving our communication channels and I think that this would make a significant difference in embedding change, reinforcing where we are trying to get to, through more effective communication." SM6

5.4.5 Relationships Between Rewards and New Behaviour

The study then explored if the current reward system impeded or rewarded change implementation from the SM perspective. Results were very mixed with support for some form of pay by performance from all three SM with professional backgrounds. Four SM including all of those with academic backgrounds, believed the problem was actually related to addressing poor performance. They correctly identified that some academics feel resentful that colleagues can and do make minimal effort and contribution, while others give 110% and, whether academics change or not, remuneration is the same. Two others believed that the rewards system impacted only at the margins, however all agreed that there may be carrots other than money. Academic recognition was deemed important and was the best reward according to some SM, while others preferred time remission.

"But, as in every institution, I think that it takes a long time to communicate that sense of purpose throughout the whole staff, particularly in the situation where you've got a massive workforce where there are very few incentives for individual excellence. To my mind a unionised reward system drives down ambition." SM3

"I think the reward structures at universities are based on a common pay structure, with little reward for great performance and little penalty for poor performance. This means that people tend to believe that whatever they do, nobody notices." SM3

"I think what concerns me more, it's not so much the reward system, it's our ability to manage poor performance and I don't think poor performance is a major issue in the sense there's a lot of it but it's de-motivating for those who see those and I've heard it expressed in this way, getting away with it when they are giving 110%. For me I think that's a greater problem than the reward system. We're looking at the reward system and the teaching fellowships and hopefully giving the signal that learning and teaching is important. But managing poor performance is an issue." SM4.

When asked what the academics thought about the relationship between change implementation and reward, comments were mixed. Three respondents thought that academics believed that current reward systems were not encouraging change and more carrots would help. Others' responses were that quite a number of academics would claim to be under-appreciated and under-rewarded anyway; while another proposed that academic work was a privilege and although outside work pays more it has different values, so there is a trade-off.

When asked if they thought the reward system should be adapted to reflect change implementation, responses were again very mixed, reflecting the individual's job history. Again those with professional backgrounds were warmer to the idea. The negative responses varied from a straight no, to the belief that change was part of the job so why should new behaviours attract extra reward? Some respondents warned that attempts in the past to introduce elements of value-added pay had been very controversial and rewarding one area usually translates into dropping awards from another for resource reasons, so someone will be unhappy. Management ideas to introduce rewards for change included the idea of linking it to enterprise or creating posts where people can play a lead

in areas of change. Only one person clearly voted yes, rewards should be linked to new behaviour, and that was with caveats;

"I think so, but I mean it would be better for the university if actually people, especially people on professional contracts, saw that change is just part of life really and therefore, to some extent, it's (rewarding change) almost a negative ... it's almost the stick rather than the carrot. I think that more and more people are realising that if they don't change that in fact at some point or other it's going to catch up with them." SM5

When the interviewer inquired how they thought academics reacted to this question, they expected academic response to be mixed, depending on which academic had been interviewed. The majority thought there would be probably more academics for than against pay-by-performance, as while some academics would say that such a reward system is dreadful, divisive and discouraging teamwork, other academics would encourage its implementation.

"I can imagine them saying 'What's in it for us? Why change? I'm not even paid a decent wage at the moment'." SM6

A closing thought from a respondent;

"And unless we can change ourselves to better stand behind that Plan (Strategic) and deliver the sort of things that the Plan is looking to deliver, unless we can do that, then I can see us slipping back over time. I can see us becoming less competitive in the sector and I can see us having quite a few difficulties in the future which will ultimately manifest in financial difficulties. However I am confident that we do have the capacity to bring about change, but we are not yet going fast enough." SM6

CHAPTER SIX

ANALYSIS OF THE ACADEMIC AND SENIOR MANGEMENT FINDINGS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

For ease of comprehension the research questions are replicated again below.

RESEARCH PRIMARY QUESTION

What is the relationship, if any, between organisational change theories and the perceptions and reactions of academics and senior management at SU University to changes in the working environment?

RESEARCH SUB-QUESTIONS

1. What are the current change status quo and the drivers for change in the working environment at the university?
2. How do academics experience and react to change in their working environment?
3. Can organisational change theory be applied to academic change experiences?
4. What level of knowledge is exhibited by senior management about staff experience of change?
5. What are the management perspectives in implementing existing change process and are these applicable to organisational change theory?
6. Can the Higher Education Change Implementation Model (Caswell 2006) be successfully applied to current university change practice?

These set questions will be discussed within the format of key findings, which reveals three main tasks for the analysis chapter. The first challenge is to discuss the academic opinion, experience of, and reactions to, change and apply these results to organisational change theory. The second is to repeat the process with the management findings and then compare them to the academic responses. The final step is to apply the results to the proposed Higher Education Change Implementation Model by Caswell (2006) (Fig 8, p 57) that was developed from the literature and discuss the fit, or lack of, obtained.

6.2 DISCUSSION OF ACADEMIC RESULTS

6.2.1 Academic Reaction to External and Internal Changes to HE

Most academics demonstrated a lack of interest and non-political reactions to HE changes, with limited knowledge on sector-wide concerns and trends. The exception was academics employed by business based Schools who displayed more sector knowledge. This majority detachment could be interpreted as insular and evidence of disengagement with the wider environment. This was surprising as such news has been extensively covered in both general and HE sector press. From the changes they had noted, concerns were expressed about both their excess speed and validity. The two most common change concerns for HE overall were a perceived lower quality of student at entry and increased bureaucracy. Although Schein (1985) proposed that academics perceive the external environment as threatening, overall SU academics, once prompted, were pleased-to-neutral with these macro-sector changes, though worried about how such changes would be nationally resourced. The researcher was left with the impression that the big picture held little interest for them as discussion prompts were required to generate discussion.

Reaction was stronger when discussing SU specifically, with academics exhibiting both positive and negative responses. Negatively they found themselves with both more numerous and less traditionally prepared students who demonstrate a consumer perspective of HE; resulting in role change as defined by Hirschhorn (1988) which is adjusting the relationship between academics and students. This perception was clustered amongst those respondents who were unionised, male or worked at Schools with poor recruitment. Academics further reported more bureaucracy and paperwork, generated by increased quality demands that they believe are driven by the university's interpretation of government initiatives. This majority reaction is contrary to Shelley (1998) who presented a more positive perspective with academics satisfied with their roles. The academics in the Shelley report exhibited a good general knowledge of management forces at work but noted no personal impact. SU academics on the other hand have noted

considerable impact, defined as a heavier workload, increased time pressures and information overload. The difference in results may be institutional or reflect the earlier dating for the Shelley study.

Some positive change responses included the belief that the university product delivered is of better quality, especially as academics are encouraged to improve their IT skills. This last may be a result of the many workshops that SU provides to update employee work skills. Again the business based Schools made the fuller contribution and overall women and non-unionised staff were more positive.

Academics believed that some colleagues adapt better than others to change, with the younger respondents being predisposed to believe that their older colleagues are struggling. Most of the sample, especially the men, also believed that their relationships with colleagues have been affected negatively due to time and work pressures. There was general agreement with Levin (1976) that change always generates conflict, time lags and frustration accompanied by real resentment, especially by the women respondents, about unfair workloads, in agreement with both Henkel (2000) and McInnis (2001). The Henkel study in particular noted that attitudes are hardening towards colleagues who not make a full contribution but insist on maintaining their old roles; this response was noted at SU.

