

**University of Strathclyde
Strathclyde Graduate Business School**

**IDENTITY AND INTERPRETATION OF THE BUILT
ENVIRONMENT**

**A case study of interpretation of symbolic artefacts in the organisational built
environment and it's affect on the identity forming process**

by

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Philosophy**

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Abstract

Much of the organizational behaviour literature examines the way actors behave in organizations and much of architectural spatial design literature discusses aesthetics, design and construction of buildings. Organizational behaviour literature tends to emphasize the relationships between members of an organization and how these relationships affect management of change. Architectural spatial design literature tends to emphasize the project management aspect of managing physical change to buildings. But very little is known about how changes to organisational spatial design are perceived or understood by organizational actors. These bodies of literature have remained apart; which is surprising considering that buildings are designed for people. This thesis begins to examine the overlapping area between organizational behaviour and spatial design by addressing why, how and with what effect a strategic change process within three case studies was interpreted by the organizational actors interpreting symbolic physical artefacts in their built environment. These three organizations were of the same industry type and under the same management structure, but with distinctly different management of change processes.

The participants, who were organizational actors, interpreted physical symbolic artefacts, which they identified as being central to 24 change incidents. The research techniques used to understand these interpretations and their role in identity formation within a change process were interviews with the participants over four phases, participant observation and photographic ethnography over a 36 month period. This gave the opportunity for an in-depth ethnographic experience in the context of place and over time which elicited micro level details on the processes involved in interpretation and consequent identity formation processes. The analysed research data was then used to create a series of typologies and models to demonstrate:

How and to what extent each dimension of the physical symbolic artefact is used in the interpretation process and how interpretation differs in changing contexts and over time. The models also demonstrates how and through which processes we interpret physical artefacts using their aesthetic, instrumental and symbolic dimensions and how these interpretations are used to affirm/influence and/or create our workplace identities.

The main factors affecting interpretation and identity formation within the case studies were found to be issues of respect, legitimisation, power and status and these were accentuated by the different management of change processes used in the three case studies. Overall, the research shows that we interpret physical symbolic artefacts in the organizational built environment, using different dimensions of the artefact and these interpretations are used to inform and alter our self, group, organizational or workplace identities.

My research confirmed Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) findings that participants interpreted artefacts through the aesthetic, instrumental and symbolic dimensions. My research extended these findings by establishing how and to what extent the various dimensions are used and that the resulting interpretation is used to form or influence various aspects of organizational identity therefore linking the findings to Hatch & Schultz's (2002) process model of organizational identity. Hatch & Schultz (2002) provided a useful framework for differentiating the concepts of organizational culture, identity and image and how they are interlinked and mentioned the role of physical symbolic artefacts in that process specifically stating that corporate architecture is used to express identity and also that by building corporate facilities identity is projected to others. However, they did not research the precise role, extent and context of physical symbolic artefacts. I found that we use symbolic physical artefacts within all four of the processes of identity formation proposed by Hatch & Schultz (2002) namely, mirroring, reflecting expressing, and impressing and that as a consequence the role the built environment plays in identity formation is more significant than previously envisaged.

Understanding the use of physical symbolic artefacts in the formation of workplace identity links the two fields of identity and symbols. This thesis develops the constructs of workplace identity and image and uses them to link ideas for examining changing organizational relationships and the impact of the organizational built environment on its occupants and stakeholders. The literature has previously suggested a limited use of physical symbolic artefacts within formation of identity but my research suggests that physical symbolic artefacts in the built environment are used more extensively than previously suggested therefore taking a step further towards explaining the roles of artefacts in the identity process.

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction and overview

Much of the organizational behaviour literature examines the way we behave in organizations and much of architectural spatial design literature discusses aesthetics, design and construction of buildings. Organizational behaviour literature tends to emphasize the relationships between members of an organization and how these relationships affect management of change. Architectural spatial design literature tends to emphasize the project management aspect of managing physical change to buildings. But very little is known about how changes to architectural spatial design affects or influences organizational actors within their changing working environment. These bodies of literature have remained apart; which is surprising considering that buildings are designed for people.

Research on symbols occurs in almost every field in social science, but there is little research, which concerns itself with the symbolic content of physical artefacts in the organizational built environment. This is surprising considering that these images permeate everyday organizational life. In an industrialized society, rarely a moment passes when we do not see some corporate visual, be it a logo, magazine or building. These visual images inform our understanding of our linkages with our organization and organizational linkages with stakeholders.

I will argue in this thesis that the research of physical symbolic artefacts in the organizational built environment leads to three important categories of findings about the organization - actor relationship adding to the existing organizational behaviour and architectural spatial design literature. These findings relate to firstly, the process of interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts and secondly, the use of this process in the formation of identity within organisations and finally discussing the effect these processes have on the management of change process.

Firstly, the examination of the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts in the organizational built environment shows us that the organizational actor's relationship with the organization is based on emotional and psychological phenomena and not necessarily only on a rational calculating and instrumental process. Therefore, organizational actors may have irrational and emotional ties to the organization and these relationships need to be accepted and consequently managed. Organizational actors may be using their organization and its built environment as an emotional and symbolic source and not necessarily only as a physical and financial resource. As Rafaeli & Vilnai-Yavetz (2004) have shown, we do interpret physical artefacts using three conceptually distinct aspects: instrumentality, aesthetics and symbolism. Rafaeli & Vilnai-Yavetz (2004) proposed, within the confines of their case study, that these reactions are conceptually and empirically distinct from reactions to the activity in which individuals are engaged and from the interpersonal interactions in which they engage. However, I argue that within a differing context, when we are involved in issues of respect, status, power or legitimisation, reactions observed and analyzed are directly linked to the activities of the organizational actors and to the interpersonal relations they experience. The processes of management of change also affected which dimensions of the artefact that were interpreted and the type of emotions reported. This is in contrast to Rafaeli & Vilnai- Yavetz (2004) whose research, based in a community rather than an organization, found that although the these interpretations did occur, did not mention the cause of, or nature of, these interpretations.

Secondly, this thesis provides an understanding of the processes by which we form our workplace identity using physical symbolic artefacts, therefore not only linking both the models of Rafaeli & Vilnai- Yavetz (2004) and Hatch & Schultz (2002) but also the literature on symbols and identity by suggesting that the interpretation of physical artefacts, is used to affirm/influence and/or create our workplace identities. This, to an extent, supports research undertaken by Hatch & Schultz (2002) who provide a useful framework for explaining the concepts of organizational culture, identity and image. In their view, culture is a symbolic context within which we construct organizational identity, whereas image focuses on its external audiences in that it represents images held by external constituencies. Hatch & Schultz (2002)

provide a useful framework for differentiating the concepts of organizational culture, identity and image and explaining how they are interlinked and mention the role of physical symbolic artefacts in that process. They state that meanings are '*expressed in cultural artefacts*' and '*the meaning laden artefacts of a culture become available to self-defining, identity-forming processes*'. Within the context of their paper they mention corporate architecture as a way of expressing identity and also that by building corporate facilities identity is projected to others. However, they did not research the precise role, extent and context of physical symbolic artefacts. I found that we use symbolic physical artefacts within all four of the processes of identity formation explained by Hatch & Schultz (2002) namely, mirroring, reflecting expressing, and impressing and that as a consequence the role the built environment plays in identity formation is more significant than previously envisaged.

This would suggest that our interpretations form a language within which meaning is constructed from physical symbolic artefacts, communication is made using physical artefacts as an encoder/decoder and is also a language that can be recognized and its influence on our identity forming process understood.

This thesis uses Elsbach's (2004a) definition of workplace identity, which includes self, group, and organisational identity. Data revealed that during the changes when issues of respect, power, status and legitimisation were apparent, and the workplace identity could identity split into an 'us' and 'them,' organizational identity was viewed separately by the participants from workplace identity. Data revealed that although the participants held views of their collective self that were central, distinctive and to an extent enduring, during change when issues of legitimisation, respect, status and power were apparent these aspects of identity were also shifting and being re-defined.

Any management of change process also affects the formation and or influence of workplace identities, which may be in place. Understanding workplace identity and the role of physical symbolic artefacts in the context of change may contribute to understanding the influences of the change process itself. Much of the work on symbolic interactions undertaken has been out with the organizational context and using one- off encounters so by undertaking this research within an organization and over a three-year period will give more facets to the research results. A lot of current research focuses on how actors adopt new organizational identities based on

changing roles. Although relevant to an extent, we can learn more by examining these identities in a changing organization.

Considering these contributions simultaneously offers a third pragmatic contribution – providing information to inform future change initiatives in the organizational built environment. In addition to their leadership roles, managers are both participants in and symbols of their organisational culture and *'their ability to manage organisational identity is both enabled and constrained by their cultural context'* (Hatch & Schultz, 1997). The meanings that they attempt to communicate about change processes can be presented in physical symbols designed by the creative team and subsequently organisational actors interpret this. It is therefore important for managers to understand their symbolic self within their cultural context and be able to communicate this to designers and appreciate how others may interpret their actions through these physical symbols. As organisational actors we can realize our identity through our physical organizational environment and it is often necessary to communicate our identity, be it social or organizational, to others and it is proposed that one method of doing this is through physical symbolic artefacts.

Organizational physical symbolic artefacts, the topic of this thesis, are instrumental communicative texts through which organizational relationships with organizational actors are structured and played out (Ornstein, 1986, 1992; Gagliardi, 1992). By carefully studying these artefacts, we can see that organizational actors make use of them to identify themselves and their products and services both to internal organizational actors and to external stakeholders, to legitimize communication materials, and to differentiate themselves from other organizations and the offerings of other organizations. I am proposing that the organizational actor uses physical symbolic artefacts in the built environment in the same way as logos are used. These are in organizational ceremonial rituals and rites (Trice and Beyer, 1984; Dandridge, 1982) as signals of authority and/ or legitimacy (Goodsell, 1988; Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975) as signals of organizational climate (Ornstein, 1986) and as a tribal banner that inspires its organizational actors to perform well (Mollerup, 1997). The built environment is then a substantial symbolic image interpreted by stakeholders to understand organizational philosophy, culture and values and strategy. Hatch (1993) affirms that organizational values *'are realized'* in organizational artefacts. We need

a greater understanding of the circumstances under which organizational actors conceive of themselves as organizational members and the role the built environment plays in this. The built environment is as important as a logo and other forms of visual communication in creating an identity. It is part of the corporate communication strategy in the same way that Fombrum (1996) stated that logos form part our knowledge of the corporate strategy. The legal notion of an organization creates an entity that is both real and surreal and symbolic physical artefacts serve the purpose of visually naming and identifying that entity.

This thesis is relevant and useful because it adds to an understanding of the use of symbolic artefacts within organizational and workplace identity. The purpose of this thesis is to examine the relationship between workplace identities and the role interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts plays in influencing and affirming workplace identities. This thesis will demonstrate that the literature has not directly addressed how organizational actors construct their identities using physical symbolic artefacts nor has the type of symbolic artefact used in this process, the circumstances under which this process occurs and whether this is altered due to time and context been fully investigated. This thesis then aims to demonstrate an understanding of these processes and provides a model for understanding these relationships.

1.2 Background to the Problem

This research is set in the context of the architectural interior design of organizational space. Little attention has been given to the effect of our perception of spatial design on organizational behaviour. Spatial design is generally considered a specialist area consisting of architects, interior designers and engineers. However, these specialists frequently have little knowledge of the future uses of the building (Hillier, Musgrove and Sullivan, 1976). Sometimes very little communication takes place between the managers or employees who will occupy the building and the designers who create it. Either senior management or a separate facilities planning department (Davis, 1984) can take space allocation decisions. The control over physical objects such as piles of paper, appointment books, and computers is likely to be within the realm of the individual manager. Whereas carpeting, lighting and furniture arrangement is controlled either by management, an administrator, or the

designer. Therefore the occupant and/or manager can have varying control over the environment and the physical objects within it. Designers may also have little understanding of how the physical setting and our interpretation of it can affect how we as organizational actors perceive ourselves and how we react. In addition, designers, engineers and architects' training often assumes one dimension as the most important or only way of looking at things. Ergonomics will favour instrumentality, marketing emphasizes symbolism and designers favour aesthetics and creativity (Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz, 2004). However, as Forty (1986) pointed out designs do not work well if they do not embody ideas that the potential users share. Features other than functionality can be critical determinants of reactions to an artefact.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

I would argue that commissioning of architectural spatial design for an organizational built environment is normally in response to a managerial organizational change plan. The construction or refurbishment of an organizational built environment will therefore be part of a management of change program. The designers' role as creator means that although they may use information from employees and managers to create a design concept they cannot fully realize how we as inhabitants will interpret their design as we interpret the environment from a multiple identity perspective and from different situational contexts.

When a designer is commissioned to design for an organizational built environment project the design will probably be required to fulfil a number of functional, aesthetic requirements which also may consider the image and identity of the organization. On completion of the building, the organizational actors will take their place and may interpret their environment differently from the intended design concept. A process of sense making of organizational life will begin within various changing contexts of the organization, but is it in line with design and managerial expectations?

Our most basic understanding of perception tells us clearly not; so what can this thesis tell us that we do not know and how can we use this information? We need to consider that physical symbolic artefacts are frequently subject to multiple interpretations and can have both intended and unintended consequences, which go

from extremes of us being oblivious to, or incensed by them, further complicating the matter.

In addition, organizational work practices are constantly evolving, particularly in relation to the organizational built environment, one reason being the spiralling costs for real estate. An example of changing work practices and the implications of this in conjunction with the built environment and our identity, as a solution to these ever-increasing costs, is hoteling or hotdesking. This is a term for non-territorial workspaces, which employees must reserve in order to use and must clear of all personal belongings after the reserved period has elapsed. One of the best-known examples of this was the New York advertising company- Chiat /Day. In 1995, they removed all allocated workstations and introduced hoteling, which proved an unpopular move. All physical markers of status and functional group boundaries were removed because of this. To quote the head of Carnegie Mellon University's School of Architecture. '*...it lost its best employees and executives after incessant bickering over ownership of workspace. The company has since reinvested in new enclosed workstations that are assigned to individuals and in team spaces that are assigned to work groups*' (quoted in Vischer, 1999:10). These changing work practices, and the sometimes devastating results, highlight the need to understand our connection between our interpretations, our identity and our physical environment.

Research has shown that major change efforts can register as a threat to identity and can lead to some organizational actors selectively focusing on positive aspects of the organization (Gioia & Thomas, 1996; Reger, Mullane, Gustafson, & DeMarie, 1994). This is not necessarily always positive as Dutton et al (1994) noted that '*...changes in structure, culture, organizational performance, organizational boundaries, or organizations competitive strategy may induce members to revise their perceptions of organizational identity and construed external image*' (p15).

Gagliardi (1986) maintains that the organization's primary strategy is to adopt instrumental and expressive strategies in order to protect the organizational identity. The very nature of identity suggests an integrative function (for example, '*who we are within an organization*'). The problem is one of understanding the process by which we establish our workplace identity and what affects this process and in

which ways. The relationship between the organizational physical symbolic artefacts and our identity process within the organisation has not been closely investigated. This thesis asks a number of questions relating to this relationship.

1.4 Significance of the Thesis

This research aims to provide a vehicle for examining these changing organizational relationships, explaining how a language involving the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts can be recognized and understood and what its influence on our identity forming process is. This process of identification and the way we display our reactions needs to be understood by both individuals and organizations as this could prove to be a powerful medium to represent and negotiate new and complex identities and status relationships.

Although the importance of understanding change in organizations has been emphasized in the literature, little research has been conducted specifically to examine the organizational actors' position and the extent of the interpretation of physical objects in the organizational built environment and how this affects the identity forming process and subsequently management of change.

1.5 Conceptual Framework

This section discusses the conceptual framework used to ground the thesis, which focuses on understanding the processes associated with our development of workplace identity and to do this I will initially explain my position on the paradigm adopted and the main theoretical fields of culture, identity, symbols, power and organizational change.

Firstly, I will present a concise review of the viewpoints of the interpretive paradigm with respect to the concept of interpreting symbolic artefacts, evaluating the philosophy with respect to the assumptions made and questions posed. Secondly, I include a statement of ontological and epistemological positions adopted, discussing options for scope, research design, theoretical constructs, methodology and empirical thesis.

Phenomenology is an interpretive, qualitative paradigm that is concerned with understanding human behaviour from the perspective of the participants. It assumes that social reality is within us and focuses on meaning as opposed to measurement.

The research methods used, seek to translate, describe and come to terms with meanings (Cohen et al, 2000).

By contrast, the more traditional positivist approach would have sought the facts or causes of social phenomena. It would have assumed that social reality is independent of us, and existed whether or not we are aware of it. The phenomenological approach, by examining meaning is more sensitive to the essentially qualitative issues in the research assumptions and questions.

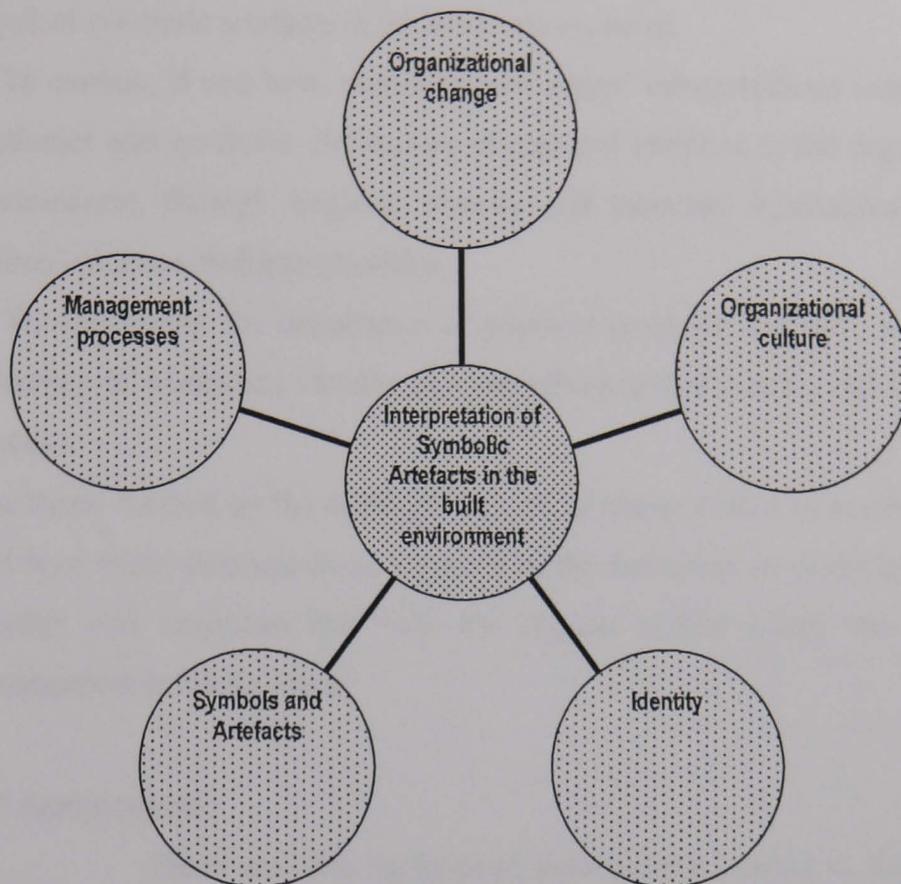
I decided not to consider the research questions from the functionalist perspective either because, in accordance with Hodder (1992) it would fail to adequately theorize the relationship between individuals and social structures and does not take into account the cause of social change, especially as it relates to the activities of individuals. This is the same criticism against structuralism, the general problem in both cases being that individuals are not just passive placeholders as functionalism and structuralism suggest. The epistemology of the interpretive paradigm is suitable because the subject is qualitative, subjective and concerned with how we derive and apply meaning. In the interpretive tradition, we accept that we view culture as a pattern of socially constructed symbols (artefacts) and meanings. The interpretive paradigm then promotes socially constructed reality shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, and ethnic and gender values; which occur over a period of time. Research within this paradigm aims to show how realities are socially produced and maintained through norms, rites, rituals, and everyday activities. Although research within this paradigm tends to be immersed in the experiences of specific members of an organizational culture, the objective here is to obtain a larger perspective than that of a single organizational member. The perspective that I sought here is of an entire system of experiences and interpretations distributed through all the organizational cultures members in relation to the form, function and meaning of physical symbolic artefacts. This shared meaning, is created and recreated by individuals through their interactions with one another. Some of what is created becomes institutionalized and taken-for-granted. This taken-for grantedness affects perception. Perception becomes positional. Individuals see the world in a particular way. They automatically see some things to the exclusion of other things. It is correct to say that we view objects as created through social action, but to clarify, those objects direct our perception one way to the exclusion of other ways. People assign meaning

to objects; but social reality becomes so well assumed that we sometimes interpret objects prior to the assignment of meaning. The creation of shared meaning in organizations comes about through social interaction.

Symbolic interaction is an interpretive approach within the interpretive paradigm that studies the underlying motives and not just the appearance, unlike a positivist or behaviourist paradigm. Symbolic interaction rests on three premises that are particularly relevant to the research questions. The first is that human beings act toward things on the basis of meanings that things have for them. Blumer (1969) refers to things as anything that can denote – be it a chair, a category of human beings, or an ideal. The second premise is that the meaning of things arises out of the social interaction that people have with one another. The third premise is that we modify meanings through an interpretive process used by the individual. To understand organizational symbolism as a social construction we need to investigate the process of construction itself. Scheler, as early as 1926, argued that the forms of knowledge must be studied both '*from within*' and '*from without*.' The notion of social construction (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Schutz, 1962, 1964) denotes interaction among individual actors and institutions centred on the methodologies, the areas of inquiry and application, the styles and routines, and the ideals that guide research. Indeed, the term '*construction*' Sismondo (1993) writes, is a metaphor capable of generating a multitude of meanings. '*Never before in human history*', notes Crespi (1996), '*has the social order been as evidently perceived as a dimension blessed with autonomy from reality, and at the same time as a constitutive component of reality itself.*' If I adopt this line of analysis with regard to the subject, I must take account, besides its theoretical foundations, of the actions and events that have influenced these foundations.

Fig. 1:1 illustrates the five main theoretical fields, discussed at length in Chapter 2.

Fig. 1:1 Theoretical Framework



1.6 Research Objectives

The purpose of this thesis is to explain how organizational actors' interpretations of instrumental, aesthetics and symbolic dimensions of physical artefacts in the organizational built environment, are used through hygiene, sensory and associate mechanisms to affirm/influence workplace identity. The thesis focuses on two aspects. Firstly, the different degrees of interpretation of the three factors and then comparing this with the organizations change process. Secondly, how these interpretations are used in the formation or alteration of workplace identity.

The thesis examines two categories of organizational actors (non academic and academic), and two levels of managerial functions (executive and operative). This is in order to determine the extent of interpretation used in each category and level, the degree of interpretation, the frequency of interpretation and the uses of these interpretations in forming or affirming identity.

The following objectives frame this thesis:

1. To determine the processes by which we as organizational actors interpret physical symbolic artefacts in the work environment.
2. To explain, if and how, organizational actors' interpretations using instrumental, aesthetics and symbolic dimensions of physical artefacts in the organizational built environment, through hygiene, sensory and associate mechanisms, are used to affirm/influence multiple identities.
3. To understand the importance of physical symbolic artefacts in the formation/influence of workplace identity and the influence that context and time play in this process.

The thesis focuses on the different degrees of interpretation of the three dimensions and how these interpretations are used in the formation or alteration of workplace identity and compares this with the context within which the change to the environment is taking place.

1.7 Assumptions

There are four underlying assumptions related to this thesis. These assumptions relate to the epistemological and ontological viewpoint chosen.

The ontology, a subjective reality, recognises the complicated nature of interpretation of symbolic objects and the proposition that it is used by organizational actors assessing their identity, combined with the individual unique personal characteristics of the human actors involved in this research suggest that a subjective qualitative approach which allows the situation to be viewed in its entirety and permits researchers to get close to participants, penetrate their realities and interpret their perceptions, is appropriate.

The epistemology, using an interpretive paradigm studying human action and behaviour, interprets our subjective understanding of reality.

1. Organizational actors create the reality they inhabit (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Weick, 1979). *'Frames of reference that individual actors can share exist within a collectivity'* (Axelrod, 1976; Bettanhausen & Murnighan, 1985; Bougon, Weick, & Binkhorst, 1977; Daft & Weick, 1984; Weick & Bougon, 1986) in Isabella (1990).

2. I assume that identity at all levels is socially constructed and because we construct it, we can understand and recognize it through communication with other organizational actors (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). This social construction of meaning indicates that we have a need for discussion and that a level of consensus on meaning is necessary for cohesion in the working environment (Labianca et al, 2000; Balogun & Johnson, 2004).
3. A physical artefact is deemed to be symbolic when we examine it as an object and in relation to its environment at the same time. Its interpretation is based on organizational cues and can be invented, revealed, expressed or indicated (Straati, 1998). Therefore, the physical artefact is symbolic when it is understood and has meaning for someone in the environment (Alvesson, 2002).
4. Interpretations (of physical artefacts) are made posteriori (Weick & Daft, 1983). They focus on an incident that has already occurred and interpretative research is built upon events that have already happened and that a collective viewpoint has had the time to emerge (Isabella, 1990).

1.8 Organisation of the thesis and research questions

In Chapter 2 I will draw on the fields of organisational change, organisational culture, identity, management processes and symbolic artefacts to establish the extent to which the role of interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts in the identity formation process within strategic management of change has been documented.

Secondly, I will describe the two models identified in this literature that partially address this phenomenon. The Rafaeli & Vilnai Yavetz (2004) model, which details the various dimensions of artefacts we interpret resulting in emotion and the Hatch & Schultz (2002) model, which demonstrates the link between identity, culture and image and acknowledges the use of symbols such as architecture in the expressing component of identity formation. Thirdly, I will explain my theory based model which incorporates both the Rafaeli & Vilnai Yavetz (2004) model, explaining the process of interpretation of artefacts, and the Hatch & Schultz (2002), model which explains how identity formation is linked to culture and image. This model links two bodies of work; identity and interpretation, which to date have received little attention from researchers and demonstrates the paucity of knowledge and attention given to the topic to date.

The following research questions then arise from this theory based model:

1: What are the processes by which organizational actors interpret physical symbolic artefacts in the built environment, and under what circumstances and to what extent are the varying dimensions of Rafaeli & Vilnai Yavetz (2004) model most evident?

2: How is the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts used by actors to influence/ affirm actors' perceived threat to identity, identity affirmation, or identity change?

In order to answer these questions I will explain how participants in three case study sites, universities under the same governance system, within the same geographic region, all undertaking management of change to the physical environment, interpreted physical symbolic artefacts.

This will be followed by an account in Chapter 3 of the methodology and description of the following techniques:

(1) Participant ethnography recorded by photography, field notes and reflexive journals over a three year period to examine any changes in the patterns of interpretation over time and using three case studies to examine any changes due to context.

(2) The research design included interviews over four phases:

Phase 1: used semi structured interviews aimed to establish the organisational culture, identity and image of the organisation.

Phase 2: used issue focussed interviews where participants highlighted 24 change incidents (eight in each of three case studies) from which they were seeking meaning.

Phase 3: used interviews with auto driving techniques with photography where participants explain their 'narratives' of the incidents and their interpretation of them including the dimensions of artefacts used and emotion related to status, power, respect and legislation.

Phase 4: used photographs in laddering techniques where participants describe attributes and the consequences are elicited which show how these interpretations informed various aspects of their identity.

Following this I will present a model, based on the empirical analyzed data, of the interpretation of physical symbolic artifacts and their role within the identity forming process.

Chapter 4 introduces the three chosen case studies. The chapter details the style of management of change and processes used and explain the variances in managerial processes within the three case sites. Then the chapter begins by explaining the differing organizational roles and context of the case study over time. To address the aspect of differing organizational roles, contexts and time I identify the organizational actors who initiate change, the actors who undertake the changes and the actors to whom the change is addressed.

Chapter 5 addresses the first research question posed in chapter 1:

What is the process and the extent by which we as organizational actors interpret physical symbolic artefacts in the organizational built environment and does this change within differing organizational roles, contexts and over time?

The chapter focuses on the first part of the question asking about the process and the extent of interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts. To begin to answer this question I examined one of the 24 incidents named 'faculty workstation' over the three case studies and the participants interpretation of the incident detailed in rich description giving categories of interpretation and discussing these phenomena in relation to the Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) findings and finally presenting a model of interpretation of physical artefacts.

Chapter 6 addresses the second research question and examines the contribution of interpretation to identity formation in the three cases. The chapter examines the contextual factors influencing interpretation in identity formation by looking at the motivations behind the interpretations. These motivations were classified into expressing, reflecting, mirroring and impressing and related to the role played by the actor in the change: initiator; executor or target. The model introduced in Chapter 5 is then further detailed to produce three typologies detailing the variance in the resulting different types of identity derived from the initial interpretation of different dimensions of the artifacts interpreted in varying contextual situations.

Chapter 7 discusses the summary of results, the main contributions of this research, limitations of the research, implications for further thesis and alternative explanations. Overall, this research will demonstrate that the interpretation of physical symbolic artifacts within the built environment is more extensive than previously envisaged and that these interpretations are used within the identity forming process, a link not previously made in the literature. This shows that if the designers of the built environment and managers of the change process understand how we as organizational actors interpret the physical symbolic artifacts in the built environment and how this informs identity processes, this information could be used to reduce potential misunderstandings of the purpose and intent behind these changes to our environment and consequently reduce resistance to change.

The following Appendices are attached for clarification and these include:

Appendix 1: Gives a definition of terms which have been adopted in this thesis.

Appendix 2: Gives a copy of the consent form used to introduce the topic of the research to potential participants and a short questionnaire to gather personal details. This details the areas of discussion which were included to allow the participant to reflect over the subject prior to interview. Each letter was signed as I gave it to the participants. At the start of each interview the participant signed and hand wrote whether they would allow both interview and/or photographs to be used for the purpose of a thesis submission.

Appendix 3: Gives the participant details in emergent order. In the right hand column are the areas (if any) the participant mentioned specifically which I would consequently document by photography.

Appendix 4: Contains a blank copy of a contact summary form. These were used for each interview and additional forms would be used for repeat interviews with the same participant.

Appendix 5: Contains a vignette description of each incident. These incidents were a result of the first ordering of all the interview transcripts from the 60 participants. This was arrived at by sorting the data into discussion areas that had been raised by participants as an issue of concern relating to physical artefacts i.e. 'change in workstation allocations'. There were 8 incidents on each case study site which were mainly the same.

Appendix 6: Contains an account, in chronological order of the first incident, ‘faculty workstations’ documented over the three case study sites and includes the reflections of the researcher. All data was sorted to obtain the sections of transcripts that discussed this incident and were arranged chronologically to make a ‘narrative’.

Appendix 7: Contains a transcript of the directors’ interview. An image of this interview appears in to Image 6.5 to illustrate ‘expression’ but the text is too small to be legible.

Appendix 8: Contains the classification of meanings sought by participants from their interpretations. This information was then directly transposed into Hatch and Schultz (2002) classifications of impressing, expressing, mirroring and reflecting.

Appendix 9: Contains a transcript of the interviews and researchers reflection of four phases of interviews with one participant. It gives an example of the content analysis used to form the summary ladders which were used as a sorting tool to highlight and define the incidents.

Appendix 10: Contains examples of clusters of responses from participants over the four phases of interviews which were used as a method of sorting data and highlighted as the main issues of concern from participants about the changes.

Appendix 11: Contains the summary codes for laddering which were the results of analysing each transcript (an example is given in Appendix 10). The figures on the left hand side are the number of times these attributes, consequences or values were mentioned. This gave an indication of the values held by participants about the changes.

Appendix 12: Contains the documentary coding used to link some of the statements in the interview transcripts to the cause of those statements.

Appendix 13: Contains a completed contact summary form for one participant, in one interview and lists the artefacts mentioned and the areas of discussion around those artefacts.

Appendix 14: Contains a sample of how the documentary coding (specified in Appendix 12) was applied. This method was used for all transcripts and one sample is illustrated here. For consistency purposes it is the same sample used in Appendix 9.

Appendix 15: Contains a sample of the field notes and reflective diary kept during the data collection phase.

CHAPTER 2: Review of the literature

2.1 Introduction and Overview

Within this chapter I provide a review of the relevant literature covering the five theoretical fields within which the research questions are positioned.

In section 2.2, I examine the theoretical foundations of change and this discussion continues with an overview of the literature on organizational change and examines it in the context of cognitive theories. In section 2.3, I examine the theoretical foundations of organizational culture and its relationship with organizational identification and organizational image.

In section 2.4, I examine the theoretical foundations of identity and this discussion continues with an examination of the literature at self, group, organizational and social levels. Once the level and definition of identity, for the purposes of this thesis have been defined it is then examined in relation to the other four theoretical areas. In Section 2.5, I examine the theoretical foundations of symbols and continue with a discussion of the literature on symbols and artefacts with a focus on the organizational built environment. Section 2.6 focuses on the management processes literature examining the affect of these processes on organizational behaviour with a particular focus on how they affect change within the organizational built environment.

2.2 The organizational change literature

In order to ground the thesis further, this section on organizational change discusses the various approaches to change that exist in the literature and the perspective this thesis will take. The focus of this thesis is on the interpretation of physical artefacts and how these processes are used in informing identity. The context within which the case studies are immersed is one of organizational change. Therefore a review of the organizational change literature is included to give perspective on the context within which the case studies are positioned. Organizational change is prevalent in today's turbulent business environment (McKinley et al, 2000). Presumably organizational change should be easy to define,

as it is an observable phenomenon. Change can be a set of relevant points measured at a point in time and then re-measured at a second point in time. If there is a variance in the measurements then change has occurred. Van de Ven & Poole, (1995, p510) defined change as ...'*empirical observation of difference in form, quality, or state over time in an organizational entity*'. However, when examining the micro processes of change involving organizational actors this approach could pose difficulties. There has been a great deal of academic effort devoted to understanding organizational actors' responses to organizational change and how organizational outcomes come about. Watson (2003) documented how this has been applied to the organizations themselves through the work of Elger, (1974); Silverman (1970); Watson (2001) and organizational change through the work of Clark et al., (1988) and Dawson, (1994). Watson (2002) discussed the implications of a relational perspective on change promoted by writers such as Hoskins and Morley (1991) and Hosking, Dachler & Gergen (1995) who look at the organization in terms of human relations involved in it. However, Watson proposes a process-relational way of looking at organizations and management which recognizes the processes of social construction and the consequence of this will be a multiplicity of goals and understandings.

Researchers have proposed that it is crucial to understand change recipients reactions to change and the way they shape change (Isabella, 1990; Labianca et al., 2000; Balogun & Johnson, 2004). McKinley et al. (2000) propose that major initiatives such as a cultural change program or introductions of TQM (total quality management) will produce an employee response but may not necessarily bring about change if we have defined change as an observable difference in characteristics.

It is useful to define organizational change in a way that is relevant to the three case study sites presented in this thesis which is in part examining the impact of organizational change on organizational actors identity forming process through physical symbolic artefacts. In this thesis organizational changes are considered to range from incremental/adaptive changes (i.e. relatively small localized change intended to improve efficiency) to transformational changes. Transformational changes are large discontinuous changes intended, in most or all parts of the organization, to fundamentally alter the way the organization interacts with its environment (e.g. Burke & Litwin, 1992; Meyer, Brookes & Goes, 1990; Miller &

Friesen, 1984; Romalli & Tushman, 1994; Sastry, 1997). This thesis is concerned with organizational level changes and actors responses to organizational level change and how they interpret these changes through the built environment. It becomes necessary to put into operation the amount of change experienced by the individual because different parts of the organization experience different amounts of change (Isabella, 1990). We translate large scale organizational change into organizational change experienced by the individual, through the development and implementation of plans, which begin to turn the directors and management team plans into operational reality. By this process, an organizational level phenomenon such as actors' responses to organizational level change is translated into a series of individual level change events in which the actor experience change directly (Dean et al, 1998; Wanous, Reicher & Austin, 2000).

What this suggests then is that organizational change may have different effects on different parts of the organization (Daft & Weick, 1984). For example, incidences of re-structuring involve changes in the reporting structure and resources. However, these changes may not be equally spread around the organization. Some may be unaffected whereas some may have new leadership. Some may experience a substantial shift in resources, positively or negatively, others little at all.

The focus of this thesis is on organization level change events, which are intended to be transformational in nature when viewed from the organization actors' perspective. We accomplish organizational transformation by changing the ways actors in the organizations behave (Ledford et al, 1989; Ledford & Mohrman, 1993). Therefore, organizational level changes may or may not lead to a transformation of the organization (Sastry, 1997) depending on the degree to which actors transform their behaviour (Reger et al, 1994).

The literature leads to a conclusion that many factors may potentially influence organisational actors' responses including the change outcomes and the actual processes of the change itself. The mechanism by which an actor's response is formulated is a cognitive one in which the actor decides whether he or she has been personally affected by the change. This thesis focuses on the particular type of individual characteristic and the actor's identification with the organization and the role physical symbolic artefacts play in helping shape the actor's identity and subsequently response to change. The literature provides some insight into the types

of organizational change events which may be expected to provoke behavioural reactions in organization members. Examples of large scale change events can include redundancies, mergers and changes of culture, all of which are apparent in the three case study sites. The results of these changes generally reposition the organization in relation to its environment. This can be contrasted with a relocation of an office which has an impact that is generally internal. It may be disruptive to actors within the organization but is unlikely to impinge on the organizations dealings with its environment. Some benefit may be gained if management is prepared for these changes and these benefits can be in terms of whether actors in the organization accept and support these changes or they are revised (Greenlaugh & Rosenblatt, 1984). By definition these changes affect a large proportion of the organizational actors (Ledford et al, 1989; Cameron, Sutton & Whetton, 1988). Consequently, if we manage these changes, understanding the reaction organizational actors may have means they may be more likely to succeed and have a positive impact in the organization. These changes often generate publicity for the organizations when they are implemented (McKinley et al, 2000). How well they are managed can have a positive impact on this publicity with a consequent influence of the organizations reputation (Fombrun, 1996). Change, in terms of the three case studies used here, is introduced by a senior management decision and enacted by middle managers and first line supervisors. This senior management action which initiates the change can be called a large scale organizational change event. When considering the impact of these change events a number of categories may be documented. For example, we could look at whether all change events are equal or whether changes initiated in different organizational systems have different impacts on organizational characteristics.

Tsoukas & Chia (2002) have argued that social reality is not composed of solid objects that are complete and in some sense 'finished' interacting with each other. They regard social reality as always being in a state of becoming. Our reality then is constantly shifting with some episodes being more in flux than others. Our positions within the organization can change as an individual (having to relocate) as a group (being given a new project) as an organization (targeting a new market) and these factors operate in tandem. Sometimes our interpretation of environment is unconscious and sometimes conscious. It follows that our interpretations are

transient and subject to change and re evaluation in a constantly shifting organization. However, recently there has been a move to change the focus. Change at the level of the organization or industry has been explored, but it has been argued that a more micro level analysis is necessary in order to gain a fuller understanding of the dynamics of strategic change (Johnson, Melin & Whittington, 2003). Arguments have come from empirical research on organisational innovation and situated practice (Johnson & Huff, 1997). In order to understand the effect of the processes of change there is a need to incorporate the lived experience of the actor.

In this thesis I will research organisational change as a process of becoming (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002) and adopt a detailed micro analysis of the lived experience of the actors. Organizational change situations are not populated by fixed identities operating according to fixed routines, but are ongoing processes in which actors' beliefs are interwoven, habits and new actions collide and new experiences are encountered and have to be accounted for in the sense-making of actors (Beech, 2000). Management may pressure for change and this can mean conflict if groupings of actors are resistant to change (Fahey, 1981; Pettigrew, 1985; Johnson, 1987). These actors will draw on their values and symbols of the state of the organization prior to change in order to legitimize their view point and deny any need for change (Lorsch, 1986). When in circumstances of organisational change actors will gossip, tell stories and recognise symbolic behaviour (Balogun & Johnson (2004). In times like these it is proposed that physical artefacts of the built environment will be interpreted to provide validation for these points.

Schein (1985) has suggested that by breaking down that which has become taken for granted and the building up of that which is new, the use of symbolic devices is important. Trice & Beyer (1985) have shown that the use of symbolic rituals helps us not only maintain continuity but also evoke change. In order to instil change, leaders can use and modify those shared symbols to promote their message and these may be effective where other methods such as revised recruitment have not been (Bennis & Nannus, 1985). To quote Johnson (1990) '*there is a link between the management of substantial strategic change and symbolic intervention and that link has to do with the importance of relating changes in that which is taken for*

granted to new visions of strategy but in terms and through means which are meaningful to the organization. '

Strategy can be understood as a search for meaning. Weigert (1988:268) in Brown & Starkey, (2000) wrote '*We have only those socially constructed identities that we can construct in our conversations with others. Identities ...are realized in stories.*' Unlike the cognitive model which will be discussed in the next section the socializing approach assumes that change in behaviour interactions amongst actors will lead to change in beliefs and organisational culture (Bate et al., 2000). This means that the speed and success of change is internal because the meaning of events is understood through discussion and social construction.

Cognitive models

Several authors (e.g. Brockner & Wiesenfield, 1993; Jick, 1985; Kabanoff, Waldersee & Cohen, 1995; Lau & Woodman, 1995; Mishra & Spreitzer, 1998; Stroh, Brett & Reilly, 1994; Thompson & Hunt, 1996) have suggested that a cognitive processing approach may be used as a theoretical basis for approaching the dilemmas of how individuals will respond to organizational change. A brief overview of these approaches is included to illustrate the role of personal impact in understanding the empirical results mentioned above.

One type of approach is an appraisal / coping mechanism (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) in which the evaluation is based on the threat/ uncertainty anticipated as a result of these changes (Brockner & Wiesenfield, 1993; Jick, 1985). In this approach, we are assumed to appraise the set of changes in terms of whether they threaten our ability to achieve valued goals (Lazarus, 1993) or create uncertainty about how to behave in the new organizational environment (Beehr & Bhaat, 1985). If conditions are perceived as threatening or uncertain then we initiate some type of coping mechanism in which threat or uncertainty is reduced. Coping mechanisms include specific actions such as looking for a new job to shifts in attitudes and personal goals (e.g. reduced organizational commitment so that the conditions experienced by us is more congruent with our personal goals and values) (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Leana & Feldman, 1992).

Another approach is exchange theory (Adams, 1965). Here the evaluation is based on our assessment of whether the set of changes has altered the balance of the exchange relationship i.e. the balance between organizational supplies and personal values or organizational demands and personal rewards (Edwards, 1996). If we feel the balance of the relationship has changed so the reward is no longer favourable then we are expected to react unfavourably to the change (Rousseau, 1995; Robinson, 1996). Examples of exchange theory include person- environment fit models (Edwards, 1992; Van Harrison, 1985).

A third example of a cognitive approach is one based on social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) or the related concept of self- categorization (Hogg & Terry, 2000). In these models the individual is assumed to seek out factors which distinguish us from other groups. A number of different motivations for this effort have been proposed, including the underlying need for self- esteem (Hogg & Terry, 2000), seeking a social identity that provides meaning and connectedness (O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991), or belongingness (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), or because social identity reinforces our self concept (Reger et al., 1994). If the organizational environment changes, it may affect the specific characteristics on which we have based our self-categorization as an organizational actor.

These cognitive approaches assume that the individual makes some judgement about the degree to which organizational level changes will affect personal goals and values; that is the personal impact of organizational level change (Wanberg & Banas, 2000). Assuming that some personal impact is identified, the individual then decides how to respond so that the balance between the individuals' demands on, or expectations of, the organization is restored (Edwards, 1996). However, the form which personal impact takes for the individual is different in each of the cognitive approaches. In the appraisal and coping model personal impact is indicated by perceptions of threat and/or uncertainty with respect to the satisfaction of the individuals' goals and values (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

In exchange models, appraisal is indicated by perceptions of fit (and changes in fit) between individuals' goals and values and the organizational values and the organizational goals we consider to be important (Edwards, 1996; French et al 1974; Rousseau 1995). In self- categorization models appraisal is indicated by the degree

to which we believe we are similar to other members of the organization (Hogg & Terry 2000; O'Reilly et al. 1991). This thesis attempts to understand which of these cognitive approaches is used to a greater or lesser extent within the interpretation of physical artefacts in a situational of organizational level change.

Change, emotion and context

In organizational life, social contexts can be portrayed as unstable and contradictory (Gioia et al, 2000; Jackall, 1998; Sennet, 1998; Watson, 1999); cited in Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003). These elements of change and contradiction create instability and individuals search for ways to deal with and understand anxiety and their own identity. There is also variation on how people draw on and depend on different sources of identity stabilizers in the organization built environment- in this case physical artefacts. Identity here relates to the question '*who am I?*' and '*where am I?*' As Giddens (1991) stated '*the self as reflexivity understood by the person... self identity is continuity*'.

Norms about emotional expressions by organizational actors are perhaps the most often discussed feeling (Hochschild, 1983; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989). Qualitative evidence that emotion shapes displayed feelings has appeared in writings by Van Maanen & Gideon, (1989); on Disneyland; on cocktail waitresses by Spradley & Mann, (1975). Organizational actors' emotions are displayed as well as felt (Hochschild, 1979, 1983; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). There is variation between organizations on the type and extent of display of emotion. What we feel and what we display in terms of emotion is also dependant on the managerial intent of the organization. Sometimes we are required to display emotion relative to the job; a friendly supportive teacher or an obliging sales assistant, for example, and these roles could either be unrelated or the opposite of what we are actually feeling. Organizations use socialization to ensure that actors conform to norm expectations that specify which emotions should be displayed and which should be hidden. Our work organization can dictate the meanings by which actors are expected to structure their social action. Connections have been described by (Barley, 1990; Brass, 1985) as elements of communication networks.

Two main outcomes of connections are social support (Wellman & Frank, 2001) and information transfer (Monge & Contractor, 1999). Connections

have been defined as interactions between people that enable them to transfer information. These connections then enhance the sense of mutual understanding although actors do not necessarily have to be in agreement. Connections provide knowledge about other participants in a routine. Verbal communication is one way that actors develop shared understandings. But this is not always necessarily the case. Actors can learn from each other by observing and sharing physical artefacts and examining perspectives about these objects that may give a clue to differences in the actors (Wellman & Frank, 2001).

Schein (1985) established that organizations maintain shared understandings regarding organizational values, priorities and assumptions. These understandings have been linked to organizational goals (March and Olsen, 1976, 1989; Weick, 1995). I will argue that physical symbolic objects create shared understanding through the connections they make and that these shared understandings play a role in organizational understanding and meaning through which we affirm or change our identity. Without these connections and shared understandings among individuals, organizations do not exist (Weick, 1979, 1995).

Shared understandings or meanings are important to organizations and seemingly routine behaviour frequently involves actors making interpretations regarding the appropriate actions to be taken in a particular context. This was defined as 'negotiated order' and 'practical action or situated action' by Suchman (1983). Balogun & Johnson (2004) have proposed that the interpretations that middle managers arrive at affects the way structures during change are developed. This action of understanding (Rafaeli & Vilnai- Yavetz, 2004) involves two levels of understanding an action which will fit into a routine and the larger picture of the action performed within the context of the organization. Within the overall organizational context we understand the tasks and perspectives of other organizational members and an understanding of the organizations identity and other characteristics such as power. Schein (1985) established that organizations maintain shared understanding regarding organizational values, priorities and assumptions.

The micro level consists of specific observable performance of a routine which is affected by and affects the macro level when understanding the routine. The abstract elements of the routine are conceptualized as part of the organization structure and culture (Rafaeli & Vilnai- Yavetz, 2004).

In the specific case of the organisational built environment there is an established power. This is the power of the provider of the environment- the management or owner of the organisation. It is the provider who defines the material practices, forms and meanings in the built environment, namely the organisational actors' participation. Facing power in the organisation, the organisational actor may exercise a counter power in order to take control of the environment. Every attempt to appropriate the built environment of an organisation is an expression of the freedom of the organisational actor left to his or her own discretion and free will in the context of power within the organisation. Through the use of do-it-yourself tactics, the organisational actor is escaping from dominant meanings and renegotiating intended meanings according to his or her own self-construct. Depending on the force of the power this dialectic tension between control- by the organisation- and freedom- for the user- may be solved in different ways. In the case of an organisation which does not exercise control on its environment, a strong user could express his or her freedom. In the case of a strong organisation which exercises a strong control on its environment, a weak user could accept this power and submit to authority. Micro level understanding will change quickly to adapt to specific circumstances whereas macro level understandings are at a higher level of abstraction (Latour, 1986). They can be altered or influenced by micro level (Giddens, 1984; Weick, 1995). Macro level understandings change more slowly and are therefore less adaptable and will appear more stable. By studying actual routines as they are performed we are likely to observe adaptation.

The change literature is extensive and has proposed numerous ways that organizational actors may understand and respond to change. This is, however, not a thesis which aims to add extensively to change literature, it is one that aims to understand the role of interpretation of artefacts in the identity forming process and the change is the context within which the case studies are situated so understanding the role of artefacts in this process may have some consequence on the way changes are understood.

2.3 The organizational culture literature

Culture as a concept has been central to anthropology for many years and a large body of literature has emerged. In the 1940's and 1950's research focussed on

traditions in work and customs (e.g. Chapple, 1941, 1943; Dalton, 1959; Messenger, 1978; Roy, 1952, 1954, 1960; Whyte, 1948, 1951, 1961) cited in Hatch (1993). In the field of sociology Jacques (1951) wrote about industrial cultures within a factory. But it was not until the 1980's that the concept of organisational culture was embraced with studies by Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Kilmann, Saxton, Serpa & Associates, 1985; Ouchi, 1981; Pascale & Athos, 1981; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Sathe, 1985). Schein (1983, 1984, and 1985) was influential because he put forward a conceptual framework for analyzing organisational culture.

Some researchers have since disputed Schein's notion that organisational culture was unitary (Barley, 1983; Borum & Pedersen, 1992; Gregory, 1983; Louis, 1983; Martin & Siehl, 1983; van Maanen & Barley, 1985). Some writers have also argued, due to the ambiguity found in culture that the role of culture is to maintain a social structure (Feldman, 1991; Martin, 1992; Meyerson, 1991a). But there was an interesting development that was not considered by Schein and that was a symbolic interpretive approach, following the traditions of Berger and Luckmann (1966) which considered symbols and symbolic behaviour in organisations and this was interpreted in several ways by, amongst others, Alvesson, 1987; Alvesson & Berg, 1992; Broms & Gahmberg, 1983; Czarniawska-Joerges, 1988, 1992; Eisenburg & Riley, 1988; Kreiner, 1989; Pettigrew, 1979; Putman, 1983; Smirchich, 1983; Smirchich & Morgan, 1983; and Turner, 1985.

The debate on the nature of organizational culture is divided into two camps, one intrinsically positivist in nature which addresses culture as a variable which can be controlled: something an organisation has. The other viewpoint comes from a phenomenological world view, a process of enactment, a 'root metaphor', something which emerges from social interaction, something the organisation 'is' (Legge, 1995). Within the McKinsey 7's framework, components have certain functions and management can control and integrate features to form strong or weak cultures. As Meek stated (1988) *'Organisational cultures are created by leaders, and one of the most decisive functions of leadership may well be the creation, the management, and- if and when that may well be the creation, the management, and – if and when that may become necessary- the destruction of culture'* (p 198).

Followers of the organisation 'has' field claim that organisational members must come to know and share a common set of expectations. These will in turn be reinforced across divisions and management (O'Reilly, 1989). This concept

however tends to ignore the possibility that organisations can have subcultures with different norms of behaviour.

In contrast, if culture is viewed as emerging from social interaction- therefore something the organisation 'is' (Smircich, 1983) it is then a label or metaphor for, not a component of, the total work organisation (Bate 1994). According to Smircich (1983) it can be viewed as a system of shared cognitions, of knowledge and belief. It is then produced and reproduced through the negotiating and sharing of symbols and meanings. The key aspect of this view is that organisational culture is synonymous with organisations and therefore organisations are cultures.

In this thesis, I accept the version of culture as something an organisation is and also, in line with Alvesson, (2002), organisational culture is accepted as an *'umbrella concept for a way of thinking which takes on a particular direction rather than mirroring a concrete reality for particular study.'*

This concurs with Frost et al's definition (1985:17) reproduced in Alvesson, (2002) which states *' talking about organisational culture seems to mean talking about the importance for people of symbolism- of rituals, myths, stories and legends- and about the interpretation of events, ideas, and experiences that are influenced and shaped by the groups within which they live. Culture is then a system of common symbols and meanings'*.

Organization Identity and Organizational Culture

Barley (1983) said *'organizational identity is a product of sense making.'* Dutton and Dukerich (1991) stated that having a sense of self is evident in organizations. Sense making is the process by which we ask *'how can I know what I think until I hear what I say'* (Weick, 1979. p. 134). The important components of sense making are the actor, retention, selection, and enactment. It is the process that involves observing organizational events, detecting and isolating patterns of association amongst events and translating them into meaningful terms. This thesis is examining organizational identity during organizational change at the organizational level so this could be altered to say *'How do we know what we think until we hear what we say?'* This is in accordance with Giddens (1991) who emphasizes the importance of self- reflection and self consciousness in understanding how we understand ourselves in relation to the culture of the organization. These self- reflexive

processes are balanced by feedback from others (Mead, 1934; Sarason, 1995). These 'others' reiterates the notion of social comparison.

In order to answer the question we need to understand the way things happen in the organization over time. The result of actions and behaviours associated with how an organization defines itself is the framework by which organization culture manifests itself. Identity focuses on who we are and culture focuses on how we get things done. Organizational identity is not an end in itself. It is often noticeable in the behaviour of the organizational actors within the culture and may be viewed through the organizations culture to answer the questions who are we? Our identity influences our behaviour and our culture is the result of our behaviour. An organizations culture will reinforce the development of desired identity. It is social identity which drives the creation of culture.

Organizational culture addresses the internal aspects of the organization in terms of values, beliefs and assumptions. Organizational identity gives the internal and external stakeholders a reference point for what the organization is.

The literature on culture and identity is often linked and early literature struggled to justify their separation. Dutton and Dukerich (1991:546) stated:

... 'an organization's identity is closely tied to its culture because identity provides a set of skills and a way of using and evaluating those skill that produce characteristic ways of doing things... 'cognitive maps' like identity are closely aligned with organizational traditions'.

Culture has been aptly compared to an iceberg. Just as an iceberg has a visible section above the waterline, and a larger, invisible section below the water line, so culture has some aspects that are observable and others that can only be suspected, imagined, or intuited. Also like an iceberg, that part of culture that is visible (observable behaviour) is only a small part of a much bigger whole.

Although there are many definitions of culture, culture in this thesis is viewed as shared meanings derived from individuals interacting with one another (Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984). Frost et al (1985) defines organizational culture as *'to mean talking about the importance of symbolism- of rituals, myths, stories and legends.'* Alvesson (2002) states that although organization culture includes values and assumptions about social reality these are less meaningful than meanings and symbolism in cultural analysis. Alvesson (2002) uses the term *'organizational culture as an*

umbrella concept for a way of thinking which takes a serious interest in cultural and symbolic phenomena. This term directs the spotlight in a particular direction rather than mirroring a concrete reality for possible study. Culture is then central to understanding behaviour reactions and interpretations within the organization; it is a setting, within which these phenomena can be understood.

2.4 The identity literature

This section on identity focuses on foundations of identity at the social level, organizational and individual includes the related constructs of organizational identification, organizational culture and organizational image.

We can trace the individual foundations of identity back to the philosophical writings of Plato and Socrates (Gioia, 1998). The qualitative, interpretive approach derived from pragmatic philosophy and evolving from the sociology of Blumer, Mead, Cooley and Dewey among others, views the self as a result of ongoing social interaction, where ontological thought consists of the consistent and replicable processes of its production. The constructionist paradigm is largely based on sociological symbolic interactions and within this identities are not elements of discrete self-concepts instead the self is considered a uniquely human construction, an ongoing formation in a symbolic world.

Mead (1934) focused on our awareness of ourselves, our 'self'. This work focused on interplay between 'I' as the result of consciousness and 'me' and the object of that consciousness (Hatch & Schultz, 1999). Hatch & Schultz, as indicated in Table 2:1 recognized that there are two perspectives, an external and an internal perspective, from which we understand identity and in order to do this we need to use both a subjective and objective sense of perception. This notion explicitly stems from Mead (1934). Mead differentiated identity into layers of consciousness. So our personal identity is our categories of ourselves as individuals and how we are different or the same as other individuals. Social identity would then be how similar we are to categories of social groups or how different we may be (Turner, Oakes, Haslam & McCarty, 1994). This would then give us an 'us' and 'them' set of reference points. Mead has influenced the identity literature and the following explanation of Mead is used to form a historical backdrop to the field of identity.

Mead treated the social group (the whole) as prior to and constitutive of the part (the individual). *'What I want particularly to emphasize is the temporal and logical pre-existence of the social process to the self-conscious individual that arises in it'* (Mead 1934, p.186). This would imply that our self identity is influenced by our social group. Mead also argued that we can gain a scientific understanding of mental states and processes through inference from observed behaviour and proposed that these observable behaviours are put into categories of gestures and attitudes. Mead proposed that our minds themselves are derived from meanings and these meanings are derived from the responses of others to gestures. Mead continued by proposing that a gesture can be defined as that part of social interaction in which an act is performed by an actor and is sensed and this evokes a response by one or more other individuals involved in the same interaction (Mead 1934, 42). A gesture is a physical or language sign or stimuli that results in a response by another. Mead (1934, 13) submitted that the *'mechanism of gesture... is the basic mechanism whereby the social process goes on.'* Gestures become significant symbols when they include an anticipation of the response they will arouse in other actors to whom they are directed. A symbol is a significant symbol only if it has the same functional meaning for both parties to a social interaction. No two actors need to respond to a symbol in precisely the same way for the meaning of the symbol to be the same to all concerned and so for it to constitute a 'universal symbol', one that calls out the same functional response among all members of the group (cf. Mead 1934, 147). Mead posited that the meaning of a symbol resides totally in the response it elicits. Meaning is therefore independent of its awareness. The mechanism of meaning is present in our social interactions before we are aware of it. This concurs with Geertz (1973) and his notion of the *'experience near'* phenomena. Meanings may not then be totally subjective and therefore can be observed and studied. According to Mead, when we were children we participated in play and in organised activities and from this we gradually gained an awareness of the meaning of significant symbols and a self begins to emerge as a result of this. Therefore meanings are embedded in the social process and are acquired through learning to anticipate the response of others to specific gestures, that is, by *'learning to take the attitude of the other'*. Mead went on to suggest that significant symbols are essentially conjoined attitudes. It is within this process of learning to take the attitudes of others during the *'conversation of gestures'* that we identify the beginnings of our conscious self – an object to oneself

as distinct from *'the other'* (Mead 1934, 133-134,171). Eventually, we become able to respond to our own gestures even in the absence of another, to talk to ourselves, to *'think'*- and this according to Mead is how we acquire a mind (c.f. Mead 1934, 141-142). This means that the self and the conscious mind are basically social constructions. As organisational actors gradually learn how to respond to complex groupings of signs, they learn to take roles and gain the capability of viewing their own symbolic behaviour from the perspective of the other. It is through this process that one *'...get(s) outside himself (experientially) in such a way as to become an object to himself and acquires self-consciousness'* (Mead 1934, 73,138). We therefore experience ourselves indirectly from the viewpoint of other individuals in our social group. We enter our own experience as an individual or self by taking the attitudes of other individuals towards us within the context of a shared experience.

Mead insisted that the self is not only a set of specific roles we might play. To acquire such unity of self, Mead observed that we must be able to *'see'* ourselves from a more abstract and general perspective in which we have awareness of the various aspects of the self- behaviours, gestures, roles – as facets of an overarching whole. Mead coined the term *'generalized other'* in reference to this *'taking'* of the perspective of a social group as a whole (c.f. Mead 1934,154) that is *....crystallizing all (the) particular attitudes into a single attitude or standpoint'* (Mead 1934, 90).

It is through the participation within systematically organized spheres of activity that we learn to *'see'* ourselves from an integrated perspective- that of Meads generalized other. Individuals, in other words, acquire integrated attitudes because the behaviour of the others into whose activities they enter is already integrated. This means that an integrated self derives from participation in organised group activity. We follow and internalize as attitudes, the rules and customs that make group activity possible, we take into our *'selves'* the integrated perspective of the group or organized system of behaviour whose rules we are following. It is important to note that it is through the generalized other that group control over the individual is affected.

