Adapting To Organisational Culture

A Staged Adaptation Model

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Abstract

Adapting to Organizational Culture: A Staged Adaptation Model

In today's fast paced world, a job for life is a concept from the past. As individuals frequently move from one organisation to another, so they move from one organisational culture to another. Change is a constant and as the pace of change increases the ability of individuals to adapt is more essential than ever. This ethnographic research was prompted by observation of clinical phenomena, which led the researcher to question whether a mismatch in expectations regarding the culture of an organisation might be a cause of stress in newcomers. A pilot study was undertaken in order to make sense of the phenomena and led to a larger scale longitudinal study, carried out over a period of four years within a global technology firm. The research examines qualitatively distinct, stages of adaptation that individuals experience when entering a new organisation, with regards specifically to the culture of the organisation. The longitudinal study involved a number of methods including participant observation, interviews and focus groups. The interviews, held with thirty participants and undertaken at three monthly intervals and field notes from participant observation, resulted in a substantial amount of qualitative data. This was analysed through thematic analysis. The resulting findings enabled the researcher to design a staged adaptation model, which identifies the stages of adaptation to organisational culture from pre entry to assimilation. The model was tested for validity and transferability through the use of focus groups. A sense of belonging was found to be critical in adaptation to organisational culture. This study contributes to knowledge regarding organizational culture in bringing it together with adaptation and adding to research with regards to Socialisation, Psychological Contract formation and Organizational Culture.

"The concept or process, or even better, the necessity of adapting, is what sets the cream of the crop apart from the rest"

Larson, P.D (2005)

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The world of work is very different today than it was as recently as twenty years ago. TED speaker Eddie Obeng, (2014) talks of the "*New World*" of work as happening overnight with the introduction of the internet and search engines such as Google, increasing the amount and pace of change significantly. The nature of work has changed substantially from the days of the Industrial Revolution to the new digital world, from predominantly manual work to knowledge work and the introduction of more flexible, agile ways of working. In today's new world a job for life is a concept from the past. Retirement specialist LV state, that for British Workers, a job for life is "*virtually extinct*" (Liverpool Victoria: 2014). The young generation, known as Millennials (born 1977-1997) are predicted to change jobs up to nine times in fifty years, on average changing jobs every 3 years, (Liverpool Victoria: 2014). People no longer stay around to work their way up the Corporate ladder (Benko and Anderson: 2010) but move sideways to gain more experience or move elsewhere in order to gain a promotion. The recent recession and resulting economic environment has meant that it is not just the younger generation who are changing jobs frequently. Due to restructuring and downsizing, generations such as the baby boomers may have to leave their current employer and move elsewhere, either due to redundancy or through disillusionment with changes bought about.

With frequent moves from one organisation to another, individuals join many different organisational cultures during their career. Fitting in to the organizational culture has been shown to be essential in an individual's job satisfaction and commitment and impacts on performance at work, (O'Reilly et al: 1991). As the vast majority of the working population will need to join a different organisational culture at some stage, the easier and quicker the process of adapting to the new culture is, the better for both the individual and organisations. There is some ambiguity however regarding the construct of 'organisational culture'. It is not a tangible construct and the numerous attempts to define it reflect this. Most definitions however include the words, norms, values and ways of working. The culture of an organisation has been described as the personality of an organisation, (Schein: 1985). Companies who appear outwardly similar may have subtle differences of culture. Even in organisations where the culture is strong and seemingly obvious there may be aspects that are not visible to an outsider or indeed a newcomer. Just as the United States of America speak the same language as the United Kingdom but both countries have very different national cultures, the deeper, underlying culture of one retail organisation to another and one bank to another can vary hugely. This study explores the process of adapting to organisational culture that can be applied to all.

1.2 The Aim of this study

The motivation for this research came from clinical phenomena observed during the author's work as an Occupational Health Professional. A number of new starters reported to Occupational Health with work related stress, which appeared to result from a mismatch in expectations with regards to the organisational culture. Of particular interest was that some individuals, despite having unmet expectations with

regards to the culture, were able to remain with the organisation happily whilst others went off with stress or left soon after.

The aim of this research was to gain an insight in to and understanding of, the lived experiences of individuals joining a new organisational culture. In doing so it hoped to establish whether there is a process of adaptation that individuals go through when entering a new/different organisational culture and to understand more about that process in terms of identifying qualitatively distinct stages. This includes identifying why some individuals appear to adapt more easily than others and what environmental and organisational influences may impact on the adaptation process. The main research questions are;

- Where do expectations regarding organizational culture come from?
- How are some people able to remain happily with an organisation despite an initial mismatch in expectations regarding the organisational culture?
- What helps individuals to adapt to the culture?
- Are there different stages of adapting?

The purpose of the research is to increase knowledge of the concept of adapting to organisational culture, (to address the existing gap in knowledge) and to inform the process of socialisation of new hires to the organisational culture in order to enhance the experience for both individuals and organisations.

1.3 Usefulness of the research

Given the frequency with which individuals will be 'hopping' from one organisation to another during their career it is clear that moving from one organisational culture to another is something that will be relevant to many people. There is at present, little if any empirical research addressing this area, specifically the adaptation of individuals to the culture of an organisation. It is hoped that findings from this research will add to the current knowledge of socialisation and on-boarding to inform HR and new hires as to what influences there are on this process and what can improve the experience of adapting to culture. Environmental, Organisational and Individuals influences are examined

1.4 Background to the Study

The culture of an organisation is seen to influence every aspect of how a business functions including communications, activities and processes (Schein: 2004) and many Business Leaders have recognised how important organisational culture is to the success of the organisation, (Barney, 1986; Alvesson, 2002). A strong organizational culture has been credited for the high performance of certain companies and others have sought to replicate this, (Grugulis and Wilkinson: 2002). A strong culture has been found to lead to greater staff engagement, enthusiasm and innovation. However, there are many examples of poor or unhealthy organisational cultures, which have led to catastrophic downfall. The culture of greed and drinking amongst city bankers is one such culture, which impacted not only the employees of the organisation but also the wider society with the resulting recession.

As stated, the link between a company's culture and its success is well documented, and many companies have introduced a change in culture in order to survive in times of economic instability. Changes to organizational culture are also bought about to reflect cultural changes in the wider society. The rise in social media platforms has given customers a louder voice and this, combined with fallout from the recession, has led to a change in market demand, from a culture driven by revenue to one which is client centric. Companies who have reacted to this change in society have kept the company moving in direction of success, (Ashby and Pell: 2001). Having to fit in to a new organisational culture therefore is not restricted to those joining a different organisation but to those remaining in an organisation whose leaders have sought to bring about a change of culture, albeit not anticipating how long and difficult the process of culture change can be.

1.5 The Structure of this Thesis

The next chapter, **Chapter Two** sets the context within which the thesis is set. Although this research is primarily concerned with the lived experiences of new hires adapting to a new organisational culture, the context within which the research is based was found to be of much importance. A greater insight in to individual experiences was gained by consideration of environmental and organizational influences on individual adaptation. The economic climate in which the research was undertaken was during and immediately after a global recession and this is seen to have had an impact on both the organisations studied and on the employees interviewed. An overview and account of the organisations studied for both the Pilot study and the larger Longitudinal Study is given. Both organisations used for the research were very different; the pilot study being based in a National Retail organisation and the longitudinal one at a global organisation specialising in mailing technology.

The following three chapters detail an extensive and critical literature review exploring the concepts of organisational culture, adaptation and psychological contracting. The purpose of this review was to inform the current study as to what existing research says regarding the three concepts and whether there is already a link established between the concepts of adaptation and organisational culture. The literature review provided a theoretical framework for this study. The review begins in **Chapter Three** with an overview of the origins of organisational culture. The numerous attempts to define this is dynamic construct are considered and various perspectives and disciplinary approaches considered. Recent research in to organisational culture, both quantitative and qualitative is discussed looking at measurement of, types of, models of and theories regarding the concept. Having examined literature concerning the nature of organisational culture the chapter then looks at the central issues associated with organisational culture including organisational effectiveness, leadership and person – culture fit.

The literature review continues in **Chapter Four** with an examination of the literature available regarding Adaptation. Although there was found to be a gap in knowledge regarding adapting to organisational culture, a review of literature regarding adaptation was extremely helpful and informative when considering the concept of individual

adaptation to organisational culture. The chapter begins with a background of the study of adaptation and its origins in the natural sciences. The differing disciplinary approaches are considered including developmental psychology and anthropology. Theory and models of adaptation are discussed from biological models such as Hans Sele's General Adaptation Theory to the management theory of socialisation and on-boarding. Chapter four also considers the concept of not being able to adapt or 'Maladaption' which can result in stress. Theory regarding stress discussed including resilience to stress or adversity. Key pieces of research regarding stages are also considered such as adapting to change and group formation. Finally the chapter looks at the construct of socialisation and its influence on adapting to job roles and organisations.

Chapter Five examines the concept of Psychological Contracts. This area of the literature review was driven by the initial observation of clinical phenomena regarding a mismatch in expectations. Literature regarding psychological contracts helped to inform an understanding of formation of expectations regarding organisational culture (including the influence of employer branding) and subsequent reactions to a mismatch in these. The origins and definitions of the concept are considered and types and content of psychological contracts discussed. A breach of psychological contract and the impact this has on employee attitudes and behavioural response is addressed.

The research design and methodology used in this ethnographic study are discussed in **Chapter Six.** The pilot study and the larger scale longitudinal study are described in detail, looking at the multiple methods used such as semi-structured interviews, focus groups and participant observation. The resulting data collection and findings from thematic analysis of the results are presented in **Chapter Seven.**

The Staged Adaptation Model is introduced in **Chapter Eight**. The development of the model is discussed and stages of adaptation described in detail. Influences on the stages are considered, looking at what eases movement from one stage to the next. **Chapter Nine** is a discussion of the results. The chapter begins with a reminder of the aims and purpose of the research and is followed by an interpretation of the findings of the study. The main research questions are answered in turn from the findings of the study and informed by literature. An analysis of the research methodology follows and limitations of the research are considered. The chapter ends with a discussion of the implications, importance and usefulness of the research. The final chapter, **Chapter Ten,** discusses recommendations and provides a conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO - The Organizations studied and Context

2.1 Context

This ethnographic study was undertaken during a time of great change, which resulted from both the global recession and also by advances in technology. The organisations studied, a UK Retailer and a Global Technology organisation were significantly affected by both of these environmental forces. Although very different organisations, both have a long history (of approximately one hundred years) and both were going through substantial transformation at the time this research was undertaken.

2.1.1 The economic environment

The Global recession of 2007 to 2009 is said to be the worst recession since the Second World War, even more significant than the recession of the 1970s, (Imbs: 2010). Often referred to as the Great Recession, it came about largely as a result of the culture of greed and risk taking in the banking world, (Inman and Kingsley: 2011). This culture of greed was reflected elsewhere in business. Money and profit became the idol and customers were almost an afterthought. Individuals too, sought to have more and went to the banks to request loans in order to buy properties which they could not otherwise afford. A leniency in agreeing to loans led to excessive borrowing such as for household mortgages, leading to an increased household debt and personal bankruptcies, (Farndale 2008; Stein 2011).

Many banks suffered huge losses from these loans and ultimately it led to the financial crisis that saw the fall of banks such as the Lehman Brothers, Northern Rock and Merrill Lynch. The financial crisis progressed to national debt as many countries, such as the UK, chose to bail out their banking system using taxpayer money. In the US the national debt rose from 66% in 2008 to 103% in 2012. According to the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA: 2004), globalisation of the world's economies, (finance and business), meant an interdependence between countries which led to the recession having affect on a global scale.

The global recession may have officially been for less than two years but ripples from the shock continue to be felt many years after. Heidi Schierholz from the Economic Policy Institute (2014) said;

"The great recession officially ended f*ive years ago this month but the labor market has made only agonizingly slow progress towards full employment"*

The effects of the recession are seen to include a decrease in consumer spending due to a fall in consumer confidence, a fall in stock market prices, a fall in prices of non-food stuff and an increasing divide between rich and poor. One of the main effects of the recession is a rise in unemployment as businesses have insufficient demand for goods and services to allow for an increase in recruitment. In their research in to the impact of the recession on business strategy planning, Lowth et al (2010) looked at strategic responses made by business to the recession. They found three main ways in which "*business might adapt during a difficult economic climate*". These were;

- Retrenchment Strategy – this includes cutting costs (such as reduction in headcount and cuts in marketing and training) and divestment of non-core assets
- Investment Strategy - where the focus is on innovation and market diversification. This high risk strategy views the recession as an opportunity to implement change
- Ambidextrous Strategy – which is a combination of the previous two strategies

This ethnographic research was undertaken between 2011 and 2015 and although the global recession was officially over, there was a further recession in the UK from Q4 2011 to Q2 2012.

2.1.2 Advances in technology

The Digital age has swept upon us rapidly, bringing with it Internet communications such as social media and e commerce. Ways of communicating with family, friends and business colleagues are no longer limited to in person, by letter or via telephone but are more likely to be via text, email or Skype. There are often new, innovative ways of communicating being developed and companies looking to install the latest technology will no doubt need to update it within a year or so. New ways of communicating have enabled new ways of working and it is now not uncommon for people to be working from home or remotely 'in the field', speaking to colleagues via conference calls or email.

With the increase in communications via the Internet, business-to-business transactions and business to client communications are less likely to be via physical mail than by email. Banks and Businesses are increasingly likely to encourage clients to online services and less communications are being sent out by mail such as bank statements and invoices. In his paper regarding trends in internet based business to business marketing, Arun Sharma (2002:77) states;

"*The Internet is changing the transactional paradigms under which businesses-to-business marketers operate. Business-to-business marketers that take advantage of the operational efficiencies and effectiveness that emerge from utilizing the Internet in transactions are outperforming firms that utilize traditional transactional processes*"

Sharma cites the case of Dell computers who gained the largest market share in the Computer Business by using Internet transactions compared to more traditional firms such as Compaq

The introduction of the Internet can be seen to have affected all areas of business transactions. Pitt et al (1999:19-28) talk of the impact that the Internet has on distribution;

"*The Internet and World Wide Web will change distribution like no other environmental force since the Industrial Revolution*"

Afuah and Tucci (2000) in their book 'Internet Business Models and Strategies' talk of the huge impact that the internet has had on business. This changed with the rise in social media as customers have a louder voice as they join forces via Internet forums to praise or condemn services and goods received. "*The customer is always right*" has taken on a new significance, as they can no longer be ignored. Organisations have had to put their customers at the centre of any business strategy and the focus on profit has shifted. With the rise of online shopping many retailers have had to rethink their approach. A smiling shop assistant is not on hand to steer customers shopping on line towards the latest line but instead interactive tools identify which items would be of most interest to the individual as they view the retailers website from the comfort of their home. As more and more customers buy items online, Retailers are less likely to send out glossy brochures in the post.

2.1.3 Globalization

A reduction in barriers in communication between countries, due in part to advances in technology, has seen an increase in the number of global organisations. Working with colleagues sited in a different country, in a different time zone has demanded different, more flexible ways of working. Flexible working was introduced as part of the Employment Act (section 47) in 2002 and the right to flexible working was extended to all employees under the Children and Families Act in June 2014, (UK.Gov. Briefing Paper: 2017). Ways of working flexibly include working from home, job-sharing, working part-time, mobile working and having career breaks, (ACAS 2014; CIPD 2017). The practice of Agile Working at the Global Technology Firm referred to home workers as being fully agile but there was huge flexibility around those deemed as 'Mobile Workers'. These employees could be out doing field visits one day, in the office for meetings another or working from home another day. Where when and how they worked was down to the individual. As long as the work got done i.e. productivity was demonstrated. The flexibility of Agile working was also of benefit to the organisation as it meant that UK employees who needed to be on calls with the US late at night or Australia early morning could plan their day accordingly, perhaps fitting in the school run or having a lie in if on a late call. Working globally also means working with colleagues based in a different national culture and often a different language. This in turn can be seen to impact on the organisational culture (Schein: 2010).

2.2 The Organisations studied

2.2.1 UK Retailer

Whilst many major retailers struggled as a result of the recession and several, such as Woolworths, MFI, Blacks, Blockbusters and Comet, went in to administration, the retailer studied for the pilot study not only survived but came out of the recession thriving. Part of a larger retail group, the organisation was helped to some extent by it's sister company but also by the strategy employed by it's business leaders, that of investment strategy. Rather than closing branches and cutting jobs, the company set about opening new stores with a different format and introducing a new value range.

Two years later however, in 2011, the strategy seems to have changed. A substantial restructuring of support services such as HR, Training and Occupational Health resulted in job losses as the roles were streamlined to become regional rather than localised in each branch. Following the restructuring of support services there were also losses in management roles and an entire layer of management, (Department Managers) was removed. These cuts however may have been more of an Ambidextrous Strategy than retrenchment as jobs were at the same time being created in the new format stores and the online business was growing rapidly, (with an increase of 40% year on year).

Although the retailer won an award for the way in which the restructuring was communicated to employees there appeared to be little communication concerning a change in culture and no rebranding of the business as such. The organisation is renowned for it's low turnover rate, (12% compared to an industry average of 40%) and many of its employees have worked there for more than 30 years. Longstanding employees commented that a number of new hires bought in at senior level had a different approach than was previously known. It was not the supportive, collaborative behaviour that was associated with the organisation. The retailer had long been renowned for recruiting on behaviours rather than technical skill and behaviours were the main focus of performance reviews. Were the behaviours required now different?

In his paper "*Customer Experience, Organisational Culture and the Employer Brand*", Mosley (2007) says that in order to have integrity with regards to the organisations brand, i.e. it reflects the true culture of the business, there needs to be a consistency of message both internally and external so that customer service is on-brand. There was no noticeable change in Customer or Employer Branding at the retailer despite the significant changes in strategy.

The retailer is over 100 years old. Recent changes however, were reported to be far more rapid and substantial than any previous changes in the organisations long history. Why did the uncertainty, caused by changes such as cuts to the support services, not lead to a higher attrition rate? Job insecurity has been found to lead to more people remaining with their current employer through fears that they wont get a job elsewhere, (Staufenbiel and Konig 2010). The organisation also has an excellent bonus scheme and a generous pension scheme that may have encouraged people to stay but there was also an inherent loyalty to the company.

2.2.2 Global Technology Company

The organisation studied for the larger longitudinal study was born from the meeting of two innovative individuals who combined their ideas to invent and make available commercially the world's first franking machine. With its headquarters based in the US it is a global business-to-business concern, dealing mainly with offering solutions to companies for transactions with customers across the world. Although it had survived the recession, the business was not doing well and at close of business in 2012 there were indications that urgent change was needed. There was a 5year low in stock price, shareholders expressed their dissatisfaction and clients demanded more value and a better client experience. Employee engagement scores were also at a low with only 66% participating in the engagement survey. Responses to the survey gave an insight as to

why employees were not happy. A lack of clear vision and direction and a loss of faith in leadership were apparent.

In 2013, a new CEO was appointed. He had a clear vision and well-articulated strategy, which restored employees faith and hope that the organisation was heading in a new and exciting direction. Within six months the CEO had established a new senior executive team. The team met to discuss strategy and to focus on three key areas; Shareholder, Clients and Employees. The aim was to improve the experience for each of these stakeholder groups and to demonstrate this through effective measures such as client satisfaction levels. The CEO made clear his belief that a change of culture was needed and that it was the responsibility of his leadership team to lead that cultural change. He repeated the phrase;

> *"Culture eats Strategy for Breakfast!"*

As well as suffering from the recession, the organisation was also very much affected by the growth in Internet use. Best known for it's manufacturing of franking machines the business was associated with an area of diminishing growth; the mailing industry. A large manufacturing site was closed and an area of the business concerned with mailing was sold off. There was concern amongst engineers working at client sites that their jobs would also be at risk. The CEO made it clear in his strategy however, that that the selling of franking machines (and other larger machines such as for mail sorting), as well as maintenance of these for clients, was to remain. The approach to selling however was to alter from face to face selling to predominantly telephone sales.

A series of road shows were held across the UK and other countries, at which senior leaders delivered the new strategy which included a growth of the software area of business. These road shows galvanised support for the strategy and introduced a focus on behaviours, which would enable the change in culture. These were Client, Team and Win. In 2014 employees understanding and belief in the new strategy was tested in a typically innovative way. A 'Jam' was held, (similar to a Facebook chat) and every employee was invited to join this online conversation. There was great participation of employees and senior leaders including the CEO. Although perhaps initially reticent to speak, employees found their voice as the Jam gathered pace and excitement grew. People said what they felt and an honest open discussion was held on various themes related to both the culture and strategy. Many mentioned the lack of support for newcomers. Comments included lack of an induction program and lack of equipment.

In keeping with it's strategy the company invested in a large project to address client experience and aimed to ensure that processes were consistent, streamlined and data accurate. This required a huge commitment of resources in terms of personnel, time and budget. The final area of the new strategy saw the acquisition of an innovative software company. The drive for operational excellence and the growth of digital commerce would please shareholders and client respectively but employee engagement was another area of concern for the business to address. A project looking at improving Employee Value Proposition was set up.

With the closure of the manufacturing site, the company UK headquarters moved to a smart new office. Although the space occupied was massively reduced compared to the old Harlow site and a lot further from home for many employees, there was not the anticipated attrition of employees. Many found to their surprise that they preferred working in the light and airy new offices. There was also another important factor in the reason for people staying. This was the introduction of Agile Working. This way of working allowed many employees to work from home and to work truly flexible hours. This flexibility benefitted employee wellbeing but was also of benefit to the company. Being a global organisation meant that conference calls could be held at various times of the day and evening depending on the time that the country hosting the call was in. With new technology allowing calls to be via Skype as well as phone, video conferencing enabled individuals working from home or office to join international calls.

As mentioned earlier, agile working has become more prevalent in businesses as advanced technology allows for new ways of communicating with colleagues wherever they are based in the world, to work 'anytime, anywhere'. Working remotely doesn't suit everybody however and for some the isolation, which can result from working at home, can impact on their mental wellbeing. Others love the independence and empowerment that the flexibility of agile working gives and value being trusted by their manager to 'get on with it'. Some Managers struggled with not being able to meet with their teams in person and it took a while for that trust to be established but for those with teams based in a different country this was already the way they worked.

The company was evolving and those employees who had been there for fifty years (of which there were a few) would barely recognise the slick modern creature that was once a large sluggish beast. The CEO was consistent in his call for Culture change and all employees were now familiar with the mantra, "*Culture eats Strategy for Breakfast!*" A cross-functional, cross-unit Culture Group was set up to ensure the roll out of culture change across the global organisation. At the same time the customer branding was changed to reflect the change in business. The company logo was changed from an entirely blue symbol with straight lines and a corporate feel about it to a multi coloured and dynamic design, which included reference to both the history of the organisation and the impact that the solutions delivered, would have for clients. With regards to Employer Branding, this was also addressed in order to recruit the innovative, high performing individuals that the company required in order to be successful.

CHAPTER THREE - Organizational Culture

3.1 Introduction

Having given a background and context to the research in the previous two chapters the next three chapters detail an extensive literature review, undertaken in order to discover what previous research, if any, had been undertaken in to adapting to organisational culture and to explore what current thinking and knowledge there is regarding the two concepts. The chapter begins by looking at the background of organisational culture, its origins and history from within anthropology and goes on to discuss the various definitions, disciplinary approaches and the ways that positivist and interpretivist researchers view the concept. Theories and models of organisational culture are discussed as well as the various attempts to measure and categorise the concept through various typologies. Literature regarding the use and change of organisational culture in order to enhance business effectiveness is discussed as well as the role of leadership in establishing organisational culture and also in changing it. Subcultures, Mergers and Acquisitions are addressed. Finally, the role of the individual is considered and the concept of person-culture fit.

In order to make sense of clinical phenomena observed, a systemic review of literature regarding culture, stress and psychological contracting was undertaken. Guided by the main research questions previous studies regarding these constructs were read to see whether any had looked at a link between them and whether others had investigated the concept of newcomers adapting to organisational culture.
The main research questions regarding organisational culture are:

- Where do expectations regarding the organisational culture come from?
- How and why are some individuals able to remain happily employed with an organisation despite an initial mismatch in expectations regarding the organisational culture?
- What helps individuals to adapt to the culture of the organisation?
- Are there different stages of adaptation to organisational culture?

The constructs of adaptation (including maladaptation or stress) and psychological contracting are discussed in the following two chapters. It was necessary first however, to have a more thorough understanding of the construct of organisational culture, studies of which were found to be manifold. Organisational culture is seen as a panacea for all organisational issues and is as popular with business leaders, organisational psychologists and behaviourists today as it was when the concept was first introduced in the 1960s. The majority of studies are therefore linked in some way to the correlation between culture and effectiveness; those addressing the correlation of culture with organisational sustainability and effectiveness, (Alvesson, 2002; Barney 1986), which types of culture are most effective, (Handy, 1993; Quinn and McGrath, 1985; Harrison, 1972) bringing about a change in culture in order to increase effectiveness (Peters and Waterman 1982) and theories, models and frameworks of effective organisational culture traits, (Denison 1996).

Numerous studies aim to define and describe the concept, those taking a positivist stance viewing the culture of an organisation as something which can be measured and managed (Denison 1990; Westbrook 2009) as oppose to the interactionist approach of

viewing culture as an intangible construct which arises as a result of social interaction (Louis 1980; Weick 2005 and Baumgartner 2009). There is a substantial body of literature addressing the origins and development of the concept including the role of leadership, (Schein 1985). Leadership is seen to be interlinked with an organisations culture from its inception to its demise and was found to be of great importance to the organisations studied for this research, particularly with regards to organisational change and associated change of culture. The concepts of subcultures, merger and acquisitions were also of particular relevance.

3.2 Background to and definitions of Organisational Culture

Since the 1960s, the construct of organisational culture has been studied extensively and a vast amount of literature exists examining all aspects of the construct and its link to organizational outcomes. That this wealth of research is still being added to, demonstrates the continuing interest and popularity of the concept with both academics and business managers alike, (De Witte and Van Muijen 1999). Business leaders and management consultants looking to ensure the survival of organisations today continue to refer to findings from research such as 'In Search of Excellence' (Peters and Waterman 1982) and to use typologies and measures of organisational culture (such as Denison's model 1990). The study of culture has been undertaken by many disciplines but has long been associated with anthropology. Knowledge from anthropological studies such as those by Malinowski (1927), Mead (1928), Leech (1954) and Geertz (1973), has led to a greater understanding of societies and the cultures that develop within them. Theories and concepts from anthropology have been applied to studies of work organisations by many of the social science disciplines including organisational psychology and sociology and this has resulted in a far greater insight in to behaviours within organisations.

Before looking at Organisational Culture we need firstly to define what in fact an organisation is? The phenomenon is defined in the Oxford dictionary as; *"An organised group of people with a particular purpose, such as a business or government department'"* Other terms for organisation include, firm, business, corporation, establishment and institution. For the purpose of this study, organisation is defined as 'a group of people large or small, working together within the boundaries of written and unwritten rules, locally or globally towards a common goal.' Turker and Altuntas (2015) speak of organisations which feature in the early years of life such as schools and clubs which can influence an individual's perception of an organisation through their experience.

Meadows, (cited Smircich, (1983: 341) states; *'Organisation is a function of the problem of order and orderliness'*

This definition, as with so many studies of organisational culture from the 1960s to the 1990s, appears to refer to an organisation that is very hierarchical with the Boss at the top of the organisation, dictating to his/her unskilled and unruly 'workers'. This may still be the case in a few organisations today but many modern businesses recognize that the skills and knowledge of its 'employees' or 'Partners' are crucial to innovation and ultimately the success of the business. The focus on people over profit is an increasing focus of the modern organisation. The corporate world today is not a place of

orderliness but, (certainly in the case of Start-Ups), one of lively creativity and change, with employees often working together remotely across the globe. Fleming and Sturdy (2011) however in their empirical study of a call centre found that there was a '*homogenizing*' of workers through culture control and other normative management systems. Gareth Morgan (1986) in his classic '*Images of the organisation'* uses eight metaphors, to describe organisations including organisations as organisms, as machines, brains, political systems, psychic prisons, as flux and transformation, instruments of domination and as cultures.

Not only does literature regarding the concept of organisational culture cover every aspect of its impact, types of and measurement of but there is also a large amount of literature debating definition of the concept. What actually is organisational culture? There appears to be a considerable amount of variation in definitions, partly due to differing disciplinary approaches but also a degree of confusion due to overlap of paradigms such as organisational climate and organisational symbolism, (Denison, 1990; Smircich, 1983; Schneider et al, 2013). Although the constructs of Organisational Climate and Organisational Culture share their roots in Social Anthropology and Organizational Theory and both are concerned with employee perceptions and behaviour, the two constructs have different conceptual and methodological approaches (Schneider et al: 2017). Organisational Climate refers to the shared perception and meaning employees have concerning autonomy, trust, support and recognition, practices, policies, procedures, (McMurray and Scott 2013; Moran and Volkwein 1992 and Schneider 2013). Organisational culture on the other hand is a less tangible construct concerned with the more underlying hidden aspects of organisational values, norms and behaviours. Douglas et al (2017:666) state, " *The climate communicates what is to be believed and valued*" Organisational Culture is studied largely through ethnographic research whereas Organisational Climate is often studied through employee surveys.

Denison sees the study of organisational culture as being largely qualitative in nature whereas the study of organisational climate is largely quantitative. Schein (2010: 7) says that '*Culture is an abstraction'*, yet the forces that derive from it are powerful. He sees culture as not only being around us but within us, having been developed from other groups with which we belong such as social and religious.

Wu (2008: 2535) says that despite the length of time the study of culture has been going on, defining culture '*appears to be the weakest link'*. Wu goes on to offer two further definitions of organisational culture:

1. Organisational cultures are individual choices aggregated into critical masses of people and over time.
2. Organisational cultures consist of interactions among critical masses of people with different preferences and past choices that have the capacity to wield critical influences upon each other, both in the short and long terms, within and beyond the confines of organisations and resource constraints.

Numerous definitions of organisational culture have been offered. It has been likened to a group's personality or character, (Schein, 2004; Stapley, 1993). Set initially by the

leaders or founder of an organisation the greater the history, the stronger the underlying culture, (Schein 2010). It is said to be pervasive, influencing every aspect of organisational activities and processes. According to Myatt, (2014: 38): '*Culture is a construct that must be embedded into the very fabric of the corporate identity. It must be part of the ethos that describes why the enterprise exists, what and who it values, and how it will behave. But it must also be much more than that— it must embody the pulse of the business—it must be a living, breathing heartbeat that leaders, employees, customers, and other stakeholders can visibly feel. More important, culture must be something they want to identify with and be a part of. Culture is the sum of all organisational parts.*'

Organisational culture has been described as a 'process,' which draws together history and everyday practice, (Parker: 2000). It has different layers or levels; the deeper, underlying, level being regarded as the true culture or the 'essence' of a culture. The iceberg model of culture, (created in 1976 by an American anthropologist, Edward T Hall), clearly represents the different levels of culture. Some aspects, described as artefacts, (Schein, 2004; Cameron and Quinn, 2011) are clearly visible at the tip of the iceberg. These include aspects such as dress code, language and buildings. Articulated values lie on or near to the surface. Deeper, underlying aspects of culture such as shared assumptions include hidden reward and punishment systems. Which behaviours are acceptable and which are not? These can be revealed through observing who are the 'star players' in an organisation and who is ostracised, or held back. What behaviours do these individuals demonstrate, (Schein: 2010). Shared assumptions can also be demonstrated in the way teams behave. Are they polite and respectful in meetings or is there a lot of banter and fierce debate.

Baumgartner (2009) describes culture as a '*mindset*', it is a way of thinking, a way of viewing the world. Organisational Behaviourist Diane Pheysey, (1993: 3) states it is…'*a way of seeing that is common to many people*'. Culture is often described as '*the way we do things here.*' This definition focuses on behaviour rather than the cognitive aspect of '*the way we think around here*' and the values people have, however, behaviour can be seen as a result of an individual or groups thoughts and values. Alvesson (1990) states that, '*culture has no fixed or broadly agreed meaning, even in anthropology.*' There are however consistencies in many of the definitions with concepts such as values, norms, behaviours and shared assumptions being mentioned in most studies. O'Reilly et al (1991:492) define values as '*internalized normative beliefs that can guide behaviour*'. Should these values be shared within a wider social unit, leading to the formation of social expectations and norms, an organisational culture exists.

The definition of Organisational Culture which is most closely aligned to the current research is that of Martin and Siehl (1983) who state that Organisational Culture is a "normative glue and a set of values, social ideals or beliefs that organization members share." This definition is in keeping with the author's epistemological position of social constructionism.

3.3 Approaches to Organizational Culture

The number of differing definitions of Organisational Culture, (as discussed in the previous section), are due largely to the varying approaches taken to the study of

Organisational Culture. These differ according to the perspective of the discipline, be it as an Organisational Behaviourist, Psychologist, Anthropologist or from the school of Management. Organisation Theorists, for example, view organisations through the contingency theory lens as 'adaptive' organisms' which interact the environment whereas anthropologists view organisations through the structural-functionalism lens as adaptive-regulatory mechanisms, which unite individuals in to social structures (Smircich 1983:342).

Meek, (1988: 455) describes a *selective borrowing'* of the concept of culture by other disciplines from anthropology. Which areas or aspects are borrowed depends on the purpose or motive such as the interest of management. Borrowing of the concept by social sciences however does not necessarily mean borrowing the same methods or approach to studying it. Positivists seeking a more empirical, quantitative approach, view organisational, (also known as corporate) culture as a tangible entity, something that can be managed, measured and compared (Denison, 1990; Westbrook et al, 2009). Hofstede (1980) states that, studies of organisational culture and national or societal culture are substantially different. Interpretivists however are generally closer to anthropological studies and see culture as something less tangible that arises from meaning making and interpretation by individuals in order to make sense of aspects such as behaviours and symbolic aspects in everyday, (natural) settings. The concept is viewed as subjective, constructed through social interactions, (Louis, 1980; Weick, 2005; Baumgartner, 2009). A distinction can be made between those who see culture as coming about through collective thinking and behaving (functionalists) and those who see culture as being down to individual perception (Cameron and Quinn 2011).

The interpretive approach to the study of culture is now gaining recognition as a valid and valuable approach for the insights it brings, (Jackson 2011). Is it right however to assume that the study of culture within 'organisations' can be approached in the same manner as anthropological studies of primitive tribes? Schein (2010:1), sees organisational culture as being very much set within the context of the wider environment with its macrocultures of national, religious and global occupational cultures and views the history of the organisation as being a major influence on the development of an organisation's culture. Cameron and Quinn, (2011:19), state that culture is undetectable most of the time and one might ask, does it actually exist? Watkins, (2013) states that there is 'universal agreement' that organisational culture exists but there are many who would disagree, or who see culture as ambiguous, (Ogbonna 1992). Martin, (1992) terms this perspective as 'fragmentation', whereby culture is seen as something ambiguous and not actually an attribute of the organisation but the nature of the organisation itself. Martin describes two other perspectives (approaches) to organisational culture. The first is integration where culture is seen as the glue that holds people in the organisation together, (Louis 1980). Schein's view of culture would seem to fit this well as he talks of culture as being intertwined with the organisation. The other perspective is that of differentiation, which sees culture as being made up of several sub cultures which, rather than working together in harmony towards a mutual goal, are competing with each other, (Sackman, 1992; Lok and Crawford, 1999).

3.4 Theories, Typologies, Models and Measurement

Theories and Models

Theories and models of Organizational Culture abound as academics from multi disciplines attempt to capture the many aspects of the construct and its causal links with internal and external environment. Schein's 1985 model is perhaps the most widely known. Schein describes three levels of organisational culture from superficial, visible artefacts to invisible beliefs and assumptions:

- Artefacts – visible behaviours
- Espoused Values – rules, standards, prohibitions
- Underlying Assumptions – invisible, unconscious

Schein's model was created in 1985 and he as well as numerous others, (Baumgartner 2009; Schobel et al 2017; Hogan and Coote 2014) ontinues to use it today. Hatch (1993) adds a fourth domain to Schein's model, that of symbols. It could be said that Schein includes symbols with his artefacts, which include aspects such as language and dress code. Although Hatch's model is more complex than Schein's and describes the process by which the levels/domains are linked, neither model addresses the interaction of an organisational culture with the external environment. Schein's model sees behaviours as being mere artefacts. But aren't behaviours the very essence of organisational culture? Don't they exist at the deeper level of influencing reward and punishment? Homburg and Pflesser (2000) place behaviours as a separate entity to artefacts, one that sits within the organisation and is crucial to market and financial performance. Dauber et al (2012) however, rather than seeing organisational culture encompassing all of Schein's domains, place culture at the deepest level of Schein's model, that of basic underlying assumptions.

Although Schein is seen as one of, if not the greatest authority on organisational culture, there are other influential models, which are followed frequently and are most often mentioned in much of the literature. The Competing Values Framework, (Quinn and Rohrbaugh 1983), Denison's model, (1990) and Hofstede's dimensions (Minkov and Hofstede 2011) are three such models. These influential models have evolved over time, (Minkov and Hofstede 2011) and have led to the development of others such as Sutcliffe (2013) and Oroei et al (2013) and Kokina (2013). Both Denison's model (see Fig 1) and the Competing Values Framework can be seen to use aspects of Schein's model but also address the influence of the external environment. Sagiv et al (2011) see the link between the external environment and societal values and internal values and culture.
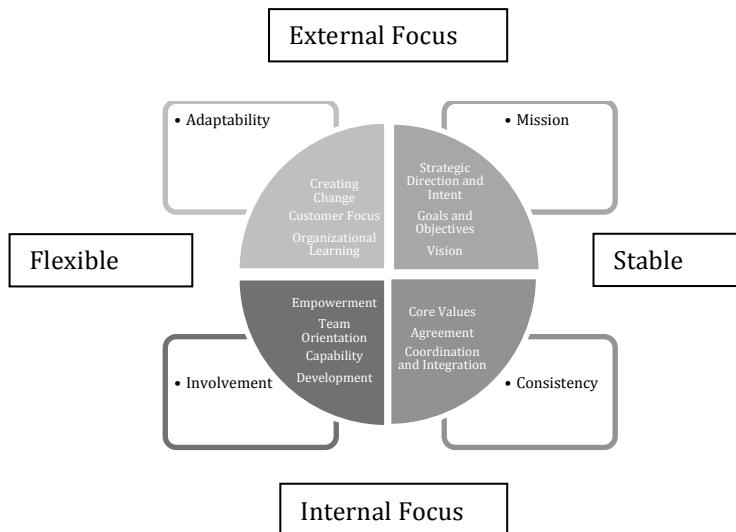
Fig 1. Denison's model

There are many overlapping areas with Denison's model and the Competing Values Framework, (CVF). Four Quadrants of CVF represents four competing or opposing sets of values, (see Fig 2 pp21).
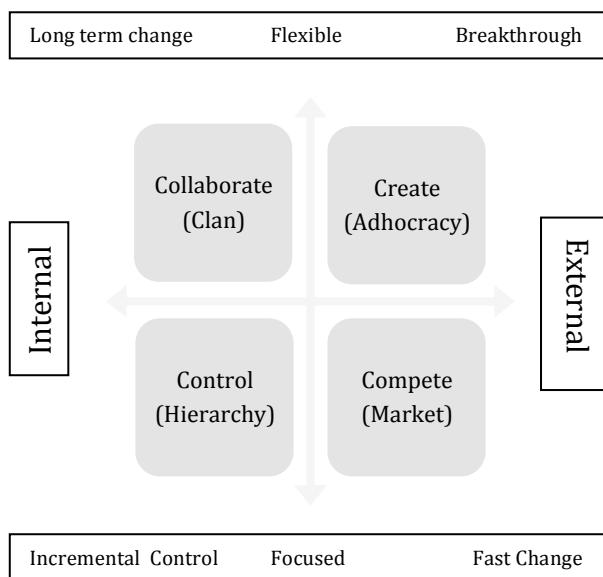

Fig 2. Competing Values Framework

Quinn and Rohrbaugh's 'The Competing Values Framework' (see Fig. 2) is a robust diagnostic tool, that has been tested and used by numerous studies, (such as Lindquist

and Marcy, 2016 and Lavine, 2014), to diagnose organisational culture. The CVF links leadership behaviours with organisational culture and competencies, which are seen to produce different types of values. Two opposing tensions are shown, one between flexibility and stability and the other between internal (organisation) and external focus. Four types of profile sit within these opposing values, at each end of the continuum. Create, (characterised by creativity and vision), Control, (characterised by focus and process), Compete (where there is drive to achieve a goal) and Collaborate, (which is value driven). The Competing Values Framework does not state which type of culture would be effective for which type of organisation i.e manufacturing would suit a stable, controlled environment whereas a start-up company would best suit a creative changing environment.

Dauber et al in their configuration model, (2012), examine the relationships between organisational culture, strategy and internal factors such as operations and maps them to external factors. In this model, organizational culture appears to take a less important role. Rather than being the glue, inextricably entwined with all aspects of organizational life, (Schein, 2010; Louis, 1980) culture is seen as being linked to other equally as important constructs of strategy, structure and operations by systematic processes.

Hofstede's 1970 dimensional model may have been influenced to some extent by Inkeles and Levinson (1969 in Soares et al 2006). Hofstede's model is relevant for national rather that organisational culture and was based on his analysis of IBM employees across 72 countries, (Minkov and Hofstede 2011). Hofstede examined cross-cultural differences and found that many national differences in culture such as values, beliefs and norms, could be associated with four identified dimensions of national culture.

Hofstede's four dimensions of national culture include;

1. Power distance
2. Individualism/ Collectivism
3. Masculinity/Femininity
4. Uncertainty avoidance

A fifth dimension, time orientation, i.e. long term and short term was added more recently

That others have taken Hofstede's dimensions and used them as a framework to study organisational culture demonstrates the potential danger in incorrect application of models and theory of national culture. Hofstede states that it would be inappropriate to apply the four dimensions in his model to the study of organisational culture, (2011:10) as the two types of culture 'are of a different nature'. National cultures add to the formation of our basic values whereas he sees organisational culture as being more superficial. National culture however can be seen to influence organisational culture, which does not sit in isolation from but is embedded within the national culture, (Dauber 2012). Adaptation to National Culture is discussed in Chapter 4.

Typologies

There have been various attempts to categorize culture in to different typologies. Although there have been different names given to the types, there are consistencies. Charles Handy (1991) sees there being four different types of culture;

- Power
- Role
- Task
- Person

Quinn and McGrath also describe four types of culture as seen in the competing values framework. These are the cultural types which can be identified using the OCAI;

- Clan
- Adhocracy
- Hierarchy
- Market

A Power culture, which Handy sees as one where power sits amongst a few, can be compared to Quinn and McGrath's (1985), The Market culture, (where the boss is in control and leadership style is directive) and Silverstone's Bureaucratic culture. Handy's Role culture, has a clearly delegated hierarchy such as in Quinn and McGraths Hierarchy role, where leaders control through formal structured performance management and adherence to rules and regulations. The Task culture, where teams form in groups of expertise is also referred to as a Matrix culture. In the Person culture, Handy sees individuals as believing they are superior to the organisation. This could lead to a lack of cohesion.

Harrison (1987) also lists four different types: Role, Achievement, Power and Support. Again there are similarities to other typologies. Role culture tends to be hierarchical; a pyramid shape organisation, the higher up in the organization, the fewer the number and the greater the perceived importance. The emphasis here is on clarity of role, with everyone aware of what their role is and no blurring or overstepping of role. An Achievement culture is described by Harrison as one in which role is not as important as getting the work done. This is the Task culture described by Handy. It is assumed that everyone is driven to achieve the organizational goal. In the Power culture, the leaders are seen as all powerful and subordinates willing and subservient. The Power culture described by Harrison appears more fear based and threatening than that of Handy although both see the distribution of power as being held by only a few. The Organisational Culture Profile (O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991), classifies cultures as having an outcome orientation (i.e., akin to market and mission cultures) and respect for people component (i.e., similar to clan and involvement cultures)

Measurement

Attempts to measure culture assume that culture exists as a tangible entity. As mentioned previously however, the approach taken will determine whether it is viewed as something measurable or if its meaning is thought to be determined, made sense of depending on the outlook of the individual or group (Martin, 1992; Cameron and Quinn, 2011). Many models of organisational culture, especially those which, like Hofstede and Schein, (2010), take a dimensions approach, aim to measure aspects of organisational culture. Jung et al (2009) found up to seventy different instruments with which to measure various dimensions of the construct including quantitative measures and qualitative. Quantitative measures include cultural audits, surveys, questionnaires, and measures such as the competing values instrument. More qualitative tools include Levin's (2000) Five Window Culture Assessment Framework (cited Cumberland: 2011). Levin sees the five windows in to the organisations culture as being:

- Leadership
- Norms and practices
- Stories
- Traditions
- Symbols

To gain a better understanding of these aspects of culture Levin recommends using methods such as interviews with Leaders.

Other measurement tools include, Hofstede's culture measure, O'Reilly's Organisational Culture Profile classification and the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument, (OCAI), (Cameron and Quinn 2006). The OCAI is the most widely used tool today. It measures Organisational Culture but can also be used to demonstrate the relationship/correlation between Organisational Culture and other constructs such as Organisational Effectiveness, Total Quality Management, intellectual capital and commitment (Meyer 2010) OCAI based on Competing Values Framework. The OCAI is described by Cameron and Quinn in their book, 'Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework'. Cameron and Quinn state that the OCAI is;

 '*a diagnostic instrument to identify core organizational values*' and this is '*especially useful in the effective management of organizational change*' (2011:167).

The OCAI measures six organisational dimensions, (key aspects of an organisation which reflect the underlying values and assumptions). These are measured using questions which are assessed using an ipsative measure, whereby 100 points are divided amongst alternative responses. The six dimensions are:

1. Dominant characteristics of the organisation – what the overall organisation is like
2. The Leadership Style and approach that permeate the organisation

3. The Management of Employees or style that characterizes how employees are treated and what the working environment is like
4. The Organizational Glue or bonding mechanisms that hold the organisation together
5. The Strategic Emphases that define what area of emphasis drive the organisation strategy
6. The Criteria of Success that determine how victory is defined and what gets rewarded and celebrated

Schein (2010) lists the dimensions of organisational culture under 'problems of external adaptation and survival' and 'problems of internal integration'. External adaptation and survival focuses mainly on achieving a shared understanding of and general consensus on the following;

- Mission and strategy:
- Goals: derived from the core mission
- Means: of achieving the goal such as division of labour
- Measurement: criteria to be used in measuring how well the organisation is doing in achieving its goals
- Correction: what action to take if goals not being met

Internal Integration consists of:

- Creating a common language and conceptual categories
- Defining group boundaries and criteria
- Distributing power authority and status
- Developing norms of trust, intimacy, friendship and love
- Defining and allocating of rewards and punishments
- Explaining the unexplainable

Jung et al concluded that 'there was no ideal instrument for cultural exploration' (2009:1087). The OCAI however is a very thorough instrument which also helps to identify how strong the organisational culture is, what cultural congruence there is, (in terms of how similar various parts of the organisation are) and what the type of culture is.

3.5 Psychometric properties of measures of Organisational Culture

Despite their widespread use, measures of Organisational Culture have come under criticism for a number of reasons (Steenkamp, 2001; McSweeney, 2002; Jung et al, 2009; Zhang et al, 2012; Heritage et al, 2014; Puppartz et al, 2017). The psychometric properties of these measures, the construct validity (accuracy) and reliability (consistency or transferability) have been found lacking at times when applied to further research and subject to statistical analysis. Zhang et al (2012) examined the construct reliability and validity (including convergent, discriminant and nomological validity) of Hofstede's and Schwartz's dimensions by examining the relationship

between Chinese attitude and luxury products. They found only two valid dimensions from Hofstede's five dimensions and seven from Schwartz's ten. Puppatz et al (2017) examined reliability of the Globe measure and found that this was 'far below the recommended threshold' and that the construct validity was 'unsatisfying'. The validity of the OCAI was examined in an Australian study by Heritage et al (2014), which looked at factor structure and criterion validity. The latter was found to be potentially weak 'when used to assess ideal culture'.

Measures of Organisational Culture use different methodologies to gather data, (Jung et al: 2009). These include the following;

- A Likert Scale: whereby participants are given statements and asked to rate how strongly they agree with it,
- Ipsative measures: where participants are asked to compare two or more options and distribute a number of points across these statements
- Q-Methodology: where participants are asked to rank a series of statements according to how much they value them by allocating points (splitting a number amongst the statements).

The suitability of these methodologies may be determined by the size of the sample to be studied, time and resources available as well as the expertise of the person doing the research in their analysis and interpretation of the data, (Jung et al: 2009). When selecting a measure it is important that the correct use of the measure is considered, such as the suitability of tool for the context being studied, (Zhang et al; 2002). The appropriateness of a tool is referred to as 'face validity'. The transferability of a tool will depend largely on the context. Hofstede's cultural dimensions for example were intended to be used to study national cultures but has been used to study cultures in a variety of settings such as accounting (Hichem: 2016), Global 500 companies, (Lo et al: 2017) and e learning systems (Contiua et al: 2012). Hofstede's cultural dimensions has been criticised for its assumption that there is one homogenous culture for each nation (McSweeney: 2002) and does not allow for the existence of subcultures. Hofstede's measure which was developed from data gathered between 1967 and 1973, has also been criticised for not being representative of today's culture and changes to the population such as advanced technology and improved education (Zhang et al, 2012; Schwartz, 1994). Steenkamp (2001) found that there was some overlap between the cultural frameworks of Hofstede and Schwartz 1994 cultural dimensions.

3.6 Organisational Culture and Effectiveness

Certain types of culture have been linked to success. Barney (1986) reported innovative and supportive cultures as leading to financial success for organisations as there is increased employee engagement due to high levels of morale and a good quality of working life. Hargadon and Sutton (2000) say successful innovation is down to attitudes and having in place tools for evaluating strengths and weaknesses, measuring performance, having systems for gathering and analysing information and sharing this information. This however would seem to be the very antithesis of a culture in which innovation thrives. It implies the need for measures and targets whereas there is a substantial body of evidence demonstrating that in order for innovation to thrive there

should be freedom for creativity and an environment in which mental wellbeing is enhanced, (Donaldson 2013). Innovation therefore is down to culture rather than one particularly creative individual.

Supportive cultures have been found to have even higher levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment than innovative cultures, (Silverthorne 2004). Supportive cultures include Quinn and McGraths 'The Clan' culture which is described as a 'consensual' culture where leadership style is supportive and encourages participation of employees. Organisations hoping to transform their culture in order to achieve success may find this more difficult than expected.

Chatterjee, (2014), finds that innovation and creativity are crucial, not only to an organisation's success but to its "*survival through transition*" (2014: 565). Although it is unlikely that organisational culture in isolation would be the reason for an organisation suddenly becoming high performing, organisations, which respond and adapt to the ever changing external environment are more likely to succeed. The role of the individual, their values and preferences also has a significant impact on organisational success. Think of the charming, creative salesperson who wins a million dollar deal for the business and in doing so acts as an inspiration to others. Is it the culture within which they operate that enables this or is it the individual's personal characteristics? The organisational culture may enable them to perform at their best, it may give them the freedom to be creative but it is their personal ambition and drive that made the difference. Dauber (2012) agrees that individuals are able to shape organisational culture to a degree through their selection of actions and evaluation of situations.