The three key staff reactions that are consistent throughout this study are already clear in these opening responses. First, that active academic disengagement with their work environment is present, second, that increased workplace requirements spotlight and increase a sense of unfairness in work assignment and thirdly, that these change reactions are amplified by lack of time to execute new demands. All of which triangulate the findings from the Shelley (2005) study which included respondents at two former UK polytechnics. The repetitive response of lack of time to react to, or manage, change is supportive of Trowler et al. (2005) which found that change is encouraged by reflective practise and such reflection requires time, which SU academics believe is in short supply.

Most respondents agreed that change is a burden, particularly when they suspect it is merely 'change for change's sake.' A minority did reflect the more proactive themes suggested by Johnston (1999) that certain changes such as the new transparency required in accountability procedures can assist clearer course outcomes and such product improvement could increase SU's competitive ability. The findings also confirmed that some academics have indeed used change to produce new identities for themselves as described in McWilliam, Hatcher and Meadmore (1999).

Most respondents described themselves as having good relationships with line management within Schools but most sensed little or no affinity with SM. Those with professional backgrounds all shared this perception. A minority though believed that management were making more of an effort to be available and in closer contact with academics.

6.2.2 Exploring the Academic Experience and Reaction to Change in Their Working Environment

Overall most respondents agreed with Marris (1986) in that both change and human resistance to change are facts of life. Whether the academic liked or disliked change in their personal lives, and some, especially the over fifty or those that had suffered recent loss or potential redundancy were very risk averse, the majority preferred to see change clearly approaching, allowing adequate preparation. Understanding the rationale behind change was mooted as the key to claiming both ownership and control of the situation. Only three academics described themselves as loving change and were not averse to change controlling them. In total it was noted that it was the non-unionised academics that shared a more positive response to this question.

When asked about recent change at the university the academics again exhibited limited unprompted knowledge or replied at the micro level. Once the prompts of quality, widening participation and the enterprise/research/teaching decision were mentioned,

discussion improved. The interviewer noted a surprising lack of knowledge or interest in the larger picture of their own work environment, through widening participation was front of mind with the women. All respondents believed after prompting that change has resulted in increased workload and agreed with the dissonance exhibited about the teaching/research/administration split in academic responsibilities in Taylor et al.(1998), Nixon (1996) and Staniforth & Harland (1999). Despite its importance to management, only one academic referred to the current University Strategic Plan throughout the whole interview process, yet this document is the guiding source of much change within SU. Again only one person mentioned the parking charges, yet this matter is currently supposed to be a hot button with fellow academics according to academic activists. Overall there was again a sense of disengagement with the change process.

When academics were asked if they would describe recent strategic change as morphostatic (window dressing) or morphogentic (profound), opinions were divided, through the men voted for window dressing. There was little solid support for believing work changes to be embedded in the university culture, as most characterised them as only first order changes (morphostatic), characterised by rebuttal or re-orientation response strategies as reported by Laughlin (1991). Many perceive that numerous changes are government driven and this belief may facilitate characterising change as window dressing, as both governments and programs can and do change. Academics stated that they have no quarrel with 'real' quality issues only the paper chase involved with 'fake' ones and they believe that they can distinguish between the two, and further suggest that SU deals mostly with the latter.

The minority of academics that acknowledged changes to the university interpretative schemes, morphogenic change, appeared to define them as resulting from colonisation by management, rather than the more organic evolutionary change route (Parker 2001).

Overall results show support for both Parker (2001) who reported that academics are still avoiding deep change in core values and Spencer–Matthews (2001) who proposed that deep university change must include both technical (behavioural) change and cultural (attitudinal) change. Further, the academic disengagement with change process noted may demonstrate Carroll's (1997) belief, that the principle change barriers are institutional cynicism or the belief that nothing can ever be changed, to be present.

Asked about their personal coping strategies for strategic change, twelve academics elicited negative views and five failed to respond; with no academic initially using a proactive strategy. The most common response, in agreement with Henkel's (2005) study was to re-interpret the change to make it more acceptable. This option was popular with all of the respondents with recent loss/ job redundancy and the business based academics. The other negative reactions to requested change were firstly to sort through changes to see which might affect the academic personally and they are willing to implement. Another was to postpone implementation till the change was judged to have actually happened and then conform. Lastly, to literally delete the change request, then wait and see if it returned. All these actions could be comparable to Dyer (1984) who warned of the dangers of pseudo-acceptance – lip service that only results in first order change, and Henkel's (2005) finding of surface change leading to accommodating change only within existing frameworks so values and agendas remain undisturbed.

Applying these results to the study of academic reaction by Benmore (2001) one has evidence for two of the four strategies found; re-interpretation of the effort-reward bargain and eventual conformity. When further applied to Trowler's model as cited by Henkel (2000), this study supports all the academic reaction strategies expected with some reflection and ambivalence, followed by accommodation or adaptation.

This initial ignoring of change mentioned by some respondents supports Marris' (1986) theory that people tend to ignore or avoid events that don't match their understanding or try to control the deviation from expected behaviour. If these techniques fail, people do

indeed isolate the innovation by segregation, as human survival depends on our ability to predict events.

The delete option demonstrates support for Reed and Palmer's (1972) application of Freud's (1955) belief that the ego avoids excessive stimuli through flight, thus avoiding the situation. SU academics dealt with moderate stimuli through adaptation and learning to bring about appropriate modifications in the external world that suited their own advantage, again the re-interpretation of change. Overall the re-interpretation and blocking mechanisms exhibited offer support for Hirschorn (1990) in that academics do create psychological boundaries to contain their anxiety and perceived threats and the use of social defences.

Results showed that current change strategies are generating some anger and much stress. The anger is often not at the change itself but the belief that change translates to extra work without corresponding additional resources or reward. This thought is expanded later in this chapter. The finding of work-related stress for academics reaffirms the work of Mahony (1997), Kinman (2001) and McInnis (1999 & 2000).

Positively, all respondents believed that change is part of their job as academics in support of Kennedy (1997) as cited by Depauw (2003), though four respondents considered further that an academic job description includes applying criticality to change.

Roughly half the respondents could not identify anyone that they believed influenced their reaction to change. The over fifty, non –unionised and professionally based academics agreed that it is a personal decision. Some of the men referred to spousal influence. Interestingly, only three mentioned referring to the union's opinions on this topic, even though the majority were union members. Again concerns were raised that colleagues may not be as adaptable as the interviewee and personal experiences related when colleagues have rejected change, and again the study recorded the mantra that

change is difficult for older academics. A few respondents proposed that one cannot quantify this topic or expect a mass reaction, as academics are not homogeneous.

Nine academics commented with a negative tone that the university simply wants them to implement change policies, without question or feedback. West-Burnham in Bush and West-Burnham (1994) proposed that for the academic the claims of the individual to exercise personal judgement in an autonomous manner, and the claims of the organisation to insist on conformity to common values, purpose and activity, constitutes a cultural threat, which is not conclusive to simple implementation. A few academics, mostly women, thought the university did encourage participation in the change process. Again, some disengagement with the workplace was noted.

6.2.3 Applying Organisational Change Theory to Academic Change Experiences

Fifteen of the academics identified the use of a top-down approach to design change policy at SU, similar to Fullan's (2001) explanation of Kotter's (1996) Model of Top-Down change and in agreement with the findings of Finlay (2005). Some academics expanded this thought to add other secondary sources such as outside bodies and government to this primary driver. Unfortunately a top-down model can struggle to implement successful change due to lack of organic source and perceived need for the change by those affected (Fullan 2001, citing Mintzberg et al. 1998). There was no evidence that SU practises the Beckhard and Pritchard (1992) model of simplified top-down change, which is driven by inspirational vision and leadership as lack of leadership was discussed earlier. The predominate use of top-down methodology was further supported by the respondents' explanation that change implementation was a combination of trickle down and imposition.