Mead has provided us with a concept of a socially constituted individual – the social self- who as a *'self'* emerges from and does not exist independent of, the taking of significant symbols, roles, generalized others, and institutions within himself in the form of attitudes. It was his view that it is only through participation in a social process can a self, as such, arise (Mead 1934, 65). Mead went further by explaining

that the self has a structure – attitudes ‘*taken*’ from social experience – that is ‘*entirely distinguishable*’ from subjective experience (Mead 1934, 167). Mead proposed that self consciousness, the awareness of oneself as self, as an object distinguishable from other elements of one’s fields activities, occurs only by means of taking or feeling the attitudes of other selves ‘*toward yourself*’ (Mead 1934, 171-172; cf, Mead 1934, 225). Mead referred to this dimension of the self, as an acting or potentially acting object, as ‘*me*.’ He used the term ‘*me*’ to denote the self we are aware of, the ‘*self*’ we ‘*know*’ as an object in our mind. The ‘*me*,’ our inner consciousness of self is basically social in nature. Mead continued by proposing that even though the self has social roots, ‘*..the self does not consist simply in the bare organisation of social attitudes*’ (Mead 1934, 173). In addition to a ‘*me*,’ Mead argued, the self also contains an ‘*I*’ Mead juxtaposed the ‘*I*’ against the ‘*me*’ in this way. The ‘*I*’ is the part of the self that acts upon or reacts to its environment- by speaking, frowning, physically or in the conscious mind. Only after the ‘*I*’ acts or reacts does one become aware of its actions and incorporate them into one’s ever changing conscious awareness of self, into the ‘*me*’ (Mead 1934, 175). According to Mead, the ‘*me*’ serves as a censor over the ‘*I*’; more specifically, ‘*(The ‘me’) determines the sort of expression which can take place, sets the stage, and gives the ‘cue*’ (Mead 1934, 210) But Mead also proposed that the ‘*me*’ active awareness, can never fully anticipate what the ‘*I*’ will in fact do in response to a particular situation. Mead’s concept of the ‘*I*’ makes us question the notion of rational action. If we cannot accurately ‘*forecast*’ before the act what we will do- ‘*one is never sure of himself, and he astonishes himself by his conduct as much as he astonishes other people*’ (Mead 1934, 204). How can it be argued that we can be relied on to select the ‘*best*’ alternative from the list of possible choices? However, on a more constructive note, what Mead has accomplished through the concept of ‘*I*’ is to allow for something new and unpredictable in the conduct of socially constituted selves: The ‘*me*’ is conventional and predictable. We need these habits and these responses which everybody has; otherwise we could not be a member of a social group. Our attitudes are gathered from our group, but are embedded in us and give us the opportunity to express them which perhaps have never taken place before (Mead 1934, 197-198).

The self is not so much a physical form but a process in which the conversation of gestures has been internalised within our physical form. This process does not exist

for itself, but is a phase of the social organisation of which we as individuals are a part. The organisation of the social act has been brought into the physical form and then becomes our mind. It still includes the attitudes of others, but is now highly organized, so that these attitudes become social attitudes rather than roles of separate individuals. The process of relating our own physical form to the others in the interactions that are going on, in so far as it is incorporated into our behaviour as an individual with the conversation of the 'I' and the 'me,' constitutes the self (Mead 1934, 178-179).

'It is through the 'me' then that society obtains an internalized mechanism for effecting social control over the expression of the 'I' (Mead 1934, 210). But, while Mead considered that a unique personality was *'the most precious part of the individual'* (Mead, 1934, 324), he emphasised that personality did not need to be thought of as something separate from the socially constituted self. Mead recognised that impulsive acts are an exception to his concept of the self's conduct, for impulsive behaviour is in essence uncontrolled behaviour, that is, behaviour in which the 'I' expresses itself free of 'censorship' by the 'me' (Mead 1934, 210). But social conduct is constituted of either non-aware immersion in *'the world that is there'*- that is, it consists of non-cognitive and non-conscious neuro muscular *'motions'* that are activated by attitudes whose release is unrestricted by the environment- or conscious activity when we are aware of ourselves as an *'object-self'* facing problems of adjustment in our world (cf. Aboulafia 1991,12; Miller 1973, 42). Behaviour, is in Mead's view simply the individualised expression of the social process to which we have found ourselves by *'taking the attitudes'* of others in forming our selves. Conscious problem – solving is similarly ingrained in the same process. This being the case it should not be ignored that while social control/coordination of individual behaviour is at the forefront of Mead's theory of the self, his concept of the interplay of the 'me' versus 'I' provides a mechanism both for *'personal growth'* and for evolutionary social change. As one person acts in a manner slightly different from what a second person has previously encountered, the attitude of the second person is adjusted. When we adjust ourselves to a changed environment, Mead noted, we become a different individual; *'but in becoming a different individual he has affected the community in which he lives. It may be a slight effect, but in so far as he has adjusted himself, the adjustments have changed the type of environment to which he can respond and the world is accordingly a*

different world' (Mead 1934,215). Advances in the way the group behaves generates accommodating changes in the structure of the 'selves' participating in those changing practices: Our physical form instigates a response (attitudes) of others (Mead 1934, 33). Thinking – the conscious use of rational intelligence- starts whenever an individual encounters a problematic environmental situation, that is, a situation in which his or hers own act of adjustment is not automatically evoked by the environment. Therefore, *'thinking is simply... the carrying on of a conversation between the 'I' and the 'me'* (Mead 1934, 335). A conversation whether between different individuals or between the 'I' and the 'me' uses significant symbols (Mead 1934, 88), which are 'taken' from pre-existing social processes and practices. In Meads view thinking is therefore social.

For Mead, attitudes are *'the mechanism of language'* and are themselves significant symbols. Mead understood that both attitudes and significant symbols are taken from society into the self. In consequence, to repeat, thinking and therefore rationality are in Mead's system basically social in character. Mead focuses on interaction of the social act and was also deeply interested in the relationship of the individual action to the larger issue of social order. Like Dewey, Mead judged that social order arises out of the capacity of a group to find successful solutions for its continuously emerging problems (Joas, 1993, 254-255). Mead's theory has been used to lay the foundations of various categories of identity theory. It also stresses the importance of significant symbols which can fall into the categories of language or physical symbols and relates these to the process of the 'I' and 'me' which are directly used in Hatch and Schultz model (2002). It is this aspect of the use and importance of physical symbols which is the focus of this thesis.

Identity has been addressed along several lines: James (1918) focused on the existence of multiple social selves. Cooley (1922) concentrated on the aspects that we only understand or experience true self if there is some threat toward self. Mead (1934) addressed identity in terms of the individual's awareness, or consciousness of self. Later, Goffman (1959) focused on the individualistic nature of an individual's self-concept in relation to others, and then in 1964, Erikson suggested that identity is a result of group comparison and comparing associated identities. Identity theory categorises identity at differing levels from social to self and this introductory

statement outlines those layers but in addition outlines the theoretical position taken on identity that will form the basis of this thesis.

Identity at a social level looks at social comparison e.g. comparison of self to others and in-group and out group comparison and interpersonal relationships. Identity has been examined from a social perspective by Tajfel (1978, 1982), Tajfel & Turner (1985), Goffman, 1959; Deaux (1993) and Gioia (1998). Self categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987) argues that in many situations people organise social information which might be the perception of shared moods, by categorizing individuals into groups. This enables them to focus on collective properties that are relevant to the situation at hand (e.g.; as team members), while neglecting the 'noise' of other variations (e.g. differences in age or background) that occur among individuals within the same group (Ellemers, Gilders & Haslam, 2004). Through the mechanism of social identification (Mael & Ashforth, 1992), team members then perceive themselves as representative of a particular group, making the actor perceive the characteristic group feature- (e.g. good moods) – as a self descriptive feature. This leads us to adopt distinctive group norms as guidelines for our own behaviour. The construct of collective identification is theoretically similar to the construct of the organizational level of identification. Organizational identification is defined as organizational actors seeing themselves at least partly in terms of what the organization is thought to represent (Kreiner & Ashforth, 2004), which might be treated like the implication of the self-concept (Pratt, 1998) and perception of oneness (Ashforth & Mael , 1989). It is a process in which individuals create several more or less contradictory and often changing managerial identities (identity positions) rather than one stable, continuous manager identity (Svengingsson & Alvesson, 2003). The concept of group identification follows the cognitive process of categorization and adopts the definition of Ashforth and Mael (1989, p.21), defining identification as '*the perception of oneness with or belongingness*' to the team. Workplace identity refers to the distinctiveness and status self-categorizations used by an individual to signal his or her identity in a specific workplace (Elsbach, 2004a). These self-categorizations include self identity (Turner, 1999) signifying a persons group and status categorizations, e.g. '*I'm a motivated team player*' and social identity categories (Tajfel, 1982), which focus on status and distinctive categories such as '*I'm a member of the management team.*'

Based on the theories of Cooley (1922), Mead (1934), and Goffman (1959), Albert & Whetten (1985) defined organizational identity as members shared beliefs of organizational characteristics that are central, distinctive and temporally continuous. They proposed that organizational identity ask the question '*who are we as an organization?*' Organizational identity describes the essence of an organization (Albert & Whetten, 1985). According to this viewpoint, it is important to understand what an organizations identity is because it becomes a way in which organizations define themselves to customers, employees, suppliers, and investors. An organizations identity may influence the actions taken by individuals. Organizational identity has already been studied in relation to multiple identities (Beech & Johnson, 2004; Gustafson & Reger, 1999; Svenssingon & Alvesson, 2003; Thomas & Linstead, 2002) and identity threats; (Elsbach & Kramer, 1996; Elsbach, 2003). Albert and Wheeton first defined organizational identity as being fixed and this has caused considerable debate. Just as an individual's identity develops and grows without the individual becoming unrecognizable so the organization can undergo change. For this reason, this thesis adopts the Alvesson & Svengingsson, (2003) definition that identity is a process in which individuals create several more or less contradictory and often changing managerial identities (identity positions) rather than one stable, continuous manager identity (see Table of Definitions, Appendix 1).

Some recent studies have included models of organizational identity. Hatch & Schultz (2002) process model of organizational identity represents the interplay between identity, image and culture and the internal and external environments. This is a dynamic model that incorporates the interaction between the internal and external environment. While multiple studies have documented types of organizational identity noticeably lacking are works on the formation process of identity. In order to put a boundary around the level of identity this thesis will focus on, I am adopting a definition of workplace identity as referring to the distinctiveness and status self-categorizations used by an individual to signal his or her identity in a specific workplace (Elsbach, 2004a). This definition, therefore includes, individual, group and organizational identity.

Foundations of Individual Identity

It has been established in the literature that the early works of Cooley (1902), James (1918) and Mead (1934) have provided the psychological foundations of identity. A large proportion of their work focused on how we as human beings make sense of ourselves as individuals. From these beginnings identity has moved on from questioning the existence of ourselves (self) to more complex understanding of how we define ourselves (self). Initially, authors like Cooley in 1902 examined the 'empirical self' which was the self that is verified by ordinary observation (Cooley, 1902, 1922). Cooley recognized that the self was deeply embedded within us, but could and does change.

James (1918) centred his debate on what constitutes a 'real me' and from this recognized that we have 'multiple social selves'. This led to the realization that there is not one 'real me' but as many real 'me's' as there are people to recognize them. This can lead us to the assumptions that who we are as individuals is largely based on the result of external perceptions.

Table 2.1: A Model of Synthesized Organizational Identity Theory

| | IDENTITY | IMAGE |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Past 'me' 'sign' | Perceived Organizational Identity | Construed External Image Reputation (cannot be known directly by members) |
| Present 'I' 'Object' | Current Organizational Identity | Current External Image |
| Future 'you' | Ideal/Desired/Future/Envisioned Organizational Identity | Desired Future Image |

Derived from Hatch & Schultz, (2002)

Mead (1934) focused on our awareness of ourselves, our 'self'. This work focused on interplay between 'I' as the result of consciousness and 'me' and the object of that consciousness (Hatch & Schultz, 1999). Hatch & Schultz, as indicated in Table 2.1 recognized that there are two perspectives, an external and an internal perspective from which we understand identity and in order to do this we need to use both a subjective and objective sense of perception. Mead differentiated identity stratifying by layers of consciousness. Our personal identity then, is our categories of ourselves as individuals and how we are different or the same as other individuals. Social identity would then be how similar we are to categories of social groups or how different we may be (Turner, Oakes, Haslam & McCarty, 1994). This would then give us an 'us' and 'them' set of reference points.

This early work has defined several characteristics of personal identity and these are that we as individuals have a sense of self and this is largely defined in relation to others. The notion of multiple identities and our consciousness of 'self' also stemmed from these early works.

Foundations of organizational identity

From an interpretive stance identity is continually renegotiated sets of meanings about who we are. Albert & Whetton's original definition of organization identity was of organizational members shared beliefs about the central, distinctive temporally continuous characteristics of an organization. Temporally continuous has often been taken to mean enduring or fixed; however it could also be defined as representing stability.

Table 2:2 Definitions of organizational identity

| Organizational Identity definition | Research |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Features of an organization that describes its essence, that distinguishes the organization from others, and exhibit some degree of continuity over time. | Albert & Whetton 1985 |
| The changing shared beliefs among shareholders of an organization that answer the ongoing question 'who are we.' | Sarason & Fiol 1995 |
| An idiosyncratic configuration of people sharing some attributes, pursuing a collective purpose through a given activity (core business) and using a limited number of operating principles. | Bouchikhi & Kimberly 1998 |
| Continually renegotiated sets of meanings about who we are. | Fiol & Gioia 1998 |
| Moral philosophy promotes statements of right and wrong around which employees can rally and which can influence a broad range of business decisions. | Barney & Stewart 2000 |
| Identity involves asking 'Who am I?' or 'Who are we?' | Pratt & Foreman 2000 |
| Identity is the act of forming, engaging and repairing our constructions to give a sense of coherence and distinctiveness. | Alvesson 2002 |
| It is a process in which individuals create several more or less contradictory and often changing managerial identities (identity positions) rather than one stable, continuous manager identity. | Alvesson & Svengingsson 2003. |

Table 2:2 illustrates the differing and progressive views of organisational identity culminating in the definitions adopted in this thesis from Alvesson (2002) and Alvesson & Svengingsson, (2003). '*Identity is the act of forming engaging and repairing our constructions to give a sense of coherence and distinctiveness*' (Alvesson, 2002). Identity involves asking, "Who am I?" or "Who are we?" (Pratt & Foreman, 2000). Identity though, is not singular as we acknowledge the existence of multiple identities within the same individual (Burke, 1937; Feldman, 1979; James, 1890; Markus & Nurius, 1986; McCall & Simmons, 1978; Pratt & Foreman, 2000; Stryker & Serpe, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Table 2:3 Organizational identity sources

| Organisational identity sources | Author |
|--|--|
| Symbols and artefacts (Names, Logos, Text, buildings, rituals) | Albert & Whetton 1985 Ashforth & Mael 1996 Bouchikhi et al 1998 Gioia 1998 Gioia et al 1984 Hatch & Schultz 1997,2002 Rindova & Schultz 1998 |
| Business practices | Ashforth & Mael 1996 Bouchikhi et al 1998 Dutton & Dukerich 1991 Alvesson & Svengingsson, 2003 |
| Beliefs and philosophy | Albert & Whetton 1985 Rindova & Schultz 1998 Alvesson & Svengingsson, 2003 |
| Documentation, newsletters, mission statements | Dutton & Dukerich 1991 Rindova & Schultz 1998 |

As Gioia et al ; (2000, p.64) noted in Humphreys and Brown,(2002), identity is ‘ *a potentially precarious and unstable notion, frequently up for redefinition and revision by organization members*’. We express our organizational identity through design and these expressions can include corporate advertising, corporate identity and design programs (Olins, 1989), corporate architecture (Berg & Kreiner, 1990), corporate dress (Pratt & Rafaeli, 1997; Rafaeli & Pratt, 1993) and corporate rituals (Rosen, 1988; Schultz, 1991), which makes use of the organizational actors sense of these and helps to concretize the organizations image. So not only is identity the organization members’ expression of its intended public culture to underscore its intended values and assumptions but also used to attract the external community. Research to date has focused on organizational identity sources such as symbols and artefacts, business practices, beliefs and philosophy and documentation. The role of buildings within the symbols and artefacts classification has been given little attention in research and this thesis aims to understand more fully the role of buildings and physical symbolic artefacts in the built environment within identity formation, as noted in Table 2:3 where the main documented sources of identity have been noted.

There is also some evidence that we are judged by others’ perceptions of our possessions (Gibbins & Coney, 1982). As organizational actors we invest ourselves in the symbols that we use, and come to identify ourselves through those symbols, as Elliot & Wattanasuwan, 1998, noted when writing about brand preferences. There is also research within identity theory that shows social actors engage in self-

stereotyping based on our identities (Simon & Hamilton, 1994, cited in Brewer and Gardner, 1996). This has been seen in popular culture when we may identify with idols by wearing the same style of clothes. There is also substantial literature on clothing and its role in identity construction. (See for example, Langner, 1959; Joseph, 1986; Feinburg Mataro, & Burroughs, 1992; Roach- Higgins & Eicher, 1992; Benstock & Ferris, 1994; Kaiser, 1997; Michelman, 1997; Pratt & Rafaeli, 1997; Rafaeli et al., 1997; Gillespie, 1998; Ransom, 1999; Crane, 2000). Within an organization, the wearing of an organizational uniform or emblem communicates group membership as well as group, social, instrumental and philosophical cohesiveness (Turner, 1978; 15; cited in Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994, p 252). Organizational dress can also be used a mechanism for controlling our behaviour within organizations by introducing dress codes and uniforms, and by wearing organizational dress we use it as a symbol of our acceptance of the organizations core values and beliefs (Ouchi, 1981; Joseph, 1986; Kaiser 1997; McVeigh, 2000; Pratt & Rafaeli, 1997; Rafaeli et al., 1997; Sperber, 2000). Our dress can also be used to symbolize a disagreement with the organizations ideals such as our status as a member of an out group. The communicative function of organization dress can also be used to emphasize status. Bouska and Beatty (1978) found that shoppers were affected by the dress of others in department stores depending on whether they were wearing high status clothing (e.g. businessmen's suits). Organizational identification is closely related to our other individual characteristics which have the organization as their focus, although it is conceptually distinct from other constructs (Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Dutton et al, 1994; van Kippenburg & van Schie, 2000). By definition, our organizational identification is a cognitive judgment relating to our fit between organizational and individual values and is essentially devoid of any evaluative component (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Rousseau, 1998) whereas other constructs such as organizational commitment (Steers & Porter, 1979; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; Allan & Meyer, 1990) or organizational loyalty (Adler & Adler, 1998) or organizational trust (Robinson, 1996; Elangovan & Shapiro, 1998) or internalization of organizational values (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; van Knippenburg & van Schie, 2000) refer more to beliefs and feelings which are evaluative in nature. These are a positive outcome from an organization management perspective. If we as actors identify closely with the organizational change process we will act in ways which benefit the organization

because this re affirms our self- concept (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Dutton et al (1994) and Rousseau (1998) posit that our organizational citizenship behaviour increases when we identify more with the organization, our motivation to reach group goals increases (Scott & Lane, 2000) and our support for the organization increases (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Our affective reactions, including job satisfaction, are more positive (van Kippenburg & van Schie, 2000) and our loyalty to the organization increases (Adler & Adler, 1998; Mael & Ashforth, 1992). If our identification with the organization is low we act in our own self interest (Scott & Lane, 2000) and these actions may not necessarily be in line with organizational expectations. If we accept that our organizational identity is based on congruency between organizational attributes and individual values (Dutton et al, 1994) then what happens to our identity if our organization is going through fundamental change? A static perspective would suggest that if the organization changes our identity forming within the organization changes and the fit becomes closer or greater depending on whether or not the fit improves (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991). However, other authors have suggested that there are other factors at play here. Rousseau (1998) suggests that whether the identification is based on situational cues or whether it is based on a more fundamental and enduring change in the employee's self conceptualization and/or experience in the organization affect this process.

Foundations of social identity

Tajfel (1978, 1982), Tajfel & Turner (1985), Goffman, 1959; Deaux (1993); and Gioia (1998) have examined identity from a social perspective. Identity at a social level looks at social comparison e.g. comparison of self to others and in-group and out group comparison and interpersonal relationships. To address these areas, social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978, 1982) asserts that people tend to emphasize what sets them apart from others. This body of research, in addition to examining identity as a social phenomenon expands on the notion of distinctiveness to identity theory by focusing on groups rather than individuals. For this reason, social identity theory provides insight into the development of identity at other levels of analysis.

A collective identity refers to the attributes of a group by members of that group (Elsbach, 2004a). Collective identity in a social setting is a general framework that we use to understand ourselves and this is formed and built on through social interaction (Goffman, 1959; Erikson, 1964; Gergen, 1985). We then claim

membership to certain social categories and to the personal meanings we associate with those categories (Deaux, 1993). This advances the earlier concept of personal identity to include interrelations and group aspects. Goffman (1959) and Erikson (1964) studied the social aspect of identity. Goffman (1959) focused on the degree to which our self- concept is distinct. That is to say that we identify with one group or another based on drawing lines of distinction comparing similarities and difference with the out group. This leads to the concept of identity as a result of social comparison. Erikson however, focused on establishing a balance within group identity, between the similarities and the differences. Erikson agreed that we classify ourselves by distinguishing ourselves from others but added that we do this at the same time as viewing ourselves as part of a similar group. Whereas later, Tajfel (1978, 1982) introduced social identity theory which has been used to explain group identity.

This concept would suggest that we have a dual identity and introduces the need for multiple identities in our lives. Gergen (1968, 1985, & 1991) suggest that multiple identities differ by circumstances and that identity is a sub set of multiple roles that are the result of the social context. Gergen (1968) went on to suggest that our identity is the result of many loosely attached identities. This could in turn suggest that our self- concept as a whole entity may be misplaced and not actually possible as an individual. This is supported by an aspect of social identity theory (SIT) that social identities are prompted by particular settings (Goffman, 1959; Turner, 1982, 1985). In terms of social identity theory, Tajfel and Turner (1985) suggest that identity is both in relation to, and comparative with, other groups and that our group identity is maintained through comparisons with other groups and that our goal with this comparison is to enhance our self- esteem. Tajfel (1978) proposed that identity emerges from the context of inter-group relations and that we emphasize our distinctive component to set ourselves apart.

It is this perception of distinctiveness that influences action, so we do not only think we are distinct, but we also act as though we are distinct. In addition, this theory asserts that when we construct ourselves with a set of essential characteristics that define our self concept, we also seek situations that confirm those self-concepts over time and space (Steele, 1988). Turner et al (1987) did not focus on these 'us' and

'them' categories rather defining three abstract levels of self- categorization and these were 1) human identity, 2) social identity and 3) personal identity. Discounting the breadth of the categories or how abstract they are the assertion was that identity is based on aspects that are distinctive for us as individuals or as part of a group. In addition to self categorization a strand of research examining the sociological perspectives of identity has arisen (Stryker, 1987; Thoits, 1991) which include elements of systems and social structure and within this framework multiple identities are assumed.

Table 2:4 illustrates the different strands of research. In each perspective there is a differentiation between individual, relational or social self. This assumes clear boundaries within a group membership but becomes more complex as group boundaries are blurred.

Table 2:4: Common characteristics of social identity

| Social Identity Characteristics | Research |
|--|---|
| Distinctive | Goffman (1959), Erikson (1964), Turner (1987) |
| Group membership | Ashforth & Mael (1989), Hunt (1991) Turner, Oakes, Haslem & McCarty (1994) |
| Social comparison | Goffman (1959), Tajfel(1978, 1982) Tajfel & Turner (1985), Deaux (1993) Gioia (1998), Gioia et al (2000) |
| Social interaction | Goffman (1959),Erikson (1964) Gergen (1968, 1985), Humphreys & Brown (2002) Beech (2000), Sims (2003) |

Brewer and Gardner (1996) state that levels of our social selves are differentiated by 1) occasions when we derive a sense of self from interpersonal relationships and 2) occasions when we derive a sense of self from larger more impersonal social groups. A central issue remains of whether collective identity is based on personal attachment or impersonal attachment which results from our identification of the social group or a combination of both.

Organizational Identity and Organizational Image

There are two viewpoints on organizational image. One originates from the management literature and the other from the marketing literature. Management's view of organizational image promotes the viewpoint that the image encompasses the viewpoints that external members hold about the organization (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Dutton et al., 1994). This is an internal focus whereas the marketing

literature views the image from the perspective of the external stakeholders. According to Abratt (1989) image is constituted of the feelings and beliefs that exist in the minds of external people so while image is intentionally manipulated by insiders for outsiders (Hatch & Schultz, 1997) it is commonly characterized as a summary of images held by external people (Abratt, 1989; Bromley, 1993). Image can be closely related to branding and reputation. The common element is the interest in what the external people perceive the organization to be. Hatch and Schultz (1997, 2002) have combined both these approaches to give a more comprehensive definition which is used for this thesis. They state that organizational image is *'a holistic and vivid impression held by an individual or group towards an organization and is a result of sense making by the group and communication by the organization of a fabricated and projected picture of itself'* (p.8). Hatch and Schultz (1999) suggest that organizational image can be summarized and categorized by its attributes of mirroring and impressing. In their view, mirroring is characterized by the appearance of the organization. Hatch & Schultz (1997, 2002) provide a useful framework for differentiating the concepts of organizational culture, identity and image (see fig. 2:1). In their view, culture is symbolic context within which construction of organizational identity is formed, whereas image focuses on its external audiences in that it represents images held by external constituencies (see Table 2:5).

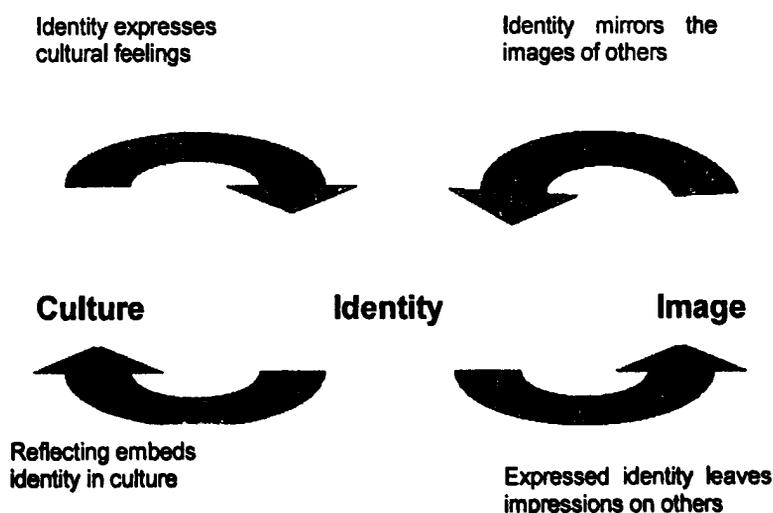


Fig 2:1 The Organisational Identity Model (Hatch & Schultz, 1997)

The Hatch & Schultz model has borrowed a Mead concept intended for individual and social identity and applied it to organisational identity. I am applying the same concept to individual identity as Mead originally intended as well as organisational, group and workplace. In doing so have found the Hatch and Schultz model of the processes of identity work and their interconnection with culture and image valuable within a discussion on the role of physical artefacts within these processes. It is the role of physical artefacts within these processes that is the focus of my second research question.

Meads 'I and me' was a theory of social and individual identity. Hatch and Schultz have taken this and applied it to organizational identity and image and how identity expresses cultural understanding through symbols. Hatch and Schultz explain the processes linking identity and culture (reflecting and expressing) with previously described processes linking identity and image (mirroring and impressing).

Hatch and Schultz have justified the transition from Meads theory by proposing that if organizational culture is to organizational identity what the 'I' is to individual identity it follows that organizations form theirs in relation to culture and image. They have also related this to self identity by saying just as individuals form their identities in relation to both internal and external definitions of self; organisations form theirs in relation to culture and image.

Gioia and Thomas (1996) studied top management teams in higher education and how they made sense of issues impacting change. They found that managers' perception of identity and future image are essential to the sense making process and impact upon organizational actors issue interpretation. Van Rekom (2002) proposes that there is agreement that identity is something perceived by organisational actors. Therefore we could assume that perceived image influences future images and the expectations, ideals and fears that organizational members may have.

Dutton and Dukerich (1991) proposed that the organizations image can influence the organizations identity as refracted through the eyes of others. Impressing, which can be influenced by culture, is the process by which organizational identity is communicated to others. Hatch and Schultz (1999, 2002) framework bridges internal functions and external relations and in this thesis it will be used to

differentiate the concepts of physical symbolic artefacts and organizational change where they directly interact with organizational identity. It will be proposed in this thesis that symbols and organizational physical artefacts provide the vehicle by which we can move forward understanding organizational identity.

Table 2:5: Identity components and expression

| Identity Component | | Expression |
|---|---|---|
| Expression: Refers to how an organizations speaks about itself |  | Symbols such as architecture , advertising, clothing, are the primary means of self- expression for an organization |
| Mirroring: The reflection of an organization through the opinions and judgements of others; links image to identity |  | The opinions and reactions of others affect organization identity Identity is constructed through interactions between organizational members and those who give feedback about the organization |
| Reflection: The process by which organizational members understand themselves as a organization; the result of how organizational members perceive themselves |  | Relationship manifests itself in an organizations history Makes organization's assumptions and values explicit |
| Impressing: Refers to images of an organization that are strategically projected to constituents |  | Purposeful communication conducted through various forms of public relations |

Source: adapted from Hatch & Schultz (2002)

Fiske and Taylor (1991) view our personal identity as our belief about ourselves both in the past and in the future. Identity cannot exist in a vacuum. The formation of identity is the result of current identity content as well as future needs. This suggests that it is dependant on us reconstructing our identity and that to some extent identity is self- referential. The information that we use as a point of reference will influence how we construct or reconstruct identity. Steel (1988) suggests that people construct themselves by having a set of essential characteristics that define their self- concepts and they engage in interpretations and practices intended to affirm the continuity of those self- concepts over space and time. The reflexive process essentially understands the present identity as it relates to the past and the future or desired state, as well as how it relates to other agents. Identity is a developmental process that links the past with the desired/ anticipated future (Giddens, 1991). While identity can change over time, it is rooted in the past. The temporally

continuous characteristics associated with organizational identity, therefore, can be traced historically with an organization, but are developed, refined over time. In this sense, identity is a self reproducing system.

Discursive consciousness, referring to what actors are able to express, is a level of consciousness which includes elements of organizational identity that organizational members are clearly able to identify and articulate as representing central, distinctive and temporally continuous characteristics of an organization. Practical consciousness refers to what actors know or believe about a given situation. This level of consciousness addresses actors own beliefs about an organization's identity, which may not be easily articulated. In this case, inferences must be made and substantiated through sources of data. A constructivist approach to a study of identity is adopted in this thesis. (Alvesson & Karremann, 2000) propose using a perspective that identities are not fixed but they adapt to social contexts and are open to modification and affected by social processes.

Synthesizing theories

Today constructionist and normative theories have been combined to mix a semiotic, interactionist process of image, perception and interpretation by individuals on to a normative view. Organizations have collective identities which are formed and maintained as part of individuals' social identities. These identities are distinct and distinguishable from each other and arranged in hierarchies within the cognitive schema of individuals and groups. Different identities are categorized and selected through the influence of organizational images which are the received and derived beliefs corresponding to these organizational identities.

Having outlined the basis on which identity is founded I will now examine workplace identity, which refers to the distinctiveness and status self-categorizations used by an individual to signal his or her identity in a specific workplace (Elsbach, 2004a).

This definition stems from several branches of organizational and psychological research including research in situated identities (Alexander & Lauderdale, 1977; Ibarra, 1999) and identity centrality, (Sherman, Hamilton & Lewis, 1999) which define identity in relation to context. This would suggest that the specifics of an

identity's self- categorizing can vary according to context (Brickson, 2000). Brewer (1991) goes further to suggest that because categorization is based on social comparison and categorization theories; identity categorization confers status based on the legitimacy and rank associated with a category and distinctiveness based on inclusion or exclusion from specific categories. Therefore, our personal self categorizing, by defining us at work, says how we are distinct and how we compare with in groups. However our social categorizing says how our group is distinct and how it compares with our groups. Status and distinctiveness are components of workplace identity (Elsbach, 2004). Turner (1987) has suggested that individuals deliberately choose to define themselves as members of specific groups or categories. Self categorization theorists propose that individuals choose to define themselves as members by selecting self categorizations which illustrate positive distinctiveness and comparing themselves with others. They say and do things to try to change the parameters so that a subjectively more meaningful and self-favouring identity becomes salient (Hogg & Terry, 2000:125). Hatch (1993) defined identity as how we define and experience ourselves and this identity is affected by our activities and beliefs and justified by our cultural assumptions. Hatch also made the link between physical symbolic artefacts and identity by stating that we use our cultural artefacts symbolically to present an image that will be interpreted by others. Hatch also linked this with culture when proposing that while our projected image is put into context by our cultural heritage the interpretations that others make are put into context by their own culture. If these people are members of the same organization then this culture-identity-image routine is fairly contained. When external influences are involved such as stakeholders, identity and image become more interdependent. I would argue that how we embed identity in organizational culture and how our identity expresses cultural understandings is at least partly through symbolic artefacts so therefore it becomes important to examine the link between culture and identity.

Dutton and Dukerich (1991) state that others reactions affect identity as those reactions are mirrored on to us and this process would encourage organisational members to involve themselves in issues which would change public opinion of their organisation. This would suggest that there is a difference in how organisational members perceive themselves and their organizations and how

external stakeholders see them and if there is a discrepancy then the members are motivated to change that image or identity and to align with what they believe others think of them. Dutton and Dukerich then suggested we '*might better understand how organizations behave by asking where individuals look, what they see, and whether or not they like the reflection in the mirror*' (1991, p.551). This mirroring process, in terms of the link between identity and image was described by Dutton and Dukerich (1991:550) as

.... 'What people see as their organization's distinctive attributes (its identity) and what they believe others see as distinctive about the organization (its image) constrain, mold and fuel interpretation.... Because image and identity are constructs that organization members hold in their minds, they actively screen and interpret issues like the Port Authority's homelessness problems and actions like building drop-in centers using these organizational reference points.'

From this we could then propose that organizational actors construct their identity in relation to the events and images around them and also in relation to what we perceive ourselves to be. Hatch and Schultz (2002) has claimed that when we do not accept the images we have of ourselves or our organization we seek to alter these images. Hatch went on to state that what sustained this sense of ourselves as different from the image through the organizational mirror was the organizational culture.

When organizational images are mirrored in identity they will be interpreted in relation to an existing organizational identity which is embedded in cultural understanding. Subsequently, this identity will be altered or reinforced through the process of reflection, the reflection process then encompassing the deep cultural values and assumptions of its actors which then becomes closely associated with the identity. Hatch and Schultz (2002) proposed that we come to perceive objects, cultural artefacts, as possessing those meanings experience adds to them. I would propose not as Hatch suggested that '*meanings are expressed*' but, **meanings are interpreted** from cultural artefacts, these artefacts are not carrying that meaning as Hatch and Schultz (2002) suggests but we as actors carry that meaning implicitly and through the artefacts as a tool, a language, we translate the implications and

make sense of our cultural understanding bringing them to a cultural surface. These artefacts then are used in a self-defining, identity forming process.

Hatch claims, that whenever organizational actors make explicit claims about what the organization is, their claims carry with them some of the cultural meanings in which they are embedded. Hatch goes on to claim that culture is embedded in material artefacts and that they can be used to express who or what the organization is, so that cultural understandings are carried along with reflections on identity into the process of expressing identity. I would argue though that the process by which cultural meaning and artefacts meets is one of social construction.

Organizational actors will make the organizations character known by its outgoing discourse (brochures, advertising) and this communicates identity as an organization within the organization and to others as image outside the organization. So not only is identity the organization members' expression of its intended public culture to underscore its intended values and assumptions but also used to attract the external community. Rindova and Fombrun (1998:60) stated that; projected images reflect not only a firm's strategic objectives but also its underlying identity. Images that are consistent with organizational identity are supported by multiple cues that observers receive in interacting with firms. There is both an intentional and unintentional aspect to these projected images so the intentional aspects attempt to manage our interpretations and the unintentional can include the buildings, appearance and layout.

When symbolic objects like these are used to express an organizations identity their meaning is closely linked to the distinctiveness that lies within any organization culture (Hatch, 2000). Individuals can alter organizational identities and the relationship between individuals and organizations is reciprocal just as organizational identities can influence individual behaviour and individual behaviour can influence organizational identities (Pratt & Foreman, 2000). In the area of professional dress and organizational identity, Pratt and Rafaeli (1997) found that nurses use dress to signal the identity they chose to maintain. Appropriate organizational dress helped these employees feel like their identities fit their work roles and provided them with both confidence and psychological comfort to carry out their work.

Several organizational researchers have recently examined how individuals use and interpret role-normative behaviour as a means of developing new workplace identities as their role or organization changes (Ely, 1995; Covalski et al., 1998; Ibarra, 1999). This work shows how employees adapt their in-role behaviour to fit in, or resist normative role expectations. Over time such modelling becomes aligned with the employee's workplace identity and alters the perception of the central and distinctive traits that define him or her at work (Ibarra, 1999). Goffman (1967) discussed the role of interaction rituals as a means of creating and maintaining "selves" For example, *'Actions taken by a person to make whatever he is doing consistent with his social image'*. An organization will make its character and claims over its identity known by its outgoing discourse so the actors in the organization can identify with this and communicate both as an organization within the organization and to others outside the organization.

In addition, research has found that our social identities, which are defined as part of one's self image that is drawn from being a member of a group, permit a cognitive ordering of the social universe (Hogg, 1995). Deaux et al. (1995), for example, found five basic different types of social identity (personal relationships, vocations/avocations, political affiliations, ethnic/religious groups and stigmatized groups), so there are a variety of ways through which our social identities can be formed. Nagel (1994) found that ethnic and cultural identity develops through an on going dialectic between individual processes of self- perception and external political, social, and economic forces. We can also realize our social identity through our workplace or through our personal relationships. It is often necessary to communicate our identity be it social or organization, to others. Accurate representation of our identity helps us as well as others to navigate our way through our environment. Presenting our identity helps guide behaviour along appropriate lines. We behave differently when we are aware of others identities. Physical artefacts are a means through which not only our identity be communicated but also we use the information gained from the interpretation of our surroundings as a sensor to alter our identity and the signals we send to others.

2.5 The symbols and artefacts literature

Symbols and Artefacts

This section on symbols and artefacts focuses on how meaning is attributed to or constructed from symbols and artefacts. *'Organizational symbols and symbolic activity are important indicators of group and organizational identity narratives'* (Humphreys & Brown, 2002). We often only act upon meanings created from appearance (Blumer, 1969) so physical symbolic artefacts are important tools, not only of appearance management (in relation to our workplace surroundings), but also as a tool of social control (McVeigh, 2000a) and, of course of understanding our environment and the people within that environment. In other words, we as organizational actors can use our surroundings as a form of communication to others of our identities, while at the same time the organization can use our physical surroundings to control the identities of groups of individuals.

Symbols allow the user to publicly and concretely affirm or display their affiliation with, or affection for, an organization in the same way as we may display a company logo on our car windscreen or wear our university's logo on our sportswear. Association with a group is visibly marked and proclaimed through using or displaying a symbol. Visible symbols are in fact powerful statements of affiliation and identity perhaps because they are physical. Accumulating objects (and clothing) can be seen as 'extending the self' (Belk, 1988). Displayed objects in the workplace (Belk and Watson, 1998; Hochschild, 1997), can reveal a great deal about personal meaning and personal, organizational and social identity. Artefacts of this sort can instantly affirm claims of identity. An individual may claim he or she is of a certain status or belonging to a certain in-group in an organization but may not be believed solely on the conversation. By displaying symbols of that group, a chair of a designated quality, a business card with a colour coding, they do not need to say a word but the symbol is interpreted as belonging to that group. The object speaks for itself and is more likely to be believed than words alone. Researcher such as Cialini et al. (1976) and Kaiser (1977) have shown us that organizational actors who identify with their organization are more likely to own objects bearing symbols which identify them with that organization. Other researchers have shown us that we as an audience are more likely to ascribe organizational affiliation and organizational characteristics to actors displaying such symbols (Joseph, 1986,

McVeigh, 2000). Given the potentially powerful communication impact of symbols I considered that worthwhile to study the relationship between symbols, identity and change in the organizational built environment.

Denotative/Physical Properties of symbols

There is a two way relationship between identification with the organization and attraction to the organization's symbols. Higher levels of identification with the organization lead to higher levels of attraction to the organizations symbols, while higher levels of attraction to the organization's symbols lead to higher levels of identification with the organization. The idea of corporate identity design implicitly assumes that stakeholders can be drawn to organizations with the help of design (Morgan, 1999; Schrubbe-Potts, 2000).

What attracts organizational actors to interpret physical symbolic artefacts in their built environment that might lead them to identify with the organization or to alter their own work place identity? There are two ways in which symbols vary from one another. One is the structure of the symbol (denotation) and the other is the content of the symbol (connotation). The structural aspect (denotation) is the physical properties that describe the physical artefact for example, colour, shape and construction. This refers to the symbols most explicit, obvious and straightforward characteristics (Leed-Hurwitz, 1993). For example: *Is the desk circular, oblong or square?* Henderson and Cotes (1998) studied denotative aspects of symbols and found that several physical aspects of a symbol (in this case the work was specifically on logo's) naturalness, harmony, elaborateness, its proportional relationship all effect on whether the symbol is recognized and how much shared meaning arises from that recognition. They also tested other variables such as 'roundness', 'organic' and 'symmetric'. Research by Feucht (1989) suggests that men prefer diamond shapes and women prefer heart shapes and that the combined preference of two genders is an 's' shape. Perhaps shapes that relate specifically to the organizations industry or service sector lead to higher instances of shared meaning. This highlights the fuzzy nature of the difference between denotative and connotative meaning in symbols. Perhaps the specific meaning of a shape cannot be captured in a denotative measurement of 'symmetry'. Uher (1991) suggests that both zig zag lines (which resemble bared teeth) and shapes which look like eyes

elicit innate physiological avoidance behaviour , so specific physical features of symbolic artefacts may generate special biological or physiological responses.

Different colour combinations may be more pleasing and attractive than others and may have an effect on the attraction of the physical artefact and subsequent identification from it. There are a number of ways in which colour can also have an effect. Research has shown that 'warm' colours are deemed more exciting, active and arousing than 'cool' colours (Adams & Osgood, 1973; Bellizi, Crowley & Hasty, 1983; Crowley, 1993; Hamid & Newport, 1989). In addition, warm colours draw us closer. So an orange wall would make us move nearer to it and a blue wall would not (Bellizi, Crowley & Hasty, 1983). Research also shows that 'cool' colours are evaluated more positively than 'warm' colours (Bellizi, Crowley & Hasty, 1983; Crowley, 1993; Guilford, 1934; Guliford & Smith, 1959; McManus, Jones & Cottrell, 1993).

There are other important characteristics of colour in the built environment besides the hues when evaluating colour effects. Gorn et al (1997) found that our feeling of relaxation rises with the colour value (degree of brightness), while feelings of excitement were found to rise with colour chrome (degree of saturation). Valdez and Mehrabian (1994) reported that value (brightness) and chroma (saturation) exhibit clear and steady effects on our emotions.

Finally, colour research has suggested that a number of colour combinations may have specific effects on organizational stakeholders. Effects resulting from the use of primary colours in design may differ from those of secondary colours. Certain colour combinations, such as those between complementary colours (directly across from one another on the colour wheel), or analogous colours (adjacent to one another on the colour wheel) may be more appropriate in some designs than in other colour combinations (Holtzschue & Noriega, 1997; Wong, 1997). Clearly colour must be considered as one of the determining elements of a physical symbolic artefacts effect on identification process.

When examining logo design (Dondis, 1974; Swinehart, 1996) found the degree of complexity affected its attractiveness. Henderson & Cote (1998) used a variable called 'elaborate' (made up of individual scores of 'complexity', 'activity,' and 'depth') and found that logos scoring at moderate level of elaborateness were preferred to logos that were either too simple or too elaborate. They also found that a logo's level of harmony (made up of measures called 'representativeness' and

'organic') or not has a significant effect on logo effect. Henderson & Cote (1998) also found that natural-ness had an influence on whether or not a logo commanded a 'shared meaning' among participants. This phenomenon may hold true within the organizational built environment.

Connotative/ Symbolic properties

The symbolic content or connotative content of organizations physical artefacts will influence its liking and attractiveness and the level of identification with the organization in a way which is different from the symbols physical properties. The denotative aspect of the symbol looks at how the symbol depicts meaning and the connotative aspect looks at what it depicts (Mollerup, 1997).

Research in semiotics have categorised the sign in three ways: an icon, an index and a symbol. An icon is a sign that visually depicts what it represents and is linked to the things they represent through a similarity between the signifier and the signified. A building can be represented as an icon with a picture of a building and can vary from being highly realistic, as in a photograph, to highly abstract. Icons can vary from being simplistic to complex and from the specific to the universal (McCloud, 1994). The building photograph can represent the building and Mollerup (1997) calls icons at this realistic end of the spectrum 'images'. The more abstract he labels 'diagrams' and these McCloud (1994) labels as the border between iconic and linguistic representation. 'Diagrams' are schematic signs that depict the simplest structure and most recognisable aspects of an object. McCloud (1994) defines abstraction as lying near the border between icon and language is telling because it points to its object. Therefore a door can be an indexical sign for a building. Because of the physical linking and pointing aspects of indexical signs meanings these meanings are dependant upon their physical placement (Mollerup, 1997). For example a wine glass on a carton implies that the goods are fragile but a wine glass in an airport probably means a bar. This would suggest that context places an important role on meaning. In the case of both the icon and the index, the signifier uses an explicit iconic cue to suggest the signified.

Symbols are the third type of sign and they are signs whose meaning has been arrived at by convention. Their meanings have been socially constructed. Symbolic meanings change over time and are not necessarily universal at any given moment in time. There are also metaphoric icons, which share the conceptual qualities with the

objects they represent. For example, outstretched hands can be the protective qualities of insurance.

Symbols are, as in the case of language, wrapped up with their social histories so we are unable to recognize and understand the meaning of symbols unless we have been taught or have socially constructed these meanings over time and through our own personal, group or organizational experience. Most human language is made up of the symbol type of sign. Ultimately language choices are arbitrary. For example in one culture white flowers stand for purity in others, death. Without explanation the viewer will not be able to ascertain the meaning of the symbol. It is an arbitrary symbol, or an ideograph. In general representations of familiar and loved things will also result in positive feelings towards the symbol and the artefact that incorporates them. If a symbolic artefact contains a representation of something that we have a positive attitude towards then we can reasonably expect that these positive attitudes will transfer, at least in part, to the symbol containing that depiction or representation.

Straati (1998) wrote that symbols constitute the broadest and most important notion for the symbolic approach because:

1. The concept of symbols defines an object and a relation at the same time.
2. The understanding of symbols is based on the interpretation of organizational codes.

A symbol does not exist unless it can be invented, revealed expressed or indicated. Therefore the physical artefact is symbolic when it is understood and has meaning for someone in the environment. Symbols and signs help people to find direction in their hectic world. As we try to fit more and more into each day we increasingly need to compress the information that is thrown at us into something more easily digestible. Symbols can accomplish this allowing us to assimilate the barrage of details with which we are assailed each day.

A symbol can be defined as an object – a word or statement, a kind of action or a material phenomenon- that stands ambiguously for something else and/ or more than the object itself (Cohen, 1974). Alvesson (2002) definition is of a symbol as rich in meaning in a particular object and therefore communicates meaning in an economic way. The complexity of a symbol and the meaning it expresses calls for considerable

interpretation. Naturally, people have their own private symbols, the meaning of which is relevant to them, however in this context it is the organizational meaning which is of importance.

Artefacts, using the metaphor of a language, allow us to form, affirm or influence our identity within the daily fabric of organizational life. Understanding the role physical artefacts play in the affirmation or alteration of our workplace identities in the organizational built environment could assist us in both managing and designing our organizations and their built environment. Increasing attention has been given to the role of symbols and identity but the context of using physical artefacts as a language metaphor has been underestimated. We know our built environment can threaten workplace identities (Elsbach, 2004a) but we cannot affirm categorizations of distinctiveness. In addition, there is now a large body of work which examines the role of identity within organizations, which includes physical forms, narrative, stories and myth. As Rafaeli & Vilnai-Yatetz (2004) state a gap exists between the extent to which artefacts are used by organizations and the theoretical understanding of the roots of this use. The literature has not directly addressed whether organizational actors construct their identities using physical symbolic artefacts and under what circumstances this occurs.

Physical artefacts in the organizational built environment

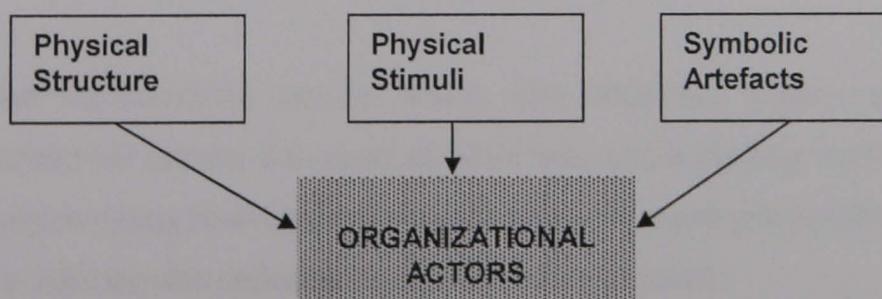
The physical structure of the organization includes the geographical location, the building layout and the design and décor. The internal organizational built environment is only vaguely understood although there have been attempts to classify the physical environment in organizations. In 1973, Steele classified them within six functions (1) shelter and security, (2) social contact, (3) symbolic identification, (4) task instrumentality (5) pleasure and (6) growth. This categorizes the social and psychological benefits that the physical environment provides for organization members. Davis (1984) categorized the physical environment as being composed of three elements (1) physical structure, (2) physical stimuli and (3) symbolic artefacts all these variables being likely to have an effect on organizational actors' behaviour. This is a useful framework to pull together the constituent features of the physical environment as illustrated in Fig. 2:2 below.

Fig 2:2 Physical Structure of the organisation



Davis (1984) defined the physical structure as the architectural design and physical placement of furnishings in a building that influences or regulates social interaction. This relationship is illustrated in Fig 2:3. Architectural design is defined as the achievement of collective agreement concerning the transformation of the organizational built environment, an allocation of the physical environment to personal and cultural priorities which although the architectural built environment stands alone yet is located within a larger urban environment. Our behaviour within the building is constrained by the physical structure because we have to adapt ourselves to it (Pfeffer, 1982). The placement of furnishings also influences the type of interactions that take place.

Fig 2:3 Physical Setting Variables Influencing Behaviour In Offices (Davis,1984)



Physical stimuli are those aspects of the organizational built environment that intrude into or influence the behaviour of the organizational actor. These include

incoming mail, telephone ringing, or the time on the clock. Naser (1994) proposed that a contrast existed between formal stimuli which can be measured - size, form, proportion and colour versus symbolic stimuli such as style- which have a subjective meaning and cannot be measured.

Symbolic artefacts can consist of four main categories (1) professional image cues (2) status cues (3) task effectiveness cues and (4) aesthetic cues (Davis, 1984). Bitner (1992) went on to suggest three categories for identifying artefacts, ambient conditions, space and function and symbols and style. This concurs with Rafaeli and Vilnai Yavetz (2004) who categorize symbolic artefacts in three dimensions of instrumentality, aesthetic and symbolism. They proposed a model which suggests that artefacts need to be analyzed according to these three distinct aspects: instrumentality, aesthetics and symbolism which overcame previous shortcomings on prior categorizations such as the assertion that these categories are mutually exclusive. However, the extent to which interpretations are made in these categories has not been addressed.

Form and Function

Milliken (1989) in Graves-Brown, (2000) distinguished three different types of function. The first is techno function, which is the utilitarian function of an artefact. An example of this would be a chair which is used to support someone in a seated position. Then, there is the socio function of an artefact which involves the display of social facts. An example of this, in the case of a chair, would be leather versus plastic upholstery, giving a statement about the price of the piece of furniture. Lastly, there is ideo function which involves the symbolization of more abstract ideas such as values and beliefs. So in this case an office chair with high back and arms, looking like a throne may symbolize authority.

These classifications can be mixed. Our chair can support someone (techno function) we can use it to stand on while we paint the ceiling (system function) our Georgian dining chair can imply wealth (socio function) and be subsequently bought by a collector who understands its historical importance.

The ideo function implied in the managing director's chair, authority, can have a proper function, seating, and system function, more authoritarian than other chairs in the organization. Of course, we can buy a relatively simple carved chair, made to

serve its technio function from Asia whilst on holiday and then having brought it from its own cultural setting into our own it can now symbolize our travels- ideo function. This represents our ontology, our nature of reality.

It now becomes apparent that artefacts can have more than one function. Our desk has a technio function to support our office equipment and to contain our paperwork in the drawers; it has the socio function of displaying our status in the organization, and the ideo function acting as a barrier. These can either be a system function, its place in the office environment or a proper function, its technical specification.

Of course, these functions or meaning are constantly shifting in the dynamics of the office environment. Our cultural surroundings are not static and are constantly changing. Although depending on the type of function or meaning this dynamism takes place at different rates. If our chair is removed from the office systems it loses its system functions, unless of course those system functions can still be implied by perhaps its office worker taking the desk home and he/ or she still reads those system meanings, but then these would transform themselves into ideo functional meaning as the meaning is now symbolic and based on values and beliefs. The desks proper function was originally to lean against and write, and then typewriters were placed on it and now computers. In that period of time the desk has changed both in its physical dimensions and in its material form. We are now designing more workstations with cable managed systems and less pure desking as our needs are evolving. The desk may then end up as a home decoration piece rather than a utilitarian piece of furniture. In many cases a system function of an individual thing becomes a proper function of a lineage of things as they gradually come to be reproduced for that function. The system function of the first wire managed workstation is large open plan offices which gradually moved on to being its proper function as wire management became a basic requirement for today's office environment. These transitions from system to proper function is typical of socio function and ideo function since style, whether it is in interior design or dress in the working environment, when adopted by an influencer, tends to be adopted consequently throughout the social group.

Proper function emphasizes the stability of function over time and across groups of things; whereas system function emphasizes its liability, the tendency of functions to change across time as one function replaces another. The concept of system function

is central to any analysis of change of function, because a proper function can only be acquired or changed on the basis of an already existing system function.

Meaning

I started off examining the differences between form and function in an artefact. Now before attempting to examine meaning in more detail I will define an artefact more precisely. It is more than a physical form with a function it is (a) a product of human action which exists independently of its creator; (b) intentional, it aims, that is at solving a problem or satisfying a need: (c) perceived by the senses, in that it is endowed with its own corporality or physicality (Gagliardi, 1992).

Artefacts can be defined as all the visible expressions of a culture, including, patterns of behaviour as well as objects and physical arrangements such as rituals and abstract productions or mental representations such as stories which, while, having an existence independent of their creators call on the powers of comprehension of the destinies rather than on their capacity to experience formal qualities concretely through the senses. In this thesis attention is given to the physical form of the artefact and further defined by being in the organizational built environment.

Artefacts include material things like rooms, furniture and decoration as well as visible codes of conduct (Schein, 1985). In the literature, artefacts in organizational settings are analyzed from different viewpoints. One perspective concerns how artefacts are interpreted by the members of an organization (Smirchich, 1983). Are artefacts interpreted as simple or complex symbols? Are these interpretations consciously or unconsciously created by the members of the organization? Another perspective addresses the function of the artefacts within the organization: Do artefacts have an energy controlling function or a system maintenance function to the organization (Dandridge, 1983). From a functionalist point of view, Schein studies the relationship between artefacts, values and basic assumptions within the organizational culture (Schein, 1983). Finally, the communicative contents of artefacts have been examined and analyzed, artefacts being defined as cultural signals which send messages to members of the organization (Daft, 1983).

Schiffer, (1992) in Graves-Brown (2000) states that social roles and cultural distinctions are universally mediated by artefacts. Foucault, (1982) agrees with this and he distinguished three types of activity, objective capacities dealing with objects; power relations, which concern our actual supervising of actions of humans and communicative relationships which concern the linguistic transmission of meaning and information. Although these aspects are distinguishable, according to Foucault they are not distinct; rather they overlap and support one another. This makes the meaning relative to the environment; the artefact is positioned in it and the power relations apparent at the point of study.

According to (Cummings, 1975) the human mind is supposed to inscribe its designs upon this surface through the mechanical application of bodily force: augmented as appropriate by technology. However, I aim to illustrate that the forms of objects are not imposed from above but grow from the mutual involvement of people and materials in an environment, supporting Foucault's comments about being distinct but not separable. The surface of nature is an illusion: we work from within the world not upon it. There are surfaces but these divides states of matter not matter from mind and they emerge from within the form generating process rather than pre-existing as a condition for it. In the context of the built environment Heidegger (1971) opposed the modernist convention that dwelling is an activity that goes on within, and is structured by an environment that is already built, but argued that we cannot engage in any kind of building activity unless we already dwell within our surrounding '*Only if we are capable of dwelling only then can we build.*' When the building is complete, with the work in its final form, dwelling and interpretation of the environment continues for as long as the life of the building goes on punctuated by the appearance of the pieces that it successively brings into being. Dwelling then, in the organizational built environment is tantamount to the ongoing virtual weaving of '*our lives with one another and with the manifold constituents of our environment*' Ingold (2000). If we accept this statement it would imply that our minds are not above or below our environment, but entwined within it. Within this context the physical artefact plays a role in our understanding of our identity in the organizational built environment.

With artefacts, form is applied from without, which implies that the artefact, a physical artefact, has a surface, a substance which must present itself to the makers

of artefacts as a surface to be transformed. According to Hodder (1992), the forces that shape artefacts are the metaphysical separation of mind and nature. The forms of artefacts have their sources in the human mind, as preconceived intellectual solutions to a particular design problem. This, then, is a further division of focus from a natural artefact, for example, a beehive. In the making of artefacts the mind is understood to place its ideal forms upon nature. This would mean that the surface of the artefact is not a surface of material construction but also a confrontation of the human mind. It is the form then of the artefact, not the substance, that attributes it a culture and to being an artefact. The emphasis is then on the issue of meaning and form as opposed to materiality. Our meaning and values float around the material object transforming it into an artefact. This transformation does not permeate the interior but rather is enveloped by the cultural imagination.

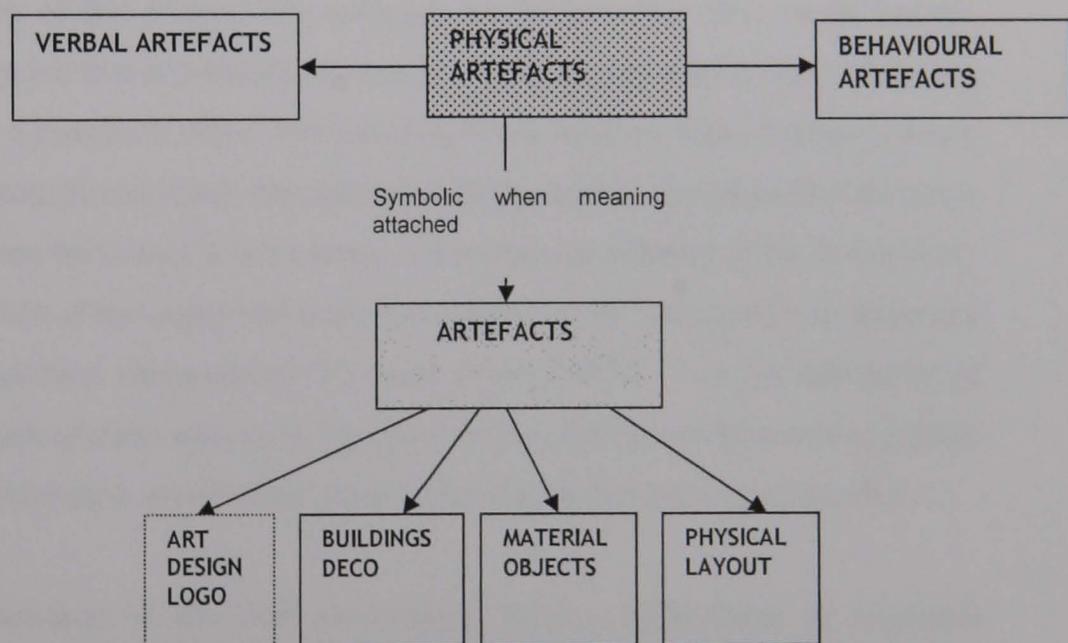
Although artefacts within the organization can be defined as all the visible expressions of a culture, including, patterns of behaviour, rituals and stories as well as objects and physical arrangements, the focus here is on physical environment itself, notably physical artefacts. Physical artefacts include material things like rooms, furniture and decoration as well as visible codes of conduct (Schein, 1985). Gagliardi (1992) proposed that physical artefacts are more than a physical form with a function but are a product of human action which exists independently of its creator. They are intentional and aim at solving a problem or satisfying a need. They are perceived by the senses, in that the physical symbolic artefact is endowed with its own corporality or physicality. Physical artefacts as defined here for this thesis to include graphic representations, buildings and interiors, material objects and physical layout. Artefacts can be defined as artificial products, something made by human beings and thus any element of a working environment. (Gagliardi, 1992) added that artefacts are always perceived by the senses and they have certain intentions, aiming to satisfy a need or a goal. Artefacts here will include colour (Sassoon, 1992) and furnishings (Davis, 1984; Baron, 1994).