The importance of organisational culture in the success of an organisation is widely recognised, (Barney 1986) and many business leaders have sought to manage and mould the culture of their firm to replicate an effective corporate culture. Denison's model, links organisational culture and effectiveness. Denison states that high performing organisations have the ability to adapt to respond to environment issues by restructuring and '*re-institutionalizing behaviours*'. They recognize the need to put the customer first and are innovative in exploring and creating new ways to serve. They have clear and consistent values and work in a coordinated way i.e. through teamwork to achieve the common goal. This may explain the popularity of this model, especially for use by organisational psychologists and management consultants bought in to help turn around a business.

There are many other models linking organisational culture with corporate effectiveness and providing business leaders with a framework to guide them towards high performance and competitive advantage. Cameron and Quinn's, (2011) 'Competing Values Framework' was developed to understand and change organisational culture in order to make it more effective. The tool is based on research which examined indicators of effective organisational performance, 'To diagnose and facilitate change' (Cameron and Quinn, 2011: 37), in a specific organisation but also to examine the link between the culture and performance.

Activities being undertaken by the organisation will also dictate the culture to some extent as different strategies and ways of working are required depending on whether

the organisation is in the service industry, finance or such as manufacturing as there will be different requirements in terms of pace of work, relationships with clients, and hours of work. The finance sector, in particular those working in the city are known for their culture of hard work and drinking. The size of an organisation has also been found to influence culture (Nyguyen et al 2014).

It can be seen that there is a wealth of research describing the link between organisational culture and success but there may be some over playing of the importance of organisational culture when other significant variables can influence organisational success. Grugulis and Wilkinson (2002:180) for example, found that although the well-known study, In Search of Excellence, (Peters and Waterman: 1982), was an 'inspirational account of changing culture,' there were many other influential factors such as environmental factors and structural changes, (such as earlier redundancies) which had an impact on the transformation of the business from loss making to hugely successful. Findings may be to some extent manufactured, either consciously or subconsciously, to support a previously conceived conclusion, (Hofstede 2011).

3.7 Leadership, culture and culture change

That managers try to manipulate culture and use it to their advantage has been demonstrated in many studies, (Alvesson: 2002) including the current study. The link between organisational culture and success is well established and many leaders use culture to help achieve organisational effectiveness, (Schein 2010). Leadership and culture are inextricably linked. From setting an initial culture to transforming the culture, Schein sees the role of leadership as being crucial at every stage of the organisations lifecycle, bringing about the formation of a culture, managing that culture and changing it in response to environmental changes. The role of leadership in changing the culture and merging cultures has been much debated however. Bligh (2006: 399) defines cultural leadership as; '*the process through which leadership influences cultural ideologies and expressive behaviours.*' Bligh talks of Cultural Leadership and its influence on the successful merging of cultures and sub cultures and preventing 'cultural clashes' following mergers and acquisitions but states that top down cultural change interventions have a poor record of success.

Leadership is defined by House et al (2004:15) as; "...*the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organisations of which they are member*s". The influence of leaders and the control they have over culture is seen in many studies as demonstrating a key way in which managers have control over work and work processes, (Martin et al, 1998; Alvesson and Willmott, 2002; Ogbanna and Harris, 2010; Trice and Beyer, 1993). Culture is seen as a source of social control because it reflects shared learning that produces normative expectations about behaviour (O'Reilly & Chatman 1996).

Myatt (2014:37) see the role of the leader as being essential for a healthy, non-toxic work environment. He states:

'*Creating a healthy culture is a matter of making it a focus point within the corporate values, purpose, vision, mission, and strategy. Put simply, a corporation's strategy that ignores, or only pays lip service to, culture will be the beneficiary of the unhealthy environment it deserves*'

Nieminen, Biermiere-Hanson and Denison, (2013) use a leader-culture fit framework to align leadership and organisational culture. Culture is seen as supporting the development of some leadership capabilities whilst constraining others. Leaders, as with other employees, may find that their own idiosyncracies are curtailed either consciously or subconsciously to conform with the expected organisational behaviours. Nieminen et al state that leaders 'can act as an agent for positive culture change', (2013:177) in order to enhance organisational effectiveness. Different Leadership styles are seen to be suitable depending on the situation and also the local culture, (Kippenberger 2002).

With increasing globalisation of organisations there is a need for leaders to be aware of local differences in national cultures and to have '*cross cultural sensitivity*,' in order to be effective, (Kabasakal et al, 2012; House, 2004). Leaders need to have a 'global mindset' and 'global leadership capabilities', (2012: 519). The GLOBE research project undertaken by House et al 2004 which examined 9 cultural dimensions (both societal and organisational), across 62 countries, and how these dimensions affected Leadership. The 9 dimensions, (which are seen to incorporate Hofstede's dimensions), consist of;

- Performance Orientation
- Uncertainty Avoidance
- Humane Orientation
- Institutional Collectivism
- In-Group Collectivism
- Assertiveness
- Gender Egalitarianism
- Future Orientation
- Power Distance

The GLOBE project examined which leadership practices and values were found worldwide to be linked to effective leadership. These Primary Leadership Dimensions are:

Administratively Competent	Decisive	Non- participative
Autocratic	Diplomatic	Performance Orientated
Autonomous	Face Saver	Procedural
Charismatic/Visionary	Humane Orientation	Self-Centred
Charismatic/Inspirational	Integrity	Status Consciousness
Charismatic/Self-Sacrificial	Malevolent	Team Collaborative
Conflict Inducer	Modesty	Team Integrator

These primary leadership dimensions were identified as either 'contributing to' or 'inhibiting' outstanding leadership. Leaders who are deemed '*charismatic*' are accredited by their followers with bringing about successful change. Leaders too may believe that it is their own charismatic leadership style that has resulted in the organisations success, however there are likely to be many factors, including the situation and context which impact on organisational change, (Trice and Beyer, 1993; Beyer, 1999).

Kabasakal et al, (2012:519), in their study of leadership and culture in the MENA region state that global managers;

'*...need to be sensitive to the cultural differences by adapting their leadership styles to the local expectations. Most of the time, it is the context including religion, history, language, rules and laws, political systems and ethnic subcultures that determines the effective way of leading*'

There has been a substantial body of research looking at leadership styles and the link with organisational culture, (Bass and Avolio 1993; Sarros et al, 2008; Mumford et al, 2002; Massod et al, 2006). Two key types have emerged from literature, Transactional leaders and Transformational leaders. A transactional leader focuses on supervision, compliance and daily performance against targets and goals through reward and punishment. Transformational leaders on the other hand seek to motivate and inspire through creating a vision for change. They work with their teams rather ruling over them and are often described as charismatic. This style of leadership is described as adaptive and flexible (Bass et al: 2003) and is the most suitable type of leadership when organisations are going through change. Transformational leadership has been linked with innovative, creative organisational cultures and business performance, (Jung, 2003; Oldham and Cummings, 1996; Dess and Picken, 2000; Sharma et al, 2012; Garcia-Morales et al, 2012, Choi et al, 2016, Corrigan et al, 2002) through introducing a system that rewards creativity.

Corfield and Paton, (2016) see long term change of organisational culture as occurring through 'strong and persistent leadership with a clear rationale for culture change' as well as using local champions to align knowledge programmes. Slavin et al (2012) provide a model for Institutional Leadership and Culture Change (the PERMA model) which aims to prevent the toxic environment that Myatt speaks of from existing with regards to medical schools and teaching hospitals. Slavin et al attribute the anxiety, distress and burnout experienced by individuals as being due to the work environment and culture. They state that forward-thinking leadership is needed to develop a healthier culture and prevent mental health issues developing. The PERMA model consists of Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Achievement.

Trice and Beyer (1993) talk of Cultural Leadership and list four leadership types;

- Leadership that creates
- Leadership that changes
- Leadership that integrates

- Leadership that embodies

These types are seen to be of relevance depending on the situation; for Cultural Innovation (as in change) or Cultural maintenance. Managers at all levels can be seen to influence culture.

As can be seen with the two organisations studied in this research, organizational change is driven by many external factors such as the economic environment and technological changes. In their book, 'Changing Organizational Culture', Alvesson and Sveningsson, (2008) list drivers of organisational change, as including political, cultural, demographic and market as well as economic and technological. Globalization is also seen to impact on organisations and lead to necessary change in terms of ways of working.

Holbeche, (2007) says the increase in global competition and technological advances has led many organizations to re-invent themselves in order to both survive and to be successful. There have been many books advising on successful organisational change, (Guest, 1962; Dawson, 1994; Jones, 2002), models of how to affect change such as Total Quality Management, Knowledge Management and Business Process Re-engineering and programs of change advised by management consultants. Changing an organisational culture however is a slow, difficult process, (Schein, 2010; Smircich, 1983; Baumgartner, 2009). Words such as evolution, transformation and reinvention are used to describe the constant process of change that today's organisations face. There are established types of change however.

The well-known study of culture change and resulting business success in British Airways, 'In Search of Excellence' (Peters and Waterman 1982) was held up as an example of the positive impact that a change of culture could have. The study looked at cultural changes that took place in British Airways, the 'putting people first', training programme launched by the then new chief executive Colin Marshall. This was designed to 'modify behaviour' amongst British Airways staff to have a more positive approach and to cope with stress. Business Leaders, always looking to find ways of increasing profit, to reposition their organisation in the market or to recruit greater talent, hope that a change of culture might be the answer.

There is no doubt that organisations need to change in order to survive and thrive in the current world. But is a change of culture the most important area to focus on in order to bring about successful change? Alvesson and Sveningsson (2008) say that organisational culture is one if the key elements in organisational change but previous studies which talked of organisational culture as the most significant aspect of organisational change and success perhaps exaggerated its importance. Before the existing culture can be changed certain structures, strategies, processes and even properties need to be changed in order to undo the hold of the current culture, its power and control (Holbeche, 2007; Hendry, 1994; Shackleton, 1998; Lorsch and McTague, 2016). Hendry (1994) refers to these policies and properties as a '*cultural web*'. Shackleton speaks of the '*immense social power inherent within the corporate culture*' and leaders may be reluctant to let go of a culture that has previously been very successful.

3.8 Subcultures

As discussed in the previous section, studies linking organisational culture and performance, tend to view organisations, (especially those with a strong culture), as having a single homogenous culture, (Barney, 1986;Peters and Waterman, 1982). This however can be seen as simplistic and ignoring the more complex underlying level of culture that exists, where there can be considerable variation in the norms, attitudes, behaviours and practices of groups or subsets (Palthe and Kossek, 2003; Van Maanen and Barley, 1985). These groups or subsets have their own cultures, (Trice and Beyer, 1993; Alvesson, 1993) or 'subcultures'. Multiple subcultures, referred to by Schein, (2010), as 'team micro-cultures,' with their different sets of assumptions and identities, co exist in organisations and perhaps especially in the modern organisation. Although pre-determined sub groups may not necessarily be of a different culture to the main, 'dominant' organisational culture, on-going change, mergers and acquisitions, global teams, agile working and less job security (Palthe and Kossek: 2003) can lead to increased fragmentation of an organisational culture (Martin: 1992).

The formation of subcultures is inevitable as organisations grow in size and become more complex, (Schein, 2010; Lok, 2011). The leader is unable to coordinate everything and it falls to the local leader to set the culture of the local group. Individuals are more likely to identify with these local groups and to adopt the local culture, (Lok: 2011). These groups can form on the following basis:

- Functional
- Occupational
- Professional
- Geographical
- Divisional
- Differentiation by product, market or technology (Schein: 2010)
- Differentiation by hierarchical level (Schein: 2010)

Subcultures can have a substantial impact on the main organisational culture. As with types of organisational culture, numerous types of subculture are found including innovative, supportive and bureaucratic (Handy, 1999; Lok, 2011). Sometimes the subculture may be in line with the main organisational culture but it may also be antagonistic, to both the main culture and other subcultures within the organisation, (Lok et al: 2011). Hofstede (1998) found that the performance of a company could be negatively impacted by the existence of subcultures. Three distinct subsets were identified in his study of a Danish Insurance firm: professional, administrative and customer interface. When tensions arose between them as a result of conflicting interests and perceived injustice it led to 'rebellion' and unrest and ultimately led to the downfall of the company. The leaders did not address the subcultures or the 'rifts' that were developing between them.

Multiple subcultures can give rise to divergent interpretation of, and differing levels of agreement and adherence to business strategies, (Howard-Grenville, 2006), and HR strategy (Palthe and Kossek: 2003). As was discussed in the previous section regarding leadership, having a clear vision and clear direction for all, are key to business success.

A lack of cohesion amongst subcultures and a lack of agreement about strategy could undermine this. Subcultures can impact on many areas of business. Linnenluecke et al (2007) for example, found that subgroups led to a difference in understanding of corporate sustainability and Barker et al (2014) found that subcultures led to differing levels of internalisation of Corporate Social (CSR) values and beliefs and principles thus determining the level of commitment to CSR.

Lok et al (2011), looked at the mediating role of organisational sub cultures on job satisfaction, commitment and leadership in healthcare. Three different types of subcultures were seen at ward level: innovative, supportive and bureaucratic. Nurses on wards with an innovative culture were found to have significantly higher levels of commitment than nurses on wards with a bureaucratic culture. A supportive culture was found to have a small but positive influence on commitment via job satisfaction. This has implications for recruitment of local leaders, (Lok et al: 2011). If the dominant organisational is supportive but the local leader is autocratic and task orientated then this can have a greater influence on the commitment of individuals to the main organisation. It is important therefore for HR and organisational leaders to be aware of local subcultures and to ensure that where possible, these co exist in harmony with the main organisational culture.

3.9 Mergers and Acquisitions – a meeting of cultures

Studies of mergers and acquisitions talk of integration of cultures and development of subcultures, (Marrewijk, 2016; Cooper and Cartwright, 1993). Mergers and Acquisitions (M&As) are increasingly used as a strategic move by businesses as they seek to grow and gain corporate advantage in a global market (Lodorfos and Boateng, 2006; Seth et al, 2000). Many of these will ultimately fail and culture has been found to be a substantial cause. A lack of integration of cultures, a lack of fit or a clash or conflict of cultures, (Cartwright and Cooper, 1993; Bligh, 2006; Weber and Schweiger, 1992) leads to a high turnover, low commitment and cooperation amongst the acquired employees, cultural ambiguity and confusion. Pablo, (cited Schraeder and Self: 2003) talks of four different types of challenges faced by companies during M&As;
- Task, (such as differing procedures, managerial styles and accounting practices)
- Demographic, (dispersion)
- Political, (the way power is exercised)
- Cultural, (organizational cultures can be difficult to blend, especially if a culture is particularly strong).

The challenges faced by individuals are equally as difficult in terms of emotional toll from feelings of loss, lack of control and anxiety due to uncertainty, (Roundy 2010). The emotional distress which results from a sense of loss of old ways/culture and dealing with change is sometimes overlooked by businesses as they focus on task and procedures. Acculturation, a term which refers to a merging of cultures whereby aspects from one culture are taken up by another in both directions, (Berry 1980) has been seen as the ultimate aim in mergers and one that leads to success. Nahavandi and Malekzadeh, (cited Marrewijk 2016), identified four strategies for acculturation; integration where the two cultures each retain their identity, assimilation, where one culture absorbs the other, deculturation where the culture disintegrates and

separation, where the two cultures are entirely separate and. There is a view that maintaining the separate cultures can be a source of creativity and learning, (Stahl and Voigt: 2008). Taking a positive approach to the merger can help, emphasising the benefits and a 'we're all in this together' approach, (Schraeder and Self, 2003; Marks and Mirvis, 1992).

It can be seen from the burgeoning body of research that organisational culture is something that business leaders must consider seriously prior to making mergers and acquisitions (M&As). From their study of 16 M&A deals, Lodorfos and Boateng (2006) developed a framework for managing culture in M&As. This four staged approach consists of a pre-merger and pre-planning phase, (during which information is gathered such as looking at beliefs and values behind practices), a planning phase, (during which a task force is set up to look at integrating the culture and aspects such as deciding on the extent of integration, timing of and risks of are considered) an implementation phase and an evaluation phase. Marrewijk, (2016) adds a further strategy for acculturation, that of 'revitalization'. Revitalization is defined by Marrewijk (2016: 339), as a strategy whereby employees; 'recreate and re-form a culture or subculture by mixing elements of their existing cultural frameworks with other elements required to adapt to the M&A process'.

Bligh, (2006: 401) states: '*In other words, in the wake of a merger, cultural leaders may need to both embody the core values of the existing culture (maintenance), while at the same time carrying forward new and/or modified cultural elements (innovation*).

3.10 Person-Culture fit

The concept of person-environment fit has been studied since the 1960's and has its origins within interactional psychology. Person-Organisation fit sits within this wider umbrella and incorporates the construct of Person-Culture Fit. The notion of fit assumes that aspects of a person such as values, preferences and personality and 'facets' of the organisation (O'Reilly et al 1991), such as job role, norms and culture can be measured to determine a match. As in dating this is predicted to result in a harmonious relationship leading to positive outcomes such as job commitment and job satisfaction (Morley, 2007; Cable and Judge: 1995; Meyer et al, 2010). Although there are likely to be multiple factors influencing outcomes most studies have focused on only a few variables and 'limited descriptions' (O'Reilly 1991).

The concept of Person-Organisation Fit has been of increasing interest amongst human resource management and recruitment agencies as business's endeavour to reduce turnover and increase effectiveness, (Arthur et al 2006; Gardner et al 2012). Meyer et al (2010) looked at the fit between employee perceptions of and preferences for organisational culture and its implications for individual commitment and intention to stay. Direct and indirect measures of fit such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment were considered. Employee needs are regarded as being reflected in their preference for a particular type of culture. In particular, Meyer et al looked at "*the implications of culture congruence under conditions of organisational change*" (2010: 459). They investigated whether there was any correlation between person-organisation fit and employee commitment and intention to stay, both during and

following organisational change. They found that a misfit in terms of deviation from expectations of the culture was most likely to lead to lower commitment and intention to stay. These finding are mirrored in studies of psychological contract, which is discussed in Chapter 5.

Individual and organisation effectiveness, job satisfaction and commitment have been shown to be enhanced where there is an alignment of values, needs, abilities and personality, (O'Reilly et al, 1991; Youngs et al, 2015; Chatman, 1991). A fit, or congruence of person and organisation has also been found to enhance happiness and innovation, (Afsar, 2016; Sousa, 2015). Meyer et al, (2010: 458) state; '...*people adapt best when there is a good person–environment (P–E) fit'.*

There have been several studies of person-organisation fit, which examine the concept in terms of personality. Gardner et al (2012) looked at personality, using the five factor paradigm as well as recruitment strategies against Quinn's four culture types. Recruitment strategies included realistic as oppose to traditional. Realistic job previews which included both desirable and less desirable aspects of the organization so that applicants with a poor fit can select themselves out. Other recruitment methods include assessing personality and skills against organisation culture and job role.

Although there has been a substantial amount of research in to person-environment fit and under this umbrella, person-organisation fit, there has been an increasing trend towards more specifically looking at person-culture fit, (O'Reilly et al, 1991; Silverstone, 2004; Meyer et al, 2010; Vandenberghe, 1999). O'Reilly et al, (1991:488) take a positivist approach to studying the concept, stating that; '*the validation of the construct of person-culture fit rests on the ability to assess relevant aspects of both person and culture*' O'Reilly et al see the quantitative measurement of the relevant aspects as a '*significant problem'*, and sometimes a '*controversial issue'*. They used a tool, which would identify more comprehensively the type of organisational culture, the 'Organisational Culture Profile Item'. This instrument contained a set of value statements that characterize an organisation and individual values behaviours were matched against this from a list of fifty four values/behaviours. O'Reilly et al see a congruence of organisation and individual values as being crucial to Person-Culture fit.

Although the person-organisation, (person- culture) fit approach continues to be used frequently by recruitment specialists it has been criticised as having both theoretical and methodological problems, (Edwards and Cooper, 1990; Nieman et al 2013; De Cooman et al 2009; Wheeler, Gallagher, Brouer, & Sabylnski, 2007). It can be seen that there are multiple influences and relationships which affect person-organisation fit, employee engagement and effectiveness, (Chen et al, 2016; Edwards and Cooper, 1990) and there is some evidence that there is a difference between perceived and actual fit, (Cable and Judge: 1995). The concept too can be criticised as preventing diversity and inclusion. If all employees are recruited to fit the mould, with no place for individualism, what would happen to creativity? Freedom of individual expression would appear to be especially curtailed by a strong culture and drive for uniformity. Having a strong culture means that individuals have similar values and beliefs which leads to standardised ways of thinking and behaving which would seem to restrict innovation and creativity. Lyons,

et al (2007: 180) state that this is not the case as the strength of culture relates to the norms and not the content.

In a strong culture however, where compliance is necessary in order to succeed, it can be difficult if not dangerous for individuals to express themselves too freely. The strength of some cultures is such that it will cause individuals to act against their own conscience, as is seen in studies of the banking industry, (Cohn, Fehr and Marechal 2014).

3.11 Summary

It is difficult to summarise the vast amount of literature regarding organisational culture with so many definitions, typologies and theories arising from this. Most agree however that organisational culture arises from a group of individuals with a history of shared activities through their work, leading to a shared understanding, values and norms, the development of a common language and ways of working. Knowledge of the culture is passed down from one generation to another, (Bratton: 2007) as a largely unwritten set of rules stating 'this is how we behave' and 'this is what we believe'. As addressed in the previous section, the concept of person culture fit assumes that some individuals are better suited to an organisation than others in terms of their behaviour and beliefs matching that of the organisation. The subject of unwritten rules and beliefs will be discussed further in Chapter Five regarding Psychological Contracts.

The strength of and control of organisational culture over both leaders and employees, is something that is demonstrated in large, successful organisations such as the retail giants Sainsbury's and John Lewis. Employees identify with and are happy to be associated with the organisation and to behave in accordance with the values and rules. The power of organisational culture is not always something that employees wish to be held by however. Firms such as Amazon and Sports Direct are seen to have a strong culture of compliance, which may be very much to the detriment of its employees' wellbeing. Increasingly these days, (largely due to globalization and the influence of US firms such as Google), organisations are moving to embrace and respect individualism. Employees are more empowered by practices such as Agile Working which has become more necessary due to business being across several geographies and time spans. As discussed in Chapter Two, more organisations are moving towards a culture of putting people (clients and employees) first showing that they are valued and respected, (Nixon, 2008; McCaffrey, 2014; Schlesinger, 2009). Rousseau (1995:49-51) sees culture as being a '*system of interconnected layers'* and notes that when organisations '*actively attempt to change the culture… they frequently alter artefacts to signal commitment to change, for example changing the company logo*'. Such artefacts are the stuff of branding, customer and employer.

It can be seen that the large majority of research in to organisational culture has been around culture and organisational performance, (Barney, 1986; Hargadon and Sutton, 2000; Chatterjee, 2014). Anthropological studies in to group culture, however, looked at all aspects of human relationships within a group such as eating habits, interpersonal relationships, (including) sexual, age and gender related issues and health. Studying organisational culture from this perspective could lead to a greater understanding of

the construct including areas such as how culture evolves in organisations and the interplay of small groups within a large organisation.

How newcomers view and understand the organisational culture they are joining may be influenced by previous experience. Schein (2004) states; '*we bring culture with us from our past experience but we are constantly reinforcing that culture or building new elements as we encounter new people and new experiences*' and '*the process of trying to be accepted by our membership and reference groups is unconscious*'. Despite the abundant research in to organisational culture, there is little, if any, looking at how newcomers are assimilated in to the culture and how they learn what the culture is. The next chapter will address assimilation and how people learn to adapt to a change in situation and environment such as joining a new group.

CHAPTER FOUR– Adaptation

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explored the concept of organisational culture, from definitions, typologies and models to the link with organisational culture and business effectiveness. The notion of person-culture fit was discussed. The notion of fit is seen as one of being stable and fixed, 'you fit or you don't', whereas the concept explored in this chapter, that of adaptation, is one of flexibility and fluidity. Adaptation in humans is linked with survival, (Sell et al, 2010; Schlebusch et al, 2015) and studies of individual adaptation in humans stem largely from the biological/ecological sciences, (Selye, 1936; Schaffner and Sabeti, 2008; Baumgartner et al, 2008; Russo, 2012). Studies of behavioural adaptations in animals also have some relevance, demonstrating the remarkable changes that animals make in order to survive in a changing environment. In a BBC documentary (May 2014) Dolphins were seen to have 'versatile and inventive brains' which allowed them to quickly learn new behaviours in order to be able to communicate and fit in with others. This includes learning the 'social etiquette of their pods'. The curiosity demonstrated by Dolphins can been seen to play a major role in helping them to learn about their environment and to adapt to this. These same skills and characteristics, versatility, curiosity, inventiveness and learning the social etiquette have been found to be essential in the adaptation of humans, (Bonanno, 2004; Fredrickson et al 2003; Bonanno and Diminich, 2013).

Adaptation can be psychological as well as physiological, behavioural, social and cultural and can be at a group or individual level. Psychological adaptation has been linked in many studies with biological adaptations, (Sell et al 2010) and has been found in studies to be closely linked with resilience, (Robertson and Cooper 2013; Lee-Bagley; 2005). Conversely, maladaptation, the inability to adapt, has been linked with stress (Selye; 1936). Behavioural adaptations have also been linked to biological changes, (Van Steenbergen 2015) and can result from the psychological adaptation for example that occurs with resilience, (Maupome et al, 2015; Turk et al 1998.) Maupome's study demonstrates the behavioural and psychological adaptations that can take place alongside cultural adaptation. Research in to adapting to national culture (Black et al, 1991; Triandis, 2006; Sanchez, 1993) demonstrates the psychological and behavioural adaptation that takes place in a process of acculturation. There is currently a gap in knowledge regarding adapting to organisational culture

Generally, adaptation is seen to take place in response to risk from, or changes in, the environment, (Smit and Wandel; 2006). Social adaptation however is not so much in response to the environment as in response to others. White and Burgoon, (2001:9) state that; 'Perhaps the most essential feature of human interaction is that it involves adaptation'. Most studies of the socialisation of individuals focus on the adjustment of individuals to work role and tasks, however adapting to social processes are seen to significantly affect adaptation to the organization, (Snell, 2006; Derven 2008). There are many studies which look at how communities adapt such as to climate change and the socio economic climate, (Smit and Wandel, 2006; Brooks et al, 2005; Hinkel, 2011; Nelson et al, 2010; Grothmann and Patt, 2005; Pelling and High, 2005) however individuals are seen to differ in their ability to adapt (Diener et al 2006). The vast majority of studies of adaptation talk of adapting as a way of coping, managing and surviving external change through transformation or adjustments. External change can

be viewed in terms of risk and possible threat. Most studies talk of bringing about equilibrium or harmony between organism and environment.

This chapter looks at the paradigms of adaptation, stress and resilience. It can be seen that all are closely linked and there is much cross usage of the terms. Various approaches to the study of each paradigm are discussed including biological, ecological and sociological. Models and theories of adaptation are considered, (Brickman and Campbell, 1971; Hutcheon, 2012; Selanders, 1993; Helson, 1964) including the interactive adaptation theory, (White and Burgoon, 2001; Hubbard, 2015) and various models which look at stages of adaptation or development such as Tuckman's theory of group formation and Kubler-Ross's stages of grief. The concepts of stress and resilience, (maladaptation and adaptation) are discussed in depth, with regards in particular to adaptation in individuals. The theory of socialization and onboarding and its application to adaptation to organizational culture is considered.

4.2 Background to the study of Adaptation

The study of adaptation originates in the natural sciences. Studies of evolution show how humankind has adapted physically and biologically as a species over a millions of years both on a local and global basis, (Darwin, 1859; Coop et al, 2009). On a microscopic, cellular level humans continue to adapt to their environment, such as described in studies of neurophysiology (Schlebusch et al, 2015; Fraser, 2013; Baumgartner et al, 2008). The study of adaptation in individuals covers many areas and there is considerable overlap with concepts such as adjusting, evolving, growing and developing. All of these concepts differ, some more obviously than others. Adapting and adjusting for example are often thought of as the same but Nelson (2007) sees adapting as an active process involving a deliberate process of decision-making and actions with the main purpose of reducing vulnerability whereas adjusting is a more incremental process. Smit and Wandel (2006) however see adaptation as being 'anticipatory' or 'reactive.' It has been described as both a process and an outcome, (Schinke and Tennebaum 2014).

 Developmental Psychologists such as Jung and Piaget regard adaptation in terms of the cognitive development of individuals, clearly demonstrated in Piaget's classic study of the four stages of intellectual development in children. Piaget looked at how a child's mental processes adjust as they learn new things. Their construction of the world alters to incorporate a new object or event which is then assimilated in to a sensorimotor or cognitive structure leading to recognition. Again the notion of equilibrium is incorporated in to this theory, as a new event or object is observed there is an adjustment of cognitive structures or mental processes to align the new or unfamiliar event in to the child's construction of the world.

Adaptation is viewed by Anthropologists in terms of societies adapting to the natural environment including making cultural adaptations. Sports psychologists also talk of adapting in terms of reaching an equilibrium. Schinke and Tenebaum, (2014) say that when an athlete faces various stressors such as a major sporting event, injury, demotion, promotion and retirement they must adapt by acting or reacting and making decisions in order to manage stress and to restore psychological balance. They

distinguish between slow, deliberate long term adaptation which relies on social support and short term, fast adaptation which is automatic and self-supported (2014: 99).

4.3 Theories of adaptation

Perhaps the most well-known of theories regarding adaptation is Hans Selye's General Adaptation Theory which is looked at further under the section on Stress.

General Adaptation theory Hans Selye; 1936

Hans Selye's (1936) biological explanation showed that the human body adapts to general or systemic stress through a chain of physiological changes. This reaction, Selye describes as a defence system and the response is the same regardless of the threat (Selye: 1948). Selye describes in detail the various hormonal releases and resulting changes in the nervous system, that take place in three clearly identifiable stages known as the Alarm stage, the Resistance stage and the Exhaustion stage. The Alarm stage incorporates changes described in Cannon's Fight/Flight theory whereby hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol are released in to the blood stream along with a raised blood sugar. This release of resources gives rise to a rapid increase in energy. In the Resistance stage, the bodies defence system is weaker as energy resources are directed to repairing damage to affected parts of the body and the parasympathetic nervous system returns many physiological functions to normal. The body remains in a state of preparedness. The final stage is known as the Exhaustion phase. If the threat remains the body loses its ability to combat stress and is susceptible to disease and ultimately to death.

Adaptive Capacity and Vulnerability Concept

In their work on adapting to environmental change, Nelson et al (2007:395), describe adaptation as "a process of deliberate change in anticipation of or in reaction to external stimuli and stress". Nelson et al speak of the need to reduce vulnerability and increase the capacity to adapt. Adaptive capacity and vulnerability is addressed in many studies looking at communities adapting to a changing environment, in particular with regards to global changes such as climate change (Smit and Wandel, 2006; Brooks et al, 2005; Hinkel, 2011; Nelson et al, 2010; Grothmann and Patt, 2005; Pelling and High, 2005). Research in to Adaptive Capacity addresses what adaptations could be made to allow communities to survive changes such as climate change and what the residual vulnerability would be once those adaptations were made (Smit and Wandel; 2006).

The Adaptive Capacity and vulnerability theory describes, assessing needs in terms of current vulnerability, planning and implementing adaptations to survive environmental change and risk. This is largely in the context of climate change. Smit and Wandel (2006) see there being three approaches in to this area:
- Studies which estimate the degree to which the impact of an environmental change or hazard could be moderated by adaptations
- Studies which look at specific adaptation options or measures. The relative merit of various adaptations are considered.

- Studies which assess the vulnerability and Adaptive Capacity of various communities so as to prioritize adaptations or measures to those most in need.

Brooks et al (2005) and Hinkel (2011) looked at indicators of vulnerability and factors which affect vulnerability. These were found to depend on the nature of the system being assessed as well as the hazard being faced. Risks addressed in studies of Adaptive Capacity and Vulnerability include global, environmental, biophysical, social, economical andpolitical.

Interaction Adaptation Theory

Whereas the Adaptive Capacity theory looks at the adaptation of communities, the Interaction Adaptation theory looks at adaptation and adjustments made by individuals whilst interacting/communicating with others, (Burgoon, Stern et al, 1995; White and Burgoon, 2001; Hubbard 2015). The concept of interactive adaptation looks at the ways in which individuals adapt their behaviour during an exchange. Individuals bring to an interaction expectations of the interaction, (derived from social norms), certain needs (e.g. reassurance) and desires (to achieve their goals), (White et al: 2001). People 'adjust and accommodate' their behaviour according to how the other participant behaves, be it through verbal or non-verbal cues. The interplay of behaviours are described by White et al (2001:12) as 'Matching', 'Synchrony' and 'Reciprocity' are seen to be fluid as individuals read the situation and adapt and adjust their response accordingly. White et al (2001:12) list four forms of adaptation which may occur during interaction;

- Approach – movement towards another
- Avoidance – movement away from the other
- Reciprocity – an individual responds in the same direction as the other with a similar behavior or a behavior of a similar value
- Compensation – an individual responds with behavior of a similar value to the other but in the opposite direction

It is not clear from the literature regarding Interactive Adaptation theory whether the adaptations made are conscious or subconscious. There is also some criticism of the theoretical underpinning of interactive adaptation. Most of the studies on which the theory was drawn from were based was on Burgoon's own work.

Adaptation Level Theory

In 1964, Harry Helson established the concept of Adaptation Level, a neutral or indifferent zone, a set point, equilibrium or weighted mean between two opposing responses. In terms of psychology for example, Helson offers the example of attraction and repellent, negative and positive feelings. The neutral point is affected by internal norms which may arise from previous experience which have a residual effect on perception of current weighting and affects response to stimuli. Processes of Assimilation (greater likeness) or Contrast (greater difference) can result from situations involving social judgement It therefore demonstrates that individuals will

adapt their response to situations/stimuli according to adjustments to internal norms. Their neutral point will differ from others depending on previous experience and external/internal stimuli such as social pressure and personality. People adapt, (get used to) conditions and reset their neutral point accordingly.

Many subsequent theories regarding Adaptation incorporate elements of Helson's Adaptation theory, (despite the very racist nature of his methodology), including Myer's (1992) The Pursuit of Happiness, Brickman and Campbell's The Hedonic Treadmill theory (also known as Adaptation Wellbeing theory) and the Interactive Adaptation theory.

Hedonic treadmill theory

The Hedonic Treadmill theory can be seen to incorporate elements of Helson's Adaptation Level theory. It asserts that individual happiness will return to a set level of Hedonic Neutrality, (Brickman and Campbell, 1971) despite short term increases or decreases in happiness which result from positive or negative life events. This theory has been criticised as not allowing for the fact that individuals adapt differently to situations and that some will adjust and remain happy whilst others will return to a previous lower level, (Diener et al, 2006; Mancini et al, 2011)

4.4   Adapting to National Culture

Although there is currently a gap in knowledge regarding adapting to organisational culture, there has been a considerable amount of research looking at adapting to national culture and studies of cross cultural adjustment, (Black et al, 1991; Triandis, 2006; Sanchez et al, 2000; Hee Yoo et al, 2006). Studies of adaptation to national culture, including moving to a job role overseas, identify various stages that individuals go through such as facing an initial 'culture shock' (when individuals encounter a new or rapidly changed culture) and eventual cultural assimilation. Learning a new language is only part of adapting to a new national culture leaving part of yourself behind has been identified as another. The key stages of adapting to national culture have been identified as;

- Honeymoon - excited, exploring,
- Rejection - stress, poor motivation,
- Recovery - relaxed, confident, obstacles easily resolved

Adapting to a national or local culture is required for business relocation and has been found to be affected by several influences including level of engagement, (Selmer and Lauring: 2016), emotional regulation, (Hee Hoo et al: 2006) and adult attachment, (Baker: 2004). Relocation can be a major upheaval for individuals and their families and organisations would be wise to recognize the impact and to invest time in preparing them for the move, ensuring the individual is well equipped socially and psychologically to live and work in the new culture. Previous coping mechanisms have been found lacking and inappropriate within different cultures, (Sanchez et al: 2000) and connecting employees with social support networks such as ex pat communities can help with their adaptation.

4.5 Stress

It can be seen that the study of stress, such as that by Selye (1936), Lazarus (1966) and Contrada and Baum (2010), is clearly linked with studies of adaptation. Indeed the two words are often used simultaneously; adaptation being a reaction to stress, a defence against stress, a way of coping with stress. Stress is described as an adaptive response, (McEwan, 2007; Ivancevich and Matteson, 1982). There is however, some criticism of the concept of stress as being too vague and all-inclusive, (Dewe et al, 2010; Contrada and Baum, 2010). Is stress a cause or an effect? Definitions of stress postulate that it can be both, a stimulus and a response, (Butler 1993) but others see a clear distinction between stress (as an adaptive reaction) and a 'stressor' (as the cause). There is increasingly the view that stress is something that is part of our lives (Southwick et al 2014). That we should perhaps re-interpret the feelings as excitement. Stress can be seen as largely a psychological response or a physiological response, the focus very much dependant on the approach; Psychological (Lazarus; 1966; Lazarus, 2006; McGrath, 1970), Social (Cohen, 1985; Cobb, 1976; House, 1981) or Cultural (Antonovsky 1987). The Biomedical approach such as that of Selye, (a medical doctor), focuses more on the physiological changes and link with disease whereas psychologists such as Lazarus and Cooper focus more on the perception of stress, the psychological response and link with Mental Wellbeing and coping. Studies of Resilience focus in particular on the individual's ability to cope with stress, (see next section). Studies of stress provide an exiting example of how the disciplines can work together (Contrada and Baum, 2010; McKewan 2009). There has been an integration of the disciplinary approaches, a biopsychosocial approach, (Contrada and Baum 2010) which considers the psychological and physiological responses that result from the individual's perception of external threat or pressure. Some however take the view that the approaches are distinct and do not overlap, (Cooper and Drewe 1994).

Hans Selye is often credited with being the first person to use the term 'stress' to describe the physiological response of the body to external 'stressors' but he was by no means the first person to study the phenomenon. The Functionalist William James, (1842-1910) looked beyond the basic physiology at emotions and how awareness or 'consciousness' enables us to adapt to change, (Cooper and Dewe 2004). Walter Cannon (1871-1945) clearly articulated Bernard's concept of homeostasis, whereby there is a stabilising effect or return to a state of stability following disruption (Abboud 2010). Cannon described the fight or flight theory whereby there is a physiological reaction, such as a surge of adrenaline, on facing a perceived threat such as a wild animal. This is in order to give an increase in energy so that an individual can either run away or stay and fight off the threat. Cannon also made the link between emotion and disease, (Cooper and Dewe 2004). In 1908 the Psychologists Robert Yerkes and John Dodson identified the correlation between the amount of arousal, (perceived stress) and performance. A key influential thinker on stress, Richard Lazarus expanded on the area of perception and described a 'cognitive appraisal' of stressors, (Lazarus 1966) in his Transactional Stress Model. Lazarus describes two levels of appraisal, a primary appraisal where an individual appraises the environment/situation in terms of demand or threat (Dewe et al 2010) and a secondary appraisal whereby the individual considers what coping resources they have to deal with the situation i.e. their self-efficacy. Does the demand exceed their ability to cope?

These key thinkers are seen to have influenced hugely, current approaches to the study of stress. The physiological impact on the brain and nervous system and subsequent behavioural and physical effects (including links with disease), continue to be of interest especially those who take a biomedical approach to the study of stress. The neuroscientist Bruce McEwan, in his paper, 'Physiology and Neurobiology of stress and adaptation: central role of the brain', recognises the initial role of perception in initiating the physiological stress response. McEwan also recognises that individuals will have different perceptions of stress, largely due to previous experience such as early life events.

The physiological stress response that those from a biomedical approach such as McEwan, (2007), Selye, (1936) and Ivancevich and Matteson, (1982) are interested in is now well known as the Hypothalmic- Pituitary- Adrenal Axis, (HPA). During this process, which is activated by a perceived threat or stressor, the amygdala, (which deals with sensory input) the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex, (which are all linked), undergo changes which cause the Hypothalamus to activate the Sympathetic nervous system and to release Corticotrophin Releasing Hormone. Corticotrophin Releasing hormone acts on the Pituitary gland to release Adrenocorticotrophic Hormone. This stimulates the adrenal cortex (located on the adrenal gland) to release Glucocorticoid hormones such as Cortisol. A release of Cortisol brings about a rise in blood glucose and there is a subsequent rise in energy levels for the individual, the flight/flight response. The Glucocorticoid hormones in turn, loop back to effect the Hypothalamus. Further studies continue to investigate the psychophysiological response to stress such as that by Cambell and Ehlert, (2012) and tests for levels/ measures of stress are now possible, mainly using levels of cortisol as a marker (Cambell and Ehlert, 2012; Hansen et al, 2006). Such measures add to the empirical evidence base regarding incidence of stress which has been criticised previously as being based on self-report, (Cox 1993).

The concept of homeostasis, or allostasis, (Cannon, McEwan 2007) whereby stress hormones, Glucocorticoids, (known as chemical mediators), bring abought an adjustment to restore equilibrium is central to the notion of the physiological stress response as a protective process which enables individuals/organisms to adapt to their environment, (Wolff 1953). The HPA axis has a moderating effect on many homeostatic systems such as the metabolic, central nervous, cardiovascular and immune systems. If stress becomes chronic and continues for some time, these systems become strained, the immune system is suppressed and the link with disease is apparent, (Wolff, 1953; Fink, 2010). Depression, (Pariante and Lightman, 2008; Gotlib et al 2008)), obesity, (Rutters et al 2011) and aging, (Aguilera, 2011; Tomiyama et al, 2012) have also been linked with the stress response. Some studies however have found no correlation between stress and disease, (Cosgrove et al 2012).

The 'stream of consciousness', as described by James, is an awareness of thoughts. The notion of 'perception' and ability to manage thoughts is very much incorporated in to stress management techniques used today such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Studies in to perception of stress look at numerous and diverse influencing factors and moderators including personality, temperament, genetic factors, childhood experiences and lifestyle habits. These factors will lead some to take a largely glass half empty view,

negative outlook whereas others take a more positive, optimistic approach. Some may find a situation frightening when others might not, depending on previous experience.

Historical events such as the world wars and more recent terrorist attacks such as on the World Trade Center have bought the study of stress, particularly post-traumatic stress, to the fore and encouraged debate on the subject. In their study into men and the stress of war, Grinker and Speigal (1945) see 'failure of adaptation' as being evidenced by 'neurotic symptoms'. Shell shock and combat fatigue were terms used to describe the mental state of many soldiers returning home having witnessed the horrors of war. The term 'Post Traumatic Stress' was not used until 1980, (Pitman 2012) but the symptoms it describes are those which were experienced by the soldiers of the two world wars, who suffered nightmares and flashbacks, avoided situations which may have bought back memories, were unable to function normally and suffered from hyper arousal and ill health. Not everyone who witnesses a traumatic event however will go on to develop post-traumatic stress, (Bisson et al 2015) as will be discussed in the section on resilience.

Literature concerning stress exemplifies the well versed debate of nature versus nurture. Is an individual's response due to factors inherent in their biological make up or is it down to their socialisation and previous experience, (Garmezy and Rutter, 1983; Hoffman and Parsons, 1991).There are Individual characteristics (moderators that can prevent stress reactions) – personality, (Billing and Steverson: 2013) genetic make-up (Mann and Currier: 2010) and emotional intelligence (Houghton et al, 2012). There are also mitigating social factors which have been identified such as social support and early bonding, (McEwan: 2007). Exposure to stressful situations in early years for example has been found to result in significant changes in the Hippocampus and Amygdala leading to an enhanced stress responsiveness, (Teicher et al 2003).

Cognitive appraisal, or perception of stressors and the psychological response is seen to be critical in coping with, or adapting with regards to joining a new organisational culture. It explains how and why some individuals experience feelings of stress when others do not? Although there is a subjective appraisal by an individual of stress within an organization it can be seen that there are certain objective causes of stress. The following sections will address in particular, causes of stress at work and examine links between organisational culture and stress.

4.5.1 Work related stress

Work related stress is a significant problem for both businesses and individuals globally. Its impact is substantial; costs to business including increased absence, reduced productivity, presenteeism, low employee engagement and morale, high turnover and client relations. The cost of work place stress is estimated to be approximately £1,035 per employee, (BITC 2009).Costs to the individual include, ill health (both mental and physical), loss of confidence, poor job satisfaction, poor performance and breakdown of relationships. The UK government have recognised the scale of the problem and commissioned research such as the Black report, (2008), Foresight Mental Capital report (2008) and Public Health projects such as by the Business in the Community to address the issue. The Health and Safety Executive

(2014) define stress as: '*a harmful reaction people have to undue pressures and demands placed on them at work'*.

The HSE's definition seems to place responsibility for stress firmly on the employer rather than the individual's coping mechanisms or perception of stress and is an approach supported by law, judging from the many legal cases where substantial awards have been made to individuals who have suffered from stress at work, (Walker v Northumberland, 1995). However more recently the emphasis in claims of work related stress such as Hartmann v South Essex Mental Health Trust (2005)the role of individuals in taking some responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. In the case of Hatton v Sutherland, (2005) the Court of Appeal placed the onus for burden of proof very much on the individual. According to Law firm Slater and Gordon (2012) the principles that emerged from the Hatton v Sutherland case were, that the individual;

1. Is in charge of his/her own mental health
2. Can gauge whether the job was doing him/her any harm
3. Can then do something about it.

The law is ambiguous when it comes to determining whether 'stress' is a disability or not and therefore covered under the Disability Discrimination aspect of the Equality Act. Suffering from work related stress is in itself unlikely to lead to a diagnosis of disability but the long term effects of stress such as depression could well be.

The HSE, in conjunction with the CIPD, developed the Management Standards and a stress indicator tool which identifies which of these are causing stress to an individual at work, (Cousins 2004, HSE 2001). The Management Standards followed research undertaken by Professor Tom Cox from Nottingham University (funded by the HSE) which identified six key causes of work related stress;

- Demand
- Control
- Support
- Relationships
- Role
- Change

These are broad areas under which a multitude of specific causes sit, (Brookes et al 2013). Relationships for example can cover the issue of bullying by a colleague or colleagues and can also include the relationship between an individual and their Line Manager. This has been found to be crucial in determining how well supported an individual is at work, and has led the HSE to undertake further work with the CIPD and Investors in people program (2009) to develop a Management Competency Framework, (Donaldson-Fielder et at: 2008). Interestingly, the standards do not include organisational culture as a cause of stress but it can be seen to influence all of the areas. Sikora et al (2004:10) state that most studies in to the causes of stress at work are too simplistic and assume that causes are limited to one or two and that individual response to these stressors is fairly straightforward. In reality individuals will often face many

stressors at work including constant change. The stress felt from these multiple stressors is cumulative. Sikora et al emphasize the need for time to allow for adjustment to these demands and states that without this the individual remains in a state of hypervigilance. This need for 'recovery time' is supported by the pressure/performance curve,
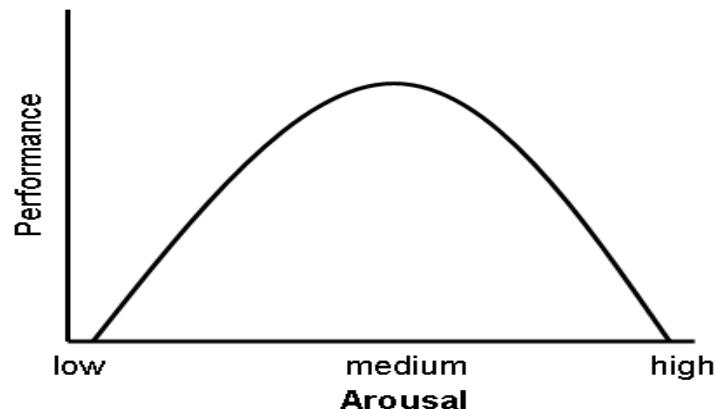
Fig 3. Yerkes Dodson Law

The Yerkes-Dodson stress curve demonstrates that having too little work can also be a cause of stress. Whilst there is much focus on the negative effects of work there are also positive effects of work. Being out of work can be a major cause of stress and ill health and even having too little work can be a cause of stress!

Siegrist (2008) links chronic psychosocial stress at work (largely due to high demand and low control and high effort but low reward) with depression. This approach to stress is known as the psychological model, (Cox 1993). As noted by Cox (1993:6) if an individual is suffering from stress this is often due to an overlap of stress in work and personal life and one will impact on the other. For example if an individual is suffering from a bereavement or going through a divorce this will raise their stress levels and leave them less able to cope with stressors at work.

Change is one of the keys causes of stress at work and is also a major cause of stress in an individual's personal life. Marriage, divorce, death of a loved one and change of financial circumstances are recognised changes where individuals experience stress. PERI (Psychiatric Epidemiology Research Interview), Life events scale (Dohrenwend et al 1988). The interplay between personal life and home life can in itself be a cause of stress and this is an increasing problem in the modern day where technology enables individuals to access work emails on their phone, (whilst sitting in bed or even in the bathroom!). Work life balance is increasingly referred to as 'work life integration' (Robertson Cooper 2016) or 'work life blending' as the boundaries between the two areas have become more blurred, (Schmid et al 2016). This can be a cause of stress to individuals who like to keep work and home life separate (segregators) but not necessarily to individuals who like to keep a check on their work outside of standard work hours, (integrators).
There are various measures of stress that employers can implement in order to assess

the scale of the problem and where best to focus interventions to reduce stress, such as Robertson Cooper's Asset test (Faragher et al: 2004) and the 10-item Perceived Stress Scale (Taylor: 2015). Some employers use their employee engagement survey to highlight areas of concern. As with various measures of general anxiety, such as the Goldberg Anxiety Scale (Goldberg et al: 1988) most of the measures of work related stress are based on self report, (Briner and Walshe: 2015). One particular challenge in implementing such surveys is anonymity of results.

Not all organisations use valid measures of stress to identify areas of support and determine which interventions are needed, but are instead introducing interventions to reduce stress for other reasons as identified by Briner, (2007: 65). Briner lists seven of the most commonly stated reasons for introducing stress management interventions in the workplace;

1. To improve effectiveness – by reducing stress there will be a corresponding reduction in behaviours which negate effectiveness
2. SMIs are introduced in response to a dramatic event or series of events such as death of a colleague or a number of employee suffering from stress related ill health
3. The organisation is a caring and responsible employer and SMIs are introduced as part of the general welfare of employees
4. The organisation wishes to portray a positive image as a caring employer
5. There is concern that employees may take legal action against the employer not providing a safe environment
6. It seems like the thing to do. Other companies are doing it
7. The employer has been convincingly 'sold' the need for Stress Interventions

As mentioned previously, the HSE do not include organisational culture as a cause of work related stress but there are several studies which demonstrate how the culture can cause stress, (Williams et al, 2007; Thompson et al, 1995). Conversely, a favourable culture has been proven to mitigate the effects of stress at work, (Kokt and Ramarumo: 2015). How stress is expressed and reported will itself depend on the culture of the organisation, (Dietmann and Stead 2000).