There was also some support for student consumerism driving change and this represents an interesting angle that could benefit from further academic thought. Only one academic believed that academic input was present in the change process, thus supporting bottom-up organisational change theory by Beer et al. (1990) as cited by Fullan (2001).

This existence of a top-town change direction was supported by further academic response as they perceive themselves only as implementers of change, not planners, this view was specifically noted from the business disciplines; yet Newton (2003) found that;

"*Engaging departments in contributing to the development of strategy is as important as engaging them in its implementation.*" *p. 439.*

Though four mentioned contributing through schools or committees, more staff saw their contribution only at the micro level. A clear minority view from the women was that the opportunity to contribute to change exists, if one wished to be involved. In summary, results mirror the insufficient ownership of change and lack of bottom–up commitment from the Newton (2003) New University Study.

Further, when asked why academics fail to contribute to planning strategic change, many replies demonstrated a degree of suspicion. Overwhelmingly there was a perceived lack of communication within the process and further complaints that the reasons and benefits for change often lack clarity, or again that academics experience change overload. There are suspicions that a perceived lack of open forums limits academic input, or that when asked for input it is already too late in the process, the decision has already been made. Some respondents, particularly the non-unionised ones, confided that this may be good news as academics are not that competent at management and/or lack the time or motivation to contribute, despite their public claims to the contrary. Fears were also expressed that showing an interest may generate yet more work for already busy staff. Academics also believe that top-down change occurs because this is the university tradition. Nine of the respondents believed that major change is imposed, with their

contribution at the unit/degree level only. A few believed that they gained some ownership over the change process by their re-interpretation methodologies, while others had opted out of the process through disengagement. This acknowledgement of disengagement was supported by both academics with a professional background and union members. Only one academic claimed to feel an integral part of the change process though overall women were again more positive in their responses.

Having established that academics on the whole don't see themselves as contributors in planning change, they were asked if they should be. Eight respondents agreed that academics should participate with the strongest support in the business oriented schools and the over fifty group. Again a lack of time and motivation were reasons given against this premise mostly by the men and the union members. There was a minority view from some respondents with professional backgrounds that strategic change was a management function and thus not a suitable area for academic participation. In total these responses could be problematic, as McInnis (2001) cites Clark (1998) as stating that it's impossible to implement university cultural change without the active support of the multiple academic groupings which must also be integral to the steering core; at SU many are unwilling to participate. These findings also concur with Newton (2003).

Women and the over fifty groups admitted that their lack of knowledge about the big picture may impact on their ability to participate in change design. In contrast the younger academics and those from business oriented disciplines acknowledged that such information is available should they wish to access it, with time restraints again given as a valid reason not to do so. These finding do create a 'chicken and egg' scenario as there is no clear relationship between lack of preparation for participation and management invitation for participation. This situation is supported by the literature, as the development of managerial models by universities has led to this 'need to know' mentality according to Watson & Crossley (2001). The development of sectional interests demonstrated could lead to internal conflict and a lack of accountability to shareholders, including academics (West-Burnham cited in Bush and West-Burnham1994), as SU

academics do not having enough institutional financial information to either understand or accept proposed change (Bobcock and Watson1994).

It was interesting that was little academic support for the concept of the Union representing the academic voice. The women felt adequately represented by Schools or committee representatives. Five respondents, mostly men and members of the younger age group, did not consider that they had a voice at all and further a small minority believed that they spoke for themselves. Again there was an impression of School first, a lack of university belonging or identity; this sense of belonging to 'balkanized sub-cultures where loyalty to the sub-group supersedes loyalty to the university '(Sergiovanni 1984 cited by Bush 1995).

6.2.4 Academic Recommendations for Change

There was very vocal response to the question of whether the change process can be improved at the university and the primary problem was defined by all sub-groups as poor internal communication. The literature agrees that poor communication is both the principal problem and through resolution, a possible solution (Bathmaker 1999 and Adams 2000). Academics supported Martin (1999) that changes would be more acceptable if accompanied by more explanation of the rationale and the benefits the change would bring from their own perspective. This lack of published reasoning behind a requested change was commented on by many of the non-union members and the men.

The academics' second recommendation was for a more visible consultation process and this is strongly supported by the literature. McInnis (2001) citing Amabile (1997) agreed that frequent feedback is necessary so staff know the state of play. Fullan (1991) citing Marris (1975) believed that more than just an explanation is actually needed, and Scott (1994) recommended that successful change must be designed to allow time for debate and assimilation to prevent poor or multiple interpretation and lack of a single focus at source. This need for investment in time and resources to embed a change was strongly

supported by the union members and four respondents who had suffered a loss or faced possible redundancy. Martin (1999) found that academics report a lack of consultation of change, it just appears in their lives and the academics at SU agreed. This proposal is especially interesting as the university is proud of its proactive approach to obtaining academic input to the Strategic Plan. Academics do not acknowledge this contribution and further appear totally oblivious to the presence and impact of the Plan on their lives.

The academics believed that they are suffering from change overload, a situation where second generation changes are happening to changes not yet embedded; a symptom from Toffler's (1970) Future Shock, the disease of change, and a finding shared with Silver (2003). They again proposed that an aggravating factor was the fast pace of change, which creates insecurity in its wake; thus supporting Thorsen (1996) which found the crux of the change implementation problem was that the rate of change was too fast to allow academics to adapt. Further academics maintained that change acceptance and implementation would be improved if members of the Office of the Vice Chancellor were more visible around campus.

6.2.5 The Relationship between Reward Systems and Change

The academic interviews finished by returning to an earlier concern, as to whether the current reward system rewards change implementation. Fifteen out of seventeen academics from all demographics said no, in fact it is a positive disincentive to change as, whether one changes or not, the reward is the same so why adopt new behaviour? Versions of pay-by-performance enjoyed strong support with these academics, again a view that is contrary to their union position for many. Remuneration is further perceived to be unfair, as a system of inequitable workload which is then rewarded equally has developed. This is blamed particularly by the women on a university-wide failure to address poor academic performance; leading to the perception that harder working lecturers are rewarded with more work and in comparison those who work less are rewarded with even less work. The findings then agree with the Bett Report (1999) as

cited by Deem et al (2000) which reported that carrots work better than sticks at motivating academics but there are few carrots available in HE today. These findings are also supportive of McInnis (2001) and McWillaim, Hatcher & Meadmore (1999) citing Ramsden (1998) which all agreed that attempts to reposition a university as entrepreneurial will not succeed unless SM understand the skills, passions and outlooks of academics and how their core work performance is influenced by the reward system. Bobcock and Watson (1994) agreed that academic rewards must be linked to the required change, while McInnis (2001) cited Amabile (1997) as recommending that the reward system must reward and recognise creative ideas to create the perception of excitement and challenge.