A physical artefact is deemed to be symbolic when we examine it as an object and in relation to its environment at the same time. Its interpretation is based on organizational cues and can be invented, revealed, expressed or indicated (Straati, 1998). Therefore, the physical artefact is symbolic when it is understood and has meaning for someone in the environment (Alvesson, 2002). Symbols can vary in

complexity, can be created consciously or unconsciously, can vary in the extent to which they are shared and can be symbolic in different 'ways to different people, sometimes contradictory' (Morgan et al, 1990). Meaning is constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Blumer, 1969; Deetz, 1982; Geertz, 1993; Manning, 1979; Straati, 1998; Turner, 1990). Berg and Kreimer (1992) and Louis (1983) claimed that a person's culturally derived meaning systems make some things important and some things not. This meaning is embedded within our culture, and causes us to see things a particular way. It positions perception, causing people to see some things, and to exclude others. To quote (Geertz, 1973): '*... man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun.*' Geertz (1973) went on to explain in *Person, Time, Conduct and Bali* that that '*meaning is not intrinsic in the objects, acts and processes, and so on, which bear it, but- as Durkheim, Weber, and so many others have emphasized- imposed upon them; and the explanation of its properties must therefore be sought in that which does the imposing – men living in society*'.

Figure 2:4 illustrates the definition of an artefact that will be adopted in this thesis.

Fig 2:4: Definition of an artefact



Our culture determines what will be noticed and what will be excluded as part of perception. Schein (1985) defined culture as a '*set of basic assumptions shared by members of a group*'. So although individuals may hold quite varying beliefs about many different aspects of their organizational worlds, there exists at some level this

core set of assumptions without which the organization could not function (Smirchich, 1983). Specific human activity produces symbols, the value and meaning of which are provided by the subjects who use them (Goetze, 1972).

Building from this I propose that the extent to which we interpret our environment and the meanings we construct are dependant on our organizational culture. Within this context physical symbols act with other artefacts such as stories and myths and ritual as a tool to make sense of what is happening around us. This would then suggest that specific objects would have different meanings if in differing locations or at varying times and there can be differences in the way actors can interpret symbols. It would also suggest that in a given culture a physical artefact is interpreted in the same way or similarly, or that some are. Hatch (2000) has contended that when a symbol is removed beyond the culture that created it some of the meaning remains embedded in the artefact and is carried with it, also claiming that symbolic objects are constituted of layered interpretations and therefore carry a portion of its history with it. I would contend that this is the case when the actor is aware of part of that history. For example, an antique chair may evoke feelings about the past but that is primarily because we know it is an antique chair. If we take a chair from a director's office, and that chair was a symbol of the director's power over the organizational actors then that chair loses that interpretation if removed to a setting where its history is not known. It becomes an ordinary chair. If this is so, then the culture of the organization and the context of the setting play an important role in the artefacts interpretation. To quote Geertz (1973) *'...is the interaction of the effects each of these structures has upon the perceptions of those who use them, the way in which their experiential impacts play into and reinforce one another'*.

Artefacts in the built environment elicit a wide range of responses (Bateson, 1995). Physical aspects of the organizational environment have influenced occupants behaviour and attitudes and emotions (Morrow & McElroy, 1981; Marans & Spreckelmeyer, 1982, Goodrich, 1982; Davis, 1984; Oldham, 1988; Baron, 1994). They also influence the interactions between the occupants (Parsons, 1976; Morrow & McElroy, 1981; Schrberg, 1990; Baron, 1994; Oldham et al, 1995). Pratt and Rafaeli, (1997) illustrate that tangible organizational symbols are vehicles that help organizational members' comprehend a more abstract notion of organization

identity. Status difference is emphasised through these physical symbols. The shared understandings tell us that the organization has people of different status and that the people of different status can (in some organizations) be treated differently. These symbols can also operate to diminish rather than emphasis status differences. But shared understandings about power and status difference produced by physical artefacts can be used to promote control in the organization.

Research has been done to investigate how people act and feel in different places. Three concepts have been discussed by Markus (1987) to characterize building – form, space and function. In Markus's (1987) analysis for example the form of the building is considered to be a design factor not a function factor. Goodrich (1982) considered the office environment to be an instrumental cue not a symbolic one. Previous research has attempted to put artefacts in one of these boxes- symbolism or instrumentalism. In 1992 however, Straati deviated from this by advancing an aesthetics approach arguing that artefacts are likely to be both aesthetic and functional objects. He suggests that artefacts should be analysed on multiple dimensions rather than on one dimension. It is this argument that Rafaeli & Vilnai- Yavetz (2004) went on to develop when they produced a model by which artefacts can be analysed on multiple dimensions of instrumentality, aesthetics and symbolism. Rafaeli & Vilnai- Yavetz (2004) used the definition of instrumentality of an artefact to refer to the extent to which the artefact contributes to performance or to promoting goals.

The relationship between interpretation and the use actors put that interpretation to with respect to their and others identity and the built environment seems complex but is insufficiently documented. It is on that relationship that this thesis focuses.

Physical objects

When symbolic objects are used, deliberately in a new office interior for example, to express an organizations identity their meaning is closely linked to the distinctiveness that is embedded within any organization culture (Hatch, 2000). Artefacts become symbols by virtue of the meanings given to them (Hatch, 1993) whether this is conscious or unconscious.

The meanings of physical symbols are socially constructed and the use of physical symbols is a routine activity that is taken for granted and conducted, consciously and

unconsciously by organizational members (Pratt & Rafaeli, 2001). Physical symbols can represent multiple meanings, one symbol having different meanings in different contexts. For example the American flag flying over a building in USA or in Iraq. Symbols can be interpreted to give meaning not only about the physical object but about the relations of the people involved (O'Connor, 1994). A large desk in an office will tell you the person sitting at it behind has status in the organization and a meta message is that this person can tell you what to do. The intent of an actor using a symbol may be misinterpreted so when, for example, management introduces open plan offices to promote communication these layouts can be interpreted by others in the environment as an infringement of privacy.

Pratt and Rafaeli (2001), viewing symbols as a non verbal language, have accepted that physical symbols have defined elements and structure. They examined increasing diversity and empowerment in the organization proposing that it altered the type (more portable or instrumental) and the use of physical symbols in the workplace.

Boje (2001) proposes that we understand the social situation, in its complexity, through multiple lines of narrative through which the actors in the situation, and we as researchers, make sense of, and attribute meaning to, events, the self and others. It is proposed here that physical artefacts are in fact an extension of language in that they fulfil the same documented roles in the organizational life. Although language can be imprecise, and it could be argued that the symbolic significance of artefacts is even more imprecise, but viewing symbols as a language provides insight by reminding us that such meaning can be found in individual symbols (words) and patterns of symbols (sentences). These patterns are useful in realizing complex and subtle relationship issues, such as those involving ambivalence or plurality (e.g. Pratt & Barnett, 1997; Pratt & Dutton, 2000) Physical objects can be a communicative tool, being interpreted, manipulated and altered by actors in the organizational built environment can be a call to action, mobilizing and directing (Straati, 1998) gaining commitment (Edelman, 1977) exerting control and power (Wilson, 1992; Czarniawska- Joerges & Joerges, 1990 and Bourdieu, 1991) communicating (Girin, 1987) and controlling perceptions and creating meaning (Pondy & Mitriff, 1979) and a political object and resource (Wilson, 1992).

The above research suggests that behaviour and artefacts can play an important role in establishing workplace identities and that these types of markers are easily recognized in organizational contexts. These markers could then be useful tools for affirming organizational identity, but nevertheless these studies have their limitations. Much of the work on symbolic interactions has been done out of the organizational context and with one-off encounters so doing this research within an organization may give more facets to the research. Secondly, a lot of the research focuses on how actors adopt new organizational identities based on changing roles. Although relevant to an extent, more could be learned by examining the identities in a changing organization.

Becker (1977) posited that a variety of components in the built environment can give information to users. This supports the view that employees may utilize external environmental cues, either to categorize, or make inferences about the organization. Other researchers have focused on the effects of specific stimuli upon behaviour such as colour (Bellizzi et al, 1983) lighting (Areni & Kim, 1994) or music (Bruner, 1990). Research into organizational dress has established that colour may carry symbolic information; blue for example, can convey dignity, red may convey affection (Burgoon & Saine, 1978; Ketcham, 1958; Mehrabian, 1976). Dark colours convey power (Becker, Geer, Huhes & Strauss, 1961; Joseph, 1986; Lurie, 1981). Pratt & Rafaelli (1997) proposed that dress attributes act as a symbol of core organization values. Fussell (1983) proposed that the purity or naturalness of dress materials determines the attributions. Synthetic fibres (such as polyester) are proposed to convey lower class and status than pure fibres (such as silk) that purity of materials is an important symbol in organizations. In organizational interior design the pureness of the fabrics specified can be used to denote stratified roles.

Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton (1981) and Wallendorf & Arnould, (1988) wrote that home interiors contain a wide variety of objects that hold special importance for identity. Such objects are meaningful because they remind people of their pasts- travel experiences, achievements, close friends or because the objects are symbols of religious or ethnic identities. Treasure objects also may be used to silently convey and express self to others. But the individual-level self is not the only one that may be conveyed through such objects. In analyzing individual

differences in favourite objects in the home Csikszentmihaly and Rochberg- Halton (1981) detect a dimension of '*differentiation*' and '*integration*' involving the choice between symbolizing self (differentiation) and symbolizing others (integration). Altman and Gauvain (1981) have detected this same dimension of difference and labelled it 'identity/communality' dialectic. Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg- Halton (1981) in their study, found that men and adolescent participants tend to cite as favourite objects those symbolizing self, while woman and older adults tend to choose objects symbolizing others. This aspect of differentiation and integration can be carried over to the organizational environment, particularly in the context of actors, rather than using organizational objects by bringing in personal objects to the work environment to differentiate self and others. Those photos on the desk, our own kettle are examples of this.

We can communicate the pattern of the organizations existing social hierarchy by carefully observing status indicators within the social hierarchy using the language of spatial distances and physical objects. By contrast some actors downplay status differences using the absence of traditional status markers to communicate this message. In this case small often bizarre status symbols are created by actors to fill the gap left by traditional symbols. Coffee pots became an informal indicator of status for employees who felt their tenure to their post was strong or weaker than others in an unstable environment. There has been substantial research in dress role within the organization and it is proposed that the same concepts can be applied to our use of physical artefacts and this is worthy of future research particularly in the aspects relating to status, power and legitimization.

Unless an organization's identity is equivalent to its ideal identity, the information contained within one schema will be inconsistent with the information in the other. Left unchallenged inconsistency between the two identities causes an identity gap, defined as the cognitive distance between the perception of the current and the ideal identity. This self- discrepancy can provide motivation to alter current organizational identity (Cantor & Kihlstrom, 1987; Higgins, 1989). In circumstances of external threats, or strategic change giving rise to political conflict or tension there is likely to be heightened symbolic activity, one set of artefacts being compensated for by another (Johnson, 1988). One such aspect of symbol activity could be our interpretation of our environment. (Rafaeli & Vilnai- Yavetz, 2004) proposed that

the process by which this takes place is by interpreting different facets of the artefact –instrumental, aesthetics and symbolism through the mechanism of hygiene, sensory and associative processes. This response is emotional and further research will hopefully tell us how this how these interpretations can be used to alter/influence our identity. Further research is required to establish the extent and proportion of which these three dimensions are used and whether or not this ratio is dependent on the educational background and cultural dimensions of the individual organizational actors.

2.6 The management processes literature

This section explores the processes managers and leaders use to enable them install their strategic plans. Firstly, this section examines the style of management or leadership used and how this affects implementation carried out by strategic managers. Secondly, the section considers the relative effectiveness of these implementation tactics.

There is substantial literature on how to categorise styles of leaders and these are listed below in Table 2.6 including what they do and how they lead organisations. Although relevant, the research questions posed in this thesis are more concerned with the micro processes which result from these differing types of management processes. Table 2.6 lists the various approaches to leadership and details the characteristics of that leadership style.

Table 2:6: Different approaches to leadership (Schermerhorn et al. 1994, p.497)

| Approaches | Characteristics |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Trait and personalities | Assumes leaders are born and not made. Leadership consists of certain inherited characteristics or personality traits. Focuses attention on the person in the job and not on the job itself. |
| Behavioural | Considers the kind of behaviour of people in leadership positions and the influence on group performance. Draws attention to the range of possible managerial behaviours and importance of leadership style. |
| Contingency v situational | Leadership style depends on the situation. Interactions exist between the variables involved in the leadership situation and patterns of behaviour and there is no single style of leadership appropriate to all situations. |
| Transactional | Involves an exchange between leaders goals and subordinates needs and desires. It can be seen as contingent reinforcement whereby work is exchanged for pay and other rewards. |
| Transformational | Leader motivates and inspires subordinates to motivate and perform to their maximum. Leaders provide vision and direction for followers to achieve the stated results. |
| Self Leadership | Leader promotes the self-direction of subordinates to maximise their own potentials, and there ability to manage their own work. |

Bass (1985) in Emery & Barker (2007) defined transformational leadership as a perception of followers towards their leader. These followers strive to emulate their leader, trust their leaders' judgement, values and vision by copying them and forming emotional ties with them. Building on the organization's vision to inspire organizational actors, transformational leaders emphasize emotional arousal over intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1985) as their platform. This appeals to the organizational actors spiritualism and is based on meaning and purpose rather than promises of rewards and security or threats and attempts to persuade or inspire actors *"to transcend their own immediate self-interests for the sake of the mission and vision of the organization"* (Yammarina and Bass, 1990). Internalization of the vision as an emotional response suggests that the organisation's mission has intrinsic value to individuals, i.e. meaning in-and-of itself. Activities with intrinsic interests provide people with a basis for motivation that is distinctly non-rational in perspective, i.e. does not rely on cognitive information processing. Intrinsically valued work can be emotionally and spiritually rewarding beyond the potential instrumentalities so integral to extrinsic views of motivation.

A traditional mechanistic management approach to managing change often uses fear to ensure employee obedience and compliance (Trice and Beyer 1993). Apart from the notion of stress, the management literature fails to address negative emotion in change such as anxiety. To quote Ackerman (1984 pp121-22) "Low morale is a rather contagious emotional state. High spirit, on the other hand, is also an energy field and is equally contagious...The ideal manager for the model is a true agent of change, one who smoothly facilitates the release and channelling of energy.

In today's dynamic organisational environment managers realise implementation is just as critical as the development of effective strategies (Atkinson, 2006; Higgins, 2005; Kaplan and Norton, 2001). How do managerial or leadership styles and processes affect the development and implementation of effective strategies?

A manager's delegation coupled with time pressure enhances adoption prospects (Nutt, 1987). When a strategic manager actively participates in the change process it is found to significantly improve adoption prospects. When a manager takes charge and creates an environment where plans for change can be justified and understood

implementation was always successful. Much of the power of delegation and command is lost when participation is limited, although it is recognised that strategies that involve a large number of people can never involve all those who are affected (Nutt, 1987).

A position of power provides the holder with the ability to disrupt goals because they may withhold needed resources or rewards. In order to avoid bringing out negative emotional responses and defensive behaviours that run side by side perceptions of threat and interruption their needs to be an increase in a counter part power to they can prevent goals of the boundary spanners (William, 2000) . Overcoming the obstacles of ensuring trust and efficient processes through organizational transitions requires new leadership competencies that help people deal with stress and help others align during organisational change (Dye, 2000)

Eliade (1991) proposed that symbols do not represent the world but are a medium of social orientation in the world and to the self. He also claimed that experience was multi-dimensional and could not be reduced to symbols. Eliade (1991) defined the mind in terms of the capacity to utilise symbols to explore reactions to an action before undertaking that action. He saw people interacting through symbols to form a pattern of order. This sense making of order was formed by the competitive and co-operative relationships between people and reflected difference in power between individuals or groups. Relationships constrain and constraint is what power is all about. Power is located in the relationship and power relationships are co-created. Eliade explained particular uses of symbols could be used to signal or enhance power: *'By figuration we mean the changing pattern created by the players as a whole not only by their intellects but also by their whole selves, the totality of their dealings in their relationships with each other. It can be seen that this figuration forms a flexible lattice-work of tensions. The interdependence of the players which is a prerequisite of their forming a figuration, may be an interdependence of allies or opponents. (1978, p.130) In this way people are emotionally bound together through the medium of symbols (p.137).* What Eliade is presenting here is a self-referential reflexive process in which individuals minds are formed by power relations while they are forming there own power relations. Eliade also explains how the interdependence between people in this figuration is expressed in symbolic form. Language thinking and knowing is to him all about handling symbols. Language

expresses power relations of the social figuration and orients one in the world and symbols form part of a language.

2.7 Literature synthesis and conclusions

Linking Identity and Symbols

Identity and organizational actors have received a lot of attention from authors within various important and insightful studies (Alvesson & Svingensson 2003; Beech, 2000; Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Thomas & Linstead, 2002). These studies however did not address physical symbolic artefacts and how they drive identification within an organization. However, in this thesis I focus on the relationship between identity and physical organization symbols. Although there is substantial evidence on the role of symbolic organizational dress in identity formation there has been little work addressing the role of organizational symbolic artefacts in identity formation.

Linking Identity and Organizational Change

In this section, I will define identity with respect to differentiating it from our other individual characteristics, which have the organization as their focus, and then explain why identity should play an important role in actors' response to organizational level change events.

The recent literature on organizational identity suggests that we go through a process in which we identify important organizational attributes and then decide whether these attributes are congruent and which are an important part of our self-concept (Beech, 2000; Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Thomas & Linstead, 2002). This process occurs during our socialization of the organization (Ashforth & Saks, 1996) and is influenced by organizational characteristics (Mael & Ashforth, 1992) as well as by social influences (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Identification is stronger to the degree that our identity as an organizational actor is more salient than other identities and to the degree the organizations characteristics match characteristics of our self- concept (Dutton et al, 1994; Pratt & Foreman, 2000). Therefore, if we find organizational characteristics salient and believe that the organizational level change will alter organizational characteristics on which we base identification we may

perceive that these organizational level changes are potentially threatening or uncertainty creating.

Organizational change, which removes the situational cues, is likely to be accompanied by a substantial weakening of identification with the organization in the first case but may have little impact on the strength of organizational identification in the second case. The second factor relates to the continuity of change- to what degree is the individual able to relate the new changes to the 'old' organization? As long as the fundamental character of the organization does not change substantially the individual who identifies strongly with the organization may still feel part of it. Gioia et al (2000) argue that the organizational identities have to change in order for the organization to remain viable in a changing environment. However, labels used to define the identity remain relatively constant thus allowing us to continue to identify with the organization while changing our behaviour to reflect the organizations requirements.

Alvesson, and Svengingsson, 2003; Beech, 2006; and Pratt and Foreman, 2000, argue that an organization has multiple identities and that we as organizational actors may identify with more than one. Management can increase acceptance of change by consciously integrating identities in such a way as to make more salient those identities, which promote an organizations performance and downplay identities, which do not help. Based on these arguments it would appear that if we strongly identify with our organization and maintain that identification through change, as long as there is continuity with some of the organizational key attributes, and then change will be more successful in terms of organizational actors adaptation to the change.

Linking Symbols and Organizational Change

Cultural artefacts are those sets of attributes-objects and behaviours that help definitively characterize one organization as opposed to another. There are at least four primary types of cultural artefacts-key values and norms; myths and sagas; language systems and metaphors; symbols, rituals and ceremonies; (Shrivastava, 1985) and the use of physical artefacts in the built environment could be a fifth.

Managers introduce organizational change without respecting the influence cultural symbolic physical artefacts may have on our interpretation of that

change. Managers, who retain old cultural symbolic artefacts that reinforce elements of the old culture they want to change, are leaving in barriers to their success (Higgins & McAllister, 2004). During change it is important that the physical symbolic artefacts in the built environment support the new values and norms reinforced during the change. When organizations formulate a change policy they will as normal procedure, evaluate the organizational systems and processes, leadership style, staffing, resources, and shared values but overlook the built environment. Organizational culture is broadly defined as the pattern of shared values and norms that distinguishes one organization from another. These shared values and norms indicate what is believed to be important in the organization and what organizational actors' value. They also show the ways things are in the organization. These shared values and norms provide direction and meaning for the organizational actors. They also motivate us to pursue the aims of the organization. This could suggest that if we want to understand our organizations culture we only have to look around us at the physical evidence and interpret it. When we are changing the organization then it makes sense to change the symbolic physical artefacts to mirror or anticipate those changes. There has been little written on this topic but Shrivastava (1985) and Johnson (1992) have proposed that an organization's culture and more specifically, its cultural artefacts, influence strategy formulation. Shrivastava (1985) suggests that four types of cultural artefacts are extremely beneficial when studying an organization's culture, its: myths and sagas; language systems and metaphors; symbols, ceremonies, and rituals; and certain identifiable value systems and behavioural norms. He allows that there are more cultural artefacts than these four, but that these four are the most predominant. I would argue that we should consider the built environment with these other factors.

Higgins & McAllister (2004) have observed this a fifth type of vital cultural artefact-the physical surroundings` characterizing the particular culture, including its facilities, equipment, and interior and exterior design and decoration-play a major role in defining an organization's culture.

If strategy and cultural artefacts are not aligned, then employees are uncertain which messages are real. If the old artefacts are still in place then employees will interpret these and presume that no change is taking place.

Alternatively the artefact could contradict the change policy which will result in confusion. The physical built environment as a cultural symbolic artefact can be interpreted to reveal the values of the organization related to such factors as innovation, the importance of employees, the degree of cost consciousness, and so on. As physical surroundings have been identified as relating to productivity in recent years, organizations have become much more concerned about this cultural artefact, but there still remains a large gap in the literature relating to symbols and change. The scope of this research is to examine organizational and workplace identity in the context of the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts in the built environment. Specifically this thesis examines the process by which this identity is formed and/or influenced.

To conclude, this literature review examined the five theoretical fields relevant to the research questions proposed. This chapter has examined the foundations of each field and then in relation to the questions posed and has explained, in relation to the research questions, the extent to which the literature has answered the questions. I have proposed that there is a link between the interpretation of physical artefacts and identity forming processes. To be more explicit, I propose that the interpretations of physical symbolic artefacts are used in the identity forming process and this links two fields, identity and physical symbols. These fields have not been examined, in relation to one another, in any depth. Although it is accepted that we interpret physical artefacts and this is done by using the three dimensions, aesthetic, symbolic and instrumental, the context within which this occurs, the frequency, the variance between the dimension of the artefact we interpret and the level of emotion that this produces and why, has not. The identity literature has suggested that symbolic artefacts are used in the identity forming processes to an extent but the context within which this occurs, the extent, its relation to culture and image has not. The fields of management processes, culture, and change have been examined because they are highly relevant to the context of the case studies used within which the questions are emerged. The next chapter goes on to explain the research design used to answer the remaining unanswered section of the questions and also the techniques used to verify what has been answered by the literature.

CHAPTER 3: Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction and overview

The preceding chapter consisted of a review of the existing literature. Firstly, I examined the organisational change literature. Secondly, I examined the organisational culture literature. Thirdly, I examined the identity literature looking at the evolution of identity theory from the organizational actors view and briefly discussed some of the points of contention in connection with the interpretation of physical artefacts. Fourthly, I looked at the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts and the theoretical progress to date in establishing the process of interpretation, examining the strands of research that have sought to bridge the gap between identity and interpretation. Specifically, this focused on the research that examines the links between symbols, identity and culture and our organizational roles and relationships. Finally, I examined what the literature had to say about identity and interpretation in the face of differing management processes and how this evolves over time and in differing contexts and highlighting areas that had not been previously discussed in the literature.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a detailed description of the qualitative research process chosen to address the research questions posed in Chapter 1. The chapter starts with a discussion of those factors which convinced me of the appropriateness of a qualitative research approach. Secondly, to a description of a flexible research design, participants, data collection, and data analysis which provide a detailed description of the process and decisions involved within an example of qualitative interpretive research in the built environment. Issues of validity and reliability are also explored.

3.2 General research approach

The research is located in the context of the organisational built environment and involves the study of human action and behaviour so it is essentially concerned with the nature of reality in the social world and this has an impact on the chose of research paradigm. In contrast to the natural world, the human "subjects" of the social world possess the ability to think for themselves, understand their own

behaviour and have an opinion about the social world of which they are a part (Bryman, 1988; Gill & Johnson, 1991, 2002 ; Schutz, 1967 ; Vrasidas, 2001).

Consequently, the study of interpretation of physical artefacts in the built environment cannot be approached from the exterior standpoint demanded by the positivist approach (Gill & Johnson, 1991, 2002). Instead, the research needs to adopt an approach that allows them to "get close" to human 'subjects' now referred to as organizational actors, penetrate their internal logic and interpret their subjective understanding of reality. Moreover, as the social world cannot be reduced to isolated variables, such as space and mass, it must be observed in its totality.

The complicated nature of interpretation of symbolic objects and the question of whether or not they are used by organizational actors assessing their identity, combined with the individual unique personal characteristics of the human actors involved in this research suggest that a qualitative approach which allows the situation to be viewed in its entirety and permits researchers to get close to participants, penetrate their realities and interpret their perceptions, is appropriate. An interpretive paradigm (Hardy, 2001) promotes socially constructed reality shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, and ethnic and gender values; crystallized over time. Research in this paradigm aims to show how realities are socially produced and maintained through norms, rites, rituals, and everyday activities. This paradigm recommends that researchers observe human behaviour and action as it occurs in "mundane" everyday life (Schutz, 1967). Interpretivists assert that people do not simply respond to external stimuli but actively interpret the world-meaning 'causes' of behaviour. If we act on the basis of our subjective understanding of the implications of phenomena of which we are consciously aware data has to be interpreted; it does not '*speak for itself*'. The epistemological assumption here is that reality is created through social interaction. There are multiple truths and not one universal truth and these derive from local communities which have local meanings to members of that community. Meaning and knowledge is socially constructed within a context, a time frame, and with specific people. Accordingly, there is no way of objectively measuring social reality. Statistics, for example, are not objective reality but simply the meanings given by social actors to events that they have perceived and interpreted in particular ways. It does not matter

what is objectively 'real', what is important for understanding human behaviour is what they think is real. It is subjective (experienced) reality that shapes behaviour. In a way positivists assert that 'seeing is believing' while humanists assert that 'believing is seeing'. As a researcher I was immersed in the experiences of specific members of an organizations' culture, my objective was to obtain a larger perspective than that of a single organizational member. The perspective I was seeking was an understanding of an entire system of experiences and interpretations distributed through all the organizational cultures members. The aim was to represent the whole culture in its full complexity by describing which experiences and interpretations have been collected that fit into the cultural pattern and therefore I chose the interpretive paradigm.

Qualitative research methods are capable of delivering a level of analysis that is conducive to explicating relationships (Belk et al., 1988; Cohen et al, 2000; Miles & Huberman, 1994). However, as no method is value-free or free from limitations (Cohen et al., 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Holbrook, 1995), it is recognized that these methods bring their own set of limitations to the research process.

Consideration then, of the topic and the exploratory nature of the research identified an interpretive paradigm using qualitative research techniques which allowed me as the researcher to view the research problem in its entirety, get close to participants, penetrate their realities and interpret their perception as appropriate.

3.3 Research design

Having selected a qualitative interpretive research paradigm to guide the exploratory study of the impact interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts have on the development of identity in the built environment, a flexible research design which would allow findings to "*unfold, cascade and emerge*" (Lincoln & Guba, 1986, p. 210) was developed. Characteristic of exploratory research conducted within a qualitative paradigm, this methodology was designed to allow me to build rich descriptions of the context within which interpretation of physical objects were developed, created and maintained which "*fitted and worked*" participants' perspectives (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As such, the design used to guide the collection and analysis of data had to be flexible enough to permit me to uncover

and explore issues which emerged as interesting and potentially capable of understanding the research problem. However, as it is "*impossible to embark upon research without some idea of what one is looking for*" (Wolcott, 1994, p.157), decisions regarding and the methods used to collect qualitative data were taken prior to entry into the field.

Once an adequate site was identified and selected, data collection took place in four phases in order to address the research questions. The primary methods for data gathering included interviews, participant observation, photography and review of documentation. The design of this thesis followed Eisenhardt's (1989) guidelines for building theory from case study research. This approach supports the need for all aspects of the influence/alteration of workplace identity to emerge within the context of change and using symbolic physical artefacts. Table 3:1 details the research questions that were addressed with the relevant data collection techniques.

Table 3:1: Research Questions and Data Collection Techniques

| Research Questions | Data Collection Approach |
|--|---|
| <p>Research Question 1: What are the processes and the extent by which organizational actors interpret physical symbolic artefacts in the built environment, and under what circumstances and to what extent are the varying dimensions of Rafaeli & Vilnai Yavetz (2004) model most evident?</p> | <p>Interviews (Phase 1) to inform background of study and organisational culture (Phase 2) Interviews with an issue focus (Phase 3) Interviews using auto driving techniques (Phase 4) Interviews using laddering techniques</p> <p>Participant ethnography recorded by photography, field notes and reflexive journals</p> |
| <p>Research Question 2: How is interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts used by actors to influence/ affirm actors' perceived threat to identity, identity affirmation, or identity change?</p> | <p>(Phase 3) Interviews using auto driving techniques (Phase 4) Interviews using laddering techniques Participant ethnography recorded by photography, field notes and reflexive journals</p> |

The approach taken in this study was influenced by symbolic interaction. Symbolic interaction assumes that meaning is shared and is the result of interactions that eventually become reality (Mead, 1934). Therefore, by focusing on symbolic

physical artefacts and their associative interpretive processes it was my intention to find out if identity was influenced or affirmed through the resulting emotion from the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts and how this is affected over the duration of organizational change. Expanding on the methods of observation and review of documentation suggested by symbolic interaction I placed equal importance on gathering data through a range of interviews to gain an understanding of the interpretive sense making process. A case study approach was chosen because it is useful for gaining information from the viewpoint of the participants. I adopted (Yin, 1994) case study methodology which draws on perspectives of organizational members while allowing me to understand the organizational context. The purpose of qualitative research is not to make generalizations but '*to detail the many specifics that give the context its unique flavour*' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; p.201. Therefore by using an inductive and emerging process within a qualitative case study offered the opportunity to study a bounded system in the context of organizational change. Additionally, the methodology provided an understanding of the process of identification using physical symbolic artefact during this change.

3.4 Site selection

The purpose of the study was to discover the process of interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts and how this contributes to the influence, affirmation or alteration of workplace identity and how this process influences or is affected by process of organizational change. Identity is often latent and not easily defined (Ashforth & Mael, 1996). Exceptions to this occur when identity is threatened (Elsbach, 2004a; Gioia & Thomas, 1996) or with a change in collective status (Albert & Whetton, 1985). Changing environments make us more aware of identity and increase the likelihood of organizational members focusing on identity attributes (Alvesson and Wilmott, 2002; Dutton et al, 1994; Reger et al, 1994). A change program within three case studies would afford the opportunity of examining the processes by which organizational identities are influenced through the interpretation of the organizational built environment in similar contexts.

In considering those sites to be involved I decided that purposive rather than random sampling would be an effective way of selecting case-sites "rich" in data pertinent to

understanding the research problem (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). While the logic of probabilistic sampling lies in "*selecting a truly random and representative sample which will permit confident generalizations from the sample to a larger population*" (Patton, 1987, p. 51), the logic of purposive sampling is suited to research with different aims. Its power lies in the selection of cases "*rich*" in information about the research problem. In addition, when using purposive sampling, the number of participating cases is not determined before starting the research (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill; 2003). Instead, as the research progresses and inductive analysis of data identifies common themes and patterns with the potential for understanding the research problem, the number of participating cases determined by the extent to which the collection of data from an additional case will contribute to understanding the situation and the potential response to the research question. As such, purposive sampling was suited to developing a comprehensive understanding of the impact which physical objects have on the formation of identity within the organizational built environment. Glaser and Strauss (1967) recommend that when the themes and issues in which the researcher is interested become "saturated", meaning that no new data are being found from the participation of additional case-sites, no further sites should be approached and the process of data collection should come to an end. Particular to this thesis, saturation of the common themes and patterns occurred when three colleges had become involved in the data collection.

The lengthy and detailed study of data-rich cases involved in purposive sampling has implications for the number of participating cases. Specifically, purposive sampling demands that if I was to develop a comprehensive understanding of the research problem, the number of cases involved must be significantly less than when using probabilistic sampling (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003). The use of a sample of this size was justified by the logic of purposive sampling. As a sampling strategy that permits the researcher to spend lengthy periods of time with individual cases, purposive sampling encourages the collection of data rich in detail about a substantive research problem. Consequently, the criteria used to assess the findings generated differ from those applied when using probabilistic sampling (Burns, R. B., 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003; Yin, 1994).

While the value of the latter is judged by the degree to which they can be generalized to the wider population, the value of the understanding which emerges from the detailed study of a purposive sample is properly determined by the degree to which it "fits and works" with the perspectives of participants (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Particular to this thesis, purposive sampling allowed me to collect rich and detailed data about the interpretation of physical symbolic objects and the actors use of this meaning in creating/ altering various levels of identity in the three colleges undergoing a rebuild/refurbishment program. Purposive sampling also ensured a credible interpretation of data, was employed so that negative or contradictory examples were sought to challenge and modify the emerging themes (Burns, R. B., 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003).

To ensure that participating case study sites would be rich in data about the research problem, criterion sampling tactics were used (Patton, 1987). I decided that the following set of pre-determined criteria would help me, when in the field, make objective decisions about the organisations I approached, so ensuring that a purposive sample of case-sites participated:

- Case study sites were fully accessible to me.
- Case study sites were involved in a refurbishment or re building program.
- Case study sites were under the same governance system, in the same geographic area and within the same service sector.
- Case study sites were undergoing a management of change program.

As well as satisfying the definition of having a design and management team involved, case-sites had to be located close by to enable me to visit them on a daily basis, for extended periods of time. I chose the college system where I was employed as a lecturer and was able to move freely amongst the campuses. Also, I needed to have access to the case sites before, during and after the refurbishment or rebuild program. I would then have access to participants' understanding of the ways in which, over time, physical objects had impacted on the development of various levels of identity throughout the change program.

3.5 Location and context of case study

The location of the three college sites is the Middle East but due to the confidential nature of the participants interviews further detail is not given in the thesis.

The case study chosen was three further education colleges known in the thesis as ALPHA, BETA and GAMMA which were part of a system of eleven colleges.

ALPHA

ALPHA was set up in 1998 under the initial directorship of Sassan. The college started with approximately 20 staff and 200 students. ALPHA has grown at a far faster rate than BETA and at the point data collection took place had 176 staff and 2000 students.

ALPHA and BETA are located in a University City. University City was constructed in 1998 and is made up of a number of separate university buildings within one main campus. The staff are mainly 'expat' on three year duration, renewable contracts coming mainly from UK, Canada and Australia. Since its set up the women's campus has expanded with additional buildings being constructed. The men's campus, BETA, has also expanded but at a slower pace. This is due to the both the strategy of the respective directors but also because the women's colleges tend to have more students than the men's as the women have fewer alternatives in education than the men in this country. Any resulting additions and alterations have been the responsibility of the director.

BETA

BETA was set up in 1998 under the founding director, Sassan. The college started with approximately 20 staff and 200 students. After a period of 18 months Derek took over as director but then in August 2003 Sassan was given the responsibility of both BETA and ALPHA and embarked upon his management of change program to bring the two campuses under one management umbrella. At this point BETA had 85 staff and 800 students.

GAMMA

GAMMA was set up in 1990 under the founding director, Norm, who has only recently retired. The college has now grown from its initial set up size of 20 staff and 200 students to 200 staff and 2000 students. The college is now relocating to a

new purpose built campus within 10 miles of ALPHA and BETA. The existing GAMMA College is located in the centre of the older part of the main city of the region. It is constructed primarily of older prefabricated buildings which have been built up gradually on an ad hoc basis since the set up of the college in 1990. There is a new campus being built on the outskirts of the city and in buildings four times the area of the original GAMMA. The building, although purpose built for GAMMA, is being built for the municipality and on completion will be handed over to the college. The campus is isolated and to reach it you have to drive (no public transport as yet) along a long dusty new road.

3.6 Participants and Sampling

Patton (1987, p. 51) asserts that the key factor in selecting and making decisions about the appropriate unit of analysis is to decide "*what unit it is that you want to be able to say something about*". As the topic under consideration is the social and cultural processes at work in assessing the impact interpretation of physical objects has upon the formation of identity in the built environment, it was important for data collection to occur across multiple segments of occupants. Managers involved in the decision making process, including the director were included in the sample because they are instrumental in the implementation of the organizational change as well as the maintenance of the organizations identity (Hatch & Schultz, 1997). A multi national staff from different departments and split between academic and administrative staff within a college were selected as the unit of analysis. But sampling was also emergent in nature, with participants chosen on the basis of insights gleaned from previous participants (Cohen et al.; 2000; Belk et al., 1988; Glaser & Strauss 1967). Purposive, judgment, selective, or theoretical sampling methods are considered legitimate, even ideal (Cohan et al. 2000; Johnson, 1990; Hammersley, 1989; Wallendorf & Belk, 1989). Table 3.2 shows the breakdown of participants interviewed in on the research sites according to several criteria, including gender, age, interview location, and department. All participants belonged to more than one grouping; hence the totals are not a simple summation of the columns. In terms of gender composition of this sample group, there were 33 males and 27 females. All participants were aware of the research and signed a consent form an example of which is in the appendix. The data was fed back to the participants but not data relating to other participants e.g. confidential transcripts.

Sassan was not a chosen participant but I used information he gave me in a professional context to determine the relevance of the participants interpretations i.e. whether or not they were accurate in terms of the managerial intentions. However the focuses of participants' interpretations were around the management of change and managerial processes, which was not what I expected to find. I did not ask the directors permission to approach staff on this campus and staff allowed me to interview them because I was known and trusted and to help with the thesis. Member checking was done through the three primary key informants, one on each case study site. I was concerned that after giving their consent participants may have suffered after publication if their identity was uncovered. I have tried to disguise the identity of participants and the case study site has been disguised. Most of the main participants have now left the employment of ABC.

Due to time and availability constraints, not all groups of interest could be fully accessed. Examples of segments that were under-represented were the IT department, who were less interested in this type of research and so less willing to support the research and support staff to whom I was less known. However, as these groups are relatively small sections of the college community, I decided that their under-representation was not overly detrimental to the resulting interpretation.

In each college a key participant was located and recruited. Key participants are trustworthy and observant individuals who have a good understanding of the (sub)culture of interest, and are willing to share this understanding with the researcher (Johnson, 1990). They are able to "translate" any jargon used, and can often offer explanations for the behaviours of others (Fontana & Frey, 1984). We need to pay particular attention to those who work in the social settings of interest to facilitate the emerging interpretation. Three key participants, one from each college were used. They characteristically had a good understanding of the events and buildings in the college, including the history of events leading up to and including alterations and construction of buildings and through their contributions they provided a degree of continuity to the study, as they had usually formed relationships with staff and had observed their behaviours over extended periods of time.

Table 3:2 Sample Characteristics

No = number
 KI = Key informant
 P= Participant
 P2G= Group interviews
 P4= Phase 4 interviews

PKI = Primary key informant
 P1= Phase 1 interviews
 P2 = Phase 2 interviews
 P3 =Phase 3 interviews
 PO = Participant observation

| No. of interviews undertaken | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|
| Category | PKI | KI | P | PI | P2 | P2G | P3 | P4 | PO |
| Males | 0 | 0 | 33 | 0 | 28 | 2 | 19 | 4 | 16 |
| Females | 1 | 3 | 27 | 4 | 20 | 5 | 23 | 8 | 18 |
| Directors | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Heads of Instruction | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Supervisors | 0 | 0 | 15 | 0 | 10 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 11 |
| IT department | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| English department | 1 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| Design department | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| Education department | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Business department | 0 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 5 | 14 | 3 | 8 |
| Engineering department | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| IT department | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Support staff | 0 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| GAMMA | 0 | 1 | 26 | 1 | 26 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| BETA | *0 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 0 | 12 |
| ALPHA | 1 | 1 | 15 | 2 | 11 | 4 | 14 | 0 | 15 |
| ALPHA/BETA | 0 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 7 |
| Total | 1 | 3 | 60 | 4 | 48 | 7 | 42 | 12 | 34 |

*Note PKI had recently moved to ALPHA but had worked in BETA for the preceding 6 years.
 Heads education background: 2no English language, 1no engineering, 1no IT
 Supervisors background: 1no Design, 1no Law, 2no IT, 1no Islam, 3 no Business, 1no Literature
 1no Math, 3no English, 2no Engineering.

The nature of the research questions meant that the participants had to have confidence in me as a researcher. The questions themselves are not personal but require reflection and a degree of exposure of the participants' feelings, possible insecurities and emotions. To some of the participants I was known and trusted but for those with whom I wasn't known I used the key participants to explain the research and gain their confidence. As interviews and observations were conducted

on the three sites, it was not possible to engage in persistent long-term observation at individual sites during the six month data collection period, although long term participant observation had occurred during the previous two and a half years whilst being employed in the colleges. The key participants were able to overcome this deficiency by adding an historical dimension by describing the events in the colleges over weeks, months, and in some cases, years.

3.7 Incident selection

Identifying data for inclusion in the category of 'incidents'

The collected data consists of conceptual entities for which there are little guidelines in the literature on available techniques and analysis methods. These data also involved multiple levels and boundaries which were ambiguous. In addition, their 'temporal embeddedness' often varied in terms of precision, duration and events. To add to the potential confusion this process data was eclectic incorporating changing relationships, thoughts, feelings and interpretations. To return to the quote in the previous section from Patton (1987, p. 51) ("*what unit it is that you want to be able to say something about*") I decided to use a unit of analysis where grouping of data were collected together around the general themes participants were discussing and the notion of an 'incident' was created.

Incident selection

One of the main difficulties with this data was to isolate a unit of analysis in an unambiguous way. For example, what should or should not be included in the definition of an 'incident'. In this case the definition of what was an incident emerged from interviews with participants in phase 1 and 2 and the field notes from the ethnographic participant observations. Participants themselves highlighted the 'incidents' they were seeking meaning from. At each site participants' highlighted separate incidents which ultimately fell into 8 categories concerning the change or construction of physical aspects of the organizational built environment. These were similar across the three case studies, and therefore produced a total of 24 incidents. The eight types of incidents were very similar in nature and occurring within the same time period over the three sites. Table 3:8 below, documents and codes each incident. A description of each incident is included in Appendix 5.

Table 3:3: A list of incidents which have occurred over the three sites

| CONTEXT | ALPHA | BETA | GAMMA |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| | ALPHA1 | BETA1 | GAMMA1 |
| Faculty workstations | Change in workstation allocations | Change in workstation allocations | Change in workstation allocations |
| | ALPHA2 | BETA2 | GAMMA2 |
| Faculty areas | Re-location of faculty areas | Re-location of faculty areas | Re-location of faculty areas |
| | ALPHA3 | BETA3 | GAMMA3 |
| Supervisors offices | Re-location within campus | Re-location within campus | Re-location to new campus |
| | ALPHA4 | BETA4 | GAMMA4 |
| Management suite | Change in use of existing | Alterations to existing | Existing and Re-location to new campus |
| | ALPHA5 | BETA5 | GAMMA5 |
| Security gates | Use of security gates | Construction of security gates | Use of security gates |
| | ALPHA6 | BETA6 | GAMMA6 |
| Parking | Quality and quantity of staff parking | Quality and quantity of staff parking | Quality and quantity of staff parking |
| | ALPHA7 | BETA7 | GAMMA7 |
| Intranet | Use of intranet portal | Use of intranet portal | Use of intranet portal |
| | ALPHA8 | BETA8 | GAMMA8 |
| Campus buildings | Use of new buildings | Use of new buildings | Use of new buildings |

3.8 Data sources and collection

The story of how the organizational actors of ABC colleges interpret physical artefacts as part of the process to alter/influence their workplace identity was built from the following sources (1) Participant ethnography recorded by photography and field notes and reflexive journals. (2) Interviews over four phases, Phase 1: interviews focusing on the organisational culture and background to the organisation. Phase 2: interviews using an issue focus; Phase 3: interviews using auto driving techniques, Phase 4: Interviews using laddering techniques to illicit the values and meaning which participants had previously had difficulty in expressing. All participants were full time employees of ABC.

Data collection was programmed to cover three colleges, and several age, socio-economic, and cultural subgroups. Efforts were made to ensure that the range of ages and nationalities of participants was very broad across the sample, and that all departments were represented. Within departments, the participants selected were intentionally manipulated to increase the exposure to participants from varying social classes and educational backgrounds and employment grades within the system. In order to access the range of participants and behaviours of interest and to

achieve saturation, a total of 105 interviews were conducted. While the sample design provided a broad range of responses, participants were by no means randomly selected or statistically representative of the entire college population. A total of 60 participants took part with 11 participants going through from stage 1 to stage 4 of the interviews. The initial objective in phase one of the interviews was to find out about the organisational culture and whether or not participants were aware of interpreting physical artefacts in the built environment, and whether or not the information gained was used to make sense of their organization and any issues arising within the organization. Phase 2 consisted of interviews with an issue focus aiming to find out what issues within the colleges, at that time, were important to organizational actors and what their feelings towards them were. Phase 3 consisted of interviews using auto driving techniques with photographs and documents focused more on specific physical areas, previously discussed by participants to find out about participants themselves and their perception of their own and others identity in relation to the physical areas. Phase 4, again using a selection of photos chosen by the participants focused even further on physical attributes by using laddering techniques to take the participants from attributes of the physical artefacts to values. After participants had time to reflect, I photographed any areas that they had mentioned and asked them to discuss what was happening in the photographs and what it meant to them.

My initial research objective was to explore the process by which physical symbolic artefacts in work environments are interpreted by organizational actors and to examine the possible relationship among the different categories and levels of organizational actors and frequency of use of the interpretation of physical objects that might be related to the actor's identity forming affirming processes.

Pilot Study

Because many of the sample selection and data collection procedures were relatively new and untested in connection with the research questions, a pilot study was conducted prior to full-scale implementation of the research plan, to insure that the procedures worked. The pilot study yielded some practical feedback from key participants about the research design and in depth interviewing in addition to information about the process of designing the built environment and collegial

behaviours. The pilot study was conducted using a sample of 5 participants, using the same sample selection and data collection procedures used in the main study. Once the data was analysed and written up a copy was given to the participants to verify. The participants assured me that the information and perspective given was accurate. However the participants could not seem to express the procedure by which they interpreted the artefacts and they did not know how this information was used to form or affirm identity. We discussed this issue and after the meeting I decided to go back to the literature on methodology and theory to see if there was any way I could introduce a method of eliciting the responses I was hoping for, into the research, without either influencing the research or to transgress the parameters of an interpretive paradigm. It was after this further stage of secondary research that I decided to incorporate Geertz's (1973) version of a hermeneutic approach, obtaining data from various perspectives of a contextual situation and rather than imposing my own interpretation of the events gradually build up a jigsaw visual of the 'story'.

In addition, as one mechanism for partially achieving this, I decided to incorporate laddering and auto driving to illicit the process. Although laddering has been used in eliciting creative design for advertising it is not normally used as an interpretive method. Recently, however it has been used within a constructivist approach. It was this aspect of laddering which was proposed for inclusion in the main study.

Data Collection: Obtaining Access

Permission to undertake the research on the case sites was obtained for GAMMA by emailing a request to the acting director of GAMMA with a copy of the research proposal. This was accepted within a day and no restrictions were placed upon me. With BETA and ALPHA permission was not sought from the director as it was his policy not to authorize research on the campus.

All participants on all three sites were approached initially by an email request to participate. If no response was obtained I did not repeat the request. I subsequently arranged to speak to those who responded in person to explain the research and when we arranged for the first interview I gave them a consent form and a brief questionnaire to fill in on personal details (Appendix 2).

Data Collection Methods

Data collection was conducted over a period of thirty six months between August 2001 and June 2004. The initial data were collected as participant observation while concentrated data collection took place between January 2004 and June 2004. The duration and activities associated with each of these phases is set out below in table 3:4 and the research process is illustrated in figure 3:1.

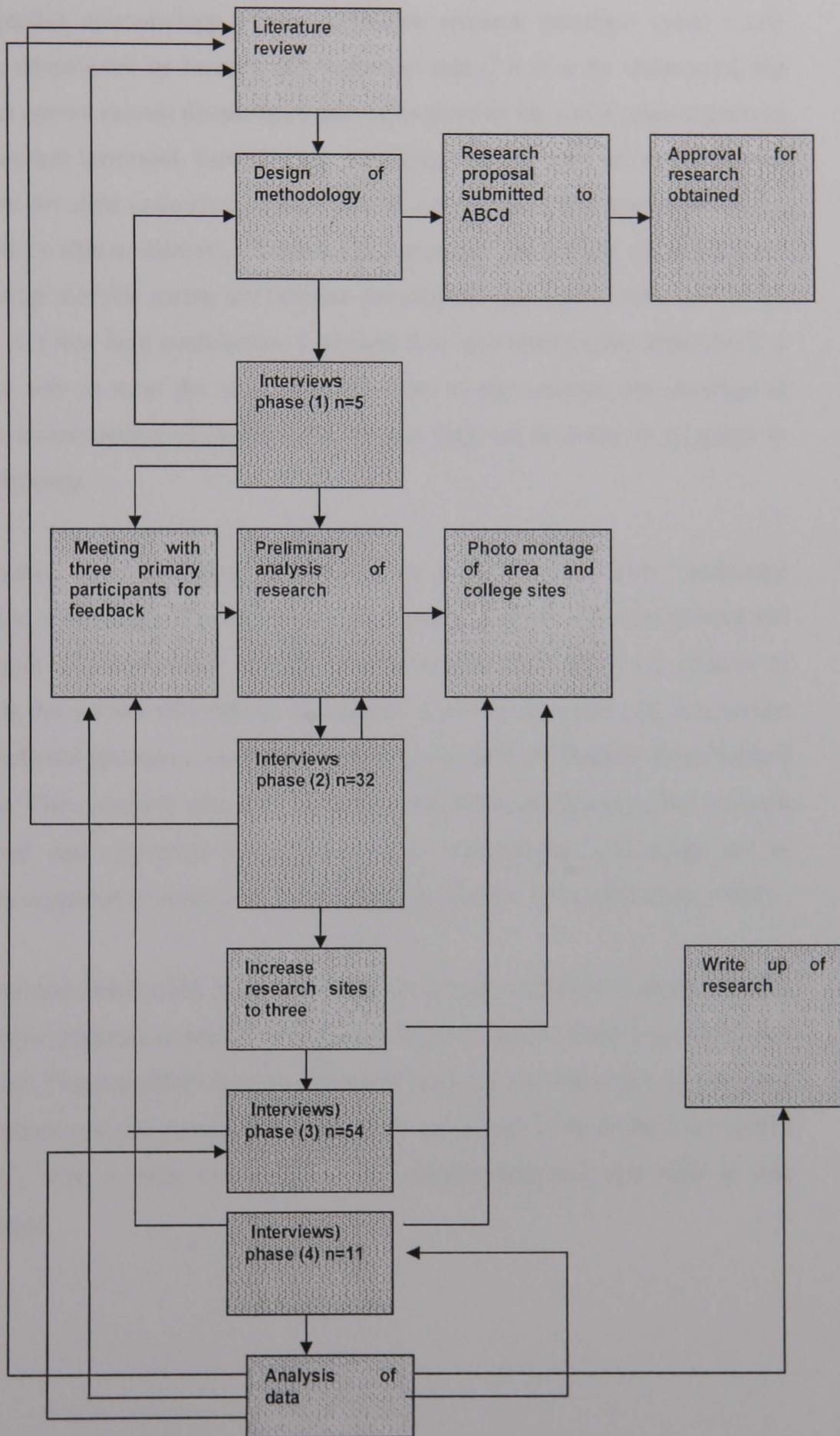
Table 3:4 Data Collection Timetable

| Timing | Type of research | Techniques | Unit of Analysis |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Aug 2001- June 2004 | Descriptive | Observation photography, field notes and reflective journals | Culture, observation of interaction of groups and their relationship with the buildings |
| Jan – June 2004 | Descriptive | Observation | Relationship between individuals and artefacts Incident |
| Jan – June 2004 | Descriptive and exploratory | Interviews | Relationship between individuals and artefacts Incident |

Main Study

Manning (1987) suggests adopting “binocular” vision when exploring behaviour with which one has familiarity. In other words the researcher needs to maintain a perspective that is empathetic yet removed from the group under study. In this study, conscious efforts were made to perceive the data through “*new eyes and new ears*” (as recommended by Wallendorf and Belk, 1989, p.71), meaning that an effort was made to become aware of those things that are usually taken for granted. In this instance it was difficult to use “*new eyes*” for the specifics of interpretation, as I was particularly interested in the topic and worked at the college sites. I was already employed by this organization so it would be difficult to keep my role as researcher apart and try and look at the situation without bringing into it a lot of ‘*baggage*’.

Figure 3:1 RESEARCH PROCESS



My decision to use myself as the "instrument" for collecting data was influenced by the qualitative research approach adopted and the exploratory nature of the research. The subjective epistemology of the qualitative research paradigm views social reality as constructed by humans and maintains that if it is to be understood, the researcher cannot remain distant from and uninvolved in the social phenomenon in which they are interested. Instead, they must adopt a role, such as "*researcher as instrument for data collection*", which allows them to get close enough to social subjects to be able to discover, interpret and understand participants' perspectives of social reality. For this reason and because participants only agreed to be part of the research if it was kept confidential, I decided that by collecting the data myself, I would be able to meet the aims and objectives of the research and develop an inductive understanding of physical objects and their use as a tool or language in identity forming.

As discussed, the qualitative data collection methods used were participant observation, laddering and in interviews, photography, use of a reflexive journal and the analysis of documentary records. In combination they were: (1) capable of generating the desired information; (2) suitable to a lone researcher; (3) appropriate to the preferred disclosure methods of participants; and (4) feasible given limited resources. The emergent nature of sampling, inductive and ethnographic research means that data collection and analysis occur concurrently, and could not be arbitrarily separated (Cohen et. al, 2000; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Belk et al., 1988).

Interviews and observation notes were transcribed and coded for content analysis and reflexive journals containing tentative interpretations of behaviours were also maintained. These enabled ongoing individual analysis and reflection on emerging interpretations and the planning of further data collection. Each method is listed in table: 3:5, with a brief discussion of its relative attributes and how it was implemented.

Table 3:5 Data Collection

| Techniques | Participant details |
|--|---|
| Participant observation ethnography recorded by photography and field notes | 3 year duration Aug 2001- June 2004 – all college employees BETA observing phenomena, returning to literature Aug 2003- Jan 2004- management team meetings BETA/ALPHA after amalgamation, observations of staff with management and director, observation of staff on BETA/ALPHA case sites Jan 2004 – June 2004- observation on 3 case sites observation focusing on participants and their areas of discussion |
| Selection of Primary key informant- phase 1 trial interviews | Discussion of primary key informant's role. Trial interviews and feedback discussions |
| Return to literature | |
| Phase 1 Pilot interviews with 4 participants on a semi- structured basis | participants (n=4) ALPHA (n=1) BETA (n=1) ALPHA/BETA (n=1) GAMMA (n=1) |
| Return to literature | |
| Selection of 3 key participants and discussions | 1 key informant from each case site |
| Primary key informant- trial interviews- phase 2 | Interview using issue focus- (P2 n=48) (P2G n=5) then informant feedback |
| Phase 2 Initial issue focused Interviews | Interviews with all participants (60) |
| Primary key informant | Discussion of technique with key informant |
| Return to literature | |
| Phase 3 Interview using auto driving techniques with photographs and documents | Interviews using Auto driving techniques (n=42) |
| Return to literature | |
| Primary key informant- trial interviews | Trial interview with key informant using laddering techniques |
| Phase 4 Interviews using laddering techniques with photographs and documents | Interviews using laddering techniques (n=12) |
| Return to literature | |
| Documents used | Researcher collated documents mentioned by participants during interviews. These were then used in the next stage of interviewing- student college magazine - college academic journal - college system wide magazine (target audience industry) - college wide e- magazine (target audience faculty and support staff) college catalogue- business cards – intranet portal |
| Reflexive journals | Researcher- journal entries made after each interview |
| Field notes | Researcher- made during and directly after participant observations |
| Photography | Researcher - photographs for auto driving of areas and artefacts that had arisen from individuals initial interviews |

Ethnography

Van Maanen (2006) maintains that there is still not a formal ethnography technique after having tried for nearly 20 years to establish a standard methodology but at the same times wonders whether the establishment of one would '*effectively neuter*' its spirit. Ethnographic methodology still involves a long term study of organizational practices as they occur in their contextual setting, is conducted in the presence of those being studied, revolves around the interpretation of what people actually do, rather than what they say they do, and is conducted within a framework of daily activities and cosmological beliefs (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In this thesis it is being used to provide access to the participant's interpretations of artefacts in the built environment and provide data that explicates local phenomena, while providing insights into broader theoretical frameworks.

This method was chosen because it gave me three primary advantages. Firstly, it situated me, as researcher in the context of the site, giving me sensitivity to the unique cultural understandings of that site. In doing this it permits an ethical stance for the researcher as it acknowledges ideological structures and value systems of both the researcher and the subjects that are in operation at the micro level organizational context. This challenges the myth of objectivity. Secondly, ethnographic methodology accommodates sensitivity to gender and marginalized groups. Thirdly, a strong advantage of the approach is that it allows discernment derived from the freedom in use and examination of language, text and symbol.

Ethnographic research required me to undertake sufficient observations to develop an understanding of the phenomena being examined and to assess the quality of the data collected. Therefore, data collection took place over a thirty six month period, involving immersion on the three sites, which ensured a depth of understanding and a diversity of interpretation. This was further enhanced by triangulation across the three sites and regular on-site meetings with the principal participants to discuss methodological details relevant to emerging themes (Wallendorf & Belk, 1988). I used note taking and a reflexive journal to note down observations during meetings, events and conversations which were then analysed according to the principles of content analysis. The stories or explanations people provided about their experiences and interpretation of the built environment were analysed for indications of the role their environment plays in their lives. As Geertz (1973) states '*the analysis of culture comes down therefore not to an heroic 'holistic' assault upon the basic*

configuration of culture, an overarching order of orders from which more limited configurations can be seen as mere deductions, but to a searching out of significant symbols, and clusters of clusters of significant symbols- the material vehicles of perception, emotion, and understanding- and the statement of the underlying regularities of human experience implicit in their formation. A workable theory of culture is to be achieved, if it is to be achieved, by building up from directly observable modes of thought, first to determine families of them and then to more variable , less tightly coherent, but nonetheless ordered 'octopoid' systems of them, confluences of partial integrations, partial incongruencies , and partial interdependencies.' I have followed Geertz's hermeneutic approach to achieve a multiple authored story telling ethnography. The multi-authored storytelling (Boje 1991 in Sims, 2002) involved in this thesis '*makes it different from the situation of the solitary writer, because there is a conversation in which participants can engage in a well-practised joint sensemaking*'. Of particular interest were the common elements in participants' descriptions of how their environment factor into their perceptions of being a valued or non valued member of the college community.

Participant Observation

The ways in which members of a group work, circulate and spend their time in their (organizational built) environment can be very illuminating in terms of the group's values, and these activities can be productively explored with the use of observational data (Cohen et al. 2000; Kluckhohn, 1967). Through observation I could, as researcher, study a phenomenon that has not been altered by the presence of a known researcher, and as such, observation has the potential to offer a different interpretation to data collected via other means (Adler & Adler, 1994). There are often considerable differences between what people say they do and what they actually do (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Piirto, 1991), and it is therefore suggested that researchers should not rely solely on interview data when seeking to explain a phenomenon (Barnes, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Wallendorf & Belk, 1989). Through the observation of behaviour it is possible to gain insights into the operating motivational influences (Rust, 1993; Dichter, 1964). While interviewing provides an emic perspective (i.e., it provides an interpretation of the unique outlook of the informant), observation through its access to actual behaviours can permit an etic

interpretation (Arnould & Wallendorf; 1994). Observation also supplies an opportunity to better understand evolving behavioural patterns (Adler & Adler; 1994). The need to infer the nature of a culture rather than relying on its direct observation is important. Observation was found to be a very valuable tool in the process of exploring participants' behaviours and motivations, and complemented data obtained through individual and group interviews.