The majority of workplace interventions to reduce stress appear to focus on the individual and looking at enhancing individual psychological wellbeing. Employers are increasingly running training in Emotional Intelligence, Stress Management, and areas such as Time Management, Mindfulness and Relaxation skills. There is some criticism of the lack of empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of these, (Briner: 2007). Cognitive Behavioural Therapy however has been found to be a very effective tool to enable individuals to rethink their appraisal of a situation (van der Klink et al: 2001). Building resilience is an area that is increasingly being employed in organizations.

4.6   Resilience

Many businesses are addressing the increasing problem of stressed employees by bringing in external agencies to deliver stress management interventions, (Briner

1997). One of the most popular interventions of the present time, which continues to gather momentum, is to have workshops aimed at building the resilience of employees, (Mowbray, 2016; Robertson Cooper, 2016). There is little available literature regarding what business leaders understand the term resilience to mean but most studies link resilience with individual strengths and characteristics, taking the focus away from risk factors which lead to stress (Fletcher and Sarkar 2013). Is resilience therefore, as many business leaders might hope, a way to toughen people up so that the employer can continue to pile on pressure? Is it a way of developing teams who will be able to do more with less? Mental toughness, or hardiness, has been a focus of sports psychologists for some time, (Gucciardi and Gordon, 2012; Sarkar and Fletcher, 2014; Cowden et al, 2016). Studies of resilience however show that resilience requires not so much a toughness (although hardiness may have some influence) but an ability to adapt, (Schoon, 2006; American Psychological Association, 2012).

The word resilience is described in the Oxford dictionary as being; "… *able to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions*" (with reference to people or animals) and as being; "*able to recoil or spring back into shape after bending, stretching, or being compressed" (*with reference to a substance or object). The expression being able to bounce back from adversity is often used to describe the concept and indeed the word resilience is derived from the Latin verb 'resilire', which means 'leaping back'. The term is used by anthropologists and environmentalists with regards to adapting to environmental change. Nelson et al (2007: 395) state; "*resilience provides a useful framework to analyze adaptation processes*". They state that the sources of resilience are; "… *inherent system characteristics that absorb perturbations without losing function, networks and social capital that allow autonomous action and resources that promote institutional learning*". This relates closely to work regarding adaptation and indeed many definitions of resilience such as that of the APA, (2012) include the word.

In 2009, the Department of Health sponsored the Buiness in the Community organisation to undertake a substantial piece of work in this are in order to develop a toolkit for companies to help them develop the emotional resilience of their staff. The toolkit is 52-page resource, which was produced by the BITC in conjunction with a steering group of experts from several business organisations including the Department of Health, The Mental Health Foundation, MIND, Nestle and the Sainsbury's Centre for Mental Health. The toolkit offers advice for those hoping to improve resilience for their employees including a business case for promoting emotional resilience and a 12-step model for 'planning, executing, reviewing and updating your own emotional resilience initiative'. There are case studies and advice regarding providing a healthy workplace and relevant training on recognising and mitigating stress. The report builds on the Government's Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project (2008).

Schoon, (2006) states; "*resilience is a process that relates positive adaptations to disadvantaged origins.*" Studies of resilience have focused on survivors of childhood adversity such as maternal affective/anxiety disorders, divorce, poverty or illness, (Luther and Sexton, 2007; Rutter, 1971; Zolkoski and Bullock, 2012; Bene et al, 2014) and also survivors of terrorist attacks and natural disasters (Pietrzak 2014). The epidemiological studies of those born in to socially disadvantaged groups began in the 1950's and looked at the 'predictability of life chances from earlier circumstances'

(2006:16). Very few of those who were born in to lower socio-economic groups '*escaped*' from this environment but some managed to move on and do well in life. The research looked at the positive impact that '*protective social ties'* have as well as a number of other factors which will be discussed later. Studies of survivors of traumatic events looked at coping, recovery and adaptive processes employed by survivors and has helped to increase understanding of why some people are able to move on with their lives whilst others continue to suffer from symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress, (Southwick et al 2014). Resilience has been described as a protective, 'safe-guarding' of an individual's mental health from stressful events and not merely the absence of disorder, (Bonnano, 2004; Dmitry et al, 2010).

Bonanno and Diminich (2013) make the distinction between emergent resilience from a long term, chronic adversity such as childhood abuse or poverty and minimal-impact resilience following a traumatic event. They describe several different pathways, (trajectories) that an individual may follow in response to a potential traumatic event, (PTE). These include:

- chronic dysfunction
- delayed dysfunction
- recovery
- minimal-impact resilience where there is "consistently low levels of symptoms or distress" or "consistently positive adjustment," whereby there is no ill health as a result of the trauma.

Southwick et al however, ask if we can call a trauma survivor as resilient if they develop chronic symptoms of PTSD but are able to function at high level because they have successfully sought personal, material and social resources?

The term 'adversity' is present in most studies of the construct of resilience and in many definitions such as the American Psychological Association's (2012) definition of resilience as; "*the process of adapting well in the face of adversity*". Rutter, (2012:474) states; "Resilience is an interactive phenomenon that is inferred from findings indicating that some individuals have a relatively good outcome despite having experienced serious adversities". Bonanno and Diminich, (2013: 382) define resilience as '*a stable trajectory of healthy functioning after a highly adverse event.*' There seems to be considerable debate. Does being resilient mean more than just surviving adversity? Some, such as Robertson (2012) see resilience as an ongoing state, an ability to keep going under pressure. This would seem to suggest that resilience is about the ability to cope and not to suffer from the physiological effects of stress. Resilience has been defined as the ability to not only survive but to thrive. Connor and Davidson, (2003: 76) say resilience "*embodies the personal qualities that enable one to thrive in the face of adversity*". Not only surviving, as Mandela did, with 27 years in prison but his going on to thrive as a world leader. Not only surviving as a soldier who is injured and disabled in the war but their going on to thrive as a Gold Medallist at the Paralympics.

Much has been discussed about resilience in the face of extreme hardship and trauma but not to such an extent with more frequently occurring life events and long term challenges such as ongoing change. Cascio (2009: 872) states; "*The concept of resilience*

is central to coping with demands and challenges" such as change and there is a "*need to withstand the unexpected*". Resilience can be seen to be very relevant within the context of the facing change within the workplace. Hamel and Valikangas (cited Robertson Cooper: 2003) state; " *Resilience is not about responding to a one time crisis... it's about continuously anticipating and adjusting... it is about having the capacity for change before the need for change becomes obvious.*" Individuals facing change, albeit organisational change or personal change to a new role or organisation can be seen to benefit from skills and traits demonstrated by those facing extremely challenging situations. Two quotes cited in the BITC's (2009), Emotional Resilience Toolkit, demonstrate the importance of on going resilience for both individuals and the organization for which they work;

"*A resilient workforce helps business bounce back in tough times*" Alex Gourlay CEO Alliance Boots (2009)

Resilience is "*the ability to succeed personally and professionally in the midst of high pressured, fast moving and continually changing envir*onment" Glaxo (2009)

Contrary to evidence from studies of childhood adversity, which found that only a few were able to shake off their disadvantaged origins, (Schoon 2006), many studies have found that resilience is a common trait, (Campbell-Sills,2006; Masten, 2001). Most people cope well in the face of adversity rather than this being an exception. Treglown et al, (2016) state that; "*Resilience emerges from ordinary processes that serve to protect the efficacy of (these) resource allocation syste*ms," (the resource allocation systems being the negotiating and managing of resources to cope with a stressor). Other definitions of resilience, such as that by Furnham, (2013) relate directly to individuals in the workplace and talk of resilience in terms of success. Individuals who are successful despite on-going, fast-paced change and highly pressurized environments are deemed to be resilient. Robertson describes four key areas of resilience; Adaptability, Purposefulness, Social Support and Confidence.

There is some debate as to what influence personality has on an individual's resilience. Robertson and Cooper (2011) find that, largely due to personality, individuals will not all find the same situations as stressful. Certain personality types have been identified as having greater resilience. Some who have a tendency towards open mindedness may enjoy change whereas someone with a tendency towards neuroticism is likely to find change a challenge, (Campbell-Sills et al, 2006; Lee-Bagley et al, 2005). Conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness have also been found as positively related to resilience, (Friborg et al, 2005; Campbell-Sills et al, 2006; Furnham 2013). As mentioned previously, individuals with a tendency towards neuroticism may become stressed when faced with change. Individuals who exhibit the same curiosity or 'open mindedness' and versatility as described with Dolphins are found to be more resilient and cope better with hardships, such as during economic recession or more extreme circumstances such as terrorist attacks, (Fredrickson, 2003; Bonanno, 2006). In their book on Wellbeing (2011) Robertson and Cooper say that personality is the starting block for resilience. Schoon, (2006) however, states that 'resilience is not a personality characteristic'. All agree that there are multiple influences involved in resilience.

Bonanno and Diminich, (2013: 390) state; "*the assumption that resilience is primarily a matter of personality is clearly unfounded*"

Individual factors are only one aspect in the development of resilience and ability to cope with stress, (Firth-Cozens, 1992; Schoon, 2006). Early life experiences, family support and stable home life, social support from friends and colleagues and social-economic situation are all found to impact on the resilience of an individual. Other factors which have been found to influence resilience include the following;

Age – younger children are not as resilient as older children. Old people more resilient than younger (Raushenbach et al: 2013)

Gender – differences have been found between men and women due to different coping mechanisms, social support and resistance factors such as role expectations and identity, (Burns and Anstey, 2009; Leventhal et al 2015)

Social Support – this was not found to be the case with individuals who suffering from grief but was of help in those facing long term adversity, (Werner and Smith, 1982; Schoon, 2006)

Previous experience – previous experience of PTE only led to PTSD if previous experience did otherwise it may in fact lead to better adjustment due to previous learns

Early experiences – Findings from developmental psychiatrists, (as per section re stress) and such as Luther's (2007) study of children born into poverty. Luther and Sexton found that those whose mothers suffered with affective/anxiety disorders were less resilient and more prone to psychiatric disorders and disruptive behaviour, due largely to neglect or from aggressive behaviour by their mothers

Environment – Family circumstances such as parental divorce, poverty and social disadvantage can influence resilience but interestingly being better off financially doesn't make people more resilient but sudden loss of money can be a cause of trauma (Rutter: 2013)

Culture – Variances in resilience exist between cultures largely due to differing values and norms and ways of coping, emotional support from relationships, cohesion (collectivist as opose to individualist society) and available resources (Boyden and Mann, 2005)

Coping /Appraisal – Whether an individual views a situation as threatening or a challenge i.e. their perception of a situation (Bonanno and Diminich, 2013; Cascio,2009)

Emotion control/regulation - Using strategies such as positive reappraisal, (looking for the silver lining), problem-focused coping and giving positive meaning to ordinary events, (Tugade and Fredrickson 2007; Bonanno and Diminich:2013)

Positive thinking – this was found to be especially beneficial. Bonanno and Diminich found there was "*compelling evidence for adaptive benefits of positive emotion in response to PTEs*" (2013: 391), especially in cases of maltreatment.

Self-efficacy – having belief in your own ability/capacity for coping is seen to help enormously (Bandura 1997; Goodman et al, 2015)

Psychological Flexibility- defined as the ability to focus on the current situation and to take action towards goals even if distracting thoughts, memories and sensations are there. Psychological flexibility theory incorporates concepts such as emotional regulation, describing how individuals are able to shift their mind set to focus on the here and now and to adapt their thinking to suit situational demands (Bunce and Bond 2005)

A study of literature concerning resilience reveals that, as with the numerous definitions of the construct, there are numerous ways of measuring it. There is some variation in the factors assessed by the different measures, some focus purely on individual factors and others include environmental/ external factors. Perhaps the best known of these measures is the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale, (Connor and Davidson: 2003). This is a short self-assessment which is based on the work of Kobasa (1979) regarding hardiness and Rutter (1985), which looked at the multidimensional aspects of resilience including the ability to adapt to change, having clear goals, a sense of humour and having secure social bonds (2003: 77). Connor and Davidson also included learns from Edward Shackleton's 1912 Antarctic expedition during which he demonstrated great resilience as a leader.

Content of the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale:

1. Able to adapt to change
2. Close and secure relationships
3. Sometimes fate or God can help
4. Can deal with whatever comes
5. Past success gives confidence for new challenge
6. See the humorous side of things
7. Coping with stress strengthens
8. Tend to bounce back after illness or hardship
9. Things happen for a reason
10. Best effort no matter what
11. You can achieve your goals
12. When things look hopeless, I don't give up
13. Know where to turn for help
14. Under pressure, focus and think clearly
15. Prefer to take the lead in problem solving
16. Not easily discouraged by failure
17. Think of self as strong person
18. Make unpopular or difficult decisions
19. Can handle unpleasant feelings
20. Have to act on a hunch

21. Strong sense of purpose
22. In control of your life
23. I like challenges
24. You work to attain your goals
25. Pride in your achievements

The scale is rated from 1 to 5 based on how the subject has felt in the past month, (2003:78). Other measures such as the two Adolescent Resilience Scales, (Jew et al, 1999; Oshio et al, 2002) also incorporated the work of Rutter, (1984) and other studies which focused on individual factors rather than environmental or external factors such as social support. Interestingly, Connor and Davidson did not include personality traits in their resilience assessment whereas in other measures such as that used by Robertson Cooper the five factor personality traits can be clearly identified. Other measures include the Resilience Scale for Adults, (Wagnild and Young:1993) and the 14 item Resilience scale, (Block and Kremen: 1996). The Baruth Protective Factors inventory, (Baruth and Caroll:2002) measures both individual and external factors including;

- Adaptable Personality
- Supportive Environment
- Fewer Stressors
- Compensating Experiences

Most measures of resilience are based on self-report. Psychometric properties of these measures, their validity, (accuracy), and reliability, (consistency), have been tested by others through statistical analysis such as Chronbach's Alpha. Assessment of the psychometric properties and transferability of Connor Davidson's 10-item scale for example has been undertaken by studies in different countries such as Denmark, (Lauridsen et al: 2017), Australia (Gucciardi et al, 2011) and China (Fu et al: 2013) and in different types of groups such as army veterans, (Green et al: 2014) and sports teams, (Gonzalez et al: 2015).

As already mentioned, most definitions of resilience talk of adapting in the face of adversity. As can be seen by the research on survivors of trauma and childhood adversity as well as more recent studies, there are several characteristics that influence resilience including personality, early life experiences and social support. Although resilience has been found to be formed in childhood, and indeed may inherited to some extent, (Burns and Anstey 2009), there is evidence that it may not be a fixed trait but can be altered through positive influences such as improved social support, (Werner and Smith 1992). Marriage and institutions such as the armed forces have been found to improve circumstances for an individual and increase their resilience (Rutter 2013). This mirrors current research on personality that demonstrates personality is not fixed but can alter due to circumstances, events and influences, (Oles 2016). Although evidence suggests that most people are already resilient to some extent, the finding that resilience can be improved given the right circumstances and support perhaps gives further reason for businesses to continue rolling out those building resilience sessions! Resilience leads to positive mental and physical health and this is linked to improved performance at work, (Seligman 1972). Resilience, as an ability to cope with stress, can

be seen as key to dealing with work related stress, especially with regards to change but also to aspects such as role and relationships. It is therefore very relevant to the study of adapting to organisational culture.

So far this chapter has looked at the adaptation of individuals to change and adversity. Studies of socialisation look at the adaptation of individuals to work, largely with regards to their work role or task. The following section looks at theories of socialisation as a learning process, a process of sense-making with the aim of reducing anxiety.

4.7 Onboarding and Socialisation

Bauer, (2011) states; "*Organisational socialization or on-boarding is a process through which new employees move from being organizational outsiders to becoming organizational insider*s". Since the 1990's there has been a substantial amount of research in to the area of socialisation. Interestingly, most studies speak in terms of newcomer adjustment rather than adaptation, implying, small-scale changes are needed in order to function alongside colleagues rather than a substantial transformation being required in order to fit in with or to become part of the group or organisation. Studies such as Moreland and Levine's 1982 model, can be seen to incorporate relevant concepts such as group socialisation. Moreland and Levine see group socialisation as being successful when there is assimilation of an individual who is accommodated by the organisation.

Socialisation is seen as a learning process (Saks and Ashforth 1997) usually experienced via a formal orientation or training program, (Feldman 1989). Much of the literature focuses on socialisation enabling the individual to understand their new role, learn tasks and find their way about the organisational hierarchy. Longitudinal studies, such as that by Morrison (1993), which looked at the effects of information seeking on newcomer socialisation, have led to a greater understanding of the needs of individuals when joining an organisation. Traditional methods of orientation focused on informing new recruits of policies and procedures and meeting key contacts during the induction period. These methods however did not help to fully integrate new employees and the time taken for new recruits to be fully functioning in terms of performance as well as high turnover rates proved costly for both organisations and individuals, (Derven 2008).

The cost of the limited productivity of senior leaders and executives during their initial few months has driven organizations to seek more efficient ways of getting them 'up to speed' (Sussman 2005). Newcomer socialisation and on-boarding are processes which aim to support new recruits through a period of induction so that they are well informed in ways of working and know what to expect in terms of role and responsibilities. The aim is to reduce the anxiety and uncertainty associated with entering a new work environment in a more holistic way.

As found by Snell in 2006, the socialisation process is vital in formulating a 'lasting bond' between employees and the organisation. Derven (2008) also talks of building a bond and goes on to describe the importance of new recruits establishing "*an emotional*

connection to their jobs". Friedman (2006), talks of organisations '*adopting*' and Johnson (2007) speaks of employee '*embeddedness*'. Words such as 'assimilation' and 'conforming' (Korte 2005) are used to describe the transition of new recruit to an on-board employee. Friedman (2006) quotes the Corporate Leadership Council's belief that forty percent of successful socialisation (onboarding) is down to support of new recruits and sixty percent talent.

Ostroff and Kozlowski (1992) see the main purpose of socialisation as being a learning process during which new recruits acquire information about the organization. Chao et al (1994) agree that socialisation involves '*learning on the part of the individual*' in order to adjust to the organisation. But others see the process as being less focused on the individual's responsibility to learn as an opportunity for the organisation to make clear its vision, mission and values. De Meuse et al (2009) also say executive onboarding should be implemented on a strategic basis. Gilmore and Turner (2010) say that giving the strategic direction and assessing an individuals ability to drive this forward is both difficult and insufficient. They suggest better a selection process, realistic job previews and more comprehensive onboarding support are required. Informal onboarding says Bauer (2010), is when an individual learns about the job without an explicit plan. Strategic onboarding is addressed during a more formal onboarding process. Friedman (2006), sees the interview as having a vital role to play in retention in that the first impression gained at interview will be a long term, lasting impression.

4.7.1   Theoretical Perspectives

In their review of research in to this area, Ashford and Saks (1997) found that although there was no existing theory of socialization there were four theoretical perspectives. These were:

- Model of Socialization Tactics
- Uncertainty and reduction theory
- Social Cognitive theory
- Cognitive and Sense Making theory

Model of Socialisation Tactics

Socialisation tactics have been found to influence job related uncertainty and the development of social exchange relationships with supervisor and co workers (Lapointe et al: 2014). Van Maanen and Schein (1979) looked at specific bipolar tactics used by organisations and the resulting behaviour demonstrated by individuals. Six socialisation tactics were identified including; *Collective v Individual, (*whereby newcomers were either grouped together or onboarded individually*), Formal v Informal, (*where newcomers were segregated from existing employees or not), *Sequential v random* (a fixed sequence of steps is clearly identified rather than an ambiguous process), *Fixed rather than Variable* (timetable of events), *Serial v Disjunctive* (serial being when a newcomer is socialised by an experienced member acting as a role model) and *Investiture v Divestiture (*investiture being when the identity of the newcomer is affirmed*).* Saks et al (2007) further grouped these tactics in to Social (Serial v

disjunctive and investiture v divestiture), Content (Sequential v Random) and Context (Formal v informal and Collective v individual). They found the social tactics were the strongest predictors of adjustment outcomes.

Jones (1983) found that socialization tactics could lead to newcomers either passively accepting the way things are in the organisation (if socialisation tactics were formal, structured and inclusive) or to question the status quo if socialisation tactics were at the opposite end of the pole such as disjunctive, random and variable. The latter are associated with increased anxiety and uncertainty in newcomers (Ashford, Saks and Lee: 1997). Perceived support has been found to positively influence the outcome of socialisation tactics (Perrot et al, 2014; Allen and Shanock, 2013). Outcomes of socialisation tactics include Proximal, such as role clarity and fit perception and Distal outcomes such as job satisfaction and commitment (Saks et al: 2007). Mediating influences on socialisation tactics was found by Saks et al (2007, to include the type of newcomer (graduate or experienced).

Uncertainty and reduction theory

This theory put forward by Berger and Calabrese (1975) focuses on lowering anxiety about unpredictable situations through information seeking behaviours or strategies, (Shin, Lee and Yang; 2017).   Individuals are motivated to seek information, which will help to reduce their uncertainty, especially in relation to face-to-face meeting of another person. Strategies can be passive, (such as observing behaviours), active, (actively seeking our information from other sources) or interactive (directly from the individual about which there is uncertainty), (Shin, Lee and Yang; 2017). Work such as Morrison's longitudinal study (1993) in to information seeking during socialisation, fits in to this category.

Social Cognitive Theory

Although this theory is mentioned in literature regarding socialisation and on-boarding, the theory, proposed by Albert Bandura in 1977, is widely used in all learning situations including education and sports science. Initially Bandura labelled his theory the social learning theory. He posited that learning, leading to psychological and behavioural change, was actively influenced by observation of social models, cognitive beliefs and environmental influences. The 'triadic, reciprocal causation' of cognitive affective, behavioural and environmental influences all affect each other. Environmental influences such as the economic conditions, education and family structures affect behaviour, largely through their impact on an individual's cognitive appraisal, (including their self-efficacy). Bandura found that individuals, whom he referred to as 'human agents' played an active rather than reactive or passive role in their learning. They deliberately alter their behaviour such as to replicate that of social models, (actors in a social situation) and are active in their own self-development and adaptation, (Bandura: 2001). He describes individuals as 'agents of experiences rather than undergoers of experiences' (2001:4).

In 1986 Bandura expanded his theory to include two important influences on learning and behaviour change, that of self-efficacy and self-regulation. He relabelled the theory

as the Social Cognitive Theory. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their capability to cope; their belief that they have the tools or resources to give them the ability to make things happen, to have some control over a situation or events. Bandura (2001: 10) states; "*Perceived self-efficacy occupies a pivotal role in the causal structure of social cognitive theory because efficacy beliefs affect adaptation and change not only in their own right, but through their impact on other determinants*" Efficacy beliefs influence how positive a person's thinking is and how optimistic or pessimistic they are. As mentioned previously, Self-efficacy is a key factor in resilience. It determines what actions an individual will take which impacts on subsequent outcomes. Bandura also sees self-efficacy as existing at group level, a "shared belief in collective power".

Self-Regulation includes self-observation, self- evaluation against self-set goals (through reflection) and action (behaviour) including self-development. Self-development is especially important in the modern world of constant change to enable employees to keep up to date and marketable. It is also one of the key aspects of the organisational culture studied for the current study. Bandura talks about the impact of fortuity, (unplanned circumstances which arise and result in changes to the life of an individual). He cites marriage as one such fortuitous meeting. Even though these fortuitous meetings and events may be spontaneous and unexpected an individual can still have some control and influence over them. Individuals may use such opportunities for their self-development or to exert self-regulation to resist if the outcome of the circumstance could be detrimental.

Cognitive and Sense Making theory

According to Weick et al (2005:409), Sensemaking refers to '*turning circumstances in to a situation that is comprehended explicitly in words and that serves as a springboard in to action*'. Meanings arise from this process, which inform appraisal and impact on behaviour. Sensemaking is very much dependant on discourse and language to create social construction. It occurs when there is ambiguity, uncertainty and chaos, when a situation is not what was expected, (Weick et al 2005), when it is novel or confusing, (Maitlis and Christianson 2014). Louis (1980) describes situations which differ from expectations of predictions as 'discrepant' events. These events trigger a need for explanation and understanding. Other triggers for sensemaking include when there is threat to identity and self, such as through job loss or disability, (Maitliss and Christianson 2014). Also where there is a threat to taken for granted roles and routines (Maitliss and Christianson 2014). Maitliss (2005) says that sensemaking is a fundamentally social process whereby individuals 'interpret their environment through interaction with others'. (cited Maitliss and Christianson). Sensemaking can be initiated by organisational leaders when they bring about change such as a change of culture or direction. Leaders are said to be 'sensegiving' in providing information regarding the need for change, (Maitliss and Christianson 2014). As well as triggers there are also blockers to sensemaking. These include strong organisational identity and attempts to retain collective practices, (Maitliss and Christianson 2014).

Sensemaking involves observing and 'labelling', 'bracketing' and 'categorising' events, (Weick et al 2005). Sensemaking involves plausible explanation, plausibility being described as '*the ongoing standard that guides learning*', (2005:419). It follows that

sense making is influenced by previous experience and perception. Maitlis and Christianson (2014: 57) describe sensemaking as '*a process through which people work to understand issues or events that are novel, ambiguous, confusing, or in some other way violate expectations.*' Action or enactment is seen to be key to the process of sensemaking whereby an individual creates the environment via structures, opportunities and constraints, (Maitliss and Christianson 2014). Structures such as roles are created for example in teams bought together on a temporary basis.

Louis's (1980) research is especially relevant for the study of sensemaking in newcomers and indeed of adapting to an organisational culture. Louis talks of the adaptation of individuals from the position of newcomer to one of 'insider' and looks at the issue of expectations of newcomers including unmet and unrealistic expectations. Whilst still an 'outsider' an individual 'anticipates their experiences' in the organisation they are about to join, (1980:7). These anticipated expectations may be unrealistic and influenced in part by the organisation overselling itself at the point of recruitment. Expectations are also found to be very much influenced by the individual's experience at the previous organisation they worked for. An individual's anticipated experiences can come up against a 'reality shock' when met with real experience at the 'encounter' stage, (1980: 7). Louis terms this as 'surprise'.

As with Lewin's change process, an 'unfreezing' or letting go of the old ways learned during previous employment is often difficult, the greater the differences between the organisations the harder coping can be for an individual. Individuals will contrast the new organisation with the old, the new ways of working and behaving against the old. As with most studies of cognitive sensemaking, Louis sees the role of previous experience as an important factor in an individual's interpretation of their current situation. Old experiences are seen as anchors from which we view the world. Personal characteristics such as predisposition to attribute cause to self or others also play a key role in interpretation and sensemaking. Newcomers can often make interpretational errors due to reliance on previous experience and the fact that they have not yet developed relationships in the new organisation to the extent where they can '*test their perceptions and interpretations*' (1980: 11). As with many models of adaptation, Louis talks of a need to restore equilibrium in order to adapt. An imbalance in an individual's psychological 'field' may arise due to a discrepancy in expectations. In such situations, when an outcome is not as the newcomer predicted, Louis says, the individual copes by a conscious attempt to make sense of the situation. Thus surprise at an unexpected outcome or situation, leads to sensemaking.

Surprise can result from cultural assumptions which the individual brings with them from their previous employment. Surprise, whether good or bad, Louis says, requires adaptation. Newcomers need to 'reorient' themselves relative to others and to 'learn the ropes' with regards to the organisational culture as much, if not more than learning their role and tasks. In learning the culture, Louis says, individuals develop a 'definition of the situation' and 'a scheme for interpreting everyday events in the setting', (1980:8). These allow newcomers to make sense of events and activities in their new setting and to respond appropriately as well as understanding the aims and values of the organisation. The assumptions and norms governing membership of the organisation become apparent through an awareness of the organisations culture.

Much of the literature regarding socialisation and on-boarding prior to the early 1990's is in need of modernisation in order to maintain its relevance to the current work place where individuals are less likely to have a long tenure with the firm. Anderson et al (1996) found the majority of British firms still offered formal on the job training but Saks and Ashforth, (1997: 246) state; '*As the stereotypic organisation career opportunities fade, organisations are likely to place less emphasis on centralised socialisation and training programs and more on creating task-centred opportunities for learning*.' In this, Saks and Ashforth are ahead of their time. Many organisations do still have an induction program whereby newcomers are introduced to their team and 'key stakeholders' as well as being shown around the building and learning the language. Increasingly however, with organisations undergoing change at a dizzying rate, there is likely to be much less of a hand holding, formal training. Instead there may be a hand reaching out to pull you on-board so that you can start running with the rest, "*Get with it, we've no time to stop and show you!*". There is little literature available at present concerning on-boarding in organisations undergoing transformation.

Literature regarding socialisation is surprisingly lacking in studies that mention organisational culture and there is even less regarding to adapting to organisational culture. Bauer and Erdogan, (2011) however state that those organisations who are proactive in their onboarding of newcomers will address culture and connection. Bauer and Erdogan describe three levels of onboarding:

Level One (Compliance) whereby newcomers are taught the basic legal and policy related rules and regulations
Level Two (Clarification) ensuring that newcomers understand their role and related expectations
Level Three (consisting of Culture and Connection). Only twenty per cent of organisations achieve this. Newcomers are provided with a sense of organisational norms, both formal and informal. This knowledge of culture is essential for the successful onboarding of the new employee. It is also vital that interpersonal relationships and information networks are established.

From the employee perspective, Bauer and Erdogan say there are multiple adjustments that new employees go through following selection including self-efficacy, role clarity, social integration and knowledge of culture.

The Selection, Adaptation and Attrition perspective (Schneider 1987) is a helpful framework for studying socialisation. As mentioned in chapter 3, people are recruited for fit to culture (selection) and those who don't fit can be socialised to change behaviour through training and performance management (adaptation). Those who fail to change behaviour to assimilate over time will leave, either because they are uncomfortable or because the org forces them to leave (attrition). These findings appear to be contradicted by studies of socialisation in American firms where new recruits are not socialised to change their behaviour but are more accepted as individuals, largely free to make decisions on their own and are able to do their own thing in their own way. American firms, having a strong belief in individuality and allowing individuals to do their own thing, have been less keen on a formal induction (Pasquale 1978). There is less of a pedagogic approach and more of an empowerment of individuals to ask what

they need to know. This approach may be increasingly used, not so much due to values as to a lack of time and resources. As evidenced in many studies, a lack of investment at the stage of induction may prove costly in terms of attrition and lack of engagement. Conversely, it might also prove costly to organisations of the future to invest too much at this stage with recent research showing that the millennial generation in particular will move jobs every three years.

<u>4.8 Adapting to change</u>

Literature regarding change and adapting to change was found to be especially relevant to the study of adapting to organisational culture. Two key models regarding change were examined for this study to see if there was any relevance to adaptation to organisational culture; Kotter's 8 step model of change (Kotter 1996) and Lewin's theory of change, (Lewin 1958). Kotter's model pertains to organisational change and was not found to be particularly helpful to addressing individual's facing change whereas Lewin's model was particularly helpful. Lewin's model at first seems very simple. He mentions three key steps or stages;

- Unfreezing – whereby a minimising of barriers is required to change (Levasseur 2001)
- Transition – teamwork and communication are essential at this stage (Levasseur 2001)
- Refreezing – at this stage there needs to be a commitment to remain and leadership need to remain actively involved until new behaviours are embedded (Levasseur 2001)

It could be argued that any adaptation is in response to some form of change, albeit a change of situation or a change of environment. As mentioned, change is listed by the HSE as a major cause of work related stress. The ability to adapt to change is therefore essential for employees today as organisations are constantly in a state of change, (van den Heuvel et al: 2013). Larson, (2005:3) states; '...*the necessity of adapting is what sets the cream of the crop apart from the rest'.* Brecher, (2014) agrees and advises, '*As realities change so must your thinking and actions. Ultimately individuals with enduring success embrace change'*

A change of thinking and actions are bought about by 'adaptive attitudes' (van den Heuvel et al 2013) such as being open-minded and a willingness to learn new ways or approaches. Individuals who respond well to change are those who feel empowered, who believe that they are in control of the situation and are able to cope with the forthcoming changes. Seligman, (1975) in his theory of learned helplessness, says a person's belief in their ability to cope with change is influenced by previous experience. Factors such as good social support and being well informed about the forthcoming change are also found to have a positive impact on an individual's adaptability, (van den Heuvel et al 2013).

Other stages of change models exist and many of them such as Carnall's seven phases of change, are based upon Kubler-Ross's 1969 model of the stages of grief; Denial, Anger,

Bargaining, Depression, Acceptance, (Cantore and Passmore: 2012). Carnall has incorporated Kubler-Ross's stages in to his model of change as described below;

Stage	Description
Shock and Surprise (Unfreezing)	People realize they cannot continue with their old ways of working. They acknowledge they do not have the skills to meet the new challenge
Denial and Refusal (Unfreezing)	Core values reassert themselves and people believe they do have the required competencies
Rational Understanding (Transition)	Some recognition that there may be a need for change although this tends to be small scale change rather than behavioural or attitudinal change
Emotional Acceptance (Transition)	This is a pivotal stage whereby management either convinces people of the need for change or there is no progress
Exercising and Learning (Transition)	If management has convinced people, they start to try new behaviours and processes
Realization (Refreezing)	People have learnt what works well in the new environment and believe they have the competency to perform well
Integration (Refreezing)	New behaviours and attitudes are part of everyday behaviours

As well as incorporating Kubler- Ross's model of grief, Lewin's model of change can be seen within Carnall's model. Although this model pertains to organisational change it can also be relevant to individuals moving to a new organisation.
Other models of change which are useful to consider include Prochaska and DiClement's 1982 Transtheoretical model of behaviour change. Behaviour change is especially relevant when looking at adapting to a new culture with different ways of working and behaving. The five stages of Pre Contemplation, Contemplation, Preparation, Action and Maintenance are usually represented in an upward curve.

4.9 Adapting to Groups

It is perhaps no surprise that the author found the stages individuals went through in adapting to the new organisation bore some resemblance to the stages of group development, (Tuckman: 1965). Joining a new organisation can be seen as joining a new group. Tuckman's classic study of the development of small groups identifies the stages that groups go through in their development; Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing. The stage of Adjourning was added later, (Tuckman and Jensen: 1977). Although the stages pertain to a group of individuals it can be seen to be relevant to some extent at individual as well as group level. The stages are as follows;

1. Forming: At this stage the group become orientated to the task, create ground rules and test boundaries for behaviour (Bonebright: 2010)

2. Storming: This is a stage of intergroup conflict and a lack of unity. There can be an emotional response amongst some group members, especially when the goals are related to self- development or self-understanding
3. Norming: The group begins to accept one another and learn to work together effectively. Norms are established. There is harmony and cohesion.
4. Performing: The group members adapt to ensure task activities are performed. The group undertakes effective problem solving
5. Adjourning: This refers to the group's life cycle and the prospect of separation

Tuckman's model does not provide an understanding of influences upon the group's development and how they progress from one stage to the next. What factors aid progression through the various stages? There is no mention of the context within which a group forms and its influence on the stages. As with so many organisational studies of the time, Tuckman's model assumes a hierarchical leadership of the group and a followship in the group dynamics. Today's small groups at work especially are often a diverse group of people of different gender, age and ethnicity, (White et al 2001).

As well as group formation, joining a group and identifying with a group has some relevance to the study of adaptation to a new organisational culture. Tajfel's Social Identity theory (1979) proposes that individuals gain a sense of who they are based on their membership of a particular group or organisation. This could be any size group, from a football club to a nation. Belonging to a group can create a feeling of superiority to those who do not belong to the group. There is an 'us' and 'them' mentality, with an awareness of differences between those 'in' the group and those 'outside' which can lead to stereotyping and prejudice. If however, people find themselves in a group that is clearly not valued by others they may try to distance themselves from the group and be seen as an individual with a separate identity. Self-esteem is very much linked with social identity and people will try to raise the social standing of their group. How people behave is influenced by the group norms; what an individual perceives is appropriate behaviour for the group to which they belong.

Tajfel and Turner describe three stages of social identity; social categorisation, social identity and social comparison;

1. Social Categorisation: As with the theory of sense-making, social categorisation proposes that people will put others in to social categories such as a particular race, occupation, political party or social class in order to understand them. This also pertains to which categories we would put ourselves.
2. Social identity: We take on the identity and behaviours of the group we have categorised ourselves as being a member of.
3. Social Comparison: We compare our group against others and view our group favourably.

The social identity theory assumes that we are social creatures and need to be part of a group. It does not explain the need for individuality. As discussed in the chapter on organisational culture however, there can be a group culture of individuality such as in American Society.

4.10 Summary

The ability to adapt is one of the most impressive characteristics of humankind. Demonstrated clearly in our adaptation to climate change, to situations of extreme hardship, such as war, poverty, famine and disasters, humans learn to a make changes in the way they live, (hunt, eat, socialize, make homes,) in order to survive change. Adaptation is not only behavioural but can also be physiological and psychological. It can be seen from the multitude of studies that there is a correlation between the different areas of adaptation, beginning with the psychological perception of a situation. An individual's perception has been found to be affected by external and internal influences; external such as early life experiences including stable, loving home life or trauma such as abuse or bereavement, internal such as personality and inherent level of anxiety. Personality types with a strong open mindedness (or intellectualism) trait are seen to be able to adapt well to change whereas those with a tendency towards neuroticism are prone to anxiety. Recent research in to personality however has found that even this aspect of an individual can change, (Oles 2016). The perception of a threat such as a major change leads to the physiological reaction described by Seyle (1936) as the stress reaction. Stress is seen to be a natural, commonly occurring reaction that is in itself an adaptation. Known as the fight/flight reaction, it ensures that individuals have the best chance of survival when face to face with danger. This age old reaction, although still valuable in some situations where a surge of energy is required in order to make a hasty escape, can prevent logical thinking and can cause an individual to use unhealthy coping mechanisms which may lead to ill health, (McEwan 2007).

Many of the models of Adaptation, be it from the natural science disciplines or psychology, describe the construct as having a levelling role, bringing about a homeostasis or equilibrium to restore balance and to enable the individual or organism to live in harmony with the environment. The physiological processes involved in the stress reaction although initially leading to a surge of energy, ultimately lead to a calming or levelling effect. The HPA process is seen to have a moderating effect on central systems such as the nervous system, metabolic and cardiac systems. Few models, other than the transtheoretical model of behaviour change, talk about anticipation of and preparation for change but this is seen to be an important factor in helping individuals to adapt, (van den Heuvel et al 2013).

From the wide array of literature regarding adaptation, albeit studies of socialisation or studies regarding adapting to change, evidence points to there being key influences which contribute positively to successful adaptation of employees at an individual level and organisational level. Individual influences, or 'resources' (van den Heuvel et al 2013) include

- The ability to learn including an openness or willingness to learn
- To make sense of, or give meaning to, a change in situation or environment
- Having self-efficacy
- Being resilient

These individual resources are influenced by previous experience and personality but can be built on through organisational resources such as:

- Information giving
- Social support
- Providing Psychological safety including working in groups, practice fields where error is allowed, providing vision, online coaching and providing learning in manageable steps (Schein:1999) training to enhance employee psychological wellbeing (Robertson and Cooper: 2012) including training for individuals to anticipate and adapt to change (Yeo: 2009).

CHAPTER FIVE – Psychological Contracting

5.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters explored the concepts of organisational culture and adaptation. This chapter continues the literature review and explores the concept of psychological contracting and the link with this to both organisational culture and adaptation. One of the main research questions for this study was 'where do expectations of organisational culture come from?' The concept of Psychological Contracting is as intangible as that of Organizational Culture and its definition is equally as varied. A psychological contract, as the term implies, is a contract which exists in the mind of the individual, (Rousseau 1995) as oppose to a formal, written contract. As will be seen in the following section, there is some debate as to whether the contract consists of expectations (met or unmet) or whether expectations are not part of the contract but a separate entity and a psychological contract is all about implicit promises made as to what is owed to employer and employee respectively (Gigi and Sutton 2004).

Psychological contracts are of concern to both HR and Management within organisations despite there being no formal, written contract. Communication during interview and on induction regarding new hires expectations and understanding about acceptable behaviours and beliefs they hold, (such as concerning reward for effort) is important to show what employees consider is 'owed' by them and to prevent any mismatch in expectations. This can be seen to be of particular relevance to expectations of the culture within an organisation. Turker and Altunas (2015) talk about a gap between newcomers ideal and actual perception of organisational culture, how they *'initially form and then develop their own notion of an organisational culture'* (2015: 130). As was discussed in Chapter Three, organisational culture has been found to be of utmost importance in the success of an organisation. A psychological contract with regards to organisational culture is especially pertinent as there is rarely any formal contract or written agreement regarding this aspect of work. There appears however scant mention of a link between the two concepts in literature.

A gap between what was expected or was believed to have been promised is referred to as a breach of contract. Studies by Rousseau (1995) and Grant (1999) regarding breach of psychological contract suggest that a violation of contract leads to stress and ill feeling. Clinical phenomenon observed for this study suggested that this was the case for new hires whose experience of the culture was not what they had expected. The concept of a Psychological Contract is a hugely important factor in the adaptation of individuals to a new organisation both at the stage of new hire and ongoing. Studies by Grant (1999) and Nelson et al (1991) found that effective psychological contracting eased the stress of transition to a new organization and facilitated newcomer adjustment.

5.2 Origins and Definition

It is of some significance to the author that the term psychological contract was mentioned under the context of organisational culture. Chris Argyris, first used the term 'psychological work contract' in 1960 whilst talking of the 'norms of employee informal culture' and a 'relationship' or understanding between employee and employer

(foremen), that the employees worked best under passive leadership. There is some debate about the origin of the concept however. Sherman and Morley (2015), state that it was Karl Menninger (1958) who first introduced the concept of an unwritten contract, in his work regarding patients and their therapists. Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler (2002) however state that it was the work of Barnard, (1938) regarding co-operative systems in formal organisations, viewed from an exchange perspective, that was the forerunner of psychological contract theory.

Like Argyris, Levinson (1962) and Schein (1965) viewed the psychological contract through the lens of the social exchange theory. This looks at interpersonal relationships which are 'reciprocal' (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2013) and seeks to 'explain the nature of social interaction among organisation members and between organisations,' (2013:724). Reciprocity is a feature of most contracts; 'I'll give you something if you give me something in return'. A contract also suggests a level of obligation. If an agreement has been made that something will be given, either in terms of payment or work, then there is a level of obligation on those entering the agreement. These earlier studies of psychological contracting saw the concept as being very much a two way exchange between employee and the employer with both sides viewed as understanding that they had obligations. Levinson (1962:21) defined the psychological contract as; '*a series of mutual expectations of which the parties to the relationship may not themselves be dimly aware*'.

In the 1970's Schein and Kotter continued to talk about psychological contracts in terms of a reciprocal arrangement. Schein (1978:48) defined the pc as; '*a set of unwritten reciprocal expectations between an individual employee and the organisation*'. Kotter defines the pc, (1973:93); as '*an implicit contract between an individual and his organisation which specifies what each expect to give and receive.*' Reciprocity continues to be an element of pc which is mentioned in research (Herriot et al: 1997). By the 1990's Rousseau had emerged as the leading light on psychological contracts, which she defined as (1995:9);

"... *individual beliefs, shaped by the organization regarding terms of exchange between individuals and their organization*".

The focus of psychological contracts (pc) had moved very much to the individual and their belief or perception of what the contract involves. These beliefs are seen to be influenced by the employer or organisation but as Levinson hinted in his earlier definition, parties to the contract may not be aware of what the other expects from them. Rousseau (1995:10) states that the pc is "...*what the individual believes they have agreed to not what that person intends that makes the contract*". This has led to criticism of the pc as being too ambiguous and theoretical; if it is all in the mind of the individual how can it be empirically evidenced, (Boxall and Purcell 2003; Gigi and Sutton, 2004; Cullinane and Dundon, 2006; Grant, 1999; Conway et al 2014). The individual contract however is seen to be very relevant to the modern workplace where there is far less emphasis on collective bargaining and agreement such as by the trade unions (Guest: 2004), especially as there is an increase in 'knowledge workers' and less working in manufacturing. Others however talk about the mutuality of the pc, (Herriot et al 1997; Conway and Briner 2005).

There is much debate about the nature of a pc. The term 'exchange' is frequently used such as by Conway, (2005), Cullinane and Dundon (2006) and Makin et al (1996). An exchange however doesn't always imply an obligation. An exchange of pleasantries for example can pass without anything more than a temporary greeting and no further interaction. A contract however implies a more permanent, more binding relationship. Rousseau (1995:6) talks of a contract as '*a belief in obligations existing between two or more parties.*' Some, such as Makin et al, (1996) speak of psychological contracts as being 'an unwritten set of rights' and 'obligations'. There are promises made by both sides; the organisation and the new recruit, regarding informal, subjective aspects such as social interactions of an organisational culture.

The term 'obligation' which is frequently used with reference to the pc, implies a level of inflexibility, that there is no negotiating the contract. Rousseau wrote about the psychological contract in a time of economic uncertainty and change in the workplace such as restructuring and redundancy and much of her work is concerning 'breach of contract' (see section 5.6). This indicates that the pc is not flexible but something which is easily broken and does not allow for changes in the workplace which have a 'destabilising' effect on the relationship between employer and employee (Conway et al: 2014). Rousseau talked of the need for the pc to allow for the changing work environment. This applies now more than ever and much of the literature pertaining to psychological contract since the 1990's is dedicated to discussing breach of contract.

Expectations have been talked of in relation to pc since the early work of Argyris and Levinson and is still very much used by contemporary theorists, (Herriot et al, 1997; George, 2010; Grant, 1999). There are expectations on both sides of the employment relationship of what has been 'promised' and what is 'owed. Gigi and Sutton (2004) however, make a distinction between 'pre entry expectations and beliefs and post entry experiences and implicit/explicit promises'. They do not see expectations as being part of the pc but as an antecedent to the formation of the contract. This view appears contrary to the work of key authors such as Levinson, Schein and Rousseau who all mention expectations in their definition such as:

- Rousseau, 'a set of expectations held by the individual...' (1990:390)
- Schein, 'a set of unwritten, reciprocal expectations...' (1978: 48)
- Levinson, 'a series of mutual expectations', (62:21).
- Kotter, 'implicit contract between an individual and his organisation which specifies what each expect to give and receive', (1973:93)

Gigi and Sutton's view also appears contrary to the main bulk of literature regarding the concept but their differentiating between pre entry and post entry needs to be considered. At what stage is the pc formed? Is it prior to an individual starting work, (George, 2010; Weick, 1979; Roehling, 1997) or is it only once he/she has actually begun their first day? Guest, (1998) in his model of the pc lists expectations as being a 'cause' of pc formation. This question will be examined further in section 5.3 regarding the formation of a pc.

It can be seen then that the psychological contract is a subjective agreement which is perceived by the individual to consist of implicit promises and mutual obligations of

both the employee and the employer. What is believed to have been agreed is over and beyond what has been formally agreed in the signed contract such as hours to be worked and pay to be received. The content of a pc is discussed in section 5.4 and it can be seen that factors relating to the organisational culture are very much linked to the pc. There are various types of pc which are examined in section 5.5 and these give an insight in to the ongoing nature of the pc. Most of the literature around this concept appears to be concerned with the initial stages of employment, and with a breach of contract (Rousseau, 1995; Conway and Briner: 2005, Conway et al: 2011) but it can be seen that the pc exists throughout the employment relationship, changing and being renegotiated as it does so, (Sparrow, 1996; Atkinson, 2002; Guest: 2004). The pc can therefore be seen as having considerable relevance to an individual's adaptation to the organisational culture. Unlike many employment theories with foundations based within the traditional industrial employment relationship, the psychological contract (pc) is very applicable to the modern workplace, (Guest 2004). The pc can be seen to influence the behaviours and attitudes of employees, (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler 2002).

5.3 Formation of Psychological Contract including the influence of Employer and Customer Branding

As mentioned previously, one of the key research questions for this study is:

"Where do expectations regarding the Organisational Culture come from?"

The author was therefore keen to understand how psychological contracts are formed in order to examine this with regards specifically to the organisational culture. The culture of an organisation is seen to be socially constructed yet it governs every aspect of the organisation including behaviour, support, punishment and reward. It is therefore especially important to know how expectations and beliefs are formed concerning what has been promised with regards to this area of working life. Turker and Altuntas (2015) in their work concerning newcomer perception of organisational culture, found that the initial working experience influenced students perceptions of the organisational culture, how they form and then develop their own notion of the culture. Turker and Altuntas (2015) distinguish between 'real' and 'ideal' perceptions of culture. But are initial experiences of the workplace where the formation of a pc begins, or does it take place before an individual has set foot in the building?

Most studies of psychological contracting are concerned with breach or violation. There is relatively little literature available concerning the formation of a pc and there have been calls for further work to be undertaken regarding the antecedents of a pc, (Sherman and Morley, 2015; Rousseau, 1995). Several studies suggest however that the pc can form prior to entering the organisation as an employee, (Herriot,1992; Rousseau 2001;George, 2015; Stoilkovska and Markovic, 2015). George, (2010:53) talks of the formation of pc amongst professionals as developing from an individual's perception of what that a profession is like, often informed by stereotypes portrayed by the media in films and on television. Such stereotypes include the 'boring' accountant and surgeons as being 'jerks'. Professional or Occupational Ideologies, (Rousseau, 2001; Bunderson, 2001), which influence how individuals expect to be treated during employment in a particular profession or type of work. Preconceived ideas may be also be informed by

sources such as previous experience of working in other organisations, (Sherman and Morley: 2015). Stoilkovska and Markovic (2015: 146) state that students at the pre-employment stage form; 'conscious and unconscious anticipations and beliefs about the employment relationship based on information seeking and information processing'. This they term 'anticipatory psychological contract'. As with George (2010) the students' beliefs pre-employment were found to be influenced by media, family and friends and previous experience.

The influence of previous work experience has been documented in several studies, (Grant 1999; Cullinane and Dundon 2006) and it is something that was mentioned by several of the newcomers in this study. When asked where their expectations regarding the culture came from a number said from working with their previous employer in a similar sector of industry. They expected the culture at this new employer to be very similar. Rousseau (2001: 512) states that; "antecedents of psychological contracts are activated to a large extent through pre-employment experiences, recruiting practices and in early on-the job socialization". Other sources of information mentioned by the newcomers which may influence formation of a pc before pre-employment include rhetoric on a company website and HR rhetoric at the interview stage. Rousseau (1995:23-54), talks of 'internal and external influences' on contract making. Internal influences include such as 'supervisor-related incidents' and external influences include personnel actions at the stage of hiring. Newcomers at both the retail organisation and the global technology firm stated that they had already formed an idea of what the culture at the organisation would be from speaking with friends and family who worked there, from the company website and also from their experiences as a customer of the organisation. What influence then does customer branding have on the formation of a pc? And what is the influence of employer branding?