Defining reward requires further study but there was considerable support for time as the currency; as respondents believed that their free study/thinking time, which they perceived is an integral part of academic life, is being eliminated. Dearlove (2002) concurred that free time is required not only to allow change participation but also to engage in the hard work needed if the change is to embed. Lack of self-scheduled time at SU could be a cause of respondents losing motivation and disengaging from the whole of university life. Dearlove (2002) continues agreeing that the very nature of academic work makes it difficult to control by management and academics need some unscheduled time as much of their output depends on serendipity and self-motivation. Strategies that result in loss of motivation could then be judged counter to the overall cause and one of those strategies may be the lack of relationship between reward and preferred behaviour. Berstein (1996) and McInnis (2001) also recommended that universities explore the type of incentives required to get academics to engage constructively in formal quality management systems. Here the younger respondents were keen on a system where personal and professional development time was the currency.

Two lecturers believed the current reward system does recompense change in behaviour and both supported the community of equals argument, leading to concerns for them that different carrots discourages teamwork, a traditional characteristic of academia.

It is interesting to note that the official union positions on rewards was not mentioned by any respondent and unionised lecturers exhibited the same disengagement on this issue from their union as they did from their employer. Academics failed to demonstrate knowledge of, or wish to include any union view relevant to this discussion and often the contributions from some union members were dramatically opposed to official union policy, yet the member failed to acknowledge any discrepancy in viewpoints. Both the union and the university may wish to consider these findings in further change discussions.

6.3 DISCUSSION OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT FINDINGS AND COMPARISON WITH ACADEMIC RESULTS

6.3.1 Reaction to External and Internal Changes in HE

Overall senior management (SM) demonstrated an acceptable sense of academic reaction and disquiet, and the claim of some academics of being misunderstood and unappreciated was only partly correct. The main variance between the two groups was their solutions for resolution.

Both sets of respondents agreed that HE is undergoing tremendous change and agreed the main changes. Both also believed the leading change driver to be outside pressures, especially the UK government, though the academics exhibited less depth of knowledge of exactly how cause and effect relationships occur in the sector. Academics and SM concurred that these drivers are mostly within the UK, but management demonstrated more of a global perspective and this knowledge gap manifests in poor understanding from academics of the reasoning behind many changes. There was a sense that managers believed themselves to be powerless in the face of external change, as per Bathmaker (1999); though all believed that these sector changes were positive or mainly positive, while the academics themselves were generally more neutral and identified both good and bad elements to sector change.

Reactions to changes within SU between the two respondent groups were more diverse and although both groups agreed on the types of change experienced by academics, management collectively were very positive about recent and planned changes while the academic reactions were mostly negative. Management did however correctly predict this response.

Asked to define their relationship with academics, some managers, particularly the two from the OVC, stated that they did not personally know or talk to that many academics, due to the distance created by their positions. Academics agreed they had little direct contact with senior management, although most did believe they have a positive working relationship with their direct managers. These findings support Benmore (2001) who found that the increasing distance of HE managers impacts on their understanding of academic issues. Bathmaker (1999) also reported this 'us and them' divide and a lack of everyday contact between the two groups. Further when asked to describe their relationship with academics the OVC participants again were unsure, in contrast with their colleagues with professional backgrounds who all readily defined themselves as managers of academics.

When asked if change impacts on academics' relationships with each other, senior managers delivered a mixed response. Three thought it must, while the others had no clear idea or believed that such relationships were not affected. Academics however believed that change does impact on personal relationships within the university, unfortunately believing it to be mostly negative and making their working lives less satisfying.

All managers agreed with the statement that change can be a burden and correctly believed that this response would also be reported by academics. The two Head of School respondents exhibiting detailed understanding for the academic position.

The differing response to the university Strategic Plan by both groups was of great interest. It was obvious that both the document and its creative process was extremely important to senior managers, especially to those from the OVC, as all talked at length about it; whereas the reality and implementation of the Plan seems almost non-existent to the academics. Only one academic mentioned it in passing and this should be of concern, due to the importance of this document in both explaining and implementing major change and the university's plans to commence work on the next version.

6.3.2 Exploring the Experience and Reactions to Change in the Working Environment

Overall senior managers demonstrated a broad understanding of academic reaction to and experience of change, though those from a professional background were at pains to point out that academics are not a generic mass so each will react differently. Again some distance was noticeable in the OVC responses. SM understood that change can be upsetting and difficult for some academics to accept and often a challenge. The degree of empathy expressed varied, depending on whether the manager had a predominately industry or mostly academic background. The former expected more of an employer-demanding and employee-accepting change model than the latter.

Management also expected academics to be both more interested and have a better understanding of recent change than the academics actually reported. In a nutshell, major strategic change is very important to managers but unfortunately less so to many academics. This overall lack of interest from some academics was disturbing as it implies deep disengagement with the institution in agreement with Prichard and Willmot's (1997) findings. Academics described some changes as profound and more as window dressing, while managers, although describing all strategic change as profound themselves, were quite cynical and those with a professional background in particular, expected academics to describe most changes as window dressing.

Academics expected the university to require them to unreservedly accept change and implement as written, often with little opportunity for discussion. In comparison, management confirmed that their preferred scenario would be for academics to welcome, understand and engage with change before implementing it. The managers were very clear that change should be implemented without re-interpretation, so one could question their stated preference for academics to understand and engage with the policy. Unfortunately the academics preferred response to new policy and process was the re-

interpretation option, resulting in less agreement for the support, evade, accommodate and appease options found by Prichard and Willmot (1997). SU academics choose the subvert option.

6.3.3 Applying Organisational Change Theory

The majority of senior managers described the university change process as top-down, driven by their responsibility to respond to external drivers, and they were insistent that change is formed subsequent to extensive staff consultation. One OVC respondent did acknowledge that although the intention to consult was laudable, ensuring the consistency of the practice was problematic. Academics agreed that the direction is top-down but did not refer to their contribution. The majority of managers correctly predicted that academics would agree to the top-down change descriptor, although two SM with professional backgrounds understood that academics would also acknowledge that some internal change is created from multiple directions. Both SM and academics believed that change is implemented by a trickle down process.

Senior management believed that top-down change is necessary as it promotes efficiency in the competitive, fast moving HE market. Academics generally agreed that they are change implementers not planners but their reactions to this truth were mixed. Some academics supported the concept of management exclusively planning change, unfettered by academic contribution; however this permission appeared to result from a sense of disengagement rather than a strong belief that the system is correct. Others, about half the sample, would like the opportunity to participate more but often are unable to clearly articulate why they personally are not involved. This finding is contrary to Bathmaker (1999); where academics actively believed that their feedback was ignored due to management not appreciating the core value of academic work. In comparison SU exhibited a sense of vacuum. Managers believed that few academics contribute to strategic change, but the opportunity is there if they wish to participate, and correctly predicted that some academics would acknowledge this home truth.

Management believed that academics are often not informed enough about the big picture to ensure valid change contributions but again the opportunity to educate themselves is available. Academics on the whole agree with this hypothesis, and both groups blamed academic lack of motivation for overall non-participation. The single manager with an academic background who proposed that the reason academics do not participate is their preference to work singly rather than in teams was not supported by the academic findings. These results are contrary to the Bathmaker (1999) study where the lecturers were quite clear that a university should be driven from the bottom. Should this disengagement process gather speed at SU, management may react similarly to their counterparts in the Prichard and Willmot (1997) study; which found that their managers' response to academic complaints of over-work was to further withdraw decision-making power under the assumption that academics did not have the time to contribute. This would be an unfortunate development at SU.