There are degrees of participation in observation (Le Compte & Preissle, 1993) but for this thesis, and as an employee of the main college system, the role used was participant observer, to be part of the social life and of participants while observing and recording what happened. A participant observer minimizes reactivity although still risks 'going native', a situation where the researcher adopts the values norms and behaviour of the group. As researcher, I remained with the participants for a substantial period of time (three years) recording what was happening whilst taking a role in that situation. I stayed in the situation and saw how events evolved over time, catching the dynamics of the situation. By being immersed in the context over a period of time not only will the salient features of the situation emerge and present themselves but a more holistic view will be gathered of the interrelationships of varying factors. This immersion facilitates the generation of a 'thick description' which lent itself to an accurate explanation and interpretation of events rather than relying on my own inferences. This emphasised the issue of mean-making as has been superbly demonstrated in the work of Clifford Geertz. This question of mean-making is wrapped up in issues of power and the effects of this power. In Geertz's work the symbolic construction of meaning by real actors is always visible. In Geertz's (1969) *'Religion and as a cultural system'* he presents a portrait of actors as vulnerable entities who need 'meaning' in the sense of order, reason and purpose. They need this to survive, to deal with chaos, to deal with evil, to deal with that that they cannot control. This issue goes beyond a situation waiting to be interpreted by a researcher to the point Geertz makes that actors are spinning '*webs of meaning*' all the time. It becomes clear that the mean-making process is something actors always do to make sense of their lives. In the case studies in this thesis I had a situation of fragile webs of stories told by vulnerable actors in situation that for them was at times nightmarish but needs to be understood as part of the social process.

Table 3:6 Changes in relation to phases of the study Semester 1

| Type | college | 7/2003 | 8/2003 | 9/2003 | 10/2003 | 11/2003 | 12/2003 |
|------------|------------------|---|--|--|---|----------------------------------|--|
| facilities | ALPHA | | | | Work on upgrading parking begins | | Announcement of new building granted |
| staff | ALPHA | | | | | | |
| facilities | BETA | Alterations to reception | New board room constructed. Additional supervisors offices constructed | Upgrading of m/p hall and canteen facilities Changes to student services layout | | Completion of new teaching block | Work on upgrading car parking begins |
| staff | BETA | New director | Intranet introduction Dismissal of supervisors Announcement of new supervisors Change in faculty responsibilities | | | | |
| facilities | BETA/ ALPHA | | Gates between campuses opened to allow staff movement between campuses | Change to workstation layouts Sports pavilion becomes a joint facility construction of auditorium begins | Construction of supervisors offices and reduction of staff facilities | | Construction of auditorium starts |
| staff | BETA/ ALPHA | | | New organizational structure announced - 1 st phase | | | Renewal/non renewal notices delivered on contracts |
| Facilities | GAMMA | Work underway building new campus | | New work station layouts for new campus distributed | | | |
| staff | GAMMA | Requests by staff for workstation positions submitted | Staff visit new campus | | Staff pack up materials and belongings | Director retires | |
| research | Observe & photos | Observe & photos | Observe & photos | Observe & photos | Observe & photos | Observe & photos | Observe & photos |
| | | | | | | | |

Table 3:7 Changes in relation to phase of the study Semester 2

| Type | College | 1/2004 | 2/2004 | 3/2004 | 4/2004 | 5/2004 | 6/2004 |
|------------|------------------|---|--|------------------|---|------------------|---|
| facilities | ALPHA | | | | | | |
| staff | ALPHA | | | | | | |
| facilities | BETA | | Change student services to new teaching block. | | | | |
| staff | BETA | | | | | | |
| facilities | BETA/ ALPHA | Mobile teaching block completed | | | | | |
| staff | BETA/ ALPHA | New organization structure announced -2nd phase | Signing of new contracts or resignations | | | | New organization structure announced -3rd phase |
| facilities | GAMMA | | Move to new campus delay until July 2004 | | | | |
| staff | GAMMA | Appointment of acting director | | | Appointment of new director to commence Sept 2004 | | |
| research | Observe & photos | Observe & photos | Observe & photos | Observe & photos | Observe & photos | Observe & photos | Observe & photos |
| | | PH1 | PH2 | PH2/PH3 | PH3 | PH3 | PH4 |

The overall aim of the research design was to try and obtain the depth of meaning that Geertz has achieved, but I also need to explain how and why certain research tools were used and to what effect. This choice included recording speech; non-verbal communication; recording of timings and events; and my own comments which were then placed into detailed contextual data. Observation was recorded in field notes; and at the level of description they included (Spradley, 1980) jottings of key words/symbols, transcripts and more detailed observations written out fully, descriptions of the physical settings or events and descriptions of the researcher's activities and behaviour. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest a variety of types from which I used: context maps- photos, sketches and diagrams of the context within which the observation takes place using categorical system, sociometric diagrams indicating social relationships and notes made on specific predetermined themes such as the layout, furniture and graphics of the buildings. Often who we are within a group or an organization is evident from artefacts and behaviours within the organization (Hatch, 1997). Table 3.5 and 3.6 illustrates the physical and human resource changes which took place while I was undergoing participant observation. Observations were framed using the literature on culture, identity, change, and symbols. I had the opportunity to be a participant observer, as a member of the management team, for all management meetings during the August 2003 - January 2004 semester. The meetings normal lasted about three hours. I also met with the director for one to one meetings for about two hours per week to discuss the changes to the physical environment, his strategy and how this would affect external communication. This was part of my official role with the colleges at that point. This totalled about seventy two hours of formal management meetings, forty two hours of meetings with the director and would be included within the three years of general participant observation with forty hours per week spent on campus (excluding seventy two days of holiday). Following each observation 'event' I used a summary contact sheet to organisation the data (sample in Appendix 4) as recommended by Miles & Huberman (1994). Observation notes were subsequently coded using content analysis in accordance with Axelrod (1976) recommendations.

Photographic ethnography

Recognising that the chosen approach must be consistent with the way in which photography has been conceptualized at the outset I have used photography in two ways. Because of the location of the case site photography has been used as a record, part of my self-reflexive visual diary and for use in auto-driving techniques.

Analysis of photography

Analyzing photographic data in qualitative research, as with textual data, is a series of inductive and formative acts carried out throughout the research process. As with other qualitative research strategies, visual researchers begin the task of analysis in the course of field research so that new inferences can be exploited before the fieldwork ends. Using Calderola's (1985) in Prosser (2003) plan for integrating photography into ethnographic research I included regular viewing sessions with participants. In this way visual data could be validated as research proceeds and used to generate new inferences that inform future data gathering. All data have strengths and limitations but poor data, that is data that are invalid, implausible, or untrustworthy, are not worth analyzing. The initial problem for the interpreter of photographs is how to ensure their plausibility and believability. Because '*cameras do not take photographs*' (Byers, 1966), '*people do*', the fallibility and selectivity of the photographer must be scrutinized. Full contextual detail (if this is ever possible) enables the trustworthiness and limitations of photographs to be assessed and this means having an understanding of both the external and internal photo context. The context is multi-faceted, reflecting the qualitative research paradigm and theoretical framework I was working within; taking into account the extent of disparity between the my own culture ethnicity, religion, gender, class, and values as photographer and the contrast between myself and the scene photographed. I was investigating the differences and relationship between images and words, or as Mitchell (1994: 5) explains "*the interactions of visual and verbal representation in a variety of media, principally literature and the visual arts*"; and questioning the relationship between representations on two-dimensional surfaces and their connection with issues of power, values and social influences. I decided that any analysis of photographs without information elaborating the macro and micro contexts was generally

unacceptable since image production and image reception informs our understanding of those photographs.

Interpretation of any photographic data requires a theoretical framework. A framework aids management of large amounts of (visual) data by providing logic for sorting, organizing, indexing and categorization. The interpretative process begins well before viewing a photograph, and takes place, for example, when decisions are made as to *what* and *how* the photographs are to be taken.

Making sense of photographs is also dependent on what sort of social explanation or intellectual puzzle is to be resolved. The photographs were taken to provide data for a *comparative* study of changes in the built environment over three colleges. They are two 'slices' of constituent data (constituent in that they require separate interpretation informed by the context in which the images were made, and the particular questions being asked of them) which were contrasted with each other and other data sets. A starting point for analysis would be to consider the photographs in terms of what Collier and Collier (1986: 47) call a 'cultural inventory': "*The spatial configuration of otherwise ordinary objects, common to the college society, may often reflect or express the cultural patterns and values of distinct cultural groups.*" Each office contains proxemic information (measurements of space), numerical information, information on the level of technology available, and information on décor aesthetics. The layout of objects in space is not arbitrary but tells us a great deal about the occupants, about who they are, what they do, and how they behave in their rooms or areas.

Documentary Analysis

Documentary analysis was another qualitative technique used to provide background and detail to the research topic. Historical materials provide an additional source of data, and can supply a perspective that is beyond the scope of participants to provide (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003; Venkatesh, 1995; Wallendorf & Belk, 1989). Brochures and publications from the three college sites were studied to trace the organizational identity and corporate image over the last five years. These themes have been used as a comparison point for the changes that have occurred in the college's literature since the described change and the role of the built environment

in these changes. Also incorporated into the interpretation are relevant reports of ABC facts and figures and staff nationality breakdown, and organizational structure.

Interviews

The interview is a valued qualitative research method (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003), and one that is extensively used across subject areas; (Fontana & Frey, 1994, Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003). Interviews have been found to be particularly useful for examining cultural meaning and changes in meanings over time (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003), as interviews provide participants with the opportunity to articulate the values and beliefs motivating their behaviours (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994). Interviews are valued for their ability to access subconscious and unconscious motivations (Dichter, 1964). This characteristic of interviews was very important to this data collection stage of the thesis, as interviews provided the context to explore the connections organisational actors have (both consciously and unconsciously) with their organizational built environment. The selection of methods that I used to collect data was also influenced by the qualitative approach and exploratory nature of the research question. I was committed to collecting data from the context in which social phenomena naturally occur and to generate an understanding which was grounded in the perspectives of the research participants (Bryman, 1988; Cohen et al., 2000; Lofland, 1971; Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Miles & Huberman, 1994). This meant that my methods had to allow me to enter into the social world of the participants and to have an empathetic understanding of participants' experiences which were the focus of my study. The collection of social data, then, is best conducted in the environment in which social phenomena naturally occur and the methods I used needed to be open and attentive to the internal logic of the participants.

Consequently, data were collected on the participants' work premises and, within working hours, at neutral places of convenience suggested by participants. It was also important that I did not impose my external logic on the behaviours that I was investigating. For these reasons, the questionnaire that has been the dominant instrument for collecting data in the built environment was rejected. Instead, methods that allowed data to be collected from participants in their working environments, captured data rich in detail about the research problem and gave the

researcher the flexibility to explore issues raised by participants were selected. Data were collected during in depth, unfocused and semi-structured interviews with management, faculty and administrative staff and also during conversations, participant observation and a photographic ethnography.

The interviews took place in four stages gradually deepening and focusing on issues of interpretation and the consequent values emanating from the physical artefacts. Samples from the research questions are noted on Table 3:7. The interviews lasted between 30- 45 minutes for each participant at each stage. The interviews were recorded, whenever the participant agreed to this and subsequently transcribed verbatim. Where the participants were not comfortable with the recording of the interview, I took notes and wrote these out immediately after the interviews. A reflective journal was written up before and after each interview and at other relevant times and field notes were taken. Each physical artefact mentioned by the participants was photographed both as a cultural record, and for using in auto driving and laddering techniques.

As Table 3:7 illustrates the first interviewing method for data collection was aimed at eliciting the organization culture. The second phase used an open interviewing technique with an issue-focus (Burns, R. B. 2000; Dutton & Duncan, 1987). The issue-focus was chosen for three reasons: (1) to serve as a stimulus for eliciting culture-specific cognitions, (2) to channel and narrow the potentially broad exploration, and, (3) to introduce a reference point for participants so that the information could be compared across time and events for each individual and across individuals. It is difficult to ask participants directly about what they think their identity is or how they interpret their built environment. Many admitted that it was an area they hadn't really considered. The issue-specific exploration served as a projective device to elicit context-specific cognitions. The selected issue had to have a broad connotative meaning to leave room for culture-specific interpretations, be relevant to organizational members, and avoid systematic response biases. A discussion with participants about different issues, such as decision making, communications, leadership, or innovation/change, indicated that the issue of change qualified best. Pilot interviews revealed that it was perceived as relevant to most organizational members that it was customarily defined, leaving room for

culture-specific interpretation, and that it was unlikely to evoke systematic response biases at an individual level. Table 3:8 shows the topic areas discussed within each interview phase.

Table 3:8: Exerts from interview areas

| |
|---|
| <p>Phase 1 Pilot interviews with 4 participants on a semi- structured basis</p> <p><u>Discussion areas</u></p> <p>What change has occurred in the organization within the last year that, in your opinion has had the most far reaching effects?</p> <p>Does the college look to the past, present or future?</p> <p>Are members of the organization here basically good, neutral or evil?</p> <p>What is the 'correct' way for people to relate to each other?</p> <p>Is organizational life competitive or co-operative?</p> <p>Is the best way to organize staff on the basis of individualism or collectivism?</p> <p>Is the best authority system autocratic, custodial, collegial, or participative?</p> <p>Is the group best off if it is highly diverse or highly homogeneous?</p> <p>Are individuals in a group encouraged to innovate or conform?</p> <p>What is your impression of the buildings you work in?</p> <p>Are there any contrasts with buildings you have previously worked in?</p> <p>What do you think the designer was trying to achieve?</p> <p>What do you think management is trying to achieve with the building design or alterations to the building?</p> |
| <p>Phase 2 Initial issue focused Interviews</p> <p>What do you think are the most important issues at the college at the moment?</p> <p>How do you think this affects you, your group, department, the college the system?</p> <p>How do you see the built environment you are in with respect to these issues?</p> <p>How do you feel about this?</p> <p>Do you interpret your situation in the college using the built environment?</p> |
| <p>Phase 3 Interview using auto driving techniques with photographs and documents</p> <p>Describe yourself as a person.</p> <p>Are you different at home?</p> <p>Describe yourself at home</p> <p>Describe yourself as a person at work</p> <p>What is your perception of the organization?</p> <p>How does your department fit into the organization?</p> <p>How does your group fit into the organization?</p> <p>Describe your working environment.</p> <p>How does that fit into the organization?</p> |
| <p>Phase 4 Interviews using laddering techniques with photographs and documents</p> <p>We looked before at the photos and document and now we've narrowed these into a few which you feel are important to you</p> <p>Lets talk about the main issues in the photos and documents</p> <p>Why are these important?</p> |

Auto driving techniques (Heisley & Levy, 1991) used in Phase 3, involved interviews being driven by participants when they heard or saw their own recorded behaviour. These involved photographs taken during the photographic ethnography, college magazines and brochures. Using these, further questions were asked to ensure accuracy of meaning. This was a successful way of gaining

deeper insights as the majority of participants initially appeared confused about the exact focus of the areas of discussion.

Participants were asked to consider the most important recent change in their college. The reasons for and characteristics of the named innovations/changes, including the related processes, were then explored in detail. After some warm-up questions about the participants work history, the exploration of change started with a broad, open-ended question, followed by triggering questions (Spradley, 1980) that fit into the flow of the interview determined by the informant (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Simultaneously, I paid attention to the body language, gestures, or physical expressions and responded to them if there was a discrepancy or if they suggested urgency. During each interview, the following questions were asked and explored: Which change, that has occurred during the past three years in the college, do you consider most important? This broad question allowed participants to define (a) changes, (b) relevance/importance, and (c) their identity (function, department, college). Then for the named change: Why do you consider the mentioned change important? What was the context of the particular change? Who was involved at what time and how? What caused the change? Who and what aspects promoted the change? Who and what aspects presented obstacles in the process and how? What should/could have been done to improve the situation? What would you do differently in the future to make it better? Subsequent to this discussion concerning the meaning participants took from their built environment, particularly relating to the change were discussed. Then working life prior and post change was discussed with an emphasis on the interpretation of the built environment. During the pilot study primary participants found it difficult to express meaning of physical artefacts.

Groups

Group interviewing was used on occasion when the participants asked to remain in a group. This enables interaction amongst participants, thus generating different results from one-on-one interviewing methods (Burns, 2000; Fontana & Frey 1994; Marshall & Rossman, 1995). It provides another element in the armoury of qualitative research methods that can add insight and understanding to the cultural component of human behaviour (Burns, 2000). While not technically an ethnographic tool, groups are recognized to favourably enhance interpretations

obtained via ethnographic means (Fontana & Frey; 1994). Fontana and Frey (1994) list the advantages of focus groups as providing new perspectives, generating background information for questionnaire design, and supplying a source of triangulation.

Fontana and Frey (1994, p. 365) outline the difficulties associated with moderating group discussions on a topic. They highlight the need to draw out all participants to maximize coverage and to prevent more vocal individuals from dominating proceedings and mention “group-think” as a possible negative outcome. The focus groups employed in this research were initially a second preference to one-on-one interviews, and the majority of interviews conducted in the college sites were single-informant interviews (35 interviews). A further 5 interviews were conducted with two participants, 3 interviews were with three participants. In interviews with more than one informant, care was taken to ensure contribution from all group members, and the group context was utilized wherever possible to generate stimulated (and sometimes heated) discussion on the issues raised.

In summary, this thesis combined in-depth interviews, focus groups, photography and observation. A targeted analysis of secondary data in the form of college publications was also undertaken. The use of a combination of techniques was decided upon based on the recommendation of many experienced researchers, including, Arnould & Wallendorf (1994), Belk et al. (1988), Cohen et al. (2000); Denzin & Lincoln (1994), Hormuth (1990) and Marshall & Rossman, (1999).

3.9 General approach to data analysis and the presentation of results

Although the incidents were focused on a structural alteration to or within the built environment they included a wide variety of issues such as restructuring, capital investment, staffing, promotion, integration, redundancy and interdepartmental rivalry. Process phenomena have a fluid character that spreads out over space and time (Pettigrew, 1992) and to deal with this I adopted multiple levels of analysis that were sometimes difficult to separate. These were made up of a continuum rather than a hierarchy or a clear classification further complicating the sense making process.

When collecting the process data I attempted to document the sequence of events pertinent to the process of interpretation and identity formation as completely as

possible. However these processes are highly restricted as certain phenomena will tend to be absent from a systematic list. There were background trends, which were the strategic directive received by the organizations directors from government bodies that modulated the progress of specific 'incidents'. In addition part of what interested me was actually what was going on in people's heads, their emotions and turmoil, and this leaves no physical trace of the exact moment of its passing. My research also dealt with the evolution of relationships between people or with the cognitions and emotions of individuals as they interpret and react to events.

There was then, at this stage, a notion of precision by using the term 'incident' but clearly there were also different levels within these incidents. An 'incident' included a physical change to a building but within that incident there was also perhaps a merger, a meeting amongst a team, a conversation and some emails, the location of a desk. At a macro level I was obliged to combine historical data collected through the analysis of documents and photographs as well as interviews and photography conducted in real time to put these incidents in context. While this type of data is richer by focusing on memorable moments it also requires an ability to distance oneself from it to separate what is really significant from what is merely 'noise'.

The research questions are concerned with understanding how interpretations evolve over time and why they evolve in this way and as such consists of stories of what happened and who did what when 'incidents' occurred and what choices were made over time. I am aiming to provide explanations of phenomena in terms of the sequence of events leading to an outcome (what is the process of interpretation of physical artefacts and how this is used in identity formation) temporal ordering and probabilistic interaction between entities. Understanding a pattern in the 'incidents' is key and in order to analyze the data then I required a means of conceptualizing events and of detecting patterns amongst them.

My process data posed considerable challenges because of the sheer volume of words to be organized and understood. The complexity of the process data is a reflection of the complexity of the organizational phenomena I was attempting to understand but the presence of multi-layered and changing contexts often disturbed steady progression towards equilibrium.

So my challenge was how to move from a mass of data to a theoretical understanding while maintaining the richness and complexity of the data. The use of

more than one strategy was chosen as an approach aimed at overcoming the overwhelming nature of dynamic and multilayered process data by fixing on an anchor point that helped structure the material but also determined what elements received less attention.

Narrative strategy

Narrative strategy was used to construct a detailed story from the raw data. It was used as a preliminary step in preparing a chronology for subsequent analysis- a data organization devise which would serve as a validation tool. To quote Geertz (1977) '*..to turn our attention towards that which gives symbols their life, their use.*' In addition by adopting a constructivist perspective, I hoped to achieve understanding of organizational phenomena by providing '*vicarious experience*' of a real setting in all its richness and complexity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:359). It is this contextual detail in the narrative (thick description) that allows the reader to judge the transferability of the ideas to other situations. The aim is to understand the social situation, in its complexity, through the multiple lines of narrative (Boje, 2001) through which the actors in the situation, make sense of, and attribute meaning to the incident, themselves and others in the organisation. I tried to avoid excessive data reduction and to present, as completely as possible, the different viewpoints of the process studied. Because of the structure of the narrative, time tends to play an important role and it allows a focus on contextual detail so works well for the three cases studies chosen rather than a large sample. It avoids the necessity of clear definitions when boundaries themselves are not clear, and it accommodates variable temporal embeddedness and eclectic data. In this context the narrative is used in an ongoing change situation within the three case study sites. The way the organisational actors enact the change affects the movement of the story and the reactions of others in a way that is compatible with the notion of becoming (Chia, 1996). The narrative develops over time and its shape could not be entirely predicted or controlled (Beech & Johnson, 2004).

An example of one narrative using 'workstation allocations' is presented in Appendix 6. The data relating to this one particular incident (workstation allocations) has been extracted and presented in chronological order, each case study

being presented separately. I have also inserted my own reflections noted after each interview took place to add to the thick description

Table 3:9 Table of contents of the ‘workstation allocations’ incident

| ALPHA | BETA | GAMMA |
|---|---|--|
| Photography of area | Photography of area | Photography of area |
| Interview discussing history of incident/ Russell | Interview discussing history of incident/ Chris | Interview discussing history of incident/ Juresh |
| Reflections of researcher | Reflections of researcher | Reflections of researcher |
| Change in allocations Yvonne/Michelle/ Gail | Allocations story Gail/Hans | Applications for new campus/ Belinda |
| Reflections of researcher | Reflections of researcher | Reflections of researcher |
| Health Sciences locked area Gail B | Emirates airline story | Coffee pot story |
| Reflections of researcher | Reflections of researcher | Reflections of researcher |
| Management meeting on allocations/ observation | Management meeting on allocations/ observation | Meeting with head on allocations |
| Reflections of researcher | Reflections of researcher | Reflections of researcher |

Narrative comprises only of the manipulation of words so diagrams were introduced to explain the process of events. The events process diagram in Table 3.5 and 3.6 does not force artificial clarity on the identification of the main unit of analysis and it conceptualizes the changes to the physical environment as an evolutionary phenomenon that interact in a dynamic way with other important issues to the participants. However this representation does not give insights into factors such as power, conflict and emotion although the causal maps do register them. Relations of temporal precedence, authority and influence between objects and individuals are quite easily represented but emotions and cognitions are more difficult to define. However, because of the limitation of diagrams in dealing with more surface structure of activity sequences it was required to be supported by another method of analysis. These diagrams can however, be viewed as an organizing strategy because they are ways of descriptively representing the process data in a systematic way. They constitute the initial rather than the final stages in the sense making process. They serve as intermediary data bases for the identification of incidents.

Inductive data analysis

The process of analyzing the data collected for this study was characterized by the fact that it began as soon as I started collecting data, it was ongoing and it was inductive. Lofland's (1971, p. 121) explanation that when undertaking qualitative research, "*during the observation or interviewing phase, one is at the same time trying to make some kind of (abstract) sense ... of the raw reality one is encountering*" is a fitting description of the overlapping activities of data collection, analysis and interpretation which occurred during this exploratory study of identity forming by interpretation of physical artefacts. As soon as I began the process of collecting data, I simultaneously engaged in analyzing and interpreting the perspectives of those I was talking with and observing. The stories were broken down into narrative structures which could be generalised (Propp, 1975) which were the underlying themes and types of actor. The actors had '*spheres of action*' informing incident-bound activities (Berger, 1997) which were part of the identity of the actors. Within the narrative structures there was an ordering (sequence and choice between alternatives) of events and actions and these were categorised into incidents. The analysis gave an indication of how different groups of actors perceived their own roles, identities and situations, and those of other actors.

Table 3:10 illustrates the relationship between the research questions, the techniques used and the analysis phases. This early and ongoing analysis was necessary for a number of reasons. By overlapping the phases of data collection and analysis, I was able to adjust my observation strategies, shifting some emphasis towards those experiences which helped to develop my understanding, and generally, to exercise control over my emerging ideas by virtually simultaneously '*checking*' or '*testing*' these ideas" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 103) with the collection of further data. Also, this concurrency of data collection and analysis suited the fluctuating and emergent nature of the interpretations of physical objects being explored. On a practical level, the "*sheer massive volumes of information*" (Patton, 1987, p. 297), generated by the qualitative methods used, demanded that analysis was not delayed until the completion of the collection of primary data.

Table 3:10: Research Questions, Techniques and Unit of analysis

| Techniques | Unit of Analysis |
|--|---|
| Participant Ethnography recorded by photography and field notes | Constant comparative method 1. Comparing incidents applicable to each category, 2. Integrating categories and their properties, 3. Delimiting the theory, and 4. Writing the theory. |
| Interviews using Laddering techniques | Laddering Eliciting Distinctions 1. Triadic sorting (areas chosen by participants) 2. Preference- artefact differences 3. Differences by occasion Selecting key distinctions to ladder Techniques 1. Evoking the situational context 2. Postulating the absence of an object or state of being 3. Negative laddering 4. Age aggression contrast probe 5. Third person probe 6. Re-directing techniques Analysis Content analysis The implication matrix Constructing the hierarchical value map Determining dominant perceptual orientations |
| Interviews using auto driving techniques | Constant comparison method |
| Document | Content analysis 1. Coding framework for classification 2. Identification of scales |
| Reflexive journals | |
| Photography | Documentation of the sites Used in auto driving techniques and laddering Generic culture ethnography |

Analysis on-site

During the first round of interviews inductive analysis occurred while in the field. The early collection of data was guided by my pre-understanding (Gummesson, 1991) of educational institutes and the aim of determining the process by which physical symbolic artefacts in work environments are interpreted by organizational actors. At this stage, depth interviews were kept open to the collection of interesting responses and perspectives around which further data collection could focus. The tape recording of interviews allowed me to make written as well as mental notes of any analysis I made during interviews. This also permitted me to identify particular responses to probe further during that interview or at a later date.

Running the data open

Immediately after undertaking the depth interviews and observations they were transcribed and recorded. Any analysis made was typed onto the transcript or written into the field notes. This second stage in inductive analysis involved reading and re-reading the transcripts and field notes made so far. This served two related purposes. The first was to familiarize myself with the data (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991) and the second was to start the process of structuring and organizing the data into meaningful units. The familiarity created by reading and re-reading transcripts and field notes heightened my awareness of the "*patterns, themes and categories*" (Patton, 1987, p. 150) of meanings existing in the data and focused my attention on these. The purpose of running the data open at this stage in analysis was to take the data apart and then piece them together in a number of ways, each of which was potentially important to understanding the research problem (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). By making several copies of the transcripts and field notes collected so far, I attached "open" codes, to those sections containing data which appeared to be important for understanding the process by which physical symbolic artefacts in work environments are interpreted by organizational actors.

These sections were then pulled together into meaningful units, the 'incidents' around which the collection of further data was planned to establish whether these units were in fact important to understanding the research problem. In this way, some chunks of data were coded in a variety of ways, others were discarded on the grounds that they were not relevant to the thesis, as a whole, and the data collected so far were reduced to a more manageable level.

A second activity carried out at this stage was the writing of memos. These written notes were referred to at later stages of analysis to remind myself of the reasons why certain chunks of data were coded in particular ways and pulled together into organized, meaningful units. These memos additionally reminded me of the logic of the interpretations that I had made at this early stage in my analysis.

Focusing inductive analysis

Analysis became focused on the 'incidents' which were central to understanding the research problem by concentrating the collection of additional data around open codes and constantly comparing these data with previously coded sections. The method of analysis used during this stage is called the "constant comparative method" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This method involved repeating the process of reading and re-reading transcripts and field notes and constantly comparing the data collected during this phase with sections labelled with open codes during previous analysis. By systematically comparing the similarities and differences between sections of coded data, some codes were disregarded as irrelevant to the study, others were expanded upon and additional codes emerged. Coded sections were then pulled together into different categories or "families" of codes within each incident. Included in each category were "slices of data" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) exhibiting an "internal homogeneity" which held them together in a meaningful way (Patton, 1987). As the categories used exhibited "external heterogeneity", they provided a structure to the sections of coded data which were useful to understand interpretation of physical artefacts in the identity forming process.

This process of focused data collection and constant comparison of coded sections of data continued until coded sections became saturated, that is, no new patterns or themes emerged. At this stage, analysis moved from open codes to focus on "core" codes and categories of codes central to understanding the substantive topic, around which deeper analysis and interpretation concentrated.

Deepening the analysis

Having grouped homogeneous slices of data into core categories and organized coded data into a meaningful structure, the analysis was deepened by interpreting the relationships between core categories and seeking to explain why these relationships existed. By interpreting the structure that had emerged and re-evaluating relationships between categories of data, a cohesive integration of categories, which provided an understanding of interpretation of artefacts in the identity forming process which "fitted" and "worked" with the data, emerged from this deeper analysis. In interpreting, re-evaluating and conceptualizing relationships

between categories of data, the constant comparative method of analysis was used once again. During this stage, I engaged in the prolonged and systematic search for similarities and differences between the slices of data contained within different categories and between core categories and concepts and theories existing in the literature. The purpose of these comparisons was to understand the meaning and nature of these relationships and resulted in some categories being disregarded on the grounds that, when analyzed more closely, they did not fit and work with the understanding that was emerging. This systematic comparison of categories with relevant concepts in the identity and artefact/ symbols literature was important for two reasons. First, comparisons between existing concepts and theories with the relationships that had emerged between categories of empirical data were useful in re-evaluating the reasons why these relationships existed. Second, comparisons with the concepts and theories used in relevant literature revealed the extent to which the understanding of the physical environment which emerged from this in-depth, qualitative study had contributed to current knowledge and understanding of the substantive area. A step by step guide to the practical aspect of coding is detailed below.

Data analysis

Step 1: Devising and coding using a contact summary form

Following the procedures laid down by Miles and Huberman (1994) I used a contact summary form (Appendix 4) for recording the main themes, issues and problems.

Step 2: Developing a complete theme list

The contact summary forms for the 60 participants over 4 phases of interviews generated a variety of themes which were put into major headings based on a classification of nine themes which emerged from interpretations of artefacts. For example '*respect of staff*' or '*power of leadership*' and '*identity of ABC*' and '*insecurity of employment*' and '*status of role versus staff*' and '*status of staff versus students*' and '*fear of change*' were broad theme categories. For example, the first category, '*respect of staff*' included a number of different themes, each highlighted by interviews with participants on their interpretations of their environment such as the quality of workstation and problems with the air conditioning, language used in emails from supervisor to staff, loss of meeting room facilities, lack of choice of

housing, superior facilities for students over staff. I used the themes to isolate commonalities in what aspects of the physical artefacts were interpreted (aesthetic, instrumental, symbolic) and to suggest an explanation for the identity formation in terms of the dominant theme categories. Each theme was assigned a separate table coding where it had appeared in the text. This process attempts to put into practice Geertz's advice on '*clusters and clusters of significant symbols*' (1973, 2000).

Step 3: Sorting the interview data into incidents.

The information gathered in the interviews (Phase 1 to 4) was then each interview coded phrase by phrase onto a theme list in order to document which interpretations were instrumental, aesthetic and symbolic and establish whether or not these interpretations and the emotion evolving from them was used in identity formation. '*In the experiences of individuals and groups of individuals as, under the guidance of symbols, they perceive, feel, reason, judge, and act*' (Geertz, 1973, 2000). After completing the theme based coding process I categorized the data into types of dimension of the artefact (symbolic, aesthetic, instrumental), discussed by the participant. This was then categorized by the interpretation made and what issues in terms identity arose. I was able to ascertain the extent of each type of interpretation and which aspects of identity were formed/ altered or influenced from it. The interviews from phase 4 were used to produce ladders from attribute, through consequences to values. This analysis was used as an organising strategy and to understand the underlying themes which were difficult to focus on through re-reading the transcripts. This helped to decide how to organise the data for presentation. Finally, I decided to use data vignettes to provide a thick description.

Means End Theory

Phase four interviews used the laddering technique which is based on means –end theory. Our objectives and values play an important part in our behaviour (Rokeach, 1973). We determine our objectives on the basis of our values, search for, or design suitable solutions, evaluate these solutions and finally make a choice (Simon et al., 1987). We try to realize certain objectives and values in solving our problems. Our behaviour when making choices is therefore value oriented and goal – directed. This

is also the case when we are interpreting our built environment. We then use the information we have to evaluate our own identity and the identity of the organization we are with and this is evaluated against our perception of the way we see the situation should be (the desirable state) and then decide in what way we can achieve the desirable state (the goal). This goal directed behaviour is not necessarily rational behaviour as goal directed behaviour results in a functional which may not be optimal choice whereas rational behaviour implies an optimal choice (Beach, 1990).

Research on understanding meaning has been primarily focused in the marketing literature and concentrated on the decision- making process from attribute to benefit to personal value perspectives is primarily driven by competitive forces in the market place. The meaning of a physical object has been extended beyond attributes in the marketing sense to include benefits those attributes symbolize to an actor (Myers, 1976). Meanings of physical objects, more notably, products have been extended again to include higher levels of abstraction (Gutman & Reynolds, 1979), namely, personal values (Homer & Kahle, 1988; Rugg & McGeorge, 2002). Means end theory was originally developed to understand how consumers feel about the products and services they purchase, consume and experience (Gutman, 1982; Reynolds & Gutman, 1984). The theory focuses on the interrelations of three aspects of product attributes, consequences and personal values. An attribute is perhaps the most concrete part of a meaning and relates to the relatively tangible or observable characteristics of an object. Consequences are more abstract meanings that refer to the outcomes that derive from selecting or use the object. Personal values are the most abstract type of meaning and are centrally held enduring beliefs or desired end of states existence that guide and influence human decision making and behaviour (Kahle, 1983; Rokeach, 1973; Verhoff, Douvan & Kulka, 1981). The theory is based on the assumption that individuals select alternatives with attributes or characteristics that produces desired consequences (or benefits) and that avoids (or at least minimizes) undesired consequences (or costs). The importance of the consequences is a function of the personal values they are associated with (Gutman, 1982; Klenosky et al., 1993).

The association between concepts offers an explanation of how consumers, and in this case organizational actors, interpret a product attribute as symbolizing

associated benefits (and in this case used to assess the interpretation of physical symbolic objects symbolizing power, status respect in the organization) .

We translate product attributes into benefits, actors translate physical objects attributes into benefits and these are ultimately translated into a reflection of self and group identity. The product or physical object, as defined by its discriminating perceptual attribute is the means which satisfies the more personal ends, represented by values and then in organizational actors compared with identity. A means- end framework adds a much richer understanding of how an organizational actor derives meaning from a physical object.

Laddering originated in Kelly's personal construct theory (Kelly, 1955) which was one of the early cognitive approaches. Personal construct theory (PCT) is notable for its emphasis on its combination of validity of information undertaken with rigor and measurement. The repertory grid was used for this initially and it has been used extensively in market research and knowledge acquisition. But the grid is not able to represent hierarchies of knowledge type such as goals, class membership or explanation and laddering was developed by Hinkle in 1965 to fulfil this need. Laddering at first glance resembles a structured interview in that it consists of a series of natural language questions and answers based around a limited set of probes.

Process of Laddering

Laddering can be conducted in different directions: downward to seek explanation and upwards to elicit goals and values, or sideways to provide further examples at the same level. I decided to concentrate on single direction upward laddering. The average interview took about 45 minutes during which I took handwritten notes rather than tape recording in the majority of cases. This was at the specific request of 80% of the participants due to the confidential and sensitive nature of the information. Although research of Reynolds and Gutman (1998) tended to elicit short responses in this case perhaps because the focus was on identity meaning and values the responses were wordy so whenever it was possible to record the responses it was helpful to be able to listen to them after the interview to search for meaning and explanation.

Data Collection Procedures and Processing

Means- end theory was designed to explain the relationship between goods and consumers. In this case it was used to explain the relationship between physical artefacts in the organizational built environment and the organizational actors. In the original definition a good is defined by a series of attributes which yield consequences when the good is used. The importance of these consequences is based on their ability to satisfy personally motivating values and goals of people. So in means end theory the relationship between attributes and values are also indirect but the consequences can be quite broad. It can encompass everyday activities but also consequences that are more functional or psychosocial in nature. In addition, means end is more 'bottom up' in its approach in the sense that the meaning an artefact has for the individual is investigated from the point of view of the individual. The attributes consequences and values which are relevant are determined in the first place by the organizational actor and not the interviewer. A means end chain is a model that provides a way for relating the choice of an artefact to its contribution to the realization of objectives and values. In the original context means are goods which people consume and activities that they carry out. Ends are positively evaluated (end) situations such as privacy and freedom. The most important linkages between values and objectives on the one hand and behaviour and preferences on the other form the elements of the means end chain model. The original means end chain model is based on four assumptions (Gutman, 1982). The first assumption states that objectives and values influence choice processes. Secondly, it is assumed that people can keep track of the enormous diversity of goods by grouping them in sets or classes so as to reduce complexities of choice. This means that we not only classify goods in product fields (furniture, equipment) but also create functional classifications such as 'preserving my image' or 'showing my status in the organization' and these classifications may contain the objects used for this such as a cell office, a leather chair. Thirdly, it is assumed that our behaviour has consequences and that these consequences are not the same for everyone. Finally there is the assumption that we learn to associate particular consequences with particular behaviours. The term *consequences* to understand every direct or indirect result of someone's behaviour and the consequences can be desirable or undesirable. The central idea in means end theory is that we choose actions which

will provide the desired consequences and minimize the undesirable consequences. Values provide consequences with a positive or negative valence. Therefore the linkage between values and consequences is of essential importance in the means end chain model. An object must be used (consumed) to realize a desired consequence, but in order to do that a choice must be made too from alternative objects. To be able to make this choice we must learn which objects (artefacts) possess the attributes that produce the desirable consequences. So the second linkage is between consequences and the attributes of objects (artefacts). The original and simplest means- end model has three levels: product attributes- consequences- values. A simple example of means-end chain model related to the organizational built environment would be: glazed office walling (attribute) – more light (consequence) - less claustrophobic (value). An example of laddering is illustrated below.

The summary ladder for (2) FACULTY AREA is:

(V) STATUS REDUCED
 I
(C) WORK ETHIC
 I
(C) DIRECTORS STRATEGY
 I
(C) MESS
 I
(C) CHECKING ON STAFF
 I
(A) CLOCKS

I am assuming that we create classes of objects (artefacts) that are instrumental in bringing about certain consequences and that contribute in their turn to the achievement of valued end situations. The categorization process forms the way in which people segment their complex environment into meaningful classes (through the creation of equivalencies between non identical stimuli) (Rosch, 1978). This way we divide our lives into smaller units that become easier to manage. This is necessary because our environment has more objects than we have values. In the built environment when we are faced daily with a multitude of physical objects we can reduce the complexity of a multitude of objects by categorizing them and that way and in that way we can process further information. If we are trying to achieve

our values then classes of objects must relate to higher objectives because otherwise there can be no question of instrumentality. Although we divide the objects into classes based on the attributes the choice of these attributes that are important to us is decided by our values. Objects are then divided into classes by attributes which are important and those which are ignored.

The way we identify objects therefore fits into our classification of these objects into functional classes. Abstract values (or symbolic meaning) that come high into the hierarchy have to be translated through less abstract objectives to consequences and attributes which provide the basis for classification of objects. This process takes place at every level of the means end chain. Therefore we create categories and classifications so they contribute as much as possible to the realization of desired consequences and attainment of values. Pieters et al (1991) summarized the conceptual model as having four propositions and these have been applied below to clarify the research topic in relation to this theory:

1. Our subjective knowledge about objects is organized into associative networks.
2. The concepts of these networks that are relevant to our decision making are attributes of physical objects, consequences of use of the physical objects in the built environment, and our values.
3. Attributes, consequences and values are ordered hierarchically.
4. The structure of our knowledge of physical objects in the built environment influences our behaviour.

Values

Schwartz (1994) defined values as '*desirable, transituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity.*' Values are thought of as objectives which, consciously or unconsciously function as criteria in all out actions. They have cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects (Rokeach, 1973). In this notion of values as objectives we recognize the following aspects: (1) values function as interests for individuals or groups; (2) values motivate behaviours and give it direction and intensity; (3) values function as criteria for the evaluation and justification of behaviour; (4) values are acquired through the socialization of dominant group norms and through unique individual

experiences (Schwartz; 1994) which consciously or unconsciously, function as criteria in all our actions.

In order to function in our social environment we transform our needs into specific values. The central role of values in the human cognitive system stems from three types of human needs: from the needs of the individual as a biological system; from the demands set by coordinated social interaction; from the demands which stem from the functioning and survival of groups.

These are the domains with some values in brackets derived from Schwartz (1994)

1. Power (social power)
2. Achievement (successful, ambitious)
3. Hedonism (pleasure enjoyment)
4. Stimulation (daring, excitement)
5. Self direction (independent, curious)
6. Universalism (social justice, unity with nature)
7. Benevolence(helpful, true friendship)
8. Tradition (humble, devout)
9. Conformity (politeness, self discipline)
10. Security (job security, national security)

Our values are used to form and affirm our identity.

Measuring and analyzing means-end chains: Which attributes are used in physical objects?

The measurement and analysis of the various elements of a means end chain and the linkages between them takes place in 7 phases.

1. elicitation of the attributes
2. selection of the attributes
3. elicitation of the attribute levels
4. performing laddering interviews
5. determination and coding of means-end chains
6. aggregation: construction of a hierarchical value map
7. analysis and interpretation of the hierarchical value map

The aim of using this technique was to elicit '*experience near*' phenomena that is difficult for participants to express. Once this information was obtained, i.e. the values I did not progress onto constructing an HVM but used the data vignettes to show which dimensions of physical artefacts were used in identity formation.

Elicitation and selection of attributes and attribute levels

The first phase concerns the elicitation of relevant attributes for the laddering interview. Usually the Repertory or Kelly Grid is used for this where participants are presented with a limited number of triad and must indicate the way two or three products are similar to each other can consequently differ from a third. In this case study the initial round of issue focused interview participants had highlighted the main areas of physical objects that were used in interpretation and their attributes (45no.) and these were used for the following stages. The second phase comprises the selection of attributes. The participants were assigned the task of selecting from the list of 45 no. attributes those that were most important for them. In addition participants could mention attributes that were not on the list. No limit was set to the number of attributes that could be selected but if the participant chose more than eight they were asked to go through a further narrowing down selection process until they achieved eight attributes. This was done to keep the interview time down to about 45 minutes. In the third phase the participants were asked which level of the selected attributes had more meaning for them in relation to their self or group identity. If the preferred attributes was glazed then the participant was asked how important they felt this was and the stated level was a starting point for the laddering interview.

Laddering interviews

The key phase in measuring the means end chain is the laddering interview.

This involves a tailored interview format using a series of probes mainly asking – 'why is this important to you?' asking what is meant (Easterby-Smith et al., 1996) This has a goal of establishing the link between the essential elements of a means end chain: attributes – consequences- values. If a participant said that glazed walling was important in assessing his or her position in the organization (identity) then they would be asked 'why do you find glazed walling important to your assessment of yourself/group/organization?' The 'why' question is then repeated as a reaction to

the answer of the respondent. This process stopped when the participant could no longer answer why. By allowing the participant to begin at the concrete level of the attributes and then continuously asking why allows the underlying consequences and values of a certain choice to be brought into the open. In this way a means-end chain can be determined for each participant and each attribute level and is called the ladder. A ladder shows the previously unvocalised reasons for choosing the attribute and may reveal the underlying values in relation to the individual and the object.

14 laddering interviews were undertaken. During the interviews participants often gave forked answers (Grunet & Grunet, 1995) this meant that several consequences are linked to only one attribute. This can occur, according to Grunet & Grunet (1995) with participants who have thought thoroughly about a certain preference or decision and consequently have an extensive meaning structure in the area concerned.

Means End to Ladder

In the next phase the means end chains were determined on the basis of the interviews. The data from the laddering interviews were transcribed and then a content analysis was carried out. This resulted in a set of ladders for each respondent. This information was subsequently grouped into 'incidents'. Subsequently the elements of these means-end chains were coded, dividing them according to topic and level in the hierarchy (attribute, consequence, value).

Data analysis of laddering

To summarize the analysis of the raw data was undertaken using Reynolds & Gutman (1988) guidelines.

- 1) Breaking up the conversation into phrases. This involved reviewing the tapes and notes and probing for the elements that best represent the concepts expressed by each individual participant.
- 2) Content analysis of the elements selected in step 1.
- 3) Summation of associations between the content codes, resulting in a quantitative assessment of all paired relationships, termed implications.
- 4) Construction of a diagram to meaningfully represent the main implications.

General constraints

Most interviews were recorded on audio tape and later transcribed. At times participants were not keen to be recorded so note-taking was used. Participants' choices of subject material were specifically noted, as much can be gleaned from the situations that participants choose to recall, and the associations that they make (Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1994). Similarly, informant omissions were of particular interest (as per Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994). The contradictions that were often apparent between stated beliefs and observed behaviours were also actively examined for meaning.

Warnings are often given regarding taking participants' statements literally. Arnould & Wallendorf (1994) discuss the selectivity of memory and the selectivity of reporting of behaviour, suggesting that verbal accounts should be perceived as efforts by participants to give meaning to their behaviour. As such, they provide emic representations rather than objective accounts. Heeding these warnings and suggestions, interviews were oriented around gaining an understanding of participants' feelings towards their built environment. Notice was taken of the surroundings and location chosen and the apparent mood of the participant. Emerging themes were noted and explored wherever possible or appropriate. It was kept in mind at all times that it was a representation of the informant that was being conveyed, which resulted in an awareness of the image-management that was to a greater or lesser extent part of each informant's response. For example, the participant was more reticent and formal where audio equipment was used than where note-taking was the method of retention.

It is posited that interview results can be enhanced by the approach taken by the interviewer and that the interviewer 'come down' to the level of participants and engage in a 'real' conversation with 'give and take' and 'empathetic understanding'. This approach is suggested to have the effect of encouraging participants to be more relaxed and open (Wuest, 1995). Over progressive interviews it was found that adopting a conversation mode with participants was more productive than making a clear distinction between interviewer and interviewee. Participants appeared to be more natural in their manner, and less concerned with giving the 'right' response. As a result, it was concluded that the quality of the rapport established was greater

where the interview was less structured and more discursive. However, such an approach was not always possible or appropriate. For example, some participants were more comfortable in the role of interviewee rather than conversation partner. Most participants appeared to find the interview process inherently enjoyable, and readily gave descriptions of their own experiences and accounts of those of others.

I considered several areas when planning interviews including the varying of techniques for different participants and the dress and body language of the interviewer. These elements can alter the results of the interview, and therefore require attention before and during data collection and analysis. In accordance with these recommendations, interviews were varied to accommodate the characteristics of participants. For example, the support staff (mainly Asian and Arab origin) reacted better to more structured interviews relative to other groups. In different research sites the clothing codes were significantly different, requiring a considered clothing choice prior to arrival at the research site. This manipulation of physical appearance was beneficial from two perspectives. First, it was possible to better blend with the surrounding environment, enabling unobtrusive observation activities. Second, participants appeared to be more relaxed when communicating with someone who appeared to be more similar than different to them.

The establishment of rapport with participants was a high priority, as rapport with interviewees is considered essential for generating trust and productive communication (Cohen et al., 2000; Heider, 1958). From the informant's point of view, as researcher I was requesting a time investment with another colleague, a request that was not long tolerated unless a personal relationship of some nature was promptly generated. This was particularly relevant to those interviewed in other colleges, as interviewing encroached directly upon their leisure or break time. The establishment of rapport did not prove to be a difficult task in most cases, although support staff did generally tend to be more resistant.

Trustworthiness Issues

A range of techniques have been suggested to increase the trustworthiness of data obtained via qualitative research methods. Examples of those trustworthiness criteria employed in this thesis for the purposes of ensuring the quality of the work and

communicating this quality to readers include the use of multiple sites, multiple methods, purposive sampling, reflexive journals and member checking. However, other techniques, such as multiple researchers, peer debriefing, and auditing, were avoided due to their shared implicit assumption of an objective reality.

Member checking was employed in this study in a general fashion. The form of member checking advocated by Belk et al. (1988) involves going back to participants after analysis and obtaining their impressions of the credibility of the interpretation. However, it is acknowledged that participants' awareness of the social world is always partial (Wallendorf & Belk 1989; Manning, 1987), and participants are not always reliable verifiers as they are less able to view their behaviours in the light of other comparison groups and relevant theories (Belk 1990). As a result, member checking was employed here in its more relaxed form, where members of the same "*stake holding groups from whom data were originally collected*" were consulted (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 314), rather than the original participants. This approach is also advocated by Wuest, (1995). Participants were often given the reported viewpoints of other participants and asked if they "sounded right". Similarly, the evolving interpretations were periodically raised with key participants to observe their reactions. This was a useful tool for stimulating discussion and drawing out similarities and differences in attitudes. While the themes went unchallenged, there were a few occasions where participants noted that they could not see the importance of what was being suggested. It was considered that this reflected a phenomenon noted elsewhere (Belk, Sherry & Wallendorf 1988), in which the participants do not have the same range of information on which to base a judgment. The obvious problem to deal with is ensuring the validity of the information obtained. Validation was carried out by observation and ethnographic photography.

Ethical issues

All participants were aware of the research and signed a consent form an example of which is included in appendix 2. The data obtained from each participant was fed back to that participant to ensure accuracy but not data relating to other participants eg confidential transcripts. Member checking was done through the three primary key informants, one on each case study site.

Sassan was not a chosen participant but I used information he gave me in a professional context to determine the relevance of the participants interpretations and to find out what management intended by a particular change. However, the focus of participants interpretations of physical artefact were prompted by the processes around the management of change and managerial style, which was not what I had originally expected to find. This data is included because it is important in respect to the research questions but the identity of the case study site has been protected. The majority of participants have now left the ABC employment and I have used alternative names for the participants to help disguise their identity. I did not ask Sassan's permission to approach staff on Alpha and Beta campus and staff allowed me to interview them because I was known and trusted and also to help with my research.

Reliability

Another possible point of sample bias worthy of mention emanates from the characteristics of the researcher. As previously mentioned I was employed as a lecturer in business and design management, therefore one of the business department and design department team. It could be argued that because of this I was known to these departments. Some of the participants from these areas then were more willing to be a part of the research. These were those with whom I had worked for a number of years. Overall, the sampling problems encountered in this research were considered consistent with those experienced in other qualitative studies, and were deemed acceptable.

Apparatus

Observation notes were recorded on notepaper. Audio recording equipment was used in most interviews with participants. Occasionally it was necessary to commit conversations to memory to be written up afterwards. A digital camera was used and is recognized as being very helpful in ethnographic research (Sontag, 1977; Prosser, 2003), although some are concerned that the presence of the ethnographer and the recording equipment are enough to alter the behaviour under observation (Rose, 1990; Heider, 1988; Marcus, 1986). Belk et al. (1988) and Heath (1997) reported that despite these reservations, they did not encounter significant data collection problems associated with the use of recording equipment. Participants

were said to become habituated to the presence of the equipment, just as they did to the presence of the interviewer. Belk et al. (1988) acknowledge that the video recorder does appear to sometimes create an unnatural or staged dimension, a phenomenon that was also noted throughout this research. Therefore I chose to use a high quality discrete digital camera capable of recording video but no more than 4 inches in size. Audio and video recordings provide a method of retention that is as close to the original phenomenon as is possible (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill , 2003), thus providing the best material for subsequent coding and analysis (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988). Extensive note-taking at the time of data collection was found to be very useful, as participants often told as much through omission as they did through inclusion. Particularly where audio or note-taking equipment was used in isolation, it became very important to detail the visual aspects of the interview/encounter, such as participants' estimated ages, dress codes, nervous habits, eye contact levels, and posturing.

3.10 Conclusions

This chapter has outlined the methods used for the collection and analysis of data in this thesis. As Yin (1994) stated a case study is a particularly useful methodology when the phenomena and context are interwoven. In this thesis the combination of the topic, interpretation of physical artefacts in the organizational built environment, and the strengths of a qualitative methodology contributed to the appropriateness of a case study approach. This case study approach was useful because I was able to interact with all participants including the key decision makers while also providing an understanding of the context and history that were shaping events. To summarize then, narrative strategy was used to focus on the meaning of processes for individuals- that is the way they are experienced, visual process mapping was used to trace overall physical change patterns and laddering to focus on the mechanisms of emotions and power aspects. The next chapter will present the three case studies and describes the context within the changes have taken place to the built environment and human resources and begins to answer the first research question.

CHAPTER 4: Three case studies

4.1 Introduction and overview

Chapter 3 justified and detailed the research design and methodology approach chosen in this thesis. This chapter begins to address the first research question posed in Chapter 1, which is:

What are the processes and the extent by which we as organizational actors interpret physical symbolic artefacts in the organizational built environment and does this change within differing organizational roles, contexts and over time?

The first section of this chapter describes the organizational roles, contexts and changes that have taken place in the three case study sites. The second section of this chapter describes the role of management and staff in the change process in the three case study sites. The third section of this chapter explains the differences between the three case study sites.

This chapter begins to address the first research question by setting out the organizational roles, context and the changes over time that occurred in these three case study sites. In the next chapter, having detailed the context and changes, comparisons can then be drawn between the process and the extent by which organizational actors in the three case study sites interpreted physical symbolic artefacts in the organizational built environment.

4.2 The change

All data for this chapter was elicited during phase 1 of the interview which focused on the culture and context of the three case study sites.

Strategic growth

ABC is a group of 11 colleges providing post secondary education to nationals in a well developed country in the middle east managed operated by 'central services' in the capital of the country. The colleges are continuing a growth strategy, defending an exclusive market of teaching nationals of the country. The three colleges in the

case study are expanding or relocating their premises. During the period of data collection ALPHA and BETA were expanding existing campuses and GAMMA was in the process of re-locating to a large new campus; all to cope with the increase in student and staff population.

Leadership

The college system is government owned and managed by an appointed member of the royal family (Sheik B). A Vice President has been appointed by 'central services' to work directly for the Sheik and is responsible for academic affairs. Each Director reports directly to the Sheik and the Vice president. Each college has its own director with the exception of ALPHA and BETA who, at the start of the interview phase in August 2003, had appointed a joint director. Dr. Sassan had been director of ALPHA since 1999 and was then given the added responsibility of BETA in June 2003 after the dismissal of the BETA director, Derek. Norm had been director of GAMMA since the college opened in 1989 and had retired in Dec 2002. GAMMA had been under the leadership of an acting director, Barbara, after Norm's retirement.

Staff

The three case study sites are part of an 11 college system which employs approximately 2000 staff and has approximately 20,000 students. ALPHA, at the time of data collection, had 176 employees, BETA had 83 and GAMMA had 201 employees. Faculty and management are mainly recruited from British, USA or an Australian educated background. The support staff is mainly Asian or Arabic background (see Tables 4:2 and Appendix 3).

Market

The colleges' core competence is in running vocationally oriented courses up to Bachelors level in business, design, engineering or health care fields. Graduating students will be employed locally in technician or first line manager positions. The college courses are accredited by British or North American accreditation bodies.

Operational change

Subsequent to the on going growth strategy and changes at director level in these case study sites a program of evaluating staffing and building use at an operational level was embarked upon across all three case study sites. Physical resources were re assessed and a program of building work commenced (see Tables 3:5 and 3:6). These tables illustrate both the changes to the organisational built environment and the changes in human resources across a time line. The extent of physical changes to the built environment was more extensive in GAMMA than either ALPHA or BETA as this campus was re-locating to a new campus in a different geographical area of the country.

4.3 A classification of organizational actors

The organizational structure is the same for ALPHA, BETA and GAMMA, with the exception that ALPHA has a Graphic Arts and Health Sciences department, whereas BETA and GAMMA do not, and ALPHA does not have an engineering department whereas BETA and GAMMA do. However, the reporting structure is the same. The difference is in the number of staff and their breakdown of nationalities.

Organisational Structure

Authority rests with the individual director who reports to the Sheik (the ruler of the country), who is the minister of education for the country. There are 7 levels of vertical differentiation in each college (grades 1-7) and 16 horizontal differentiations (number of departments/supervisors). Within the college system as a whole, the procedures are formalized with documented rules, procedures and communications. The colleges are mechanistic forms of organization, high levels of complexity, formalization and centralized. Organisational actors are granted limited discretion in performing their tasks and rules and procedures are carefully defined. Organisational actors have a limited opportunity to participate in decision-making which tends to be conducted at director level. The colleges all operate on a multi-divisional structure, being separate functional structures that report to individual heads. The average span of control for a supervisor is 10 staff.

Recruitment

Recruitment of staff is handled by central services staff located in the headquarters in the capital where staff screen all applications and hold initial interviews. A college director can also put forward a candidate for initial screening.

If candidates are successful, their details are held by human resources in central services and can be picked up for a second interview by any one of the college supervisors. If the appointment of an applicant is to be recommended then it has to have approval by one 'head' and the director. This means that an individual director has the final choice of who is appointed to any college.

Organisational Culture

ALPHA

Organisational actors are not encouraged to be *'too vocal'* and are required to be passive. The definition of truth is what has been instructed by the director. Time is oriented towards the present, on a weekly basis with little or no forward planning or thinking is encouraged in staff by the director. Within this culture human nature is assumed to be lazy and the notion that human nature needs to be 'fixed' is present. Organisational life is competitive; with staff trying to maintain their own performance evaluations to ensure they are offered a contract renewal at the end of their three year employment contract. The departments are organised into working teams based on the subject to be taught and the academic level of students. The authority system is autocratic and paternalistic. Individual groups of organisational actors are required to be homogeneous and individuals are encouraged to conform.

Examples of norms at ALPHA can be found in the display of emotion and organisational dress. The display of emotion at work is discouraged and organisational actors are required to wear formal business attire, adapted to Islamic traditional values (i.e. the woman wore long shirts and covered their arms) which indicates a value for conformity.

BETA

Prior to the merger, organisational actors had been encouraged to be pro-active. The definition of truth was arrived at largely by social consensus. Basic orientation towards time was the future, rather than the present, with many team based projects planned over a two or three year time frame. The most relevant time units were on a

semester (three months) basis. The assumption was that people are basically good and that human nature is perfectible. Organisational life was co-operative and the need for individualism recognised, although a group approach was sometimes required. The authority system was participative and collegial. When individuals were working within a group they were encouraged to innovate. Examples of norms at BETA were the display of emotion and organisational dress. Displays of anger or happiness and individualistic styles of dress were encouraged. This indicated a value for being dedicated to the organisation (showing emotion showed that you cared). This was in direct contrast to ALPHA.

GAMMA

The organisational culture was the same at BETA had been at the time of the merger.

Nationality of organizational actors

These tables show that the spread of nationalities over the three case study sites is similar. The main difference being, on GAMMA, where there are a large proportion of Indian passport holders. This is because on GAMMA there are 32 out of 42 Indian passport holders are employed as security guards. In ALPHA and BETA there are a similar number of Indian passport holders who are security guards but they are not directly employed by the colleges, but by University City, therefore do not appear on the tables.

Table 4:1 Institutional position of participants

| College | Position | Frequency | % of total participants | No. of employees | % of total |
|-------------------|---------------------|-----------|-------------------------|------------------|------------|
| ALPHA | Director | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.8 |
| | Head of Instruction | 1 | 6 | 2 | 1.2 |
| | Supervisors | 3 | 20 | 11 | 6.0 |
| | Faculty | 8 | 54 | 98 | 56 |
| | Support staff | 3 | 20 | 64 | 36 |
| | TOTAL | | 15 | 100 | 176 |
| BETA | Director | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Head of Instruction | 1 | 8 | 1 | 11 |
| | Supervisors | 4 | 33 | 7 | 9 |
| | Faculty | 7 | 59 | 46 | 55 |
| | Support staff | 0 | 0 | 29 | 34 |
| | TOTAL | | 12 | 100 | 83 |
| ALPHA/BETA | Director | 1 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| | Head of Instruction | 1 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| | Supervisors | 4 | 58 | 0 | 0 |
| | Faculty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Support staff | 1 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| | TOTAL | | 7 | 100 | 0 |
| GAMMA | Director | 1 | 4 | 1 | 0.5 |
| | Head of Instruction | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1.0 |
| | Supervisors | 4 | 16 | 12 | 6 |
| | Faculty | 10 | 38 | 110 | 57 |
| | Support staff | 10 | 38 | 69 | 35.5 |
| | TOTAL | | 26 | 100 | 194 |

Table 4:1 table illustrates that data was obtained from a range of organisational actors at differing grades across the three case study sites. These tables are not being offered as a claim to knowledge, but to show how the process by which my theoretical views were generated.