Employer Branding is a relatively recent concept, introduced by Simon Barrow (1996) and originating from the earlier concept of corporate branding, (Edwards, 2009; Rosethorn, 2009). Barrow and Moseley (2005: xvi) define employer branding as; "the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment and identified with the employing company". The main purpose is to "increase productivity and improve recruitment, retention and commitment" (2005: xvi). Martin, (2009:6) states that employer branding "considers current and potential employees as branding targets". Whereas customer (corporate) branding aims to attract more customers through selling the organisation as a great company to do business with, employer branding portrays the company as a great employer to work for. Employer branding is typically associated with marketing but is increasingly referred to by HR professionals, covering areas such as Recruitment and Talent Management, (Martin, 2009; CIPD, 2007).

Employer branding can be evident through sponsoring of university events and at recruitment fairs as well as advertising campaigns for apprenticeship schemes such as those run by Price Waterhouse Cooper and Barclays. It is a strategy which is becoming more important with the aim of both recruiting and retaining talent, in today's competitive market, (Tanwar and Prasad 2016). Phrases such as 'a friendly and supportive atmosphere' or 'a fun and innovative environment' seek to entice new recruits with offers such as 'we take care of our staff' and 'we put our people first.' More

specific targeting to attract certain generations or specialist roles requires organisations to sell their 'uniqueness' to potential employees and to make clear what sets them apart from the rest. Concepts such as unique selling point (USB) and employee value proposition, (EVP) are used to describe aspects of an organisation which sell it as a preferred employer.

The employer brand is very much a reflection of an organisations culture. Edwards, (2009: 7) states; "*A central element to employer branding involves the identification of elements of the character of the organisation itself; features such as the organisations key values and the guiding principles underlying how it operates as a collective entity.*" Values and guiding principles of the collective entity influence are important aspects of the culture. There have been several studies linking employer branding with psychological contracts, (Rosethorn, 2009; Edwards, 2009; Vinay and Shilpa, 2013; Wilden et al, 2010). The overall employee experience sold by employer branding (Edwards: 2009) includes many aspects of organisational culture which are not included in the written contract but which are understood by potential employees to have been promised such as a 'supportive' or 'fun' work environment.

The employer brand demonstrates the employer's side of the promise or agreement made in forming the psychological contract. There is however little available literature regarding this link. There is even less concerning the link between customer branding and the psychological contract. Customer branding is an image or expression of the "enduring ambitions," and the "values and beliefs" of an organisation, (Hatch and Shultz 2008). It is very much linked to the culture of an organisation, as well as the vision of the CEO, (Hatch and Shultz 2008). As the expression goes, it tells you what is in the tin. Is this a company you want to make transactions/do business with? Words such as 'traditional, family company', 'highly competitive', 'global player', 'nation's favourite' are used to describe an organisation and these will influence a customer's expectations regarding the behaviour and type of service they might receive. These customers however may also be potential employees. One might expect the customer brand and employer brand to be in line but these may in fact be incongruent and expectations of the working experience drawn from experience as a customer may lead to a mismatch in expectations, (see section 5.6).

As mentioned previously, HR practices and policies have a substantial impact on formation of a pc, (Grant 1999; Rousseau 1995). At the recruitment and onboarding events especially, rhetoric used by HR has a significant influence on the formation of a pc, conveying as it does an image of the organisation. There is some criticism of HR rhetoric as being 'ideal' rather than 'realistic', that it is not congruent with reality of working life within the organisation and that it doesn't for example reveal recent changes to the organisation, (Grant 1999). This could also be said of employer and customer branding. New Hires in this study had frequently looked at the company website prior to joining and were influenced by not only the wording but the images and 'feel' of the website.

Employer branding, HRM Rhetoric and information on the company website are all 'messages sent by the organisation' conveying promises and obligations (Rousseau: 1995). These are also evident when there is organisational change (such as during

announcements of restructuring) and at developmental activities. The global organisation studied held an Early in Career program and a Leadership course where messages conveying promises of developmental opportunities for 'high potential' talent. Much could be read in to this by recruits to the program who may perceive that as they had been identified as high potential talent they would be recognised and promoted if they in return worked hard and showed commitment. Rousseau (1995: 36) lists four 'behavioural events' during which communication of promises may be made;

- Overt statements; such as "hard work is rewarded"
- Observation of the treatment of others; who are seen as 'party to the same deal'
- Expression of organizational policy; including documents, compensation systems and promotion practices
- Social constructions such as tales from the organisations history for example what happened during the last recession.

As well as messages from the organisation, there can also be messages conveyed from co-workers through social cues, (Rousseau: 1995). Social cues include information provided by colleagues regarding whether it is a good company to work for (including the level of support given), what behaviour is deemed acceptable and an impression of management and the general perception of. Social cues convey 'norms and standards' (Rousseau: 1995) and these can be linked very much to the organisational culture.

The culture of a society, group or profession to which an individual belongs has been found to have a substantial influence on pc formation (Schalk and Soeters, 2008; Thomas et al, 2010; White and Robinson, 2014; Restubog et al, 2007; Orlando et al, 2009). National cultures can be individualist (such as in the UK and US) or collectivist (such as in China) and values learnt and internalized from the culture affect which stimuli are noticed and deemed important, (Thomas et al: 2010). The culture also influences how stimuli are interpreted with events being perceived differently depending on the culture within which an individual is based. This is due largely to view of self in relation to others and what motivates i.e. is this for the good of society or for self? Culture will also influence the type of contract formed, (see section 5.6).

Although many participants in this study mentioned that they had formed their expectations of the organisations culture from the company website, there is little if any literature relating to the influence of social media on expectations of employment at various organisations. What is the influence of the networking tool LinkedIn for example? Professional groups, old colleagues and interest groups can meet to chat and share views and experiences. The tool is also used for job seeking and recruitment. It may be that this and other networking groups are a source of expectations regarding the culture of an organisation.

Expectations and beliefs that a promise has been made can formulate through an individual's perception and interpretation. People recognise a situation similar to a previous experience and make the connection in order to make sense of the situation. These connections or patterns are known as 'schema'. According to Sherman and Morley (2015:25), people are more likely to notice something which fits in to their schema and 'experience is the driving force of schema development'. These schema are

likely to remain unchanged, even when presented with contradictory information. Schema can be simple consisting of basic beliefs or complex, having evolved over time, and involving interrelated beliefs (Rousseau: 2001).

Higher Level Abstractions Regarding Employment Exchange
Ideology   Norms
Associated Meanings eg Transaction/relationship
Elemental Beliefs Promises/Obligations
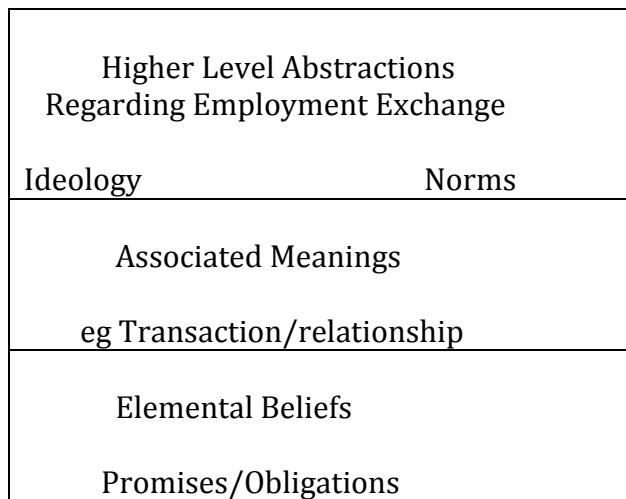
Fig. 4 Psychological Contract represented as a schema. Ref Rousseau (2001:518)

Schema are seen to 'fill the gaps' where information about work at an organisation is incomplete such as prior to starting or as a new hire, (Rousseau: 2001). Assumptions are made from previous experience or professional ideologies and stereotypes as well as employer and customer branding. Cues or small snippets of information are used to create the overall picture or ideal notion (Turker and Altuntas:2015) and expectations are formed. These notions and expectations may alter over time as new information is gathered, (see section 5.5).

It can be seen therefore that formation of schema pre-employment can be influenced by a number of sources including;

Organisational Communication/image:	HR rhetoric and recruiting practices, Customer Branding, Employer Branding
Societal Culture:	Values, norms and beliefs of national and group culture
Stereotypes and occupational ideology:	Associated with certain professions
Previous experience and socialization:	Good or bad. Expectations are that the new employer will be similar if within the same profession or area of business

Schema lead to beliefs of what behaviour is appropriate for both parties of the pc and what obligations there are on both sides. They guide and inform the sensemaking processes as described in the previous chapter, (McGrath et al: 2006). Formation of a pc can begin prior to employment and continue during early socialization (Turnley and Feldman 1999; Rousseau 2001). The initial pc formed is gradually shaped as new information is received. The formation of schema and reliance on stereotypes would seem to imply that most people are not very open-minded but have fixed ideas, strongly

influenced by previous experience! Open mindedness is however one of the five key personality traits (Lee-Bagley et al:) and therefore some may approach the new employment with less rigid expectations.

Although, as has been described, the pc can be formed through a mental model in the mind of the individual, they are not only 'in the mind' of the individual but can be beliefs shared by a group of individuals.

5.4 Types of Contract

Rousseau (1995: 9) describes four types of contract, one of which is the psychological contract. These types of contract are categorized depending on whether they are at group or individual level and whether the perspective is from within or outside the contract;

Individual	Group	
Psychological	Normative	Within
Implied	Social	
		Outside

Fig.5 Rousseau's types of contract

Normative Contracts

Normative contracts are psychological contracts which are shared by a group with whom individuals have social identity such as a team at work, a social group or organisation. The group members agree on the terms of their individual contracts; they believe they are owed the same and have the same obligations. There is social pressure to conform to group behaviours as dictated by the contract and if there is a perceived breach of contract by HR or management with any of its individual members the group feels this as a violation against the entire group. Individual members may also fall out of line with what is expected by the group with regards to behavioural norms and social cues from co-workers. Comments or gestures such as frowns or in more extreme situations, ostracising of the individual can occur. Interpretation of a situation or event is an important factor in forming a normative contract. If employer and employee make the same interpretation there is said to be 'cognitive matching' (Rousseau: 1995). Socialization through interaction can influence a newcomer's pc and normative contract. For example if teamwork is important to the group a newcomer may observe how the team help and support each other and see that HR arrange team bonding activities. The need to share information through interaction with the group is essential in order for contract terms to overlap and a normative contract to form.

As mentioned in chapter three, many firms are now recruiting for person culture fit. The normative contract ensures that those who do not 'fit' initially learn the group norms and accepted behaviours through socialization. Those who do not wish to conform, who think 'this is not for me!' eventually leave, either voluntarily or through HR practices such as performance management and dismissal. Rousseau (1995: 47) refers to this as

the Selection – Adaptation – Attrition cycle, a slight remodelling of Schneider's established Attraction - Selection – Attrition process which aims for homogeneity of people within an organisation (Schneider, 1987; Ployhart et al, 2006). For this study Rousseau's model can be seen to be very significant. However several of the participants in this study who did not wish to change their behaviours and did not like the culture remained with the organisation for many years. They had not been dismissed or planned to leave. Could it be that the strength of the pc is such that it is seen as binding? Literature regarding retention needs to be investigated further but work by George (2015) suggests that one of the reasons people stay is manager behaviour including appropriate style of leadership and manager support, (see section 5.7 re pc and commitment).

Under a normative contract, employees compare themselves to other groups within the same organisation with regards to treatment such as rewards and benefits. This was seen clearly in the two organisations studied for this research. For the UK retailer, comparisons were made by employees within one area of the business to another with regards to differing occupational health services. The company addressed this and changes were made to standardise the service across all areas of business. In the global organisation studied, employees were aware of differing levels of support services such as EAP provision across various countries. Again the organisation recognised this and made changes to incorporate a more even approach in services offered globally. Differences in reward and benefits owed can be seen as especially relevant to cultures where there is a collectivist approach but is also of relevance to the study of organisational culture and adaptation to culture via vicarious learning.

Social Contracts

Social contracts can also be seen to have significance for adapting to organisational culture. These are based on 'shared, collective beliefs regarding appropriate behaviour in a society', (Rousseau: 1995). Rousseau (1995:13) gives the example of 'reciprocity' as a behaviour norm whereby people are expected to be grateful to those who have helped them until the favour has been returned. Behaviour norms are an essential element of national culture and also of organisational culture. Although they differ from psychological contracts in that they are not based on promises but are established standards of behaviour for a group, they can influence psychological contracts by influencing the individual's perception of what is owed.

Implied Contracts

Implied contracts are contracts which are viewed by an external party as having been made. External our third parties include witnesses and juries.

5.5 Types of Psychological Contracts

There are various types of pc. The two types which are most frequently mentioned are transactional and relational pcs (Rousseau, 1995; McGrath et al, 2006);

Relational contracts tend to be described as 'socio-emotional relationships' which are concerned with elements of the employment relationship such as support and development, (McGrath et al, 2006; McInnis et al, 2009). These are highly subjective contracts and tend to be long term, (Rousseau: 1995). O'Donohue and Nelson (2000: 252) state that the relational type "focuses on mutual interest and an emphasis on socio-emotional and non-material contract terms". Job security in return for loyalty is viewed as 'core element' of a relational pc, (De Cuyper and De Witte, 2006; Millward and Brewerton, 2000). Relational pcs are more associated with permanent rather than temporary staff.

Transactional pcs on the other hand tend to be associated with temporary staff, (De Cuyper and De Witte). They are short term and less ambiguous, more evident for others to observe. Transactional pcs include monetary aspects such as pay and rewards and are seen as having more of a 'focus on self-interest', (O'Donohue and Nelson, 2000; Rousseau: 1995).

Reaction to breach of contract can be seen to have a different reaction depending on the type of contract. Breach of relational pcs has a much greater effect than transactional due to the emotional nature of the contract and the longer term investment in it, (see section 5.6)

A third type of pc, a 'balanced' pc is mentioned (Rousseau and Wade-Benzoni, 1994; McGrath et al, 2006; Chaudry et al, 2011). This is perhaps the ideal sort of pc. There is mutual support and strong commitment on both sides. Rousseau (1995) also mentions a fourth type of pc, a 'transitional' pc. This exists when other forms of contract have broken down and there is an absence of contract. Transitional contracts are short term, existing in situations such as mergers and acquisitions. Rousseau (1995:98) describes the transitional contract as being 'ambiguous' and having 'no guarantees'.

Grant (1999) takes a different approach to typology of pcs. He describes four types of psychological contract;

- Congruent: where HRM Rhetoric matches reality
- Mismatched: where rhetoric fails or doesn't appeal or where it doesn't match reality (the example is given of an organisational culture which doesn't compare favourably with rhetoric; there is incongruence)
- Partial: parts of the pc match but parts don't
- Trial: where rhetoric is given a chance to be proven

5.6 Content of a psychological contract

It can be seen from the above section regarding types of psychological contract that the content of these differ, with relational pcs including aspects such as support and development and transactional pcs including aspects such as pay and reward. Herriot et al (1997) investigated the content of pcs in terms of perceived obligations. In order to decipher what the content of pcs was they asked participants to describe an incident whereby a colleague had gone beyond or fell short of what was expected of them; from

an employee perspective this was with regards to the way the organisation treated the individual in terms of what they offered and from the organisation this was whether an individual offered more or less than they were expected to. Whilst management tended to place importance on relational factors employees viewed transactional factors such as job security and fair pay as being the most important organizational obligations. The research found that employees favoured more tangible content over promises of socio-emotional. Interestingly Herriot et al list twelve obligations for organisations and only seven for employees, indicating that the employee expects slightly more from the organisation and the pc is heavily weighted towards employee expectations rather than employer. The twelve organisational obligations include;

Training	Fairness
Needs	Humanity
Consult	Discretion
Recognition	Environment
Justice	Pay
Benefits	Security

Obligations for employees include;

Hours	Work
Honesty	Loyalty
Property	Self-presentation
Flexibility	

From this list of content, the reciprocity of the pc does not appear to be balanced in terms of a like for like transaction but rather expectations of what is owed differs depending on the perspective.

5.7 Breach of psychological contract

A considerable amount of literature regarding psychological contracts is devoted to studies of 'violation' or 'breach' of the contract. A breach occurs when promises, believed to have been made, are not fulfilled, (Freese and Schalk 1996). Bunderson, (2001: 2) refers to perceived organisational breach of pc as simply "not living up to its end of the bargain". A violation of pc has been defined as 'the employee's perception that the organization has failed to fulfil one or more of its obligations as defined by the psychological contract', (Turnley and Feldman 2000). Violation of pc is seen to have a greater emotional impact, (Solinger et al: 2015). The language used in studies of breach of pc by those such as Rousseau (1995) and Tomprou et al (2015) seems at first to be emotive and exaggerated. 'Violation' and 'victim' are words usually associated with cases of physical, mental or sexual abuse. Can it be that the repercussions of a breach of pc can be equally as devastating? Clearly there can be no comparison however the effects of a breach of pc can be substantial and result in strong feelings of anger, frustration, resentment and mistrust, (Zhao et al, 2007; Tomprou et al, 2015) which can have a lasting impact on the mental health of individuals, their behaviour and future employment relations.

Robinson and Morrison, (2000) found that a perceived breach of pc was more likely to occur in the following situations;

- Organisational and/or individual performance is low
- There is no formal socialisation process
- There is little contact with the organisation prior to starting
- The individual has a history of experiencing breach
- Where there is more emotional involvement (such as relational pcs)
- If the breach is seen to be unfair

Much of the research in to breach focuses on changes in the wider environment which have impacted the work relationship. Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler (2003) talk of the impact that the Thatcher government had on public services. Prior to Thatcher, public services had been well funded and seen as a stable source of employment but changes made by the government in 1979 in order to make the services more efficient and streamlined, often involving privatisation, changed the employment relationship dramatically. No longer was a job in the public sector seen as a job for life with associated benefits. As discussed previously, job security has been seen to be something that employees view as a major employer obligation.

The context of the time and economic environment within which Rousseau wrote was also to influence the approach taken to her study of the concept. Rousseau's research in to breach of psychological contracting, was undertaken during a period of economic uncertainty in the 1990s when many companies were restructuring and downsizing and organisation's had " imposed on workers employment arrangements they did not choose." Those who survived redundancy and remained in employment found that the organisation had imposed changes on them that left them feeling 'powerless', insecure and full of resentment, (Herriot and Pemberton 1995 ; De Cuyper and De Witte :2006). Previous custom and practice regarding behaviours may have altered unannounced. This research is especially pertinent following the recent financial crisis where many establishments have made significant changes in order to survive. One resulting area where there is a perceived breach of contract is that of redundancies leaving behind fewer colleagues and twice the workload. Organisational change often heralds a breach in pc, (Conway et al 2014).

As mentioned previously, changes to the way of working have been considerable, especially since the introduction of the intranet and social media bringing about an end to the traditional employment relationship, (Turnley and Feldman, 2000; Robinson 1996). Flexible or Agile working including working from home is increasingly accepted although some managers are more comfortable with this than others, (Collins et al: 2013). Working from home involves many aspects which are not formalised such as the degree of flexibility agreed and a violation or breach can occur where flexibility has been offered but the extent to which this is allowed is not sufficient to fulfil employee expectations. In the global organisation studied supervisor 'trust' was seen to be a major factor in the amount of flexibility given to employees. Globalisation has also impacted the way in which people work and had an impact on the pc. Employees at the

global organisation studied were often surprised to find their line manager would be based in the US and that working with colleagues in meant they often had to work outside of regular 9 – 5 hours.

Breach of contract, in the circumstances described above, relates primarily to existing employees and as discussed in section 5.3 there is some debate as to whether a psychological contract can be formed before an individual has any interaction with the organisation, (Sutton and Griffin: 2004). However expectations are the building blocks of a psychological contract, (Rousseau: 1995) and a mismatch of a new hire's expectations, (gathered from sources such as HRM rhetoric and the company's website) and their perceived reality on joining, can lead to a violation, (Grant: 1999). The study undertaken by this author found that expectations of the culture formed prior to joining from sources such as employer and customer branding did not always match the perceived reality. However expectations were exceeded for some individuals, in particular at the global organisation studied, in terms of support and positive work environment provided.

Cassar and Briner (2005) list the different reasons for a breach of pc as being;

- Delay
- Magnitude
- Type-Form
- Inequity
- Reciprocal imbalance

The negative influence of violation of pc on employee attitudes and behavioural response has been well documented, (Robinson and Rousseau, 1994; Grant, 1999; Turnley and Feldman, 2000; Bunderson, 2001). Having previous experience of a breach of pc leaves it's mark on employees who are less trusting and show less commitment, (Robinson 1996). Briner and Conway, (2006: 68) found that employees who have previously experienced a breach of pc "will be less trusting and more likely to monitor their current psychological contract more vigilantly". This heightened vigilance means they are more likely to find a breach has occurred. For trust to be breached however it needed to be there in the first place (Robinson 1996). Breach of pc can have a significant impact of employee engagement and retention, (Turnley and Feldman 2000). Intention to leave, neglect of role related duties, reduced citizenship, increased absenteeism and lack of engagement are all associated with breach of pc, (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2003; Turnley and Feldman, 2000).

As discussed with regards to coping with stress, individuals will deal with a perceived breach of pc differently depending on the individual's personality, previous experience and circumstances. Those who are adaptable may take a problem solving approach and try to resolve or negotiate and repair the breach of pc, (Solinger et al 2016). Likewise those have good self-regulation, self-efficacy and open-mindedness are more likely to cope with a perceived breach of contract and take an approach to resolving it, (Rousseau, 1995; Solinger et al, 2016) Edwards et al (2003) found that self-reliance also led to a lesser impact of breach. The response to a breach of pc or perceived violation of

pc can be intense. Strong emotions such as anxiety and anger can be triggered. The emotional reaction is greater with relational pcs than with transactional, due to the socio emotive nature of the contract, however exit is more common with breach of transactional pc (Rousseau: 1995).

Exit is one of a number of responses to violation of pc. Rousseau, (1995:135) neatly categorizes these responses according to whether they are Active or Passive, Constructive or Destructive, (see Fig..)

	Constructive	Destructive
Active	Voice	Neglect/Destruction
Passive	Loyalty/Silence	Exit

Bunderson (2001) found that differing ideologies and perceived role obligations also affected the consequences of a breach of pc. For example breach of administrative pc led to dissatisfaction and attrition whereas perceived breach of professional obligations led to lower organisational commitment and job performance.

5.8 Effect of psychological contract breach on commitment

As discussed in the previous section, violation or breach of pc can lead to anxiety, anger and a subsequent disengagement of the employee. Yet some participants in the present research were found to have remained with the organisation and to be happily engaged in their role for several years, despite an initial perceived breach of pc. Is it possible then that some, perhaps more resilient individuals are able to bounce back from a breach of pc? Or is the pc more flexible than literature would suggest? Fulfilment of pc has been seen to result in organisational citizenship behaviour and employee engagement/commitment , (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2003;). In their recent (2015) research, Solinger et al investigated how commitment recovers following breach of pc. Their research found that the emotional reaction to the breach and the perceived level of organisational support following breach influenced the degree to which individual commitment to the organisation recovered following resolution of breach. Job security has also been found to have a moderating influence on breach of pc, level of OCB and commitment, (Conway et al 2014).

It can be seen therefore that a breach or violation of pc impacts negatively on commitment. This has been found to be moderated by job security and individual factors such as personality, the importance attributed to the pc and a perception that the breach can be resolved, (McInnis et al, 2009; Solinger et al, 2015; Conway et al, 2014). There exist three types of commitment, described by Allen and Meyer (1996: 253) as:

- **Affective** which involves 'identification with and emotional attachment to the organisation' and
- **Continuance** whereby 'employees recognize the costs associated with leaving the organization'

- **Normative** commitment which is described as having 'a sense of obligation to the organisation'

There is some evidence that those who view pcs in terms of emotional tie i.e. relational pc are likely also to have affective commitment whereas those with a more transactional approach to pc are seen to have a more continuance commitment. The type of commitment is seen to affect the response to a breach of pc, (McInnis et al 2009). Allen and Meyer state that 'a psychological link between an employee and his/her organisation makes it less likely that the employee will voluntarily leave the organisation'. This is supported by Rousseau (1995), who found that although breach of a relational pc led to a greater emotional reaction, it was breach of transactional pc that was more likely to result in exit from the organisation. One participant in the present study experienced a violation of pc yet three years later he was still with the organisation and winning awards for high achievement. He did not appear to be any emotional tie to the organisation however and his commitment to the organisation appeared to be continuance. Reasons for continuance commitment may include having an environment which is conducive to fun/innovation, compensation, support, work-life balance and autonomy, (George, 2015; McInnis et al, 2009).

Recent research by Rousseau and Tomprou et al (2015) addresses the strategies used by individuals in order to try to resolve breach of pc and negative affect of this. As with previous literature regarding adaptation, coping mechanisms used (including Approach Oriented Strategies and Avoidance Strategies) aim to restore the equilibrium by reducing the perceived discrepancy. Strategies of those who remain with the organisation rather than exit following a breach of pc include problem focused coping such as speaking up, acting to solve the problem and seeking advice whereas emotion focused coping includes voicing disappointment without attempting to solve the problem as venting feelings is enough of a help, (Tomprou et al 2015). Avoidance strategies used by some individuals include mental and behavioural disengagement where expectations of the employer are reduced by the individual taking a cynical approach towards the employer or ignoring the problem by focusing on issues outside of work, (Tomprou et al 2015). A perceived positive response by the organisation can help to resolve any discrepancy in pc.

Tomprou et al list a number of possible outcomes which follow a breach of pc. These include the following:

- PC Reactivation: whereby the pc returns to its pre-violation state
- PC Thriving: where the victim accepts a revised pc which is more beneficial
- PC Impairment: the employee accepts a pc which is less beneficial
- PC Dissolution: the individual 'remains in a state of felt violation', refusing to accept the changed circumstances, (2015: 561)

The above outcomes can be aligned to the Rousseau's earlier model of active/passive and constructive/destructive responses.

5.9 Summary and rationale for research

Summary

Literature regarding psychological contracting can be seen to have great relevance for the study of adapting to organisational culture, not just at the initial stage of new hire but ongoing. Even prior to recruitment stage when initial pc's may be formed from customer or employer branding and HR rhetoric regarding the culture of the organisation through to the influence of normative contracts on attitudes and behaviours in keeping with the organisational culture and finally with regards to breach of pc concerning organisational culture and how individuals can adapt through resilience and formation of strategies.

Normative psychological contracts specifically (those shared by a group) are seen to be of great importance with regards to organisational culture. Adapting to a new organisational culture can be viewed through the framework of pcs as involving pressure via social cues to conform to with group norms and behaviours which form the group or organisational culture. Change is seen to have a huge impact on the pc in terms of perceived breach and this in turn impacts massively on commitment. How does this then bode for future working relationships? In an ever changing environment there is less time to develop relational pcs and transactional or transitional pcs are more likely to occur. This will affect the relationship between employer and employee considerably, leading to less commitment on both sides. How will this affect the organisational culture? Will there be time for this to develop if individuals do not stay long enough and will they care about adhering to group values and norms? It may be that in fact the younger generations, so keen to see work as a 'gig' to be engaged in only briefly, in butterfly fashion, stopping long enough to gain experience and create innovatively, will at some stage wish to settle with an organisation where they feel they belong.

How individuals are able to overcome a perceived breach of pc was of particular interest and the literature regarding commitment has enabled a greater insight in to how this might be possible. A breach of pc with regards to organisational culture and a mismatch in expectations may be overcome if there is continuance commitment as new hires are less likely to have a strong normative commitment, whereby there is a sense of duty to the organisation, or affective commitment. Violation of pc too may be overcome. The observed phenomena that first prompted this research, that of individuals whose expectations regarding the culture of the organisation were not met yet who went on to remain with the organisation may be explained by literature regarding the outcome of breach of pc, (Conway and Briner; Rousseau, 1995; Tomprou et al, 2015). Although some may exit the organisation following a perceived breach of pc many will remain either happily or not so happily employed. The outcome of the breach of pc is dependant largely on the strategies and coping mechanisms used by individuals to deal with the distress of a violation of pc. Resilience is seen to play a large part in how individuals cope with violation of pc. Strategies and coping mechanisms used are the same as those described previously in Chapter Four regarding stress, resilience and self-regulation.

Nelson et al, (1990) linked adjusting to organizational culture with forming psychological contracts 'with integrity' which give realistic expectations of stressors to be encountered. HR may endeavour to be as realistic as possible at interview and on induction, however changes are constantly occurring in organisations and individuals will need to be adaptable to changing pcs in order to cope. It can be seen from literature regarding pc that individuals can learn to move on from a breach of pc through renegotiating contracts and ... however those who have a relational approach and affective pc are more likely to remain with a company despite ill feeling. Perhaps the transactional pc and continuence pc are a more healthy approach for individuals in that they would appear to minimise the psychological impact of a breach or violation of pc. It seems that the latter are more likely in the modern world of work. It would also seem more costly for organisations as breach of transactional pc leads to a higher level of exit.

It would seem best therefore for organisations to be aware of perceived pc's by asking new hires at interview and on induction what their expectations are with regards to the organisational culture and to be as open and honest in return about the reality of the current culture and also what changes are ahead which may impact on this. Employers need to be aware of any perceived breach of pc and offer support and interventions such as learning new skills and providing new opportunities where possible in order to demonstrate their responsiveness, (Tomprou et al: 2015). The legal and ethical implications of pc should also be considered, (Spindler 1994 ; O'Donohue and Nelson, 2009).

Rationale

The aim of the literature review was to discover whether any previous research had explored the link between adaptation and organisational culture and to critically look at studies and theories, which may be relevant to and inform the current study. Studies of the constructs of organisational culture, (oc), adaptation and psychological contracts provided a better understanding of the possible processes involved in adaptation to oc and what influences there might be on the process but there was found to be a gap in knowledge regarding a link between adaptation and oc. Studies of oc were helpful in providing an insight in to the different types of culture, the levels of culture and the importance of being able to adapt to the culture of an organisation in terms of job satisfaction and performance. The literature regarding oc also gave an insight in to individual versus collective cultures and how these might impose differing levels of conformity to the group values and behaviours. Literature concerning sub cultures and mergers and acquisitions also gave a better awareness of how individuals may have different experiences of joining the culture of the same wider organisation.

Literature regarding adaptation, including studies looking at adapting to change, was especially helpful in informing the current study about coping processes that individuals may employ when faced with a new culture. Although not directly transferable due to the difference in context and subsequent influences, studies of adaption to national culture and socialisation, (Black et al, 1991; Triandis, 2006) to a different culture helped to inform the current study of the processes individuals may experience when joining a new oc. Literature regarding psychological contracts (in particular regarding the formation of schema), gave an insight in to the formation of

expectations and informed the current study with regards to the possible impact of a mismatch in expectations between the new organisational culture and the actual culture.

Although the literature review informed and guided the present study it demonstrated a gap in existing knowledge and left unanswered questions regarding adapting to oc such as '*are there qualitatively distinct stages of adapting to and assimilation in to the culture?*' '*why are some individuals able to adapt more easily than others?* and *'what facilitates individual adaptation to organisational culture?'* This research aims to answer these questions in exploring the concept of adapting to organisational culture.

The purpose of this research is to inform new recruits, HR and businesses about the process of adaptation, and what helps to make this process easier in order to enable a speedier, happier assimilation in to the organisation, specifically to the culture. This is especially important in today's world of work where individuals move from one organisation to another more frequently, (Liverpool Victoria: 2014). Adapting to and therefore fitting in to the organisational culture has been shown to be of utmost importance in an individual's job satisfaction, commitment and performance (O'Reilly: 1991) and this subsequently impacts on the success of an organisation (Barney, 1986; Alvesson, 2002

CHAPTER SIX – Methodology and Research Design

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to explore the experiences of individuals joining a new organisational culture and to establish whether there is a process of adaptation associated with this. The previous three chapters looked at the literature review undertaken in order to gain a greater understanding of the concepts of organisational culture, adaptation and psychological contract and to discover what existing knowledge there is linking these concepts. This chapter looks at the design of the research and methods used in order to explore the experiences of newcomers with regards to adaptation to organisational culture and the process of their adaptation. As mentioned in Chapter One, the study was prompted by observations of clinical phenomena, which the author noted in her role as an Occupational Health Professional i.e. that of a number of new starters reporting to Occupational Health with work related stress, seemingly as a result of a mismatch in expectations regarding the organisational culture. This appeared to link to studies of psychological contract formation and expectations. In order to explore further why some new starters were finding the culture of the retail organisation a cause of stress and to test the feasibility of a larger study, the author undertook a pilot study of fifteen employees at various stages of employment. Findings from both the Pilot Study and a literature review of work related stress and psychological contracting led to further research questions including how and why were some individuals able to adapt to the organisational culture despite an initial mismatch in expectations. In order to better understand the process of adapting the author undertook a longitudinal study at a global technology firm. This was to allow observation of adaptation to culture over a period of time, (the author spent four years at the global firm, studying adaptation to the culture as participant observer). A further review of existing literature regarding organisational culture and adaptation was undertaken. It appeared there was a gap in knowledge regarding the two concepts.

Having worked in Occupational Health for over twenty years and prior to that in nursing, the author has always employed evidence based practice. Most of this evidence base was from medical and nursing research, largely positivist, quantitative research. Statistics from this research however, have often left the author wanting to know more about the underlying experiences of the participants. What was the lived experience of the people represented as numbers or lines on a graph? How did they feel? What was important to them? What made a difference? What further insight could be revealed about their experience?

In order to explore the experience of newcomers joining an organisation in particular with regards to its culture, the author chose to undertake a qualitative study, one which was largely ethnographic. The aim was to allow a deeper understanding of the processes that individuals go through when joining an organisation, which enable them consciously or subconsciously to adapt to the ways of working, to be aware of the values and to know the unwritten rules regarding what the organisation deems to be acceptable behaviour in order that they can feel they belong and function well as oppose to not adapting and suffering from stress. It seeks to understand rather than to explain, it leans towards interpretivism rather than positivism. From this understanding it is hoped that theory of adapting to organisational culture will be developed.

The chapter firstly addresses the epistemological position of the researcher, one of social constructionism. The theoretical perspective which provided a framework for the research is then looked at. Both studies, the pilot study and the larger, longitudinal study, were ethnographic in approach and this is discussed in the section on methodology. Semi structured interviews were used for both studies but a number of qualitative methods were employed in the main longitudinal study, including semi structured interviews, participant observation, focus groups and field notes. These methods were qualitatively driven and aimed to capture the complete, holistic experience of newcomers. Although the interviews gave an insight in to the experience of participants at given moments in time, the author was able to observe and experience herself (as participant observer), the culture of the organisation and the process of adapting to this. As participant observer the author was also able to gain a much deeper understanding of the organisation and its leadership, as well as having an insight in to the wider context of both the organisation transformation and the economic environment in which it functions. Focus groups were used to test the validity of the data gathered at the interviews and the model that arose from these.

6.2 Theoretical Perspective

6.2.1   Epistemology

The theoretical perspective of the author is underpinned by their philosophical stance including their epistemology and onotology. Epistemology is defined by Crotty, (1998:3) as, the 'theory of knowledge'. It describes what we believe to be knowledge or what is taken to be the 'truth' (Duberley et al: 2012) and how we obtain this. Our objective and scientifically proven such as the positivist stance or subjectively as with constructionists, who view knowledge as being created by the meaning we ascribe to certain events or concepts.

The epistemological position taken by the researcher is that what is deemed to be knowledge, rather than being objectively proven by neutral researchers, is influenced by and created through our own preconceptions and beliefs which arise from our experiences. These preconceptions and beliefs are influenced in turn by the society we are born and raised in and groups such as family and friends. The epistemological position is therefore constructivist, specifically social constructionist, (Young and Collin 2003). The study of adaptation to organizational culture sits well within a social constructionist approach, viewing knowledge as resulting from social processes, which are, as Young and Collin state 'historically and culturally specific', (2003: 373). Social constructionists see knowledge as arising from social interaction. They view language as being essential to our understanding of the world; 'Reality' is created through discourse, knowledge being constructed via social interchange or shared activity, (Gergen 1985). It is discourse or language resulting from this interaction that gives meaning to the world. (King and Horrocks 2011). Social Constructionists question taken for granted assumptions and challenge the objective nature of what is accepted as knowledge, (Gergen 1985). Knowledge and the degree to which this is considered valid, is dependant not on empirical evidence but on the extent to which words and meaning attributed to events, acts and even self, have been reiterated over time. This has led to criticism of approach as lacking validity and undermining realist research findings

(Hacking 1999; Hammersley 1992). Social constructionism however is concerned with reality but views that reality as being constructed through social interaction

6.2.2   Ontology

The ontological approach of the researcher can be as interpretivist in that it seeks to understand rather than to explain reality. An interpretive approach looks at 'people's experience' within 'specific contexts' (Lee 2012) which is very much the concern of this research. It allows an open-minded approach, rather than trying to prove or disprove a theory. This is largely an inductive study, 'allowing theory to emerge from the data', (O'Reilly and Bone 2008) but within a theoretical framework. This is typical of grounded theory research but not entirely similar as the purpose of this study was not so much to develop new theory as to provide an understanding of the process of adapting to organisational culture. However, with the development of a model this may be seen to some extent as grounded theory. Andrews, (2012) states that 'social constructionism is compatible with grounded theory' and has been instrumental in 'remodelling' grounded theory. Braun and Clark (2006:8) state that a 'full fat' grounded theory, requires analysis to be directed towards theory development'. The type of analysis used for this research (discussed in Chapter 7) was thematic analysis which does not adhere to any given theoretical framework, (Braun and Clarke).

6.3 Methodology

The context in which the present study was undertaken i.e. following the recession of 2009 is seen to be of great importance to the formation of a pc and any subsequent breach. Many firms have gone through a transformation in order to survive including the two studied for this research. Restructuring and redundancies are a familiar occurrence. Robinson, (1996: 574) states; "organizations under pressure to make rapid and constant changes have had to alter employment relationships and the psychological contracts that underlie them". This is especially relevant to the two organisations studied for this research, both of which have had to make substantial ongoing changes in order to survive. Both firms have a long history and many of their employees have been with them throughout their working lives. One employee had just retired from the global organisation having been with them for 50 years. According to participants in the present study and observations made during the ethnographic research, the culture at both organisations studied had also changed considerably. New hires at both organisations arrived with expectations of the culture derived from branding, (such as through advertisements) and rhetoric. Many of the new hires also arrived, (especially in the case of the UK retailer) expecting a job for life.

The methodology for this research was determined by the theoretical and epistemological perspective of the author. It is a qualitative study; qualitative research being described by Willig (2001), as being concerned with meaning and how people make sense of the world. It is an exploratory piece of research looking at the lived experiences of new hires with regards to organisational culture and how they adapt to this. The research is underpinned by theoretical knowledge. It does not set out to empirically prove or disprove a hypothesis but rather to explore what the experience of

newcomers is. The study is therefore based on theoretical knowledge and the participant's lived experience (Schein 2010).

6.3.1 *Ethnographic study*

This research is organisational ethnographc in nature, the context of both the pilot study and subsequent longitudinal study being within the organization where the researcher was employed. The researcher, an Occupational Health Professional worked in a clinical role in the first organisation and a more strategic, management role in the second. Coomer (2014:) states, that "OH Practitioners are well placed to identify the organizational problems that need answers and can have a holisitic sense of the problem from many different layers of the organization and their own practical experience".

Ethnographic research and analysis is perfectly suited to an interpretivist perspective as it seeks to understand why people think and behave as they do, their motivations and beliefs, (O'Reilly: 2009). The methodology sits well within a social constructionist epistemology as its purpose is to study, "social interactions, behaviours and perceptions that occur within groups" (BMJ 2008; 337). In their paper, 'The role of theory in ethnographic research' Wilson and Chaddha, (2009: 549) state;

"The ethnographic method examines behaviour that takes place within specific social situations, including behaviour that is shaped and constrained by these situations and peoples understanding and interpretation of their experiences,"

It is interesting to note that Wilson and Chaddha refer to ethnography as a method. There can indeed be some confusion as to whether it is both methodology and method. De Chesnay, (2014) speaks of ethnography as a "qualitative research design" and it can sometimes be referred to as qualitative inquiry, fieldwork, interpretive method or case study. It can in fact include all of these, (Atkinson and Hammersley 2007) but ethnography is a methodology rather than a method, (O'Reilly 2009). It is mainly associated with fieldwork and specific research methods such as participant observation and involves the researcher becoming immersed in the group or organisation being studied over a period of time.

Traditionally associated with anthropological studies such as Mead's 'Coming of Age in Samoa', (1928), ethnography has predominantly been used for the study of culture. It is the Polish anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski (1884 -1942), who is most often thought of as the 'founder of contemporary ethnography' (Reilly: 2009). Malinowski spent many years with the Tobriand Islanders, studying their culture for his 1922 classic study 'Argonauts of the Western Pacific'. Edmund Leach, who was guided by Malinowski, was also an influential figure in his work on Political Systems of Highland Burma (1954). The methodology was taken up by early sociologists such as Max Weber and Emile Durkheim, (in their studies of people, politic, societies and culture), and in the 1920's through to the 1950's a group of sociologists at Chicago University, known as the 'Chicago School of Ethnography' were extremely influential in their use of the methodology. By the late 20th century ethnography was also beginning to be used by other disciplines including psychology.

Whilst anthropology has 'produced an archive of diverse human experience' from ethnographic studies (Marcus: 2008), there are surprisingly few ethnographic studies undertaken by psychologists, particularly in Social Psychology and Organisational Psychology. More recently, ethnography has been used in Educational Psychology, Health Psychology and Sports Psychology but, although there have been many qualitative studies (including longitudinal studies) of Organisational Culture by psychologists most of these have not been ethnological. Kral (2007) states that, unlike other social science disciplines, where the methodology is fast gathering momentum, ethnographic research is still on the margins of psychology. He recommends that Psychologists should think more 'anthropologically' and anthropologists think more 'psychologically'. Squire, (2000) too suggests psychology form 'alliances' with other disciplines such as anthropology. Marcen et al (2013) see ethnography as a link between Psychology and Sociology, a 'relevant method in both psychological and sociologic research when they interact to explain facts and experiences from the past'.

Kral suggests that the lack of ethnographic research by psychologists may be because Psychology leans towards objectivity, positivity and deductive scientific methods. Briggs et al (2012) criticise positivism and the construction of objective realities as leading to a conceptual distance from the subjects (groups) being studied. In early studies the researcher was thought to have a separate identity to the group being studied but more recent ethnographic studies accept that the role of the researcher is to be part of the group. Indeed, Robson (2011: 142) says that the ethnographer's task is to become an accepted member of the group. Samnani and Singh (2013) believe that an ethnographic study is especially useful for becoming intimately familiar with the specific context of the organisation, processes and events as well as allowing the researcher to observe phenomena in their natural setting.

Others agree that it is this intimacy which leads to valuable insights which might otherwise be missed, (Brewer: 2004, Lengnick-Hall et al:2009). Hartley, (2004) sees time spent in an organisation, be it weeks or years, as providing valuable information regarding the research question. Positivists would say that this practice reduces the level of objectivity and that this can lead to bias, however the main purpose of ethnography is to view things from the perspective of the participants, (Crotty1998). Becoming one of the group being studied is synonymous with ethnography and it allows a stripping away of formal boundaries to enable the researcher to get closer and witness first-hand the 'real life' behaviours and beliefs.

Ethnographic research is valued for gathering detailed, in depth descriptions of the real world, (Hoey: 2012) and is particularly useful for allowing the researcher to get close to the point of intimacy with the context, processes and events that occur within the organisation or group, (Brewer: 2004, Samnani and Singh: 2013).

Bjerregaard (2011:58) states that;

"Grounding institutional work studies on ethnographic methodologies may complement the ideational emphasis on rhetoric and discourse in the extant literature on institutional work and entrepreneurship"

There can be difficulties associated with being a member of the group. Tietze, (2012) speaks of the perceived danger of the ethnographer getting too close and people revealing too much, with the disappearance of barriers. This would seem to go against the whole purpose of ethnography. Surely, learning all there is to know about a subject's thoughts and beliefs is the essence of the methodology? Doing ethnographic research is like being an undercover detective carrying out a covert investigation. But should the psychology researcher be covert or overt? There is an ethical concern, if a subject feels they have been 'duped' in to giving away more than they would like to have done or regret sharing information as they feel it may compromise their situation or job. Conversations held in a more relaxed, familiar setting may result in the participants revealing more than they would under more formal circumstances, yet their words will be written down and recorded as data, (O'Reilly 2009). The researcher therefore, has to ensure that however useful or intriguing the potential information is, that they have gained the informed consent of the person/group being studied. Unlike the covert detective, they need to make clear to the subjects being studied that they are there in a research capacity.

It is a difficult balance to strike. The ethnographer seeks to minimise the impact of their presence as an outsider but going 'native' is to be avoided (O'Reilly 2009). Spending time with a group for a matter of weeks and maybe even years, a researcher can become so comfortable within that group that the distance needed to retain an element of objectivity evaporates. There is a danger of becoming so entrenched in the group and its culture, that the strangeness has disappeared and the researcher no longer has the heightened awareness required to notice important detail. It becomes too familiar and taken for granted. The researcher is one of the gang, no longer an observer. Being aware of the role of the researcher is an important factor in analysing qualitative research and the dynamics of the researcher-researched relationship are especially pertinent in ethnographic studies.

In their ethnographic research 'amongst drinking youth cultures: reflections from observing participants', Briggs, Gololobov and Ventsel, (2015), encountered a few dangerous situations but see an increased risk governance as preventing valuable research from being undertaken and detailed insights from being revealed. As well as the potential danger that 'being part of the group,' may result in for the ethnographic researcher, there is also the impact that they themselves may have on the research. The possibility that bias may result from the lack of distance from the group (or individuals), studied has already been mentioned and Coffey (1999) sees the potential for 'personal, emotional and identity issues' that the researcher may have as leading to 'analytical weaknesses'. This has long been a concern for qualitative researchers; the impact of self on their research but that concern has been addressed by the concept of 'reflexivity' whereby the researcher is aware of and takes note of their feelings and reactions.

Finlay and Gough (2008) state the process of reflexivity allows the researcher to 'analyse personal, inter-subjective and social processes which shape research projects'.

6.3.2 *Study One - Pilot Study*

Pilot studies, (also known as Feasibility Studies) are often used to ensure the effectiveness of a particular research tool. Lancaster, Dodd and Williamson, (2004) in their recommendations for good practice when undertaking pilot studies, state that there should be clear aims and objectives. The main purpose of this pilot study was an exploratory investigation of clinical observations prior to undertaking a larger, explanatory study. It was hoped the pilot study would test the feasibility of a larger scale study including the usefulness and acceptability of the questions on which in depth interviews were to be based. The aim was to ensure that the right questions were being asked to enable the researcher to delve deeper and to understand what the underlying issues were which had given rise to the observed phenomena. It was not intended to prove or disprove a hypothesis at this stage but to ensure that further research would be investigating the relevant variables, which influenced adapting to organizational culture.

This was a case study, undertaken at the head office of a UK based organisation where the researcher worked as an occupational health professional. The environmental context of the study was during the recent economic recession. The sample consisted of fifteen participants from a variety of roles. These were not people who had attended the Occupational Health Department for stress but were individuals who had accepted an invitation to take part in the research. The study looked in particular at their expectations of what the organizational culture would be, the reality of that culture and their personality and culture fit. Results from the pilot study led to the conceptualization of adaptation to organizational culture as a process, involving psychological contracting, person-culture fit and resilience. This study and the literature review led to the Conceptual framework on which the larger scale, longitudinal study was based.

6.3.3 *Study Two - Longitudinal study*

Robson (2011), states that ethnographic studies are likely to be over a prolonged period of time. They are therefore longitudinal in nature. There are many longitudinal studies concerned with organisational stress and causes of, (Zapf, Dormann and Frese: 1996) however many of these have been quantitative studies. This next stage of the study was both ethnographic and longitudinal and was based within the global organisation where the researcher was employed.

It was decided to undertake a longitudinal study, in order to investigate the process of adaptation, observing the participants at three stages within the first six months of them joining the organisation. Each participant was surveyed at the following stages;

- On induction
- At three months
- At six months

The reason these particular points in time were chosen was as follows;

- On induction – so that people's expectations were still fresh in their mind
- At three months – as this is the end of the probation period
- At six months – newcomers would have had three months as permanent employees.

The organization studied for this phase of the research is a global organization, with headquarters based in the US. As with the UK based organization documented in the pilot study, this global company is well established with a long history. Its origins however are very different. Dating back to the 1920s it was not family led but arose from the joining in business of two dynamic and innovative individuals; one an inventor and the other a skilled businessman. The company grew and an office was opened in London. Machines produced by the company were sold as far as India and Brazil and the organization soon became a universal business in the manufacturing and engineering sector.

The organization was founded on an innovative idea and innovation continues to be one of its main values today. There have been numerous changes over the history of the organization as new machines were developed and sold to more countries and employees became used to changes such as a move of the UK head office from one town to another. Change remains a constant today and both the pace of change and direction of the business have increased dramatically with the introduction of a new CEO. The new CEO has pushed for a change in culture towards a High Performance organization with clients needs the central focus of the business. The change in culture has been communicated to all employees via several channels including the intranet and discussion groups, which were held as part of a culture change project.

There are four different divisions within the business;

- Service (Engineering)
- Software
- Sales
- Corporate

However in this longitudinal study, participants were new to the organization and there was no previous working relationship with the researcher. Contrary to Tietze view that closeness allows a more open discussion, the participants in this study appeared both open and effusive in the first interview. This may have been because they felt happier speaking to a relative stranger about their feelings or because as newcomers they had a heightened awareness of the issues being discussed, (such as ways of working and people's behaviour). Also as newcomers there may have been an element of being keen to oblige.

6.4 Methods

6.4.1 *The Sample*

The sample consisted of thirty newcomers to the organisation. Newcomers were invited to take part in the research and the thirty participants were selected sequentially on the basis that they were the first thirty to join and accept the invitation following the start of the research and included individuals from all divisions. (see table 1). Twenty of the group joined in 2013 and ten in 2014.

Division	Sales: 6	Software: 11	Corporate: 11	Service : 2
Age Group	18 – 29 x 14	30 – 40 x 12	41 – 51 x 3	52 – 65 x 1
Gender	F = 0, M= 6	F = 2, M = 9	F = 6, M = 5	F = 0, M = 2

As the newcomers tended to join individually over a period of months rather than collectively as a group, the first participant's induction interview was held in August 2013 and the final induction interview was held in February 2014. The period of time therefore, to collect all the data from interviews, was a year. During this time there were several changes taking place in the company as regard to on going restructuring and a new culture being introduced.

A number of qualitatively driven methods were used during the Longitudinal study. Mixed methods are

6.4.2 *Participant Observation*

Active Participation is a method often used in ethnographic studies by anthropologists in their study of the culture of groups and communities; the researcher actively joins the group they are studying, often for a long period of time, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the culture. This helps in many ways such as;

There is increased trust because the researcher is one of the group
People continue in their usual manner as the presence of the researcher is not an unusual event
The researcher is aware of the less obvious behaviours and underlying values

The researcher recognized however, that their own thoughts and feelings regarding the organization could potentially have some influence on the way the questions were asked. Labaree, (2002) in 'the risk of going observationalist: negotiating the hidden dilemma of being an insider participant observer' discusses the risks of the researcher having a 'shared relationship' with the group observed and the risk of disclosure. However, the researcher was not part of the group observed and the focus of the research was not to make any comment as regards the culture itself so much as to understand the expectations of newcomers regarding what the culture would be like, whether there was a mismatch between expectations and reality and what factors influenced a successful adaptation to the culture.