Academics believed that top-down change encourages a lack of communication in the whole system; resulting in them being unable to appreciate the rationale for change decisions or ascertain what the overall and personal benefits could be. Another emerging problem with this change methodology is that, without participation, half of the academics thought that change was done to them rather than by them, which they resent. The result may be that their re-interpretation change response is an attempt to gain some change ownership. Senior managers correctly thought that most academics would vote for the 'done to me' category but referred repeatenly to academic lack of participation. Again, the result is a sense of unease caused by disengagement and the creation of the need to constantly manage resulting tensions, as found by Newton (2003).

When senior managers were asked how academics would define their voice, those with an academic background were either unsure or thought academics would consider themselves voiceless. SM with a professional background also acknowledged the lack of an academic voice but were able to connect it to disengagement. Academic response was

also mixed but not so negative. The key area of disagreement was the differing perceptions of the Strategic Plan, with management, especially those from OVC, repeatedly stating that academics participated in change through the consultation process for the Strategic Plan. The academics though never mentioned the Plan as an opportunity for academic involvement and demonstrated no interest in it.

6.3.4 Senior Management Recommendations for Improvement

Senior management all gave considerable reflective thought to how the change process could be improved and many of their suggestions matched academic responses. The paramount recommendations were the need for more visible leadership, improved communications and better methods to engage the academics in the process. All three recommendations are supported by the Literature Review and previous SU studies. Management believed that the key element in poor implementation was poor communication guiding the trickle down process. Academics agreed that lack of communication was a prime problem, but also requested more information overall and, as discussed below, more carrots. Both groups then agreed with Bathmaker (1999) and Deem et al. (2000) that the essential communication process to move forward is often missing, leaving one to wonder that if both groups agree better communication is vital, why has the problem not been previously pro-actively addressed.

6.3.5 Management Perceptions of the Current Reward System

Management reaction was very mixed as to whether the current reward system impacts on the success of change implementation. All SM agreed the problem of mismanaged poor performance as identified by the academics and recognised that there may be non-monetary reward alternatives that can be used as their staff suggested. In reference to pay-by-performance, the management reaction was varied; the SM from professional backgrounds all supporting some use of pay by performance. Overall though SM created the impression that they were wary of radical change to the present system, which of

course is legislated and union agreed. This finding is contrary to Varghese (2004) who proposed that incentives are indeed important in transforming the behaviour patterns of both individuals and institutions in education and that professoriate support for change may have to be bought. Senior managers believed that academics would also exhibit a mixed response but overall take a traditional stance against a pay (reward) by performance system. In this they agree with Benmore (2001) who found managers to believe that the effort-reward system at their institution was basically good.

Academic reaction actually was more radical than the managers anticipated, with the majority of respondents feeling under rewarded and in support of reward by performance. Academics believed that the current reward system proactively discourages new behaviour and requires amendment, and in this they agreed with the Bathmaker (1999) finding that there are few incentives to motivate change. It is interesting to note that, while the senior managers deferred to the union position on this, the academics defined their support as one of personal ideology.

6.3.6 Overall Perceptional Match

Overall the management level of understanding of academic change concerns at SU was reasonably supportive, with clear evidence of proactive attempts to connect with staff, as evidenced by their previous use of staff satisfaction surveys. This finding is contrary to Benmore (2001) which found levels of management understanding to be low. Again though one must ask why with a reasonable level of agreement, identified problems have not been resolved prior to this study.

6.4 COMPARISON WITH HIGHER EDUCATION CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION MODEL (Caswell 2006)

6.4.1 The Model as Proposed

From the secondary research, the author proposed a new model to provide a best practice framework to ensure deeper and more effective change implementation in HE. The model is replicated on the next page and this chapter concludes with the application of the SU findings and a full discussion on resulting fit. In chapter seven this discussion will be developed into recommendations to ensure progression in change process.

Five Pathways to Deep Change

1. Leadership

Clear corporate, rather than school level, vision and leadership

+

2. Think big, act small

Shared, holistic, long-term strategic direction achieved in logical single steps

+

3. Inclusion of all stakeholders in change policy

Open consultation between top and bottom to build academic ownership of change

+

4. Best practice communication systems

Reasoned inclusive communication for change

+

5. Proactively address change impact issues on staff

Invest in staff development and education in the new culture

Realise that impact of change is as important as implementation of change

Rework reward system to acknowledge successful change implementation

Methodology

Through small group policy initiations to wider involvement

Results

1. Accelerating the embedding of cultural change to the corporate body
2. Encouraging positive academic acceptance of workplace change

Higher Education Change Implementation Model

Caswell (2006)

6.4.2 Discussion of Application of Model to Findings

6.4.2.1 Model Pathway Discussion

The first requirement of the model is that deep change requires strong leaders who enjoy a trust relationship with staff. Unfortunately the SU academics, in common with most of the sector, exhibit more of a School than university identity. School line management are a known factor, university management in agreement with their own predictions are personally unknown to many. Both groups report little daily contact so there is no structure in place to encourage trust and promote mixing. Such a lack of daily networking has resulted in 'the great divide' and is not helpful to institutional cohesion. Academics proposed more visible leadership and Senior Managers agreed that this would help build a more corporate vision.

The next pathway to successful change implementation is to think big but act small; the idea of sharing a holistic, long-term strategic direction achieved in logical single steps. At SU this has been attempted through both the current and impending Strategic Plans but the findings show a massive imbalance in the Plan's perception. It is a non-entity for the academics and its creation is not perceived to be a means of contributing to planning change. The Strategic Plan and its development process were on the other hand very important for management and they incorrectly believed academics to share this perception and be excited at the opportunity to contribute.

Overall it was obvious that strategic changes are far more important to management than too many academics and this thought leads to the third pathway: that all stakeholders must be included in change policy. While both groups believed in the concept of open consultation between top and bottom to build academic ownership of change, only the managers believed this to actually occur. Academics viewed their role as implementers not planners of change and only a minority believed that the university honestly wanted their involvement. The problem with encouraging inclusion is that mixed signals are

received from academics as to whether they want an active planning role or actually prefer to complain from the sidelines. Many suggested lack of time or motivation as reasons that prevent involvement but the validity of these excuses requires interrogation to explore if there are other underlying issues. Certainly there is a sense that managers would prefer involved academics, they are not deliberating cutting them out of the process; SU simply does not have a working strategy to involve them. Unfortunately the result of academic non-involvement, whether intentional or accidental, is that both academics and management agreed that there is no clear indicator that academics deem themselves to have a voice within the university. Bringing academic voices into the planning process could present a challenge.

Improving the communication system was the key respondent demand from both camps in this study. Without clear communication the reasoning behind a change and the benefits it may offer remain hidden. The study did find that managers expected staff to have a deeper understanding of change and the reasons for it than the staff demonstrated. Academics like to see change coming over the horizon in both their personal and work lives and most find unexpected change frightening; yet unexpected change is what occurs in their work environment. Without full information academics are hard pressed to support change as written and suspicion grows that the change, especially quality issues, is not legitimate. The need for better communication systems has already been flagged by the university's previous studies and solutions are in progress. It was interesting to note that the academics do not seem to view their union as a communication channel between themselves and management.

The last path to embedded change is to proactively address the impact of change on staff, rather than just concentrate on the change itself and place the people involved front and centre. Academics believed that the university is either unaware of the additional burdens that change brings or does not rank possible staff distress high on their agenda. They believed their complaints of too much change too fast and increased workloads are not

acknowledged, and that management fail to give sufficient attention to the process of bedding-in change.