When the merger of the campuses colleges ALPHA and BETA was announced there was also some staff allocated to manage across two campuses at Head of Instruction and Supervisor level. There were very few faculty staff who were teaching across campus and few support staff working across campus at the time the data collection was undertaken. At the time the study took place there was 176 staff employed in ALPHA, 83 in BETA and 194 in GAMMA. Although the table shows a number of participants working across both campuses they were employed by one or other campus. The category ALPHA/BETA shows the number of participants who were working across both campuses on a daily basis.

Table 4:2: Nationality of participants (country of origin)

| College | Nationality | Frequency | % of total |
|-------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| ALPHA | British | 5 | 33 |
| | Canadian | 2 | 13 |
| | Lebanese | 4 | 27 |
| | Indian | 1 | 7 |
| | South African | 1 | 7 |
| | Emirati | 2 | 13 |
| | TOTAL | 15 | 100 |
| BETA | British | 3 | 26 |
| | Dutch | 1 | 8 |
| | Canadian | 2 | 16 |
| | Australian | 3 | 26 |
| | Lebanese | 1 | 8 |
| | Iranian | 1 | 8 |
| | Irish | 1 | 8 |
| | Total | 12 | 100 |
| ALPHA/BETA | British | 4 | 58 |
| | Australian | 1 | 14 |
| | Palestinian | 1 | 14 |
| | Iranian | 1 | 14 |
| | TOTAL | 7 | 100 |
| GAMMA | British | 14 | 53 |
| | Canadian | 1 | 4 |
| | New Zealand | 1 | 4 |
| | Lebanese | 2 | 8 |
| | Jordanian | 1 | 4 |
| | Pakistani | 1 | 4 |
| | Indian | 6 | 23 |
| | TOTAL | 26 | 100 |

The participants come from a range of ages, countries of origin, academic backgrounds and positions within an organizational setting where three case sites are undergoing similar changes to their built environment and these factors give an almost exclusive opportunity to study the phenomena within the selected paradigm.

Table 4:3 Participants by length of service with college

| College | Length of service | Participants |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| BETA | Less than 3 years | 3 |
| | 4-6 years | 5 |
| | 7-9 years | 2 |
| | 10 years and more | 2 |
| ALPHA | Less than 3 years | 3 |
| | 4-6 years | 9 |
| | 7-9 years | 1 |
| | 10 years and more | 2 |
| BETA/ALPHA | Less than 3 years | 1 |
| | 4-6 years | 3 |
| | 7-9 years | 2 |
| | 10 years and more | 1 |
| GAMMA | Less than 3 years | 10 |
| | 4-6 years | 10 |
| | 7-9 years | 4 |
| | 10 years and more | 2 |

Table 4.3 shows the length of services each participant has with the colleges. All participants are employed on a three year renewable contract. The participants have to indicate, by November of the third contract year whether or not they want their contract to be renewed. They are notified in the final semester of the third year of the contract (one month before the end of term) whether or not they will be renewed. Table 4:3 shows participants who are in their first contract (less than 3 years), second contract (4-6 years) and third contract (7-9 years). In years 3, 6, and 9 participants, if they have indicated that they want to renew their contract, may be unsure if this contract will or will not be renewed.

Table 4:4 shows the length of service of each participant. A member of staff serves a one year probation period and is notified officially of their success or otherwise in passing this probation in May towards the end of an academic year which ends in the end of June. Faculty are asked if they want to renew their three year contract in the November of the third year of service and that application is considered by management and staff are normally offered a renewal contract to sign in the March of their third year. If staff do not want to renew they must give a full semester's (six months) notice or they risk losing their accrued benefits. This means that staff who are unsure of their position and fear that they may not be offered a renewal may resign in January rather than risk being notified two months before the semester ends that they have been unsuccessful. The staff that were in the position of either renewal or probation are noted for each college as it is acknowledged to be a stressful time for expatriate staff who may have to re-locate family, home and career if they are unsuccessful. In the year this study was completed 75 staff out of a total of 259 over ALPHA/BETA campuses were up for renewal and 30 were on probation. In GAMMA out of 201 staff, 65 were up for renewal and 24 were on probation. The annual staff turnover is 30% and the average contract length served throughout the system of 11 colleges is 4.5 years.

Table 4:4: Participants and their length of service with institution

| College | Length of service | Frequency | % of total Participants |
|-------------------|---|------------------|------------------------------------|
| ALPHA | 1 st contract (1-3yrs) | 3 | 20 |
| | 2 nd contract (4-6yrs) | 9 | 60 |
| | 3 rd contract (7-9yrs) | 1 | 6 |
| | 3 contracts + | 2 | 14 |
| | Participants on probation or renewal year : yr 1,3,6,9 out of above | 2 | 13 |
| | TOTAL | 15 | 100 |
| BETA | 1 st contract (1-3yrs) | 3 | 25 |
| | 2 nd contract (4-6yrs) | 5 | 41 |
| | 3 rd contract (7-9yrs) | 2 | 17 |
| | 3 contracts +(10yrs) | 2 | 17 |
| | Participants on probation or renewal year : yr 1,3,6,9 out of above | 5 | 41 |
| | TOTAL | 12 | 100 |
| ALPHA/BETA | 1 st contract (1-3yrs) | 1 | 14 |
| | 2 nd contract (4-6yrs) | 3 | 43 |
| | 3 rd contract (7-9yrs) | 2 | 29 |
| | 3 contracts +(10yrs) | 1 | 14 |
| | Participants on probation or renewal year :yr 1,3,6,9 out of above | 2 | 29 |
| | TOTAL | 7 | 100 |
| GAMMA | 1 st contract (1-3yrs) | 10 | 39 |
| | 2 nd contract (4-6yrs) | 10 | 39 |
| | 3 rd contract (7-9yrs) | 4 | 15 |
| | 3 contracts +(10yrs) | 2 | 7 |
| | Participants on probation or renewal year : yr 1,3,6,9 out of above | 9 | 34 |
| | TOTAL | 26 | 100 |

4.4 Who does what?

This section examines the social context surrounding the changes and identifies three key roles relating to the change implementation: Initiator, Executor and Target.

The Initiator of all change at ALPHA was the director and in all cases the Executors were the two 'heads of instruction' who then undertook the practical administration of any change. This was done largely by seconding aspects of a change to the relevant supervisor and the heads then checking to ensure that it was done and reporting back to the director. The perception was always that the target of the

changes was in all cases the organisational actors. An example to clarify this statement is; the 'allocation of workstations' incident. The change was seen to be about who sat where; it was not seen to be about the physical design of workstations. This change procedure was introduced at BETA when Sassan took over as director but prior to his take over the procedure for change was different. Any member of staff could propose change. It would then be introduced at the weekly management meeting and discussed by the supervisors, heads and director. A decision would be taken by the director based on the recommendations of the management team and his own input. Subsequent to this, a team would normally be appointed to process the change, with a relevant head or supervisor in an advisory capacity and the team would then set a schedule for the implementation of the change and report back to management, possibly during the management meeting. At GAMMA the process for change was the same as it had been in BETA prior to the change in leadership. The target for change was seen to be the physical layout, and not the organisational actors; so the target was change to the environment and not change to the way people worked together.

Context

ALPHA had suffered the unfortunate reputation among staff of the ABC system in the years before the merger as the '*prison*' of ABC colleges. When the participant observation and field work commenced, they had introduced a sophisticated intranet porthole system that tracked student attendance as staff logged them in and tracked how often and when staff logged into the system. This was coupled with video facilities throughout the campus that then transmitted live shots of activities throughout the campus as they occurred. Staff perceived that they were being checked on and were not trusted. Staff worked extremely hard under the apparently constant vigil of the director. This was in direct contrast to what had been the situation at BETA prior to the merger where staff was treated in a more traditional collegial fashion as espoused by the then current director.

After the announcement of his joint directorship, the appointed director Sassan, during his first meeting with all staff, which was held on the ALPHA campus, stated that there had been a '*lack of discipline and efficiency*' on the BETA campus largely due to the '*lax management practices*' of the previous director. He promised that the same high standards he '*enforced*' at ALPHA would be put in place at BETA. It was

his concern that, via the stories the senior management told, this attitude had filtered down the organisation and manifested itself in lower grade levels in the form of a '*laissez faire culture*' that inhibited cross functional communication and a student centred approach.

At the time the fieldwork began, staff at ALPHA rated themselves as being the most efficient college with the overall highest academic results in the college system. The staff saw themselves as being held back because they were under joint management with BETA. They were concerned of what the future held in terms of layoffs and a possible integration with BETA. They also hoped that the director would now become more involved with BETA and his then legendary '*micro-management techniques*' would be less focused on ALPHA. No formal declaration was made by Dr. Sassan as to the extent of the future merger. Sassan had queried the lower retention rates and lower grades of the students at BETA and attributed this to the lack of dedication of the management team and staff. A report produced by the management team of BETA for Sassan showed that the opportunities for education and careers for men in the country were more extensive than for women. The trend was for male students to enrol in the college in August but was also apply to the armed forces and the police. When the army and police started recruiting in October the students who were offered a place usually left ABC. Generally, these were students of a lower academic capability and were enrolled in the CD program. Recruitment was on a first come first served basis and education was free of charge so there was no way to prevent this trend under the present ABC student recruitment policies. In addition, a number of fee paying universities had opened in recent years and a 'national' student could get a bursary to attend, so competition amongst the more academically oriented students was becoming fierce. ALPHA, however, still tended to be a holding ground for young girls until a suitable marriage was found for them. They could not enter the police or armed forces and the great majority would not have been allowed by their families to study abroad or to study in a mixed gender /mixed cultural environment.

GAMMA had a very good academic reputation and was the largest of the men's colleges. It was also the most popular amongst staff as it was in the centre of the city and also the students were reputed to be of a higher academic calibre. Norm, the director was a legend among directors and one of the recent stories told of him was

of his retirement. A cavalcade of over 300 cars containing students and alumina followed him to the airport when he was due to fly home after retiring. The students and staff went to see him off and wish him well. All staff were comfortable in their working environment and Barbara, the acting director, had said that she just wanted to finish the project that Norm had started. This was to relocate the college to a new campus and to ensure all the facilities were in place for the new director.

The fortunes of ABC colleges were intertwined with the education 'industry' as a whole in this country. A large number of European and US universities had entered the market to offer either full time, part time or distance courses with accredited authorities. However, due to the rapid growth in the 'national' population the numbers of students at ABC continued to grow. This brought with it its own difficulties because education was free of charge to 'nationals'. Each year there was a budget crisis and the normal response to this was to cut number of applicants that could be admitted or to cancel teaching contracts. This resulted in staff continually trying to affirm their own position in the colleges. It is worth noting here the implications of this policy. If a member of staff had their contract cancelled then they had 30 days in which to leave the country and this would include any family who were with them. So if a member of staff lost his/her job he or she would consequently loose their home and their children would loose their school education and within days he/she would have to return to the country of his/her origin.

Table 4:5: Management of change processes across the three campuses

| ALPHA | BETA | GAMMA |
|--|---|--|
| Change/driving forces New technology Changing work values Competition from other colleges Market turbulence Socio-political changes | Change/driving forces New Director New Technology Competition from other colleges Changing work values Market turbulence Socio-political changes | Change/driving forces New Director New technology Competition from other colleges Market turbulence Socio-political changes in UAE Increase student numbers |
| Change/restraining forces Resistance from individuals and groups: Habit, fear of loss, Economic reasons Social ties | Change/restraining forces Resistance from individuals and groups: Habit, fear of loss, Economic reasons Social ties | Change/restraining forces Resistance from the organisation Limited resources |
| Processes of change Revolutionary change | Processes of change Revolutionary change | Processes of change Incremental change |
| Strategies for change Power-Coercive Strategies Use of political power Use of economic rewards and sanctions Use of social pressure | Strategies for change Power-Coercive Strategies Use of political power Use of economic rewards and sanctions Use of social pressure | Strategies for change Empirical-Rational Strategies Use of information is the key Rational argument Reward systems Cumulative approach Engages with the rational side of people |

Table 4:5 shows the management of change processes across the three campuses.

The main differences in the processes are in the categories of:

Change/driving forces

Although the main driving forces for change in BETA and GAMMA were the appointment of a new director, this was not the case in ALPHA, but they did have the same director as in BETA. Increase in student numbers was one of the main instigators in GAMMA moving to a new purpose built campus.

Change/restraining forces

The main difference within the restraining forces evidenced were that resistance came from individuals and groups in ALPHA and BETA and these arose because of habit, fear of loss, economic reasons and social ties. The restraining forces in

GAMMA came from resistance from the organisation (central services) and these were due to limited financial resources.

Processes of change

The processes of change in ALPHA and BETA were revolutionary but the processes of change for BETA were incremental.

Strategies for change

The strategies for change in ALPHA and BETA were Power-Coercive Strategies using political power, economic rewards and sanctions and, social pressures. Whereas in GAMMA empirical-rational strategies were used for which use of information is the key and rational argument, reward systems, and a cumulative approach was used which engages with the rational side of people.

4.5 The role of the management team in change

This section examines the differences of role of the management team within the change process and communication of the change process across the three cases studies.

On becoming Director of BETA/ALPHA, Sassan called all of the BETA management team to his office in ALPHA on an individual basis. After these interviews were completed he announced his new management structure. Sassan had demoted the then supervisor of continuing education to lecturer position and closed the continuing education department despite there being a large number of profitable contracts running. He announced this demotion during his first staff meeting and justified it by say *'we are in the business of educating nationals not a few Indians and the occasional Russian. If I want the revenue that this department generated I would ask the sheik for it and get it that way. It is just a waste of valuable resources and not why we are here'*.

The demotion of a member of staff who had been in the college system for ten years and who had been publicly humiliated in this fashion caused a great deal of fear and uncertainty amongst all staff. Although the changes in the management structure and subsequent changes in the faculty and support structure were generally inconvenient they were not commented on or reacted to publicly. During this meeting Sassan announced that the building which was under construction at BETA for the

continuing education department was now allocated as an additional teaching block. The construction of a new building for the education department at ALPHA was announced and the purpose designated for this building was both as teacher training to produce qualified 'national' teachers for 'national' government owned primary schools.

In theory, all the heads reported to the director and the supervisors reported to their head. At these grades supervisors held an equal weighting in the structure of the management team; that is, they were all direct reports to the head. However, in terms of size of budget, number of employees and current projects on the ABC agenda it was widely acknowledged that Russell was Sassan's man and Ken had control of the largest budget and was highly trusted by Sassan who was known to announce that he trusted no one. The positions, ages and lengths of tenure of each of the supervisors and heads who were participants are shown in Table 4.6

There was a fear culture within ALPHA which meant that as researcher and as a newly recruited member of the management team it was difficult to get members of the management team to speak freely. Therefore out of the 16 member management team I was involved on a day to day basis with 9. Paul, Nigel and Ron were from BETA and we had over the last couple of years established a working relationship. Phil had been Head at BETA and had been transferred to ALPHA *'to make sure he didn't do any favours for the BETA staff'* and still retained his identification with BETA. Tim had been transferred from ALPHA at the time of the merger *'to keep control of BETA and let Sassan know everything that was happening over there.'* Tim had *'suffered at the hands of Sassan'* and talked freely about changes and the implications of these changes although was not trusted by staff in general as he *'would have cheerfully sold his granny for a profit'*. Helen and Ken were supervisors who had always been at ALPHA. Ken had been given the responsibility of BETA library services and as a consequence the supervisor of BETA resigned. Helen had been working as acting supervisor for 4 years and had never been fully appointed and was resentful of this. Russell had been supervisor of business prior to Sassan taking over BETA and his position had been changed to supervisor of student services while Paul took responsibility for business on both campuses. The director and the management team were unaware of my research aims at this stage

and so the in depth information I obtained was through participant observation and the preamble to interviews for publications. There were several important relationships within the management team. The first of these was the relationship between Helen and Ken. They had worked together in the past, knew each other well and shared a great sense of loyalty to, and affection for, each other. Paul, Ron and Nigel became known as the '*naughty boys*'. All three had been appointed by the previous director and shared a love of outdoor sports, desert bashing and mountaineering and had made a pact to '*stand by each other and let each other know what was happening and what was said.*' Tim and Phil had been employed in the system for a long time and even though '*the gravy train had stopped*' had '*nowhere else to go.*' In addition, they were clearly the gatekeepers of college knowledge; old stories of past triumphs and failures, and were both well connected through out the ABC group and their parent organisation as a whole.

Table 4:6 ALPHA/ BETA Management Team participants.

| Name & Position | Age | Tenure In ABC |
|---|------------|--------------------------|
| Sassan Director ALPHA/BETA | 59 | 6 years |
| Phil Head of General Education ALPHA | 57 | 10 years |
| Tim Head of General Education BETA | 44 | 9 years |
| Paul Business Supervisor ALPHA/BETA | 42 | 2 years |
| Nigel Engineering Supervisor BETA | 43 | 10 years/ 1 year at BETA |
| Ron Student Services Supervisors BETA | 44 | 2 years |
| Helen Graphic Arts Supervisor ALPHA | 54 | 4 years |
| Russell Student Services Supervisors ALPHA | 45 | 9 years |
| Ken Supervisor library services ALPHA/BETA | 49 | 6 years |

After the first round of meetings, before Sassan announced his decision these were some of the concerns.

Ron *'Paul and I are buddies, we went through the Himalayan trek together. Derek employed Paul because he's a fitness fanatic and could take the guys (students) out. Derek had big ideas on setting up sports facilities and an outbound course but it never seemed to get done. I'm sure Paul will be OK. He can bluff his way through anything. (laughs) We knew what had happened to Derek, he took us aside before he called everyone to the multi- purpose hall. I'm determined to make things succeed with Sassan. If I'm honest I've never given this job 100%. In Canada, you can ask Ann, I worked 150% and here it's been about 80%. He's asked for some reports and figures. I'll get them done – let's just hope we've got a job. If we all stick together we'll be fine- I'm sure.*

Paul *'That was a bit of shocker that meeting with Sassan. Between you and me Sassan asked if I would take a job as faculty and I said no. He asked me for some ideas about what should happen in the business dept and I ran some figures past him. It's old Ron I'm worried about. They've got a super slick student services over there (ALPHA)*

Nigel *'Whatever I said he argued with and obviously wanted to pick a fight. I've got to look after my staff and they are all doing a good job. He's talking about starting a course for women in engineering- it would certainly get the numbers up. I wonder if he'll build an engineering block in ALPHA then. It's all too early though'.*

Both Ron and Paul had been recruited by the previous Director, Derek. Paul had previously worked for Derek in Hong Kong and Ron also had had an acquaintance with Derek prior to his appointment. Ron and Paul had nominated Nigel for the position of supervisor after meeting him on some continuing education courses BETA had run for other colleges. They felt vulnerable because of this association.

Management meeting 1- Researchers observations

All the management team were milling about outside in the corridor of the management suite. The door to the board room was opened and Manar (Directors PA) went in and put Sassan's notepad and pen at his seat at the head of the table. All the team filtered in to the room. Since the merger of two management teams had taken place it meant more chairs had been required. Now there were 30 chairs round the table. The managers were trying to locate their place as it was obvious they always sat in the same seat. The managers from BETA were also trying to find a

place. Anne, a supervisor from BETA known as 'the bulldog' was aiming to sit next to Gail, the supervisor of Health Sciences who was in favour with the Director. Paul and Nigel sat together. Tim took a seat next to Sassan and another head Gerard took the other seat next to Sassan while Phil took the seat opposite Sassan. The room was very cold, the lights were bright and the blinds closed. No one spoke. The director spoke for four hours and no one spoke unless spoken to. Tasks were divided and the new management structure explained. The supervisors were checking how many 'reports' they had.

Sassan outlined the task ahead. He had, he explained just got ALPHA running the way he wanted it when he was asked to take over the responsibility for two and had this to say-

'Change makes some people uncomfortable, but it doesn't make me uncomfortable. I love change especially if it results in improvement. Not all changes are good, but if change makes us better and if it allows us to offer better services to our students and better services to our community, then I welcome that and I thrive on it. When any system changes there will be some negative and positive effects. The negative effects usually have to do with people's ability to adjust to change. There are many people who become comfortable with what they have and changes are threatening to them. But if we are good managers, then we manage the changes in such a way that it does not make people feel insecure and fearful. Sometimes when there are changes, the people in the organization become a bit insecure because it is something new for them and they don't know exactly what is going to happen. That's why it's very important that we keep communication lines open with everyone and that we try to let people know what we're doing and how we're doing it. That way you reduce the amount of tension that comes with change. '

He added as a summary-

I don't trust anyone and you can't trust anyone either. Don't get emotionally involved with the staff. What has to be done will be done and it won't help you take action if you spend the weekend on the golf course with these people. If you all do as I ask you will be OK and you may get your contract renewed. (laughs)

4.6 Patterns in the three organizations

Table 4:7: Leadership styles on the three campuses

| ALPHA | BETA (post merger) | BETA (pre merger) | GAMMA |
|---|---|---|---|
| Autocratic Positive and directive Clear downward communication Control reward and Punishment Task-oriented Leader Telling Participating | Autocratic Positive and directive Clear downward communication Control reward and Punishment Task-oriented Leader Telling participating | Free Rein High level of independence for subordinates Upward communication High trust Support subordinates in making decisions Relationship oriented selling | Democratic Participative 2-way communication Consultation and agreement Relationship oriented leader Delegating |
| Transactional Contingent reward Management by exception – active | Transactional Contingent reward Management by exception – active | Management by exception – passive Laisser-faire | Transformational Individualised consideration Intellectual stimulation Inspirational Motivation Idealised influence |
| Functioning leadership Frame-structural Leader- architect Leader process-analysis/design | Functioning leadership Frame-structural Leader- architect Leader process-analysis/design | Functioning leadership Frame- Political Leader-Advocate, negotiator Leader process-advocacy, coalition building | Functioning leadership Frame-Symbolic Leader-Prophet Leader process-inspiration, frame experience |
| Non functioning leadership Leader-Petty tyrant Leader process-over focus on detail | Non functioning leadership Leader- Petty tyrant- Leader process-over focus on detail | Non functioning leadership Leader-Con-artist-thug Leader process-manipulation-fraud | Non functioning leadership |
| Followers Job Maturity Ability to perform the task without direction/supervision On the basis of: Knowledge Skills Ability Experience Capacity to set high but attainable goals | Followers Job Maturity Ability to perform the task without direction/supervision On the basis of: Knowledge Skills Ability Experience Capacity to set high but attainable goals | Followers Job Maturity Ability to perform the task without direction/supervision On the basis of: Knowledge Skills Ability Experience Capacity to set high but attainable goals | Followers Job Maturity Ability to perform the task without direction/supervision On the basis of: Knowledge Skills Ability Experience Capacity to set high but attainable goals |
| No Psychological Maturity No Willingness to take responsibility No Self-motivation Not aware of, and committed to the objectives | No Psychological Maturity No willingness to take responsibility No Self-motivation Not Aware of, and committed to the objectives | Psychological Maturity Willingness to take responsibility Self-motivation Aware of, and committed to the objectives | Psychological Maturity Willingness to take responsibility Self-motivation Aware of, and committed to the objectives |

Table 4:6 summarises the leadership styles on the three campuses which will be discussed in the following section.

4.7 Autocratic leadership case (ALPHA)

This section discusses the styles of leadership in ALPHA and how this has influenced the management of change processes.

Alpha's directors' leadership style is autocratic using a clear down ward direction in organisational communication. He controls through a reward and punishment system and is very task oriented. His management style is to tell the management team about proposed changes rather than invite their participation in decision making. This style is useful in situations where there is a low level of willingness and ability on the part of subordinates. The functioning aspects of his leadership are that it is a contingent reward system (in exchange for effort and performance). He also uses active management by exception where he watches for deviation from rules and attempts to correct the situation.

The functioning aspects of his leadership are when he operates on a structural frame, and uses a leader process focussing on analysis and design of incentives acting as an 'architect' constructing his organisation. The non functioning aspects of his leadership are that he could be classified as a petty tyrant with a leader process that over focuses on detail.

The organisational actors have the ability to perform the task without direction/supervision because they have the required level of knowledge, skills, ability, and experience and have the capacity to set high but attainable goals. The organisational climate is such that organisation actors within ALPHA'S campus now show no willingness to take responsibility, no self-motivation and are not aware of, or committed to organisational objectives.

4.8 Free rein leadership case (BETA, pre merger)

This section discusses the styles of leadership in BETA and how this influenced the management of change processes. Derek's style of leadership, prior to Sassan taking over as director was 'free rein.' The organisational actors had been used to a high level of independence, upward communication channels and were shown a high level of trust by the director. He supported subordinates in making decisions and was relationship oriented. When he wanted to take a decision he would 'sell' his

decision to the management team, a style more suited to willing but less capable subordinates. He tended to manage by exception in a passive style and intervened only if/when standards were not met. The functioning aspects of his leadership were that he operated within a political frame, negotiating at all levels of the college system and always espoused a policy of coalition building. The non-functioning aspects of his leadership were that he could be a thug, bullying subordinates into submission without discussing issues with them and tended to manipulate circumstances to his own advantage. The organisational actors in this case study site were able to perform the task without direction/supervision on the basis of their knowledge, skills, ability, experience and a capacity to set high but attainable goals. They showed a willingness to take responsibility, were self-motivated and aware of, and committed to the objectives. When Sassan took over BETA he used the same style of leadership as he did in ALPHA.

4.9 Democratic leadership case GAMMA

This section discusses the styles of leadership in GAMMA and how this influenced the management of change processes. The style of leadership practised by Norm was democratic and participative. Two way communication channels were used and it said that Norm's door was always open for any member of staff who needed to talk anything through. He was a relationship oriented leader, a style suitable for moderate conditions. He managed by consultation and agreement with the management team, academic and support staff. He delegated when it was necessary and was considerate to staff and treated everyone like an individual. Working in a symbolic frame, the functioning aspects of his leadership were his ability to motivate and inspire those who worked with him. He was treated like a 'prophet', respected for his wise decisions. None of the participants in this case study site reported any negative, non-functioning aspects of his leadership. The organisational actors in this case study site were able to perform the task without direction/supervision on the basis of their knowledge, skills, ability, experience and a capacity to set high but attainable goals. They showed a willingness to take responsibility, were self-motivated and aware of, and committed to the objectives.

4.10 Explaining the differences between the organizations

Each of the three organizations exhibited a different pattern of leadership and management of change processes prior to the merger of ALPHA and BETA. After the merger, the Director and consequently the leadership style changed. Prior to the merger BETA enjoyed the same organisational culture as GAMMA and a more participative style of management but after the merger this changed to an autocratic management style.

4.11 Conclusions

This chapter has described the organizational roles, contexts and changes that have taken place in the three case study sites. The organisational roles are the same across the three case study sites. The changes to all three case study sites are very similar and situations within which the participants highlighted 24 change incidents, 8 no across the three case study sites have been described and are the same. The context then is similar in all respects but one and this is the management of change processes which are different across the three case study sites probably due to the difference in style of leadership.

The second section of the chapter described the role of management and staff in the change process in the three case study sites. The role of management and staff in ALPHA and BETA was the same but the process was far more collaborative in GAMMA. Prior to the change in director at BETA the role of management and staff in change processes had been the same as GAMMA, but was now, after the merger, the same as ALPHA. The third section of the chapter explained the differences between the three case study sites which were primarily due to the differences in style of leadership and consequent management of change processes.

This chapter began to address the first research question by setting out the organizational roles, context and the changes over time that occurred in these three case study sites. In the next chapter comparisons can now be drawn between the process and the extent by which organizational actors in the three case study sites interpreted physical symbolic artefacts in the organizational built environment.

CHAPTER 5: The process of interpretation in the three cases

5.1 Introduction and Overview

Chapter 3 detailed the qualitative research approach and methods of data collection, together with the process of inductive analysis which was used to identify the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts by organizational actors within the organizational built environment. Chapter 3 also detailed the reasoning behind clustering the data in a unit of analysis, not by an individual participant, but by a physical symbolic artefact and the various issues surrounding it, which was then named an 'incident.'

Chapter 4 detailed the three case study sites used in the research and described the changes to the organizational built environment and how this change process was managed.

This chapter introduces the analysis of one of these 'incidents' and the results.

The objective of this chapter is to explain the processes of interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts, detail what dimensions of the artefact in the incident were interpreted and to what extent and under which circumstances this occurred. This analysis is then related to the Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) model and answers the first research question which is:

What are the processes and the extent by which organizational actors interpret physical symbolic artefacts in the built environment, and under what circumstances and to what extent are the varying dimensions of Rafaeli & Vilnai Yavetz (2004) model most evident?

5.11 The process by which the question will be answered

Firstly, this chapter explains that within a situation where the context appears to be the same, there are differences reported in the extent of interpretation of an artefact

and the different dimensions of the artefact (i.e. instrumentality, aesthetics and symbolism) used in the interpretation process.

Secondly, this chapter explains the relative importance of the extent and type of interpretation and how the balance of impact on emotions changes over time and context.

Thirdly, this chapter explains the connection between interpretation of artefacts and the activities and interpersonal activities within which participants are engaged.

Finally, this chapter links these findings to the Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) model and explains the similarities and differences between the Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) results and my own and provides a possible explanation of why these have occurred. These findings confirm their proposition that we interpret various dimensions of the physical symbolic artefact. The results also demonstrate my own contribution which details how and to what extent each dimension of the physical symbolic artefact is used in the interpretation process, the connection between interpretations of artefacts and the activities and interpersonal activities within which participants are engaged and how interpretation differs in changing contexts and over time.

5.12 Which data are used to provide the answer?

This chapter begins with a rich description of one of the incidents ‘faculty workstations’ across the three case study sites. In total 8 incidents were defined which were occurring almost simultaneously across the three case study sites, resulting in a total of 24 incidents. All 24 incidents are described in appendix (5).

The chapter continues with an explanation of my own understanding of this data giving categories of interpretation and showing how I arrive at my explanation of the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts. This is represented by a series of summary tables illustrating the dimensions of the artefacts used in interpretation and the differences in results across the three case study sites. These differences occurred in the extent of interpretation of an artefact and the different dimensions of the artefact (i.e. instrumentality, aesthetics and symbolism) used in the interpretation process.

An additional summary table 5:10, produced from these data and the remaining 7 incidents is used to illustrate the differences in context over the three cases study sites which explain the relative importance of the extent and type of interpretation. Data vignettes are used from these points in time, with ethnographic descriptions of the context from which they were drawn and the emotions felt by participants to explain how the balance of impact on these interpretations changed over time and context.

Ethnographic data vignettes are used to illustrate the connection between interpretation of artefacts and the activities and interpersonal activities within which participants are engaged.

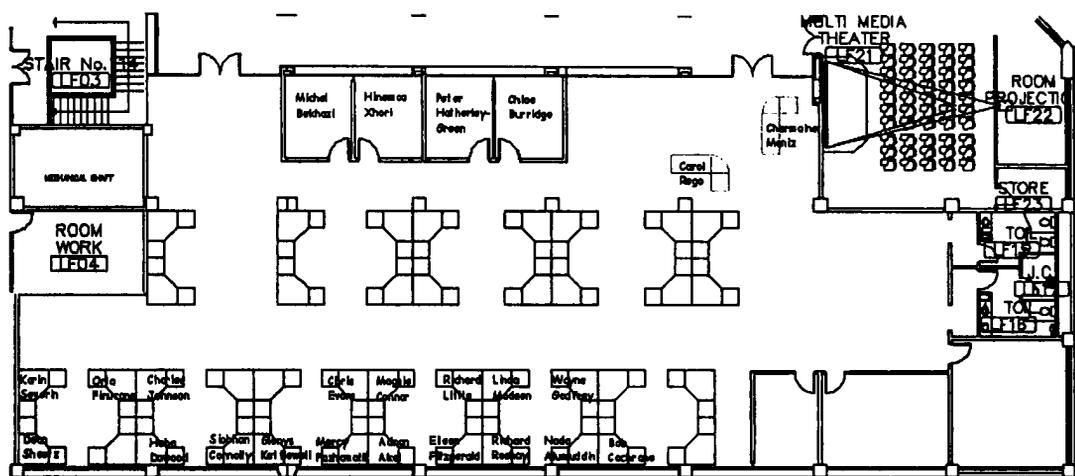
5.2 Similarities of context

The three case study sites were described in Chapter 4. This description included physical details of the facilities and architecture detailing changes to the interior and exterior over the intense phase of data collection which took place from August 2003 to June 2004. The aspects of organisational behaviour noted, included details of the participants, their role in the organisation, their education background, nationality and length of service and the details of the management of change process itself. As previously stated, the case study sites were located in the same geographic region, under the same governance system and organisational structure. All three case study sites were educational institutes offering similar courses to the same segment of the market and all staff within the sample were employed on expatriate three year renewable contracts employed, not through individual colleges, but through a head office located in the capital of the country. The facilities were of a similar standard and specification of the interiors was standardised throughout the 11 college system. They were to all intents and purposes the same. Therefore, at the start of the research, the type, extent and the circumstances of interpretation and the use of those interpretations was predicted to be the same. The details which follow will illustrate that this was not in fact the case and that the results from participants on each case study site varied considerably. The following is an account of one of the incidents 'faculty workstations' over the three case study sites, Alpha, Beta, and Gamma, written up as incident ALPHA1, BETA1 and GAMMA1 because it is the

first of 8 recorded incidents over 3 case study sites giving a total of 24 recorded incidents. The data relating to this one particular incident has been extracted from the all the original data collected which had been categorised by participant. The data will now be presented in chronological order, by incident, with each case study being presented separately. I have also inserted my own reflections and descriptions of the context of the conversations noted after each interview took place to add to the thick description.

5.3 Description of incident ‘faculty workstations’

Figure 5:1 Typical workstation layout plan



This plan shows a typical standard layout of faculty workstations. This was a standard layout and specification used throughout the three cases study sites, varying only because of architectural constraints. It shows the layout of workstations in a quadrangle formation, which would normally be allocated to four staff. The supervisors’ offices are located on the perimeter.

ALPHA 1: Change in faculty workstation allocations

This incident concerned individual faculty members who were relocated within the ALPHA campus. Sassan announced during an all staff meeting that he was also going to be in charge of the BETA campus as well as ALPHA. He emphasised the need for staff *‘to work as efficiently in BETA as staff had always done in ALPHA’*. He added that this may involve faculty and management working across both

campuses rather than remaining on one campus in order to use staff more efficiently. His first action as Director of both colleges was to interview the current management team of both ALPHA and BETA on a one to one basis. The day after those meetings he announced, in a joint management meeting of ALPHA and BETA management, a new organisation structure, which involved some changes in post, some demotions and relocation of some of the management team was presented. These were not discussed with the management team prior to announcement. A revised staff organization chart was presented to the management team and building work was authorised by him to create or adapt offices for the revised management team and install additional facilities on both campuses. Subsequent to this meeting, changes at faculty and staff level were announced and some members of staff were relocated to either ALPHA or BETA and occasionally to a different department. These changes all took place between June 2003 and October 2003.

BETA1: Change in faculty workstation allocations

This incident concerned both the management of the change in workstation allocation process and the physical layout, design and location of the old and new workstations allocated to faculty members. This was the same incident that occurred in ALPHA except that the staff at BETA also underwent radical changes in managerial processes. The change process and leadership style of newly appointed Sassan was a stark contrast for the staff from the style of their previous director, Derek who had a more collaborative style of management. Staff were unsure of the long term consequences of these changes. What had been, under the previous director, a consultative process, now became an 'allocation'. This all took place between June 2003 and October 2003.

GAMMA1: Change in faculty workstation allocations

At the same time, the beginning of the new semester in August 2003, there were also changes in workstation allocations within GAMMA .The planned relocation to the new campus had not gone ahead over the summer break because the completion of the new campus buildings had been delayed. New staff and faculty had been hired and other staff had resigned. Therefore, there was a need to find accommodation for new staff in the old buildings which were also being used as storage for packed items awaiting re-location. The director (Norm) had retired and an acting director

(Barbara) was appointed from within the college to oversee the move. Some additional workstations were erected in an ad hoc fashion where space allowed and with the consultation on staff in those areas. Everyone lent a hand to find accommodation for the new staff and on occasion shared a desk where necessary sometimes amongst the packed boxes. The process was discussed openly and staff were asked for their suggestions which were generally acted upon. Staff were not forced to move if they did not want to and the process was informal and friendly.

The above gives details of what in essence was the same incident which occurred across the three case study sites.

Table 5:1 below details the order of presentation of the incident across the three case study sites and the accounts listed all refer to where or how staff were allocated their workstations. The names in the table relate to the participants who are giving their account of the incident.

Table 5:1 Sequence of the incident ‘faculty workstations.’

| 5.31 ALPHA | 5.32 BETA | 5.33 GAMMA |
|---|--|--|
| 5.311 Interview discussing history of incident/ Russell | 5.32 1 Interview discussing history of incident/ Chris | 5.331 Interview discussing history of incident/ Juresh |
| 5.312 Change in allocations Yvonne/Michelle/ Gail | 5.322 Allocations story Dimitral /Hans | 5.332 Applications for new campus/ Belinda |
| 5.313 Health Sciences locked area | 5.323 Emirates airline story | 5.333 Coffee pot story |
| 5.324 Management meeting on allocations/ observation | 5.324 Management meeting on allocations/ observation | 5.334 Meeting with head on allocations |

The following accounts are presented in chronological order and the data for these accounts have been extracted from the participants’ interviews and my own researcher’s diary and reflections to create a narrative account of this incident. They are quoted verbatim and I have included a short explanation of each to try to put the conversation in the context of the culture within the college and other events occurring at the same time. I have included my own reflections, the aim of which is to explain the levels and type of emotion which was evoked from the result of interpretations that took place. I have looked back at Clifford Geertz’s (1973) work as an ethnographer to draw inspiration from the way he interpreted the small nuances within an environment and the feelings of each participant to illustrate their

lives graphically. During his career Geertz has argued for what has become known as a hermeneutic method, where one interpretation is placed on top of another, one version of a 'story' is placed next to another and one set of perceptions compared with another. The medium for these comparisons are symbolic forms, in this case an 'incident'; which can be observed and understood. By starting with this clearly stated symbol and comparing it with other perceptions and interpretations of that symbol both from participants and my own interpretations and reflections, then an understanding can slowly be built up.

Sometimes a participant in these case studies said little about the subject itself, but the way it was said and the circumstances under which it was explained, lead me, after having been immersed in this Middle Eastern culture for six years and this college culture for three years to consider myself capable of understanding the implications of these narratives. Therefore, the reflections are my own interpretations but to obtain validity these were also discussed and confirmed by a primary key informer on each case study site.

5.31 Incidents account: faculty workstations in ALPHA

Image: 5:1 Entrance to ALPHA

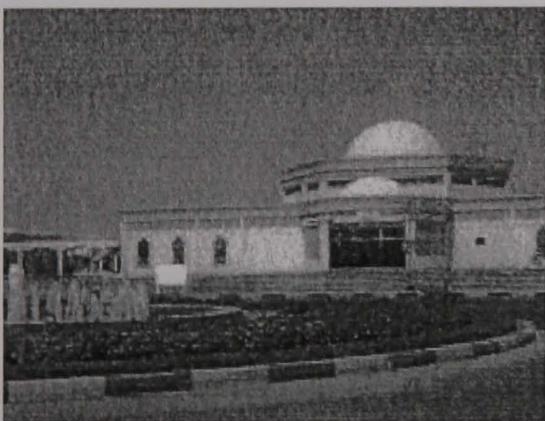
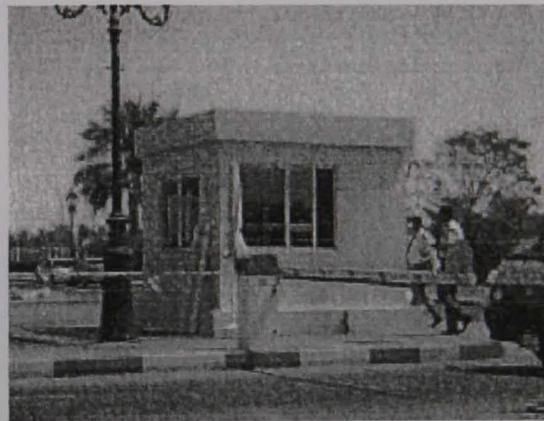


Image 5:2 Security gates at entrance



ALPHA and BETA are located in a University City in the Middle East. University City was constructed in 1998 and is made up of a number of separate university buildings within one main campus. The area around University City is quite poor by comparison. As you drive into it from one direction you pass the municipal dump and the other is passing the cargo airport road. The campus is built on a huge scale with a main avenue running through the centre, reminiscent of Paris with the Eiffel Tower at one end, although it does not have any of the ambiances attached to the Paris setting. The design and building extensions made since completion at ALPHA

also reflect the local culture. The two campuses allocated to ABC for BETA and ALPHA are both identical but one was designated for female students and one was designated for male students.

The female students are not allowed to leave the campus before the end of their study day and come to college by bus or car. There are security staff on the gate checking who is entering and exiting the college and movement around the campus is strictly regulated. The main entrance was originally identical to BETA but internal alterations and extensions have been made. When you enter the reception you find yourself in a large open circular reception hall with a marble floor. The domed ceiling circular reception hall is empty of furnishings except for some pictures hanging on the wall of the sheiks and a reception desk with a female security guard and a receptionist. The atmosphere is cold and formal. To the left are the Facility and Finance offices and to the right was the original director's office which has now been relocated into a management suite accessed through the student services area. There are a lot of students milling about covered in black traditional Islamic clothing, (abya and shayla) appearing to glide calmly through corridors while staff scurry from place to place looking slightly harassed and busy- always carrying papers. The furniture throughout the campus is of a good quality but bland. Lots of low seating is scattered in different areas and invariably there are students are sitting there and chatting.

Image 5:3 Alpha entrance

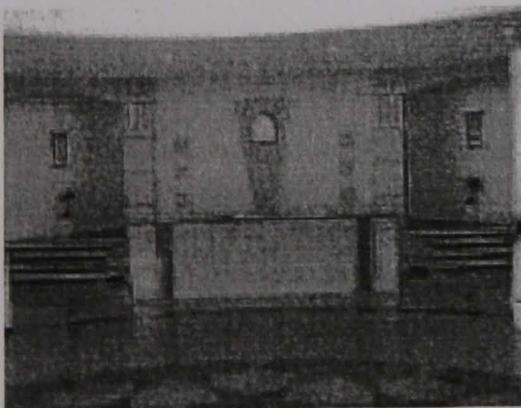


Image 5:4 Alpha reception area



Context of Russell's interview

Image 5:5 Official department photo



Russell (centre front row) had up until recently been the Business supervisor but had been transferred to Student Services supervisor so up until recently had managed faculty work station allocations. Russell had worked for this college system for 6 years having transferred from another college within the same system to obtain promotion. He was of South African origin, did not want to return to South Africa, and had decided to make the Middle East his home. He was always conscious of his lack of job security and lack of employment rights in this college system. Unlike a lot of expatriate workers he did not have another home to return to and this, plus the lack of job security, made him very compliant to all the directors' instructions, even if he did not agree with them. This conversation took place outdoors during a walk from one building to another where it would be difficult to be overheard.

5.311 Interview discussing history of incident/ Russell

Allocations are always done by the supervisor. Dr. Sassan doesn't want staff choosing where they will sit because he thinks they will band together and just chat. Everyone's got to work hard here and if they don't they're out. I'm not sure how Gail got a prime spot like the window and now you're moving to a window spot- it shouldn't happen – no-one should choose. I suppose Paul (the business supervisor) isn't really bothering because he's leaving anyway. But wait and see it'll come up at the management meeting. My wife works in the American school and she says she doesn't know how I put up with it- she couldn't do it- but there is good and bad in everything. You might as well just do what you are told it's easier that way. Dr Sassan has got micro management techniques- he hears everything and he wants everything done yesterday. His standards are very high and he checks everything. So

he wants to know where everyone is and it's easier to check up on everyone that way. Sometimes it is very difficult to work like that. As a supervisor I'm told to do things, or make sure some things are done that I don't agree with. It can be depressing to know you are not in control of your own job. But here you are not and you either accept that or you leave. I've been moved from job to job and from office to office. Just as you get used to something, Dr Sassan will change it. I don't think he wants anyone to have a great degree of expertise but just be good enough to do their job. I'm used to working in a disciplined environment. I used to be a professional runner and before that I was in the army so perhaps it is easier to accept. You will find quite a few members of staff have a military background in this college. They get on quite well because they are used to accepting instructions without questioning them. I suppose issues like workstation allocations can seem petty and small minded to someone who has come from a European university culture. It's not easy to accept that you have a desk allocation with a number and can be moved at any moment. The organisation here is efficient and the whole campus works well. It really needs this military precision, especially in this culture.

Researchers' reflections

Everything in this college was distributed by a written facilities allocation, even the smallest items like pens and paper. Everything was controlled and checked so even the smallest triumph, like actually choosing where you sat but without anyone finding out about was considered to be important. Russell was always very keen to be seen to be doing what the director wanted, when the director wanted it done. He wanted to be seen to be hardworking and used his own thermos coffee cup as a symbol of his hard work. He could be seen to be hurrying to the directors' office for a meeting called only moments previously, coffee cup in hand, saying that he never had time to take a break and so sipped coffee from the thermos throughout the day.

5.312 Change in allocations Yvonne/Michelle/ Gail

Context

Yvonne (third from right, front row) had worked in ALPHA for 6 years having transferred from another college in the same system. She was outspoken and said she did not fit in with the sub groups that had formed over time in this faculty area. When we spoke she was planning not to renew her employment contract and to

return home to the UK within a year. This conversation took place in the coffee shop where Yvonne approached me with this information. The coffee shop was nearly empty and she could be sure that no one over heard her comments. Most staff were very careful about what they said to whom for fear of reprisal. In this data vignette she was displaying her influence to make sure that I received a reasonable workstation allocation.

Yvonne

It's a mad house in here. I want to leave. It never used to be like this you know. I did 6 years in Al Ain (another college in the same system) and then transferred here because Stephen (Yvonne's husband) got a job in the area so we all (the family) moved. I've been so ill and run up so much debt paying medical bills that it's taken years to pay off. Otherwise we'd have gone home before. This semester I'm moving from my workstation to go next to Bill and Geoff. At least you can speak to them without wondering who they will repeat the conversation to. The atmosphere is just terrible here. You only have to look at the faculty area to know how little respect they have for us here. It's depressing but it's also dangerous. They insisted we move from our old building and put workstations in the storage facility above the canteen. We now sit just above the gas tanks so god help us if they explode. I was in the Health and Safety committee at the time and we all complained but Dr Sassan took no notice and here we are. You've just got to accept it and make your own plans. I'm trying to go back to the UK if I can pay off the debt. We were respected in Al Ain, everyone helped each other but here everyone is so scared they will stab you in the back as quick as look at you. When I tell people back home what it is like here they think I'm mad. They don't believe me. You know that everything on your workstation is accounted for don't you? I want to leave but to get the paper signed off to get my gratuity I need to hand in my waste paper bin, paper punch and everything else. If I don't then I won't get the gratuity. It's just mad. We are treated like numbers- like dogs – no dogs aren't treated as bad as this are they? About your workstation.....

I'll have a word with Anna, she's the department secretary. You can have my old window seat because I'm moving. If I sit next to Caroline any longer I'll kill her. It's a window seat and it's quiet. You are not supposed to choose, the supervisor will do

that, but if you have a word with Anna she'll sort it out. I'll do it for you if you like, and then you won't need to go up to the witches' coven until it's really necessary.

Researchers' reflections

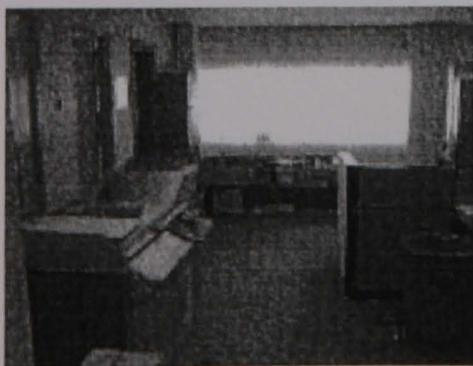
The witches' coven was Yvonne's name for a group of faculty members which included Michelle. Yvonne interpreted their actions as being in conspiracy with the director and that their attempts to get better faculty workstation positions was ensured by 'leaking information' to the relevant supervisors about staff who did not comply with the 'norms' of the department. Although Yvonne appears to be 'bucking the system' she was fearful of her own position in the college. Having spent 11 years in the system she would be paid 11 months salary as a leaving benefit but only if all requirements had been fulfilled before her departure. She demonstrated an underlying fear of ending up leaving without this payment and continually sought understanding of her own position through changes in the built environment. She saw her move to a different workstation as a symbol of security because it was one of the favoured positions behind the secretary (Anna) who was seen to have a position of influence on what happened in the department.

Context

Michelle (second from right, front row, official photo) had worked for this college for three years, originally being employed as Student Services supervisor, but had been demoted to faculty by the Director at the end of her first years service. This conversation took place off campus during a student trip while we were having a cup of coffee. This meant no one would overhear what she had to say. If we had not had this opportunity to talk privately I doubt whether she would have confided in me.

Michelle

Image 5:6 Michelle's' workstation



You know what happened to me don't you. I was the supervisor of student services. I'd worked in marketing for years and was offered that job by Dr Sassan. I gave it everything but after 6 months Sassan was tired of me and did a re- shuffle. I was offered a teaching job instead and took a cut in salary of 35% because I had no teaching experience so was put on the lowest band. I had a great office before- down in the management suite and when I was demoted I was put up above the cafeteria next to the photocopier. There's no privacy and my back is to the corridor- we're treated like cattle round here. I couldn't resign because the house came with the job and my husband was out of work. I just had to get on with it. I didn't get to choose where I sat I had to come up here and find the panel that my name was on. Good work areas are given out as a reward in just the same way as a bonus. You got Tim's office and he got sent to the men's (college). Mind you it's no fun sitting in front of Dr. Sassan's office. I've got the kids photos to make it feel more personal.

Researchers' reflections

When Michelle was demoted and given her workstation in this area and she interpreted the location of the workstation was as a direct result of having fallen out of favour with Sassan. She has fully accepted the director's decision and the implication this has had on her life. However, these were opinions that she normally kept to herself and it took several months of working with Michelle before she trusted me enough to talk about these issues.

Context

Gail had been employed in the college system for 5 years and was only recently transferred from BETA to ALPHA. She had requested this transfer because of a disagreement with her supervisor in BETA. She had been a personal friend of Tim (head of General education) and he had arranged her transfer. BETA did not take official departmental photographs, so the photograph used here was one I took of her during the photographic ethnography.

Gail

You know I had a great workstation at BETA next to two windows. When I was transferred to ALPHA I was glad to see at least I had a window- most people don't. I know Tim arranged that and knowing that made the move a bit easier. The

equipment and facilities we have as faculty compared to the quality of equipment the students have and again the quality of equipment in ALPHA is higher than BETA. For example BETA staff had laptops when Derek (the director) was there but ALPHA staff get computers that are out dated once the student computers have been replaced (Staff get the old student computers). ALPHA have a lovely coffee shop that is relaxing to sit in, of course it was put there for the students and not for us - but still. There's nothing like that at BETA and they even took the coffee out of the staff room. The overall appearance of the college buildings suggests that there is really some quality work done here particularly the scholarly achievement but the reality is so different and everything is staff driven the students never come up with anything.

Image 5:7 Gail at her workstation



This is a photo of me at my workstation. It's not to say that I prefer the photo but I think it encapsulates some of the issues that we have discussed. The photo shows me as an individual. I don't dress up for work because there is no point. I'll dress up and wear make up when I go out at night. But from an Islamic perspective I need to wear loose clothes and don't want to appear to wear a lot of make up, although some of the students do. On the workstation itself I've tried to put a few things on it that are important to me but also there are items that symbolise the organisation. I've bought a poppy for poppy day but kept it there. That shows my background and where I come from but it's not offensive to anyone and would not mean anything to anyone who doesn't come from the UK. There is a clock next to the computer which I use to make sure I'm always in time for my classes and meetings- we are really driven by time here which is so unlike Islamic traditions. My name tag is on the panel – in yellow the same as everyone else- just in case I walk past my own area and sit at someone else's because they are all the same. It also means the supervisors can see if I'm at my desk and if not my timetable is on the wall or on the

intranet so she can check up on me and doesn't have to remember where I sit. There are photos of my kids on the panel which reminds me that I stay here at the college to give them a reasonable standard of living. The computer is fairly old fashioned- I'm not a computer whiz kid- but it's a bit slow and all the money here seems to go on student's equipment. The workstation itself looks the same as everyone's but at least I'm next to a window and my chair is comfortable- some aren't. You can see on the photo how low the ceiling is and I've got the AC fan directly over my head which blows cold air on the back of my neck- it doesn't help the migraines at all.

Researchers' reflections

Gail, having originally worked in BETA, was used to a greater degree of autonomy. During our interview she compared BETA with ALPHA and her position in the college system after being transferred. To find out about her status in a new college she interpreted her work environment by made comparisons with her old work station environment. Although she accepted her situation she was also angry about the way her case over the disagreement with the supervisor had been managed and felt herself to be a 'number' in this college rather than the 'individual' she had been in BETA. She demonstrated this by her referring to the name labels on her workstation.

5.313 Health Sciences locked area

Image 5:8 Official Department photo



Context

The Health Sciences faculty area was in a separate building on the second floor with the lecture rooms and labs on the first floor. The faculty area was a closed room with a security lock on the door. The supervisor (Gail B, second row, first left in the official photo) explained that the lock was there to keep students out of the area (this

did not happen in other departments) as they were obsessed with the only male 'national' teacher on the campus. The female students had taken to entering the faculty area under any pretext; so Gail B had put the lock on the door to 'protect' the teacher. This meant that all health science staff were kept apart from teaching staff in other departments as no-one could just pop in to discuss any issues with health science staff as they did not know the code for the door. If staff from another department wanted to enter, someone would need to leave their desk to open the door.

Image 5:9 Omar: Health sciences teacher



Health Sciences locked area

Gail B (supervisor in health sciences): *I had to move Omar away from the door and next to the window. He's the only Emirate teacher we've got and I didn't want him to leave or for the situation to get out of hand. All the girls think he's gorgeous and kept coming into the staff area and bother him with their questions. I've had to put a lock on the door as well so they can't get in.*

Sheila (faculty in health sciences): *If it was me having the problems she (Gail B) wouldn't have put a lock on the door. Staff have worked for years to gradually get a better work station and now we have all been shuffled round to other places just because Omar can't tell the students to go away. Has Gail B never considered that he just enjoys the attention from all these female students?*

Researchers' reflections

The other members of staff interpreted this action as the emirate teacher being more important than them as his workstation was now next to a window and away from the door. They had also formed a group identity as underprivileged victims and

Omar was now isolated from this group. Although Gail B's decision was accepted, it was the cause of de-motivation and lack of morale amongst staff.

5.314 Management meeting on allocations/ observation

The management suite has no natural daylight with the exception of the Directors office and the boardroom on one side. On the opposite side of the Directors office, within the management suite there are four offices, two for the heads of instruction, one vacant office temporarily used by a secretary and one for a supervisor who is also a royal family figure head. These four offices have no windows but are fully glazed on the wall facing the director's office. The suite also has glazed walls leading from the reception area (see photo). The directors' Personal Assistant has a workstation in front of his office and acts as a gatekeeper.

The board room is large with a barrel shaped mahogany table with 30 leather high back executive chairs. There is a window but the blinds are kept permanently closed so the overhead lighting is required at all times. The room is equipped with excellent multi media projection and conferencing facilities. The temperature of the room is kept at 18 – 19 ° c at the request of the director. The director's office is large totalling approximately 100 sq m. It is almost square with sheer drapes blocking the direct light and light colour curtains. The parquet flooring is unlike any other flooring in the college, the standard specification elsewhere being carpet. Whenever you enter the director's office you are conscious of the click clack of your own shoes which can make the walk to the directors' desk seem like a long one. The directors' desk is large at 2.5m long with executive bookcases behind. The office is tidy and well kept. There is a round table with 4 chairs opposite the entrance. The director always sits facing the door when he sits at this table. There are also 3 low leather sofas and a coffee table. The temperature here is also kept at 18° c, the director believing that this temperature keeps you alert.

Context

At the start of term there was a management meeting called by Sassan with all 15 supervisors and 3 heads from ALPHA and BETA. Amongst other items on Dr Sassan's' agenda, workstation allocations were discussed. The meeting was held in the ALPHA boardroom. To signal the start of the meeting Sassan left his office,

which is next door, entered the board room and put his notes at the top of the table. The management team, who had been congregating in the corridor outside, followed slowly and quietly and entered the room. The meeting started at 2pm. Normal working hours are until 4.30pm, but Sassan announced that he would talk until 6pm because there is a lot to say. Nobody protested, commented or wanted to be seen to disagree. In fact nobody talked at all during the meeting unless addressed directly by Sassan.

Image 5:10 Management suite- entrance to directors' office



Image 5:11 Dr Sassan talking to management Image 5:12 The management team



Management meeting Sept 15th 2003 ALPHA/BETA

Sassan: *There seems to be a lot of staff moving from one workstation allocation to another in the men's (BETA). That will stop. I want a plan drawn up –see to it Ali- put all faculty names on it. I want to know where all staff are at all times. No one can move without permission- is that clear. Otherwise they will all be off playing tennis and I won't know where they are. No feeble excuses either. That Al Hafid women with the red shoes- why is she next to a window?*

Tim- Head: *'She suffers from migraines Sassan.'*

Sassan: *As long as there is a good reason. We can't have people coming in here doing what they want. They need to know who's in control. And that's me. I'm going*

*to look into all these allocations and put people with the team they are working with.
Ok now the security gates.....*

Researchers' reflections

These comments by Sassan were typical of his style of questioning and level of respect and autonomy given to members of staff. This data vignette has been chosen because it is so typical of his approach. After wards, during one of my meetings with Sassan, I asked why the curtains were closed all the time and he replied that it stopped 'management' looking out of the window when they should be looking at him. He used the cold temperature to focus everyone's attention and thought that if it was too warm it would be too relaxing. He told me that he didn't trust any of the staff and had set up a system with employees so that he could find out everything that was going on. He seemed to need to be in control of all events and staff at all times. He demonstrated a complete lack of trust in the abilities and integrity of any of his staff and boasted that he trusted no one, not even his own wife.

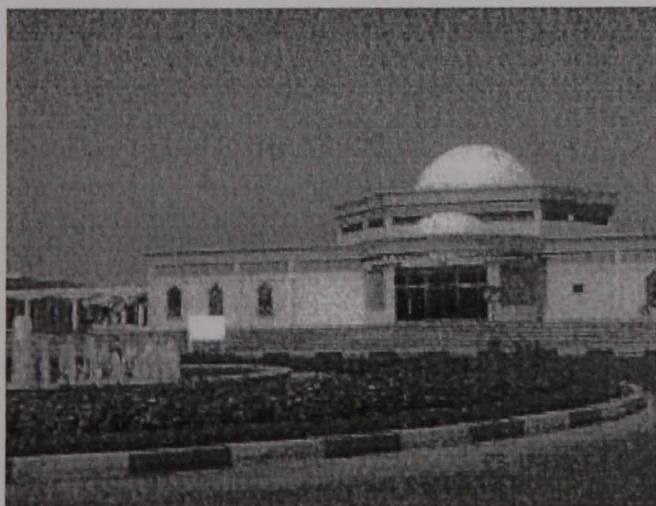
Sassan took a walk around the campus every week, inspecting the facilities and always asked one of the 'heads' plus another member of staff to accompany him in his entourage. During these walks he talked to favoured staff, blatantly ignored staff who were out of favour and usually inspected the staff workstations to make sure they were tidy. If they were too tidy he presumed staff had not got enough work and they would be summonsed to his office, after having been interviewed by one of the heads, to justify their workload. If their workstation was piled high with work the same procedure would take place to find out if the member of staff was overworked or simply incompetent. Having accompanied him on these inspections I found that staff were conspicuous by their absence and only those who carried favour would be waiting in attendance. He had confided to me during a conversation that this was a ritual he used to show his staff he was in complete control.

5.32 Incidents account: faculty workstations in BETA

When you enter the college you are greeted by security guards. These guards are pleasant and polite but they require you to state your business and will contact whoever you are visiting for to obtain authority for you to enter. Security guards are posted on each corridor, and although in an official uniform are so timid they cannot

enforce order if it is required. The faculty area is dimly lit and the faculty workstations have 1500mm high panel screening with no acoustic and little visual privacy. There are over 50 faculty in the main area. Faculty has to conduct student counselling at their desk and although the security should stop them, students just walk in looking for the faculty they want to see. Around the perimeter are the supervisors' offices with glazed walling towards the faculty area. It gives the impression that all staff movements are being monitored. These offices are in a row and whoever is more in favour or has higher status has a larger office or with better furniture. Off this main area is a faculty rest area, which is quiet with using only one or two faculty using it to eat lunch. The main reception area is about 200 square metres with a marbled floor and no furniture. To one side is a receptionist desk with a receptionist and a security guard. To the left of this is the newly constructed boardroom with leather upholstered seating and a mahogany conference table to seat thirty people. Due to the change in management structure and managers having an office on each campus, any meeting rooms staff had have now been converted to managers offices. The directors' office is off to the right of the reception. A personal assistant's desk is situated outside the Directors office as a gatekeeper. The atmosphere is 'stiff.' The directors' office has remained unchanged since the previous director, Derek, was dismissed. The room is about 40 square metres and it is furnished in new, functional mid- range quality furniture.