Being aware of the impact of their role on the research is important for all qualitative researchers but those studying their employing organization need to be especially aware of their thoughts and feelings with regards to the business. Do they have an underlying agenda? What are their own values and assumptions and how might these

influence the analysis of the research? There are undoubtedly views and assumptions held by the researcher but recognising these and being open and empathetic to the views of others should prevent any bias occurring. Being an insider to the organisation provides a greater insight and awareness of the underlying culture and provides greater opportunities for discussion with existing employees as well as new hires about the culture.

Susanne Tietze, (cited Symon and Cassell: 53) states that a 'blurring of roles' which researchers studying their employing organization will experience can be an advantage as the familiarity between colleagues can allow a more open and honest discussion.

6.4. 3 *Interviews*

The schedule for interviews in both the pilot study and the longitudinal study included participants being shown an information sheet in the first interview, explaining the purpose of the research. They were asked, if they consented to take part in the research, to sign a consent form. Interviews were held in the privacy of a meeting room. During the interview, notes were made by the researcher but no recording was made for the following reasons:

- The first participant was anxious about being recorded and it was felt that they would not be as open and honest as they would without being recorded.
- As a participant observer in this ethnographic research it was felt that recording the interview would appear unnatural and make the conversation less spontaneous. It would create a barrier between the researcher and participant. (Robson, 2011; Samnani and Singh, 2013; Brewer, 2004; Lengnick-Hall et al, 2009)

- The author had over twenty years' experience of listening to patients, clients and employees concerns and subsequently recording these in medical records.

The full response was written up immediately after conclusion of the interview. If there was any doubt at all about the exact wording of the response the author was able to check this with the participant. At the end of the series of interviews, participants were given a debrief form explaining a bit more about the purpose of the research and asking whether the participant had any further questions as well asking them if they wished to be informed of the outcome of the study. Contact details of the researcher and supervisor were given.

The interviews were semi structured and were based on the following questions:

1. On induction – How did the new hire feel? What did they expect the company to be like in terms of ways of working, behaviours and values? Where do these expectations come from and were these expectations met? What values did the individual hope to see demonstrated by colleagues in the organisation? What did they hope to achieve in their new role?
2. At three months – How were they feeling about being with the organisation? How would they now describe the organisational culture, (defined as ways of

working, behaviours and values)? Did they feel they belonged and if so what had helped them to fit in?

3. At six months – How did they feel with regards to being part of the organisation? Had their understanding of the organisational culture changed? How would they describe it now? What values had they observed? Was there any particular language that was used? Had they themselves made any behavioural changes in order to fit in? How had they coped with joining a new organisation?

Robson (2011: 285) states that semi structured interviews 'are most appropriate when the researcher is closely involved with the research process'. Semi structured refers to a certain amount of flexibility with regards to the order and wording of questions asked. They are the method of choice for many interpretivist resarchers, (King and Horrocks: 2011).

6.4.4 *Focus Groups*

Focus groups were held to test the generalizability and transferability of the Staged Adaptation Model. These groups also helped the author to gain a better understanding of the culture within the global organisation. Focus groups were held with members of the HR and recruitment team within the global organisation, a software team (a recent acquisition), new employees at Head Office and exiting employees at Head office. Robson (2011: describes focus groups as;

"a group interview with a specific topic for discussion"

Advantages of holding a focus group include getting a greater understanding and insight in to the group attitudes, norms and social processes within the organisation, (King and Horrocks: 2011) through the input of a wider group of respondents. By meeting with

The HR and recruitment group the researcher was able to learn more about the history of the organisation including acquisitions made and the culture these smaller organisations bought with them as well as having an insight in to how HR viewed the existing culture and what they were looking for with regards to person – culture fit. The researcher acted as a facilitator for the discussion and ensured that certain topics were addressed, including who the group would say were "star performers" in the organisation and what qualities these people demonstrated.

Employees at Head Office were invited to join a focus group looking at adapting to culture and a total of thirty two attended. The group was given a series of statements, which had been made by participants of the study and asked

6.4.5 *Field notes*

A personal diary was kept by the researcher, in which dates and times of meetings, such as the focus group and interviews, were recorded. Thoughts regarding the research process were also documented as well as reflections and observations such as those resulting from impromptu or casual meetings with participants and conversations with

colleagues. Brief notes were made at the time of these observations and experiences and then written up in detail as soon as the opportunity arose.

6.5 Reflexivity

Whilst undertaking this ethnographic study, the researcher determined to have an awareness of the influence that her preconceptions, beliefs and behaviours had on both the research process and findings. This being a qualitative piece of organisational research, rather than seeking to prove an existing truth it was acknowledged that the research would be largely a subjective, construction of the social world studied, (Rhodes and Wray-Bliss 2008). It was necessary however to be aware of the influence that the role, values and language used by the participant observer (working as a Health and Wellbeing Manager) had on the reported phenomena. Far from being a '*passive reporter*' it is acknowledged that the author will have played an active role in constructing meaning from the research findings (Rhodes and Wray-Bliss 2008). Berger (2015: 220) states that 'the idea of Reflexivity challenges the view of knowledge production as independent of the researcher producing it'. This is not to say that the researchers own experience was not important. As participant observer, the author made field notes of her own thoughts and feelings as a new starter and found that it was not dissimilar to many of the participants reported experience of having been left to 'get on with it' and feeling empowered to do so.

This led the author to question whether she had influenced the participant's response in any way. Had she perhaps through questioning or non-verbal cues led them to talk about feeling empowered and having to be a self-starter? Not all of the participants had given this response however and it appeared that it very much depended on the team being joined, whether or not the line manager was based in the same office or globally and whether the role was remote. Focus groups also helped to confirm the findings of the interviews. Having first-hand experience of being a new starter at the organisation added to the richness of the data and gave the researcher a greater awareness and understanding of the organisational culture and what helped to feel part of this. This reflexive dialogue continued throughout the research, including the stage of analysing the data. There is however, a balance to be struck between spending too much time and focus of the research as self-theorist rather than on the data and development of theory, (Weick: 2002).

CHAPTER SEVEN– Data Analysis and Results

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter looked at the methods used in order to explore how individuals adapt to organisational culture. This chapter presents the findings. The chapter is structured chronologically in order of the studies undertaken. Findings from the Pilot Study, (N=15), are presented in a table showing codes which emerged from the interview transcripts and the resulting themes. The analysis of these themes is then discussed. As mentioned in the previous chapter, a process of thematic analysis was used to help identify themes or patterns in the data, to interpret and understand the findings and ultimately to develop a model from these. Braun and Clarke (2006: 2) state that thematic analysis is a '*theoretically flexible approach*' which is '*essentially independent of theory and epistemology*' (2002:6) however the analysis framework appeared to be the most appropriate method of analysis for the research approach of gaining an understanding of the process of adapting to organisational culture rather than testing theory. Thematic analysis allowed the participant's voice regarding their experience to be heard, rather than reduced to numbers on a graph whilst offering a Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, (participant numbers were too high for this) The thematic analysis undertaken was largely inductive, allowing the data to drive further questions on which to base the longitudinal study.

Findings from the Longitudinal Study are then presented, firstly looking at data from the interviews and the thematic analysis of this. Analysis of the data for this study differed slightly from the pilot study in that transcripts from the interviews were entered in to an Nvivo software program in order to determine the initial codes. A word search was undertaken using Nvivo and the most frequently used words such as change, support, team, trust and confidence were used as codes. As with the pilot study, these codes were then grouped under themes. Initially the data was analysed at a descriptive, (semantic) level. It was presumed that the frequency of which the codes and themes occurred within the data would reflect the importance of the themes but a look again at the research questions led the researcher to undertake this process again, reading and re reading the transcripts many times. It was surprising how often something previously unnoticed would leap out as being very relevant to the research question rather than the frequency with which it appears in the data. This led the author to refer again to literature, looking this time at other concepts and areas of interest which arose such as 'belonging', 'social identity and 'being valued.' At this stage the analysis became more in depth and interpretative, (latent), (Smith, Flowers and Larkin 2012). Braun and Clarke (2006 14) state that, 'thematic analysis that focuses on latent themes tends to be more constructionist'. Thematic analysis of interview data and discussion of the findings the chapter then looks at themes, which were common to both the pilot study and the longitudinal study. Mediating factors, which became apparent during the analysis are looked at.

Following the section looking at data from interviews, the data from several focus groups undertaken within the global firm is then analysed. These included;

- Recruitment and HR group in Software
- Group of employees at software office recently acquired
- Group of new hires at head office

- Group of varying lengths of tenure employees at head office

The aim of the focus groups was to test the findings from the interviews and also to test and further develop a model of stages of adaptation (discussed in depth in chapter eight). A discussion of the experience of the researcher as participant observer then follows as well as a section on field notes and finally reflexivity which the author practised throughout the research process.

7.2 Study 1 - Pilot Study

The purpose of the pilot study was to make sense of the observed clinical phenomenon of newcomers finding the organisational culture a cause of stress, seemingly due to a mismatch of expectations. The main questions at this stage sought to discover:

- Whether others had experienced a mismatch in expectations
- What their experience of the culture was
- How they had expected it to be
- Where had these expectations come from
- Was a breach of psychological contract occurring?

Interview transcripts were coded by reading though and identifying issues that were key/important to individuals. Theory integral to the themes was consulted such as literature regarding breach of psychological contract, unmet expectations, stress and organisational culture.

7.2.1 *Initial Codes for Pilot Study*

Interesting and seemingly important features from the data were identified and collated in to codes across the whole data set from the pilot study interviews, (See appendix 4). Codes included *Head Office versus Branch, Old versus New, Observing and Listening, Sense of Community, Support and Ways of Working.*

7.2.2 *Themes for Pilot Study*

The Codes were collated in to possible themes, which were then reviewed and refined to form Themes as illustrated below

Sense of Purpose

Mismatch in Ways of Working

Change

Ways of working

Head Office v Branch
Behaviours

Ways of Working
Opportunities

Old v New

Belonging

Coping Mechanisms

Sense of Community
Fit

Making it Work

Theme

Old v New
HO v Branch

code

Key =
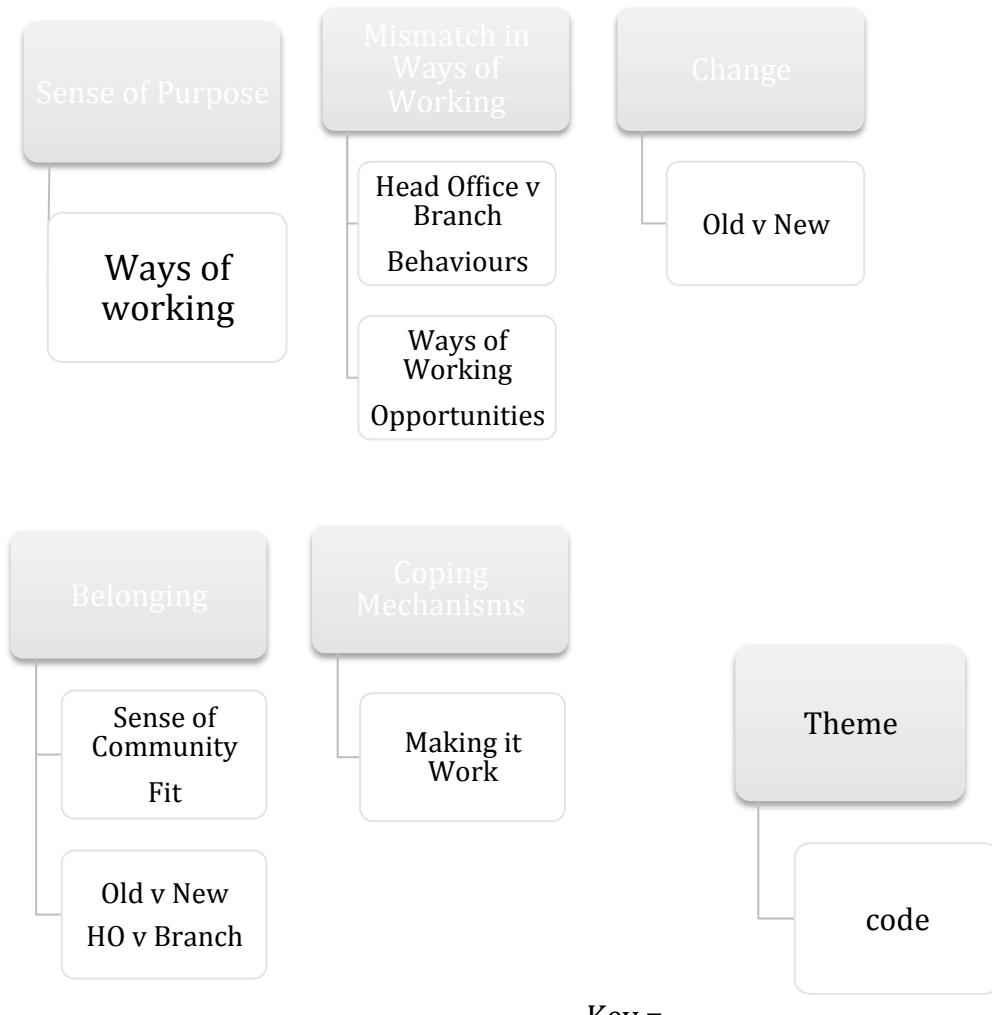
Fig. 6 Pilot Study Themes and Codes
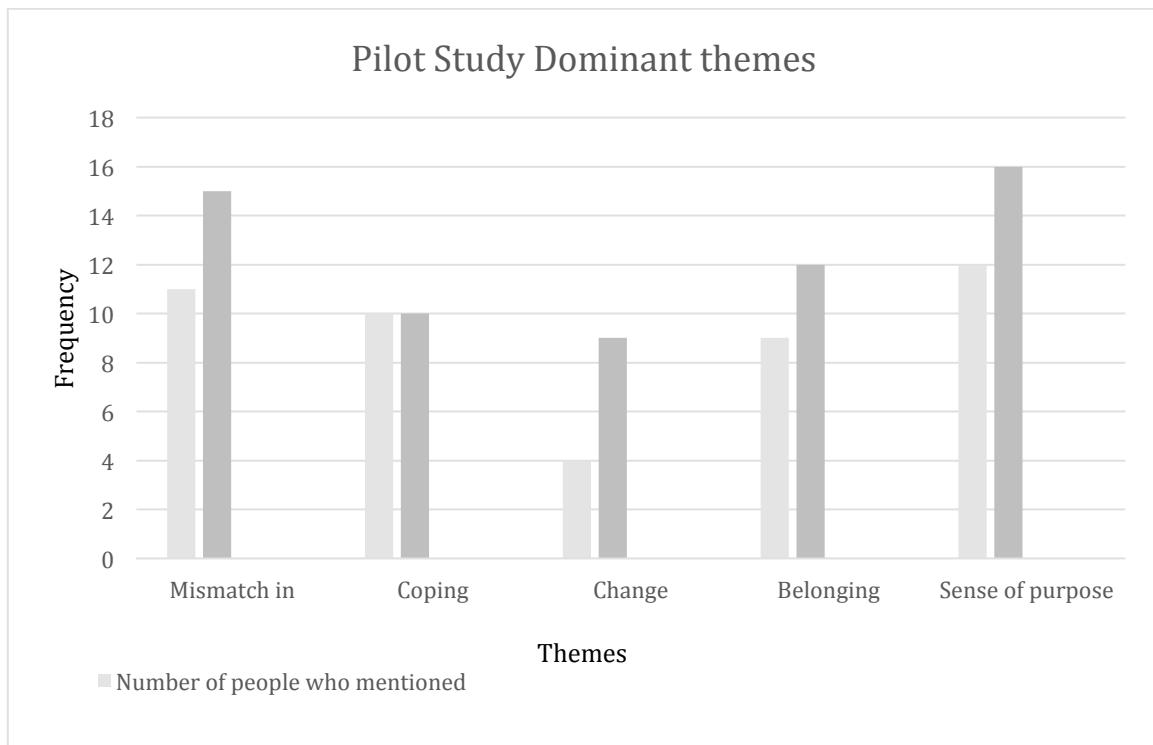
Fig 7. Dominant Themes from the pilot study

Table six shows the number of people who mentioned each theme and the number of times that each theme was mentioned.

7.2.3 *Findings from Pilot Study*

Although the purpose of the pilot study was to test the feasibility of a larger study and to test the suitability of the questions, the findings were useful in supporting results of the longitudinal study. The fifteen participants in the pilot study were from a variety of roles and differing lengths of service, (between six months and twenty years). Their experience of the organisational culture however was quite consistent.

Theme 1. Mismatch in Expected and Experienced ways of working (n=11)

Participants found the culture at the retail organisation to be different from what they had expected. These were participants who had been with the company for less than five years. Nine of these said they had gained their expectations of the organisational culture from their experiences as a customer. Others mentioned family and friends, parents as customers, previous employer and recruitment agency as a source of expectations. Their expectations were very similar, that the retailer would be a supportive, caring employer, which offered many benefits. In the pilot study the culture described in the branches was very different to the head office. The branch culture was found to be supportive with a real sense of community and it was this culture that people had expected to find when they joined head office as this is what their experiences as a customer had led them to believe. The culture in branches was spoken

of warmly with words such as 'family', 'team' and 'community' being mentioned. Clear differences in cultures were seen to exist between the branches and head office. There are many reasons why these subcultures may have formed including geographical, (head office was in London and branches in other towns in UK), divisional, functional (the roles in head office were not customer facing and tended to be more strategic) and hierarchical in that the head office roles tended to be more senior, (Schein: 2010).

Seven participants in the pilot study had been 'disappointed' to find the culture in head office was not as caring or have the same sense of community as they had expected. There was not the level of job security they had expected due to the amount of change occurring. Two said the culture was more 'cut throat' than expected, another that it was 'more commercial'. Unlike the clinical phenomenon observed prior to the study, participants had not been so upset that they were off sick with stress. This may be that they were better able to cope with stressful situations, (see section below regarding coping mechanisms) that they were able to bounce back from the upset due to resilience (Bonanno: 2004), or that other factors were in place to support them such as information giving by HR or Line Manager, (Morrison: 1993) and having a supportive team. Literature regarding unmet expectations posits that expectations regarding employment that are not realized can lead to emotional exhaustion and lack of job satisfaction, (Turnley and Feldman, 2015; Maden et al, 2016). Although there was an initial mismatch in expectations which had led to disappointment for some the participants were still with the retailer after a minimum of a year. One participant said she did not have any expectations before joining as she had no prior experience of working in retail and seven reported to be pleasantly surprised by the culture, (two of which were participants working in the branches).

Quotes which illustrated the felt mismatch in expectation and experience of ways of working included; *"The focus is now more on delivery and accountability", "The culture here in Head Office is very different from the branches" and "I expected lots of rules and regulations but it seems like a* good *company to work for with lots of benefits"*

Theme 2. Change (n=4)

Those participants who had a long tenure with the retailer (four people had been with the retailer over ten years), spoke passionately of the change in culture from the old to the new culture. The change of culture had resulted in strong feelings of hurt and betrayal. Field notes mentioned that they appeared to be mourning the old culture. They found the new culture as having more focus "on delivery and accountability", whereas the 'old' culture was described as a little old fashioned but 'warm', 'friendly,' 'caring' and 'sincere'. The old culture was changing despite there being no communication as such from the business regarding a change of culture. Talk from the business was of restructuring and transformation but this was not the culture they had signed up to.

The strong feelings resulting from a perceived breach of contract regarding the culture can be explained by theory of psychological contract breach, (Rousseau, 1995; Grant, 1999, Conway and Briner, 2006). On joining the retailer, individuals felt they had signed up to a reciprocal arrangement whereby they would get a supportive culture and in

return they would work hard and give the company loyalty. This can be seen to be a 'relational contract' and is the type of psychological contract most common in 'Clan' type of culture, (Orlando et al: 2009). The change in culture had been introduced without their agreement. This apparent breach of contract bought about far greater strength of feeling than the mismatch in expectations regarding the culture and the results indicate that it is likely to take longer to recover from.

The way people dealt with change varied. Some appeared far happier than others stating that they liked change and found it exciting. Although this study does not focus on the influence of personality, individuals who have traits of intellectualism, or 'open-mindedness' would be people who enjoy change. One participant stated: "I think the older you get the less you enjoy change. Others stated;

"I knew (the organisation) as a customer. It seemed very attractive"

"I like change and new situations. I find it exciting. What will the outcome be?"

Coping with change is discussed in the following section.

Theme 3. Coping Mechanisms (n=10)

With the perceived changes to the organisational culture and the mismatch in expectations regarding the culture, it was of great interest to the author to note what helped people to move forwards and to remain, if not happily at least functional, at work. Some insight was given by participants as to how they coped with change.

Coping Mechanism	Number of Participants who used this method
Observing and Listening	X 3
Preparing and gathering information	X 2
Having a sense of humour	X 2
'I enjoy change'	X 2
Being open-minded	X 1
Talking to friends	X 5

These were individual coping mechanisms but there were also organisational interventions, which acted as mediating factors including having a mentor and starting with other new hires. Individual coping mechanisms reported included;

"I observe initially" and "A sense of humour gets me through".

Theme 4. Belonging (n=9)

Belonging to the organisation is something that most people seem to aspire to and was mentioned by nine of the fifteen participants. Belonging is one of Maslow's basic needs, so important that it comes immediately after basic physiological needs and safety needs (cited Arnold and Randall et al: 2010) and participants in the pilot study talked

passionately about belonging to a team, how close the teams were in the branches and the welcome they had received from the team. They bemoaned the fact that this was lacking at head office; that there was no feel of belonging to a team there, especially following the changes bought about as a result of restructuring. Participants in the pilot study talked of a 'close knit community' and a 'family feel' present in teams in the branches but missing at head office. They viewed the team as being synonymous with caring and support. One individual mentioned that with all the recent changes she was not sure if she' fitted' any more. Another also noted the effect the changes had on their sense of belonging; "Being here so long I know everyone. Well, I used to…" The notion of fitting in of being 'one of the family' was mentioned by many participants.

Other statements from participant's which illustrated the 'Belonging' theme included; "There used to be lovely people. I'm not sure if I fit now", "I'm not sure if they get me" and "The low turnover makes joining hard as the local community is close knit. Like some unspoken web"

Theme 5. Sense of Purpose (n=12)

Twelve of the fifteen participants mentioned a sense of purpose, something that was driving them or someone such as manager who was giving them direction. Participants in the Pilot Study stated;

"*There is less emphasis on productivity, which is nice to begin with but then it gets frustrating. What is the purpose? What are we trying to achieve? What does it mean in real terms in the real world*?"

"*Work is totally unstructured. I don't have a job description or plan. It's not clear as to specific ways we will achieve target*".

The quote, '*What is the purpose? What are we trying to achieve?*' was of great importance. It reflects the need for a sense of purpose, for people to know what it is they are trying to achieve at work.

Looking at where individuals had gained their expectations from, the majority (9 out of 15) stated their expectations had been from drawn from their experience as a customer. This suggests a possible incongruity between employer branding and customer branding. It may also be due to an assumption on the applicant's part that working for the organisation would be a similar experience as being a customer. One participant stated, 'the staff always seemed happy'. Two of the participants stated that they had joined the organisation in order to get a better work/life balance. There was little if any indication in the media of the restructuring that was taking place at the retailer. A large number of redundancies were made but this appeared to be only mentioned in a couple of local newspapers. Applicants therefore may have had little indication that changes were taking place and that the culture may be affected.

When a mismatch in expectations regarding the organisational culture occurred, or indeed a possible breach of psychological contract with regards to the supportive

culture, (perceived to be absent or being taken away from head office), it appears that people were able to remain functional at work despite this set back. Participants talked of using a number of coping measures, talking to and having the support of family and friends and having a sense of humour were perhaps the more expected coping mechanisms. Interestingly however, a number of participants stated that they 'observed' and 'listened', thinking about things before acting, suggesting a more thoughtful, less impulsive response to challenging situations.

Reasons people stayed were not obvious but appeared to be around the perception of the organisation as a good employer. Only five people mentioned benefits and perks but looking at the reason people gave for joining gives a greater indication of why people stayed. Eight of the fifteen participants said they had joined as the organisation was known to be a good employer. Although the culture was changing the organisation was still seen as a good employer and one participant noted it remained in the top 100 employers. There remained an element of pride in working for the retailer.

Notes from the authors diary at the time state "*A number of people with longer service speak of holding on until retirement*" and also "*an approach of 'better the devil you know".*" What was most striking to the author at the time of the interviews was the strength of feeling that came across from participants. The change of the old culture was seen as a great loss. Diary notes talk of 'mourning' and 'stages of grief'. This is synonymous with a breach or violation of psychological contract, (Rousseau 1995). The culture in the branches was spoken about with great warmth, affection and pride. This was clearly something very special to participants. Literature regarding organisational culture which was studied by the author at the time of undertaking the pilot study revealed how difficult it is to change an organisational culture. It won't happen overnight. As mentioned previously, there was no announcement from the retailer that a change of culture was underway and it may be that once the changes of restructuring (due in part to the recession but also the success of the online shopping) have been embedded, the treasured old culture will be found not to have gone away. Quotes from participants which illustrated the theme 'Sense of Purpose' include;

"There is less emphasis on productivity, which is nice to begin with but then it gets frustrating. What is the purpose? What are we trying to achieve? What does it mean in real terms in the real world?"

7.3 Study 2 – Longitudinal Study

The main focus of the pilot study was around organisational culture as a cause of work-related stress, specifically a mismatch in expectations of organisational culture leading to a possible breach of psychological contract. The Longitudinal study was informed by findings of the pilot study and the research questions were refined accordingly. Questions arose from the pilot study around how and why people remain with an organisation despite an initial mismatch in expectations. Do new hires learn to adapt to the new culture and if so how? Are there stages of adaptation that new hires go through?

The research questions for the Longitudinal Study

- Where do expectations regarding Organizational Culture come from?
- How and why are some people able to remain happily with an organisation despite an initial mismatch in expectations regarding the organisational culture?
- What helps individuals to adapt to the culture?
- Are there different stages of adapting?

7.3.1 *Initial Analysis of Longitudinal Study*

The initial analysis was done using the qualitative data analysis software Nvivo. A word search was undertaken of the interview transcripts to see the frequency at which certain words were mentioned in the belief that this would give some indication of the most important issues. The words, (responses to interview questions) were then used as codes, which were grouped under the relevant theme, (see table below); This was done for each interview stage (T1, T2 and T3). This approach is seen to be following a Hermaneutic approach in that the part can only be seen in relation to the whole , (Smith, Flowers and Larkin 2012; Alvesson and Skoldberg 2000).

Stage	Sub Theme	Codes	N =
T1 (Induction)	Reason for joining	Experience	13
		Promotion	2
		Redundant	6
		Training	1
		Myself	11
	Culture - expectations of	Big	9
		Formal	15
		Corporate	6
		Social	1
		Previous (Employer)	14
	Sources of expectations	Website	11
		Family	3
	Values	Friendly	19
		Inclusive	2
		Team	13
		Trust	5
		Support	9
		Enthusiasm	3
		Work/life Balance	2

	Feelings	Very	9
		Really	4
		Happy	10
		Excited	1
		Love	5
		Uncertain	2
		Great	3
	Integration	excellent	2
		welcome	12
		team	13
		embraced	1
T2 (3 months)	Culture – perception of	Nicest	1
		Adult	3
		Change	10
		Fast	2
		Slow	2
		Friendly	12
	Values - perceived	Trust	2
		Inclusiveness	3
	Feelings	Okay	5
		Happy	6
		Great	2
		Challenged	2
		New	8
	Integration (belonging)	Team	24
		Included	2
		Busy	6
T3 (6 months)	Experienced Culture	Friendly	4
		Change	8
		Empowered	2
		Slow	1
		Team	9
		Hardworking	5
		Positivity	1
		Acronyms	6
	Feelings	Happy	1
		Great	1
		Relaxed	6

		Confident	6
		(Fall in) confidence	1
		Upset	1
		Uncertain	1
		Stressed	1
		Driven	3
	Integration	(Feel) New	6
		Belong	4

Although the above was a useful guide further codes and subthemes were developed from the all the data collected, including narratives and field notes. The resulting themes and subthemes are shown in the schematic below.
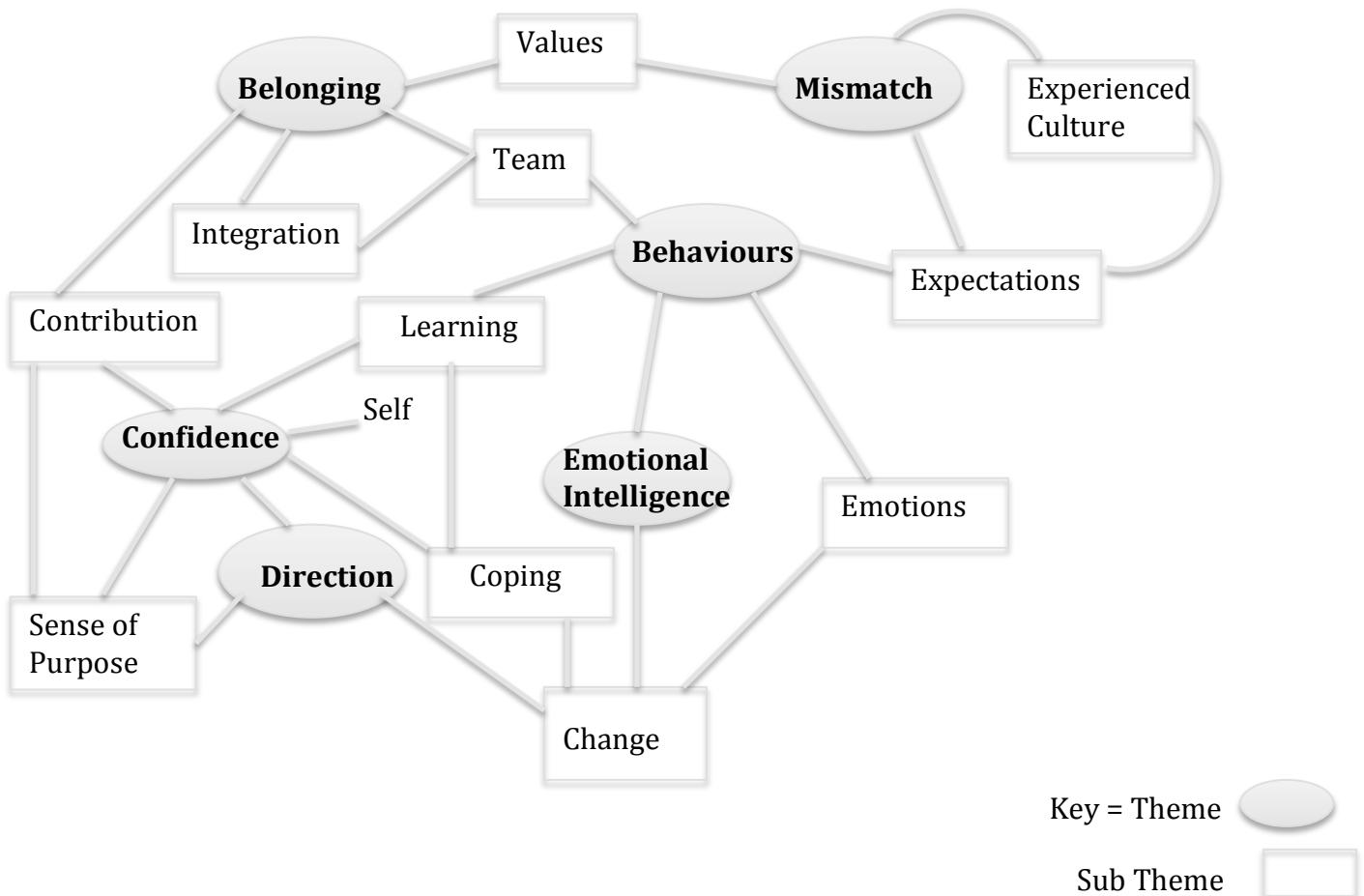

Fig. 8. Thematic Map showing Themes and Sub Themes

7.3.2 *Findings of the Longitudinal Study*

<u>Theme 1: Mismatch (n=26)</u> *Subthemes: Experienced Culture, Expectations and Values*

All participants arrived with expectations of what the organisational culture would be and the majority of these experienced a mismatch between the expected and the experienced culture. This mismatch was largely positive; the experience was better than expected, as the following example shows;

"I thought it would be like a huge company. I expected it to feel cold but it's much more friendly"

Subtheme 1: Experienced Culture

Interestingly, those joining the global organisation at head office were surprised by how relaxed and informal the culture was whereas many of those joining the software teams found the opposite. Two of the new hires to software had a very different and very positive experience on joining the global company.

Subtheme 2: Expectations

Many (n=14) reported having gained their expectations from their previous employment and seven had looked at the company website to find out about the company. Five individuals spoke in terms of stereotyping of the organisation, using statements such as "*I thought with it being a large global company.*" These expectations may well be developed from media images and films, (George 2010).

Subtheme 3: Values

Many participants (n=19) mentioned friendliness as something that they valued or something that they were happy to have experienced at the global organisation.

"*I like to have a good work/life balance, that expectations of employer are, you need not be always raising the bar*"

"*I like to find a positive vibe amongst people, welcoming and open about things*"

Having the same values as the team appeared to make a difference in terms of 'fit' and having a match,

"We're all similar and we have a laugh"

Having a "fit" with the team appeared to help with belonging. Those who reported having a similar sense of humour seemed to bond with the team especially early on. As stated previously, individuals who do not experience a 'fit' with their team and do not feel they belong there, seek to find this elsewhere. One participant said somewhat bemusedly; "*I'm not sure if they get me.*"

Another individual who did not appear happy at the interview sessions spoke of the 'typical male banter' that went on amongst his team as being quite derogatory and insulting. He remained with the organisation for several years but did not enjoy the teasing and being called a 'geek.' He was able to identify with the wider company culture however and stated;

"There's a lot of banter amongst the team but the wider culture is good"

Twenty-four of the thirty participants were pleasantly surprised by the friendliness and of the culture but three were unhappy. All eleven new hires to the software area of the business and the two new hires to engineering reported a mismatch. Within the software business area new hires to admin roles were 'very happy' with the 'friendly' culture, one saying she loved it. Those participants recruited in to specialist software roles such as program developers however found the culture more 'corporate' than they had expected. They found that the global organisation was unlike previous software companies they had worked for. Three of the new hires to Sales roles worked within the software area of the business. These participants appeared to struggle the most with a mismatch in culture. One of these recruits was very confident at T1 however, stating he had previously worked for software organisations and 'knew the culture'. This making of assumptions was seen to have disastrous results and is discussed under the section on emotion regulation. The other two recruits to Software Sales felt 'uncertain' about the amount of change. The history of the global firm as a manufacturing company was seen to influence the culture enormously, (Schein 1985). Processes and procedures were seen as 'cumbersome' and new hires to software felt restrained and overwhelmed by the larger corporate culture having been used to working in smaller software firms (some in start-ups) where there was more 'creativity' and 'freedom'. Three of these new hires spoke of how the 'fun' element was missing. There were no volunteering events for corporate social responsibility and the office environment was not as creative as the likes of Google with slides and beanbags, although there was a table tennis.

Expectations were formed from a number of influences including previous employment, stereotyping and employer branding, (including the website).

```
Previous Experience
Employer Branding
Stereotyping
HR Rhetoric
Company Website
Family and Friends
```
- Expectations form prior to joining organisation

```
Organisational Change
Subcultures
Team Support +/_
Hidden, underlying Culture
```
- On joining organisation new hires find culture not as expected

```
Mismatch in Expectations
? Breach of Psychological
Contract
```
- Mismatch in Expectations

Fig 9. Mismatch in Expectations

Theme 2: Belonging (n=30) Subthemes: Team, Integration, Contribution

The overwhelming message that came through from the interview transcripts of both the pilot study and the longitudinal study was the need to belong and the influence this has on adapting to an organisation and its culture.

Subtheme 1: Team

Being welcomed or 'embraced' by the team who they would be working with made a considerable difference in terms of feeling included and belonging to the organisation. It helped to speed up adaptation to the culture.. The team welcoming two new hires at a smaller software office appeared to exemplify the best approach for new hires. They provided a mentor, invited them in social occasions and included them in projects early on. These two new hires appeared to adapt very well reporting being happy and having a sense of belonging from induction through to a conversation held with them three years later.

Subtheme 2: Integration

Participants who had been made to feel welcome and taken in to the fold of the team spoke of being included in social occasions such as nights out, joining a game of football

with colleagues, having a staff Christmas party and attending a conference with an overnight stay. They reported a feeling of belonging sooner than those who had not been embraced. Social events especially enabled them to get to know other team members on a more personal level and this helped them to, as one participant put it 'learn to deal with the idiosyncrasies of colleagues' sooner than they might otherwise have done. It helped to build a camaraderie with the team. Those who reported being included in the team early on reported feeling happy. Participants in the longitudinal study who had been welcomed by their new team found this a source of support as the following quote illustrates;

"The team have embraced me and I love working with them. They are very supportive".

Subtheme 3: Contribution

Feeling as though they were contributing to the team was important to newcomers in the study. Those who reported they were busy felt a sense of belonging earlier. Playing their part and feeling needed helped.

"We are building something new together. I love it"

Playing their part and contributing to the greater goal is something that many participants said helped them to feel like they belonged. Illustrative quotes include;

"In ways I feel as if I belong. I have something to add, something to give"

"Yes, I do belong here. I can add something to the team. I can make a difference"

"I definitely feel I belong. There's a need for me"

Feeling that they were contributing to the team and were valued was associated with a rise in confidence for many participants as the following quotes illustrate;

"As I have seen this culture emerge I have been more confident to influence direction with my own experience, safe in the knowledge that my opinion is valued".

"I offer up ideas more. I'm more sociable"

"This is my area of expertise. I feel at ease with the guys"

"There has been an increase in my responsibility and expectations of me are greater which is good. It's nice they feel they can ask me more. I'm now very much in the role"

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                  ┌─ Embrace New
                  │      Hire
                  │
                  ├─   Closed Team
                  │
                  ├─   Team Values
            team  │
                  ├─     Team
                  │    Behaviours
                  │
                  ├─  Act as Mentors
                  │
                  ├─  Team nights out
                  │
                  └─  Remote v Office
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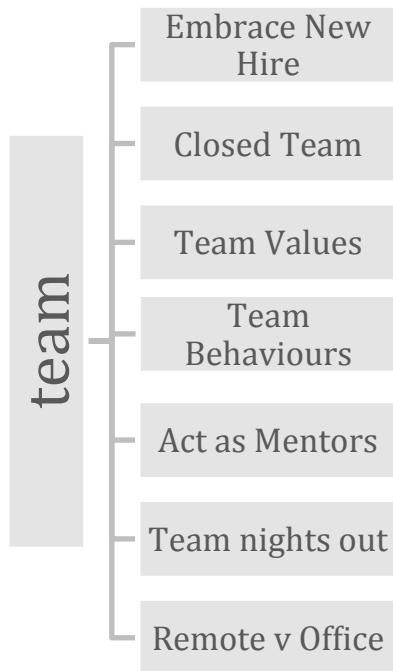
Fig.10 Team Characteristics

Joining a team however was not as easy for all participants for a number of reasons. Participants from both studies reported finding it difficult to become a member of teams who were very close. One participant in the pilot study stated;

"*Low turnover makes joining hard as the local community is close knit. Like some unspoken web*"

"*I don't really feel part of a close team as people I work with are spread all over the world but everyone is friendly*"

Another from the Longitudinal study said;

"*I still feel new. Some groups have worked together for a long time and it can be hard to feel included. Not that they exclude but they have shared stories and experiences, they have a history*"

Joining a team of individuals with similar values, interests and behaviours, or as one described it as 'being on the same wavelength,' helped participants to feel they belonged and enjoyed working together. One participant in the longitudinal study stated; "*We're all similar in the team, outgoing with a sense of humour*". There were similar quotes in the pilot study. Joining with other new starters appears to help adapting to a new organisational culture significantly. Both in the pilot study and longitudinal study participants who had joined with other new starters said that this had helped enormously, possibly as they would all be in the same situation, already part of a group with whom they could associate and share experiences;

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"Lots of us were new together. We're on a learning curve together"
"We're all in it together"
"I joined with other new starters which has helped as we immediately formed a bond"

These findings are in line with Tajfels social identity theory (1979) whereby an individual's identity, their perception of who they are, is based on membership of a group or team.

These findings are consistent with literature regarding person-culture fit, (O'Reilly 1991) and add to the literature in terms of aspects or measures of 'person'. One such measure apparent from these findings is that of sense of humour. As with findings from studies of person-organisation fit, having a person-culture fit led to a greater job satisfaction and commitment in participants and a greater sense of belonging, (Morley, 2007; Meyer et al 2010).

It was found that the sub culture of teams varied considerably from the main group, (organisational) culture. In the global organisation (longitudinal study) the existence of sub cultures was especially the case in the software teams which had been recently acquired. They held on to the culture of their previous organisation and felt overwhelmed by the culture of the larger corporate organisation. The culture of teams also varied depending on the area of business whether it be the Sales teams, Software, Head Office or Engineers. One participant in the software area stated;

"It's a fast evolving business, there's no definitive culture"

These findings are consistent with literature regarding subcultures in that there appeared to be teams within the larger organisation with a different sense of identity, values and assumptions, (Schein 2010; Smith 2014).

<u>Theme 3: Direction (n=22)</u> *Subthemes: Line Management, Leadership, Communication, Global Organisation, Sense of Purpose*

Having direction appears to be an important factor in helping people to adapt to the culture. New starters at the global organisation were lucky to be joining at a time when the culture was being broadcast at every opportunity and the behaviours, which were expected from people, were made very clear. As one participant put it "*there have been lots of changes in (org) management. There's a new vision, we're starting from scratch*". A lack of direction was something that many participants in both the pilot and longitudinal study mentioned and this came as somewhat of a surprise to the author who as a person enjoys being self-directed. "*What's the big plan?*" was asked by individuals in both studies and also repeated by an employee who the author met in her role as participant observer. The new CEO was welcomed for his clear vision and strategy.

"The culture has changed with a new CEO. There's much more focus and more pulling together of different acquisitions in to one (org)"

The reported culture of the global organisation however was one of being 'self-directed' and those who were self-motivated and 'self sufficient' thrived on this culture and the empowerment it enabled. Quotes regarding the need for direction include;

"*I like to have targets and objectives. Some sort of feedback. What are the expectations of me?*"

"*The culture is one of empowerment. People are empowered to make judgement and do the right thing. I rarely see any autocracy. Everyone is given respect of having a valued opinion*"

Subtheme 1. Line Manager

Line Managers were also mentioned by a few as offering support and helping individuals to settle. Five participants in the longitudinal study stated that their Line Manager had helped. For example, "*My Manager has really helped me to settle in. He meets with me once a week*" and "*My Line Manager has been especially helpful, looking towards my personal development and signposting me to where I can find help*". One individual declared, "*My Line Manager is such a great guy".* Others had not had such a welcome and support. One participant who had been with the organisation for a few weeks stated, "*I've not yet had a hello from my reporting line*". A change of line manager had quite a marked impact on the happiness of participants, mostly for the better but for one chap who had joined the organisation because he knew the man who would be his line manager, being asked to report in to someone else had been a cause of upset. Two participants stated that the behaviour of their line manager was not in keeping with the culture of the wider organisation. One for example mentioned how their line manager micromanaged the team whereas the general culture was very much one of empowerment and self-direction. One individual who stated that his line manager was 'dictatorial' left after six months following a fall out with his manager.

Others who had reported in to a locally based line manger had been asked to report in to a manager in the US. This bought several challenges in terms of distance (both emotional and geographical) as well as cultural differences, such as the culture of individualism in the US (Pasquale 1978). As mentioned earlier there were differences in subcultures between local teams within the global organisation and there were also differences in the national culture of teams. Of the US culture, one participant stated; "We have meetings with colleagues around the world but the US is definitely the dominant culture". Another stated; The US culture is one of positivity and enthusiasm. It's quite catching. The word 'awesome' is used a lot"

Subtheme 2. Leadership

Leadership on the whole was seen to be a positive role, especially the introduction of a new CEO to the global company. He was credited with bringing together the many acquisitions under the larger organisation banner; "*The culture has changed with a new CEO. There's much more focus and more pulling together of different acquisitions in to one (org)*". The clear steer, (direction) given by the new CEO was welcomed by all of the participants in this study. "*Since 2014 there has been a big change to the company with*

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more direction from the new CEO". The new CEO was very clear when laying out his strategy for the business that culture was of huge importance.

Subtheme 3. Communication

There was repeated and clear communication regarding a new culture that the business wished to move to in its aspiration to become a high performing organisation. This communication was via a number of different media; weekly newsletters, huddle meetings (where a senior leader held a stand up meeting to give business updates to employees based in various offices), pocket cards, podcasts and 'the Jam'. This was a group conversation where every employee was invited to join to have a discussion regarding the culture of the company

Subtheme 4. Global Organisation

Two factors, which appeared to influence belonging for new hires at the global company were Globalisation and Remote working. Those new hires whose teams or line manager were based in other countries took longer to feel they belonged, even though there was no difference in the extent to which they reported being happy compared to those who were office based. The global company practised agile working whereby employees could be either home based, mobile (field worker) or traditional (office based). Of the eight participants whose teams worked remotely, (either mobile or home based), six reported being happy on induction due to the friendliness of local teams. These six enjoyed the empowerment that working remotely offered and the 'trust' that this demonstrated. Words such as 'self-starter, 'self-directed' and 'self-motivated' were used at the first interview session.

New hires stated they had no option but to very quickly fend for themselves or they would struggle to cope. Many reached out for help from the local or wider team. Two of the participants working remotely however did not feel welcome until T2, with one interpreting having to be a self starter as 'having to sink or swim'. Those whose teams were office based tended to learn the deeper culture more quickly than those whose teams were mobile, only coming in to the office two or three times a week. One such participant initially complained of the '*slow pace'* of work and '*laid-back approach'* until at T3 he had begun to realise that people were working very hard and long hours at home.

Participants reported not feeling included in their team due to their team being located in different countries or that the team were UK based but worked remotely. In these cases, participants tended to form friendships with colleagues from local teams. Being embraced by the team you work with undoubtedly made people feel they belonged to and enjoyed being with the organisation. Others however were able to find this sense of belonging by forming relationships with members of the wider team. Participants talked of "*building relationships*", "*forming networks*" and "*making friends in other teams*" which all helped them to feel included. Two individuals who were particularly unhappy on induction as the culture was not what they had expected and they did not feel embraced, reported feeling happy and having a sense of belonging at a later stage when ties had been established with people in other teams. For one individual this

friendship was not formed until two years later. At all three interview sessions she had appeared very unhappy but two years later at a chance meeting with the author (in the head office café area), she stated she very much felt she belonged. She was smiling and spoke of being happy at work due to the wonderful friends she now had. The other individual reported being much happier after being asked to join a global working party which enabled him to form a much wider network and to find more like-minded individuals.

Subtheme 5. Sense of Purpose

Having direction and clear communication as to the purpose and strategy of the company helps people to feel part of something, to be playing their part towards to a communal goal. Having a clear sense of purpose is a measure of resilience on the Connor-Davidson resilience scale (2003).

"I want to do well and move on"

"I would like to work here for a few years, maybe get promotion.
It's the start of a career"

"I am hoping for good career prospects"

These quotes demonstrate the need people have for a sense of purpose. Others raised questions such as "*What are we trying to achieve?*"

Theme 4: Confidence (n=20) *Subthemes: Confidence, Self, Learning*

Having observed the culture and learnt the ways of working, people began to relax and to grow in confidence, aware of the boundaries and what behaviours were acceptable. At this time, having gained confidence, participants mentioned feeling able to be themselves, to 'develop their own brand' as one individual put it. The stage at which people felt they could be themselves was also mentioned by the focus groups. e on induction went on to do very well with the organisation

Subtheme 1: Confidence

Confidence to some came early on. Perhaps not surprisingly, many of the new recruits to sales roles were less reticent and more optimistic with regards to what they hoped to achieve within the organisation. One individual seemed particularly confident saying the culture was just as he had expected it to be and stating; "*I've worked for big software names for the past 10 – 15 years so it's very similar*". This individual was asked to leave after being with the organisation for only three months. Had he made assumptions that the culture was just the same as other organisations he had worked at without taking the time to observe? Others who were brimming with confidence on arrival also left the business at an early stage such as one participant who said; "*I had an immediate affinity at interview. I was told I was the type of person to fit in*".

Interestingly, other new sales hires who were less certain initially, gradually gained in confidence over the first year and went on to be rewarded for excellent performance. Other quotes which illustrate the theme of confidence include;

I'm becoming more confident, more 'able to speak up'"

Subtheme 2: Learning

Learning norms and behaviours by observation and practice and from role models appears critical to building confidence.

"I'm becoming more confident. I find myself clapping and calling out, acting like rest of the team when someone gets a deal. I've become more of a team player"

Subtheme 3: Self

In the context of confidence, participants spoke about reaching a point where they felt confident enough to be themselves:

"As I have seen this culture emerge I have been more confident to influence direction with my own experience, safe in the knowledge that my opinion is valued"

"I feel as if I am myself now and developing my own brand"

Theme 5: Emotional Intelligence (n=30*) Subthemes: Emotion Regulation, Thoughts, Feelings, Change*

The constant and significant changes, which both organisations in this study faced were, to many participants, a source of anxiety. Not only were they faced with a different culture than expected but also one that was undergoing a transformation. Some individuals appeared more able to cope with this uncertainty. Their coping strategies demonstrated an emotional awareness and regulation. Whilst some reported 'loving it' or being very anxious at induction stage others remained quieter and more observant. This period of observation allowed them to learn more about the culture, (the language and ways of working, what behaviours were rewarded and what were frowned upon) until they felt familiar with these and demonstrated emotional intelligence.

Subtheme 1. Emotion Regulation

One of two particularly successful sales hires stated at the first interview session (on induction):

"I'm not sure how I feel about joining (org). There is a lot of change and uncertainty here"

Several years down the line he is still with the organisation and has been promoted. Another individual, (whom the author met three years later winning an award from the organisation for his outstanding achievement) stated at the first interview session;

"I'm not feeling great about joining (org). It seems disparate, disjointed with less structure than I imagined. There is a lot of uncertainty and change. I've had no real welcome. I've had to sort myself out. You have to be a self-starter here"

Critically he went on to say;

"I'm keeping an open mind though. The company has lots of products and opportunities. There is a lot going for it"

Fortunately for him the organisational changes and a new line manager proved to be for the better and he went on to thrive but his open mindedness was an important factor in helping him to remain with the organisation and to move forwards despite the apparent disjointed nature of the business and the uncertainty.