Managerial findings actually demonstrated a high level of both understanding and sympathy for the academic position; there is clear miscommunication and lost opportunity here. Where the management were found wanting was their lack of understanding as to how academic roles and relationships with each other are suffering from the impact of change, as forming new roles requires time and the academics believe this has not been allowed for. Though the relationship is not proven, academics believed that their jobs are more stressful because of change and this can create a victim mentality. The university is aware of these issues from previous internal research and does invest in staff development and offer coping mechanisms through counselling and workshops. The reality that such findings have occurred again may call the success of these measures into question.

Implementing change requires staff to adopt new behaviours and a related topic was should adaptation translate to more reward? Academics believed that change has resulted in unfair workload and that management failure to deal with academic poor performance further impacts on them, and managers partly agreed. The main disagreement is the potential use of some form of reward-by-performance system, which was supported by most academics contrary to their union's position. Senior Managers were much more wary on this matter. The only common ground is that both groups agreed that the reward could just as easily be self-scheduled time allowance as money. There is an open door here that management could push to the benefit of the university community.

In summary then, the university has achieved limited success with model pathways. The university can take some comfort from the fact that many findings triangulated previous SU studies and work is already underway to counter previously found deficiencies, such as poor communication and staff stress. These policies and committees would result in

the university being able to quickly take corrective actions as many of the mechanisms are already in existence.

6.4.2.2 Model Methodology Discussion

The preferred methodology to implement change as proposed by the model is through small group policy initiations widening out to corporate involvement. SU does not currently use such a system. Both academics and managers agreed that SU has a top-down decision system, which is viewed as reasonably successful, especially by management who support it for efficiency reasons, but viewed as divisive by some academics. Managers further believed that the current system has a built-in consultative process through the Strategic Plan, a belief not shared by academics. There is no clear appetite from either group for exclusive bottom-up change systems, so a compromise such as small group policy initiatives with members from both groups should be actionable. This is provisional on meeting the challenge of encouraging academics to actively engage and the ability to build-in time allowance for both thinking and participation.

6.4.2.3 Model Results Discussion

With only partial success at achieving the five pathways to deep change and a top-down methodology in current practise, it is no surprise that SU is having difficulty in attaining the two preferred results. To achieve the first result of deep cultural change to the corporate body, change implementation needs to be of the second order. Unfortunately most academics believed that change to date demonstrates only first order characteristics and often is interpreted as not of direct concern to them. Management reaction differs, as they believed change processes to be already embedded but also acknowledged that the academics would not agree with this premise. The second goal of positive academic acceptance of workplace change was judged by the academics to be a mostly negative

experience or again not of direct concern. Academic disengagement unless countered will unfortunately prevent SU from attaining better change implementation.

In the next chapter this report makes recommendations as to how SU can better fulfil the requirements of the model.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This final chapter will conclude the key findings of the study using the format of the Higher Education Change Implementation Model (Caswell 2006). It should be noted with concern that little fit is demonstrated between current change implementation practices and the requirements of the model. Recommendations will then follow to assist the university in achieving best change practice. The chapter then proposes recommendations for future research of further benefit to SU. These recommendations are sourced from considerations of the limitations of this study, interesting tangents topics which presented and interviewer reflection. The chapter concludes with a discussion of likely outcomes and the challenges that may present if the recommendations are not implemented.

7.2 RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

Comparison to the Higher Education Change Implementation Model
(Caswell 2006)

A. Current Use of the Five Pathways to Deep Change

1. Academics tend to have a School rather than corporate identity and strong, visible leadership and links between academics and the higher management echelons are limited.

2. A Strategic Plan that guides the big picture is available and promoted by SM but academics have little interest or knowledge of the document.

3. Academics have limited involvement in change policy and consequently sense little ownership in resulting changes.

4. Poor communication systems that fail to justify change are acknowledged by all, but already improvements are planned at the university to correct this situation.

5. Though work skills programs are offered, there is little evidence of how successful staff development in the new culture has been. There are misunderstandings between SM and academics as to the impact of change. The reward system does not reward successful change implementation.

B. Change Methodology Used

SU currently uses a top-down change implementation approach with limited academic consultation and little shared understanding of how and why this situation has developed.

C. Current Results

1. Academics believe university change to be mostly first order, while senior management considers change to be of the second order. The established academic culture is resistant rather than welcoming to change.
2. Academics comprehend workplace change as either a mostly negative experience requiring re-interpretation strategies or have disengaged from their work environment to some degree.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROMOTE BETTER CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION

In order to meet the preferred goals of embedded cultural change and a positive work experience for all staff, SU should consider amending the current change methodology and execute fully the five pathways to deep change.

Although the current top-down approach is efficient and enjoys the confidence of SM and the support of some academics; it disenfranchises many other academics from the decision process. A negative cycle of no perceived involvement, breeding ever deeper disengagement, is developing. The university will gain nothing from such enhanced disengagement other than low morale and a 'McJob' approach to university responsibilities from the academics. Breaking the cycle requires finding a strategy to encourage academics to participate on a voluntary basis. Both the findings and literature suggest that this may be achieved by both communicating the personal benefits of involvement and assigning time allowance for participation. Such approaches could be led by the Heads of Schools as they appeared more understanding of the academic mindset.

To encourage academics to become an integral part of university processes, loyalty programmes should be developed to encourage the academics to think of their place in the university first and within their School second. This requires a recasting of their identity to one of corporate player, which should widen their horizons. Networking opportunities should be launched to bring ordinary academics into a more personal relationship with SM, who should be frequently visible around campus to advertise their ready availability and aid recognition.

The academic disinterest in the Strategic Plan is deeply worrying as this document is vital to their shared future within the university. This disinterest may be partially caused by to

the considerable time lapse since the plan was developed. Many in the community have simply forgotten both its existence and importance. It is likely that SM have realised the problem, as recent programs have been launched in the university to stimulate interest in the document prior to the development of its successor. This study believed that these events are vital, as to drive the university forward every member must understand and participate in the journey.

A mechanism, that is a public forum, must be found to involve academics in change design. SM have indicated that there is more of an open door here than many assume, but few are pushing it. The two main reasons given by both respondent groups for lack of academic involvement were that academics lack the time or the motivation. They do not perceive contributing to be part of their job and both sides admit that academics do not know enough about the 'big picture', although academics from business related subjects know more than SM realised. The university must be proactive here and explore the reasons behind non-participation.

The university should consider encouraging participation through a revised reward system in which the acceptable currency to the majority seems to be time allowance. Further on the subject of time, lessons could be learned from Trowler et al. (2005), in that change is best practiced by reflective practitioners so strategies should be explored to create time within the academic workload to contribute to and execute changes. Currently academics are so loaded with teaching and administration on their timetables that participating in extra-curricular activites is difficult.

Exploring the reaction to the current reward system, findings from both academics and those SM with a professional background, would seem to indicate that a radical overhaul is needed. Such changes however are problematic at this time as the implementation of new government pay guidelines is causing friction with union representatives on campus. Though changes in pay are often out of the hands of individual institutions, a reward of

some nature must follow the academic adoption of new behaviour and rewards must be withheld from those who refuse to change. Without this basic premise being followed there is no encouragement for people to take a risk or invest their time in learning new policy or process.

Poor communications was flagged by both respondent groups as the primary problem in preparing academics for workplace change. Particular emphasis was placed on this issue by the non-unionised academics who presumably are not kept abreast of new developments by NATFHE. Without either warning or justification, strategic change is unnecessarily frightening staff and generating unwanted reactions. The university is already working on improving communications and this report encourages these developments and recommends a method of benchmarking change acceptance be found to create a tracking mechanism. Through the improved communication process, SM must find a way of informing staff that their change concerns are acknowledged and not ignored. This study found considerable sympathy for academics by SM but this solicitude is not disseminated, creating totally unnecessary distrust and a divide.