Image 5:13 Entrance of BETA (identical to ALPHA)



Context

BETA had been under the direction of Sassan, who still managed ALPHA at this time, when it opened in 1998. Derek took over as director in 1990 and Sassan

remained with ALPHA. Since 1990 BETA staff had enjoyed a collegial style of management typical of European and North American higher education. Staff had a degree of autonomy about how and with whom they worked. Chris had been facilities supervisor for six years in BETA, having been originally appointed by Sassan while he was director of BETA. This interview starts with Chris giving some information on the history of workstation allocations in BETA and then with the personal narratives from Dimitra, and Hans which show how staff tended to negotiate moving from one workstation to another. Most of the workstations were designed in a quadrant format, with four staff allocated to that quadrant providing a limited amount of privacy both acoustic and visual.

5.321 Interview discussing history of faculty workstation allocations/ Chris

.... Faculty allocations are always a concern. Everyone thinks they can choose to sit where they want. We go to a lot of trouble to try and balance the allocations but at the end of the day everyone moves wherever they want. Derek (previous director) was keen to create a family atmosphere in the place. Most staff don't have extended family in this country so he encouraged us to be friendly that's why he turned a blind eye to staff moving from one area to another- unless there is some problem of course. Now it's all changed but hopefully it will be more efficient. The main thing I am worrying around is the facilities. Last time Sassan was the director we lost millions of dirham (approx 500,000 sterling) worth of equipment and furniture which he took over to ALPHA. We never got them back when Derek took over and it's starting again here. The decent lap tops have all gone over to ALPHA and some workstations and there is nothing we can do about it. It's really frustrating. I just trying to get the paperwork sorted out so there is a track record of it otherwise we'll be left with nothing. I don't want someone from central services doing an audit and then I've got to explain where everything has gone. I'll be put on the next plane back to the UK within 24 hours if that is the case.

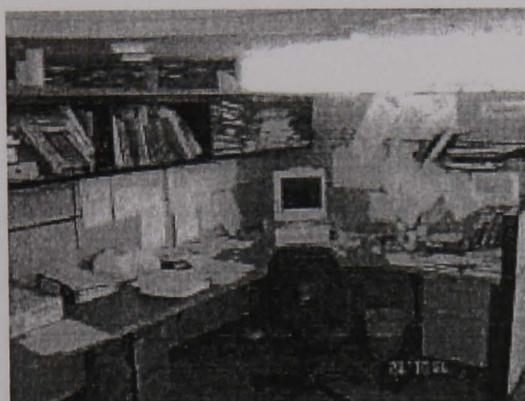
Researchers' reflections

Chris had worked for both directors, Derek and Sassan. He found it frustrating that he no longer had control over acquisitions and movement of facilities. He was also concerned that technically, in contractual terms he was responsible for any misappropriated items and he felt concerned that his position was becoming more

vulnerable because facilities were being moved from campus to campus without the relevant paperwork to back it up. Ultimately it was his responsibility to account for the whereabouts and condition of all facilities. He knew his authority was being eroded and he had started to be concerned for his own future and contract renewal possibilities within ABC.

5.322 Allocations story Dimitra/Hans

Image 5:14 Staff quadrant under discussion



Oh good (Sue) you want to come and sit here. We've been hanging on for someone. In fact Russ asked only last week but I said Dimitra had said OK to someone already. It's a great spot here we've got a view on both sides and being in the corner at least it's not like being under the dome where you are and everything you say echo's up. I'll put your stuff here and then you can sort it out after the holidays. I just hope we all get some work done and don't chat too much. Email Chris and tell him you've moved.

Email to Chris from Sue

Hi Chris,

Just to let you know I'm moving from faculty workstation 426 to 342. Phil said they are going to use 426 for a recording area so I had to go quick. Hope it doesn't cause any problems.

Email from Chris to Sue

It's not really the way it should be done but in this case OK.

Hans

You get all sorts of staff coming up and asking to move into our quadrant, because it's about the best. It's taken us years to get here and you can't have part time staff that have just arrived thinking they can get a prime spot like this you know. You need to be careful because we are not conformists here and we don't want someone repeating our conversations- you don't know who gets to hear about it. We've got two sets of windows so we can see everyone coming and going, but we are tucked away in the corner so someone has to enter the quadrant to see if we are here and they very rarely bother.

Dimitra

It's certainly changed around here since Sassan took over. Do you know he has even taken the coffee away from us? Derek supplied the coffee to encourage us all to be friendly and chat over the days events but Sassan is the opposite. No one wants to be seen sitting in the faculty room anymore. He cancelled the newspapers as well. It's the same with the workstations. We got away with it with Sue because Sassan hasn't got his grip on everything yet. Mind you, Chris has now sent out an email saying that no one can change their workstation without filling in an application form justifying why. It gets more like a prison here every day.

Researchers' reflections

Faculty had really appreciated being able to choose who they worked with and where they sat. They had little control over their work responsibilities and they felt the teaching itself was very basic so working in a friendly atmosphere had been the compensation for this. This changed when Sassan was appointed and all workstation allocations went through the facilities manager via the academic supervisor.

5.323 Emirates airline story

Context

At the beginning of August 2003 some new staff were employed. Two staff had applied for a transfer from Ras al Hanam (Phil and Ben), Martin had been recruited from Paul's (business supervisor) old university in Australia and they were allocated to sit in a faculty quadrangle next to Nasser. Towards the last few weeks of the academic year, May 2003, Phil and Ben had been dismissed but still had to work out

their remaining weeks of contract. Martin did not survive probation and Nasser, after 9 years service, was told his contract was not going to be renewed. Therefore, all four in the quadrangle had lost their jobs and consequently their homes and rights to stay in the country but still had to wait until the end of term. Three of the four staff worked under the engineering supervisor, Nigel whose office was next to the quadrangle. Nigel was also dismissed and a few days later took all his personal belongings and left the country, leaving a photograph of his face on a stick in his office chair. When staff from his department took all the end of term photos they included the photograph of Nigel which was mounted on a stick like a lollipop.

Martin-*Have you seen my sign?*

Researcher – *I can hardly miss it really*

Martin had put up a sign above the quadrangle which said 'Emirates Airline departure lounge'. All the staff were talking about this quadrangle and how unlucky it was to enter. Due to the fear culture quite a few staff did not want to be seen talking to staff who had been dismissed. However, the staff who were affected by this were determined to regain their identity and re-instate themselves as individuals by putting up the sign. They realized that other staff were not willing to be involved with them for fear of recrimination and acknowledged this in forming their own group identity associated with departure. They felt they were being treated in an underhand manner with no regard for their abilities or who there were as individuals. Their identity as outcasts was transferred to the physical workstations which they happened to be in. They also put up photos of where they were going- back to Australia or England to illustrate that they were not victims but individuals and to quote '*there is life after BETA....*'

Martins' workstation

I suppose you've heard I've not passed my probation. I suppose I'll go back to Australia now. This is the unlucky corner, we've put up that sign because we're all off (dismissed)- no one will come near us now- in case it's them next. I'm really pissed off about the whole thing. I was just summonsed to Sassan's office and told- you are not really happy here are you? So I've decided you don't match up with BETA and I'm not passing your probation' Well, how would you feel?

Nigel (off campus before his flight out of the country)

Staff on BETA campus have always sat where they wanted to. If staff were teaching on a course together sometimes they wanted to sit near each other for that academic year. It made sense. They could do their course preparation together. What is the point of forcing people to sit where they don't want to sit? Is the aim just to demoralise and de-motivate them? If so it works. We don't get much control over what we do here, but at least we could choose where we sat. Sassan even wanted me to move over to ALPHA. He says he wanted all key people over there and not on BETA. BETA is becoming like a second class workstation allocation. The best staff go to ALPHA and the rejects stay here with all the old equipment and facilities. There are no engineering staff on ALPHA, so what's the point of me going there? Sassan's only in BETA for 2 days a week and even then he arranges for everyone from ALPHA to come over to BETA to see him. He doesn't want anything to do with us and treats the entire faculty like scum. If I'd moved over to ALPHA what kind of signal would that have given to my staff? That I don't care, that's what it would have said. I've stayed near them and tried to protect them. I've spent all year trying to save them from all the crap we get in the management meetings. Well it hasn't worked has it? He sacked me. After 10 years in ABC he wants to move one of his lackeys into my job and put me back to faculty. He threatened me you know. He said if I didn't accept he would sack me and make sure I wouldn't get any of my gratuity. Well I'm off. I just feel sorry for the guys I've left behind.

Researchers' reflections

Staff were angry and stressed and sought reassurance about their future employment prospects from both a personal and group perspective. This reassurance was not forthcoming from management so the physical environment and changes were discussed more intensely and stories circulated about what was 'really' happening. Faculty discussed the location of the workstations and who was where and what the implications were for them as individuals and group members and tried to understand their own status and that of others within a changing system.

5.324 Management meeting on allocations/ observation

Context

Bi- monthly management meetings were usually held in the boardroom at BETA with the director chairing the meeting, heads, supervisors, a representative from HR and the directors PA taking minutes. A version of these minutes was then circulated to staff.

After Sassan took over, these meeting were held in ALPHA with a joint management team and no minutes of those meetings were circulated. There was never an agenda produced for the meeting but occasionally Sassan would ask one or two of the management team to produce a report for the meeting. They were not told the purpose of the report.

For example, Ron was asked to produce a plan of where all staff had offices or workstations and put their role and grade next to their name on the plan. For the same meeting Jo in HR was asked for the Performance Appraisals of staff who were coming up for renewal of contracts. In the same meeting Sassan produced a revised organisational structure and changed the workstation allocations of all staff, up for renewal who had poor performance evaluations and located them next to their supervisor's offices. He also produced a list of staff up for renewal and put a black mark against approximately 10% of the names. He then told the heads and supervisors to ensure that these staff had a least three 'lecture observations' and a meeting with the heads before the end of the month. When this had been done, and during the next management meeting he asked:

'So Tim how are you getting on with the evaluations?'

Tim: I've done then all and they are fine. One member of staff was not well prepared but otherwise they are fine.

Dr Sassan: In that case Phil I think you need to interview them and find out some more information. I've put a mark against these people and there is a reason for it. It is your job to find out my reason.

I've moved all these people so they know there is a reason for it, I expect they are worried so it is up to us to stop them worrying. The sooner the renewals are announced the better and then we can get on with our jobs. I don't want to refuse too many staff on non- contract renewal.

Researchers' reflections

The news had circulated amongst staff that there was a list of names up for renewal and that some of these names had a mark against them. Staff who were 'up for renewal' were trying to find out if they were on this 'blacklist'. The staff who had been moved to a new workstation wanted to know why, but all they knew was that Sassan had changed their workstation. This led to fear and speculation as staff tried to understand the meaning behind the moves and relate the new and old workstations and evaluate the differences and hopefully understand the message. There was a lot of anger among some groups who questioned the legitimisation of the moves and the teacher observations and also some unease.

Management meeting 29 September 2004

The following management meeting started as follows

Sassan: *Tim, what about those observations?*

Tim: *Well out of the 12 staff 10 have handed in their resignations, so I haven't continued with them.*

Sassan: *Phil what about your interviews?*

Phil: *Well after Lawrence had that attack and had to be taken to hospital during the meeting I haven't been able to finish the interview, but I believe he has sent in his resignation.*

Sassan: *That's fine then, we've cut out the old wood and haven't been seen to be dismissing too many people. Let's move on to the next item.....*

Researchers' reflections

During a meeting I had with Sassan subsequent to this dialogue with Phil he told me it didn't look good if too many people were dismissed, so for their sake he went through this process carefully. If staff had had a problem in the past they had a black mark against them and had to go through this process. Most staff resigned before going through or completing this process. Staff had no way of finding out whether they were likely to be renewed or not so indicators such as having to move work station were the only way they could evaluate their standing in the organisation.

This section has detailed the participants account of the workstation allocations incident in BETA and the next section will continue with the workstation allocations incident in GAMMA.

5.33 Incidents account: faculty workstations in GAMMA

Image 5:15 GAMMA front entrance Image 5:16 View from front entrance to parking



Context

Gamma's existing campus is located in the centre of the older part of the city. It is constructed primarily of old prefabricated buildings which have been built up gradually on an ad hoc basis since the set up of the college in 1989. At the front of the building is an old car park which is laid out in gravel. The entrance is manned by security guards who are friendly and keen to assist. Although the security guards check your I.D. before allowing you to enter the building they do so in a friendly manner. They are confident and self-assured and able to take decisions easily.

Image 5:17 GAMMA trophies



Image 5:18 GAMMA Entrance



Once you enter the building there is a glazed reception area which is manned by a security guard. To the right of this is a display cabinet showing all the cups and

awards the college has won. The corridors are long with low ceilings and the floor is sprung timber which gives you the impression of bouncing along. The college is rather like wearing an old coat- it has it's imperfections but you enjoy wearing it. When you arrive at the executive area it is rather rundown and informal. The staff have all worked there for a long time and welcome you as a friend. They are interested in you and are all keen to help. They are not under duress or stress and everyone seems comfortable in their working environment although the working environment itself is not comfortable. The staff areas are too small for the number of people they accommodate. The staff and students having grown in number but there is no more land for the college to expand accordingly. The faculty areas themselves are old, in need of decoration, badly lit and the accommodation for staff blatantly inadequate, yet the working atmosphere and organisational climate is pleasant.

The Executive area containing the director's office and HR office is off the main corridor leading from the reception. I stumbled into it to ask directions on the first day I arrived there and didn't realize it was the directors' suite. There is one large square room, with natural lighting. This room has the directors' office to the right and the human resources office to the left. The main central room has three workstations in it, one for the Directors personal assistant and two others for human resources staff. The floor is carpeted and the office furniture functional yet unpretentious. The director's furniture is old, comfortable and unassuming. The director at GAMMA is in an acting position since the retirement of the previous director in January who had been with the college since it started. The retiring director, Norm, was a large personable man with great charisma who appeared to feel at ease in any situation. The staff and students adored him and when he retired a large number of staff took this as their queue to call it a day and leave the Emirates. The Acting Director is trying to make the place more efficient in line with the colleges move to a new state of the art campus and also to make her mark before the new director takes over in September.

Juresh works in the facilities department and has been employed in the college since 1989.

5.331 Interview discussing history of incident/ Juresh

You can see how cramped we are. Ten years ago I had this office on my own and now there are ten of us in here. It isn't very comfortable. We can't even get in and

out very easily but we'll get by. Most of the desks are broken in some way. The filing cabinets are old. They are the same specification as in all the colleges but just older that's all.

I was here when the college first opened you know. We weren't here then. We worked out of an apartment block. Some staff still live there. Everyone knew each other and everyone still does know each other. The college has just grown. Every year we have to increase the budget to allow more students to enter. So we ran out of space years ago. Everyone just finds somewhere to sit. You have to get on with who you are next to because there is no space. Of course the biggest problem is that everyone is cramped here. We have now been trying to move to the new campus for nearly two years and it's been problem after problem. They are not under our control though so there is not much point in worrying about it. The new campus is more than ten times the size. We won't have enough furnishings to fill it. That will be the next problem. The furnishings come from GAMMA'S own budget and as you can see we haven't got that much. It's all a lot older than some of the other colleges' facilities. Norm never really bought in a lot of furnishings, although he could have done anything he wanted, but he was more interested in equipment for the students. I'll get you a copy of the plans and the facilities meetings memos if you want. Barbara said to give you anything you wanted.



Image 5:19 Corridor to executive area



Image 5:20 Juresh's work area

Reflections of researcher

Juresh and his team are secure in their working environment. They are working together as a team to accomplish clearly set targets that are achievable. The working environment is stable and the organisational structure and reporting procedures transparent.

The faculty area is filled with low level open partition 'pens' which are the same throughout the college system. Although the furniture is the same as other colleges the main difference here is in the supervisors offices. Perhaps due to the constraints of the building itself, but also partly due to the management style, the supervisors offices are not necessarily facing the faculty area, nor are they glazed. Staff do not feel they are visually under surveillance. Staff come and go from their areas and there is no impression of the 'clock in clock out' situation that happens at ALPHA and BETA.

5.332 Applications for new campus workstation allocations/ Belinda

'The supervisors' offices are just where it is practical to build them. This is an old campus and it's not ideal so the supervisors are not necessarily with their faculty. We're respected and trusted to get on with the job. I don't mean it's perfect or anything but I and I think most of us appreciate that. Now we're moving to the new campus everyone's worried where they'll be located but only because they want to be close to their team or someone they can talk to.'



Image 5:21 Faculty areas



Image 5:22 Faculty areas

'We're all fairly laid back here. Even the way we dress is more casual than some colleges. You can't wear anything too dramatic because it's a men's college but at the same time we've got to be practical we're stepping over boxes all day. We're not into status dressing though. It's the same with the furniture. If it works it's OK. If it doesn't well....'

5.333 Coffee pot story

Context

The supervisors had coffee pots supplied to them in their office and these were refilled with coffee by support staff regularly during the day. Faculty were upset about this. As a consequence, faculty bought their own coffee pots in to work and installed them at their workstations. They explained this incident by saying that there were not many opportunities for promotion at GAMMA and therefore they felt that those who were promoted to supervisor were just lucky. They felt that all teaching and supervisors were therefore equal and the action over giving supervisors coffee pots was interpreted that the supervisors were in some way superior to faculty. This was then equalled out when the faculty brought in their own coffee pots.

Image 5:23 Coffee pot workstation



Janice: The only real trauma that has happened here was about the coffee. I suppose that puts us into perspective in relation to some of the other colleges, particularly ALPHA/BETA really. The supervisors were given their own coffee percolators and the service staff were told to keep the coffee filled and the college supplied the coffee. I know that happened in BETA but Derek put the coffee in the faculty staff room didn't he, and that way everyone could use it. But here it was put in the supervisors' office. That meant that if you were sitting out here you had no coffee. The place is so cramped we don't have a faculty room and not everyone wants to go to the canteen. The main argument is that it is only luck that some faculty become supervisors. We are all really experienced but there is virtually no chance of promotion here because no one leaves. So we are all equal and therefore why should they get coffee pots? That's why when you walk round you see everyone's got

a coffee pot, or kettle and we can now help ourselves to the coffee. We sit where we want. We rarely move workstations unless we have had to squash up to accommodate another member of staff. Working conditions are not ideal but we accept that. It's no ones fault. I'm sure it will get better when we move. The only concern people had was to make sure we sat next to who we wanted in the new campus. Everyone had to send in their request for workstation allocations and a staff committee was set up to look at the requests, but basically everyone got what they wanted within reason.

Researchers' reflections

When staff are relocated they compare the workstation and surroundings with that of their previous location, with that of other staff in and out of their groups and comparisons were made. From these interpretations conclusions were drawn about their own status, respect and power both as an individual and the group or department as a whole. The only real conflict appeared to be over coffee pots but the result of these interpretations was action. There were issues of status and respect emerging over the coffee pots when staff interpreted the action of providing supervisors with coffee pots meant they were more valued than faculty. This was balanced when the faculty introduced their own coffee pots. They supplied their own coffee pots and they arranged their own workstation allocations within their own organised committee.

Context

I had a meeting with the head of facilities which took place in her office. She provided me with additional documentation on the proposed move and explained the management process.

5.334 Meeting with 'head' Stephanie on allocations

The head was discussing how workstation allocations were taking place during the change process.

Amongst the management team we decided which departments should be allocated which buildings. This was really a practical decision as some buildings were plane hangars and it made sense to put engineering next to it. It wasn't a difficult decision and everyone agreed. The main problems were in

allocating the workstations. Since we will have to use existing furnishings the CAD guys have drawn up plans of workstation areas and we've allocated the zones to say engineering or business and then the plans were posted in the staff coffee area. We then asked staff to request an allocation and give the reasons for it so hopefully people who work in a team will bid together for an area. There aren't too many difficulties but some people won't get what they want but if they don't it will be for a practical reason so, hopefully, they'll understand.

Reflections of researcher

The workplace allocations incident in GAMMA was less important to staff than it appeared on ALPHA and BETA. During my discussions with staff in GAMMA issues of respect, status, power and legitimisation were not mentioned as much as had been by participants on the other two sites, ALPHA and BETA. Participants in GAMMA interpreted the workplace allocations incident but were also confident that whatever actions were taken to change the interiors were discussed prior to change and staff were either informed of the reasons or participated in the decision making.

The details of the faculty workstation incidents will now be interpreted to evaluate the type, extent and context within which these interpretations took place.

5.4 Comparison of case studies: extent of interpretation and dimensions of artefacts used in this process.

Firstly, this chapter described one incident occurring almost simultaneously over three case study sites where the context appears to be the same. This section of the chapter will now compare the extent of interpretation of an artefact and the different dimensions of the artefact (i.e. instrumentality, aesthetics and symbolism) used in the interpretation process.

To recap the definitions of these terms are:

Instrumentality: The extent to which the artifact contributes to performance or promoting goals.

Aesthetics: The sensory experience the artifact elicits and the extent to which this experience fits individual goals and spirit- sensory aesthetics (colors, odors), formal

aesthetics (forms, complexities) and symbolic aesthetics (associative meanings which cause pleasure).

Symbolism: the symbolism an artifact represents- the meaning or association it elicits (Rafaeli & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2004).

Understanding the interpretation of the 'workplace allocations' incident in ABC does not stem from a sort of extraordinary sensibility or an almost preternatural capacity to think, feel and perceive like a 'native' in the anthropological sense. So how is it possible to have an anthropological knowledge of the way these participants think, feel and perceive? The participants use experience-near concepts spontaneously and unselfconsciously; they do not recognise that there are any 'concepts' at all. That is what experience-near means- that ideas and the realities participants disclose are naturally bound up together. As a researcher I cannot perceive what the participant perceives. What I perceive is what they 'perceive with' or 'by means of' or 'through'. In this chapter I have tried to adopt Geertz's advise (Geertz, 1977) and arrive at this most intimate of notions not by imagining myself to be one of the participants and then seeing what I thought was happening, but by searching out and analysing the symbolic forms- images, behaviours and artefacts in terms of which, in each case study site, that participants interpret and identity with actually represent themselves to themselves and to one another. The concept of 'self' is, in fact, an excellent vehicle by which to examine the whole question of how to go about poking into other peoples turn of mind. Rather than attempt to place others in a framework of 'researchers empathy' with the participant, the aim has been to set that concept aside and view their experience within their own idea of what 'self' is and how that works or otherwise within the notion of 'group' within the setting of an organisation. There has also been the difficulty of understanding and portraying the subtleties of emotion within the 'workplace allocation' incident within the cultural context.

To quote an example from Geertz (1977):

'Only when you have seen, as I have, a young man whose wife- a women he had raised from childhood and who had been the centre of his life- has suddenly and inexplicably died, greeting everyone with a set smile and formal apologies for his wife's absence and trying, by mystical techniques, to flatten out, as he himself put it, the hills and valleys of his emotion into an even, level plain (That is what you have

to do,' he said to me, 'be smooth inside and out') can you come , in the face of our own notions of the intrinsic honesty of deep feeling and the moral importance of personal sincerity , to take the possibility of such a conception of self hood seriously and to appreciate, however inaccessible it is to you, it's own sort of force'.

This quotation demonstrates with clarity not only differences in behaviour and showing emotion from one culture to another but the potential difficulties for a researcher to gauge the meaning behind the level of emotion displayed and not to judge this with the norms and values of their own culture. In ALPHA, it was a cultural norm not to visibly express emotion and there was an incident very similar to the one Geertz has quoted when a student services assistant received the news of her mothers death only minutes before having to do a presentation of the college to several important college guests. She still went ahead and undertook this task and none of the audience was aware of her personal tragedy and only after doing the presentation did she leave the college to be with her family and mourn the death. In her case the depth of emotion was there, as in Geertz's example, but was only understood by those who knew her very well. The student services assistant was admired for her resolve to complete her task and her dedication to the college. A similar incident occurred in BETA, when the director (Derek) received a telephone to inform him that his mother had died. He wept openly in front of colleagues and this was interpreted by staff that he cared deeply for his mother. On this campus open expression of emotion was the norm.

Emotion is realised not in terms of some general mood I as researcher in my spiritual versatility can somehow capture, but through a set of readily observable symbolic forms. When using means and symbols in the 'workplace allocations incident' I am attempting to move back and forth between asking, *'What is the general form of life'* (Geertz, 1977) which was detailed in the preceding section and *'What exactly are the vehicles in which that form is embodied?'* (Geertz, 1977) detailed in the next section. This section introduces the notion that the participants see the 'self' as a composite, a persona, or a point in the pattern.

The preceding chapter has tried to illustrate the context within which these interpretations took place and the first section of the chapter has tried to illustrate the interpretations, meanings and understandings because *'we cannot know what importance a catchers mitt is if we don't know what baseball is'* (Geertz, 1977). In

the context of this research we cannot understand the relative importance of a 'work station allocation' if we are unable to grasp the intellectual thread of thought captured in the change of one office chair for another within the incident. Therefore, accounts of participants' subjectivities can be built up without recourse to any pretensions. Whatever accurate or half accurate sense I get from what participants are really like, comes not from the experience of that acceptance as such, which is part of my own biography not the participants, but the ability to construe their modes of expression, or which such an acceptance allows me to work toward developing.

The statements which follow and their interpretations need then to be understood from the context of the participants' lives and not from the readers sense of reality.

Comparison of case studies by dimensions of artefacts used in this process

In this section I will compare the type of interpretation across the three case study sites of the workstation allocations incident.

5.41 Instrumentality

Table 5:2 below illustrates typical data samples of participants interpreting the instrumental dimension of the artefact across the three case sites.

Table 5:2 Instrumentality

| |
|---|
| ALPHA |
| <i>'.....and my chair is comfortable- some aren't</i> |
| BETA |
| <i>'What good does it do bunching us up like this- we can't work any better'</i> |
| GAMMA |
| <i>'you can see what the place is like...we don't have enough workstations and those we do have are broken'</i> |

To illustrate, a participant described the faculty workstation allocation in terms of its use and function (instrumentality).

'.....and my chair is comfortable- some aren't

In ALPHA the interpretations of the instrumental dimensions of the artefacts usually compared their workstation allocation with someone else. In contrast, a participant in BETA described the faculty workstation allocation in terms of its use and function (instrumentality) but as a group not as an individual. The evaluation of the workstation allocation was collective and the implication was that the decision to move staff was made because management wanted to increase performance and that this action would not be successful.

'What good does it do bunching us up like this- we can't work any better'

This participant was describing a change to his work area. The interview took place at his workstation and he was expressing his frustration and anger about being moved without consultation.

A participant from GAMMA described the faculty workstation allocation in terms of its use and function (instrumentality).

You can see what the place is like...we don't have enough workstations and those we do have are broken.

Although the participant is criticising the furniture, he is not allocating blame nor is he comparing his furniture with that of a colleague.

Interpretation of instrumentality of an incident : ALPHA

In the case of faculty workstations some participants at ALPHA recognised that the moves were necessary to ensure better communication between re-organised groups. However, even if the change does work efficiently in terms of the organisational goal it does not necessarily mean there is no emotion emerging from the interpretation but that there is little or sometimes no emotion related to instrumentality. Below is a non- affective response from a participant who saw the change in faculty workstations as functional and in keeping with managerial aims for the change:

'It may be inconvenient to move but I suppose Barbara (the supervisor) wants us all together so we can discuss work more efficiently, which I suppose it does.'

The participant was not stressed here but accepted the situation. However, more intense emotions were displayed when the change did not seem to serve any practical purpose:

'The meeting rooms have gone now too which doesn't help.'

This participant accepted the situation and was depressed about the lack of meeting rooms because it made her role in the organisation more difficult if she had nowhere to discuss confidential issues with students or staff. The participant went on to mention issues of her lack of status in the organisation. Although the words themselves cannot be used as an indicator of the level of emotion the setting of the interview and gestures of the participant can. The participant was fearful and stressed and this was demonstrated in her choice of interview area (a closed acoustic language booth) and her own body language (leaning forward like a conspirator and nervously picking at her nails when she spoke).

Interpretation of instrumentality of an incident: BETA

In the case of faculty workstations participants at BETA did not recognise that the moves were necessary to ensure better communication between re-organised groups. They saw it as disruptive to their chosen work pattern. The response was emotional but containing more anger than fear.

'It is difficult to have a private conversation from the workstations'.

The participants' tone of voice (slightly raised) and stance (hands on hips) and expression (raised eyebrows) indicated annoyance.

However, even if the change does work efficiently in terms of the organisational goal it does not necessarily mean there is no emotion emerging from the interpretation but there is little or sometimes no emotion related to instrumentality. The underlying tone was one of disapproval and this was demonstrated in facial expression, body language and tone of voice.

Quoted below is a non-affective response from a participant who saw the change in faculty workstations as functional and in keeping with managerial aims for the change:

'It's what management want to do and at least the supervisors are located near us now.'

The emphasis here was on *'it's what management want to do'* as if drawing a comparison with what staff wanted. The manner was again disapproving and annoyed with what was happening and as above demonstrated in facial expression, body language and tone of voice.

Interpretation of instrumentality of an incident: GAMMA

In the case of faculty workstations some participants at GAMMA recognised that the moves were necessary to allow new staff to have a workstation and that the areas would be cramped until the move to the new campus could take place. However, even if the change does work efficiently in terms of the organisational goal it does not necessarily mean there is no emotion emerging from the interpretation but there is little or sometimes no emotion related to instrumentality. Below is another a non- affective response from a participant who saw the change in faculty workstations as practical and in keeping with managerial aims for the change:

'It's certainly not the best working environment and nothing really works anymore but it's only temporary and I can't see any other solutions to the problem for the moment.'

However more intense emotions were displayed when the change did not seem to serve any practical purpose, but in this case study site that was very rare:

'The desking has been changed in the IDCL area. That serves no purpose and I'm going to make sure I get the best one because I'm grade 4 and the others are a grade 7.'

5.42 Aesthetics

Table 5:3 below illustrates typical data samples of participants interpreting the aesthetics dimension of the artefact across the three case sites.

Table 5:3 Aesthetics:

| |
|--|
| ALPHA |
| <i>'...The workstation <u>itself</u> (looks) is the same as everyone's'</i> |
| BETA |
| <i>'The area is dull, the lighting is poor and the colour is depressing'</i> |
| GAMMA |
| <i>'...The workstations are cramped and old, everything here is tatty'</i> |

This participant from ALPHA had been relocated to another workstation without consultation. The area she had moved from was the same specification, the colour was the same and the levels of lighting the same as the workstation she moved to but she made this comment. This participant describes the same incident using language relating to aesthetics:

'...The workstation itself (looks) is the same as everyone's'

Emphasis was placed on the word 'itself' hinting that only technically the workstations were the same there was another comparison to be made.

'The area is dull, the lighting is poor and the colour is depressing It's not the same as we had before.'

This participant from BETA had also been relocated without consultation. The area she had moved from was the same specification, the colour was the same and the levels of lighting the same but in frustration she made these comments. The comments here mentioned the group (the area – a group quadrangle) rather than the individual and comparisons were made with what they had been allocated previously.

A participant from GAMMA describes the same incident using language relating to aesthetics:

'...The workstations are cramped and old, everything here is tatty'

Although the participant is criticising the look of the furniture, he is not allocating blame nor is he comparing his furniture with that of a colleague.

Interpretation of aesthetics of an artefact: ALPHA

Aesthetic aspects are the direct impact of the interpretation of the artefact within the incident on one or more of the senses. Emotion is directly evoked by the sensual impact of the artefact, with no cognitive mediation, so to directly produce an emotional reaction of fear or anger or pleasantness. *'Producing emotion through aesthetics is complicated by the potential gap between the intended sensual effect of an artefact and the actual emotional effects.'* (Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz, 2004).

'The surroundings are beautiful and the students have every facility.'

Negative emotions were evident in all responses but not in great numbers:

'They are boring but all the same.'

The emotion evoked by the aesthetic interpretations was always linked to the impact of the artefact on the senses with no mediating cognitive process.

Interpretation of aesthetics of an artefact: BETA

Emotion here is directly evoked by the sensual impact of the artefact, with no cognitive mediation, so to directly produce an emotional reaction of irritation and disappointment.

'Even the colour is depressing; it's that grey green everywhere. Perhaps it doesn't work because there is so much of it and the lighting is not evenly distributed so you end up with more headaches.'

To summarise, although different emotions were reported by different participants the emotion was always linked to the impact of the artefact on the senses with no mediating cognitive process.

Interpretation of aesthetics of an artefact: GAMMA

The aesthetic aspects quoted below are representative of the data collected and again illustrate that they directly impact of the interpretation of the artefact within the incident on one or more of the senses. Emotion is directly evoked by the sensual impact of the artefact, with no cognitive mediation, so to directly produce an emotional reaction of fear or anger or pleasantness.

'The new building is huge but it's also light and airy and very attractive.'

Negative emotions were evident in all responses but not in great numbers:

'It's certainly inconvenient but that's all.'

The emotions reported by the different participants were always linked to the impact of the artefact on the senses with no mediating cognitive process.

5.43 Symbols

Table.5:4 below illustrate typical data samples of participants interpreting the symbolic dimension of the artefact across the three case sites.

Table 5:4 Symbols

| |
|---|
| ALPHA |
| <i>There's no privacy and my back is to the corridor- we're treated like cattle round here.</i> |
| BETA |
| <i>'Of course by moving us around like this, and sticking our allocations on a sheet of paper in front of the faculty room – I feel like an exhibit in a zoo. I'm just waiting for the description to be put on my desk- rare example of sane English lecturer from New Zealand due to become extinct at the end of three year contract.'</i> |
| GAMMA |
| <i>We've all had to move around to get some new staff in. The new campus isn't complete yet and that meant squashing more of us into a small space. It can't be helped though, in the emirates no building goes to plan. It just means we've got to make do – no big deal really.'</i> |

A participant from ALPHA participant called up the symbolic features of the incident:

There's no privacy (now) and my back is to the corridor- we're treated like cattle round here.

This participant had moved from a higher status workstation allocation and was comparing it with what she had before the move and the level of status and respect she now had.

Another participant from BETA called up the symbolic features of the incident:

'Of course by moving us around like this, and sticking our allocations on a sheet of paper in front of the faculty room – I feel like an exhibit in a zoo. I'm just waiting for the description to be put on my desk- rare example of sane English lecturer from New Zealand due to become extinct at the end of three year contract.'

The new faculty workstation allocations had been put on a plan of the faculty areas with names stuck on the plan showing staff where they had to move to. The interpretations here were group rather than individually oriented and also related to the participant's status and respect in the organisation.

Another participant from GAMMA called up the symbolic features of the incident:

We've all had to move around to get some new staff in. The new campus isn't complete yet and that meant squashing more of us into a small space. It can't be helped though, in the emirates no building goes to plan. It just means we've got to make do – no big deal really we're just small cogs in the big wheel.'

The participant is relating his importance within the college to the management of the country as a whole and the comparison here is where the GAMMA staff are situated within the perspective of the government. This is in contrast to ALPHA and BETA where the comparison is either with others within the organisation (ALPHA) or with management or director initiatives of change (BETA).

Symbolic aspects of the artefact and emotion ALPHA

Symbolic aspects of the artefact within the incident are the set of meanings that have been constructed from the interpretation and what it can be seen as representing. The data in ALPHA case indicated that the symbolism of the interpreted artefact resulted

in the production of emotion through an indirect mediating process where the association with the artefact produces emotion.

'She is working in amongst that mess. It shows what Dr. Sassan thinks of ALPHA staff. It's not a good work area and seems inferior to the others and that makes me feel inferior.'

'The students have beautiful work areas and then you compare it to ours- it doesn't take long to get the message does it- we are replaceable.'

The symbolism of an artefact within an incident represents both the associations intended by the organisations but can also evoke emotions by any association leaving the way open for an interpretation of intent that was not the intention behind the change. For example, the aesthetic appeal of the student areas was interpreted symbolically as a signal to staff that they were replaceable. The perceived inferiority of one workstation when compared to another was interpreted to mean that the occupant of that workstation had a lower status than others.

Symbolic aspects of the artefact and emotion BETA

The data in the case of BETA also indicated that the symbolism of the interpreted artefact resulted in the production of emotion through an indirect mediating process where the association with the artefact produces emotion.

The symbolism of an artefact within an incident represents both the associations intended by the organisations but can also evoke emotions by any association leaving the way open for an interpretation of intent that was not the intention behind the change.

'We are here as part of those facilities bought in for our qualification just like the tiling.'

This data strip demonstrate the anger felt by a participant and relates how the facilities (in this case the workstations) symbolise her position in the organisation.

Interpretation of symbolic aspects of the artefact: GAMMA

The data in the case of GAMMA indicated that the symbolism of the interpreted artefact resulted in the production of emotion through an indirect mediating process where the association with the artefact produces emotion.

'The only thing that's ever bothered me was the coffee pots. Why did the supervisors get them in their offices and not us? That's why we all got coffee pots and put them on our desks. After all we are just as good as them. We probably have just as much experience and qualifications and it's only because there are so few opportunities for promotion and no one leaves that we are not supervisors and they are.'

The symbolism of an artefact within an incident represents both the associations intended by the organisations but can also evoke emotions by any association leaving the way open for an interpretation of intent that was not the intention behind the change.

Implications

This section has illustrated a degree of emotion is a result of interpreting an artefact, but it has not illustrated the degree of change in level and type of emotion before and after the interpretation. These interpretations are experience-near concepts used spontaneously and unselfconsciously and participants do not recognise that there are any 'concepts' at all. That is what experience-near means- that ideas and the realities participants disclose are naturally bound up together. This is where a holistic approach to interpretation comes into play in the analysis. A degree of emotion has prompted the participant to seek meaning about his or her role/or group role/ or organisational role in the environment. If the participant was angry as a result of this interpretation how can the level of anger before and after be gauged, or how can we gauge if sadness turned to anger rather than the other way around?

ALPHA: It has always been the same with Sassan. Nobody knows if their job is safe or not. Look at Michelle, she came in one day to find her office locked and she was given a workstation above the cafeteria. It was only after she moved she was told she had been demoted. She was frightened of losing her job altogether and she still is.

BETA: It used to be such a laugh. Remember Madeline's emails. Everyone would respond within minutes with a witty comment. Now we don't know if anyone will forward them to management and if so what the consequences will be. We used to be able to talk to anyone at the workstations- not now- you don't know who's listening. I'm really angry about what has happened to us.

GAMMA: Although there is a big move on with the new campus things don't really change around here much. Everyone gets on with one another and we know we are treated better than in other colleges. At least we are respected.

Data strips with comparisons between present and past highlight the change in organisational climate during the period of change. They also illustrate the emotional response before and after interpretation.

Table 5:5 Responses before and after interpretation

| Workstation allocation | ALPHA | BETA | GAMMA |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Past | Fear | Respect /humour | Respect for staff of the organisation |
| Present/ after interpretation | Confirmation of fear | Anger against management | Confirmation of respect for staff of the organisation |
| Future / 1 year after interviews and after changes | Fear with less instability | Acceptance with less instability | Respect for staff of the organisation |

According to Berg (1979) an organisation can be viewed as a social organism where *the emotional bonds between the members of the organisation affect the formative processes within the company* (1979:248). Within each of these three case study sites there was evidence of a collective common emotion. In ALPHA this was fear, in BETA this was respect which turned into anger during the change and then acceptance. In GAMMA the same emotion of 'respect' was apparent before during and after the change. Emotional structures are collectively formed and establish relatively stable patterns, as demonstrated on these three case study sites.

We are left with an image of an actor [on the organisational arena] who thinks a lot, plans, plots and struggles to look the right part at the right time. But we do not

hear this actor's anger, pain, embarrassment, disaffection or passion and how such feelings relate to actions-except when it forms part of the organisational script (Fineman, 1993:14).

This section has illustrated the pain and anguish felt by ALPHA participants and the pain and anger felt by BETA participants. And the respect felt by GAMMA participants.

Table 5:6 aims to illustrate that under certain contexts, such as exists in both ALPHA and BETA all dimensions of the artefacts are interpreted by participants but that in differing contexts such as existed in GAMMA not all dimensions were necessarily interpreted. This sample in Table 5:6, from one participant, illustrates interpretations from all dimensions of the artefacts within the incident and is representative of the data collected on the 'faculty workstation' incident from ALPHA.

Table 5:6 References to different dimensions of the artefact within the incident 'faculty workstations' from one participant ALPHA

| References to instrumentality of 'faculty workstations' |
|---|
| <p>Data</p> <p>There is an air-conditioning vent directly over head. Sometimes it's freezing, that's why I keep my cardigan on my chair. But if I'm freezing someone else in the same area will be too hot so you can't ask security to alter the setting.</p> <p>The ceilings are very low as well so it seems to blow cold air directly on to you- I'm just waiting for a migraine to start up. To enter the faulty area you have to pass the supervisors office and the secretary's workstation. They both check if staff are arriving on time or leaving early.</p> <p>The photocopier is next to the faculty area all printing and photocopying is sent to this machine and it's difficult to concentrate with the noise from it.</p> |
| References to aesthetics of 'faculty workstations' |
| <p>I don't have breakfast and when I come in all I can smell is frying onions. The work stations are boring but they all look the same.</p> |
| References to symbolism of 'faculty workstations' |
| <p>My name tag is on the panel – in yellow the same as everyone else- just in case I walk past my own area and sit at someone else's because they are all the same. It also means the supervisors can see if I'm at my desk and if not my timetable is on the wall or on the intranet so she can check up on me and doesn't have to remember where I sit. There are photos of my kids on the panel which reminds me that I stay here at the college to give them a reasonable standard of living. The computer is fairly old fashioned- I'm not a computer whiz kid- but it's a bit slow and all the money here seems to go on student's equipment. The workstation itself is the same as everyone's...</p> |

When a participant is seeking meaning from an incident and there are issues of insecurity, respect, legitimisation and power, and meaning is not available from other sources (i.e. the management of change process is not transparent) participants then tend to use all three dimensions of the artefact to understand what is happening around them. The difference here appears to be the amount of sense making a participant is trying to achieve by interpreting the artefact and the amount of emotion involved in this process. In a highly emotional and negative situation all three dimensions are interpreted.

Table 5:7 References to different dimensions of the artefact within the incident 'faculty workstations' BETA

| References to instrumentality of 'faculty workstations' | |
|--|---|
| Data | You can where I've been put. I can't have a tutorial with a student here because it will disturb everyone around me. I needed to phone my gynaecologist for the results of some tests the other day and found myself trying t speak very quietly tucked into the panels so hopefully no one will hear me. They've extended the faculty room but there are so many people in here it just doesn't work. |
| References to aesthetics of 'faculty workstations' | |
| | Even the colour is depressing, it's that grey green everywhere; Perhaps it doesn't work because there is so much of it and the lighting is not evenly distributed so you end up with more headaches. |
| References to symbolism of 'faculty workstations' | |
| | Whenever I go to the loo I've got to pass Paul's office, I almost feel like telling him I'm only going for a pee not nipping of for a drink at the pub. In Canada we were respected as faculty- not here. It wasn't the same with Derek; he knew the disadvantages of the system and turned a blind eye so we could live as normal a life as possible. Now we are allocated 'pens' to work in- I'm so bloody angry to be treated like this. |

Table 5:8 References to different dimensions of the artefact within the incident 'faculty workstations' GAMMA

| References to instrumentality of 'faculty workstations' | |
|--|--|
| Data | Nothing works anymore. All purchasing has been on hold until we get to the new campus but I don't think there will be a new budget to replace the furnishings. Apparently all the money has been spent. The new building is great though. The facilities for engineering are marvellous but it does seem that we will be still using the same broke n desks. |
| References to aesthetics of 'faculty workstations' | |
| | It's a mess in here. We don't have any space, it's dark and gloomy and the carpets are torn. You couldn't say it was beautiful unlike the facilities at ALPHA, of course. But it won't last forever we'll soon get to the new campus. |
| References to symbolism of 'faculty workstations' | |
| | |

The differences between Table 5:7 and 5:8 are the amount of sense making a participant is trying to achieve by interpreting the artefact and the amount of emotion involved in this process. This situation is not highly emotive and the participant is secure in his working environment. The changes to the environment are not going to adversely affect him or his group and he is fully aware of the process. He does not need to seek meaning because the way change has been managed has ensured that he is aware of the implications of change.

5.44 Conclusions

There are some key points to be made at this stage. In general, the emotion resulting from interpreting the workplace allocations incident in ALPHA was disappointment but also acceptance and the interpretations were generally related to the participants' identity in relation to another colleague. In general the emotion resulting from interpreting the workplace allocations incident in BETA was anger and frustration and non acceptance and the interpretations were generally related to the participants' group dilemma rather than a comparison with their own identity and another colleague. In general the emotion resulting from interpreting the workplace allocations incident in GAMMA was frustration but acceptance and the interpretations were generally related to the organisations identity in relation to the wider society identity (the geographic location).

5.5 Comparison of case studies by extent of interpretation

Table 5:9 The dimensions of artefact interpreted

| Dimensions | ALPHA | | BETA | | GAMMA | |
|--------------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Instrumental | 23 | 22.7% | 26 | 30% | 66 | 62% |
| Aesthetic | 11 | 10.3% | 7 | 8% | 34 | 32% |
| Symbolic | 72 | 67% | 53 | 62% | 6 | 6% |
| Total | 106 | 100% | 86 | 100% | 106 | 100% |

The data on the dimension of interpretation was elicited in Phase 3 of the interviews using auto driving techniques. There were 42 interviews in total, 20 from

GAMMA, (8no) from BETA and 14 from ALPHA 4 from participants who were employed on both the ABCW and ABCD campuses. The participants were 19 males and 23 females. There were only 11 data strips recorded out of 14 interviews on ALPHA where participants were interpreting the symbolic dimensions of the artefacts in the workstation allocation incident. There were only 7 data strips recorded out of 14 interviews on BETA where participants were interpreting the aesthetic dimensions of the artefacts in the workstation allocation incident. There were only 6 data strips recorded out of 20 interviews on GAMMA where participants were interpreting the symbolic dimensions of the artefacts in the workstation allocation incident. Therefore, I can conclude that not all participants interpreted all dimensions of the artefact in the workstation allocation incident. There were only 6% of the data strips classified as a 'symbolic interpretation' in GAMMA whereas on ALPHA there were 67% and 62% on BETA. The only apparent difference between these cases study sites are the style of management and leadership during the change process. There appears then to be a link between the contexts within which the interpretations take place, which in this case was the style of leadership and management, and the dimension of an artefact which a participant will interpret.

The previous section, 5:43, has demonstrated the type of interpretation made from the three dimensions and the circumstances under which this occurs. In order to demonstrate that interpretations of the various dimensions of artefacts within the 'workplace allocations' incident was occurring with all participants, content analysis of the data strip was undertaken and the number of interpretations counted from the various dimensions over the three cases study sites. This is illustrated in Table 5:9.

In this chapter, to date, I have relied heavily on Geertz's hermeneutic approach. Table 5:9 categorises the data to illustrate the differences in the dimensions of the workstation allocations incident interpreted across the three case study sites. ALPHA and BETA show a consistently high incidence of symbolic dimensions interpreted, whereas in GAMMA there are relatively few. This is consistent with the narratives quoted in the previous section. In GAMMA most participants were concerned with the instrumental dimensions of the artefact rather than the symbolic meaning attached to the artefact. This table also illustrates that interpretation of the

artefacts within the workstation allocations incident was not an infrequent occurrence, as could have been claimed from a few selected data vignettes but that these interpretations were frequent and the dimension which participants interpreted over the three case study sites varied. Ludwig Wittgenstein's notions of family resemblances has been used by Rosaldo, R.I. (1999) to inform Geertz's comparisons. *'Wittgenstein proposed that two cousins, may resemble each other in their lips, teeth and noses. As a total group of cousins, they probably do not have do not have any single feature in common; there is no lowest common denominator that unites all family members. Instead, the strength of their connections resides in the significant, if incomplete overlap of such features or ascending to abstraction.*

Geertz moves laterally to expand his reader's sense of human possibilities. Rather than confining himself to the vertical dimension, either descending to the lowest common denominator or ascending to abstraction.'

This section has moved laterally across the three case study sites to compare to dimensions of artefacts which were interpreted by participants and to illustrate the differences and the similarities.

5.6 Interpretation over time and context.

In the previous section I have detailed what dimensions of the artefacts participants interpreted, and how often. This section, using summary examples from all 8 incidents across the three case study sites, aims to establish the initial cause of this process of interpretation and find out why participants needed to interpret this incident and why the results of the interpretations over the three case study sites should vary to this extent when to all intents and purposes they are the same.

Table 5:10 Data samples from incidents which have occurred over the three sites

The data vignettes in bold show the most frequent type of interpretation on each case study. The frequency of each type of interpretation is shown on Table 5:9

| | ALPHA | BETA | GAMMA |
|----------------------|---|---|--|
| | ALPHA1 | BETA1 | GAMMA1 |
| Faculty workstations | Change in workstation allocations | Change in workstation allocations | Change in workstation allocations |
| Aesthetic | <u>It looks great quality</u> | <u>It looks dull</u> | |
| Instrumental | The A/C overhead <u>isn't equally distributed-</u> cold and then hot in places | There is <u>no privacy</u> to talk to the students | We all put in who we wanted to be with and <u>the planning seems to have worked out all right.</u> Wherever possible that is. |
| Symbolic | You just get put anywhere here it <u>depends if you are flavour of the month or not</u> and you know a way round it. | No-one asks us we were <u>just moved- now I can't even talk to the people</u> I'm working with- how can we work on a new curriculum like that? | None reported |

| | ALPHA2 | BETA2 | GAMMA2 |
|---------------|---|--|--|
| Faculty areas | Re-location of faculty areas | Re-location of faculty areas | Re-location of faculty areas |
| Aesthetic | The new areas are <u>fabulous- state of the art</u> | I suppose it will <u>look the same</u> | The new building <u>looks great</u> but we need to take the <u>old tatty desks</u> with us. |
| Instrumental | It's <u>too hot</u> to move from one building to another- it's 50°C | If we go into the new building there are <u>no ladies loos</u> | The departments all got together and chose the <u>best solution.</u> It will work out in the end. |
| Symbolic | We are getting the new building, so I at least know I'll have a <u>contract renewal- I've done something right.</u> | Who knows were we will be. Some of our group may be in ALPHA- but we're not consulted <u>.We don't count</u> | There's <u>no real meaning</u> behind it all ,it's a practical decision |

| | ALPHA3 | BETA3 | GAMMA3 |
|---------------------|--|--|---|
| Supervisors offices | Re-location within campus | Re-location within campus | Re-location to new campus |
| Aesthetic | Well it all <u>looks good</u> we can't say much about that | <u>One place looks the same as another</u> | <u>It's got to be better than here</u> |
| Instrumental | We need to link up facilities and <u>we need the quality of light for the designs</u> | <u>The facilities aren't the same – we have some special requirement</u> | The supervisors aren't necessarily with the <u>staff</u> but then we don't need to be watched over and everyone knows that |
| Symbolic | I came in on Sat for a meeting and walked into Pauls office- the meeting room had been changed into a supervisors office overnight. <u>They don't think to tell us</u> | Where are we supposed to meet? In the toilet? There are supervisors offices everywhere <u>We don't count</u> | <u>It doesn't mean much</u> |

| | ALPHA4 | BETA4 | GAMMA4 |
|------------------|--|---|---|
| Management suite | Change in use of existing | Alterations to existing | Existing and Re-location to new campus |
| Aesthetic | <u>It's so over the top, luxury and opulence</u> | <u>It's simple</u> | <u>It's so tatty</u> |
| Instrumental | <u>He has everything he could need</u> | <u>It's practical and it works</u> | <u>everything is falling apart</u> |
| Symbolic | Anne is desperate to be allocated the old directors office. She sees it as <u>a symbol of success</u> if she can get it and knowing her she'll do anything to get there. | Sassan is using all the meeting rooms to enlarge the management suite. Where are we supposed to see students or have faculty meeting; <u>I suppose we don't matter anymore.</u> | I hope they buy new furniture for the directors office or we will look <u>like a poor relation compared to the other colleges</u> , but Norm never cared about things like that he wanted the money spent on other things |

| | ALPHA5 | BETA5 | GAMMA5 |
|----------------|---|---|---|
| Security gates | Use of security gates | Construction of security gates | Use of security gates |
| Aesthetic | <u>Ugly and oppressive</u> | <u>A mess</u> | <u>They are just gates</u> |
| Instrumental | It keeps <u>some people out</u> but it <u>makes getting into the college slow</u> and takes <u>a lot of time</u> to go through | <u>It will never work- the students won't accept it</u> | <u>The gates are just to stop strangers wandering in</u> because we are in the middle of Dubai. The guards all know everyone so we can just wander in. I can't see that changing in the new campus. |
| Symbolic | The gates <u>mean</u> we are late for work if there is a queue to get in and everyone is checked. I can't be late for a class or I can be sacked. It's happened before We are certainly <u>not respected as professionals here.</u> | Now it is <u>becoming like the prison over in ALPHA</u> . The gates are being installed to check when we leave, <u>we're not trusted.</u> | <u>It means we are safe there are a lot of terrorist threats these days</u> |

| | ALPHA6 | BETA6 | GAMMA6 |
|--------------|--|--|--|
| Parking | Quality and quantity of staff parking | Quality and quantity of staff parking | Quality and quantity of staff parking |
| Aesthetic | <u>They look arabic in keeping with the building</u> | <u>They don't look as good as on Alpha</u> | <u>They seem in keeping with the design</u> |
| Instrumental | We are getting more covered places and that really helps- <u>you keep a lot cooler when you get in the car and getting to the car</u> | There are <u>not enough covered places- the cars get too hot</u> | <u>Our parking is on the rough ground over there. The new campus is mostly covered parking and there is an even allocation for each department</u> |
| Symbolic | I can only get under the covered parking if I come in at 7am otherwise I have to leave the car in the sun. The students have more than us <u>but then that is where Sassans priority is.</u> | Even the shaded parking was installed in ALPHA before BETA and we never had any so we should have been first. <u>We are second class citizens here</u> | <u>We'll see who is favoured to get the covered parking at the moment we don't have any</u> |

| | ALPHA7 | BETA7 | GAMMA7 |
|--------------|--|---|---|
| Intranet | Use of intranet portal | Use of intranet portal | Use of intranet portal |
| Aesthetic | | | |
| Instrumental | <u>It creates a lot of work but it is efficient</u> | <u>It is really efficient</u> . It saves a lot of time chasing students for non-attendance <u>all the info is there</u> | We didn't have an intranet like ALPHA/BETA. We didn't really want the same system either. We don't want to loose the personal interface. So we set up a committee <u>and a questionnaire was sent out to staff and based on that we designed our own system</u> |
| Symbolic | Sassan has won some IT prizes for the intranet- although it was Zaid who designed it of course. We have to enter attendance within 30 minutes of finishing a class or we are locked <u>out of it and then questions are asked.</u> | It's another way to check up on us. Do you know that they count how many times we log in and whether it is at home or in the office. <u>It's like 1984- big brother watching and we all know who big brother is</u> | None reported |

| | ALPHA8 | BETA8 | GAMMA8 |
|------------------|---|---|---|
| Campus buildings | Use of new buildings | Use of new buildings | Use of new buildings |
| Aesthetic | <u>The pavilion style is impressive</u> | The <u>look of the round building is unusual</u> it should go to con-ed because they are different as well | They all <u>look fantastic</u> but the <u>design of building A suits the media department</u> |
| Instrumental | I don't think education need that <u>large space</u> but the design department need the larger space and business have the <u>most students</u> | Con-ed should have the space they need students to be able to <u>go into there building without passing through the other student areas</u> | Some of the buildings, like the aviation hangar were obvious, but other <u>than that it was a college decision. No big deal</u> |
| Symbolic | The most favoured department will get the new buildings it's always like that. Let's hope it's <u>Business then I might have a job next year.</u> | Derek had decided that the circular building would be used for con-ed but Sassan changed that to e-commerce. Derek had made it a management decision but Sassan just informed everyone what would happen. <u>Things are different now</u> | None reported |

This table demonstrates the consistency of responses over the three case study sites. The dominant interpretations in ALPHA and BETA were negative symbolic whereas the dominant interpretation over all incidents in GAMMA was instrumental. (this will then be linked in with the rest of the chapter) The underlined text illustrates the contents of the data vignette which have been classified under aesthetic, instrumental or symbolic.

This table, quoting participants' interpretations and meanings, illustrates that the leadership and management style is a causal influence on the interpretation of artefacts within the incidents and is not an event in isolation. This table also illustrates the structural relationship between the appointment of the director, Sassan, to manage both campuses and the incidents, resulting staff insecurity and the low level of trust among colleagues. Participants consistently talked about the appointment of the director as being the trigger point for changes in the built environment. The organisational climate was one of uncertainty and staff insecurity after the appointment of the Director to manage both ALPHA and BETA campuses. The changes were seen as a direct result of instructions from the director. This table shows the importance to the participants of relatively small changes within this context and the relationship they perceive exists between the changes and their own (ALPHA), their group (BETA) and the organisation (GAMMA) position in the college. For example the installation of a desk for security at the entrance in BETA was seen to mean that the director wanted maximum control over faculty and this resulted in an increase in staff insecurity.

At the time of Sassan's' appointment detailed in incident BETA 7, appointment teaching loads were increased. Although this was a system wide decision it was interpreted that Sassan did not trust the staff and knowing they would not want an increased load may be tempted to cut teaching sessions short so he introduced the increased monitoring at security checks. Other directors' system wide had protected staff from the increased loads by allocating a number of teaching hours to admin work but Dr Sassan did not and also asked for additional teaching with no additional allowances. The numbers of supervisors' offices were also increased and this caused the staff to evaluate their own work stations and compare their allocation with the supervisors. This was a group reaction rather than an individual interpretation and the group of faculty compared their allocations with the supervisors group. In BETA, the cause of a developing fear culture and an increase in staff de-motivation appears to be the directors' leadership style and consequent management of change processes.

In GAMMA there are a number of changes which triggered interpretations, namely the issue of low ceilings, staff meeting rooms turned into supervisor's offices and the panelled workstations mentioned in incidents mentioned in GAMMA 2 and GAMMA 3. The faculty workstations had been standard issue and the low ceilings were not a cause of complaint until the meeting rooms were turned into offices. Staff were consulted about the move and realized it was a short term inconvenience prior to re-location.

The data was collected in an intense period between June 2003 and June 2004. However observations took place between August 2001 and June 2004 and in June 2005 I re-interviewed 10 participants from the three case study sites to find out if the intense interpretation of changes was still taking place. This period of flux had now stabilised and participants were no longer seeking meaning from their environment to the same extent.

5.7 Connection between interpretation of artefacts and participants activities

Ethnographic data vignettes and description of context have established what dimensions of artefacts are interpreted; the frequency and a connection between what participants were interpreting, and context within which the changes occurred. These also illustrate the connection between interpretation of artefacts and the activities and interpersonal activities within which participants are engaged.

Implications

In this section data vignettes showing all 24 'incidents' were used to illustrate the connection between interpretation of artefacts and the activities and interpersonal activities within which participants are engaged and the difference in context. Previous research by Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) that there is no connection between interpretation of artefacts and the activities and interpersonal activities within which participants are engaged. My data suggests that in this organisational context there is a connection between interpretation of artefacts and the activities and interpersonal activities within which participants are engaged. Within these three case study sites interpretation was taking place when participants sought to understand their own and their groups' position within the organisation or their

position within the team. There was no evidence that the interpretations were connected with activities out with the case study.

5.8 Findings

Firstly, this chapter explained that within a situation where the context appears to be the same, there are differences reported in the extent of interpretation of an artefact and the different dimensions of the artefact (i.e. instrumentality, aesthetics and symbolism) used in the interpretation process.

Within the case study sites ALPHA and BETA, there were a far greater number of symbolic dimensions of the artefacts within the incident reported. There were overall, taking into account the greater number of interviews at GAMMA, far fewer interpretations of artefacts in general. The context of the three case study sites was initially at the outset of this research presumed to be the same and the results were expected to be the same. The only difference between the three sites was in the style of leadership and the management of change process. In GAMMA the style of leadership was collegial and the management of change was seen to be a collaborative process. There was no fear of change and all staff participated in the decision making process as far as was reasonably possibly. In contrast both ALPHA and BETA were under an autocratic style of leadership which was directive in its approach to management of change.

Secondly, this chapter explained the relative importance of the extent and type of interpretation and how the balance of impact on emotions changes over time and context. The symbolic dimension of artefacts is one which is used to associate meaning with another aspect of the participants environment. For example changing an organisational actor's workstation allocation can symbolise to him or her, a lowering in their own status and this can result in either anger or fear and the consequence of this may be that the actor seeks employment elsewhere. Therefore interpretation of the symbolic dimension may not be what management or the design team intended and is consequently difficult to predict and may hamper the management of change process. These interviews were conducted during the period of change itself and when interviews were conducted a year after the changes had taken place the impact on emotions had drastically reduced and less interpretation was taking place.