Subtheme 2. Thoughts

Having a positive mindset is something that participants reported had helped them to feel settled. One participant stated; *"You just have to keep going, to pick yourself up. Positive thinking helps you do well"*. Others had a similar approach, an optimism which was not excitable and unrealistic but grounded. Others stated;
"When you find all is not going as expected or difficult moments I pull back... I focus on small realistic successes and deliver on those".

Subtheme 3. Feelings

There was a wide range of emotional control demonstrated by participants. Some expressed raised emotions such as upset and anxiety whilst others were more restrained in their response. One calm individual stated:

"The welcome was okay. You just have to get on with it"

Another participant stated; *"I was quieter when I joined whilst I worked out who was who, how (the org) works"*. Another quote demonstrating emotion regulation was; *"I've learnt to deal with stuff better".*

Subtheme 4. Change

The global organisation was going through a period of transformation and there was on-going change including some redundancies. This was a source of anxiety for a few, summed up by one participant:

　"The amount of change is unsettling",

<u>Theme 6: Behaviours</u> (n=21) *Subthemes: Expected Culture, Experienced Culture, Learning*

Observing and learning how people work, how they dress, what language they use and what behaviours are the norm can take several months if not years. One participant whom the author met said he still felt new three years laterIndividuals soon picked up

on the dress code and the company language such as 'huddle' meetings and the three letter acronyms for every area of the business. As mentioned, most participants very early on became aware of the culture of empowerment that employees were given to get on and do their jobs; there was unlikely to be anyone looking over your shoulder, you just had to get on and find the work. Working as part of a global team was also something that soon became apparent but as many had joined for this very reason, (to be part of a global organisation) this was something that was largely welcomed

Subtheme 1. Expected Culture

As mentioned under mismatch, the culture for many was not what they had expected. The behaviours demonstrated took them by surprise. In most cases this was a pleasant surprise in that the

Subtheme 2. Experienced Culture

"I've had to get used to working more as a team. I've also had to slow down a bit, I'm used to working at a faster pace"

"I've had to get used to the coming and going. People working from home and in different countries. Lots of conference calls"

"Having stand up meetings was a bit of a shock. I've had to become louder to be heard at these. I think it will take me a year to get used to these meetings!"

Subtheme 3. Learning

Getting used to the different means of communicating with the global teams took a little longer. Skype meetings, late night and early morning calls with teams in different countries was mentioned as a source of frustration. What also took people longer to be aware of was how hardworking most people were; the long-hours culture. One participant who complained that people were slow and not pulling their weight realised after three months that people were actually working very hard but not when they were in the office. As many of his team worked agile and mainly from home, when they came in to the office they enjoyed the social aspect. This gave the appearance that they spent a lot of time chatting which was not a true reflection. Another participant echoed this situation:

"*It appears laid back but actually people are working all hours. No one is pushing but there's lots to be done*"

Some participants however were perhaps yet to discover the hard work that was going on behind the scenes; "*I was told it was quite relaxed but surprised to what extent. It's quite laissez-faire with guys in their jeans for meetings with senior managers*"

Having observed and learnt behaviours, which were usual for the team, participants described how they had changed their own behaviour accordingly;

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"I'm having to work harder on negotiating, persuasion and influencing skills. I was quieter when I joined whilst I worked out who was who, how (org) works etc. I feel as if I am myself now and developing my own brand"

"I've had to get used to the coming and going; people working from home and in different countries. Lots of conference calls!"

7.4 Dominant Themes

Figure 8 shows the Dominant themes in terms of the number of times themes were mentioned and the number of people that mentioned them.
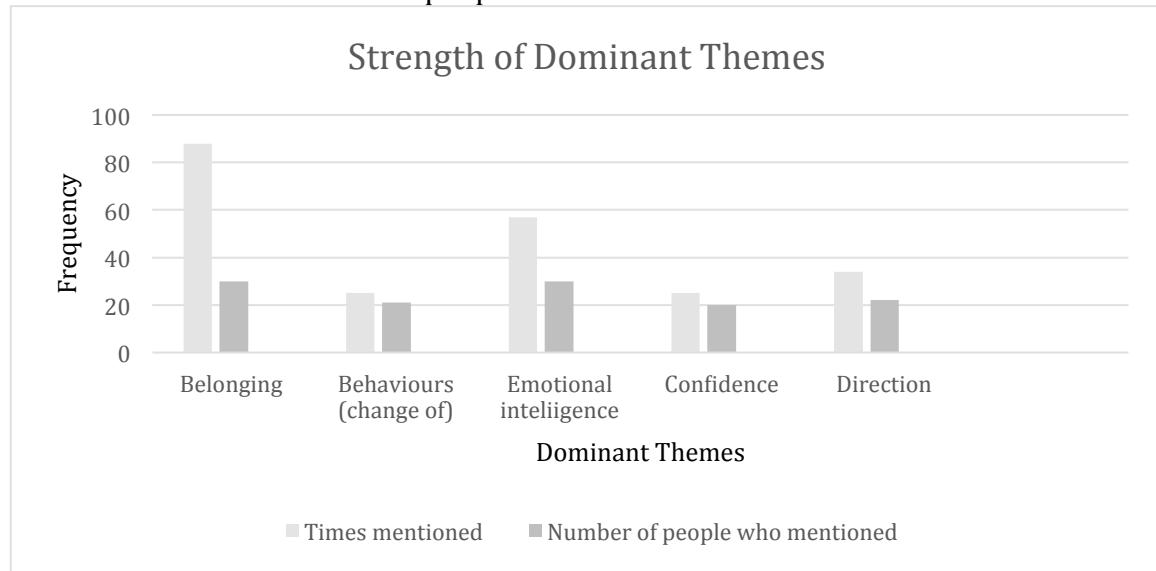
Fig 11. Strength of Dominant Themes

Theme	Corporate %	Sales %	Engineering %	Software%
Mismatch in expectations	72	83	100	100
Belonging	72	67	100	100
Emotional Intelligence	45	100	100	100
Direction	27	67	50	100
Behaviours	27	50	0	90
Confidence	10	34	50	36

Fig 12. Strength of themes related to Business Area

Figure 12 shows the differing response according to the business area that participants worked in. These subgroups are divided by occupation but interestingly engineers and

software specialists, which would seem two very different professions, had the most similar responses. This may be due in part to the remote nature of their work or perhaps due to the local culture. Neither group were based at head office but at sites at some distance away (over 200 miles away). These groups were also comparatively small teams, 6 – 20 as oppose to the hundreds based at Head Office.

7.5 Mediating Influences

One key research question was 'What helps individuals to adapt to organisational culture'? With an increased understanding of organisational culture, informed by both the literature review and observation, the author was interested to learn what participants had found helpful in getting to know the culture, feeling they belonged and if possible, being assimilated in to the organisation and its culture. There were some themes common to both studies which gave some indication of what might help individuals in joining a new culture

7.5.1. *Joining with other new starters*

Those participants who had joined with other new starters found very much that this was something that helped them to settle. Being with other new starters meant the participants were already part of a group. They had an immediate common ground, all being new and were able to share impressions and concerns. They were a group which could offer help and support. They were a readymade friendship group. Seven out of the thirty participants had joined with other new starters. These included two in one software office, three in another and two in Telesales. All seven stated they were 'very happy' on joining. A good rapport was evident amongst individuals in these groups, they appeared to have already formed a close bond. Only one of the UK offices in global company had a formal induction process which included an in person talk by HR and introduction to the rest of the team and key personnel. Most new starters at the company were directed to an online welcome but most participants reported they had not attended as they were unaware of when and how to join this.

Examples of participant quotes, which support 'joining with other new hires' as being a mediating factor are;

"*I joined with other new starters which has helped as we immediately formed a bond*"
"*Starting with other new hires helped*"

7.5.2. *Team support*

Being embraced by the team to which you were assigned was mentioned by the majority of participants in the Longitudinal Study as being something which they had found very helpful. Belonging to a team was of great importance to participants, so much so that when they were not made to feel welcome or found they did not have anything in common (similarities) with their team, participants sought to connect with individuals in other teams or in the wider team. This was also the case for individuals

whose team was based elsewhere. They soon established a connection with colleagues based in the local office.

"*The team have embraced me and I love working with them. They are very supportive*"

"*The team try to have a laugh and keep spirits up when faced with challenges*"

Those whose own team were not found to be supportive had sought this elsewhere;

"*The local office team are friendly and the sales team are supportive*"

7.5.3. *Socialising with the team*

Spending time with the team outside of work on occasions such as a meal out or team away days helped participants enormously with team bonding and feeling they belonged to the team. It helped as they had shared experiences outside of work and it enabled them to get to know the rest of the team on a more personal level. This helped them to know better the different personalities amongst the team and to feel closer to the team. Playing a spontaneous game of football with the team had made a considerable difference to one of the participants. Three recruits to the software area of business were disappointed to find that there were no Corporate Social Responsibility events as they had experienced many of these in their previous employment and had enjoyed the opportunity for socialising with the team outside of work in a m,ore relaxed, fun, environment.

"*When all the staff got together for a night out, (we've had a couple) I got to know people on a personal level*"

"*When we finished a project and celebrated and also at Christmas we all went out for a meal … helped me to feel as if I belonged*"

7.5.4. *Having a mentor*

A few participants were allocated a mentor and they found this helped considerably. Mentors helped individuals to feel more relaxed in that they had someone to turn to who was experienced in the organisational culture, (the ways of working, behaving and the language). Mentors could advise on the best approach in certain situations or to act as a signpost as to who best to speak to regarding an issue or where to find information.

For example, when asked what had helped to settle in to the organisation one individual said simply, "*I've been given a mentor*"

7.5.5. *Management support*

Very few participants mentioned support from their Line Manager but two stated their Line Manager had made a considerable difference to them settling in. This was similar

to the help offered by a mentor in offering advice and support but was also someone who gave direction. Having direction was found to be of great importance to new hires. (? Number) noted the difference the new CEO had made in giving a clear sense of direction, communicating the business strategy through roadshows, webinars, meetings the intranet and the online newsletter. He had reiterated on numerous occasions the importance of culture and repeatedly stated 'culture eats strategy for breakfast'. His communications and clear message had helped to bring together the different subcultures and acquisitions under one umbrella organisation although local differences regarding culture did exist to some extent.

An example of good management support was given;
"*My manger has helped me to settle in. He meets with me once a week*"

7.5.6. *Coping skills/Emotion Regulation*

Techniques used by participants to cope with the stress of change varied from a '*keeping my head down'* and '*taking a step back'* approach to reaching out to others. Different coping skills were mentioned by participants including seeking support from family and friends. Having a sense of humour was also mentioned. Coping skills can be divided in to emotion based and problem solving, with emotion based coping involving reaching out to others whereas problem solving coping involves a more logical, 'how can I fix this' approach.

Those participants who at T1 and T2 (3 and 7) stated they were quieter and 'observing' the culture appeared to have a smoother entry in to the organisation and to remain with the organisation longer. The same was found with those who had an open-minded approach. A few participants across both studies stated that they liked change or kept an open mind when it came to change and this appeared to help them to deal with the ongoing and in a lot of cases unexpected level of change.

Examples of coping mechanisms that individuals found helpful included;

"*Interacting with nice people has helped when I have any difficulty*"

"*If I have a difficult situation I talk to colleagues, peers and my manager to see if this is the norm for (org) and whether there is anything they would be doing to ease the situation eg. could they introduce me to other people who could get the work done*"

"*When you find all is not going as expected or difficult moments I pull back. Like situations that keep you busy with unimportant tasks. I focus on small realistic successes and deliver on those*"

"*I ask for help if I need it*"

7.5.7. *Contributing*

One of the most striking themes to emerge from the interview data was the importance of feeling valued. Participants stated that contributing to the team and being needed by

the team helped them to feel they belonged. *"I've got something to add" and "they have faith in me"* were examples of this.

7.6 Results of Focus Groups

As mentioned in Chapter 6, Focus Groups were held to test the generalisation and transferability of the staged adaptation model. Four groups were held including members of the HR and recruitment team within the global organisation, a software team (a recent acquisition), new employees at Head Office and existing employees at Head office. Their responses confirmed the relevance of the themes, which arose from the main participant group.

Focus Group	Themes	Quotes
HR and Recruitment Software N=6	Direction (Leadership)	"*Managers are quite protective of their teams*"
	Belonging (team/community)	"*I think they (acquisitions) feel squashed by the Corporate world. The larger business area is more corporate and process driven*"
	Mismatch (Subculture v wider culture/ change)	"*Because of Agile working it looks as if people aren't working hard. You don't see bums on seats, working away but people are working very hard*"
Recent Acquisition group Software N=8	Mismatch (Subculture v wider culture/ change)	"*I find the 'My (Org)', 'Our (Org)' speak overwhelming*"
		"*We feel like a small part of something much bigger*"
	Belonging	"*Having lots of new starters together helped a lot. Also the manager introducing everyone has helped*"
	Emotional Intelligence	"*There's lots of insecurity with key people leaving*"
		"*I had real anxiety for about one or two weeks*"
New Hires at Head Office N=6	Mismatch	"*There's much less hand holding than expected*"
	Direction (Leadership)	"*My manager is in the US. I've just had to get on with it. I'm trusted to get on with it*"
	Confidence (Self)	"*Once I formed a few friends I began to be myself*"
		'*I feel I've been here forever. I went to*

	Emotional Intelligence (Coping)	*the team Christmas party and it helped'* *"I'm looking forward to getting stuck in, to using my skills"* *'Really excited! My interview extended to lunch and I felt included. I will fit in here. I want to be here!'* *'I observe others. I learn how they work and communicate'*
Employees at Head Office N=32	Emotional Intelligence (Coping) Belonging	*"They're always telling us what the culture should be. What our values should be. I feel like I am being brainwashed"*

The fourth focus group was held with existing employees at Head office in order to test the Staged Adaptation Model. The group were given a series of statements which had been made by participants in the study at T1, T2 and T3 and asked to state at which point in time (if at all) they had experienced the thought, feeling or behaviour described. Findings from this focus group confirmed the existence of the Alarm phase. On the first day fourteen out of the group of thirty-two stated they felt anxious and twelve said they felt new. The establishing stage was tested through statements such as "*I have started to dress in keeping with dress code*" and "*I've made changes to the way I work eg work slower/faster/more collaboratively.*" Ten out of the thirty-two focus group participants agreed with these statements at the three-month time period.

Results from the focus group however did not show the 'Establishing' stage to be a set moment in time but a stage that could be reached at varying points in time depending on the individual. Whether individuals could identify with the 'Self' stage and if so at what period in time they felt this applied, was tested by them agreeing or not with statements such as '*I know the culture'*, '*I feel able to challenge*' and '*I am able to be myself*.' There was insufficient evidence of the progression of the stages. It appeared for example, that the 'Self' stage, was not experienced by many participants in the focus group until after a year whereas others said they felt they could be themselves on the first day.

Statements such as "*I am one of the team*" and "*I know how hard/what hours I am expected to work*" were used to test Belonging. Reponses were similar in the focus group to participants in the main study with fourteen ticking yes to these statements at the one -year period and a further fourteen agreeing to them at the three-year period. The Assimilation stage was tested through statements such as "*I can't imagine working anywhere else.*" As with participants in the main longitudinal study, few participants in

the focus group could identify with this statement with only two agreeing to it at the one-year stage and four at the three-year period.

Overall findings from the focus group did not provide sufficient evidence of the progression of the stages. Those attending the focus group could identify with the majority of the quotes and the thoughts, feelings and behaviours they represented however, some appeared to have reached the various stages at differing times or to have revisited the stage again. From the discussion it appeared that this happened following a period of change, such as a promotion, a restructuring or a change of Line Manager.

7.7 Participant Observations

Data obtained from participant observation and field notes made were analysed and compared with data from interview transcripts. This data was incorporated in to the findings and helped to give a better understanding of the context in which the research was set. Observations of participant's chatting, laughing and having lunch with their teams were seen as evidence of integration with the team as oppose to those participants who were seen to spend a lot of time on their own or looking unhappy. Impromptu conversations confirmed what these observations suggested. Participant observations also allowed for data to be collected outside of the set time slots for interviews (T1, T2 and T3), for example one young participant stated three years after joining (far beyond T3) that he still felt new. Participant observation also enabled a better understanding of the background as to why those participants who left prior to one year had done so. For example other employees expressed relief that one individual had left as their behaviour had been seen as bullying.

In their role as participant observer, the researcher was able to witness situations and phenomena which supported evidence gained during interviews regarding stages. For example, it was interesting to note at the six month interview (T3) how much more difficult it was to arrange a meeting with the participants. Some had left and others seemed much less willing to meet stating they were very busy. Busyness reflected to some extent the level of assimilation in to the organisational culture. Impromptu and coincidental meetings between the researcher and participants led to unplanned conversations with regards to how the participants were settling in up to three years later, (although by this time a third of the participants had left the company).

As a new hire to the organisation only a couple of months prior to undertaking the longitudinal study, the author also noted their own experiences. The role for which they had been recruited through a series of interviews no longer existed and it was advised that they should make the role to suit what was needed. This was not an unwelcome situation as working autonomously suited well, being an individual who is self-motivated. Here the notion of fit came to mind. During the interviews the culture of being a self-starter, autonomous and empowered was mentioned by many in a positive light. Those who required more direction however, spoke of being left to 'sink or swim'. Someone who enjoyed the freedom of empowerment and self-motivation, who was able

to manage their time and workload well would be deemed to fit well in this culture. Individuals who required more direction and a more structured working day might not.

Whilst carrying out their daily job role but also as participant observer, the author found that comments made by colleagues or spontaneous conversations in the café area gave rise to 'light bulb' moments. The term 'embraced' was used by a colleague who had recently been recruited, in relation to the welcome she had been given. This term threw a new light on the concept of welcome. It suggested that a team reached out to the new hire, to bring them in to the fold and nurture them, rather than the new hire having to knock on their door and asking to join. This came at a time when the interviews were still underway and was then repeated by some participants, one saying '*I've not been massively embraced.*'

The participants came from all areas of the business and were based at a number of offices and field sites so the author did not regularly see many of the individuals following completion of the three interviews. Occasionally however, the author would meet with one of the participants whilst visiting a site and it would be interesting to hear how they were getting on. One participant a young chap whose role was field based, stated he still felt new having been with the organisation for three years. The author was very pleasantly surprised to meet with another participant at an award ceremony three years later where he was being recognised for his outstanding achievements. This was an individual who had been unhappy on joining the organisation. These meetings prompted the author to look at the participant journeys, plotting their trajectory.

Whilst speaking with a group of new hires at one of the sales offices, a couple of comments were made that seemed to be of great relevance. The first was made by a young chap who had joined the organisation from a role in sales at another company. He said he had felt mortified when he had begun competing with one of his colleagues to 'steal a deal'. This was viewed as an absolute 'no no!' by the current organisation where the team work as a team and support each other rather than as individuals. In his previous organisation however the team was encouraged to compete against each other. Another individual stated how they too had had a moment of embarrassment when he had not understood what one of the acronyms stood for but didn't like to keep asking. He made an assumption which was incorrect and left others muddled as to what he was talking about. These embarrassing situations prompted the author to probe further and to ask at subsequent focus groups whether others had experienced moments of awkwardness as a result of not knowing the culture.

Being a participant observer enabled the author to have a far greater awareness of the context in which the study was set. External influences such as the recession and advances in technology clearly affected both organisations studied. The global company was particularly affected by advances in technology and had changed the direction of business away from being a manufacturer towards software solutions. The retailer was very much affected by the recession which had led to the restructuring, as employees were informed 'in order for the business to survive'. It clearly worked as the business went on to thrive but the negative impact it had on employees at the time was marked. People commented that there had never been so much change in the past twenty years.

Advances in technology were viewed in a much more positive light, as a sign of the times, even though they too very much played in the need for restructuring.

The impact of the new CEO of the global organisation was observed with interest. His announcement of a new culture, to be introduced in order to become a high performing organisation, heralded a series of communications over the next few years regarding the company values and the importance of culture. An employee culture group was set up to discuss views of the culture and how best to help establish this. As mentioned previously, there was an online conversation via Yammer called a 'Jam' to which every employee throughout the global organisation was invited, in order to share their thoughts and opinions as to the culture. This created a lively debate that was talked about for some time. This was something different something new to be proud of. We were at the forefront of technology. There were a few cynics. One commented that she felt she was being 'brainwashed' by all the talk of culture and the new behaviours. The values were put up in large letters on the wall in the UK Head Office and other offices around the world. Most significantly there was a new company brand. The all blue brand that participants mentioned in forming their expectations of the organisational culture, (safe and very corporate) was changed to a much more dynamic, colourful and modern logo.

The aspect of the new leadership that appeared to be most welcome from both comments made by participants and in more spontaneous conversations held by the author in their role as participant observer was the clear sense of direction. He was talked of as being a 'strong leader'. Again there was a considerable amount of communication to introduce the new strategy and a series of road shows were held at key offices and sites to explain to people what the stages of the strategy were. Perhaps a reflection of the strength of the new leadership is that despite the amount of substantial changes to the organisation since the introduction of the new CEO there did not appear to have been the same level of negative feeling, the anger and sadness that the author witnessed in the retailer. Both the organisations are of a similar age. The difference in communication at the two organisations studied which was noted as participant observer was that at the retailer there was no clear communication regarding a change of culture. If there was communication from leadership regarding this, it was not seen by the author. There was talk of changes and organisational restructuring however. At the global organisation the communication was constant and via multi media.

7.8 Summary

Findings from both the Pilot Study and Longitudinal Study help to answer the key research questions.

Q1. *Where do expectations regarding Organisational Culture come from?*

Most participants arrived at the organisations studied with certain expectations of what the culture would be like. These expectations were gained from the following areas;

- Previous Work Experience
- Stereotyping of the type of business

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- Employer branding
- Company Website
- HR rhetoric
- Stories from family and friends who worked at the organisation
- Experiences as a customer

There was a mismatch in expectations for the majority of new hires, both at the retail organisation and at the global technology firm. Factors, which lead to a mismatch of expectations, were highlighted including previous experience, subcultures, employer and customer branding and in the case of new hires to the retailer head office, lack of a supportive team. Literature regarding psychological contracting was found to be relevant, in particular with regards to breach or violation of psychological contract for those at the retail company who had expected to find a far more supportive culture. At the global company the majority were pleasantly surprised by how friendly the culture was but had not been expecting to be so empowered.

Q2. *How are some individuals able to remain happily in employment despite an initial mismatch in expectations?*

In line with literature regarding socialisation, it was found that new hires progressively adapted to the organisational culture through sense making and learning. Sense making and formation of schema regarding the new organisational culture were processes which were ongoing for several months if not years. Initially there was a period of raised emotions and heightened awareness largely bought on by anxiety caused by the new situation and the amount of change encountered (Seyle 1936; McKewan 2007) but also some delight (possibly relief) at finding people were so friendly. Although the majority of new hires had strong emotions on joining, a few individuals (two participants and one from a focus group) reported that they were quietly observing. They demonstrated emotion regulation. Others soon gained emotion regulation and began to observe, although two individuals remained quite excitable, missing important cues and behaviours.

Social support from the team helped individuals to move forwards from the initial upset of a mismatch in expectations. It was not confirmed that the mismatch was perceived to be a breach of psychological contract. Those who were embraced by their team reported being much happier and felt as if they belonged far sooner than those whose teams were remote or 'closed'. Clear direction from leadership also helped to steer new hires forwards over any initial hurdles.

Q3. *What helps new hires to adapt to the culture?*

It became clear that certain influences helped new hires to transition from one stage to another. These mediating influences included having emotional intelligence, (including emotion regulation), the support of a team, socialising with the team outside of work, having a mentor, line manager support and starting with other new hires. Belonging to a team was found to be hugely important for new hires. Group behaviours and norms were learnt more readily by working closely with the team. Those participants who

joined with other new starters found a ready-made group. Others were taken out for social events with their team and found this helped with bonding enormously. Participants who had been allocated a mentor found this helped hugely with learning the culture. Having a supportive line manager was also found to be very helpful.

Some participants experienced finding it difficult to join their team. They were not welcomed by the team and reported finding them 'closed to outsiders'. Closed teams were found to be those who 'had a long history' and 'shared stories' although this did not apply to all long standing teams. Individuals who joined global teams initially felt somewhat abandoned but found colleagues based locally to be supportive. Meeting the global team in person, (one reported having initially met her team in terminal 5 at Heathrow airport), helped to establish a personal connection team and even if future meetings were via Skype or conference call that initial connection established a sense of belonging.

Belonging to the organisation and being part of the culture was helped by the individual feeling as if they were contributing. By T3 most participants stated they were busy and this busyness helped them to have a sense of being needed and valued. Joining with other new hires provided individuals with an immediate support network of others in a similar position, facing similar challenges. One individual who struggled initially following a mismatch of expectations and values that appeared to differ from his team found that being asked to join a future leaders program gave him a sense of belonging to a network of like-minded colleagues. It was found that belonging to any group or even having established friendships with one or two others was enough to help people feel they were part of the organisation. Being part of the organisation was to be part of the groups accepted behaviours and norms. One participant whose role was field based reported that he still felt new after three years.

By observing behaviours, including those rewarded or punished, picking up on social cues, (regarding norms) and copying and practising behaviours, new hires gradually let go of previous behaviours and ways of working and adopted the ways of working associated with the new culture. It can be seen therefore that emotional intelligence is key to learning the culture. Values were deeper rooted for individuals and harder to change but very significant with regards to 'person-organisation fit'. Although the new CEO communicated clearly the longstanding company value of 'doing the right thing at the right time' there was a slight cynicism towards this. New hires and existing employees said they would 'bear this in mind' but one employee said, 'it feels like they are trying to brainwash us'.

Q4. *Are there qualitatively distinct stages of adaptation to Organisational Culture*?

Through data analysis and identification of themes a pattern emerged of key stages that new hires went through in adapting to the organisational culture. These stages will be discussed in the following chapter in further detail but the process of assimilation in to the culture was found to follow a defined pathway. Interview data from both the Pilot Study and Longitudinal Study revealed that expectations regarding the culture of the organisation formed prior to an individual joining. Expectations were seen to be

influenced by factors such as previous work experience, experiences as a customer of the company, the company website, the stories of friends and family who worked or had previously worked at the organisation and employer and customer branding. Heightened or raised emotions were common at T1. This was largely due to the amount of change going on in the organisation, which they had not expected. These expectations were such that when a mismatch in expectations arose on joining the organisation strong feelings ensued. Literature regarding psychological contracting and breach or violation of psychological contract, (Rousseau: 1995) describe similar strong feelings resulting. Although the findings of this study questioned whether expectations regarding organisational culture can be seen as psychological contracts the literature gave a greater understanding of the strong reaction some individuals had on finding the culture was not as they had expected, (Rousseau: 1995). It left participants at both organisations studied feeling uncertain about whether they had made the right decision to join. Literature regarding stress (Selye:1936), Sensemaking, (Weick et al: 2005) and adapting to change (Kotter: 1996) was found to be very relevant at this stage.

Of particular interest was that despite some participants stating that they felt unhappy and uncertain at T1 they reported being much happier at later stages and in a few case were found to be thriving in the organisation. What helped them to move on beyond this stage? Individual influences are discussed in the next section but one individual stated that he was 'keeping an open mind' and this would appear to be vital for both organisation and individual at this stage if progression to further stages is to be successful. A minority of participants (3 out of 30) reported quietly observing the culture at the alert stage, including the ways of working, behaviours and rules, (including rewards and punishment). These individuals appeared to calmly adapt to the culture without any obvious upset.

For most participants, reaching out and establishing friendships was important. This tended to be with other team members but for those who were not able to connect with their team, either because they worked remotely or that they did not 'fit in' with their team connections were made with individuals in other teams. For those whose teams were global connections (friendships) were made with others based in the local office, either through conversations such as in the café area and by the printer or through more task related conversations. Very early on the importance of making friendships became clear. Networking and socialising was seen to be essential if new hires are to feel they belong. Socialising with the team outside of work, at a team night out or a CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) event made a significant difference to the speed at which new hires felt they belonged to the team. Starting with other new hires also helped individuals to feel they belonged a lot sooner.

The next stage was one where participants expressed an increased confidence and an ability to be themselves. A few individuals seemed to reach this stage very early on, skipping through the previous stages in a matter of days. This was not helpful however, as a couple of the new hires left soon after, having expressed dissatisfaction and demonstrating behaviours, which were not in keeping with the organisational culture. One individual offended a team member by assuming there was the same element of competition between team members as in his previous job. He thought it acceptable to steal clients from his colleagues, a practice which was apparently usual in his previous

company but was absolutely not the norm in the global organisation studied. One other participant offended through the language he used in order to motivate his team, in a style he had used in his previous job. His team were very upset by the language used and the individual was let go from the global organisation. By rushing through the alert stage and not taking time to observe behaviours and pick up on subtle cues these individuals had made the error of being over confident and missing the underlying deeper culture which was not so apparent. They had mistakenly thought that the global organisation was the same as other software companies but this organisation had a very different history. It was previously a manufacturing company and had only recently moved in to the world of software. The culture, although going through change under the direction of the new CEO, remained influenced by the leaders and workers from the manufacturing days and the long established behaviours and practices associated with these.

Although some participants had previously stated that they felt as if they belonged to the organisation they had also stated they still felt new. At the 'belonging' stage participants no longer feel like the 'new boy' and are more involved, treated as one of the team and given responsibilities. It was noted at this stage that many participants reported being busy. Being busy and contributing to the work of the team was something that a few participants stated made them feel as they belonged.

The next stage, where individuals are assimilated in to the organisation, was not reported by any of the participants at the global company but hinted at by employees at the retailer who had been there more than ten years. These participants reported finding it extremely difficult facing a change of culture. One new hire at the global company stated he was feeling some dread on joining the new organisational culture as he had worked for his previous company for sixteen years. Assimilation' was described well by one participant in the pilot study as having 'the organisation in your blood'.

The above stages are described further in the next chapter.

CHAPTER EIGHT– Development of a Staged Adaptation Model

The previous chapter discussed the findings of both the pilot study and longitudinal study. The concept of adapting to organisational culture and the question as to whether there might be stages of adaptation arose from findings of the pilot study. However, it was during analysis of data from interviews held as part of the longitudinal study that a clear pattern emerged. This was most markedly with expressed emotions, thoughts and behaviours but also perceptions of the organisational culture. During the process of interviewing at T1, T2 and T3, it became apparent that participants (new hires) moved through certain cumulative and progressive stages of adaptation to the organisational culture. This was initially evident with regards to expressed thoughts and emotions. At T1 for example both interview data and field notes revealed participants demonstrated raised emotions. These could either be positive through excitement such as 'I love it here' or negative through anxiety due to the amount of change and uncertainty. A few participants however, were more reserved and spoke of 'observing'. Expressed emotions were mapped and a trend became evident with certain words and phrases seen to be common at certain times. At T2, the raised emotions tended to be more moderate and words such as 'it's okay' were more common. By T3 participants started to use the words 'relaxed' and 'confident'.

Literature is laden with models describing various stages that individuals and organisations go through and these are well utilised both as a framework for further research and for practical application by management consultants. Many, such as the stages of change (Lewin 1943) and group development, (Tuckman 1965) were consulted for this study in order to see whether there was any correlation. There is however much criticism of these models as being 'flawed' or 'invalid' often as the stages cannot be replicated or are not in the order described. Are they sequential, progressive, cumulative or circular?

One of the most popular models of change is Prochaska and DiClemente's 'Transtheoretical Model' of behaviour change with its progressive stages of pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintain. This model is criticised quite damingly by West (2005: 1036) who states:

 "…problems with the model are so serious that it has held back advances in the field of health promotion".
West argues that boundaries between the stages are 'arbitary' and that influences such as addiction are not taken in to account. Littell and Girvin 2002 also criticise Prochaska and Di Clemente's stages of behaviour change. They state there is "scant evidence of sequential movement through discrete stages in studies of specific problem behaviors, such as smoking and substance abuse",

Even long established and influential models such as Kubler-Ross' model of the stages of grief, have been criticised, (Stroebe et al, 2017; Day, 2012). Stroebe, Schut and Boerner, (2017: 455) state:

"Major concerns include the absence of sound empirical evidence, conceptual clarity, or explanatory potential. It lacks practical utility for the design or allocation of treatment

services, and it does not help identification of those at risk or with complications in the grieving process..."

The literature suggests that stage models developed from the use of questionnaires can lack evidence from 'real life experience' (West 2005; Northcote 2011), therefore missing out on the contextual influences on the process. Dall'Alba and Sandberg, (2006: 388) state, focusing too much on stages can veil 'more fundamental aspects of development'.

Cognizant of the criticism that even the most influential staged models can attract and the potential areas of weakness, the author was careful to ensure that these areas were addressed when developing the Staged Adaptation Model. The stages were developed from the lived experience of new hires and tested through the use of focus groups. The model not only shows the stages but also very much the context in which the process takes place with regards to environmental influences. Both the influence of organisational factors and individual variances are shown.

8.2 Identifying the stages

Having been alerted to the possible existence of distinct stages of adaptation to organisational culture, the author began to track responses from the other key themes which arose from interview transcripts (detailed in the previous chapter). At each of the stages distinct differences were also found to apply to behaviours, team integration (or belonging) and confidence or 'self'. With regards to behaviours for example, participants mentioned 'observing behaviours' at T1. As emotions calmed, participants began to take on or copy these behaviours, (around T2). As confidence built and participants became more relaxed participants reported feeling able to act or behave more like they normally would, (at T3).

Focus group discussions and participant responses suggested that there are in fact additional stages to the three initial stages identified through interviews. These were;

- A Pre Entry stage: before individuals have actually joined the organisation
- A Belonging stage: when the organisation feels familiar to the individual
- An Assimilation stage: where an individual is embedded in to the organisation to the point where they are they are no longer aware of the culture as being anything other than the norm and no longer consider themselves to be 'new'.

Norcross et al 2010 state; '*stages represent when, processes represent how.*' Some individuals were seen to move more rapidly through the stages than others. One participant stated he still felt new after three years. The stages cannot therefore be said to have defined time limits but are sequential in the order that they occur. If stages are skipped i.e. an individual does not follow the usual sequence then this can result in a failure to adapt to the culture. This was seen with the very confident participants who did not spend time observing during the Alert stage and seemed to skip the Establishing stage, (in that their emotions were no calmer and they made no attempt to establish a network or friendships). These individuals left the organisation shortly after, one after

three months because of their behaviours i.e. they had not changed these to fit in with the culture and their behaviour was deemed unacceptable by the organisation.

Although the stages identified initially emerged from observations and transcripts of the interviews at T1, T2 and T3, being a participant of the organisation enabled the author to observe the participants beyond the set interview times, which were:

T1 – within the first month
T2 - after 3 months of employment
T3 - after 6 months

Over a period of four years, the author was able to record the participants' individual journeys. Some individuals left the global company during the first six months of the study. One individual had left after T2, another four left shortly after T3. It was interesting to note their thoughts and feelings at T1 and to see if there was any pattern, which might explain the reason for their particular trajectory.
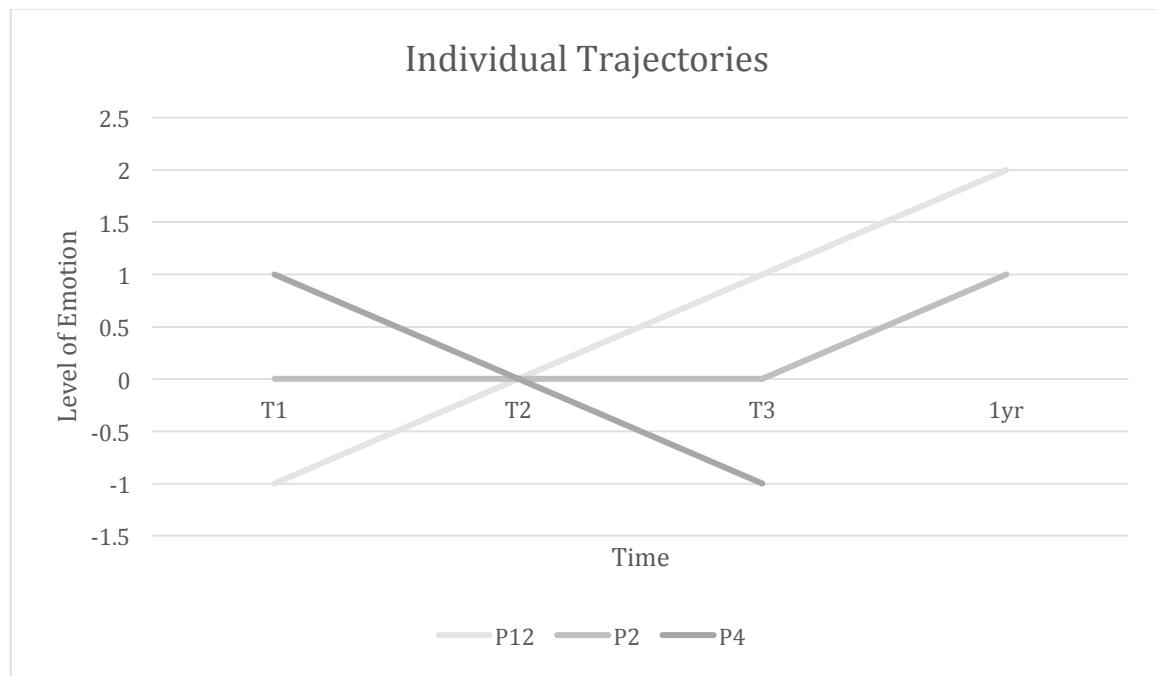
Fig 13 Individual Trajectories

Mapping individual journeys helped to understand how the stages interact and to understand the influences, which help or hinder movement (progression), from one stage to another. The level of emotion was determined by the words used by participants to describe how they were feeling. 'Okay' for example was scored at 0 'Good' was 1 and 'Very Good' was 2. Similarly negative emotions reported such as 'Anxious', 'Not Happy' or 'I hate' it were scored as minus numbers relating to the strength of feeling expressed.

8.3 Theoretical Framework

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A search of literature regarding stages of change was consulted and revealed a number of models including Lewin's three steps of change, Kotter's eight stage model for organisational change and Prochaska and DiClemente's stages of behaviour change. Lewin's three steps of change was very relevant and helped to give greater insight in to how participants altered their behaviour and ways of working. It was Tuckman's model of the stages of group formation however, that was found to be most similar to the stages of adapting to organisational culture identified. There was some correlation between Tuckman's model and Stages of Adaptation identified by described characteristics of Tuckman's stages. Schein (2004), regarded the culture of an organisation as being like the personality of a group. It was interesting therefore to compare adapting to organisational culture to joining or forming a group. Literature regarding adaptation, in particular studies of resilience helped to inform an understanding of how individuals progress through the stages.

8.4 The Staged Adaptation Model

Stage	Most likely time period that stage will be reached	Characteristics of the stages	Aligned Themes
Pre Entry	- 1 month to 0	Expectations form regarding the organisational culture. Antecedents of psychological contract form and schema develop from a number of sources.	Mismatch in expectations
Alert	0 – 1 month	A period of heightened awareness of both the environment and behaviours. Emotions tended to be raised at this stage. Any mismatch in expectations regarding the organisational culture becomes apparent.	Mismatch in expectations Emotional intelligence
Establishing	1 – 3 months	At this stage in particular, new hires began to form friendships and networks. Emotions were generally calmer. Group behaviours are copied.	Direction Emotional intelligence
Self	3 – 6 months	Participants appeared	Confidence and self

		more confident by this stage. They have a better knowledge of the rules and begin to question and challenge. They act with less trepidation and more like themselves.	
Belonging	6 – 12 months	By this stage new hires feel they are contributing to the organisation and are of value. They begin to feel they belong to the team or to a wider network	Belonging Direction
Assimilation	12 months onwards.	This stage can take many years to reach. Expert in knowledge of the cultural norms. High performing, autonomous, competent, motivated and knowledgeable.	Belonging

The three stages highlighted in bold are stages that were identified through data from interviews. Other stages were identified from participant observation and focus groups.

Pre Entry

Antecedents of psychological contract are formed, largely through previous work experience and HR/Recruitment practices, (Rousseau: 1995). Employer branding was seen to influence psychological contract formation at this stage, (Rosethorn, 2009; Vinay and Shilpa, 2013). The formation of schema may also occur at this stage, whereby individuals make sense of messages given out at interview and on the company website by recognising a similar situation to previous experiences and making a connection.

Research in to person organisation fit would claim that certain individuals are already more suited to an organisation at this pre entry stage, (O'Reilly et al: 1991). That their values and personality are better matched to the organisational values. This research however questions to some extent this claim. Individuals who were deemed to be a great fit at interview were found to demonstrate behaviours at a later stage which were not in keeping with company values and ways of working. One individual or example described 'an immediate fit at interview;
 'I had an immediate affinity at interview. I was told I was the type of person to fit in at PB'. He had left only a few months later.

This underlines the importance of organisations being realistic and current in their communication regarding the culture. If fit is to be real and long term organisations need to take in to account any changes that have occurred or are ongoing. The global organisation studied for this research is now recruiting for individuals who cope well with change and ideally enjoy change. It is important that the local subculture, especially where this differs from the main culture is also communicated to new hires.

Alert

Everything is new and unfamiliar at this stage and new hires experience a heightened awareness and an alertness. Observations of the artefacts of culture are made such as the smell and feel of the place, the moderness or mustiness of the building, the dress code, the language and how friendly people are. The 'excitement' shown by the majority of new hires interviewed mirrors findings from research in to individuals emigrating to different countries and new national cultures during the 'honeymoon' period. Emotions are raised (noted at T1) and it was during this time that many participants said they 'loved' it at the new organisation. Three individuals however were 'very unhappy' or were 'very anxious'.

Establishing

At this stage new hires and organisation are getting to know each other. There is some similarity with Tuckman's 'Forming' stage. The stage was initially called the 'mimic' stage as during this time new hires 'act to be accepted', (Tuckman:1965) such as following the dress code, learning the language (what do those three lettered acronyms stand for?) and adopting behaviours to fit in. Learning and copying behaviours included speeding up or slowing down the pace of work, being more vocal at meetings, learning how best to work remotely such as how to use technology for Skype meetings and getting used to standing meetings. Meetings provided a good opportunity to observe team behaviours and group norms. The most commonly mentioned change in behaviour during this phase was being more self-driven and empowered. As well as learning and copying observed behaviours at this stage individuals began reaching out and making connections with others.

Self

The 'self' stage can be seen to have similarities to Tuckman's group Storming stage. New hires start to feel comfortable challenging and expressing concerns. The stage is characterised by a growth in confidence as individuals feel they are getting to know the rules and group norms and are generally more relaxed. At this stage individuals report they can be themselves.

Belonging

The belonging stage is necessarily when newcomers may feel they are in the right place but it is reached when they no longer feel new. It is characterised by being more involved as a actively contributing team member. Being valued is associated with

belonging. In their article 'Respect in Organisations: Feeling valued as "we" and "me"' Rogers and Ashforth, (2014:1578), state that respect or feeling valued "fulfill the receiver's needs for belonging and status, which facilitates the self-related outcomes of organization-based self-esteem, organizational and role identification, and psychological safety". Being needed is more important to employees than perks and benefits, (HRM: 2008).

Knowledge of the organisational culture is such at this stage that individuals still have in mind the behaviours and values from their previous employer but are aware of and now familiar with the values, norms and behaviours associated with the organisational culture of their new employment. Individuals have now adopted these and are confident in their knowledge of the 'rules'. They begin to associate themselves with the organisation, to identify with it socially, (Tajfel and Turner: 1985) but still have a large degree of independence.

Assimilation

The final stage in adapting to organisational culture involves an expert level knowledge of the culture. The employee is deeply embedded in to the culture. This stage can take years to reach and indeed, given the changing nature of employment whereby people are more likely to change jobs every few some employees may never be fully assimilated in to the culture. 'Social identity theory can be seen to be most applicable at this stage, (Tajfel and Turner, 1985; Ashforth and Mael, 1989). Although employees still have an awareness of themselves as a separate entity (a personal identity) they view themselves as an integral member of the organisation.

Ashforth and Mael (1989: 21) state that with social identity, an individual perceives themselves, "as psycho- logically intertwined with the fate of the group". Unlike in the 'belonging' stage, individuals who reach the assimilation stage are barely conscious of the ways of working and behaviours as these are now ingrained and automatic. They have reached the expert stage in learning the organisational culture and may find it hard to remember another way of working. Employees who reach the 'assimilation' stage have a shared history with their colleagues and help to continue the organisational culture.

8.5 Influences on the stages

Following identification of the stages the staged model of adaptation was developed further to incorporate the interaction of influences. These include personal differences and organisational characteristics as well as the context or environment within which the process takes place. The influences on adapting to organisational culture were revealed through participant transcripts, participant observations and the literature review. For example both organisations studied were going through transformational change as a result of environmental influences such as the recession and advances in technology. These changes were observed to have a direct influence on the culture of both organisations and subsequent adapting of newcomers. In the retailer for example, participants spoke of the move from the 'old' culture to 'new' more business-like culture and whereas the retailer had previously been viewed as offering a job for life, more

uncertainty was being shown due to restructuring and redundancies. The restructuring was due in part to the effects of the recession and advances in technology resulting from more people shopping on line. The global company was also making changes as a direct result of changes in technology from mail to email, physical technology to digital technology.

Influences that help individuals to move forwards through the stages are listed in the table below.

Pre Entry	• Organisation gives accurate information regarding the actual rather than ideal culture • Individual does not rely on assumptions from stereotyping or previous experience • Individual keeps an open mind
Alert	• Individual has emotion regulation • Joining with other new starters • Team embrace their new hire
Establish	• Individual has emotional intelligence • Individual values are in line with the team or wider organisation values • Social occasions with the team such as nights out
Self	• Supportive team • Emotional intelligence • Individual values are in line with the team or wider organisation values (person-culture fit)
Belonging	• Supportive team • Individual feels they are contributing – using their skills, being busy • Clear direction from leadership
Assimilation	• Length of tenure – observed to be over four years • Person-culture fit • Environmental factors such as economy are stable

Individual Characteristics

These included expectations, which arose largely from previous experience of working in an organisation in the same line of business. How newcomers view and understand the organisational culture they are joining appeared to be influenced by previous experience. They have developed an understanding from interactions and language used in their previous job. Personality is likely to impact on ability to adapt to culture in that those who demonstrated open-mindedness, (such as those who claimed they liked change) embraced the new culture more readily. These same individuals demonstrated key qualities of resilience, adaptability and a sense of purpose, (Robertson Cooper). A congruence in values between those, which individuals said they would like to see and those that they reported as being shown is also seen to have an influence on adaptation.

Organizational Factors

These include the hire of a new CEO and the resulting change in organisational culture. Both employer branding and customer branding are seen to influence expectations of what the culture would be like and the importance of ensuring these reflect any change in organisational culture is highlighted. The behaviour of Line Mangers and whether this is congruent with the established organisational culture is seen to be of utmost importance. Other organisational factors which impact new hires adapting to the culture include team characteristics. If the group have a long history together and shared experiences they may not embrace new recruit as readily, although it was seen that most teams were very receptive to new hires and played a major role in helping them to feel they belonged.

Environmental Factors

The impact these have on an organisational culture is seen to be considerable. The recent financial crisis has led many organisations to change their culture in order to survive, from one, which is driven by revenue to one which is focused more on the value of its people. The rapid expansion of social media platforms have led to the customers voice becoming much louder and many organisations have changed to become much more client centric.

The induction and orientation process in the global organisation need to change if newcomers are to feel embraced and to have a better understanding of the culture of the organisation. Addressing these elements will help newcomers to adapt more speedily and to have a sense of belonging earlier on. Currently, newcomers report having to, 'sink or swim' and being, 'left to get on with it'. Participants stated that joining with or meeting other newcomers helped them to feel supported and to be part of a team but currently this is not the practice at the global firm. Having newcomers start together and to meet in person rather than undertake an online induction would enhance the process of adapting to the organisational culture. Similarly, having a mentor who can explain the culture and advise on etiquette for meetings and emails (for example) would help newcomers have a better understanding of the culture as well as to feel more supported.

Figure 15 shows the Staged Adaptation Model
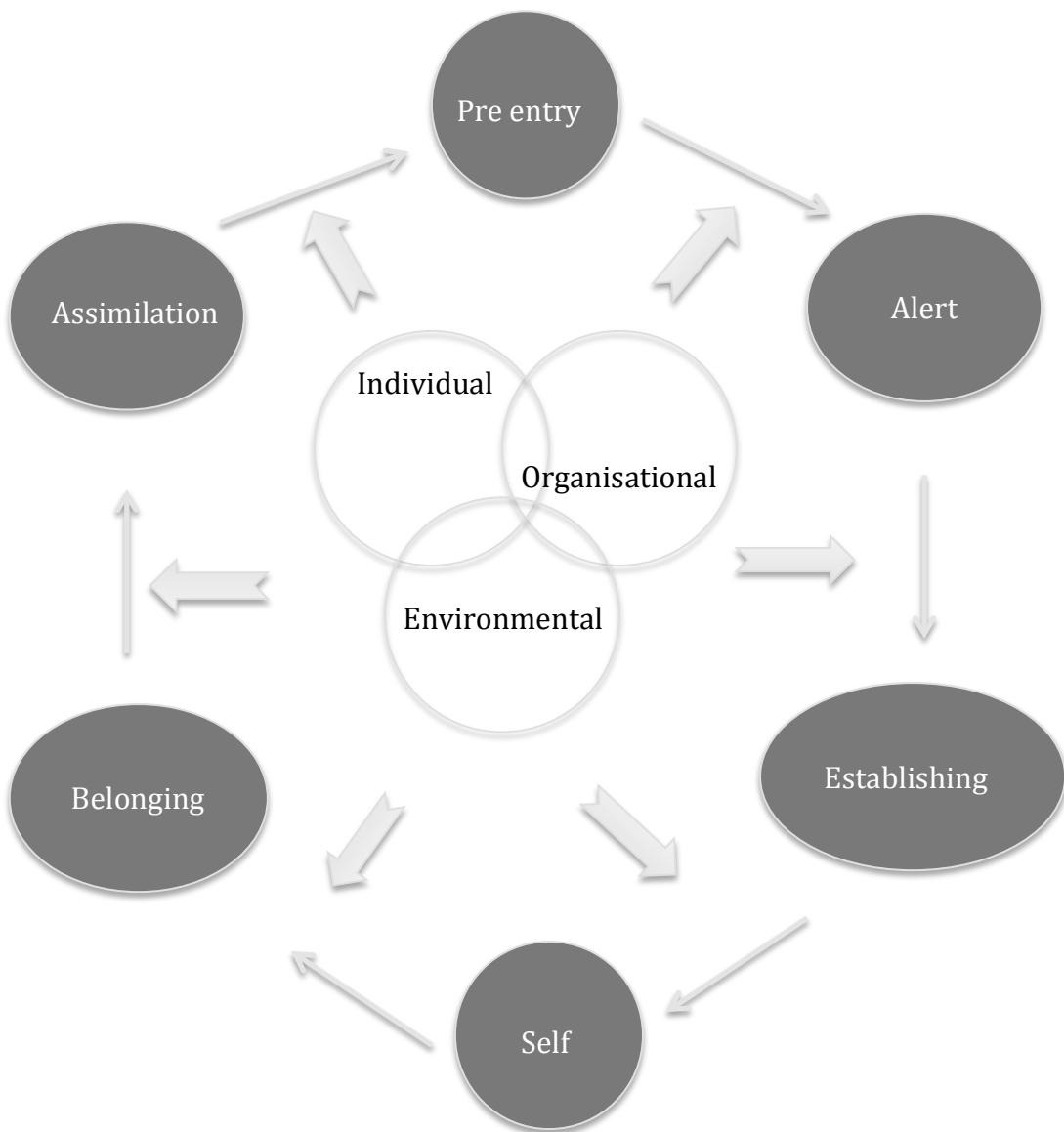
Fig.14

8.6 Summary

The SAM model is a relatively simple one without too many complex mechanisms but the inclusion of context and influences gives it relevance (Lafeurza et al 2016). It is

hoped that the model will be operationalised and provide some heuristic guidance to both new hires and organisations. Arrows on the model indicate that individuals are progressively assimilated in to the culture (through observing, learning and mimicking). The pace at which individuals progress will differ according to the individual variances listed. Some, for example are seen to arrive quite swiftly at Self but the consequence of them doing so may be that they miss vital observations and cues as to the culture. The arrow pointing in the opposite direction indicates that there are situations in which individuals can go back to the initial stages. This was demonstrated especially clearly in the retail organisation where a change of culture 'from old to new' meant that individuals were having to start the process of adapting to a new organisational culture all over again. To some extent this implies that the process has circularity. With employees moving from one organisation to another more frequently and with most organisations constantly facing some sort of change many employees may start the process of adapting to organisational culture several times. Their previous experience, (as shown on the model) will have some influence on this but it can be seen from the study that it is important not to make assumptions too soon.