Overall the university must continue with both the change workshops and counseling programs currently offered to staff but should investigate ways of expanding academic participation and improving attitudes and measure results obtained through regular qualitative tracking studies. The university should further consider methods of encouraging those academics whose demographic profile places them in a higher risk band in terms of poorer change reactions to attend. Such groups may include academics from Schools with poor recruitment and the older members of staff.

Lastly, the author believes that the issues raised in this paper are momentous enough for the university to replicate this study in a larger quantitative format. At the very least these questions should be posed again in two years to measure progress against the recommendations and explore if a better level of fit has been achieved against the model.

7.4 FURTHER RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study can be expanded in related directions both inside and outside the SU research field. Firstly, the author acknowledges some limiting factors; the small sample of this study, the concentration on a single institution necessitated by the case study format and that the snapshot methodology extended for several years' duration due to the part-time nature of the Doctorate in Education program. As discussed in the methodology chapter all these elements could impact on the ability to generalize to other institutions, even from a qualitative sense, from this single case study. In consequence all findings are worthy of further triangulation.

Recommendations for SU to triangulate internally were proposed in the previous section but these questions should also be asked from larger sample bases, in both qualitative and quantitative formats, at other universities from both sides of the post-1992 divide.

Demographics were collected, as recommended from the literature, from respondents to encourage a wide spectrum of participation. These facts were not an integral part of this study but did demonstrate some interesting directions worthy of further research. For example although many key academics in the Literature Review concluded that academic reactions can be categorized by discipline, this reaction was not found other than that academics from business related subjects tended to be both more informed and more flexible. Change reactions seemed more related to whether the lecturer had a traditional academic or professional background, with professionals exhibiting better change accpetance, rather than by subject taught. One might suppose that reaction by discipline is more the preserve of pre-1992 institutions and reaction by professional experience more likely in post-1992. This is an interesting hypothesis, worthy of study.

Women and younger academics were also found to be happier in their roles and demonstrate more flexibility and change acceptance; consequently larger studies based on both gender and age would add to knowledge in the change acceptance field.

In addition, a couple of academic respondents were of ethnic origin and appeared to exhibit a cultural bias to their change perceptions in support of cultural theory and this line of questioning would also be of interest.

Related topics have surfaced which are not directly connected to the research question and sub-questions but could be potentially illuminating and result in further research opportunities of benefit to SU. The first is the opportunities posed by truly understanding academic disengagement within the institution. Despite repeated attempts to probe behind respondents' defense barriers, the findings remain unclear as to why many academics do not participate in planning change. The reasons they have given seem superficial and there may be deeper issues to explore. The easy findings of no time or motivation sit uncomfortably with the concept of academia. Academics are supposed to be active, radical, investigative creatures, eager for a new challenge, why is change design not a challenge many wish to pursue?

The paper has also inadvertently questioned the position of the union both in representing academic views and in influencing change policy. This line of questioning was not intended and the second proposal is that unions should also participate in further study as, if the respondents can be described as disengaged from the university, they are equally if not more so disengaged from their union. Few academic respondents, the majority of which are union members, demonstrate a knowledge or interest in union positions relevant to this discussion. Often the ideas proposed from some union members were opposed to official union policy, yet the member did not observe or acknowledge any discrepancy. On the whole union members were unhappier with the status quoi and

demonstrated less flexibility in the work environment than their non-union colleagues. One wonders why this should be so.

Both the union and the university may wish to consider these findings in further change discussions and further, the university may want to reconsider how it communicates with the academic body as a whole, as a clear connection between the union and its academics members was not proven.

The original design of both interview questionnaires included perceptions of change agents. This line of enquiry was deleted for reasons of clarity and word count. Initial results though did exhibit a general acceptance of the use of change agents and a belief that they could assist in embedding institutional change. With such a positive response, change agency may be a methodology worthy of further investigation.

Inadvertently this paper also raised the issues of how to reward academics for new behaviour. Some ideas such as time allowance have been examined by this thesis but the topic of exactly how to reward individual academic achievement in a sector with a national pay spine is worthy of further research.

Finally, members of both respondent groups proposed a relationship between the rise of student consumerism and the changes cascading through Higher Education. This proposal that the sector has new masters is worthy of further study to ensure the future viability of the sector.

7.5 LIKELY OUTCOMES OF CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION FAILURE

Should the academic perception of imposed change remain unchanged or intensify, it is likely that the negative academic reactions to strategic change will continue and disengagement will grow. Many academics demonstrated limited unprompted knowledge or interest about sector or university-wide changes and some were unable to connect such changes with their own work lives. Further, most were unable to clearly articulate or justify their lack of involvement in university matters. Higher Education though is a people business and SU is entering a highly competitive marketplace. To survive in this new world and win their share of the market SU needs community oriented members willing to support the team.

The study demonstrated that the normal academic reaction to change within the university is a re-interpretation strategy. Without a sense of change ownership and an understanding of the rationale behind the change process, many academics appear to believe they have unofficial permission to re-interpret change to suit themselves or their School. This constant shifting of policy will do little to either build corporate identity or ensure that change objectives are clearly achieved. SU needs to understand this reaction better and take steps to minimise both the acts and their effects.

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

ACADEMIC PERMISSION SLIP, DEMOGRAPHIC STATEMENT AND DISCUSSION OUTLINE

A. ACADEMIC PERMISSION SLIP

To participate in this discussion you need to be both a full-time academic (defined as a .8 or more) and have worked at SU for a minimum of 3 years.

Thank you for volunteering to participate in this study on the work environment, from the academic perspective here at SU. This study is intended to form part of my Doctorate in Education at Southampton University. Consequently you should be aware that the finished study may be published, available for public use in the University library and reviewed by Senior Management at SU. The copyright of this study will be owned by the author.

Consequently to address any worries about your comments, you will be guaranteed full anonymity within the study and referred to by a pseudonym. Further you can withdraw from the study at any time and will have the opportunity to review all your comments in writing prior to submission and discuss any perceived discrepancies. There will be no access by any other member of the academic community to the raw data.

This interview should take no more than 45 minutes and I will take notes and with your permission also record our discussion with a tape recorder.

By signing below you have read and agree with these interview conditions.

Name (printed)

Signature

Date

Email

Telephone number

B. ACADEMIC DEMOGRAPHIC STATEMENT

Name

Gender

Age

How would you describe your social class?

How would you describe your ethnic origin?

Position within the university

Qualifications both professional and academic

Primary work role

Work history within Higher Education

So have you always worked in HE or also in the 'outside world'.

Discipline Taught

Do you serve on any university governance committees now or in the past?

Are you a member of a teaching union?

C. ACADEMIC DISCUSSION OUTLINE

Objective One
To review the drivers for change and establish the current status quo in the working environment at the university.

Market Comments

1. Do you think that universities in the UK are changing or static?
2. If changing how are they changing?
3. What do you think is causing these changes? How about global forces?
4. Is this process good or bad or both in your opinion?

Personal Comments

1. Is the working environment at SU changing?
2. How would you describe these changes, changes to what exactly?
3. Are these changes coming from within you or from outside? Who is directing these changes?
4. Have you found that your working life or role has changed over the last few years?
5. For you are these changes positive, negative or a bit of both?