Thirdly, this chapter explains the connection between interpretation of artefacts and the activities and interpersonal activities within which participants are engaged. Within these three case study sites the nature of interpretation that was taking place was when participants sought to understand their own and their groups' position within the organisation or their position within the team. There was no evidence that the interpretations were connected with activities out with the cases study.

Finally, this chapter links these findings to Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) and explains the similarities and differences in the results and provides a possible explanation of why these have occurred. The similarities between Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) and my own data included distinct references to three dimensions of the artefact as well as a rich set of interpretations. Regarding interpretations, both sets of data showed that the three dimensions of the artefact elicited emotion through conceptually distinct processes. They also found that instrumentality produced emotion primarily through a disruptive process of bringing about unpleasant emotions where it was judged as dysfunctional and that the proper functionality of an artefact may at best produce positive emotions. Instrumentality is therefore suggested to have emotional effects similar to those of hygiene factors. In contrast, aesthetic aspects are suggested to produce emotion through a non-mediated sensory process of direct impact on the senses. The artefact is sensed as pleasant, arousing or boring with no mediation involved. Emotion is also elicited by symbolic aspects of an artefact, through the associations the artefact elicits. When associations are undesirable, emotions such as disgust or anger were reported but with positive associations, pleasant emotions were reported. The emotions evident in their data did maintain a consistent pattern with both sets of data, with each of the three aspects eliciting emotion through a distinct mechanism, leading them to propose three different mechanisms through which artefacts influence emotions. Two mechanisms are cognitive in nature and the third is sensory in nature, implying an emotional response that is not mediated by a cognitive assessment process, but reflects the direct impact of the artefact on one or more of the senses.

Both sets of data suggested that when an artefact is viewed as not promoting goal accomplishment, extremely negative emotional reactions emerge.

Additionally, if multiple and different interpretations were noted in relation to aesthetic properties was always linked to the impact of the artefacts on the senses, with no mediating process. Also, the symbolism of an artefact arouses emotion through an indirect mediating process wherein the associations with the artefact produce emotion. The symbolism of an artefact represents multiple associations the artefact can represent not only the associations formally intended by an organisation.

Each of these dimensions is important because it can help unravel emotions towards the artefact. Emotions, towards that artefact and evoked by that artefact, can emanate from multiple aspects of the artefact, whether it promotes the functions it is intended to help accomplish and especially when it doesn't, the sensory experience it ignites and the emotions these sensations set off and the meaning it represents and the emotions they trigger.

The differences between Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) and my own data was as follows: Their results showed that participants consistently referred to more than one and typically all three aspects of dimensions when interpreting artefacts whereas my own data found that this happened when the situation was generally negative and emotionally charged and that when the situation was not emotionally charged and negative there were a large number of occasions when only one dimension was interpreted. The artefacts in GAMMA, where there was little stress and actors understood the management of change processes, were generally interpreted by one dimension.

Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) have found that there was no connection between interpretation of artefacts and the activities and interpersonal activities within which participants are engaged whereas my own data found that there was. The Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) findings were in a public service area, the provision of a bus service, whereas my own research took place in an organisation where the participants were actively seeking meaning about their personal and group situation. Perhaps most importantly Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) did not make any propositions about what happens to the resulting interpretation whereas the next chapter will now go on to explain how these interpretations are used.

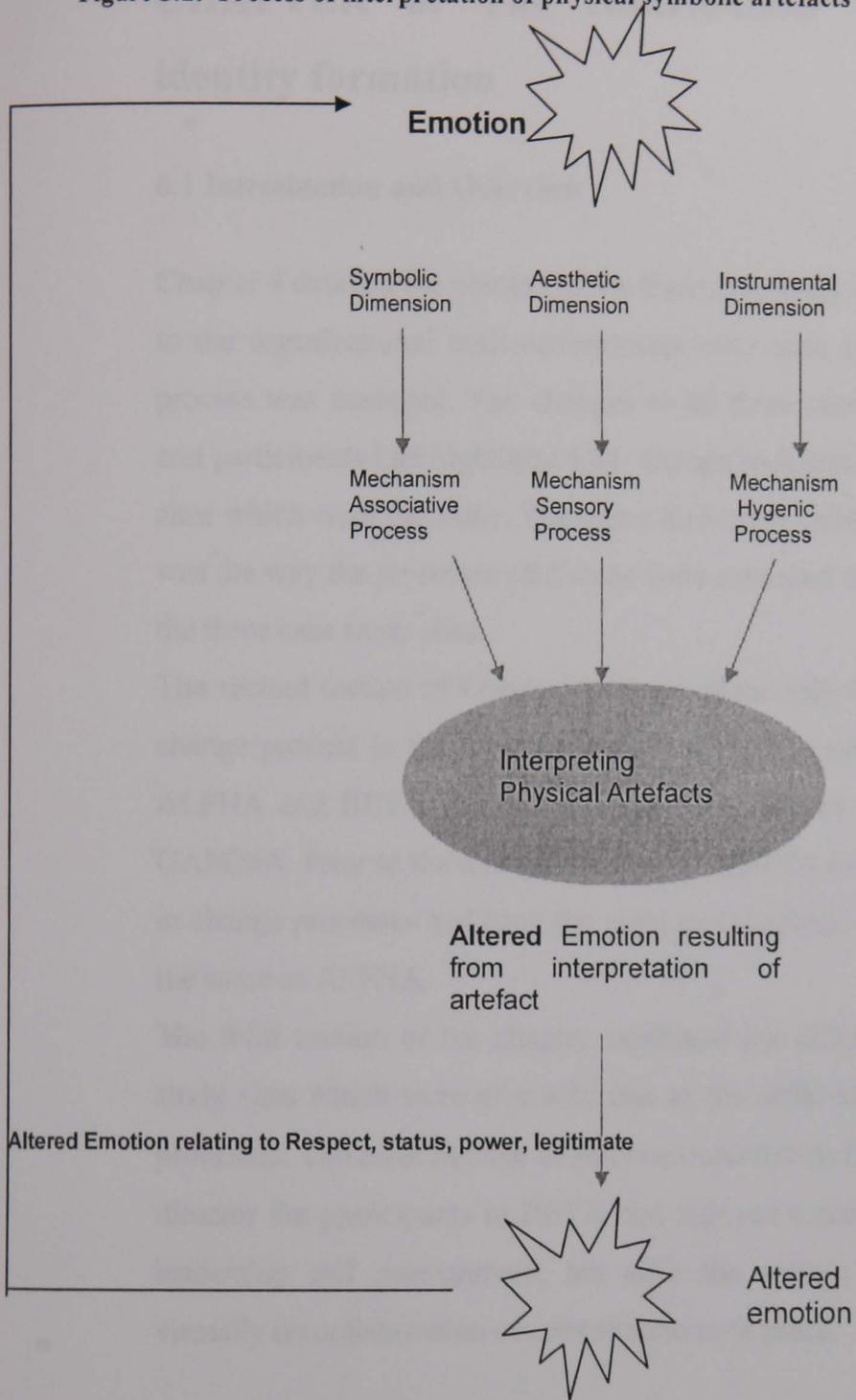
5.9 Conclusions

The results presented in this chapter have resulted in a re-worked model showing the process of interpretation. The first category in the model suggests which dimension of the physical artefact receives attention and these were divided among instrumental, aesthetics or symbolism. The interpretation from these dimensions was either negative or positive. The type of interpretations of physical artefacts was found to sit in one of four categories and these were status, power, respect or legitimization.

The social constructivist perspective emphasises the importance of the social context regarding a particular emotion. They would argue that emotions do not make sense if they do not relate to the social context and or the cultural setting. Averill (1980, 1984) implies that emotions are a social construct rather than a biological inheritance and this implies that emotions originate from a persons interpretation of a situation, and are therefore improvisations. The term syndrome indicates that several factors co-operate to identify the phenomenon as an emotion. Cornelius (1996) explains it in this way: *A syndrome is a set of events that occur together in a systematic manner.* This chapter has attempted to illustrate a set of events (workplace allocations incident) and how the factors within it identify the phenomenon as an emotion.

The next chapter goes on to detail these processes and explain the link between the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts and identity formation by explaining how emotions related to these issues are then used to inform or influence different categories of identity.

Figure 5:2: Process of interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts



CHAPTER 6: The contribution of interpretation to identity formation

6.1 Introduction and Overview

Chapter 4 detailed the context of the three case study sites and described the changes to the organizational built environment over time and described how this change process was managed. The changes to all three case study sites were very similar and participants had highlighted 24 change incidents, 8 across the three case study sites which were the same. The cases then were similar in all respects but one. This was the way the processes of change were managed and this was different in each of the three case study sites.

The second section of Chapter 4 described the role of management and staff in the change process in the three case study sites. The role of management and staff in ALPHA and BETA was the same but the process was far more collaborative in GAMMA. Prior to the change in director at BETA the role of management and staff in change processes had been the same as GAMMA, but was now, after the merger, the same as ALPHA.

The third section of the chapter explained the differences between the three case study sites which were primarily due to the differences in management of change processes. The most notable difference occurred on BETA as prior to the change in director the participants in BETA had enjoyed a collaborative, transparent style of leadership and management, but after the change in director this stopped and virtually no collaboration or consultation took place.

Chapter 5 introduced the results of the analysis of the 'workstation allocations incident' defined in Chapter 3. An explanation of the processes of interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts detailing which dimensions of the artefact in the incident were interpreted and to what extent and under what circumstances this occurred, was proposed. This analysis was then related to the Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) model and answered the first research question which was:

What are the processes and the extent by which organizational actors interpret physical symbolic artefacts in the built environment, and under what circumstances

and to what extent are the varying dimensions of Rafaeli & Vilnai Yavetz (2004) model most evident?

The findings which are perhaps most important in terms of understanding how participants react to or are involved in management of change processes come from understanding the implications of the interpretation of the symbolic dimension of a physical artefact and its impact on identity construction. To recap from the conclusion of Chapter 5, the symbolic dimensions of an artefact are interpreted through an indirect mediating process wherein the associations with the artefact produce emotion. The symbolism of an artefact represents multiple associations the artefact can represent, not only the associations formally intended by an organisation. These resulting interpretations are perhaps the strongest out of the three dimensions of the artefact and we cannot sensibly predict what they are likely to be as the process is an indirect mediating one relating also to the participants personal past experiences. Therefore, if we cannot predict them it would be useful to management to understand how and to what extent they are likely to affect the management of change process.

Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) have found that there was no connection between interpretation of artefacts and the activities and interpersonal activities within which participants are engaged whereas my own data found that there was. The Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) findings were in a public service area, the provision of a bus service, whereas my own research took place in an organisation where the participants were seeking meaning about their personal and group situation. Given that the interpretation of the symbolic dimension is the most unpredictable and dynamic and that the findings in these three cases showed a link between the interpretation of artefacts and the activities and interpersonal activities within which participants are engaged I found it relevant to go on and try to understand, unlike Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004), what happens to these interpretations of physical symbolic artefacts.

The objectives of this chapter are firstly to explain the link between the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts and detail which dimensions of the interpreted artefact were used in which types of identity construction (self, group, organisational and workplace) and secondly, to compare the data collected with

Hatch & Schultz's four processes of identity (expressing, mirroring, reflection and impressing) and to highlight the frequency and extent to which the interpretation of physical artefacts used in these processes. This answers the second research question which is:

How is the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts used by actors to influence/affirm actors' perceived threat to identity, identity affirmation, or identity change?

Meads 'I and me' was a theory of social and individual identity. Hatch and Schultz have taken this and applied it to organizational identity and image and how identity expresses cultural understanding through symbols. Hatch and Schultz explain the processes linking identity and culture (reflecting and expressing) with previously described processes linking identity and image (mirroring and impressing).

This thesis has found that these four processes are present and just as relevant to workplace, organizational, group and self identity in the context of explaining the participants' identity processes within an organization i.e. themselves within an organisational group, the organisational group within the organisation as a whole. Hatch and Schultz have justified the transition from Meads theory by proposing that if organizational culture is to organizational identity what the 'I' is to individual identity it follows that organizations form theirs in relation to culture and image. They have also related this to self identity by saying just as individuals form their identities in relation to both internal and external definitions of self; organisations form theirs in relation to culture and image. My primary data collection, upon analysis, provided findings that were very similar to the Hatch and Schultz model. These findings were then compared to the model and similarities and differences discussed, rather than taking the Hatch and Schultz model as a base and then seeking to confirm the model. My findings then concurred with Hatch and Schultz in terms of the processes used but found that the use of physical symbolic artefacts in this processes was apparent in all four processes and I have gone further in documents the extent and circumstances where this occurs.

6.11 The process by which the question will be answered

Firstly, this chapter examines what triggers the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts and how the resulting emotion is used in identity formation.

Secondly, this chapter describes the role of emotion resulting from the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts in influencing/ affirming actors' perceived threat to identity, identity affirmation, or identity change.

Thirdly, this chapter links the interpretation of artefacts and the identity formation processes by comparing the results from the case studies of the dimension of physical artefacts used by participants and how they are used in the identity forming process, and offers an explanation for the similarities and differences that occurred.

Fourthly, this chapter compares the results from the case studies by the type of identity formed and offers an explanation for the similarities and differences that occurred.

Fifthly, this chapter develops a model of interpretation of physical symbolic artifacts and proposes three different typologies detailing the variance in the resulting different types of identity derived from the interpretation of different dimensions of the artifacts interpreted in varying contextual situations.

However, because of the sheer volume of data produced in these three case studies the focus of this section will be on using data from BETA. This is because the participants were reporting differences in the style of management of change post change of director. This chapter will also focus on the interpretation of the symbolic dimension of the physical artifact and then comparing it with the other two dimensions.

Finally, using the BETA case study and still focussing on the interpretation of the symbolic dimension, the similarities and differences in the identity processes will be discussed and a possible explanation will be provided of why these have occurred.

6.12 Which data are used to provide the answer to research question 2?

This Chapter continues with the rich description of the data from various 'incidents' across the three case study sites, detailing the identity formation aspects of the incident. In total 8 incidents were defined which were occurring almost

simultaneously across the three case study sites, resulting in a total of 24 incidents. All 24 incidents are described in appendix (5).

The chapter continues with an explanation of my own understanding of these data giving categories of identity and relating these to the dimensions of the physical symbolic artefacts used and showing how I arrive at my explanation of the use of physical symbolic artefacts in the identity formation process. This is represented by a series of summary tables illustrating the dimensions of the artefacts used in interpretation and the differences in types of identity formed across the three case study sites. Ethnographic data vignettes are used to illustrate the connection between interpretation of artefacts and the identity forming process. These data vignettes are used with ethnographic descriptions of the context from which they were drawn and the detailing participants interpretations in order to explain how the balance of impact on emotions changes over time and context.

The data for the second research question were collected during (Phase 3) interviews using auto driving techniques, (Phase 4) interviews using laddering techniques and participant ethnography recorded by photography, field notes and reflexive journals. The research tools and methods of analysis used were described in detail in Chapter 3. This included participant ethnography which was recorded by photography and field notes, then analysed using the constant comparative method. This involved comparing incidents applicable to each category, integrating categories and their properties, delimiting the theory, and writing the theory. The interviews using auto driving techniques and laddering techniques were analysed using the constant comparison method.

6.2 What is the trigger for starting the interpretation process?

The previous chapter introduced the context within which organisational actors interpret their environment to obtain information about power, status, respect and legitimization within the organisation and this section continues this and suggests what triggers the cyclical process and details the differences in the three case study sites. This was done by using data strips from the from all incidents gathered from phase 3 and 4 of the interviews which were coded phrase by phrase onto a theme list in order to document these issues. The data collected contained a wealth of

emotional reactions and four main categories (legitimation, power, status and respect) were generated (grounded) from the data.

The term 'respect' included any reference to the following terms in the positive or negative: admiration, opinion, deference, esteem, reverence, disrespect, value, think a lot of, have a high/low opinion of, look up/down to admire or disregard.

The term 'power' included reference to any of the following terms in the positive or negative: authority, control, influence, supremacy, rule, command, sway, dominance, strength, force, might, energy, muscle.

The term 'status' included reference to any of the following terms in the positive or negative: rank, position, standing, grade, eminence, prominence, (un)importance, (in) significance, repute, reputation, category, class, or type.

The terms 'legitimate' included reference to any of the following terms in the positive or negative: lawful, rightful, legal, genuine, justifiable, valid, unlawful, (un)reasonable, (un)acceptable, (un)justifiable, (il)logical, (in)valid, fine, okay, or sensible.

During discussions of the workstation allocation incident, participants talked about the issues within the incident which had prompted them to seek meaning from the artefacts within this incident. Table 6:1 illustrates samples of data obtained.

Table 6:1: Samples of data strips collated into emergent themes

Legitimate (lawful, rightful, legal, valid, genuine, justifiable)

| |
|--|
| ALPHA |
| <i>Faculty: 'It's not right the way we are treated. But there is nothing we can do about it, is there? We can just be moved at a moments notice.'</i> |
| BETA |
| <i>'They know they can go and complain to the Director (the students) – they couldn't before. There was a procedure. They can just walk straight up to the faculty workstations now. This is not reasonable'</i> |
| GAMMA |
| <i>Most if not all actions here are justifiable. It's not like some of the other colleges. There is usually a reasonable explanation for a decision or an action. If we don't see it then we'll ask and get an explanation. Allocations for the new campus for example- we wanted to know how the decision about who would sit where was going to be made- and it seems logical – we certainly know the process and have input into it. There is a faculty member from each department on the committee.</i> |

The above data vignette shows how Alpha participants discussed how legitimate or otherwise the changes were. Generally, the Alpha participants felt they generally

had no recourse within the college system to the changes. ‘.. *there is nothing we can do about it, is there?* In BETA they commented that the administrative processes had changed, and that a process which they believed to be legitimate before, now wasn’t. In GAMMA the participants felt that the processes were transparent and legitimate and that this had not changed despite the director having retired.

Power (authority, control, influence, rule, sway, command, and dominance)

| |
|--|
| <p>ALPHA</p> <p>Sassan: <i>There seems to be a lot of staff moving from one (workstation) allocation to another in the men's. That will stop. I want a plan drawn up –see to it Ali- put all faculty names on it. I want to know where all staff are at all times. No one can move without permission- is that clear. Otherwise they will all be off playing tennis and I won't know where they are. Later in the same day:</i></p> <p>Russell: <i>He knows everything that happens and has control over everything.</i></p> |
| <p>BETA</p> <p><i>'You were there at the Dr. Farouk talk when a student said he'd complained about an engineering faculty weren't you? It was Bob, and Sassan is not renewing his contract. Just one comment in public and Sassan has cancelled his contract. It's the same with Nigel. He knew he was in for it because Sassan was sitting behind his desk when he was summoned. Wanted Nigel to move office to ALPHA and he wouldn't because he wanted to stay with the faculty. Doesn't like Nigel, that's what he said and 10 years career is down the toilet. How can he justify that? You know what HR in Abu Dhabi said. Sassan has 100% power- they can't do anything.'</i></p> |
| <p>GAMMA</p> <p><i>Norm had the power to buy or do anything he wanted but he only wanted to do the best for the students and staff and that wasn't always having the most expensive equipment or the best workstations. He would arrange trips abroad or for the students to do team building and diving in Oman. He had an open door policy and anyone could have a chat with him if they had concerns.</i></p> |

The above data vignette shows how in ALPHA and BETA all discussions around power to make changes were centred round the director, Sassan. All participants, including Sassan himself, felt that he had ultimate power over all changes. In ALPHA, this situation was accepted by participants but this was not the case in BETA where the participants who had up until recently enjoyed a more relaxed style of leadership, were angry. In GAMMA, participants recognised that the centre of power was the director and that he had power because of his position but they also acknowledged that neither the recently retired, nor the acting director, used it to control staff.

Respect (Value, revere, admire, disrespect, look up to, deference, high opinion)

| |
|---|
| ALPHA |
| <i>Faculty: "No one is sure what's going to happen. I've had to change workstations and I don't know why. I'm up for renewal next year and with the merger we've heard that there are too many English teachers. The college system always 'purges' and gets rid of some people. It might be us, no one knows. They don't have any respect for us we are just a number."</i> |
| BETA |
| <i>'Now the security desk is in front of the faculty room it's almost as if we are checked in and out by the security guards. The security guards check what time we leave. The students sense the lack of respect we now have, the students' just walk in now but the faculty can't get out'.</i> |
| GAMMA |
| <i>This is an old campus and it's not ideal so the supervisors are not necessarily with their faculty. We're respected and trusted to get on with the job. I don't mean its perfect or anything but I and I think most of us appreciate that. Now we're moving to the new campus everyone's worried where they'll be located but only because they want to be close to their team or someone they can talk to.'</i> |

The above data vignette shows how ALPHA and BETA participants discussed the lack of respect they had as individuals and professionals as a result of way the changes had been managed and the style of leadership used. In ALPHA, the participants mainly sought to understand issues of respect, through interpreting artefacts. They showed concern for their position and their future, not as a group but as individuals'. The management and leadership processes resulted in participants working in a fear culture and then trying to understand, rather than change, their own situation. In BETA, a transformational change had been deliberately engineered and the participants sought to understand why they were now shown no respect. The participants did this mainly from a group rather than an individual perspective. In GAMMA, the participants discussed the campus as a whole, the organisational identity, and they sought meaning about the respect they are shown as an organisation within their social and geographic setting. The changes in GAMMA have taken place over a long period of time and the process was 'transparent' and decision making was collective.

Status (rank, position, standing, grade, repute, (un) importance, reputation)

| |
|--|
| ALPHA |
| <i>'The equipment and facilities we have as faculty is poor compared to the quality of equipment the students have. Just look at my computer. I'm (teaching) on e-commerce (program) and I've just about to crank the thing up in the morning. Then I go down to the students (class) and they've got state of the art lap tops. Even the students make comment. We are unimportant.'</i> |
| BETA |
| <i>'Now at BETA nobody is talking. Have you noticed how quiet the faculty area is now? I don't know where the dart board has gone- what is the significance of that? Remember, when we were in our corner together we used to have such a laugh. And those emails Madeline used to send round- everyone had something witty to say in response. Now no one knows who they can talk to. I don't know who I can speak to in my new area now; our standing is so low now.'</i> |
| GAMMA |
| <i>I can't say we are into status here; we just get on with it. Very few people will ever get the opportunity for promotion- you know that. You look at the number of faculty and then the number of supervisors. When a supervisors job came up there were 6 internal candidates and we all helped each other to prepare for the interviews. We were a bit annoyed when they appointed an external candidate -there was no need for that. Then he got the only decent office. Supervisors are no better than anyone else. Most of us could do that job; we should all have the same facilities.</i> |

The above data vignette shows how participants were seeking meaning from the artefacts in the incidents in relation to the status they have in the organisation. In ALPHA, the participants evaluated the meanings they have constructed about their own self identity and that of teaching staff and students on other programs. In BETA, the comparisons participants made are between the status they enjoyed in the past; prior to the changes and the reduced level of status they have now within their group identity. In GAMMA, the participants believe that all should, and in most cases do, share the same level of status. They did, however, interpret the allocation of an office for a newly appointed supervisor as a reduced amount of status for faculty because they believed that the faculty and supervisors were equal.

The motivation behind interpretation

... the masks they wear, the stage they occupy, the parts they play, and, most important, the spectacle they mount remain and constitute not the face but the substance of things not least the self (Geertz, 1977). The preceding section highlights differences in the three case study sites and the inclusion and explanation of the narrative is intended to explain the differences in the depth and type of emotion between the three case study sites. These vignettes illustrate the '*substance of things*' which is that the management processes used in the change triggered the

need to seek meaning and the tool used in this process, particularly within ALPHA and BETA, was the interpretation of physical artefacts. During each participant's interviews the issues of respect, power, status and legitimization may have been mentioned more than once and often together. I sought patterns in the way the emotions evolved from the interpretation and what dimension of the physical symbolic artefact was interpreted. The categories were grounded from the data and labelled in order of the number of times emotions relating to issues of power, respect status and legitimization were mentioned. This is shown in table 6:2. This is an unsophisticated method of ordering and although allows the creation of a certain order in the data it does not demonstrate the strength or depth of the emotions displayed by the participants which is shown in the data vignettes throughout the chapter and 'represents the substance of things' (Geertz, 1977). During these phases the implicit quantification that appears in the tables has also been added to show that these occurrences of interpretation were not isolated but occurred over a long period with varying degrees of frequency. These tables allowed me to see that the influence of the management processes was a major factor in the interpretation and identity processes and shows how my theoretical views were generated.

Table 6:2 Data vignette showing issues of power, respect, status and legitimization mentioned together

| |
|--|
| ALPHA |
| <i>'The equipment and facilities we have as faculty is poor compared to the quality of equipment the students have. Just look at my computer. I'm (teaching) on e-commerce (program) and I've just about to crank the thing up in the morning. Then I go down to the students (class) and they've got state of the art lap tops. Even the students make comment. (status) I'm not sure what to do anymore. We get moved around without anyone consulting us. Surely we are due at least that amount of respect. I know they can do anything they want to anyone in this country (legitimation) but if they don't think of the staff as human beings (respect) you would think they would think of the human resources cost of replacing us. I heard it cost a years salary to recruit and pay for a lecturer to come out here. We are all so exhausted and de-motivated after doing our three year contract it's probably better to have some fresh blood. Anyway I'd better go and see where my new work area is this time...</i> |
| BETA |
| <i>'Now at BETA nobody is talking. Have you noticed how quiet the faculty area is now? I don't know where the dart board has gone- what is the significance of that? Remember, when we were in our corner together we used to have such a laugh. And those emails Madeline used to send round- everyone had something witty to say in response. Now no one knows who they can talk to. I don't know who I can speak to in my new area now.' Sassan is a real power freak (power) but surely he can't be allowed to get away with it, (legitimation) can he? Is there more to come? Don't we have any rights at all anymore? If the management doesn't respect us (respect) how can the students be expected to? What are we anyway, we have the status lower than those poor construction workers you see every day working in 50° of heat. (status)</i> |
| GAMMA |
| <i>I can't say we are into status here, we just get on with it. (status) Very few people will ever get the opportunity for promotion- you know that . You look at the number of faculty and then the</i> |

number of supervisors. When a supervisors job came up there were 6 internal candidates and we all helped each other to prepare for the interviews. We were a bit annoyed when they appointed an external candidate -there was no need for that. (legitimisation) Then he got the only decent office. Supervisors are no better than anyone else. Most of us could do that job; we should all have the same facilities. I suppose it is also a matter of respect,(respect) it's not that anyone wants to get one over on anyone else (power)

Table 6:2 shows how the participants discussed these four issues and how they were intertwined and integral to the workstation allocation incident and not separated and dealt with differently.

Table 6:3, has been included to show how often references were made to these four main issues of respect, power, status and legitimization and to emphasize the point that these were not isolated incidences but rather occurred over the length of time data collection took place. Table 6:3 illustrates the number of references to these emotional categories in the workstation allocation incident, made during phase 3 and 4 interviews. In total there were 416 references to the issues of respect, power, status and legitimization.

Table 6:3 Number and frequency of references to emotional issues by organization

| Emotion | ALPHA | | BETA | | GAMMA | |
|----------------|-------|------|------|------|-------|------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Respect | 66 | 27% | 42 | 29% | 3 | 10% |
| Power | 69 | 28% | 37 | 26% | 8 | 27% |
| Status | 72 | 29% | 23 | 16% | 12 | 42% |
| Legitimization | 36 | 16% | 42 | 29% | 6 | 21% |
| Total | 243 | 100% | 144 | 100% | 29 | 100% |

ALPHA participants recorded 243 mentions of issues of respect, power, status, and legitimisation which were the triggers to start interpreting the artefacts in the 'workplace allocations' incident. There were 144 in BETA and 29 in GAMMA, indicating that there were fewer emotional issues and fewer reasons to interpret the environment. These references were recorded during the period of intense data collection, between January and June 2004. The amount of references has been recorded to show that these are not isolated incidents but have occurred regularly

over a long period of time. They do not demonstrate how important they are to the participants and this is demonstrated by the data vignettes.

Implications

What can all this tell us about the why we interpret artefacts and its potential use in identity formation? To quote Geertz (1977) *'In describing symbol uses, are we describing perceptions, sentiments, outlooks, experiences? If so, in what sense is this being done?'*

The data vignettes have shown that in these three case study sites there were four main emotional issues relating to status, respect, power and legitimisation that surrounded the 'workplace allocation' incident. The data, discussed in Chapter 5, have also suggested that the main trigger for these issues was the process of management and leadership used during the alterations to the physical built environment. This is made clear because, in ALPHA, although participants accepted the management and leadership processes and they were accustomed to being treated in this way, the issues remained and they made more reference to these issues. This was one of the only means they had to find out what was happening to their working environment. In BETA, again the four issues were prominent, but fewer references were made to them through interpretation. BETA participants were undergoing a change of leadership and the fear culture prominent in ALPHA (both sites were managed by the same director) had not yet established itself. The participants showed anger and still voiced their opinions through other means, such as conversation or email, not only interpreting meaning through physical symbolic artefacts. In GAMMA, although the changes were the same, the participants still enjoyed a democratic style of leadership and meaning could also be found in more traditional means of communication e.g. memo's, minutes of minutes and open discussion. Therefore, although the issues were the same in BETA and interpretation took place, the trigger of the management processes had less impact.

6.3 Incidents and the role of artefacts in the identity forming process

In Chapter 5 the reasons behind ordering the data by 'incident' were discussed. I decided to use this method because the incidents emerged from the data, participants were discussing what was occurring during the changes and how they were seeking to understand these occurrence. They sought understanding by interpreting the changes in the built environment and the physical symbolic artefacts that were placed or designed into certain areas around which the incidents themselves were central. These participants sought to understand what was happening in relation to their own, or group, or organisational role, in the change process. The next section goes on to explain this link.

6.4 Link between artefacts and the four identity formation processes

This section examines the link between the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts and their role in the identity formation process. Hatch & Schultz (2002) have stated that the physical environment (artefacts) is used mainly in the expressing process of identity formation but did not mention their uses in the other three processes. This section uses examples from the incidents to portray the use of physical symbolic artefacts in all four of these processes.

6.41 Mirroring

Mirroring is the reflection of an organization through the opinions and judgements of others and links image to identity. This indicates that in order to establish that this process occurs using the resulting emotion from the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts in influencing and/or forming identity, this process must also be recorded by 'others' i.e. those outside the organisation. It is the process that links, what we as organisational actors feel to be, the identity (what we or the organisation is) and the image (what others feel the organisation to be). Therefore, to find out whether or not this process can be formed using physical symbolic artefacts I needed to see whether there was a link between the views of external stakeholders and if they formed their opinion of the organisation using interpretation of physical artefacts. I also needed to know how organisational actors compared the stakeholders view with their own view (subsequent to interpreting physical symbolic artefacts) and the consequences this had on the identity process. (see table 6:4)

The following is an example of mirroring which shows the opinions and judgements of others and the role physical symbolic artefacts play in this process. At the time of the merger of ALPHA and BETA, during the period of changes both to management and to the built environment a prominent entrepreneur and author Moh. Al Farim asked to use the physical facilities of ALPHA and the co-operation of the ALPHA/BETA staff to launch his new book 'from Rags to Riches'. The book was about the development of the UAE and in his speech launching the book he stated that he wanted to be linked with ALPHA and BETA because of their image in the UAE of being forward thinking and yet remaining loyal to Islamic traditions both in the style of management but also in the style of buildings.



Image 6.1 Mirroring : a prominent author chooses to launch his new book from the Alpha campus



Image 6.2 Mirroring: Counselling Arabia conference organisers choose to launch the concept to the press from ALPHA boardroom

Another example came from the Counselling Arabia conference. Counselling Arabia wanted to be associated with ALPHA/BETA by launching their conference on the campus as the organising committee felt the association would be mutually beneficial and they could be associated with Alpha's work.

Table 6:4 Data vignettes showing examples of mirroring

| ALPHA/BETA (stakeholders) | Participants |
|---|---|
| <p><i>'It is always a great pleasure to be associated with ALPHA/BETA. I personally maintain our Arabic traditions but realise that as a nation we have to step forward into the global arena and remain competitive and have a leading edge. My books illustrates to you all here today that Emirates can do this and I wanted to launched my book from this campus because the university, through Dr Sassan embraces our Arabic traditions both in his management, the respect the university shows for the community and maintaining an Arabic style of architecture on the campus demonstrates the intention of the university to maintain these traditions.'</i> Extract from Moh Al Farim speech</p> | <p><i>We have this image which Sassan tries to create which mixes Islamic traditions and technology. Farim buys into that but what does that mean for the ways things really happen here. Global arena indeed. The technology is here in the buildings that is for sure but we can hardly get these students o lift a pencil let alone the global arena. Anything that is in the public eye is done by the staff. If we don't go along with it we are out on our ears with no possibility of an appeal.</i></p> |
| <p>ALPHA/ BETA</p> <p><i>Counselling Arabia is launched here today on ALPHA/BETA campus. We are proud to be associated with this university who show a caring and empathetic approach to the education of our young Emirati generation. This is illustrated by the commitment to counselling students but also the provision of physical resources and environmental facilities available on the campus which would rival any European university.</i></p> <p>Extract from Counselling Arabia opening speech</p> | <p><i>The thing is we are launching Counselling Arabia and I have a student with such a bad stammer she can hardly speak. When I asked for a counsellor to see her they told me she doesn't have a problem. They cannot document problems because then the girl can't get married. What are we really doing here f we cannot help with issues like this. What is the point of having a counselling department and all that equipment when we cannot admit to any problems .It's all pomp and ceremony.</i></p> |
| <p>GAMMA</p> <p><i>GAMMA and HCT as a whole show a commitment to the education of Emirates today and this is echoed here in these new facilities which illustrate their commitment to high technology and the future of our country.</i></p> <p>(speech from Sheik Moh opening new Gamma facilities)</p> | <p><i>We got Sheik Moh literally popping in here by helicopter to look over the campus. It shows his commitment to us and what we are doing here.</i></p> |

The above table shows how participants use the views of stakeholders in the mirroring process and how interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts is used in this process. Stakeholders have formed an opinion of the colleges based on their

interpretation of the buildings and artefacts and subsequently participants have used this opinion in the mirroring process.

6.42 Reflecting

Reflection is the process by which organizational members understand themselves as an organization and is the result of how organizational members perceive themselves. The following is an example of one of the ALPHA/BETA director's initiatives. He was given a large trailer and decided to convert it into a mobile learning unit to allow primary school children to have access to computing facilities. This involved the IT department in donating older versions of PC's and the education department developing a suitable curriculum. Graphic design staff were responsible for the decoration both internally and externally of the unit.

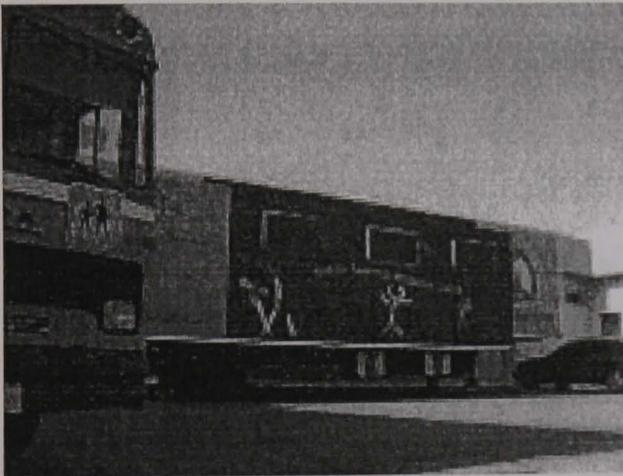


Image 6.3 and Image 6.4 Reflection: participants talked about how the directors incentive at ALPHA/BETA to educate children in the community by bringing computer facilities and teaching staff into the schools in a 'mobile learning unit.' Participants matched this up with their perception of themselves and this allowed them to understand themselves as an organization.

Table 6:5 Data vignettes showing examples of reflection

| |
|--|
| ALPHA |
| <i>'I thought I was supposed to be course director of the 'teaching English for young learners program'. Now we are way behind in the program because the students have been asked to decorate the mobile learning unit with illustrations for the kids and to go out teaching computing in the schools. Aren't we just exploiting the students for a better image? Is this what we are all about now?'</i> |
| BETA |
| <i>Derek's (previous college director) strategy was always to look forward into industry, put the students into good careers. I don't understand why we are going out into primary schools. What is happening in this university: it's filling up with old painted trailers euphemistically called 'mobile learning units.' What am I? A kindergarten teacher? All this is going on and we still haven't found out where our workstation is, or if the facilities are going to be renewed.</i> |
| GAMMA |
| <i>We know we've got good staff here and now we've got facilities to match what we are all about.' We are number one and we will always be number one.</i> |

Participants actively discussed the work in preparing the mobile learning unit and evaluated their own self perceptions with what was going on in the university. In this way, through their interpretation of symbolic physical artefacts they tried to understand the organisation and their place within it.

6.43 Expression

'Expression' refers to how an organization speaks about itself. In this edition of a college publication, the Alpha's Director, Sassan, talks about the changes to management and to the buildings and uses the buildings to express the calibre of the university and how quickly the university staff are reacting to change. The article draws parallel between the speed of change in physical facilities and the speed of change in organisational structure.



How our jobs have changed

Interview with Dr. Farid

1. Could you please tell me something about the changes that have occurred in the ICT system in general and the college in particular? I think the main reason for most of the changes that are happening in the college probably more than the changes in the system, has to do with the fact that you are working about what has been happening in the system and the way it affects us at Sharjah Women's College. The biggest change would be that they have had to do with funding. How was it coming from the government and available to the ICT in general? I think it was a good thing. We have been getting less and less money and more and more systems to take care of. Now ICT should be on our list. I think, makes the whole system to be more of a high quality. So, if you have extra things and a lot of students who want to come to the ICT, they are not having enough money. They have a lot of things and they are not having the people to do them, add them to their system. They want to maintain the quality, we can't expect all the students who apply and they are big problems for us at Sharjah Women's College. We have been here for 20 years, we have had a lot of money, but we are not having it. If we had the money, they would be able to come to some way of a good one, we have students who come to some here because it means that they like the college and it has a good reputation. On the other hand, it's bad because it means we can't accommodate all their needs. Then we really the biggest problem we've had over the last 20 years, less money, more students and the need to maintain a high level of quality.

2. What is your reaction to all these sudden changes? Change makes some people uncomfortable, but it does make me more comfortable. I love change because it's a change in an improvement. Not all changes are good, but if change makes us better and it's a change in a better form, we should not be afraid and better service to our community. And I believe that you believe so.

3. What are your thoughts on the changes in the ICT system? Change makes some people uncomfortable, but it does make me more comfortable. I love change because it's a change in an improvement. Not all changes are good, but if change makes us better and it's a change in a better form, we should not be afraid and better service to our community. And I believe that you believe so.

4. What are your thoughts on the changes in the ICT system? Change makes some people uncomfortable, but it does make me more comfortable. I love change because it's a change in an improvement. Not all changes are good, but if change makes us better and it's a change in a better form, we should not be afraid and better service to our community. And I believe that you believe so.

5. What are your thoughts on the changes in the ICT system? Change makes some people uncomfortable, but it does make me more comfortable. I love change because it's a change in an improvement. Not all changes are good, but if change makes us better and it's a change in a better form, we should not be afraid and better service to our community. And I believe that you believe so.

6. What are your thoughts on the changes in the ICT system? Change makes some people uncomfortable, but it does make me more comfortable. I love change because it's a change in an improvement. Not all changes are good, but if change makes us better and it's a change in a better form, we should not be afraid and better service to our community. And I believe that you believe so.

7. What are your thoughts on the changes in the ICT system? Change makes some people uncomfortable, but it does make me more comfortable. I love change because it's a change in an improvement. Not all changes are good, but if change makes us better and it's a change in a better form, we should not be afraid and better service to our community. And I believe that you believe so.

8. What are your thoughts on the changes in the ICT system? Change makes some people uncomfortable, but it does make me more comfortable. I love change because it's a change in an improvement. Not all changes are good, but if change makes us better and it's a change in a better form, we should not be afraid and better service to our community. And I believe that you believe so.

Sharjah Women's College
P.O. Box 12407, Sharjah
Fax: 0671 55 200 202

jawaher

Image 6.5 Article in college publication
In this article the director actively uses the buildings to underscore his opinion of the university and its strategy (transcript of interview in appendix 7). He uses the quality and opulence of the buildings to 'tell' the readers of the publication that the quality of teaching standards and college achievements are the same calibre as the buildings.

Image 6.6 Students preparing to camp on the campus



Expression: The text below demonstrates how the organisation expressed itself through news events about a simple induction program involving the students camping on the university grounds. This was published on the university web site.

Transitions in Semester 2

Transitions in our lives can be challenging and stressful. This is true even when the changes are positive. “Good stress associated with change helps motivate us to succeed and grow in different directions,” according to Nawal Majeed, Academic Advisor at Syri Women’s College. “However, stress can also prevent us from reaching our goals. We all need time to accommodate the changes in our lives.”

This was the aim of **Transitions**, a two-day orientation program for CD Year 1 students on the Horizons Challenge, at the start of Semester 2. Students grouped together for the first time in their elective courses were given several team challenges that helped to ‘break the ice’.

In addition to camping and map reading activities, students participated in group counselling workshops designed to help them manage change in their lives. In these workshops students had a chance to express their feelings of loss and anxiety and were given strategies to help them make the transition to their new situation.

Afterwards students expressed appreciation that we understand what they are going through when faced with a new situation, and that we gave them this opportunity to prepare for change. **‘Transitions’** prepared them well to focus on their chosen course of study.

Text from press release published in September 2003

These publications were used by staff prior to the merger to express what the college was all about, but since the change in director, on BETA and GAMMA and the merging of ALPHA with BETA they had undergone a change in image and were gradually being used more in the impressing process and staff were having to find alternative methods to ‘express’ themselves.

Table 6:6 Data vignettes showing examples of expressing

| |
|--|
| ALPHA |
| <i>'We are trying to get the students, not only to be more independent but to reflect on the purpose of their education and what it can do for them. How meaningful it all is at the end of the day no one know but there is certainly a lot of fuss about a very simple initiative, not that we can voice our opinion of course we just have to do what we are told no matter how disruptive it is to our personal and home lives- or how irrelevant we think camping on the campus may be.'</i> |
| BETA |
| <i>E commerce team are more about getting the guys to be more responsible and create some type of work ethic in them although I sometimes feel using a cattle prod might have more effect. We've got fantastic outward bound facilities now and we really use them to show the students what we are all about. One of the students has written a piece about it for the Al Manar (college publication) I think other staff have got a sense of purpose from this project to, albeit amongst other very depressing changes.</i> |
| GAMMA |
| <i>We know we've got good facilities here and we use them to express what we are all about and it goes from the students up to the director and back down again. We are really excited about some of the new facilities, such as the aviation hangars, that we have got here; they really say something about us.</i> |

'Expression' refers to how an organization speaks about itself and here participants show in their dialogue how they use physical symbolic artefacts to express their identity.

6.44 Impressing

Impressing refers to images of an organization that are strategically projected to constituents. The buildings were a strategic advantage to the university because of their quality, opulence and location and were used in various publications and website banners to project this image to stakeholders.

Impressing: Example of images of the buildings used on the back page of the university student publication



Image 6.7 Front and back cover of college publication

Table 6:7 Data vignettes showing examples of impressing

| |
|---|
| ALPHA |
| <i>The magazines and press article paint a glorious picture of what is going on here. Admittedly the buildings look fantastic and students have the best of facilities but you don't need to be working here for long to realise that the image does not match the student output and most of the effort comes from the staff, that's why we are taken out of here on a stretcher eventually. Dr. Sassan won't allow any staff member name on any publication apart from his own and of course the students names, we really mean nothing here.</i> |
| BETA |
| <i>I used to be editor of the men's magazine and was for years. Why does Sassan want this lengthy editing process before anything from a student is published in one of the magazines? I'll tell you why because if he doesn't it will just show that the students cannot even write a simple article. It is all to show the efforts of the college, his efforts really. Before I used to work with the students, the magazine was for them and sometimes there were errors in the text, but it was their work. This is all for show. We tried to show what we have in terms of facilities before but not in order to create a false impression. He's even taken the editors role away from me because of this.</i> |
| GAMMA |
| <i>Our magazine display our students work and that way industry can see what they are really capable of. Ok it's not an international publication but we have to be honest. So we work with the students so they can produce their best work. We do showcase the new facilities why not, we are proud of them and it does show what we are capable of and that we are a serious organisation.</i> |

Table 6:7 shows how participants interpreted the illustration and use of the built environment in the college publications, public relations and publicity within the impressing process of identity formation and how they used this understanding to evaluate their own position.

This section of the chapter has used examples of photographs and university publications detailing various incidents to establish the use of interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts within the four identity processes. The next section will examine the extent of the occurrence of the four process of identity influence/formation using the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts across the three case study sites using the data collected on the 'workplace allocations incident.'

Does this happen often?

This section shows how often, within these three case study sites, organisational actors use the interpretation of physical artefact in identity formation processes and how differing contexts affect the frequency of this occurring.

Two sets of phenomena, inward feelings and outward actions or words are regarded, not as functions of one another, but as independent realms of being put in proper order independently. This is explained by Geertz:

'There is so much to all this because it connects up to both an ontology and an aesthetic. But so far as our problem is concerned, the result is a bifurcate conception of the self, half ungestured feeling and half unfelt gesture. An inner world of stilled emotion and an outer world of stilled behaviour confronts one another as sharply distinguished realms into themselves, any particular person being but the momentary locus, so to speak, of that confrontation, a passing expression of their permanent existence, their permanent separation, and their permanent need to be kept in their own separate order (Geertz, 1977)

Table 6:8 illustrates what processes participants used their interpretations for and to show the comparison between the results of the three sites. The interviews had been sorted by incident and then using content analysis the data strips were sorted into categories which related to the purpose of the interpretations. These fell into the categories of reflection, expression, impressing and mirroring.

Table 6:8 The use of interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts

| Interviews Use | ALPHA 14 | | BETA 8 | | GAMMA 20 | |
|-------------------|----------|------|--------|------|----------|------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Reflection | 42 | 33% | 47 | 38% | 5 | 15% |
| Expression | 25 | 20% | 14 | 11% | 10 | 31% |
| Impressing | 27 | 22% | 12 | 10% | 12 | 36% |
| Mirroring | 32 | 25% | 52 | 41% | 6 | 18% |
| Total | 126 | 100% | 125 | 100% | 33 | 100% |

Table 6:8 is included to explain that it is not being offered as a claim to knowledge, but to show how my theoretical views were generated. The data was sorted in this way to show the extent of recording of the different process within the identity process and how this differed within the three case study sites. The table shows that there were a total number of 126 accounts of the use of interpreting artefacts within the workstation allocations incident in the Alpha case study site. Almost the same number were reported in BETA at 125 but in GAMMA only 33 purpose or use. This is despite the fact that there were almost the same number of interviews at GAMMA as ALPHA and BETA combined. This would suggest that participants either felt the need, although not outwardly, to seek meaning in their environment more often in ALPHA and BETA than in GAMMA. Considering again that the case study sites were to all intents and purposes the same, this would suggest that the main factor in the three sites which was different, the context within which the changes were taking place and the management of change processes, could have been responsible for this difference in results.

Interpretation for reflection

The first category in table 6:8 is reflection, by which organizational members understand themselves as an organization and is the result of how organizational members perceive themselves. This 'information' was instigated by the leadership style and change of management processes which triggered emotional issues relating to status, respect, power and legitimisation within the organization either relating to self, group, organizational or workplace identity . In ALPHA and BETA there was a total of 89 such meanings sought for a total of 22 interviews and 5 recorded cases of

information seeking in GAMMA with 20 interviews. The data in the data vignettes for each case study site supports the information in this table. The participants have stated quite clearly that information is not available to them and it is therefore difficult to make sense of the changes in their environment, whereas in GAMMA the participants have all the information they need to make sense of the changes in their environment.

Table 6:8 shows that out of 125 data strips from BETA which contained references to the purposes of interpreting artefacts, 47 of these references were made by participants to seek information about the changes and what implications this would have on themselves, their group or organisation. In GAMMA the table shows that out of 33 data strips containing references to the purposes for the interpretation of artefacts, 5 of these references were made to seeking information about the changes and what implications this would have on self, group or organisation identity. Although the categories were defined as information for reflection relating to self, group or organisation identity. Table 6:9 shows that ALPHA participants interpreted artefacts for information and compared their findings almost exclusively with their self identity rather than group or organisational. BETA participants interpreted artefacts for information and compared this almost exclusively with their group identity rather than self or organisational. GAMMA participants interpreted artefacts for information and compared this almost exclusively with their organisational identity rather than self or group.

Interpretation for expression

In this category participants were using 'expression' which refers to how an organization speaks about itself. These 'expressions' were instigated by emotional issues relating to status, respect, power and legitimisation within the organization either relating to self, group or organizational identity. For example *'I put a poppy on my desk and that says something about where I come from'* or *'the photos of my kids show why I am still here it is to give them a good standard of living'* or *'I keep all my books on my desk to show how busy we are in CD2.'* In ALPHA 25 references out of the total of 126 were almost exclusively about seeking to 'express' meaning to others about the participants' self. In BETA 14 references out of the total of 125 were almost exclusively about seeking to 'express' meaning to others about the participants' group identity. In GAMMA 10 references out of the total of

33 were almost exclusively about expressing meaning to others about the participants' organisational identity. For example-*'We are really involved in sports in GAMMA, more than the other colleges. That's why I keep the photos of the football matches and the press releases here.'* ALPHA participants had the highest number of mentions of interpreting artefacts for expression with 25no (20%). This may be because the participants were in a fear culture and had few means of communicating honestly and openly. Organisational actors communicating in this way, is almost like a coded message about themselves which could be denied if necessary to other organisational actors unlike an open conversation.

Interpretation for Impressing

This section details the circumstances under which actors interpreted the artefacts within the workstation allocation incident and used these interpretations to evaluate the images of an organization that are strategically projected to constituents and compare this with their own position. This process was triggered by the leadership style and resulting management of change processes which produced emotional issues relating to status, respect, power and legitimisation within the organization and consequently used by the participants in influencing their self, group or organizational identity. In ALPHA 27 references, using symbolic physical artefacts out of the total of 126 were made to seeking meaning about 'impressing.' For example, Lawrence moved workstation to be right outside the supervisors' door. This was done to both express his allegiance to the supervisor but to ensure faculty and external visitors knew he had been promoted to assistant supervisor and would now be control. *'I'm here so I can see what's going on while Paul's on the other campus but also so if we have any visitors from outside the campus they will understand that it is me they should speak to if Paul is not here.'* In BETA 12 references out of the total of 125 were made to seeking meaning about 'impressing'. In BETA the published plans of workstation allocations were placed at the entrance of the faculty area were used to show staff how much they were under control because they could not choose where to sit at the beginning of the semester, but also to show visitors where to find the member of staff with whom they had a meeting . In GAMMA, 12 references out of the total of 33 were made to seeking meaning about 'impressing' and again mainly about organisational identity. For example *'we*

showed them- have you seen what a fantastic campus we've got now. It shows we are the best in the system.

Interpretation for Mirroring

Mirroring is the reflection of an organization through the opinions and judgements of others and links image to identity and this section details the circumstances when actors interpret their environment symbolically by relating the meaning of the information obtained through the opinions and judgements of other (who have interpreted the physical symbolic artefacts) and the participants own feelings about the organisation. This was triggered by management of change process which resulted in emotional issues relating to status, respect, power and legitimisation within the organization either relating to self, group or organizational identity. In ALPHA, 32 references out of the total of 126 references were recorded which sought meaning about the implications of the change using the process of mirroring. This implies that participants did not know or understand the true meaning of the changes and sought information through the opinions of stakeholders. In BETA, 52 references out of the total of 125 references were to seeking meaning about the implications of the change through the mirroring process which implies that the participants were even more confused about the true meaning of the changes. *'What is happening to my group? We've been moved to this part of the building. What does it really mean? Farim said in his speech that the emphasis will be on technology, does that mean our group is less important to the college now?'* In GAMMA, 6 references out of the total of 33 were to seek meaning about the implications of the change which implies that they had a better understanding of the true meaning of the changes. *'What do they mean by giving the supervisors coffee pots? Sheik Moh stressed equality in his speech- where is the equality here?'* The frequency of interpretations in GAMMA was far less than the other two case study sites implying that they did not need to seek meaning and were secure in their environment.

6.5 Comparison of case studies: interpretation and types of identity

The question raised by the findings in section 6.4 is:

Why should participants on one case study site interpret the artefacts more frequently than another case study site?

The results indicate there were far less ‘meanings’ sought in GAMMA although the number of interviews were higher and consequently I would have expected a relative increase in the number of mentions of meanings sought. In order to understand this I categorized these interpretations in relation to the purpose of the interpretation. In ALPHA there were a total number of 126 of meanings sought around the incident of workstation allocations. Almost the same number were reported in BETA at 125 but in GAMMA only 33 records of meaning sought. This is despite the fact that there were almost the same number of interviews undertaken at GAMMA as ALPHA and BETA combined. Given that the three case study sites are essentially the same and the main difference is in the way the management of change process is lead then it follows that the management of change processes themselves may have prompted the difference in the number and type of dimensions of artefacts interpreted and the ultimate use of these interpretations.

Table 6:9: The contribution of identity processes to types of identity

| | ALPHA | | | | BETA | | | | GAMMA | | | |
|------------|-------|------|-------|-----|-------|------|-------|-----|-------|------|-------|-----|
| | Total | Self | Group | Org | Total | Self | Group | Org | Total | Self | Group | Org |
| Reflection | 42 | 36 | 4 | 2 | 47 | 8 | 38 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| Expression | 25 | 18 | 5 | 2 | 14 | 2 | 13 | 0 | 10 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| Impressing | 27 | 10 | 15 | 2 | 12 | 2 | 8 | 2 | 12 | 1 | 8 | 3 |
| Mirroring | 32 | 23 | 5 | 4 | 52 | 10 | 35 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | 126 | 87 | 29 | 10 | 125 | 22 | 94 | 10 | 33 | 3 | 13 | 17 |

Table 6:9 illustrates the total number of interpretations for each case study site in the column ‘total’. This data is divided into categories for ‘self’, ‘group’ and ‘organisation.’ The total number of interpretations from participants relating to each identity process, e.g. ‘reflection’ has been divided into the type of identity that has been used to influence; which is either ‘self’, ‘group’ or ‘organisational.’ The table demonstrates the inconsistency of use of the interpretations for influencing the various types of identity over the three case study sites. The data shows that participants use these processes in the main, in ALPHA for self identity, in BETA for group identity and in GAMMA for the formation of organisation identity.

The following section uses the data obtained to understand why participants appear to use this information on ALPHA for self identity, on BETA for group identity and on GAMMA for organisational identity?

6.51 Self: ALPHA

The data vignettes from section 6.2 have shown that participants on ALPHA were insecure and the culture was a fear and blame culture. The participants did not trust each other and saw the organisational identity and the identity of Sassan as one and the same. There was little evidence of reference to group identity and all participants related the interpretation of the artefacts within the 'workstation allocation incident' to their future or their past.

6.52 Group: BETA

In BETA participants had, prior to the appointment of Sassan as director, been secure in their workplace environment. The previous director, Derek, had encouraged a sense of group and organisational identity. This strong sense of group identity remained but participants no longer identified with the organisation which they saw as being represented or controlled by Sassan. Workplace identity, comprising of self, group and organisational, had subsequently largely fragmented into several strong group identities.

6.53 Organisation: GAMMA

The participants in GAMMA identified with the organisation and saw themselves as part of the 11 college system. Norm (previous director) had encouraged staff to see themselves as part of this 11 college system and also compare themselves with other colleges in a competitive way. Inter college sport, exam results and student achievements are examples of these. This continued with the acting director (Barbara), who also used the collegial style of management that GAMMA was reputed for in the college system. Participants maintained an organisational identity and a workplace identity.

Implications

This section shows the interpretations have resulted in changes to the type of identity participants discussed. In GAMMA the identity has remained a group and organisational identity with no significant references to 'self' identity changes.

Within these three case study sites the nature of interpretation that was taking place was participants seeking to understand their own and their groups' position within the organisation or their position within the team. This section has detailed how the resulting emotions from interpretations are used by actors to influence/ affirm actors' perceived threat to identity, identity affirmation, or identity change.

It is accepted that at any times of our lives we exist in some emotional form. We are not entirely free of emotion. Therefore, when the participants in these case studies interpreted artefacts in the workstation allocation incident there was an emotional prompt to do so. This was instigated by the participant as an experience –near phenomena to gain an understanding of the implication of changes in workstation allocations had for them as individuals, as part of a group or as part of the organisation (the workplace identity). This illustrates that emotion is present as part of this initial trigger to seek meaning.

Data revealed that during the changes when issues of respect, power, status and legitimisation were apparent the participants identity split into an 'us' and 'them' and organizational identity was viewed separately by the participants to workplace identity which then gradually over time and within the same environmental conditions became a group and then self identity definition. This however differed to the extent that it occurred over the three sites. GAMMA showed evidence of a strong organisational identity. BETA participants had splintered into numerous group identities and ALPHA showed evidence of mainly self identities. This process of fragmentation is shown in the diagram below.

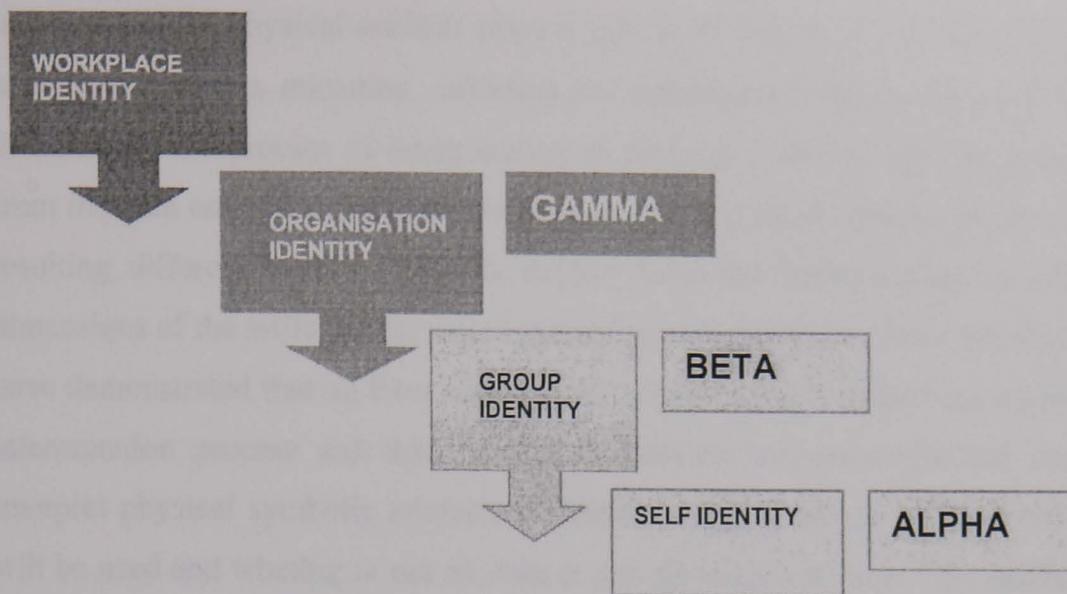


Fig. 6:1 Workplace identity has split into various identities on the three case study sites

6.6 Typologies to describe the role of interpretation in identity formation

The typology below is based on the Hatch & Schultz (1997, 2002) organisational dynamics model.

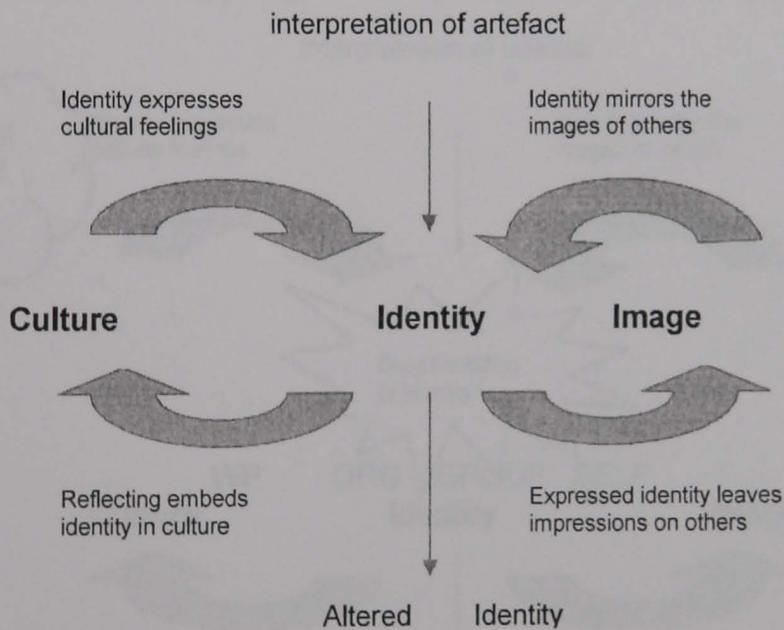


Fig. 6:2 Use of emotion from interpretation of physical artefacts in identity formation

The typology above in fig. 6:2 is a proposition about the place emotion resulting from the interpretation of physical symbolic artifacts has within the identity formation process. The Hatch and Schultz model places identity within the context of culture and image and so far in this chapter I have explained that the

interpretation of physical artifacts plays a role in all four of the identity processes namely, expression, mirroring, reflecting and impressing. This section continues to demonstrate the process of interpretation of physical symbolic artifacts, grounded from the data collection, by proposing three typologies detailing the variance in the resulting different types of identity derived from the interpretation of different dimensions of the artifacts interpreted in varying contextual situations. Previous data have demonstrated that all three different dimensions of the artifacts are used in the interpretation process and that people in different circumstances and contexts interpret physical symbolic artefacts differently and this affects which dimensions will be used and whether or not all, two or one dimension is used. This section will also demonstrate that the process of mirroring, reflecting, impressing and expressing are used in the formation or alteration of identity subsequent to the interpretation of physical artifacts. These typologies are included to illustrate how the interpretation of the different dimensions of the artifact is influential in the formation of differing aspects of identity.