CHAPTER NINE – Interpretation of results and discussion

9.1 <u>Introduction</u>

This Chapter begins with a review of the rationale for the study, revisiting the key research questions. This is followed by an interpretation and explanation of the findings of the research as reported in Chapter Seven. General and specific findings are examined, both from the Pilot Study and the main Longitudinal Study. The results are then analysed in relation to existing literature and research and theories of organisational culture, psychological contract formation (including sense making and formation of schema) are discussed as well as literature regarding adaptation, (including stress, resilience and socialisation). An indication of the importance of the findings is given. The methodology chosen to undertake the research is then critically reviewed, looking at possible limitations of the research design and any restrictions this may have on generalizability of the research. This is followed by a discussion of the 'Staged Adaptation Model' and operationalizing of this. The implications of this study for research and its practical applications for business are then discussed. Finally recommendations are offered and conclusions drawn.

9.2 <u>The Aim and Purpose of the Study</u>

This study aimed to explore the concept of adapting to organisational culture, to discover whether there is a process of adaptation that new hires experience on joining an organisation and to explain, through the lived experiences of new hires, what influences there are on the process of adaptation. As mentioned in Chapter One, the motivation for this research came from observations of clinical phenomena i.e. that of newcomers reporting to Occupational Health with work related stress, seemingly as a result of a mismatch in expectations regarding the organisational culture. What led to the formation of these expectations was of interest but also how, despite a mismatch in expectations, some individuals went on to remain happily employed whilst others went off sick with stress or indeed left the organisation. The research set out to determine whether there were qualitatively distinct stages of adaptation to and assimilation in to the organisational culture. It also hoped to examine why some individuals appear able to adapt more easily than others and what individual, organisational and environmental influences may impact on the process of adaption.

A review of the organisational culture literature was conducted in order to discover whether any previous studies had been undertaken linking the constructs of adaptation and organisational culture. Current studies of organisational culture support a correlation of strong organisational culture with strong business performance, which has led to many organisations looking to strengthen their culture. This includes the global organisation studied for this research. Fitting in to organisational culture has been found to be essential to job satisfaction and commitment, (O'Reilly et al 2001) and more organisations are looking to recruit for person organisation fit. Literature regarding the concept of adaptation was consulted to see if there was evidence of new hires being able to adapt to a culture despite an initial mismatch. Is it, as studies regarding person culture fit suggest, a case of you fit or you don't or is it possible to adapt to the culture? Studies regarding person organisation fit would appear to suggest a homogeneity is preferable to a diverse workforce.

Several studies of socialisation were consulted as part of the review of adaptation literature. This included studies looking at the transition of newcomers in to an organisation with regards to on-boarding processes and transitioning in to the role, (Nelson et al, 2010; Ashford and Saks, 1997), as well as several studies linking socialisation to national culture. However there was found to a gap in knowledge regarding the link between adaptation and the culture of an organisation. Studies linking work related stress and organisational culture provided some insight in to organisational culture as a cause of stress however none of these studies linked these constructs with maladaptation or difficulty in adapting. Most studies of stress and organisational culture look at types of culture that can cause work related stress. It was especially interesting to find that the HSE's Management Standards, which list causes of work related stress, do not include organisational culture.

The review of literature regarding adaptation included studies looking at adapting to change. These studies gave a greater insight in to the current research and the coping processes that individuals may employ when faced with a new culture. Literature regarding adaption to national culture and socialisation, (Black et al, 1991; Triandis, 2006) to a different culture was also found to be relevant and helpful in increasing understanding of the processes individuals may experience in facing a new culture. Findings from these studies however could not be transferred directly to the current study as the context and influences were found to differ. The honeymoon period for example could not be said to apply to all participants in this research as a mismatch in expectations led many to feel uncertain and unhappy.

The observed phenomena of new hires reporting stress following a mismatch in expectations led the author to question whether this was due to a breach of psychological contract. An exploration of psychological contract literature was undertaken at the start of the study, looking specifically at whether a mismatch in expectations could be perceived as a breach of psychological contract. Psychological contract literature however was found to be too narrow in talking of promises and obligations, (Gigi and Sutton 2004). Participants in the longitudinal study did not feel that the organisation had made any commitment to them with regards to the culture despite the website not being an accurate portrayal of the culture prior to the re branding. Although studies regarding breach of psychological contract appeared to explain the reaction of new hires at the UK retailer to a mismatch in expectations, there appeared to be a gap in knowledge regarding antecedents of the formation of psychological contracts and prominent researchers such as Rousseau (1995) and Grant (1999) called for more research to be done in this area. Literature regarding the formation of schema was found to be of particular relevance when investigating what leads to a formation of expectations?

A review of literature concerning the constructs of organisational culture, psychological contracting and adaptation was found to be helpful in providing a greater insight in to possible processes and influences on the process that individuals experience when adapting to a new organisational culture. Concepts such as formation of schema and individual coping mechanisms were found to be particularly relevant but did not entirely answer the main research questions. These were:

- Where do expectations regarding organizational culture come from?
- How are some people able to remain happily with an organisation despite an initial mismatch in expectations regarding the organisational culture?
- What helps individuals to adapt to the culture?
- Are there qualitatively distinct stages of adapting?

9.3 Interpreting the findings of the Study

This section discusses the findings of both the pilot study and longitudinal study and provides an explanation and interpretation of the results. This includes the more specific findings such as those which did not appear to fit the main theory drawn from the overall results. The findings are examined in relation to existing literature and research, in particular studies of organisational culture, psychological contract formation, adapting to change and socialisation. The context within which the research is set and the importance of this on the results is considered. Findings of the pilot study and longitudinal study are then discussed in answer to the key research questions.

9.3.1 Context of research

The context in which the research took place was found to be of great importance. The influence of the environment had a marked impact on the findings in both studies, the pilot study at a UK retailer and the longitudinal study at a global technology company. Both organisations studied are very different with regards to their organisational culture and the nature of their business but both have been very much affected by the economic environment and advances in technology. As a result, both organisations were going through a period of substantial and ongoing transformation at the time of this research. The UK retailer was in the process of restructuring, making a number of redundancies in HR and Occupational Health and subsequently taking out a layer of management. Although none of the participants in this research were directly affected by redundancy they were impacted by the changes through the resulting perceived change in culture and the loss of colleagues. The global technology company had recently invested a new CEO who was also making sweeping changes in terms of restructuring and redundancies followed. Participants in the Longitudinal Study were all new hires to the global organisation and were not impacted by the restructuring however the amount of change was commented on by ten of the thirty participants with the first three months of them joining.

The changes taking place in both the retailer and the global organisation were in response to the economic environment and the recent recession but also to advances in technology. The retailer needed to alter the way of selling in response to changes in the way people shop, largely the introduction of online shopping. The online area of the business continues to grow and as a result fewer personnel were required to staff the branches as profits move away from the stores to the online portal. For the global organisation advances in technology meant a need to move away from its long tradition of manufacturing to break in to the software business. The new CEO came from a multinational technology company and bought with him colleagues with a knowledge of the software business (who were made senior leaders). A move to software involved acquiring several start-up companies and successful software names. Subcultures that

these groups retained were to have a significant influence on individuals adapting to the organisational culture.

Other influences on the findings included communication or messages from the organisation itself. Expectations regarding the culture were seen to be influenced by information on the company website as well as HR rhetoric at recruitment. Employer branding and also customer branding were also found to impact on expectations and a resulting mismatch. This will be discussed further in the following section.

9.3.2 Pilot Study

As mentioned, the pilot study was carried out at a leading UK retailer. Initial observations made of new hires reporting to Occupational Health with stress, seemingly due to a mismatch in expectations regarding the organisational culture, led the author to explore the lived experience of new hires regarding joining a new organisational culture. The aim of the pilot study was to test the feasibility of a larger study including the usefulness and acceptability of the interview questions. The sample in the pilot study (N=15) were chosen by sequential selection following an invitation to participate in the research. At this stage in the study there were areas of knowledge which the author sought to gain a better understanding of. These were,

- Whether others had experienced a mismatch in expectations
- How they had expected it to be
- What was the reality
- Where had expectations come from
- Was a breach of psychological contract occurring?

Findings from the pilot study and a literature review helped to answer these questions and led to the main research questions. The findings suggested that it was not uncommon for new hires to experience a mismatch in expectations regarding the culture of the organisation. This finding is in keeping with literature regarding unmet expectations, (Louis 1980). Eight out of the fifteen participants stated that the culture was different from what they had expected. These eight participants had remained at the retailer for many years, (some? had been employed at the retailer for more than ten years) despite having had an initial mismatch in expectations and this raised further research questions including what helps individuals to adapt to the culture and whether there are qualitatively distinct stages of adapting. These findings gave a greater insight in to and helped to answer in part the first main research question, which was, 'Where do expectations come from?' Nine of the participants said they had formed their expectations from their experiences as a customer. Although two participants stated they had arrived with no expectations, eight of the fifteen participants found the culture differed in some way to what they had expected. They experienced a mismatch of expectations.

New hires arriving at the retailer had a preconceived idea as to what the ways of working and behaviours would be like, including the amount of support they would receive and how much job security there is. Participants at the retail organisation talked

about rules and regulations, which had been '*carried down for centuries*,' of the low turnover and teams, which had been in existence for many years. People arrived expecting a job for life and were surprised by the amount of change and restructuring. Given the changing nature of employment over the past decade towards a less stable environment, expectations of a job for life seem unrealistic. As Tulgan, (2004:24) states, 'the myth of job security is dead.' The majority (9 out of 15) of participants at the retailer said they had gained their expectations from their experiences as a customer and this might indicate that they had not properly investigated or been made aware by HR of the reality of the employment situation. Awareness of restructuring at the retailer was minimal outside of the organisation and redundancies were rarely announced in the media. This lack of awareness and resulting surprise also implies that new hires were not informed at recruitment stage of the transformation that the organisation was undergoing. Louis (1980) describes situations which differ from expectations or predictions as 'discrepant' events. Those who had insider or internal information about the changes would be 'better prepared' on joining the organisation, (Moser 2005).

Expectations of what the culture would be like were varied and ranged from expecting, 'a warm, friendly welcoming, environment,' to having, 'lots or rules and regulations' and being 'more hierarchical'. For two individuals they found the culture at head office to be more 'cut throat' than expected, others said it was 'more commercial' and 'hard work with little support' whereas two stated they had found the culture was more relaxed than they had expected. It was interesting to note how expectations differed between individuals and to understand more about how these expectations had developed. The themes which emerged regarding 'Dealing with Change', 'Belonging' and 'Sense of Purpose' were also found to be of significance in findings from the longitudinal study and are discussed in more depth in the following section.

A salient feature of the interviews carried out for the pilot study was the strength of feeling the participants expressed towards the perceived change of culture from 'old' to 'new' and the unexpected difference between the culture in branches and head office. This change of culture could be seen as a breach of psychological contract as participants very much felt that the organisation had made clear, via media and via customer experiences, that its culture was one of great support with the emphasis on team.

Branding was found to be a significant influence on expectations, raised by participants in the pilot study. Nine of these participants had been customers of the retailer and were stated this is where they had gained their expectations of the organisational culture. The employer branding and customer branding for the retailer were relatively consistent. The customer branding pulled on emotions, its advertisements talking of reliability, trust and caring. Participants had expected this reliability as an employee, to be cared for and supported, to have longevity as an employee. The employer brand was attractive, speaking of employee happiness and the many benefits of a career with the organisation.

9.3.3 Longitudinal Study

As mentioned in Chapter Two, the organisation studied for the longitudinal study was a global firm, in the process of undergoing a major transformation from being predominantly a manufacturer of equipment to being a developer of software programs. The company had a new CEO at the helm who had moved from a major technology company and was instrumental in initiating the transformation of both the nature of the business and its culture. The influence of the new CEO was found to be of great importance with his determination to introduce a new, more high performing culture. The introduction of Agile, (flexible) working was also seen to be of significance. Thirty participants were interviewed over a period of six months for the study but observations of their progress and impromptu conversations with them continued over the four year period. Field notes documented conversations held with participants on several occasions during this period and events such as promotions and dismissal of participants were recorded.

The sample was chosen sequentially from all new hires and consisted of individuals from all areas of business including Sales, Corporate, Software and Engineering. They included twenty two men and eight females, fourteen of which were aged below thirty, twelve between thirty and forty, three between forty one and fifty one and one aged over fifty one. Only a few of these new hires joined with others. Two joined one software office, three in another and two in telesales. It was usual for new hires to join individually and the process of onboarding was haphazard in that in one software office HR ran an in person induction, introducing new hires to key personnel whereas most new hires were asked to join a webinar. Those who had joined this found it to be of little use and others had not managed to join or had decided against joining the webinar.

The main purpose of the Longitudinal Study was to establish whether there is a process of adaptation that individuals experience when joining a new organisational culture and to understand more about that process, in terms of identifying qualitatively distinct stages of adaptation. The ethnographic study resulted in findings that support psychological contract and socialisation literature but also adds new knowledge, which arose from observation of the participants over a period of four years. The study was informed by Literature regarding Organisational Culture, Adaptation, (including socialisation) and Psychological Contracts as well as from findings of the Pilot Study. The main research questions were addressed and will be discussed in the following section.

Q1. Where do expectations come from?

Participants at the global organisation also had a mismatch in expectations although nineteen of the thirty new hires had been pleasantly surprised rather than disappointed by the difference. Only three participants were unhappy with the culture, which they found differed to what they had expected. They had not expected so much change. As with findings from the pilot study, participants arrived at the global company with different expectations of what the culture would be like. Twelve of the thirty participants used words like '*more formal,' 'more corporate', 'strict'* and '*more bureaucratic*' to describe the culture they had expected. Instead, they found a culture that was *'friendly', 'sociable'* and '*relaxed*'. One unexpected aspect of the culture, which seven participants reported, was that of empowerment. New hires reported surprise at

being treated like an adult, just having to get on with it and having to be a self-starter. One said of his induction, '*I just had to go online and hook up with people through my own initiative*'. This empowerment may have arisen due to the system of agile working and remote working, made necessary through the global nature of the organisation. Participants reported having their teams located in the US and other countries across the world. This included their line manager. This ensured a hands-on approach was often not possible.

Initial observations of clinical phenomenon had led the researcher to explore whether a mismatch of expectations for new hires, regarding the organisational culture was a breach of psychological contract. Participants at the global company who found the culture was not as supportive as they had expected complained of feeling unhappy and uncertain, unsure as to how long they would stay. As there were only three out of the thirty participants who were unhappy with the culture and only one of these three stated that he had gained his expectations directly from the organisation (website) there was not enough evidence to confirm that a mismatch in expectations regarding the culture leads to a breach of psychological contract. No participants talked of a promise of obligation on the part of the organisation with regards to expectations of the culture.

Theory of Psychological Contract (pc) formation however, provides a powerful framework in which to further analyse the formation of expectations. Although the majority of studies regarding pc explore breach of contract, there are studies investigating the formation of pc's before individuals join an organisation, (Herriot, 1992; Rousseau, 2001; George, 2015; Stoilkovska and Markovic, 2015). Key authors such as Argyris, Rousseau and Grant, all talk of psychological contracts as containing a set or series of expectations. There is some debate as to whether expectations form part of a psychological contract, (Gigi and Sutton 2004) and the current study did not find any evidence to suggest that new hires at the global company believed that there was any promise from the company as to what the culture would be. New hires at the global company stated their expectations came from a number of areas including, the company website, recruitment agencies, HR and friends and family who worked for the organisation. Unlike newcomers at the retail organisation, which was a well-known British brand, most participants in the longitudinal study said they had not previously heard of the global organisation prior to recruitment. Three individuals, two of whom had been headhunted and the third who was just out of university, said they had no expectations at all before joining. Ten participants said they had formed their expectations from experiences at their previous employer and five stated they had formed their expectations from stereotypes of organisations such as 'I thought with it being a large global company it would be quite formal' and 'I've worked for Software companies before so I knew what to expect'. Seven participants said they had searched for the company on Google and looked at the company website. Interestingly, two participants said the building had influenced their expectations, one who had been interviewed in the old building which was head office in the manufacturing days, stated he thought the company would be 'a bit old fashioned' and another who had been interviewed at the new, spacious modern office said the building had 'a corporate feel.'

Several studies of psychological contract such as those by Grant, (1999), Cullinane and Dundon, (2006) and Shermand and Morley, (2015), talk of the influence of previous work experience on the formation of pc and this is supported by findings from the current study. Given the length of time that people can spend with employers it is not surprising that the cultures there will have an influence on individuals expectations of subsequent employers. One participant who said he had been with his previous employer for more than sixteen years was '*dreading*' starting at the global organisation because he had been happy there and was fearful of the change. Ten of the thirty participants reported their expectations had been informed by their previous work experience in a similar industry. Statements such as that of an engineer who said, '*I expected it to be like my previous job where there was a lot of banter and people taking the mick but it's not like that*' and a young sales chap who said, '*I expected it to be more formal and strict. My previous employer was like that*' reflect the differing expectations of the new organisational culture previous work experience can lead to.

One very confident individual stated that he already knew what the culture at the global organisation would be like as he had worked for a software company before. To some extent this can be seen as 'stereotyping' of organisations, (George 2010). Five participants stated they had formed their expectations from the 'type' of organisation they had understood the global organisation to be. '*I expected it to be more formal and structured…My expectations came from fact it is a large global company*.' Another said, '*I got my expectations came from the media. Also, as it's a big company I thought it would be too big to pay attention to small individuals*'. This finding is supported by research by George, (2010) who posits that pc formation amongst professionals is developed from their perception of what a profession is like. This perception can be informed by stereotypes portrayed by the media in films and on television such as hospital and legal dramas. These perceptions are referred to as Professional or Occupational Ideologies, (Rousseau, 2001; Bunderson, 2001) and they influence how individuals expect to be treated in a particular profession or type of work.

Those recruited in to software offices at the global organisation expected it to be similar to other software companies. Well-known software brands such as Google and Facebook are often in the media talking about their 'fun' working environments. Bean bags, skateboarding, table tennis and slides feature in these offices and have become synonymous with the '*creative*' software environment. Unlike participants recruited to sales and head office teams, who expected a '*formal', 'corporate'* environment, those recruited in to software teams expressed a belief that there would be a 'fun' and 'social' workplace and were disappointed to find this lacking. Although there were wellbeing events and a table tennis table at the office there were no group corporate social events. The history of the global technology company may explain the difference in culture to other software companies. The fact that it had been a large manufacturing company until very recently meant that for over ninety years the company had been mainly staffed by engineers and operators, manual labour as opposed to knowledge workers. The influence of this history is an important factor in the development of its culture and one which literature regarding organisation culture suggest will not be something that is quickly changed, (Schein 1985).

As well as preconceptions arising from stereotypes, media and previous employment, Stoilkovska and Markovic (2015: 146) found that at the pre-employment stage '*anticipatory psychological contracts*' form from information gleaned from family and friends. Four of the participants in this study reported their expectations to have been influenced by stories of people who worked at the organisation. This included the sister of one young man, the father of another and a person met on a cycle ride. One participant stated, '*I knew my Boss previously. He was the main reason for me joining*'. Soon after this individual was asked to report in to a line manager in the US.

As mentioned previously, other sources, which influenced the formation of expectations prior to employment, include the company website and HR rhetoric. The website of the global company was described by new hires as being 'very blue', having 'a corporate feel' and being 'formal' and 'professional'. It did not appear to reflect the change of culture from the days of manufacturing. With the introduction of a new brand, changes have since been made to the website to include a new, more fluid logo and colourful graphics.. Literature regarding branding states both customer branding and employer branding contain key elements of the character of an organisation such as its principles and values, and therefore give messages out about the culture, (Edwards 2009). The link between employer branding and formation of a psychological contract has been made in several studies, (Rosethorn, 2009; Edwards, 2009; Vinay and Shilpa, 2013; Wilden et al, 2010 Biswas and Suar, 2016). Whether customer branding and employer branding are consistent and how realistic employer branding is, are questions which may need to be considered by both prospective applicants and employers. Could the employer branding reflect equally the culture in head office as in the branches or for the retailer or the culture in a sales office and a software office at the global company? Employer branding can perhaps only be generic but job previews are where accuracy and realistic impressions of local culture are needed, (Earnest 2011).

Drawing on theories regarding unmet job expectations, (Maden et al, 2014; Moser, 2005; Turnley and Feldman, 2000), provides a greater understanding of the formation of expectations regarding organisational culture. Reactions of participants to a mismatch in expectations are in line with literature regarding employee responses to unmet expectations of job role as well as breach of psychological contract, (Maden et al, 2016; Turnley and Feldman, 2015; Moser, 2005, Rousseau, 1995). Unmet expectations have been found to result in emotional exhaustion, reduced job satisfaction and turnover intention, (Maden et al: 2016). Studies looking at the effect of recruitment source on met or unmet expectations and post hire outcomes such as commitment and job satisfaction give a greater understanding of possible sources of expectations. Several studies, such as by Barber (1998) and Zottoli and Wanous (2000), have questioned the correlation between 'recruitment source and post hire outcome', (Moser 2005) and participants in the current study did not report recruitment sources to be the greatest source of their expectations of the organisational culture. These were previous experience and the company website at the global company and their experiences as a customer at the retailer.

Turker and Altuntas (2015:133) talk of 'pre-existing descriptive and normative perceptions of what an organisation is and how it should be'. They refer to these pre-existing perceptions as 'ideal' notions of an organisation including notions of its culture.

Pre-existing expectations of organisational culture include those, which have developed from previous work experiences. Expectations are abstract notions, or assumptions formed in the minds of individuals in anticipation of an event, defined by the Oxford Dictionary (2017) as "a strong belief that something will happen or be the case'. Despite having similar sources of expectations amongst the participants, there were differences in expectations derived from the same sources. Expectations formed from experience of previous employment understandably differed but seven participants who said they had formed their expectations from the company website also mentioned differing expectations. There were some consistencies in their expectations such as a corporate feel and a formality, but one individual stated he had expected a 'fast paced and dynamic' workplace whereas another said they expected it to be 'more bureaucratic' and another 'paternalistic'.

Evidence suggests that the more inside information an applicant has about an organisation the more likely they are to have met expectations, (Earnest, 2011; Moser, 2005). This would apply also to expectations regarding the organisational culture. Where information about this is lacking or incomplete, individuals try to make sense of the situation, making assumptions from previous experience, professional ideologies and stereotypes. Louis (1980) says that individuals can make 'interpretational errors' due to reliance on previous experience. Literature regarding sense-making (Louis,1980; Weick, 2005; Maitliss and Christianson, 2014) gives an insight in to the thought processes involved in forming expectations and the formation of 'schema'. Schema are patterns of information formed by individuals to help 'fill the gaps' in available information, (Rousseau 2001) and to '*interpret everyday events*, (Louis 1980:8) creating an overall picture or ideal notion, (Turker ad Altuntas 2015). This study demonstrates the formation of schema pre-employment can also be influenced by other sources such as stories of family and friends working at the organisation and customer and employer branding.

Q2. How are individuals able to remain happily with the organisation despite an initial mismatch in expectations regarding the organisational culture?

Findings from both the pilot and longitudinal current studies revealed that a mismatch in expectations can result in strong feelings. These can be both positive or negative depending on whether the reality was better than expected or worse. Strong emotions were reported in twenty seven of the thirty participants. This is in line with literature regarding adapting to change and appraisal or perception of the new environment as a possible threat leading to stress (Seyle 1936; Lazarus 1966) and literature regarding unmet expectations leading to '*surprise*' or '*reality shock*', (Louis 1980:1953). Feelings varied from excitement and delight at the unexpectedly friendly culture, anxiety and uncertainty about the amount of change or upset about the perceived lack of support as they had been 'left to get on with it'. Three individuals however remained calm and quietly observant. It was interesting to follow the individual journeys from these initial reactions and to note that those who were very happy or excited at induction were not necessarily those who would continue happily with their employment and those who were very unhappy on induction included individuals who would go on to win awards with the global company for high achievement.

One very confident recruit in software (P4) appeared quite excited at T1. He stated that he was 'very happy' as he had worked for software companies before and said 'it was just the same.' Less than six months later however, he was let go from the global company as his behaviour was not acceptable. In comparison, one recruit to a sales role (P2) was very unhappy at T1 as he had not expected the amount of change and thought there would be 'more structure' to his role. He went on to do extremely well with the organisation. There appeared to be several moderating influences on individual trajectories and these will be discussed more in the following section regarding what helps individuals to adapt. This section is concerned specifically with the initial moving forwards from the shock of a mismatch in expectations.

An increase in emotions appeared to be due directly to the mismatch in expectations regarding organisational culture. Literature regarding acculturation and adjusting to national cultures, (Black et al, 1991; Sanchez et al, 2000; Triandis, 2006; Oberg 1960) also talks of an initial culture shock. Symptoms of culture shock can include stress, uncertainty, disorientation, excitement, isolation and 'foreigness', (Marx 2011). Culture shock is described by Furnham and Bochner, (1986) as a, "*psychological reaction to an unfamiliar environment*". This describes well the reaction of new hires in this study. Acculturation theory however, posits that there are three stages of adapting to national culture and culture shock is the second stage, (Oberg 1960). The first stage in Oberg's model of adapting to national culture is the honeymoon phase, where there is great 'excitement' and 'curiosity' regarding adjusting to national cultures, (Marx 2011). This pattern of adapting to national culture was replicated in the trajectory of sixty percent of the participants in the current research. Three individuals who were not happy at induction stage did not appear to have experienced a honeymoon period at all. Nonetheless, theory regarding adapting to national culture overlaps considerably with adapting to organisational culture and provides a greater understanding of the individual experience of working in a different culture.

It is interesting to note that literature regarding breach of psychological contract also talks of individual coping and social skills. Psychological contract literature provides a useful framework for explicating how individuals move forwards from a mismatch of expectations. Although findings from the pilot study appeared to support a clear link between a mismatch in expectations of culture and breach of psychological contract, there is some doubt as to whether there is a direct correlation between the two concepts. With nine out of the fifteen participants in the pilot study having gained their expectations from their experiences as a customer, their responses indicated that the retail organisation had been responsible for their expectation and had therefore give them some form of unwritten promise, (Rousseau 1995). Many (66.7%), of participants in the longitudinal study however were clear that they had formed their expectations from sources other than the organisation. Ten talked of stereotyping the organisation and another ten stated they had formed their expectations from their previous experience of employment. They did not give any indication that they blamed the organisation for the culture not being as they had anticipated. Even the three who were most unhappy did not talk of there having been any kind of promise from the organisation but rather a lack of information.

Having made the distinction between the two concepts, (a mismatch in expectations and a breach of psychological contract regarding a change of culture), literature regarding breach of psychological contract did continue to provide a useful framework. It helped in the understanding of how individuals move forwards following the upset of finding things were not as they expected them to be on arrival at a new organisation. In their study of post violation, Tomprou et al (2015:1) talk of the 'negative ramifications' of breach or violation of pc for both the employer and employee. These include the employee becoming 'cynical and distrustful' and having less commitment. As was seen in the current study, turnover was found not to be affected.

The four possible outcomes of a violation of pc in Tomprous' model, including, 'reactivation' thriving' 'impairment' and 'dissolution' help to provide further insight in to the differing experiences of participants in this study. Those who were 'very happy,' at T1 as the culture was much better than expected, can be seen to be thriving on a 'more beneficial contract', (Tomprou et al 2015). Looking at the individual trajectories however revealed that these individuals went on to have very different outcomes. By T2, four of these individuals were less happy, two due to the amount of work, (one of which was too busy to meet for interview), one due to the amount of change and one, already mentioned, who was asked to leave because his behaviour was not acceptable. Although the culture was initially experienced to be more beneficial, or expectations were better than expected, this did not indicate a successful adaptation to the culture or long term career with the organisation. By T3 two participants who had initially been very happy were absent from work due to stress.

Two participants might be described as accepting a contract that was 'less beneficial' or 'impaired' (Tomprou et al 2015). Both said the culture was 'okay' but appeared disgruntled due to a reported mismatch in expectations. One had expected the culture to be 'fast paced' and did not feel 'massively embraced' by his team. The other stated that the culture was 'good' but at the same time expressed a dissatisfaction with the welcome she had had saying 'It was okay. You just have to get on with it.' She also added that, 'it can't be as bad as my last job'. Field notes made by the author stated that neither of these individuals appeared happy at work. This was a largely subjective observation in that neither smiled other than a small smile on passing and both appeared emotionally flat. Their comments supported this observation however, 'I don't think there is a particularly good culture here… it seems the louder you shout the further you get' and 'there is lots of stress' from the participant who said it couldn't be as bad as her last job. This comment is significant. Having experienced a breach of contract previously employees are likely to be less trusting, less committed and more 'vigilant' for possible future breaches, (Robinson, 1996; Briner and Conway, 2006).

Both of these individuals continued to work for the organisation for over three years and one is still there over four years later. Neither could be described as 'thriving' but they were not unhappy. Their experience of working for the global company was 'okay'. How did they manage to continue working and to be functional? The participant who had expected it to be a fast paced said at T2, 'the culture is slow and plodding' and at T3, 'the culture is laid back. There is no sense of urgency'. Both of these individuals remained at the organisation for several years, functioning but not thriving. One is still there after four years. What is especially interesting to note is that after the first six

months, the participant who reported the culture to be much slower than expected and thought that people were 'very laid back' discovered that people were actually working long hours at home and when they came in to the office they enjoyed socializing with colleagues.

Participants in the longitudinal study did not express the same strength of emotion on experiencing a mismatch in their expectations of culture as those in the pilot study. Participants at the retail organisation who found the culture at head office to be far from the 'ideal' supportive culture expected following their experiences as a customer could fall in to Tomprou's category of being in a 'chronic and dysfunctional state of felt violation' (2015:2) or 'dissolution'. These individuals expressed anger and feelings of anxiety. As stated in the chapter exploring psychological contract, the term 'victim of violation' appears extreme and inappropriate. It would not appear to be a true description of the participants in the longitudinal study. However, those at the retail organisation who expressed strong feelings may perhaps view themselves as a victim of an injustice. Although there may be no legal recognition for a psychological contract, the fallout can have a lasting impact on emotions and attitudes, (Spindler 1994). A breach may be seen as unethical, (O'Donohue and Nelson 2009). The two participants described above appeared to remain in a chronic state of unhappiness. Initially both stated things were 'okay' at T1. Both continued to function but never appeared to be particularly happy or thriving. One of these individuals was nominated to join the aspiring leadership program but he left the organisation soon after completing the course.

There were only three participants at the global company who stated they were dissatisfied or disappointed by the mismatch between the 'actual' culture and their 'ideal' culture, (Turker and Altuntas 2015) but two of these individuals were found to move on from the upset and to go on to successfully adapt to the culture. Literature regarding breach of psychological contract and violation, talks of the negative impact of a breach on commitment, (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler 2003). The negative impact however, is moderated by influences such as job security and individual factors such as personality, (Conway et al, 2014; McInnis et al, 2009; Solinger, 2014). Individual influences were clearly demonstrated in the current study, in particular with regards to coping mechanisms. The recruit to Sales who at T1 stated he did not feel great about joining and found the culture to be 'more disparate, disjointed and less structured' than expected, stated that he would 'remain open minded'.

This open mindedness and optimistic outlook are seen to be a key characteristic of resilient individuals, (Baruth and Caroll, 2002; Robertson and Cooper, 2015). Resilience, which is defined by the American Psychological Association (2012) as 'adapting well in the face of adversity' is mentioned in literature regarding all areas of work psychology that were studied for this research including breach of pc, adapting to national culture and socialization. A negative mismatch in expectations regarding the organisational culture might be viewed as an adverse situation. The term 'bouncing back' from adversity is used in relation to resilience (Connor and Davison 2003) and was evident in participants in this research. As discussed in Chapter Four, Bonanno and Diminich (2013) distinguish between 'minimal impact' and 'emergent resilience'. Findings from the current study suggest that minimal impact resilience is required in order to move

forwards from the initial upset of a negative mismatch in expectations as this is a one off event. Continuing adjustment to a culture where there is not a person culture fit may require more ongoing resilience,(emergent resilience). Studies of psychological resilience link the concept with individual characteristics such as coping mechanisms and emotion regulation. Cascio (2009: 872) states: "*The concept of resilience is central to coping with demands and challenges*" such as change and there is a "need to withstand the unexpected".

Another participant who was not happy with the culture on joining stated;

'*I was quieter initially so as not to offend the existing work of the team. As I have seen this culture emerge I have been more confident to influence direction with my own experience, safe in the knowledge that my opinion is valued ... When you find all is not going as expected or difficult moments I pull back. Like situations that keep you busy with unimportant tasks. I focus on small realistic successes and deliver on those*'

The participant appeared to be using logical thinking rather than being ruled by his emotions. This demonstrates a degree of emotional intelligence, particularly emotion regulation and positive reappraisal, (Isen, 1978; Tugade and Fredrickson, 2007; Bonanno and Diminich 2013), characteristics of resilient individuals. Emotional intelligence was seen to be key for individuals facing change and adversity and was especially important for those adapting to a new culture, (Goleman 2004; Mayer et al 2008).

Individual coping mechanisms are clearly of great importance in overcoming an initial negative mismatch in expectations. However, findings from the current research demonstrate that other influences also helped individuals to move forwards from the initial negative mismatch. As one individual stated, 'the company has lots of products and opportunities. There is a lot going for it'. Rewards and benefits were seen to be important to participants at both the retailer and the global organisation studied for this research. They acted as a driver, something that gave people a determination to keep going despite the obstacles such as unexpected culture. This is supported by studies looking at what makes people stay with a company, (George, 2015; Self, 2011).

Social support is another mediating factor which was seen to influence the ability to 'bounce back' from the upset of a mismatch on expectations regarding the oc. Those who had good relationship with their line manager and/or their teams (such as the individual who stated that the European Director was fighting his corner), were less affected by unexpected culture and organisational changes.

Participants joining the global organisation faced a degree of uncertainty due to meeting with an unexpected culture and a considerable amount of organisational change. As is typical in this type of situation, the new hires underwent a process of sensemaking, (Weick et al 2005; Maitliss and Christianson, 2014) whereby they interpreted and understood the circumstances through their interaction with others, influenced very much by their previous experience.

Q3. What helps an individual to adapt to the culture?

Variables, which enabled a smooth adaptation to organisational culture, were many. There were however, three key influences, which were found to have the greatest impact on adapting to organisational culture. These were Individual Factors, Belonging (team integration) and Direction (including leadership). These dominant themes, arose from both the pilot and longitudinal study during interviews, focus groups and participant observations. These were multi factorial and included both individual characteristics and organisational factors. It was also interesting to note the correlation between adapting to organisational culture and the influence of environmental factors, which in the two organisations studied, were a significant influence.

1.Individual factors

Drawing on literature regarding resilience, socialisation and adapting to change, individual characteristics which enabled a smooth adaptation to organisational culture included coping skills, emotional intelligence, (Slaski and Cartwright 2002), including emotion regulation, sensemaking and learning ability. Social Cognitive theory, (Bandura 1977) was found to be especially relevant. Looking at individual trajectories helped to reveal which individual influences impacted on adaptation to the culture. Those individuals who appeared to have a smooth adaptation to the culture demonstrated a high degree of emotional intelligence at T1. Field notes revealed that these individuals appeared far calmer on induction. They demonstrated an ability to manage their emotions and showed good self-control. This enabled them to observe and learn the culture more easily, their minds were clear, not distracted by strong emotions, (Goleman 1998). Emotional intelligence also helped these individuals to pick up on social cues, having an ability to read emotion in others through their gestures and facial expressions. They soon learnt what language and behaviours were acceptable to the group, (albeit the team or wider organisation), by gaining immediate feedback through facial expressions such as a frown or a smile. They observed and copied the group's behaviours and held back on revealing too much of themselves until they were familiar with the rules of the organisational culture. One quote from a participant exemplifies this approach:

'I'm still letting it wash over me to some extent. I think it's important to let the business show itself before I make any decisions about how I operate. I'm absorbing it all. I've brought all the old stuff with me but don't use it straight away'

Those who showed a high degree of strong emotion at T1 took longer to learn the culture and had a less straightforward adaptation. This was not only in those who were upset due to a negative mismatch in expectations regarding the culture but also, and especially in, those who were very excited. Two individuals in particular who field notes recorded were very happy and confident, appeared to miss subtle cues and hidden aspects of the deeper culture, making assumptions that the culture was as it had been at other software organisations. The consequences of not learning the culture, (as demonstrated by P4) were catastrophic. Others who stated they were 'very happy' on induction also appeared to struggle with the culture at a later stage. By T3 two further participants had left, both of which had been very happy on induction. One left due to ill

health with work related stress. The other left unexpectedly before T3 but reasons for his sudden departure were not clear. Not all participants who stated they were very happy or appeared excited on induction, experienced problems later on. One key influence on their continued enjoyment of the role appeared to be the support of the team.

Those who were very unhappy or anxious at T1 also experienced a less smooth transition to the organisational culture. In direct contrast to those who had started very happy and then struggled, two of the three who struggled to begin with managed to overcome their initial upset, (as discussed in the previous section) and went on to do extremely well with the organisation. The third individual did not express happiness or a feeling of belonging at any of the interview stages. She was off sick with stress at T3 but managed to return and to remain, (unhappily) with the organisation for a further two years. During this time, she had several long-term absences. There were marked differences in approach between these three individuals. The first two were optimistic despite the initial challenge. They were seen to have 'adaptive attitiudes' , (Van den Heuvel:2013). As mentioned in the previous section, the first stated he was keeping an open mind and that the company had good benefits. The other said he focused on 'small realistic successes'. They demonstrated a great deal of resilience as well as emotional intelligence, continuing to perform well and going on to thrive despite considerable challenges. The third, who had been off sick with stress, talked about the amount of change and uncertainty at both T1 and T2. She did not demonstrate any effective coping mechanisms or feelings of control but instead was lacking in self-efficacy and did not see herself as being an active influence on the situation. To some extent she showed learned helplessness, (Seligman: 1975). She did say however that HR and her partner were supportive. This support may have been what enabled her to stay with the organisation despite her anxiety and unhappiness for two years.

Although there is scant literature available regarding the process of learning the behaviours and language associated with organisational culture, literature regarding Socialisation, (Ashford and Saks 1997), gave an insight in to how new hires learn during the on-boarding process and ongoing. This was largely related to aspects of their role and tasks. To some extent this same information seeking approach to learning, (Morrison: 1993) can be applied to learning the culture but with marked differences. Most learning for role and tasks is accumulative, with skill being developed over time and knowledge acquired in previous roles being helpful and indeed necessary in order to understand the current role. Concerning learning of organisational culture, previous experience can actually be a hindrance. A process of 'unfreezing' or unlearning is required, (Lewis 1958), as ways of working, language and values may be entirely different. As was discussed earlier, previous experience of culture will inform the sense-making process and can lead to 'interpretational errors' and a 'discrepancy in expectations' (Louis 1980). In learning tasks and role, previous experience can justifiably lead to confidence. With adapting to organisational culture, confidence born from assumptions that the culture will be the same as previously experienced could have disastrous consequences.

Socialisation and on-boarding usually take place though a formal process of imparting information to new hires. The purpose of on-boarding is to reduce the anxiety and

uncertainty of individuals, (Derven 2008) and to help new hires move from a position of an 'organisational outsider to become an organisational insider', (Bauer: 2011). It could therefore provide an opportunity for organisations to inform new hires of the company mission, its values, (Gilmore and Turner 2010) and its culture. Very few organisations achieve this however, (Bauer and Erdogan 2011) and the focus of most on-boarding programs remains that of policies, regulations and 'role-related expectations' (Bauer and Erdogan 2011). Even the most basic formal induction process is becoming less common, with companies seeking to get new hires on-board as quickly as possible. This is likely to become more common if current trends of shorter employment tenures continue. In the global organisation studied only nine of the participants had had any form of induction and only six had had an in person orientation. This is more usual in American organisations, which favour a more individual approach, (Pasquale: 1978).

Findings from this study however indicate that formal induction is not the best approach for learning organisational culture. For a formal induction with regards to the organisational culture to be effective, HR and Management would need to be fully aware of the deep underlying culture, (including any subcultures) and to be open and honest about this. Spouting rhetoric regarding the ideal culture will not help new hires to deal with the current, actual culture even though it may be helpful for all to know what the culture the organisation aspires to. Learning the culture occurs best through a process of observation and copying language and behaviours, (Bandura 2001). Observation is optimal when an individual has good emotion regulation, is open-minded and has good emotional intelligence. Having a good 'social model' (Bandura 2001) in the form of a mentor helps a new hire to witness the behaviours and pick up on the rules and regulations faster as well as to check if they are not sure what behaviour or language (such as on an email) is appropriate in the organisation. As the CEO of the global technology company stated, (2017); 'don't impose yourself on the company but dig, dig, dig' in order to learn what the culture is. This is the best advice for new hires, to manage your emptions and observe.

2. Belonging (Team Integration)

Having the right individual attributes is essential for a smooth adaptation to organisational culture but the influence of team as a mediating factor is also of great significance. This section looks at the characteristics of teams and the ways in which they can embrace and support new hires, acting as social models to demonstrate behaviours and values or, in the case of remote or 'closed' teams causing individuals to seek this vital support elsewhere. Team values and behaviours, and the fit of these with new hire values and behaviours, were found to be important. Behaviours and values varied considerably between teams, especially between the different business areas. Subcultures were especially apparent in teams that had been acquired by the global organisation. Team was a dominant theme and belonging to a team of utmost importance to all participants. Those who did not experience a fit with their team or whose teams were based remotely, sought to connect with local teams or to individuals in the wider team. Belonging to a supportive team helps learning and therefore adaptation considerably. Literature consulted included social identity and group formation as well as person-organisation fit.

The differences between teams within the same organisation became very apparent during this longitudinal study. Some were local, office based teams working together on a 9-5 basis whereas others were global, their members working from home or various offices around the world. Local, office-based teams did not necessarily lead to a more supportive or welcoming team. Two participants, one from the retail organisation and one the global company, experienced great difficulty in joining teams, which were essentially 'closed' to new hires. These were teams who had worked together for many years, who had formed a close bond and, as one participant stated, they had their own 'shared stories' and 'history'. They were not as receptive to newcomers, possibly seeing them as a threat to the established team cohesion or perhaps being unaware of the needs of the newcomer. This finding is contrary to research on cohesive groups (Liang et al 2015; Salas et al 2015) which posits that more cohesive groups are more supportive. These studies however focus largely on group performance of existing members and do not address the ease at which newcomers join cohesive groups. The number of those who experienced difficulty in joining a closed team is too small to draw any firm conclusion and indeed there were participants who joined cohesive teams who were very much welcomed.

The example of two young participants who joined a close-knit team in one of the software offices highlights the difference that having a supportive team makes. All members of the team welcomed and supported these new hires and they were invited out on social events and wellbeing events such as lunchtime walks. Although the team reported in to a line manager based in the US, a local mentor was allocated to the new hires. The mentor, whose role was to be a point of contact, to guide and support, was one of the team. Most importantly for adaptation to organisational culture, this mentor provided a 'social model' (Bandura: 2001). Working closely with the mentor provided new hires with an opportunity to observe at close hand, the group behaviours, values and language used. The mentor acted as a signpost for help and also as a checkpoint for the new hires to consult with if they were unsure as to appropriate language to use in an email or a meeting or how to approach someone at a more senior level. Both of these participants established a close bond with the team and expressed a deep gratitude for the support shown.

There were clear differences in the culture of teams from different business areas and subcultures amongst teams in the same line of business. Field notes mention the enthusiasm and energy of new hires to the sales teams. Two new hires to telesales stated they 'love it here' and talked about a need to be successful and for 'good career prospects', hoping for early promotion. The culture was 'less strict' than they had expected, based on previous experience. The telesales teams had a loud and lively culture. Those new to the corporate area of business tended to be more reserved and this was in keeping with the culture in head office where teams worked quietly. These were obvious, superficial aspects of the culture and in line with stereotypes. Various teams within the corporate office had their own underlying, 'deeper culture' which took longer for the new hires to learn. Some corporate teams were friendly and welcoming, others less close knit due to high attrition and restructuring. Some teams in the corporate office had worked together for many years having moved together from the old manufacturing building. They worked a more traditional 9 – 5 and the line manager was quite autocratic. There were complaints and a general discontent about the move.

Other corporate teams worked agile, mainly home based and coming in to the office once or twice a week. These teams appeared to be livelier and more talkative. However, as one new hire discovered, the appearance of doing less work due to chatting was false as these individuals were often working long hours when at home.

Although, superficially at least, the corporate and sales teams conformed to stereotypes of the lines of business, teams within the software area of business did not. Two of the three individuals who were unhappy on induction were recruits to sales but within software. New hires to the software teams found most difficulty adapting to the organisational culture. This was also the area of business, which recruited the very confident new hire, (P4) who was asked to leave after less than six months. Software was a new area for the business (which had a long history of manufacturing). Participants in this study arrived with expectations of it being like other software companies. They expected a similar work environment such as companies such as Google have with fun slides, bean bags and table tennis as well as several corporate social events. They anticipated more independence for the team, several having come from small start-up organisations. The differing acquisitions each had their own local culture. Until recently these teams had been allowed to keep their previous company name as well as their previous HR policies. A focus group held with a recent acquisition team, (previously a small start-up company) noted use of words such as 'overwhelming' to describe the larger organisation's attempts to standardise language and practices to be one company. Everything on the intranet and newsletters, posters and links to benefits was prefixed by 'My (org)'. They were not used to 'systems dictating how to do this and that' and to have so many policies and procedures. They were used to a freer more creative environment with many having been freelance beforehand. There was initially a considerable amount of attrition from the group although this has since slowed. One participant summed up the feeling of the group, 'we feel like a small part of something much bigger.'

Events such as corporate social responsibility outings help to bring an element of fun and socialising as well as a sense of 'pride'. Joining social events with the team was seen to speed up the process of bonding for these software new hires and was also mentioned by others as having helped them to feel as if they belonged. It allowed them to get to know their colleagues on a more personal level with the team but also to create stories of which they were part. Going out with the team socially helped the new hires to identify with the team, to establish a social identity with them, (Tajfel and Turner: 1979). They felt part of the team and were reported to be performing well. Others mentioned how joining social events with the team, such as a game of football, helped them to feel as if they belonged.

A need to belong to the team was compelling for the new hires in this study. Those who did not fit with their local or remote team sought to connect with others in the wider team. They did not report being happy until friendships had been established. For one participant (a new hire from the corporate office) this was not until two years after she had joined. At each interview stage and at subsequent impromptu meetings, she stated she was not happy, commenting, 'if they won't be friendly then neither will I'. She also noted, 'I've made a couple of friends that's all I need'. This need for belonging to a group, either the team or the wider network, is consistent with Maslow's five classes of basic

human need (cited: Arnold and Randall et al, 2010) and in line with literature regarding social identity and group theory, (Easterbrook 2013), which state that belonging is a basic human need, (Baumeister and Leary: 1995). Participants who joined with other new hires found that this helped hugely with a feeling of belonging. They had a ready-made group to whom they were attached, with shared experiences. The group offered each other support and were able to consult with each other as to their experiences of the culture. Having other people joining after them also helped individuals to feel as if they belonged. They were no longer the new one.

Theories of social identity and group theory posit that a feeling of belonging to a group is based on similarities to the group, (Tajfel and Turner: 1979) and this is supported by theories of person-organisation fit, (Morley, 2007). One participant in particular clearly demonstrated the theory of person -culture fit, his quieter nature finding his team and their banter loud brash and insensitive. He never felt that he belonged to the team but did establish connections with the wider team. Person culture-fit theory states that teams made up of individuals with similar values will perform better, (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1996). This is in contrast to studies such as that by Fay et al, 2006, (cited Arnold and Randall et al: 2010), which found a strong link with diverse teams and high performance. Having the same values as the team was seen to influence adapting to organisational culture. Those whose values matched the team values helped. Those who stated they valued friendliness and support and found this in their team stated they felt they belonged sooner than others who did not have a match. One individual for example said she valued honesty and courtesy and found the latter lacking to some extent in her team. Another individual stated he valued enthusiasm but found his team to be 'slow and plodding'. He said the wider team, (the organisation) were generally enthusiastic and also self-starters of which he said he was one and found a better fit with colleagues beyond his immediate team. Having a person-organisation fit helped individuals to feel as if they belonged sooner.

The current study found a correlation between being busy and a feeling of belonging to the team. Reasons for this include a belief by individuals that they were contributing, that they were adding something to the team, playing their part in achieving the group goals and making a difference. This helped them to feel valued. Those who adapted to the culture of their team or wider organisation felt they belonged. Both of these findings are consistent with literature regarding belonging at work, (McClure and Brown 2008). Feeling they belonged reduced anxiety and allowed individuals to be more observant and learn the culture more readily. Studies regarding belonging to a group links this with an increase in resilience, (Scarf et al: 2016), wellbeing (Mellor et al: 2008) and performance, (Kirkhaug 2010). Conversely, adapting well appears to foster feelings of belonging.