Relationships

1. Have there been changes in your colleagues' work or roles here at the university?
2. Does the pressure of change impact in any way with your relationships with colleagues?
3. Tell me about the burden of change. Who picks up any pieces?
4. Do you feel that you have a relationship with Senior Managers here at SU?
5. Do you know Senior Management and why?

C. ACADEMIC DISCUSSION OUTLINE (contd)

Objective Two
To explore the academic experience, reaction too and expectations of change in their working environment.

Personal Ability to Deal with Change

1. How do you feel about change in your life in general? Do you have a high/low tolerance for change? Does change excite or worry you?
2. What do you tend to do to cope with change in your life?

Personal Experience of Strategic Change At University

1. Tell me about any recent strategic changes to policy or process that you have experienced in your employment with the university?
2. Would you describe these changes as window dressing or profound and why do you think that?
3. Exactly what was your thinking or action process in dealing with these strategic changes?
4. Do you think that accepting change is part of your job as an academic?
5. If we look at change at the university as a continuum, where are we now?
6. What are your next expectations of strategic change to policies or processes?
7. How are you planning to react or think you will react to these?

The Reaction of Others

1. Does any third party influence your reaction to changes?
2. How did your colleagues react to these changes?
3. How do you think the university wanted you and your colleagues to react?
4. Why do you think this?

C. ACADEMIC DISCUSSION OUTLINE (contd)

Objective Three
To apply organisational change theory to these change experiences.

Current Change Process

1. Where does the push for strategic change come from at SU, does it come down from management or up from the academics or perhaps from somewhere else?
2. From your perspective how does change in policy or process happen at SU?
3. Do academics contribute to change in policy or process at SU?
4. Who implements the change once it is made?
5. What do you like or dislike about the current process for implementing change at the university?
6. Why do you think that change at SU happens this way?

Personal Participation in Change

1. Do you feel part of any change process or is change something that just gets done to you?
2. Are you or have you been part of the planning process for any change?
3. Should academics be more involved in designing and implementing change processes or is this a Senior Management function only?
4. If you haven't been involved in any change process is there any reason why not?
5. Do you feel that you know enough about the issues involved or the big picture in each change to contribute if you wanted to?
6. Who do you think speaks for you on these issues? Do you have a voice?

Change Agency

1. As an academic have you ever led change or acted as a change agent?
2. Do you think that using change agency strategy is suitable for a university and why or why not?

Improvements in Current Change Processes

1. Could the change process be improved at SU and if so how?
2. What sort of process would you suggest for implementing change?
3. Do the academics need anything to help them adapt to changes at work?
4. In your opinion are there any communication or staff development issues here?
5. Do you think that the reward process at SU has any impact on the success of change implementation?
6. If not how could the reward system be adapted to reward change implementation?

APPENDIX 2

MANAGEMENT PERMISSION SLIP, DEMOGRAPHIC STATEMENT AND DISCUSSION OUTLINE

A. MANAGEMENT PERMISSION SLIP

Thank you for volunteering to participate in this study on the academic reaction to a changing work environment, from the Senior Management perspective here at SU. This study is intended to form part of my Doctorate in Education at Southampton University. Consequently you should be aware that the finished study may be published, available for public use in the Southampton University library and reviewed by Senior Management at SU. The copyright of this study will be owned by the author.

Consequently to address any worries about your comments, you will be guaranteed full anonymity within the study and referred to by a pseudonym. Further you can withdraw from the study at any time and will have the opportunity to review all your comments in writing prior to submission and discuss any perceived discrepancies. There will be no access by any other member of the academic community to the raw data.

This interview should take no more than 30 minutes and I will take notes and with your permission also record our discussion with a tape recorder.

By signing below you have read and agree with these interview conditions.

Name (printed)

Signature

Date

Email

Telephone number

B. MANAGEMENT DEMOGRAPHIC STATEMENT

Name

Gender

Age

Position within the university

Qualifications both professional and academic

Work history within Higher Education starting with SU

So have you always worked in HE or also in the 'outside world'

Are you a member of a teaching union?

C. MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION OUTLINE

Objective One
To review the drivers for change and establish the current status quo in the working environment at the university.

Market Comments

1. How do you perceive the HE market to be changing in the UK?
2. What do you think is causing these changes? How about global forces?
3. How do you feel overall about this process?

SU Comments

1. How is the working environment at SU changing?
2. Do you believe these changes are coming from within SU or from outside?
3. Where do you think the academics believe these changes are coming from?

Relationships

1. How would you describe your relationship with academics? Manager/Father figure/one of the team.
2. Do you believe that recent strategic changes at SU impact in any way with your relationships with academics?
3. Do you think that recent changes have impacted on academics relationships with each other?
4. Some theorists believe that change can be a burden for people, do you agree?

Objective Four

To establish the level of knowledge exhibited by Senior Management about staff experience of change.

Academic Experience of Strategic Change At the University

1. What recent strategic changes to policy or process do you think the academics have commented on?
2. What do you think their reactions have been?
3. What do you think academic thinking or action processes were in dealing with these strategic changes? Theory believes that academics can react one of four ways, fight, flight. Interpret or just get on with implementing the change.
4. Which reaction to change do you think represents best practise? Is this preference feasible?
5. Do you think that many academics view recent strategic changes as embedded, deep change? Why or why not?
6. Do you think that accepting change is part of their job as an academic?
7. If we look at change at the university as a continuum, where are we now?

C. MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION OUTLINE (contd)

Objective Four continues in association with

Objective Five
To explore management perspectives in implementing existing and planned change process

Current Change Process

1. Organizational theory divides change process into 2 categories, top-down change by management or bottom-up change from academics. Which process describes SU in your opinion?
2. Where do you think that many academics believe the push for change comes from at SU?
3. How do you think many academics believe that policy or process change happens?
4. Do academics contribute to change in policy or process at SU? How?
5. Do academics believe that they contribute to the planning process for strategic change?
6. Should academics contribute to policy and process change or is this a Senior Management function only?
7. Do you think that academics know enough about the big picture or the issues involved too contribute to strategic change if they wanted to?
8. What in your opinion are the positive and negative attributes of the strategic change process at SU?
9. Do you think that many academics feel part of the change process or that change is just something that gets done to them?
10. Do many academics think that they have a voice in planning strategic change?

Change Agency

1. Do you think that a using change agency strategy is suitable for a university and why or why not?

Improvements in Current Change Processes

1. Could the strategic change process be improved at SU and if so how?
2. In your opinion do the academics need anything to help them adapt to changes at work?
3. In your opinion are there any communication or staff development issues here?
4. Do you think that the reward process at SU has any impact on the success of change implementation?
5. What would you have expected the academic reaction to be to this question?
6. Could or should the reward system be adapted to reward change implementation?
7. Again how do you think the academics reacted to this suggestion?

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AUT ..... Association of University Teachers

CTM ..... Course Team Meetings

FE ..... Further Education

HE ..... Higher Education

HEFC ..... Higher Education Funding Council

IHCS ..... Institute of Health and Community Services, a SU School

ILT ..... Institute of Teaching and Learning

NATFHE ..... National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education

NVQ ..... National Vocational Qualification

PA ..... Programme Administrator

QAA ..... Quality Assurance Agency

UMT ..... University Management Team

ARPM ..... Annual Report of Programme Monitoring

OVC ..... Office of the Vice-Chancellor

VC ..... Vice-Chancellor

PL ..... Programme Leader

EdD ..... Doctorate in Education

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