3. Direction (including leadership)

As discussed in Chapter Three, theory of Organisational Culture links certain cultures with organisational effectiveness, (Barney, 1986; Denison, 1990; Nieminen and Denison, 2013) and sees leaders as playing a crucial role in using culture to achieve that success, (Bass and Avolio, 1993; Ogbonna and Harris, 2000; Schein, 2010). Leaders are seen as setting the initial culture, (Schein 1985). During the period of this longitudinal

research the global organisation studied was going through a substantial transformation. The new CEO appeared well informed regarding theory of organisational culture. He made clear his aim to introduce a new organisational culture, a high performing culture and one that would unite all the various lines of business and acquisitions under one umbrella. His vision for the company and its culture was repeated frequently through various channels of communication including the intranet, newsletters, roadshows, 'huddle' meetings and a 'culture group'. A wallet card with the core values on it was given to all employees. Perhaps the most innovative way of spreading the message of a new culture was a 'Jam'. This was an online, Facebook type, conversation to which all employees were invited to join regarding the culture of the organisation.

Participants in the study talked of the positive influence the new CEO had in uniting the various acquisitions. One individual stated, "there has been a big change in the company with more direction from the new CEO. We are all using the same language and phrases now". Another stated, "The culture has changed with the new CEO. There is much more focus and more pulling together of different acquisitions in to one (org)." In communicating his clear vision, the new CEO can be seen as a transformational, charismatic leader, (Burns, 1978; Bass and Riggio, 2005). The focus and direction that he gave was welcomed by many and gave an answer to questions participants asked such as "what's the big picture?" and "what's the purpose?" These questions were asked by participants in both the pilot study and longitudinal study including those attending the focus groups and comments from current employees observed during the study. Another stated, "I could do with a bit more focus". The need for clear direction was very apparent and is supported by studies of resilience, which found having a sense of purpose helped people to continue forwards despite adversity, (Lundman et at, 2010; Ishibashi et al, 2016). The relentless and consistent messaging from the CEO was not welcomed by all however, with one participant claiming she felt she was being brainwashed.

The theme of Leadership included codes regarding Line Management support as well as direction from the CEO. Six participants in the longitudinal study mentioned appreciating the support of their line manager. The importance of line managers both as a 'social model' (Bandura: 2001) and as a support (CIPD and HSE: 2009) was observed and also their role in helping new hires to make sense of the new culture, (Maitliss and Christianson, 2014; Weick, 1995). Two participants stated that their line manager's behaviour did not 'fit' with the culture of empowerment, one describing their manager as 'dictatorial' and another as 'micromanaging'. Line Management behaviours need to be in line with the organisational culture in order to aid adaptation, (Hartnell et al, 2016; Nieminen, Biermiere-Hanson and Denison, 2013). The underlying culture, (one of empowerment and self-motivation), was inhibited in some teams by line managers who were more autocratic and micro managing. This tended to be in corporate teams such as the one previously mentioned, who had moved from the old manufacturing site, and also in certain sales teams.

The culture at the global company was seen to be in keeping with many American firms which value individualism or 'self-sufficiency' rather than having a collectivist approach where there is an emphasis on belonging to a group or team, (Hofstede: 2001). Leading

a global company has many challenges for a CEO, not least in communicating in a style that is acceptable to all cultures. Leadership theory posits that leaders are influenced by national and organisational cultures, (House et al: 1999) and in the organisation studied differences in local management style can be seen to some extent. There are however certain attributes and behaviours which are valued in all national cultures. As studied by the GLOBE project, (House et al: 1999), these include having integrity, being enthusiastic and motivational, a confidence builder, a team builder and being intelligent. Attributes which were consistently not valued by national cultures included being a loner, being dictatorial and irritable. New hires joining teams where the line manager exhibited these negative qualities did not adapt to the culture as easily having no clear social model for guidance.

Q4. Are there qualitatively distinct stages of adaptation to org culture?

The stages of adaptation identified were informed largely by participant responses but also from observations made by the researcher as participant observer, data from focus groups and relevant theory from the literature review. The stages became clear as a pattern emerged from the interview transcripts. The pattern consisted of emotions, thoughts and behaviours of the participants at each of the three interview stages. Further stages were then observed throughout the ethnographic study through focus groups, observations made and impromptu conversations held. One of the most striking themes was that of strong emotions at T1. These could be negative emotions such as anxiety or disappointment or positive such as excitement and happiness. Once this stage had been identified others became apparent. That formation of expectations took place prior to joining the organisation was evident in response to the question, 'where do expectations come from'? The majority of new hires at the global company stated they had formed their expectations from previous work experience and for those at the retail organisation expectations had been formed from their experience as a customer. This was therefore labelled the pre entry stage. Initially the establishing stage was called the 'mimic' stage as participants at T2 talked of copying team behaviours such as speeding up or slowing down their pace of work, joining standing meetings and shouting out at meetings. It soon became clear however that the most important issue for individuals at this stage was forming friendships within the local or wider team. This appeared to be very important to them in terms of their adaptation.

Although the stages were common to all participants, they did not necessarily reach the differing stages at the same time. Three for example rushed through the first two stages to reach the 'self' stage. The belonging stage appeared to coincide with people stating they were busy and was reached at different times for the participants. Assimilation was reached when there was a strong identity with the organisation and the individual has become an expert in knowledge of cultural norms. This stage was only seen in participants in the Pilot Study who had been with the retailer for ten years or more. Comments such as 'having the organisation in my blood' and 'I can't remember a time when I wasn't here' suggest people may have reached this stage. This was only seen in participants in the pilot study who had been with the organisation for more than three years. After four years of observation at the global company, the author did not witness any of the participants having reached this stage. One individual stated he still felt new after three years. This was a person whose role was field based.

Stage Theory such as stages of change, (Lewin 1958), of grief (Kubler-Ross 1969) and of group formation, (Tuckman 1965), were consulted. There were some similarities between the Staged Adaptation Model (SAM) and Lewin's stages of change. An initial 'unfreezing' of any previous culture is required to allow an open mind approach so that the new culture can be observed, clearly and without assumptions being made. Change to behaviours are then made and these are practised until familiar and ingrained as the norm. Lewin's three-stage model did not incorporate all the stages apparent in adapting to organisational culture.

The staged adaptation model could be superimposed on both Lewin's and Tuckman's models:

Unfreezing		Change		Refreezing	
Pre Entry	Alert	Establishing	Self	Belonging	Assimilation
Forming	Forming		Storming	Norming	Performing

Stages of Tuckman's model of group formation (1965) could be seen to overlap considerably with the SAM model with new hires becoming part of a team however the SAM model focuses on individuals taking on the group behaviours. The need for direction and guidance from the leader, mentioned in Tuckman's forming stage was seen to be applicable to new hires at the Alert stage. The individual trying to establish themselves and coaching undertaken in Tuckman's Storming stage can be seen at the Establishing and Self stages of SAM. Both Norming and Performing stages correlate with the Belonging and also Assimilation stages.

The stages of SAM are fluid and each stage can be visited for differing lengths of time depending on the individual. As was seen in the longitudinal study, three individuals raced through the first two stages to reach the Self stage. Missing a stage can have serious consequences in terms of adapting. Individuals who make assumptions and who do not take time to observe and learn the culture can get it very wrong. They miss out on subtle cues as to the deeper culture. When they reach the 'Self' stage, they can mistakenly believe that certain behaviours will be acceptable. Depending on influences such as if a role is office based or remote and if a team is supportive and socializes outside of work, the belonging stage can be reached in less than a year or more than three years.

By addressing the stages that individuals go through in adapting to culture it was seen that an immediate person/culture fit might not always be apparent but that individuals can indeed adapt. Conversely, there may appear to be a great fit initially but once individuals reach the 'self' stage, their behaviours may reveal that there is not a true fit. It can take many years to reach 'Assimilation'. Indeed, some may find they never reach this latter stage. If current employment trends continue and the average tenure with a firm is three years then this may have a huge impact on the continuity and strength of a culture. Once the generations who joined believing they had a job for life have left, the

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culture may disappear with them. Strong longstanding cultures may be replaced by a more transparent, transactional culture of hot-desking and 'gig' employment. The resulting impact this might have on social identity and belonging is yet to be seen. It may be that the social network and friendships are formed more readily but not as enduring but it may also free people from the binding control that culture has on behaviours and the back biting and undermining that can occur amongst colleagues who work day in day out together for years and who have become complacent and entitled. A change of culture can lead individuals back to the pre-entry stage of the SAM model as they start the process of adapting to the new culture again. As was suggested by participants in the pilot study this change of culture may lead to a breach of psychological contract and individuals may not be able to move forwards from this set back as well as the pre hires move forwards from a mismatch in expectations. The SAM model can therefore be seen as cyclical.

9.4 General findings

The key findings of this study were that expectations regarding the culture of an organisation are formed, prior to joining, from influences such as previous experience, experiences as a customer of the organisation, branding, (including website information) and stereotyping of the organisation. A mismatch in expectations was found to be common. Although findings from the Pilot Study indicated that a mismatch in expectations regarding the culture might be a cause of a breach of psychological contract there was not enough evidence to support this in the Longitudinal Study. A small number (less than 10%) of new hires were not able to move forwards from a mismatch in expectations and were either off sick with stress or left the organisation within six months. The majority however, were seen to learn and adapt to the culture. The study identified six stages of adaptation to organisational culture, from pre entry to assimilation in to the culture. Influences on adapting to culture were highlighted including what helps individuals to move through the stages of adaptation. These include individual factors such as resilience and emotional intelligence, organisational factors such as team embrace and on going support and clear direction from leadership. Environmental factors, which were seen to influence adaptation, include the economic environment, advances in technology and globalisation.

The study was informed by literature regarding studies of organisational culture, psychological contracting, socialisation, (including Sense-making and SCT) adaptation (including resilience, emotional intelligence and adapting to change) and social identity. Findings from the current research will add to knowledge of socialisation and organisational culture. It may also add to knowledge regarding antecedents of psychological contract formation with regards specifically to organisational culture. The study brings together the constructs of adaptation and organisational culture.

A key finding of the study was that a mismatch in expectations regarding the organisational culture was found to be common amongst new hires. The true, underlying culture of an organisation was not communicated by organisations to new hires, (or potential new hires), possibly due to a number of reasons:

- HR and Management may not be aware of the deeper culture through lack of investigation
- It may be that the true culture is difficult to capture or to summarise
- Communication from the organisation may be out of date and not reflect recent changes
- Employer Value Proposition and Employer Branding may promote an 'ideal' rather than actual culture

Once new hires met with the organisational culture, a mismatch in expectations led to a process of sensemaking, whereby they made sense of the unexpected culture and the uncertainty and ambiguity around this, (Weick et al 2005), turning the situation in to one that could be understood. Interpretation of the culture and subsequent sensemaking is largely a social process, involving interacting with others but it was also informed by their previous experience such as previous employment and experiences as a customer, (Maitliss 2005). It was usual for emotions to be strong at this time, either negative due to uncertainty and anxiety, or positive with excitement due to the experienced culture being better than expected. As with adapting to any change, being resilient was seen to be of great importance in coping with the uncertainty of joining a new organisational culture. Individuals who demonstrated resilience, in particular minimal impact resilience, (Bonanno and Diminich 2013) were able to move forwards following the upset of a mismatch in expectations and have a successful adaptation to the culture.

 There was little evidence to support that strong emotions were due to a breach or violation of psychological contract at this stage. Most new hires did not believe a promise had been made by the organisation regarding the culture. Apart from one individual who had gained his expectations from the website (and found the culture less fast paced than expected), most new hires were clear that the expectations they had gained of what the culture would be like were formed largely from their own experiences. Breach of psychological contract however may well have been the cause of the hurt, anger and upset witnessed by participants in the pilot study who had been with the retail organisation for many years and were unhappy about the change of culture. Literature regarding psychological contracting was informative with regards to formation of schema. Studies of socialization and psychological contract formation indicate that expectations or schema continue to form, (Turnley and Feldman, 1999; Rousseau: 2001) during employment. Rousseau (1995:23-54), talks of 'internal and external influences'. Internal influences include such as 'supervisor-related incidents' and external influences include the sources previously discussed.

Those who demonstrated emotion regulation were able to observe and learn the culture more easily. Having a calm, clear mind enabled new hires to notice behaviours and to read social cues from colleagues, which informed them of the rules and boundaries set by the culture. Individuals with a high degree of emotional intelligence were able to read social cues in others more accurately and to adapt their behaviour accordingly. Individuals who were open-minded were less influenced by assumptions and stereotypes. Their perceptions of the actual culture was more optimistic but realistic. They were able to move forwards despite an initial miss match in expectations and they went on to thrive within the organisation. Emotional intelligence, including emotion

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regulation and open mindedness, was found to be vital for adapting to the organisational culture, (Slaski and Cartwright 2002). The extent to which emotional intelligence is essential, had not been anticipated by the author.

A sense of belonging was seen to be of utmost importance for new hires and one of the key influences on adapting to organisational culture. Schein (2004: 1) says individuals fear: '*will I be included in this group? Will I have a role to play? Will my need to influence others be met? Will we reach a level of intimacy that meets my needs?*'
Belonging to a group, albeit a team or the wider organisation, and adapting to the behaviours and values of that group means conforming to the group norms or normative contract, (Rousseau 1995). As individuals increase their sense of belonging to the organisation and its culture their social identity with the organisation increases. The study revealed a correlation between being busy and increased sense of belonging. Individuals reported feeling they belonged as they were contributing to the team or wider organisation.

Findings from this study and from literature of Social Cognitive Theory, (Bandura 2001) suggest that learning the culture is best done through observation of social models and replicating behaviours. This requires a deliberate altering of behaviour in order to adapt to the culture. Those who bonded well with their team were able to observe and copy behaviours more easily than those who did not fit with their teams or whose teams were remote. Teams, line managers and in particular, mentors, provided a social model to follow and to consult with regarding etiquette for communication and language used. Communication by the organisation regarding the culture and formal learning of this is only helpful if it accurately describes the culture. It is likely that only the superficial 'artefacts' of the culture will be taught but this may still be a helpful introduction for new hires if aspects such as meeting and email etiquette are taught. Variables, which were found to impact on the process of adapting to organisational culture, included individual, organisational and environmental influences. Individual influences include those mentioned above such as emotional intelligence and resilience. Person- culture fit (in terms of individual values) was also found to be important. Individuals who were self- driven and enjoyed being empowered to self-direct experienced a more smooth transition to the culture at the global organisation. Person culture fit was not obvious initially however. Some individuals who appeared to have an immediate affinity were found to lack similar values at the 'Self' stage.

Organisational influences including that of Leadership, Team support and Line Management Behaviour were found to be important. Transformational leadership, as demonstrated by the new CEO of the global organisation, gave strong, clear direction that is sought by both new hires and employees with a long tenure who are facing a change of organisational culture. The new CEO gave constant and consistent communication regarding the introduction of a new, high performing culture. This direction gives individuals a sense of purpose and a sense of meaning as well as impacting positively on their sense of belonging, playing their part in the larger goal.

Team support was a key influence on adapting to organisational culture. As already mentioned this was due to the positive influence on sense of belonging and also the provision of social models to demonstrate language and behaviours. A sense of

belonging was increased by inclusion in social events with the team and by starting with other new hires. Some teams were found to embrace new hires more keenly than others. Close-knit teams with a long history and shared stories and remote teams were hardest to join. Likewise, some line managers were supportive and acted as good social models for the culture whilst others demonstrated values and behaviours that were not consistent with the organisational culture. The existence of subcultures influenced adaptation to culture, especially where these varied hugely from the culture communicated by employer branding and HR rhetoric.

Lastly, the influence of environmental factors such as advanced technology and economic recession were seen to impact on individual adaptation to organisational culture. This was due to the resulting amount of organisational change, (transformation) bought about in order for the organisation to survive. Changes bought about were substantial and ongoing. There was some consistency between adapting to change and adapting to culture in terms of resilience, open-mindedness and emotion regulation. The nature of business changed from manufacturing to a focus on technology including software. A resulting restructuring of teams to support this change led to considerable uncertainty amongst new hires. The change of business focus coincided with acquisitions of software start-ups, these teams bringing with them their own subcultures. The CEO ably steered the organisation through all these changes with his clear direction and introduction of one overriding global culture which the organisation would aspire to, despite the many national and local cultures.

9.5 Analysis of Methodology

This was a qualitative, interpretative study, the methodology chosen as it best allowed for exploration of how individuals make sense of situations rather than testing a pre-existing theory. The rich data collected enabled a deeper understanding of individual experiences of adapting to organisational culture. Organisational Ethnography was determined as both the methodology and method for this study based on the theoretical and epistemological perspective of the author. Ethnography was found to suit the epistemological position of social constructionism well as it explores reasons why people think and behave as they do within certain social situations, (O'Reilly, 2009; Wilson and Chaddha, 2009) and gave a deeper understanding and detailed description of the experience of adapting to culture, (Hoey 2012).

This research was prompted by observation of clinical phenomenon and the pilot study provided a useful tool for exploratory investigation of these. It also allowed for the feasibility of a larger scale investigation and usefulness of questions asked to be tested. Initially the author had posited that a mismatch in expectations regarding the culture may have been a breach of psychological contract leading to work related stress. However, experiences of participants at the retail organisation studied in the pilot study suggested that this may not be the case and that people were able to move forwards following a mismatch and learn to adapt to the culture. This led to the question, 'were there specific stages of adaptation to organisational culture?' A longitudinal study was deemed most suitable for the study of adaptation over time. The sample was chosen sequentially from new hires joining the company. This meant that there were varying

numbers of participants from different business areas. Ideally it would have been a better comparison to have had the same amount of participants from all areas of the business as well as equal representation of all generations and gender but the sample reflected the demographics of the organisation.

As a participant observer, the author was afforded a greater insider knowledge of the organisation, including ongoing changes, processes and most importantly its culture. By remaining with the organisation for a period of four years, greater insight in to ongoing individual adaptation to the culture during this time was gained. Remaining with the organisation so long added valuable knowledge that might otherwise have been missed, such as one individual stating he still felt new after three years. It also enabled individual trajectories to be observed over a four-year period. The length of time spent studying adaptation to culture allowed the author to get beyond superficial phenomena and discover the deeper, underlying influences and participant experiences. Using ethnographic methodology allowed rich descriptions, detail and context of the findings to be given, adding to the transferability of the findings. The richness of data and findings were supported by a number of methods including interviews, participant observation and focus groups. The design of the study was therefore considered appropriate in order to examine the process of adaptation.

As stated in Chapter Six, the timing of interviews for the longitudinal study was chosen for the following reasons:

- On induction – so that people's expectations were still fresh in their mind
- At three months – as this is the end of the probation period
- At six months – newcomers would have had three months as permanent employees

It may have helped to have had further formal interviews with the participants at six monthly to yearly intervals but having the benefit of participant observation meant that individual trajectories were still able to be followed.

During the analysis of data collected, themes that addressed specific aspects of the larger research question, (Braun and Clarke 2006) were revisited a few times to ensure that nothing had been missed. Reading and re reading the transcripts it was surprising how often something new would emerge which caused the author to consider again the codes and subsequent themes to ensure that the essence of participant experience had been captured. A few unexpected findings emerged from the participants' experiences including the correlation between a sense of belonging and being busy due to the individuals' belief that they were contributing to the team. Joining the team on social occasions outside of work and joining at the same time as other new hires were other findings regarding belonging that had not been anticipated. It was most interesting and possibly most informative to explore the trajectories of individuals who did not appear to have adapted to the culture. These were not those who had been upset on induction due to a mismatch in expectations but were those who had been very confident that the culture was just as they had expected. They had made assumptions and rushed through to the stage of self without taking time to observe and learn the underlying culture. This finding led the author to review an initial interpretation and explore phenomenon

through a theoretical framework of emotional intelligence. The strong emotions at 'Alert' stage which had initially been viewed as being due to a possible breach of psychological contract were reviewed in the light of participant experiences, (no promise or agreement was perceived to have been made) and led to the phenomenon being understood better in terms of emotion regulation and dealing with change and uncertainty.

9.6 Limitations of the research

As with many ethnographic studies there was a risk that as participant observer, the author may lack objectivity and therefore influence the findings. Being employed by both organisations studied meant that the author was affected by changes within the organisations both directly in terms of role changes and indirectly in terms of witnessing the distress of others. In the retail organisation, this included seeing colleagues losing their jobs and others who remained being upset by the apparent change of culture. In the global company where change was constant the author was upset to hear that two of the new hires to software who had been so happy with their new teams and appeared to have adapted so well had been made redundant three years later. As a participant observer, being aware of these thoughts and feelings was essential if they were not to influence the interpretation of results. It was also important to note values and opinions of the participant observer. A process of reflexivity allowed transparency and ensured that the findings were a true interpretation. Discussions with academic colleagues who challenged assumptions and acted as a sounding board also helped to ensure credibility of findings.

Although the pilot study was at a very different organisation, a UK retailer, being largely a case study of one large global organisation, it might be said that the findings of this study are limited in terms of generalisability. A further large-scale study, possibly quantitative was considered but was not felt to be necessary or in line with the epistemological position of the author. Further studies of the Assimilation stage would be beneficial, as this stage was only suggested by participants in the pilot study who had been with the company for ten years or more. The context within which both firms were studied, that of substantial transformation both in restructuring and changes to the nature of business can be seen in many organisations today, (Maden et al 2016) and therefore suggests that findings are likely to be replicated.

Questions asked during the interviews of both the pilot study and longitudinal study were semi structured. Although this allowed response to be more extensive than that of a questionnaire or closed questions the questions and responses were to some extent steered by the interview guideline. Following the first participant stating that being recorded made him anxious, subsequent interviews transcripts were written rather than recorded via audio. This was to minimise any barriers but may have further reduced the amount of data. The author relied on her interviewing and note making skills as an occupational health professional.

9.7 Implications, importance and usefulness of the findings

Findings from this study add to both theory and applied psychology. Linking the two concepts of organisational culture and adaptation contributes to knowledge of socialisation theory and theory of organisational culture. The Staged Adaptation Model identifies for the first time, clear stages of adaptation that individuals experience in adapting to organisational culture. The study also highlights influences that assist adaptation to culture as well as those that may hinder progress through the stages. The finding that emotional intelligence and resilience are hugely important for adapting to organisational culture supports literature of socialisation with regards to social cognitive theory and helps to fill the current gap in knowledge of socialisation to organisational culture. The importance that belonging to and having social identity with a team have on adapting to organisational culture, as well as the importance of team support and the availability of social models also adds to knowledge regarding socialisation. The role of leadership in setting and changing organisational culture is already established but the finding from this study that clear direction from leadership is needed and that line manager behaviours need to be consistent with the organisational culture add to knowledge of organisational culture.

The study also provides a greater insight in to influences on the formation of expectations and possible antecedents of psychological contract formation, regarding organisational culture. That expectations were informed by previous experience of being a customer of the organisation as well as previous work experience, company websites and stereotyping adds to existing knowledge. Theory of stress, which has focused on types of culture as a cause of work related stress, might be widened to include difficulty in adapting to the culture as a cause of stress. The finding that a mismatch in expectations regarding organisational culture is common may lead organisations to consider the importance and accuracy of communication such as their employer branding and HR rhetoric in relation to the culture and information on company websites.

In terms of practical application, findings from the study may inform Management and HR practice regarding recruitment and socialisation of new hires. Being aware of the true, underlying culture is essential if information on the company website, the employer brand and Employer Value Proposition are to be an accurate reflection of the culture rather than an ideal. This may help to prevent a mismatch in expectations. Organisational culture can be measured by any one of a number of tools such as the Organisational Culture Assessment Instrument, (Cameron and Quinn 2011) and the Organisational Culture Profile, (O'Reilly 2006). Person-culture fit was found to be important but a true fit was not evident until new hires had reached the 'Self' stage. An immediate affinity at interview does not necessarily mean a fit of underlying values. Keeping an open mind and having emotion regulation is important for both new hires, HR and Management and all staff including new hires and management would benefit from training on emotional intelligence. Observation is key. Being unhappy or happy on induction was not found to be an indicator of long-term success with an organisation.

There is much that organisations can do in order to ease the adaptation of new hires to the organisational culture. The staged adaptation model can be used as a tool to help

new hires and management to identify the stage they are at in adapting and to learn what can be done to assist in moving forwards in order to thrive within the organisation. Starting with other new hires was found to be hugely helpful and if possible HR should plan recruitment so that individuals join as a group in order to have this support. The support of a team is of utmost importance and teams should be made aware of the importance of embracing their new member. Ideally going out for a social night out or team event should be planned in order for all team to get to know each other. This will help with team bonding, having shared stories and subsequently the success of the team. Allocating a mentor to new hires was seen to assist in their adaptation to culture as the mentor acts as a social model and point of reference. Lastly, having clear direction from leadership, both regarding the strategy but also as importantly the culture, helps new hires to know what their purpose is and where they fit in to the bigger picture.

CHAPTER TEN - Conclusion and recommendations

10.1 Introduction

This study adds to literature regarding organisational culture and socialisation and fills a gap in knowledge by linking the concepts of adaptation and organisational culture. The identification of distinct stages of adaptation and the model created by the researcher contributes original research. The model can be used as a tool for management and HR to help new hires experience a smooth adaptation to the culture. Belonging was found to be a key factor in adapting to organisational culture (Maslow 1943). A supportive team who embrace their new hire and invite them to social events helps with belonging, as did the belief of new hires that they were contributing to the team. The study highlights the importance of previous experience in the perception and appraisal of organisational culture and adds to knowledge regarding the influence of stereotyping and branding on the formation of expectations regarding the culture.

Characteristics of resilience such as the ability to adapt to change, open-mindedness, a sense of purpose and emotion regulation, (Bonanno and Diminich 2013, Connor Davidson 2003; Schoon 2006) were found to be of great importance in adapting to organisational culture. Emotional Intelligence was found to be essential in learning the culture through reading social cues and behaviours (Slaski and Cartwright 2002). An inability to adapt is linked with stress (Maupome et al 2015) as experienced by one participant in the longitudinal study and two in the pilot study. Findings from this study however demonstrate the ability of individuals to adapt to the behaviours, values and norms that form the organisational culture and are consistent with literature regarding psychological adaptation, (Sell et al 2010; Seyle 1936; Bonanno and Diminich 2013). Leaders who offer clear direction and provide a mentor can help to both prevent stress from the unfamiliar organisational culture and enhance learning.

This final chapter summarizes findings from the research and offers recommendations and practical advice for HR, management and individuals regarding new hires joining an organisational culture. The chapter concludes with learns that the researcher made on the journey from observing clinical phenomena to interpreting the findings and developing and testing the staged model of adaptation.

10.2 Conclusion

There have been numerous and varied attempts to define organisational culture. It has been described as a gel that binds all aspects of an organisation, from artefacts such as the buildings and dress code to underlying assumptions held, (Louis, 1980; Myatt, 2014). Schein, (2004 1) states that culture; "constrains, stabilizes and provides structure and meaning to the group's members". It steers every business decision. Culture has been referred to as a mindset, (Baumgartner 2009) and as an intangible and ambiguous construct, (Ogbonna, 1992; Martin, 1992; Cameron and Quinn, 2011). Consistent to all definitions however is the understanding that culture consists of norms, values and behaviours.

The importance of adapting to and becoming part of the organisations culture cannot be underestimated. The link between a strong organisational culture and business success is well established, (Peters and Waterman, 1982; Barney, 1986; Denison, 1996;

Alvesson, 2002) but for a culture to be strong there needs to a unified set of individuals all working towards the same goal, with the same basic underlying norms, values and behaviour. For the success of the organisation therefore, it is essential for its members to be integrated into the culture, (Schein 2010). For individuals to thrive within the organisation, to have job satisfaction and be performing well (Silverstone, 2004; Quinn and McGrath, 1985) it is vital that they are aware of and adapt to the values, norms and behaviours that form the organisation's culture. For an individual to communicate with their colleagues they need to know the language. For them to belong to the group they need to feel they are contributing to the group and are recognised as one of the group through their shared behaviours, (Tajfel and Turner 1979).

Prior to joining a new company, individuals form expectations about what the culture will be like. These expectations are informed by previous work experience, experiences as a customer, the employer branding and stereotypes. The study found that communication from organisations may not accurately reflect the actual culture, either because there had been a recent change of culture and websites and employer branding had not been updated or because there was a lack of awareness by HR and Management about what the true culture is. A mismatch in expectations regarding the organisational culture was found, in both organisations studied, to be common. An initial mismatch and for some individuals, disappointment regarding the actual organisation however, was not a predictor of failure to adapt.

Qualitatively distinct stages of adaptation were identified and influences on these stages were found to be individual, organisational and environmental. Individual influences, which assisted adaptation to organisational culture, include emotional intelligence, emotion regulation and open-mindedness. Positive organisational influences include team support, provision of a social model, (such as a mentor) and direction from leadership. Environmental influences such as economic recession and advances in technology, impact on adaptation in the resulting amount of organisational change.

The stages of adaptation that individuals experience were found to be fluid, the time period for each stage differing to some extent depending on the individual. They could also be cyclical if leadership introduce a change of organisational culture. Four of these stages were clearly identified from interview transcripts: Pre Entry, Alert, Establishing and Self. The Belonging stage where there is social identity with the organisation was observed to occur beyond the T3 interview stage, which was at six months after joining. One individual did not feel he belonged until three years later. The Assimilation stage was not reached by participants in the four year, longitudinal study but was suggested by participants in the pilot study who had long tenure, (over ten years) with the retailer. Further research is needed to confirm influences other than long tenure, which help to achieve this.

That there is a 'Pre Entry' stage was confirmed by ninety percent of participants who stated that they had formed expectations of the culture prior to joining. Individuals formed schema, a pattern or picture in their mind as to what the culture would be like, based on previous experience and communication from the organisation regarding the culture such as through employer branding. Influences of the environment on pre hires expectations could be seen at this stage to include experience of redundancy due to

economic recession leading to uncertainty and the possibility that people may accept a job where there was not a 'fit.' The gig economy may also affect pre hires adaptation to organisational culture if they do not view their role as a long term job.

The Alert stage was the most obvious stage to emerge from interview data. This is the stage where a mismatch in expectations is common and emotions are strong. The strong emotions demonstrated by most participants at T1, (the Alert stage) were typical of the Alarm response described by Seyle (1936). There was not enough evidence to confirm that the strength of emotion at the Alert stage is due to a breach of psychological contract although this was suggested in findings from the Pilot Study where people had arrived with expectations formed from the media and their experiences as a customer. Strong emotions on induction are seen to be caused by excitement or anxiety (due to uncertainty and change). Those who demonstrate emotion regulation at this stage are able to observe the culture and to learn more readily the group values and behaviours. Those who are upset or disappointed but maintain a level of open-mindedness will be able to move forwards successfully from this. Those who make assumptions at this stage and jump to conclusions (as a result of schema based on previous experience or stereotyping) may fail to learn the culture and are unlikely to make any necessary changes to their behaviour in order to 'fit' the culture. Organisational influences, which are important at this stage, are the welcome or embrace of the team, whether the team is 'closed' or 'open' to new members and whether they are based locally or remote. Subcultures, such as in acquisitions, also play an important role at this stage, making adapting to the organisational culture more difficult if the subculture is not consistent with the wider organisational culture. Other organisational influences which are important during the Alert stage include joining with other new hires and having clear direction from line management or the CEO.

As with all forms of adaptation, psychological, social and behavioural, the need to return to an equilibrium was demonstrated and following the initial Alert stage emotions returned to a more neutral level. During the Establishing stage the importance of new hires having emotional intelligence became evident. Having emotional intelligence allowed new hires to pick up on social cues, to learn the rules concerning what behaviours are and are not acceptable and to observe and copy behaviours. Having a social model in the form of team members or a mentor helps adaptation to the culture at this stage. A supportive team continues to be important and being invited to social events with the team was found to help enormously with belonging. Whether a team is remote or office based continues to be an influence. It is of utmost importance to new hires that they make connections, forming new friendships outside the team if not inside. This is vital in helping individuals to feel as if they belong and to adapt to the culture. The history of the organisation is seen to be very important in the influence this has on the culture. That the global organisation had a long history of manufacturing machinery and was now moving in to software meant the old culture as a manufacturer was still in place to some extent whereas the smaller acquisitions still had the creative relaxed feel of a start-up business. A clear vision and continued clear direction from management was found to help. Clear direction from the CEO regarding the 'ideal' culture helped to merge the subcultures but was felt to be overwhelming by some.

At the 'Self' stage, new hires have grown in confidence, as their knowledge of the culture, the language, behaviours, rules and boundaries have become more familiar. At this stage new hires start to feel comfortable challenging practices or behaviours that they do not agree with. They feel able to express their concerns. It is at this stage that a true person-culture fit is apparent, whether or not an individual has the same values as their team and organisation, (O'Reilly et al 1991). Individuals relax and begin to 'be themselves'. Behaviours are now demonstrated that may have been supressed or withheld, either as the individual has not been fully undertaking their role, has been shadowing others on an induction program or has been too uncertain of the response. Those who have not taken the time to observe and to learn the culture during previous stages or who have made assumptions, may at this stage make error of judgement and behave in a manner that is unacceptable to the organisation.

At the Belonging stage individuals begin to develop social identity with the organisation, (Tajfel and Turner 1979). They feel as if they belong there, they are part of and identify with the group. The heightened awareness demonstrated at the Alert stage has subsided and everything feels familiar; buildings, people and communications, (including acronyms used) no longer seem strange. Being busy and using their skills helps to increase a sense of belonging as people feel they are contributing to the team and wider organisation. Direction from leaders helps individuals feel as if they have a part to play in the organisations goals. Team support continues to assist with adaptation at this stage and inclusion of the new hire in social events.

The final stage of adapting to organisational culture is that of 'Assimilation.' This is the stage where the culture of the organisation is so familiar that people make statements such as '*it's in my blood*' or '*I can't remember a time when I wasn't h*ere'. Having learnt the culture for many years and shared experiences and history, individuals are now very much part of the culture. Norms, values and behaviours are now '*second nature*' and require little thought. Having emotional intelligence certainly helps individuals to reach this stage as well as length of tenure. Environmental influences such as economic recession, as well as the changing nature of work, impact at this stage in the resulting changes to the organisation, structure, direction and culture that they bring. At this stage a change of organisational culture may lead individuals to return full circle to the Alert stage. Here a breach of psychological contract may be felt as a result of the change of culture, (Rousseau 1995). Being open-minded, having good emotional intelligence, clear direction from leadership and team support can help individuals to move forwards.

10.3 Recommendations and practical applications

Recommendations and practical applications were developed from findings of both participant observation and comments from participants as to what helped them to feel they belonged and to understand the culture. Findings from previous studies as part of the literature review also helped to inform the recommendations. For example the recommendation to keep an open mind came from literature regarding resilience and also from observation from participants who had adapted well despite an initial mismatch in expectations stating "*I like to have a open mind*".

Recommendations for individuals joining a different organisational culture
Keep an open mind. Previous experience is not always a good indicator of what you can expect with regards to the culture
Don't make assumptions
Be curious. Observe behaviours and learn the language
Attend social events where possible to get to know your team and the group behaviours
Find out what the etiquette is (or unwritten rules) regarding behaviours such as during meetings or on emails
It is natural to feel excited and a little anxious on joining a new company but be aware of your emotions and try to keep them in check so that you can observe with a clear head

Recommendations for Organisations
Ensure any communication regarding the culture of the organisation is a true reflection of the actual culture. The ideal culture can be promoted but be clear that this is an 'aspired to' rather than 'actual' culture.
When planning onboarding programs, ensure that this includes information about the culture such as meeting and email etiquette
Ensure new hires have clear direction and are well informed about any forthcoming change
Offer learning, (talks, workshops, webinars) regarding coping with change
Invite new hires to team social events – hold a welcome party
Provide a mentor for new hires

Recommendations

Organisations need to be honest about the organisational culture and ensure that communication regarding this reflects the actual culture. In their employer branding, rhetoric at recruitment, information on their website and at interview, information given to new hires regarding the organisational culture needs to be accurate. In order to give a realistic picture to potential recruits and new hires Management and HR need to have undertaken a measurement of the culture and update any communication to include any recent changes to the culture. If the employer brand truly reflects the organisational culture this will help to attract individuals who will thrive in the organisation. Organisations should perhaps view holding a welcome party for new hires as important as holding leaving parties.

For individuals this study can help in adapting to organisational culture. An awareness of the stages can help pre hires to appreciate that an initial mismatch is common and they should not rely on previous experience to be an accurate predictor. A need to be open-minded is important and to be aware that an initial negative mismatch in expectations regarding the culture does not mean that they will not be able to go on and thrive within the organisation. The need to take time to observe the culture, not to make assumptions is essential. Having emotional awareness and regulation is also of great importance, especially during the alert stage. Attending social events with the team will

help. That individuals can adapt to an organization's culture lends support to the call for diversity and inclusion within organizations rather than having a homogenised group of employees. Organisational culture, (as is clearly demonstrated in the two organisations studied), is dynamic and evolving over a period of time, (Trice and Beyer 1993). This can be seen to be largely as a reaction to external, environmental influences such as the economy and advances in technology. Organisations who recruit for person-organisation fit therefore need to be aware that some flexibility is needed. The influence of personality was not examined in this study but findings such as those relating to open-mindedness suggest further research regarding a correlation between personality and adapting to culture would be beneficial.

Although there was some testing of the Staged Adaptation Model through the use of a focus group, findings from this were not substantial enough to confirm the progression of the stages. Further testing through large scale quantitative methods such as questionnaires may provide further empirical evidence for the Staged Adaptation Model. Further research in to assimilation and a change of organisational culture leading to perceived breach of psychological contract would be beneficial. After a period of four years the participants in the longitudinal study had not reached the Assimilation stage whereby they are fully absorbed into the organisation and its culture. If recent employment trends continue, (Tulgan 2004) and the job for life is a rarity, far fewer employees are likely to ever reach Assimilation. The gig economy, characterised by short-term contracts, looks to be the employment trend of the future. Individuals who reached the Belonging stage were seen to be thriving in the organisation, performing well, winning awards and establishing friendships. What impact will this have on continuity for culture? Perhaps the constraining forces of a strong culture, dependant on assimilation of employees, will have less hold on individuals in future employment. It takes time and history to create a strong culture and there may not be either of these if employees come and go every few years. It may be however that the culture of future organisations will be one of individualism with a dynamic, creative workforce who never reach the stage of being bored of each other 's company or irritated by the idiosyncrasies of colleagues. An ideal organisational culture of the future might be one of supportive teams and managers who embrace new hires and invite them out for a social event to enable a speedy 'get to know each other'. Colleagues would work together closely on projects, much as a film crew come together to make a film then move on to the next project /organisation, perhaps meeting up with colleagues who have worked together on previous projects and embracing them like long lost friends.

10.4 Learns for the researcher

The skills required for adaptation, that of curiosity, keeping an open mind and not making assumptions were very much required in the researcher in order to ensure that this study was a true depiction of the lived experiences of new hires with regards to adapting to organisational culture. Learning the language was also a skill that was required of the researcher who had been working in business for many years and not undertaken an academic study for some time. The academic language had become unfamiliar. Also due to the fact that academic study had not been undertaken for some time, the researcher had to revisit their epistemological position and ontological position. What was their belief in how knowledge was formed and had this been

influenced personal experience such as their work as a health professional? That their work as a health professional was evidence based and the evidence was largely from quantitative, positivist studies undoubtedly influenced the research to some extent especially with regards to looking at influences on adaptation.

At the start of this research the concept of psychological contracting was explored as findings from the observed phenomena and the pilot study suggested that a mismatch in expectations regarding the culture may be perceived as a breach of psychological contract. That psychology is a science and not an art was always in mind for the researcher and objectivity was checked through a process of reflexivity. The author found that there was insufficient evidence from participants in the longitudinal study to support the earlier finding of a possible breach of psychological contract. This may well be due to the weaker branding at the global organisation, (which has since been hugely improved with a media launch of the dynamic brand).

The journey from observation of clinical phenomena to developing and testing the staged model of adaptation was a very enjoyable one and the researcher learnt a huge amount about the process of adaptation and organisational culture. There were many surprises along the way, firstly the huge importance of belonging for participants. The need to belong was clearly a driving force in their adaptation to organisational culture. What was also an unexpected finding was that being busy, contributing to the team and using their skills was very important for a sense of belonging. The importance of emotional intelligence was also a finding that had not been anticipated.

Appendix 1

INFORMATION SHEET

Adapting to Organizational Culture: A longitudinal study in to psychological contracting, culture and stress.

I am a PhD student at the University of Hertfordshire currently undertaking research into newcomer's experience of organizational culture.

If you agree to take part you will be asked for an interview shortly after joining (the organisation), three months later and a further three months after this.

It is expected that the study will be completed within two years.

Any data you do provide today will remain both confidential and anonymous and will be used only for the purposes outlined here.

You may use the contact number below should any queries or concerns arise in the future.

Tel:07710 300629

You will have an opportunity to answer questions now and at the end of the study.

Please note that any information you may supply today will only be used for the purposes outlined here, participation in the study is voluntary and you may withdraw your assistance at any time if you wish and without explanation.

Thank you for your participation.

Researcher: Claire Lavelle, tel:07710 300629, email:douglai@hotmail.co.uk
Supervisor: Dr Christeen George, email: c.george@herts.ac.uk

This study has been approved by the School of Psychology Ethics Committee
Registration Protocol Number PSY/08/12/CL

Appendix 2

CONSENT FORM

Adapting to Organizational Culture: A longitudinal Study in to Psychological Contracting, Culture and Stress.

Statement by Participant

• I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for this study.

• I understand what my involvement will entail and any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

• I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary, and that I can withdraw at any time without prejudice.

• I understand that all information obtained will be confidential.

• I agree that research data gathered for the study may be published provided that I cannot be identified as a subject.

• Contact information has been provided should I wish to seek further information from the investigator at any time for purposes of clarification. Participant's Name .... Participant's Signature .... Date .... **Statement by Investigator**

I have explained this project and the implications of participation in it to this participant without bias and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

Investigator's Name ....

Appendix 3

Excerpts from Interviews

1a. <u>Interview with P2 at T1</u>.

Researcher: "How *have you found it here so far?*" P2: "Fine. *I'm looking forward to the challenge of joining a new organisation. I've had a good welcome. I'm slowly introducing myself to people as I come in to contact with them operationally*" Researcher: "What *did you expect it to be like here?*" P2: "I *expected it to be more corporate, more paternalistic*" Researcher: "Where *do you think those expectations came from?*" P2: "From *the company website. It is quite formal and safe. Even the colours are safe. Blues. The language on the website is very corporate*" Researcher: "What *values and behaviours do you like to see at work?*" P2: "I *like there to be accountability. Responsibility and honesty. I like service delivery at work.*" Researcher: "What *do you hope to gain from your time here?*" P2: "I *hope to broaden my client group and widen my experience as I've worked for the same company for the past nine years*" Researcher: "Was *that in a similar industry?*" P2: "No *it was in retail, for (large retail organisation). It was very different there. People were a lot younger and dressed in all sorts of things. Some crazy outfits. It was fun*"

1b. <u>Interview With P4 at T1</u>.

Researcher: "How *have you found it here so far?*" P4: "Great! *Yes, I'm very happy. People are helpful and friendly, professional and supportive. Some of the processes are quite drawn out and bureaucratic. I've had to approach several people and teams to get things done. I find the Admin team have poor knowledge. I haven't had any formal induction, I had to go online and hook up with people through my own initiative. I looked up key individuals.*" Researcher: "What *did you expect it to be like?*" P4: "It's *just as I expected but a bit more bureaucratic. I've worked for big software names for the past ten to fifteen years so I knew what to expect. It's very similar.*" Researcher: "What values and behaviours do you like to see at work?" P4: "I *like to see a culture of innovation, where there is energy and enthusiasm*" Researcher: "What *do you hope to achieve whilst you are here?*" P4. "I *came here to do a job.*"

P4 left at 3 months. 1c. Interview with P12 at T1

1c. <u>Interview with P12 at T1</u>

Researcher: "How *have you found it here so far?*" P12: "Mmm. *I'm not feeling great about joining (name of org). It seems disparate, disjointed with less structure than I imagined. There is a lot of uncertainty and change. I've had no real welcome. I've had to sort myself out. You have to be a self---starter here*" Researcher: "What *did you expect it to be like?*" P12: "I *was unaware of (name of org) before joining. I was headhunted so had no real expectations. I suppose it's more informal than I expected it to be.*" Researcher: "Where *do you think you got your expectations from?*" P12: "I *worked for a competitor before joining*" Researcher: "What *values and behaviours do you like to see at work?*" P12: "I *like work to be inclusive, for there to be teamwork and a supportive culture. I like there to be consistency and to be well informed. Researcher: "What do you hope to achieve*

whilst you are here?" P12: "If I stay! I'm keeping an open mind though. The company has lots of products and opportunities. There is a lot going for it."

1.d <u>Interview with P25 at T1</u>

Researcher: "How *have you found it here so far?" P25: "I felt comfortable within a week. I'm working with some great people. There is far more empathy and awareness of you as an individual with personal needs" Researcher: What did you expect it to be like?" P25: "I was told it was quite relaxed but am surprised to what extent. It's quite laissez--- faire with guys in their jeans for meetings with senior managers" Researcher: "Where did you get your expectations from?" P25: "My expectations came from my previous company which was a global software company. Previous colleagues moved to (name of org) and called me" Researcher: "What values and behaviours do you like to see at work?" P25: "I like to portray a professional image and to wear a suit. I like a 'let's get the job done' approach with motivated individuals" Researcher: "What do you hope to achieve whilst you are here?" P25: "I hope to have a better work/life balance working here. I left the last company as I was at a time in my life when things make you question what are you doing. A new guy came and changed my role and I wasn't happy. I want to make a difference and to be successful"*

2a. <u>Interview with P2 at T2</u>

Researcher: "How *is it going? How are you finding things at (name of org)?" P2: "I'm still finding my feet." Researcher: "Are you settling?" P2: "I think so, it's a bit early to tell. I was headhunted from my last job so I didn't have that natural separation from my last job." Researcher: "What do you think has helped?" P2: "The team. They are always willing to help" Researcher: "How would you describe your feelings about being here?" P2: "I'd say that I'm happy here but I don't love it as such" Researcher: "How would you describe the ways of working and the behaviours here?" P2: "Friendly. Everyone is friendly"*

2b. <u>Interview with P12 at T2</u>

Researcher: "How *is it going? How are you finding it at (name of org)?" P12: "Much better, it's much better. I am reporting in to a different person and there is much clearer direction" Researcher: "Do you think you are settling?" P12: "I don't feel like I really belong yet but I feel like I soon will do. There's still a lot of change." Researcher: "What do you think has helped?" P12: "The people here. They are very friendly." Researcher: "How would you describe your feelings about being here?" P12: "I'm not there yet but I may be getting there" Researcher: "How would you describe the ways of working and behaviours here?" P12: "Trust. It's all down to trust. You are trusted to get on with it."*

2.c <u>Interview with P25 at T2</u>

Researcher: "How's *it going? How are you finding things?" P25: "The last few months have not been at all stressful. But there have been lots of changes in management. There's a new vision, we're starting from scratch" Researcher: "Do you feel like you are settling, like you belong? P25: "Yes, I feel I belong. I'm with an exciting new team. Older employees who have been here a long time were not with us initially as they felt downtrodden but now they are seeing the light" Researcher: "What do you think has helped?" P25: "Lots of*

us were new together. We're on a learning curve together. Even with the older team now we feel we are all in it together. Face to face time with the team has helped" Researcher: "How *would you describe your feelings about being here?"* P25: "Good. *Optimistic"* Researcher: "How *would you describe the ways of working and behaviours here?"* P25: "New *people seem far more driven than those who have been here along time. The older members take liberties regarding benefits like booking more expensive flights"*

3a. <u>Interview with P2 at T3</u>

Researcher: "Hi *how are you? How are you finding life at (name of org)?"* P2: "Good *thanks. Its friendly but you often don't see people as they are working from home or a different office. So there's not such a buzz as there might be otherwise. There are no cliques. I would say the atmosphere is informal but there is a real email culture. It maybe lacks fun. There are no crazy people or really dynamic individuals."* Researcher: "Would *you say you are doing anything differently, or behaving differently in any way since you've been here?"*

P2: "I'm *still letting it wash over me to some extent. I think it's important to let the business show itself before I make any decisions about how I operate. I'm absorbing it all. I've bought all the old stuff with me but wont use it straight away."* Researcher: "Have *you noticed a particular language here? Any phrases or terms that seem peculiar to (name of org)?"* P2: "Huddles" Researcher: "How *would you describe the sort of person who would be a star performer here?"* P2: "Self *starters"* Researcher: "Where *would you say you are with regards to being settled here?* P2: *I'm not fully immersed yet"*

3b. <u>Interview with P12 cancelled as they were too busy. Met again three years later at an awards ceremony for high achievers within the organisation</u>

3c. <u>Interview with P25 at T3</u>

Researcher: "Hi *how are you? How are you finding life at (name of org)?"* P25: "Things *are changing. It's like people who have been here for years have been in a deep sleep and are just waking up. There is no pressure to achieve things that aren't feasible"* Researcher: "Would *you say you are doing anything differently, or behaving differently in any way since you've been here?"* P25: "I'm *more of a team player. More confident. I'm more able to speak up. Sharing with the team"* Researcher: "Have *you noticed a particular language here? Any phrases or terms that seem peculiar to (name of org)?"* P25: "It's *much more (name of org) global than local"* Researcher: "How *would you describe the sort of person who would be a star performer here?" P25: "Hardworking, team players"* Researcher: "Where *would you say you are with regards to being settled here?* P25: "I *think Ill be here for a while"*

Appendix 4

Field notes and diary (examples)

Pilot Study:

Participants appeared to have strong feelings about the culture especially when talking about the perceived changes from old to new culture. 'Perceived' as no formal communication regarding a change of culture.

This negative view of the new culture reminds me of the stages of grief. It seems as though they were in the denial and depression stages, not yet accepting of the new culture.

Literature regarding Psychological Contract: The strength of feeling appears typical of violation of PC. Can find very little in the literature re antecedents of Psychological Contract.

'Team' seems very important

Longitudinal Study:

Clear pattern emerging from data. Especially regarding 'feelings' and 'belonging'.
Focus group – results of set questions regarding stages surprised. Still feeling new at 3 years! Also backed up by comment from field participant. What was going on? Changes to role/team/leadership/culture could begin stages of adaptation again. This caused reflection. Could individuals perhaps go through the stages at different times and indeed in a different order? Perhaps people could revisit stages when faced with new change such as a change of role or line manager?

Quotes that appeared to be key

I'm used to it now. I took a week off and when I came back it felt okay
I know who to jump to and who I don't need to jump to
I don't really feel part of a close team as people I work with are spread all over the world but everyone is friendly
In ways I feel as if I belong. I have something to add, something to give
I've not been massively embraced
I've learnt to deal with the idiosyncrasies of my colleagues
The team have made it easy to integrate and I have been started on projects straight away
I still feel new. Some groups have worked together for a long time and it can be hard to feel included. Not that they exclude but they have shared stories and experiences, they have a history
I was quieter initially so as not to offend the existing work of the team. As I have seen this culture emerge I have been more confident to influence direction with my own experience, safe in the knowledge that my opinion is valued
I met my team in person at Terminal 5 at Heathrow
I expected it to be packed with people working industriously in cubicles!

I'm becoming more confident. I find myself clapping and calling out when someone gets a deal, acting like the rest of the team. I've become more of a team player
I had an immediate affinity at interview. I was told I was the type of person to fit in at PB

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