6.61 Discussion of Typology 1: Interpreting the symbolic dimension negatively

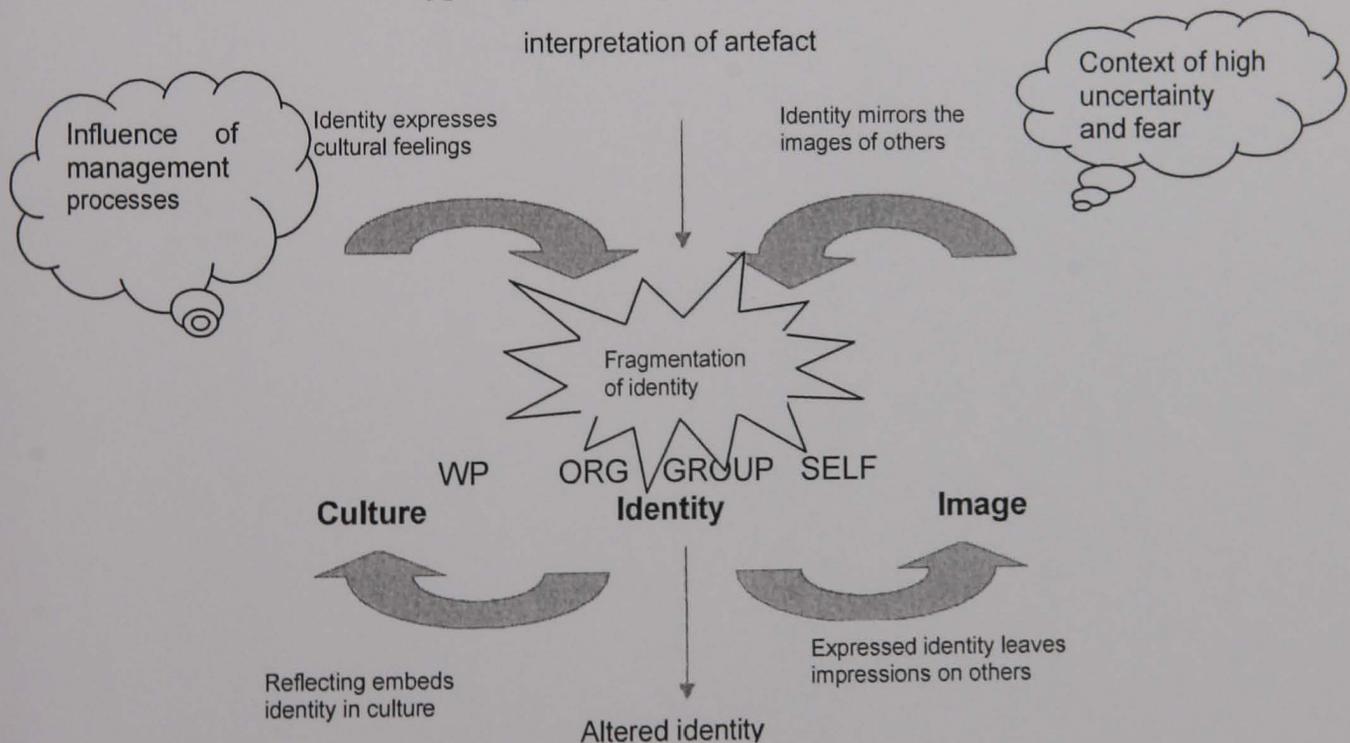


Fig. 6:3 Typology 1 Interpreting the symbolic dimension negatively

This is perhaps the most interesting typology and it illustrates the results on identity of interpretation using the negative symbolic dimension of a physical artefact. The

influence of management of change processes in this typology produced a negative emotion. When participants were triggered by a negative emotion and interpreted the symbolic dimension this produced a high level of emotion, and the workplace identity split off into organisational identity, this organisational identity, over time and under the same circumstances split into group identity which should the same circumstance remain split into self identity. This was the case on both ALPHA and BETA. In ALPHA the circumstances had remained the same for a long time and there was much evidence of self identity, very few examples of group identity and virtually no examples of organisation identity. In BETA, participants who had up until recently been working under a different leadership style and management of change process, there was a lot of evidence of group identity and little or no examples of organisation or self identity. This would indicate that this splintering off process takes place over time.

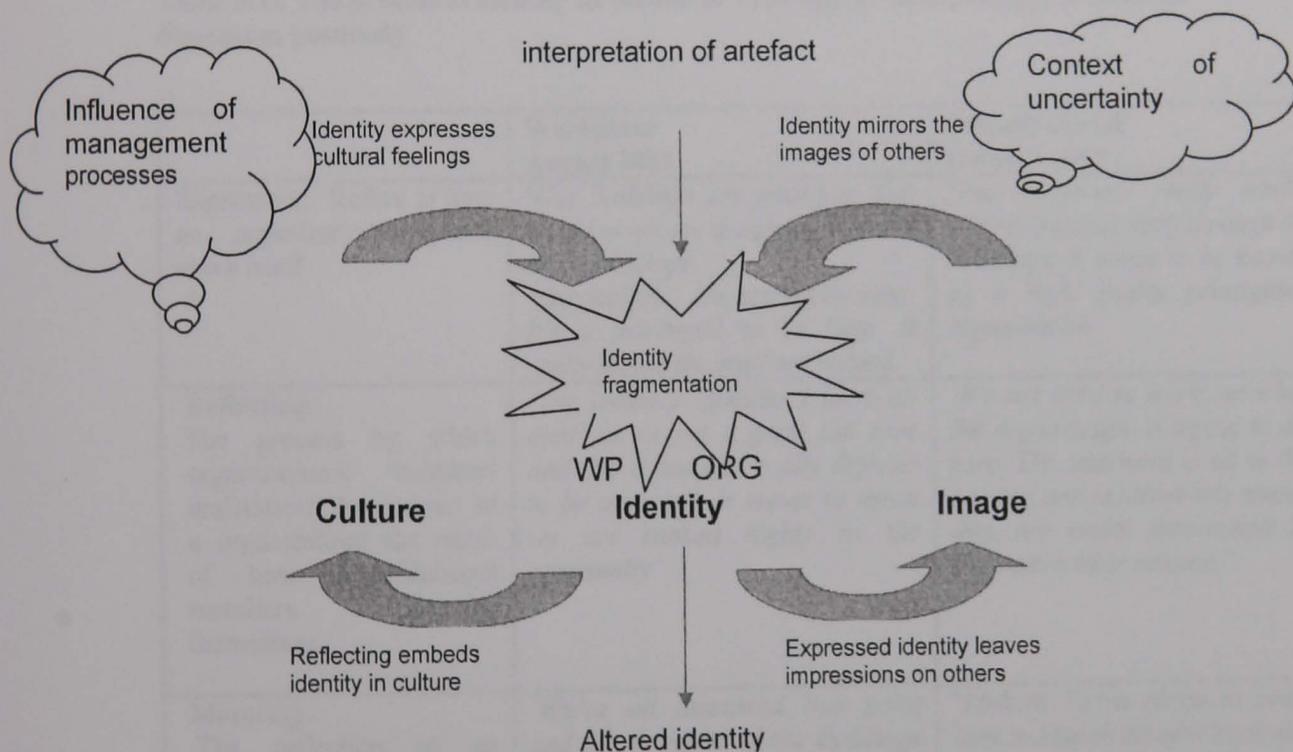
Table 6:10 The process of identity formation in Typology 1: Interpreting the symbolic dimension negatively

| | Workplace | Organisational | Group | Self |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| Expressing: Refers to how an organizations speaks about itself | <i>We are supposed to be all together in this .The mobile unit is supposed to send a message to the community that we care but no one cares about what happens within the university</i> | <i>The mobile learning unit is supposed to symbolize the universities involvement with the community but wouldn't it be better to look forward to industry not to primary school kids. All the while this crap is going on we don't even know if we've got a job or where we'll be allocated</i> | <i>The mobile learning unit has had all that press put out about it, but what does that mean for the ed group. We've had to drop everything and get the students to work on it, while all these changes are taking place and we are getting moved around to new workstations. We are really behind in the curriculum now</i> | <i>Alpha talks about the transitions project but I had to come out and sit in the campus while a few rich kids decided they wanted to camp out. They even had maids with them who brought their food. My kids were left with a babysitter and I still had to rearrange my desk because I've been reallocated a new space</i> |
| Reflecting: The process by which organizational members understand themselves as a organization; the result of how organizational members perceive themselves | <i>I though ABC was all about getting kids into the workplace not entertaining school kids what is this system for now?</i> | <i>All the ABC staff are the same. Some colleges are better than others but at the end of the day we are a replaceable resource. They invest in buildings, they invest in facilities but where is the investment in staff, where are the professional development funds,- nowhere</i> | <i>When you think about it we mean nothing here. We are just shuffled about like numbers. The college tries to show how advanced it is, equal to Europe or USA but in reality the staff, us, especially in English, don't have any meaning at all- the facilities we are given and the workstations we have , if you compare them to the students- mean nothing</i> | <i>Sometimes I really wonder why I am here. I've spent weeks of my, and my students time on the mobile learning unit and yet even with all that effort I'm still given a workstation area that is too hot, noisy and out dated and what's more I'm not even told I have to move. I despair really.</i> |
| Mirroring The reflection of an organization through the opinions and judgements of others; links image to identity | <i>The Industry through the PAP group know what they can do with our students, virtually nothing but they are obliged to take them anyway.</i> | <i>There is not much point having industry discussions in ALPHA because we can't change the character of the place and the students are our products. The opinion of industry says a lot about our role here, and it's not good. What it really means I don't know.</i> | <i>The role of engineering in my department cannot do what the PAP wants and needs what we are and what our image is are two different things. I hope it doesn't mean job losses.</i> | <i>Personally I'm not sure what it all means if the PAP portrays one thing and I can only do something else role it doesn't give a positive picture for me.</i> |
| Impressing Refers to images of an organization that are strategically projected to constituents | <i>ABC has a corporate PR machine to give out its messages but all that means is we are trying to tell a story that is unrealistic and create an image that is fault. For the students that means that employers will be disappoint and for incoming staff it means disaster.</i> | <i>ALPHA gets a lot of publicity for stuff like transitions but at the same time no one wants to employ our students because they can't work , but they have to employ them</i> | <i>I'm in education and I can't work out what this means for my group the PR is nonsense and we have to write it up.</i> | <i>They write about the transitions project but what does it mean really. The PR says what a good job we are doing in beautiful surroundings. In reality if I drop dead tomorrow they will replace me.</i> |

These data vignettes recorded from participants across the three case study sites shows how, when participants interpret the symbolic dimension negatively, using physical symbolic artifacts in the built environment the resulting identity processes fragment over time. All four process of identity formation are used to influence or change the identity and that this identity, gradually over time fragments from a workplace, through to an organizational, into a group and then self identity. This is the one typology where it is difficult to predict to reaction to a change to the built environment because participants relate the change with an element of the artifact that holds a personal symbolic meaning either to them personally, their group and their organization.

6.62 Typology 2

**Fig. 6:4 Typology 2: Interpreting the symbolic dimension positively
Interpreting the instrumental and aesthetic dimension negatively**



This typology is the result of three categories of interpretation. These are interpreting the symbolic dimension positively, interpreting the instrumental and aesthetic dimension negatively all three of which produced the same results in terms of the affect on the identity formation processes.

Interpreting the symbolic dimension positively

This typology illustrates the results on identity of interpretation when we interpret the symbolic dimension of a physical artefact and draws on data presented in chapter 5 which established the existence of the interpretation of symbolic artefacts. The influence of the management of change process in this typology produced a positive emotion. When a participant was triggered by a positive emotion and interpreted the symbolic dimension this produced a high level of emotion. As a result of interpretation of the physical artefact within the incident, and the resultant meaning this had for participants, the workplace identity split off into organisational identity. The participants identified with the organisation but saw the organisation as separate from a workplace identity which would have incorporated the self, group and organisation. There was evidence of this typology mainly in GAMMA where the identity had remained stable over a long period.

Table 6:11 The process of identity formation in Typology 2: Interpreting the symbolic dimension positively

| | Workplace August 2003 | Organisational October 2003 |
|--|--|---|
| Expressing: Refers to how an organizations speaks about itself | <i>'Our buildings are amazing. You would never see a campus like this built in Europe.'</i> <i>'Our facilities are second to none-it's a privileged to be here. It really means the staff are valued.'</i> | <i>'The university really works hard to express itself through its buildings. It wants to be known as a high quality prestigious organisation.'</i> |
| Reflecting: The process by which organizational members understand themselves as a organization; the result of how organizational members perceive themselves | <i>'The industry contacts I have all think we've got a great job here and that it must be really difficult to be accepted. It seems to mean we are ranked highly in the community'</i> | <i>'It's not hard to work out what the organisation is trying to do here. The statement is all in the campus and facilities this means they are really determined to succeed in their mission.'</i> |
| Mirroring The reflection of an organization through the opinions and judgements of others; links image to identity | <i>'We've all discussed this point and the standard of the buildings seems to motivate us and the students to work to higher standards. Other teams in the university really appreciate what we do in the engineering dept.'</i> | <i>'Moh al Farim chose to come here to launch his new book and several international conferences have asked to use our buildings. It shows how well thought of the organisation is.'</i> |
| Impressing Refers to images of an organization that are strategically projected to constituents | <i>'The brochures all contain photos of the buildings and the interiors and they are designed to impress our potential students and potential employers. I take this to mean that we are all involved in this and are valued as well'.(see images below)</i> | <i>'We use our buildings to advantage. That's why they are on the web site banner and several college publications. The organisation is proving its place amongst other universities.'</i> |

Table 6:11 includes data vignettes from various participants in BETA and shows how the interpretation of physical artefacts was used in all four processes of identity formation but also illustrating how over time the organisational identity split off from the workplace identity. The discussions which took place in August 2003 were centred around a workplace identity but by October 2003 these discussions were centred round organisational identity and show how the levels of identities had begun to splinter.

Interpreting the instrumental dimension negatively

This interpretation results in the same typology illustrates the results on identity of interpretation using the instrumental dimension of a physical artefact. The influence of the management of change process in this typology produced a negative emotion.

Table 6.12 Process of identity formation in Typology 2: Interpreting the instrumental dimension negatively

| | Workplace August 2003 | Organisational October 2003 |
|--|--|--|
| Expressing Refers to how an organizations speaks about itself | <i>ABC does spend a lot on facilities and buildings but they never seem to get it right. If it works it's the wrong spec and no one knows how to operate it or the stuff breaks down after three months and no one repairs it.</i> | <i>The men's college facilities are old fashioned, we don't seem to have much. The work stations are old and tatty. The computers don't work half the time.</i> |
| Reflecting The process by which organizational members understand themselves as a organization; the result of how organizational members perceive themselves | <i>ABC staff are getting out of date with technology because there is no training that's why we can't repair what we have. Mo admitted that but he doesn't want to admit it to Sassan.</i> | <i>Over in Al Ain (the same college system) they think we have all the facilities and if you look at it like that we have, but still they don't work do they?</i> |
| Mirroring The reflection of an organization through the opinions and judgements of others; links image to identity | <i>ABC worked with the Hyatt to put on the conference and they wondered why we were having a media conference when we don't have any media equipment that is up to date or that anyone can operate.</i> | <i>Sassan wanted the women's college to put on a presentation of media courses at the conference but we all thought the other colleges would have a laugh because we can't get the stuff to work properly.</i> |
| Impressing Refers to images of an organization that are strategically projected to constituents | <i>All the catalogues and website say we are high tech and cutting edge at ABC but we don't have the in house expertise to operate what we have.</i> | <i>We are putting on e-commerce conferences at the men's but in a lot of cases it is not e-commerce but business over the net. It just doesn't work.</i> |

When a participant was triggered by a negative emotion and interpreted the instrumental dimension this produced a low level of emotion, but the workplace identity split off into organisational identity. There was evidence of this occurring on all three case study sites but the examples here are from BETA.

These data vignettes were recorded from participants across the three case study sites shows how when participants interpret the instrumental dimension negatively, using physical symbolic artifacts in the built environment, all four process of identity formation are used to influence or change the identity and that this identity, splits off into organizational identity over time. There is a low level of emotion displayed through out this process.

Interpreting the aesthetic dimension negatively

This typology illustrates the results on identity of interpretation using the aesthetic dimension of a physical artefact.

Table 6:13 The process of identity formation in Typology 2: Interpreting the aesthetic dimension negatively

| | Workplace Identity August 2003 | Organisational Identity October 2003 |
|---|---|---|
| Expressing Refers to how an organizations speaks about itself | <i>In ABC the buildings should not be Arabic style but should be more futuristic, to match what we are trying to do here.</i> | <i>The buildings are like an old mosque but we are supposed to be high tech in ALPHA</i> |
| Reflecting The process by which organizational members understand themselves as a organization; the result of how organizational members perceive themselves | <i>People outside ABC view ABC as an Islamic university because of the style of the buildings and this is a negative attitude because we are supposed to be geared to the future of industry.</i> | <i>In BETA we saw ourselves as being high tech but all our externals are worried about coming here because they think of fundamentalist lam when they see the buildings</i> |
| Mirroring The reflection of an organization through the opinions and judgements of others; links image to identity | <i>We got a lot of negative feedback from the Canadian colleges we were trying to be accredited with. Because of the style of the buildings they started to ask questions about gender and equality in student intake and of cause that is our main issue as it is segregated teaching.</i> | <i>The Canadian accreditation board made us look again at how we segregate the students and their and then our opinion was a negative one. Why should we have to segregate the students? What are we trying to achieve. All you can see here are fences and security gates. Not very 21st century.</i> |
| Impressing Refers to images of an organization that are strategically projected to constituents | <i>ABC puts out images that are ugly in Western eyes and at the end of the day it is western society that we have to persuade.</i> | <i>GAMMA tries to give the impression that they have a fantastic campus but certain parts have not been well designed and that shows us up here but we have no control over that.</i> |

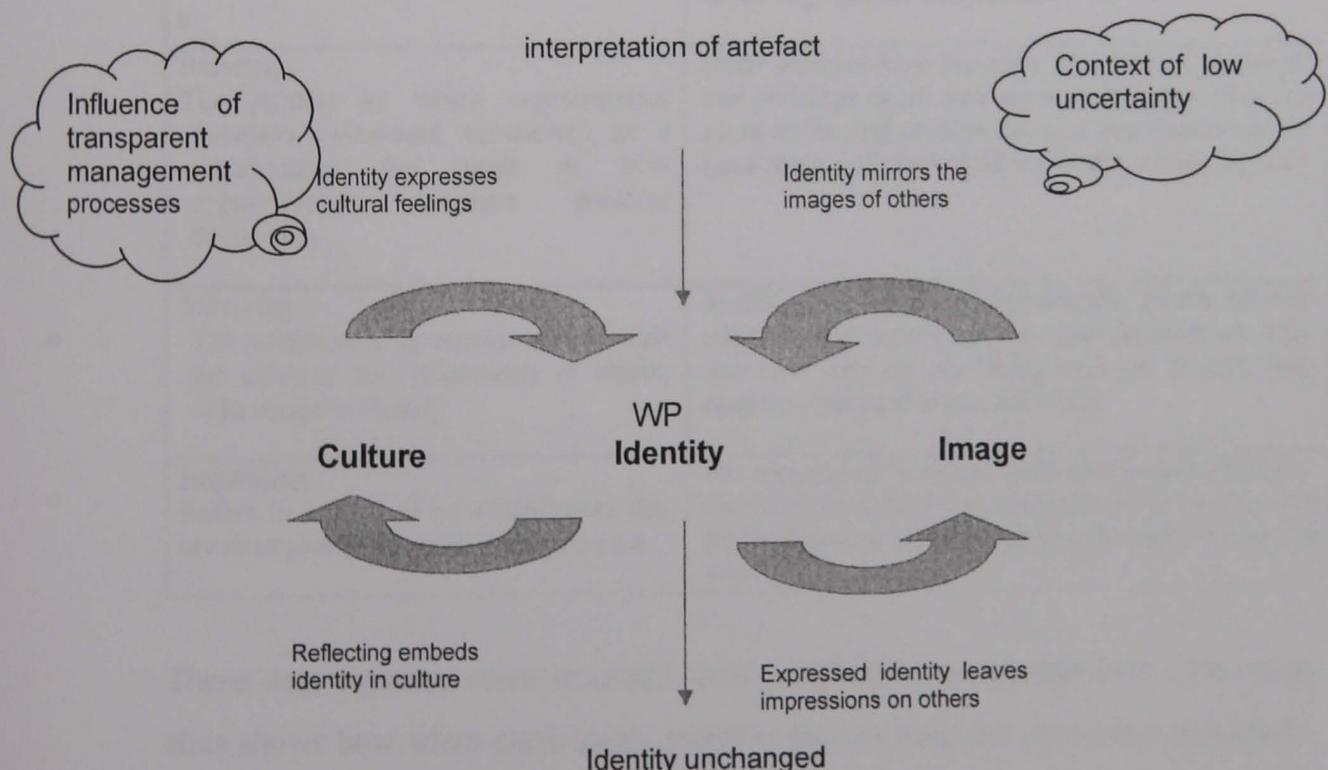
The influence of the style of leadership and management of change process in this typology produced a negative emotion.

When a participant was triggered by a negative emotion and interpreted the aesthetic dimension this produced a mid level of emotion, and the workplace identity split off into organisational identity. There was evidence of this mainly in GAMMA where the identity had remained stable over a long period but to a limited extent in ALPHA and BETA.

These data vignettes were recorded from participants across the three case study sites shows how when participants interpret the aesthetic dimension negatively, using physical symbolic artifacts in the built environment, all four process of identity formation are used to influence or change the identity and that this identity, splits off into an organizational identity over time. There is a mid level of emotion present throughout the process.

6.63 Typology 3

Fig. 6:5 Typology 3: Interpreting the instrumental and aesthetic dimension positively



This typology is the result of two categories of interpretation. These are interpreting the instrumental and aesthetic dimension positively, both of which produced the same results in terms of the affect on the identity formation processes.

Interpreting the instrumental dimension positively

This typology illustrates the results on identity of interpretation using the instrumental dimension of a physical artefact. The influence of the style of leadership and management of change process in this typology produced a positive emotion. When a participant was triggered by a positive emotion and interpreted the instrumental dimension this produced a low level of emotion, and the workplace identity remained intact. There was evidence of this mainly in GAMMA where the identity had remained stable over a long period.

Table 6:14 explaining the process of identity formation in Typology 3: Interpreting the instrumental dimension positively

| | Workplace identity |
|---|--|
| Expressing Refers to how an organizations speaks about itself | <i>ABC expresses its position in the community by it's investment in the campus and the facilities. They are of high quality yet functional and that's what we are about- high quality and function.</i> |
| Reflecting The process by which organizational members understand themselves as a organization; the result of how organizational members perceive themselves | <i>Other colleges have the same standard of equipment and buildings as us, well more or less and when you speak to the staff in other colleges they tend to say the same thing, so I don't think we are far wrong, do you?</i> |
| Mirroring The reflection of an organization through the opinions and judgements of others; links image to identity | <i>In ABC, and in GAMMA in particular we always read what industry says about us, what facilities we have and how well we are doing and yes it does help confirm what we think we are about.</i> |
| Impressing Refers to images of an organization that are strategically projected to constituents | <i>The web and the brochures tell what we are all about; they show how high the standards of the campus and the facilities are. It's all high quality stuff here and no mistake.</i> |

These data vignettes were recorded from participants across the three case study sites shows how when participants interpret the instrumental dimension positively, using physical symbolic artifacts in the built environment, all four process of identity formation are used to influence or change the identity and that this identity, remains stable as a workplace identity over time.

Interpreting the aesthetic dimension positively

This typology illustrates the results on identity of interpretation using the aesthetic dimension of a physical artefact. The processes through all six typologies are the same. The influence of the style of leadership and management of change process in this typology produced a positive emotion. When a participant was triggered by a positive emotion and interpreted the aesthetic dimension this produced a mid level of emotion, and the workplace remained intact. There was evidence of this occurring on all three case study sites but infrequently.

Table 6:15 explaining the process of identity formation in Typology 3: Interpreting the aesthetic dimension positively

| | Workplace identity |
|--|---|
| Expressing Refers to how an organizations speaks about itself | <i>The buildings and the interiors are beautiful, it is a massive investment and we all proud to be part of it, it says a lot about us and who we are.</i> |
| Reflecting The process by which organizational members understand themselves as a organization; the result of how organizational members perceive themselves | <i>Most people I speak to think this must be a great place to work, fabulous facilities, amazing design – look at the sports hall you, we are really luck here.</i> |
| Mirroring The reflection of an organization through the opinions and judgements of others; links image to identity | <i>The PAP committee (external industry experts) tell us how fabulous it is here state of the art and a fabulous designed working environment, talking to them just emphasises how privileged we are.</i> |
| Impressing Refers to images of an organization that are strategically projected to constituents | <i>MOSAIC (a well publicised student event) told a great story of how well designed the event was and we agreed with them. It was a lot of hard work but worthwhile.</i> |

The data vignettes were recorded from participants across the three case study sites but are specifically recording data obtained from BETA and shows how when participants interpret the aesthetic dimension positively, using physical symbolic artifacts in the built environment, all four process of identity formation are used to influence or change the identity and that this identity, remains stable as a workplace identity over time. There is a mid level of emotion present throughout the process.

6.7 Comparison of case studies: dimensions and the identity process

Table 6:16 The dimensions of artefact which were interpreted (reproduced from chapter 5)

| Dimensions | ALPHA | | BETA | | GAMMA | |
|--------------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Instrumental | 23 | 22.7% | 26 | 30% | 66 | 62% |
| Aesthetic | 11 | 10.3% | 7 | 8% | 34 | 32% |
| Symbolic | 72 | 67% | 53 | 62% | 6 | 6% |
| Total | 106 | 100% | 86 | 100% | 106 | 100% |

Table 6.16 shows how little interpretation of the symbolic dimension took place on GAMMA whereas on ALPHA and BETA the highest dimension interpreted was the symbolic dimension. The conclusion of this in chapter 5 was that the influence of the style of leadership which meant that information on change was not transparent or forthcoming lead participant to try and seek meaning, albeit in a sub conscious manner through the symbolic dimension.

Table 6:17 The contribution of identity process to types of identity

| | ALPHA | | | | BETA | | | | GAMMA | | | |
|------------|-------|------|-------|-----|-------|------|-------|-----|-------|------|-------|-----|
| | Total | Self | Group | Org | Total | Self | Group | Org | Total | Self | Group | Org |
| Reflection | 42 | 36 | 4 | 2 | 47 | 8 | 38 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| Expression | 25 | 18 | 5 | 2 | 14 | 2 | 13 | 0 | 10 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| Impressing | 27 | 10 | 15 | 2 | 12 | 2 | 8 | 2 | 12 | 1 | 8 | 3 |
| Mirroring | 32 | 23 | 5 | 4 | 52 | 10 | 35 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | 126 | 87 | 29 | 10 | 125 | 22 | 94 | 10 | 33 | 3 | 13 | 17 |

Table 6:17, which was initially introduced in section 6.5 shows how in ALPHA the overall identity had splintered off over time to a self identity and in BETA the identity had splintered off into a group identity whereas in GAMMA the identity remained mainly at the organisational level. The largest recording of data strips from participants was mainly from the level of identity that was prominent at the end of the process. So for ALPHA, whose participants were discussing self identity, then self identity data was predominant. What the data does not show is which of these processes were more influential in identity formation. The data does show however that all four process of reflection, expression, impressing and mirroring were evident in identity formation.

6.8 Findings

There were five findings in relation to the second research question and these were:

- 1) Emotions resulting from the interpretation process are used to inform or influence different categories of identity by a cyclical process of interpreting, using the resulting emotion to inform identity, comparing that identity, altered or informed, with another interpretation which may result in an altered form of emotion.
- 2) Data revealed that the participants held views of their collective self that were central, distinctive and to an extent enduring but that when issues of respect, status and power and legitimisation were apparent the views of their collective self splintered into organisational, group or self identities over time. The style of leadership and resulting management of change processes triggered emotions relating to respect, status, power, and legitimization and participants started this cyclical interpretation process.
- 3) Hatch & Schultz (2002) proposed four processes of identity formation namely, mirroring, reflecting expressing, and impressing, and only mentioned physical artefacts in the impressing process. My findings propose that all four processes are used.
- 4) The data highlights how people in different circumstances and contexts interpret physical symbolic artefacts to differing extents and by using different dimensions of the physical symbolic artefact.
- 5) The dimension of the artefact interpreted, and whether or not the interpretations were positive or negative affects the identity formation process. The most interesting typology is that of the negative symbolic interpretation as it results in a fragmenting of identity from organisational down to self. It is the least predictable and consequently should be understood by management and designers as the participants reactions can affect how management of change processes are adopted or otherwise.

Why does this happen?

Participants seek to understand changes by interpreting their environment to support decisions, protect themselves and to foresee future events which may affect their self, group or an organizational identity. Participants in ALPHA were already demotivated and working within a fear culture. There was little evidence of any group identities and a concentration on individuals own self identity. This is evidenced by the number of references to self in Table 6:17 which was 87 out of 126. In BETA the group identity remained strong as the influence of the new director was only just beginning to take effect and participants still related to one another. There was already evidence of a breaking away from organisational identity as the participants began to interpret a 'them and us' situation. In GAMMA, although there was a change in director, participants still identified with the organisation and self and group remained the same.

6.9 Conclusions

In conclusion, this chapter has linked findings to Hatch & Schultz (2002), who proposed four processes of identity formation namely, mirroring, reflecting expressing, and impressing, and explains the similarities and differences and provides a possible explanation of why these have occurred.

This section has compared the results, describing how emotion resulting from the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts is used by organisational actors to influence/ affirm their perceived threat to identity, identity affirmation, or identity change, over the three case study sites and has offered an explanation for the similarities and differences that occurred.

CHAPTER 7: Discussion of findings and conclusions

7.1 Introduction and overview

Chapter 4 detailed the context of the three case study sites and described the changes to the organizational built environment over time and how this change process was managed. The changes to all three case study sites were very similar and participants had highlighted a total of 24 change incidents, 8 across the three case study sites. The cases were similar in all respects but one and this was the way the processes of change were managed.

Chapter 5 introduced the results of the analysis of the 'workstation allocations incident' defined in Chapter 3. An explanation of the processes of interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts detailing which dimensions of the artefact in the incident were interpreted and to what extent and under what circumstances this occurred, was proposed. This analysis was then related to the Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) model and answered the first research question which was:

What are the processes and the extent by which organizational actors interpret physical symbolic artefacts in the built environment, and under what circumstances and to what extent are the varying dimensions of Rafaeli & Vilnai Yavetz (2004) model most evident?

Chapter 6 explained the link between the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts and detailed which dimensions of the interpreted artefact were used in which types of identity formation (self, group, organisational and workplace) and secondly, within which, of Hatch & Schultz's four processes of identity (expressing, mirroring, reflection and impressing) were the interpretation of physical artefacts used. This analysis was then related to the Hatch & Schultz (2002) model and answered the second research question which was:

How is the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts used by actors to influence/affirm actors' perceived threat to identity, identity affirmation, or identity change?

This chapter, Chapter 7, discusses the findings, conclusions, and related implications. Specifically, the chapter begins with a synthesis of the results followed by discussion and conclusions. Next, this chapter provides a discussion of the findings in relation to the existing literature, and provides alternative explanations for the findings. Finally implications for both theory and practice are presented, along with suggestions for future research. Overall, this research will demonstrate that the interpretation of physical symbolic artifacts within the built environment is more extensive than previously envisaged and that these interpretations are used within the identity forming process, a link not previously made in the literature. This shows that if the designers of the built environment and managers of the change process understand how we as organizational actors interpret the physical symbolic artifacts in the built environment and how the resulting emotion is used, this information could be used to reduce potential misunderstandings of the purpose and intent behind these changes to our environment and consequently reduce resistance to change. This thesis then supports the argument put forward in recent literature for a more integrated approach between design and management.

7.2 Discussion of findings

This section will firstly present a synthesis of the five findings related to the first question asking how we interpret physical symbolic artefacts and secondly how the emotions resulting from the interpretation process are used in the identity forming process.

1. Data revealed that participants interpreted artefacts through the aesthetic, instrumental and symbolic dimensions. This concurs with the Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) findings.

When faced with artefacts within our organizational built environment we interpret them using one of the three dimensions at a moment in time. This does not exclude us from interpreting another dimension at another point in time, but dependant on the type of information we are seeking, or sense making we are undergoing, then we use one of these specified dimensions. Instrumental dimensions are those which have a function. We are therefore assessing or interpreting the artefact by its ability to

perform that function. If, for example, we are relocated within our workplace to a different office, we may assess it by its quality of light to enable us to perform our task, the amount of space allocated, whether or not that is functional and whether the type and quality of our office furniture allows us to work efficiently. We are seeking confirmation that the functionality of the equipment meets a desired or required standard. If we interpret the same office from an aesthetic perspective we are assessing the design and the look of the working environment. Do the colours match? Is the style of the furnishings compatible with the image of the organization? Is the layout pleasing on the eye? We can also interpret our working environment from a symbolic perspective. Have we been given what we perceive to be the 'correct' quality of furnishings that match our status in the organization? Is our office larger or smaller than a colleague with whom we have equal status? If we feel the design is not aesthetically pleasing does this mean we are not respected in the organization? If the lighting is too harsh for us to work comfortably is this because the correct fittings were not specified and does this reflect management's perceptions of our capability to do our job. We therefore interpret our environment in different ways depending on the meaning we are seeking at that point in time.

2. My findings extend those of Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) by determining that the extent of the response which resulted from these interpretations varies, depending on which of the three dimensions were interpreted. The most intense interpretations were evidenced when participants were interpreting the symbolic dimension of the artefact negatively and this occurred to varying degrees depending upon the context within which it occurs. This was also the most unpredictable interpretation as it depended on numerous factors such as the participants' role in the organisation, how they related the artefact to their own circumstances and what changes were happening around them. These interpretations were the most complex and as such difficult to predict as a reaction of change processes to the built environment.

3. My findings also revealed that we interpret different dimensions of artefacts to differing extents depending on the context. This finding was based on the comparison of the frequency and type of interpretations gathered during phases 1-4 and over the three case sites. The three case sites were undergoing similar changes, although GAMMA participants, enjoying a more stable environment with a more

participative style of management, interpreted their environment to a lesser extent than the other two sites. BETA participants however, interpreted their built environment to a greater extent and used the symbolic dimension of the physical artefact more often than on other case study sites. The main difference between the three case study sites was the way the change was managed and in BETA the style of management had recently changed from participative to autocratic. Therefore, when information about the changes and the implications these changes would have on participants was now not available they sought meaning through the physical changes to the built environment by interpreting the physical artefacts within that environment. The symbolic dimension was used more extensively in the interpretation of physical artefacts under these conditions.

4. Rafaeli & Vilnai – Yavetz (2004) suggested that the dimension of the physical artefact interpreted is, at least in part, influenced by the participants' type of education and professional background. Their case study involved the assessment of impact on a community of the introduction of a new colour of bus. Participants in their study interpreted this from a professional perspective. The marketing expert assessed the colour from a symbolic perspective and the engineers assessed it from an instrumental perspective. My findings suggested that participants discussed their interpretations in two ways. The first way that these interpretations were discussed was similar to Rafaeli & Vilnai- Yavetz (2004). For example, during a meeting, participants who were on the publications committee responsible for editing the college magazines were discussing items for inclusion in the next publication. One article was written about a student's trip to Korea. The marketing lecturer was concerned with the symbolic content of the article and whether it matched the image of the college. The graphic design lecturer was concerned with the aesthetics of the photographic image chosen for inclusion with the article and the English teacher was questioning whether the article, which was written by a student, should be edited to upgrade the level of language used. In this context, and there were numerous incidents of this nature, the findings coincide exactly with Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz (2004). However this phenomenon was out with the research design as the research design was used to investigate how participants felt about issues in the workplace and how they sought to understand these issues and not necessarily in a purely professional context as illustrated above. When, however, interpretations were used

to inform the participants' identity in the workplace, this phenomenon changed. The findings from GAMMA where the participants were not reporting negative aspects of power, respect and status in connection with the change processes, showed that participants interpreted their surroundings mainly in accordance with the Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz (2004) findings i.e. in accordance with their education background. In the BETA and ALPHA case study participants were interpreting the symbolic dimensions of artefacts far more often and the majority of their interpretations were not connected to their educational background. When the interpretations were analyzed by the country of origin of the participants the results showed that the highest number of interpretations in this context came from British and Canadian participants. I would propose that rather than there being a direct link between nationality and the extent and type of interpretation this phenomenon can be explained by the type of working conditions prevalent in the participants' country of origin. In Britain and Canada participants would expect to experience a more collegial type of management decision making and where decisions taken would be communicated in a transparent manner and subject to a strict documented academic procedure. The participants in the ALPHA and BETA case study were working under an autocratic style of management and there was no collaboration on decision making and no procedure in place for informing actors of the decision making process.

The data would suggest that in a context where the participants were seeking meaning about changes in the environment, aspects of educational background are not as relevant as when artefacts are interpreted in a professional task oriented setting. This data is suggestive but by no means conclusive and perhaps a longitudinal study with a greater number of participants would provide more conclusive evidence. The context within which my research took place implied that their interpretations had deep personal meaning for the participants who were reflecting on how changes may or may not affect their position, groups' position within the organisation or, alternatively, the organisations' position within society.

5. Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz (2004) proposed, within the confines of their case study, that these reactions are conceptually and empirically distinct from reactions to the activity in which individuals are engaged and from the interpersonal interactions in which they engage. This makes sense considering their particular case study

involved the interpretation of the colour of a bus. If we interpret the colour of a bus as we are walking along the street our resulting interpretation will have little or nothing to do with who we are or whether we are going to book a holiday, or see the bank manager about the possibilities of an overdraft. In this context the interpretations are distinct and separate. However, my data revealed that within the differing context of my cases study sites, the reactions observed and analyzed were directly linked to the activities of the organizational actors and to the interpersonal relations they experienced. When interpretations are placed in the context of seeking meaning in the workplace then these interpretations become directly linked with who we see ourselves to be and who we want to be seen to be. Therefore, there is an aspect of reflection back on who we were and who we are now and also how others view us or will view us in respect of our changing workplace environment.

There were four findings in relation to the second research question which was:

How is the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts used by actors to influence/ affirm actors' perceived threat to identity, identity affirmation, or identity change?

These were:

1) Data used to answer the first research question has suggested that participants interpreted the physical symbolic artefacts in an 'incident' through the artefacts aesthetic, instrumental and symbolic dimensions. These interpretations are used to inform or influence different categories of identity. This occurs within a cyclical process of interpreting, using the results to inform identity, comparing that identity, altered or informed, with another interpretation which may result in an altered form of emotion. The cyclical nature of this process was observed over time and during a series of interviews with the participants. The findings suggest that there is a direct link between the interpretations of physical artefacts in the context of the organisational environment and that we use these interpretations to influence, inform or alter our identity.

2) Hatch & Schultz (2002) proposed that there are four processes of identity formation namely, mirroring, reflecting expressing, and impressing, and only specifically stated that physical artefacts are used in the impressing process. My findings propose that all four processes are used. Hatch & Schultz's (2002)

framework for differentiating the concepts of organizational culture, identity and image and how they are interlinked, mentioned the role of physical symbolic artefacts in that process. They stated that meanings are '*expressed in cultural artefacts*' and '*the meaning laden artefacts of a culture become available to self-defining, identity-forming processes*'. Within the context of their paper they mentioned corporate architecture as a way of expressing identity and also that by building corporate facilities identity is projected to others. However, they did not research the precise role, extent and context of physical symbolic artefacts. I found that we use symbolic physical artefacts within all four of the processes of identity formation proposed by Hatch & Schultz (2002) namely, mirroring, reflecting expressing, and impressing and that as a consequence the role artefacts in the built environment plays in identity formation is more significant than previously envisaged.

3) Data revealed that the participants held views of their collective self that were central, distinctive and to an extent enduring but that within the context of an organisational environment when issues of respect, status and power and legitimisation were apparent, the views of their collective self splintered into organisational, group or self identities over time. This process was informed by the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts. The processes of management of change triggered emotions relating to respect, status, power, and legitimization, the participants sought meaning about their situation through the interpretation of physical symbolic artefact, these interpretations informed their identity and as a result the organisational identity started to fragment. The perceived radical changes caused participants to alter their view of the organizational and workplace identity in the BETA case study and this fragmentation of identity resulted in workplace identity gradually splintering down into various group identities. In the ALPHA case study the splintering continued down from various group identities into self identity. In the GAMMA case study workplace identity had largely remained intact but had also, to a lesser extent, splintered off into organisational identity.

4) The dimension of the artefact that is interpreted by participants, and whether or not the resulting interpretations were positive or negative, affects the identity formation process. When participants interpreted the symbolic dimension of

physical artefacts negatively this produced a high level of negative emotion and workplace identity split off into organisational identity. Organisational identity, over time and under the same circumstances split into group identity which, should the same circumstance remain, split into self identity.

In conclusion, this section has linked findings to Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz (2004) who proposed that artefacts were interpreted using three dimensions and explains the similarities and differences and provides a possible explanation of why these have occurred.

This section has also linked findings to Hatch & Schultz (2002), who proposed four processes of identity formation namely, mirroring, reflecting, expressing, and impressing, and explains the similarities and differences and provides a possible explanation of why these have occurred. The results have also linked the two theories and consequently two fields of research, interpretation of symbols and identity. The results have been compared describing the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts is used by organisational actors to influence/ affirm their perceived threat to identity, identity affirmation, or identity change, over the three case study sites and has offered an explanation for the similarities and differences that occurred.

7.3 Relationship of results to existing literature

This section discusses the findings of this thesis in relation to the main concepts of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

Results related to Symbols literature

Pierce (1931-1958) in (Clarke et al. 1998) proposed that meaning and knowledge are derived. He isolated three key categories of sign; an icon which represents an object, an index, which follows on from an event and represents that event, and a symbol which requires interpretation to signify the relationship. This thesis has focussed on this third category of signs. (Clarke et al., 1998) proposed that by focusing on the way objects can be interpreted (symbolised) the meaning of the experience within a particular context can be fully understood. This thesis has focused on the 'incident' which was the experience and within that incident the interpretation of physical

symbolic artefacts was interpreted and documented to inform the meanings within the context.

Literature has previously suggested that physical objects can be a communicative tool, being interpreted, manipulated and altered by actors in the organizational built environment can be a call to action, mobilizing and directing (Straati, 1998) gaining commitment (Edelman, 1977) exerting control and power (Wilson, 1992; Czarniawska- Joerges and Joerges, 1990 and Bourdieu, 1991) communicating (Girin, 1987) and controlling perceptions and creating meaning (Pondy and Mitriff, 1979) and a political object and resource (Wilson, 1992). Some symbols of culture are recognized by participants. Other unplanned symbols had been ascertained by other participants and these serve to confuse those presented by others (Preston, 1993). Within the context of this thesis unplanned symbols such as the interpretation of glazed lecture rooms were perceived as a control mechanism over staff rather than the managerial intention which was to ensure that sufficient light entered the lecture rooms. If we assume that cultural symbols aid the participants to understand change incentive then the participant is often confused by what appear to be contradictory symbols of culture (Buch & Wetzel, 2001). The case study management of change program was being justified by a necessary action to become more efficient and technologically advanced and yet at the same time there were contradictory symbols on site such as old computers and broken desks. As argued by (Clarke et al., 1998) the focus in research up until recently has been more on physical artefacts rather than the experience of meaning around the artefact itself, through the active construction of a social definition. Within this process, the meaning and symbolism of the act, or incident, can only be gleaned by examining how the change to the built environment has been encoded by 'imagery gatekeepers' to denote a particular lifestyle or status which is then subsequently understood by social construction by participants.

Rashid & Rachman (2003), suggest that during organisational change the dynamics of conventions is never the direct consequence of managerial action but results from a process in which action is only a part. Rather, there is a permanent search for and maintenance of coherence under the pressure of maintaining routine between various screens of symbols and that this is triggered by individual behaviour. Managers, of course are included in this social environment and they act also as individual trying to escape uncertainty.

Managers through change create objective patterns (Rashid & Rachman, 2003) but these elements can be embodied in physical symbols. (Renteln, 2004) propose that it is important not only to understand the relationship between symbols but also the set of beliefs to which they are attached or relate to. (Renteln, 2004) stated that individuals feel that their identities are connected to symbols and therefore it is very important to them to preserve those symbols. This thesis has given evidence of this in data vignettes showing how participants used artefacts. For example, a coffee pot might be used to illustrate that participants were equal to their supervisors. Symbols accentuate the difference between a minority group and the dominant cultural group (Renteln, 2004) and this can cause discomfort. In the context of these case studies the symbols showing that one organisational actor was more important than another, leather seating, closed offices, provision of coffee, provision of parking caused discomfort with those who did not have these symbols but also the need to justify having them by the minority who did. Anxieties increase when a symbol that participants construct one meaning for (Renteln, 2004) (the author was writing about religious symbols) and others within the same locality can hold different world views. When the organisation does not acknowledge these differences and holds a mono cultural paradigm this discomfort may be unavoidable (Renteln, 2004). In Alpha and Beta this was demonstrated by the fragmentation of identity into group identities as participants held different world views.

This thesis's findings concur with all of the above. Despite the references above, physical symbolic artefacts have been little researched in the management literature and their place in management studies has been consequently under estimated. This thesis has provided empirical evidence that we interpret our physical surrounding in a sense making process relevant to the activities and intentions of our workplace colleagues and managers. This is a powerful tool to be understood and its impact on management revealed.

Results related to Identity literature

This thesis has researched the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts within the built environment and how or indeed if these interpretations are used to form or influence identity in the workplace. The data gathered from the three case studies has supported the notion that identity is the act of forming engaging and repairing

our constructions to give a sense of coherence and distinctiveness (Alvesson, 2003). Participants, through their interpretations of the artefacts in the built environment involved asking, “Who am I?” or “Who are we?” (Pratt & Foreman, 2000). The data supported the notion that identity, is not singular as we acknowledge the existence of multiple identities within the same individual (Burke, 1937; Feldman, 1979; James, 1890; Markus & Nurius, 1986; McCall & Simmons, 1978; Pratt & Foreman, 2000; Stryker & Serpe, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Participants in the research could alter identities and the relationship between individuals and organizations management was reciprocal just as organizational identities can influence individual behaviour, individual behaviour can influence organizational identities (Pratt & Foreman, 2000). The case study shows that when there were no negative identity issues such as was evident in Gamma; participants related to a workplace identity which included, organizational, self and group and this concurred with Elsbach’s (2004) definition. Consequently, they had ownership of the identity and could alter that identity. In the BETA case, where the identity had fragmented from organisational, to group, to self; participants perceived that the organizational identity was separate from them; they had no ownership over it and consequently could not influence it.

Albert and Whetten’s (1985) definition of organizational identity has fuelled debate as to whether identity is static or an ‘enduring’ notion. Other theorists would argue that identity is dynamic (Gioia & Thomas, 1996) or contradictory and often changing managerial identities (identity positions) (Alvesson & Svingingsson, 2003). At the onset of this data collection I accepted the Alvesson & Svingingsson definition and still do, but the question remains as to the exact definition of enduring versus fluid. However, although Albert & Whetten’s definition has been mainly understood as advocating that identity is fixed the terminology was that it is ‘temporally constant.’ This allows for changes over time for an organization to adapt to its environment. This is similar to other authors who have suggested that identity is fluid and unstable. To summarize then, over the three year period of the study the identity of two of the sites was ‘temporally constant’ at least from the views of the participants and one of the sites, BETA, identity was fluid and changing rapidly and the data has suggested that this was due to the style of management in the management of change processes.

There was a constant argument at ALPHA and BETA, which did not occur at GAMMA, about what the organization was. Was it two colleges who happen to be located in the same area and have one director, or was it two colleges merging into one campus? Because of the political nature of the changes and perhaps also the directors' leadership style this was never openly discussed or stated and remained a constant source of confusion. It also meant that staff arranging facilities, buildings, publications were in constant contact with the director for advice on which direction to make the physical changes required. The discrepancy in this can also be explained by how the changes were made and who was interpreting them

People can seek to adopt particular practices, artefacts or language in order to assert a particular identity position (Beech, 2004). When faced with changing situations identity work can be heightened (Alvesson & Wilmott, 2002). This identity work occurs as actors try to develop their own position, impose their positions on others or prevent others from constructing their identity (Beech, 2004). It has been acknowledged by Beech, (2004) that physical and symbolic representations become embedded with meaning and this has significance for actors within that context.

Knights and McCabe, (2002) have argued that a managerial innovations can transform individuals that can be negative or positive and this has an impact on their role and identity. Beech (2004) also highlighted three aspects of identity work and these were 1) a concern with forming identity constructions (evidenced in this case study with the constant questioning from participant about their value in the organisation) 2) identity work is an ongoing process (this occurred over three years although less so during stable periods in the case study 3) identity work entails maintaining the distinctiveness of the identity (participants tries to maintain their distinctiveness by using artefact to emphasis their status and value. e.g. the coffee pot story.

Management using symbolic, amongst other means, *'may satisfy narcissistic needs so well that the employee views their own identity in terms of their work context'* (Beech, 2004). This means that within a Western culture, evidenced in this thesis with Canadian and British actors showing a high incidence of interpretation, that the actors 'worth' is valued in terms of the status of their employment (Carr, 1998).

Results related to Organizational Change literature

Individuals respond to the change process itself and the dimensions most frequently researched are fairness (Brockner et al., 1994) and open communication (Brockner, De Witt, Rover & Reed, 1990, Buckhardt, 1994). In the appraisal and coping cognitive model of change personal impact is indicated by perceptions of threat and/or uncertainty with respect to the satisfaction of the individuals' goals and values (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Mishra & Spreitzer, 1998).

This research confirms that organizational change situations are not populated by fixed identities operating according to fixed routines, but are ongoing processes in which actors' beliefs are interwoven, habits and new actions collide and new experiences are encountered and have to be accounted for in the sense-making of actors (Beech, 2000). Management may pressure for change and this can mean conflict if groupings of actors are resistant to change (Fahey, 1981; Pettigrew, 1985; Johnson, 1986). These actors will draw on their values and symbols of the state of the organization prior to change in order to legitimize their view point and deny any need for change (Lorsch, 1986). In times like these it is suggested that physical manifestations of the built environment are interpreted to provide validation for these points but the relationship between interpretation of the built environment and the use actors put that interpretation to with respect to their and others identity seems complex but is insufficiently documented. It is on that relationship that this research has focused and has attempted to address these gaps.

How fast a minor concern develops into an 'incident' as defined in this thesis depends according to Carr, (1998) on not only who is involved but also on the opportunities they have to interact and construct meaning. If there is a variation in knowledge and meaning is ambiguous then potentially interconnected signs (or symbols) need to be negotiated before the incident can be defined and the issues emerge. Self interest or perhaps self identity may solidify a *'partial recognition of an issue thereby hindering a broad consensus* (Carr, 1999)

What is organizational change in this context? From the perspective of an individual in ABC, a new job description or a new post may be seen as change, whilst from the perspective of the heads of instruction or director this may seem insignificant. Even changes which the director feels to be important such as the addition of a building or the installation of the intranet porthole may from outside the organization appear

relatively minor. Furthermore, the same phenomena can often be perceived as evidence of change and stability depending upon the perspective that is taken, and on how the boundaries of the system within which the change is taking place are defined. Is the definition the building, or the campus, or the college system, the emirate or the country? In the college the overall management perspective may be of a stable system of education and success of the students. To the teaching staff and supervisors, however, the teaching processes necessary to support this overall approach often seem turbulent in the extreme.

The interpretation of physical artefacts and the formation of identity are relevant within all classifications of changes because they involve our perception of the change around us at whatever level of management we happen to be. This thesis was set within one of these contexts, and the data collection focussed on participants perceptions of incremental and radical change. The focus was to understand the role interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts in the process of organizational change. Incremental change has been defined as the sort of ongoing change that is routinely necessary for any organization to adapt to its environment, whilst radical change can be seen as the sort of change that necessitates a thoroughgoing re-examination of all facets of an organization. This distinction may seem helpful in ordering our thinking but there is a concern. First, whether the change will be perceived as incremental or radical will be contingent on the opinions of participants, since change is "predominantly a perceptual phenomenon, understandable only in terms of individuals' accounts of definition of the situation" (Wilson, 1992, p. 7). To the participants of ABC the changes they were undergoing were radical and, particularly to the participants of BETA, stressful. Now, a year after the study I contacted 25% of the remaining 14 participants. Some have left the organization, others are still employed there. But all agree that *'the dust has settled'*. *'Not much has happened this year.'* *'When you think what a state we were all in last year- you wouldn't have believed we would still be here would you?'*

How useful is it to say that change is incremental or radical if the attached meanings and assumptions are not revealed? Who decides whether the change is incremental or radical? Change that was regarded as incremental can develop and expand to have what are seen to be radical implications for the organization. *'Only the director has*

changed but the reality of the situation is that our world has changed and nothing will be the same as it was. '

As a result, the differentiation between incremental and radical change is often more difficult to discern than might be expected.

Whether the change is incremental or radical will be dependent on the boundary judgments of those involved in and affected by it. It is very unlikely that different people will perceive the boundary of the system in the same way. In ABC some participants were affected by the changes to a greater degree than others and some perceived the changes to be restricted to GAMMA, especially those departments such as Design and Health Sciences who did not have a similar department on the other campus. Furthermore, are boundaries taken for granted, or decided through discussion? What are the assumptions controlling where boundaries should be drawn? If these questions are not transparent, there might be a possibility that the system of concern, and the change, will be uncritically determined. In the case of ALPHA and BETA the questions and answers were not transparent. In GAMMA all was discussed, resulting in less fear and more acceptance of the change.

7.4 The main contributions of this research

Symbols

The findings of this thesis add to the theory on interpretation of symbols in several ways. The findings lead me to conclude that we interpret physical artefacts through their aesthetic, instrumental and symbolic dimensions with the symbolic dimension being used more extensively in the formation/ alteration of identity.

The data would suggest that under conditions where the participants are reflecting on their own identity in the workplace and interpreting artefacts in this physical context and that those conditions exhibits issues of respect, status and power then aspects of education background are not as relevant as has been suggested in earlier research.

Identity

The findings of this thesis add to identity theory in several ways. Firstly, with the changes to identity reported in BETA it suggests that identity is dynamic. However changes in identity were not noted in ALPHA or GAMMA identity although the

participants were going through similar changes in the physical and human resources environment. This could, perhaps be due to the degree of change both physical and to the organizational culture. Any single aspect of identity is subject to multiple interpretations and although the core of understanding remained similar there were differences depending on who was interpreting them. Additionally, the thesis expands our understanding of the extent of identity work in differing contexts of management of change processes.

In terms of the related others, findings show support for Tajfel's (1982) notion of social comparison. Participants were actively comparing their physical facilities with that of colleagues or students and using this information to make judgments about power status and respect. Identity, as a focusing and integrative mechanism focused on issues of membership (Goffman, 1959). Participants interpretation of artefacts and consequent perceptions were aimed at understanding and or affirming group memberships and in/group, out/group status.

Data provided empirical support for Hatch & Schultz's (2002) process model of organizational identity both with regards to the organizational identity and the workplace identity (self and group) in connection with the aspect of different types of processes being used. Data however revealed that physical symbolic artefacts were interpreted to provide information for not only the expression process as indicated by the authors but also mirroring and reflection and impressing processes.

The interpretation of artefacts was evidenced more in the reflecting processes and less frequently in expression and impressing and least in mirroring. This suggests that using the Hatch & Schultz model as a lens, that the interpretation of artefacts is used in understanding and shaping the organizations changing culture.

Change

It can be argued that organizational change is a phenomenon characterized by subjectivity rather than objectivity. It can be perceived as either change or stability depending upon the participants' perceptions and boundary judgments, and consequently focus needs to be, not so much on what type of change is taking place, but rather on diversity within a systemic framework, to order our thinking and help

manage organizational change. I have outlined these points to illustrate that our understanding of interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts and their role in forming our identity in the workplace is important within all levels of change, because the underpinning concept is that change is what we perceive it to be and what we perceive is to an extent dependent upon our interpretation of our environment. In summary, organizational change is a dynamic process, concerned with the management of a diversity of approaches to continually changing problem contexts and if we understand the way that employees turn to their environment to seek an understanding of events and future events it can only assist us in managing such changes to a successful outcome. In managing change, the critical task is in understanding how pieces balance one another, how changing one element changes the rest, how sequencing and pace affect the whole structure. It is within this role that understanding the impact both changing and consequently interpreting the built environment has on our identity formation becomes important in the successful management of change.

7.5 The limitations of the research

This research was undertaken by a single researcher (myself) within one organisation and within the context of one organisation within the Middle East. However, this was undertaken over three years, providing an ongoing context over time; with the use of informed participants, verifying data collected and using three case studies sites within the one organisation, showing that the phenomena is not unique to one context.

7.6 Methods for understanding organizational identity processes

I used a research design that is aimed at identifying both the content and the process of interpretation of physical artefact and processes of identity formation. This is not the only research design that could or should have been used in this thesis. A longitudinal study would capture the identity processes before during and after change and also allow for a larger number of participants of different countries of origins and educational background. However this would fail to capture the emotions that were so prevalent in this case study which were encapsulated using ethnography and participant observation. Much of the work on symbolic interactions has been done out of the organizational context and with one-off encounters so doing this research within an organization may give more facets to the research. A lot of the research

focuses on how actors adopt new organizational identities based on changing roles. Although relevant to an extent, I felt that more could be learned by examining the identities in a changing organization.

This thesis adds to the knowledge on method by offering confirmation of Geertz's hermeneutic approach and more recently that of Sims (2003) who stated that by presenting data vignettes he had '*pieced together, in each case from many hours of listening to participants in the situation, a version of the story which would be fair and recognizable to many of those involved and which, like many stories reflect the view of more than one participant*'. He claimed a narrative truth confirming Bruner (1990). Sims (2003) has also suggested that meaningfulness in life is what we understand from our own stories implying that the truth is how we perceive or understand it. '*If we have reason to care strongly about our stories then we want others to understand the situation as we see it*'. Stories will often fail because the characters are not credible (Sims (2003). In this thesis I have tried to tell the participants stories of seeking meaning and understanding the changing working environment they were in and how the role of interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts was used in this identity work.

7.7 Alternative Explanations

This thesis sought to understand the processes involved in the formation and or alteration of identity in the workplace through physical symbolic artefacts in the organizational built environment. The research took place within the context of change to the organisational environment both from the resulting changes to the physical structure and refurbishment of the buildings and the human relations aspect and. The dimensions of the artefacts used in interpretation, aesthetic, symbolic and instrumental, provided some insight into the process. How this resulting interpretation was used through expression, reflection and mirroring and impressing gave insight on how identity is formed through the resulting emotion from the initial interpretations. The context of change within these three case studies affected the way and the extent to which participants both interpreted artefacts and how this resulted in the formation or alteration of identity.

However, I have to accept that other explanations may be possible. The research for this thesis was conducted at organizational level. Therefore, I must accept that alternative explanations may be found at other levels for example at society level.

I compared my results to the two dominant theoretical models which were closely related to my subject are using Mead (1934) as an underpinning meta theory but may have found additional or alternative explanation had I used another theoretical comparison. Giddens's structuration theory, for example, refers to the structuring of social relations across space and time. Structures can be changed but the results of the change cannot be predicted because of Giddens's notion of unintended consequences of action. One of the central concepts of Giddens's structuration theory mentioned above is the notion of duality of structure. The duality of structure refers to structure as both the medium and outcome of the conduct that it organizes. Further the structural properties of social systems do not exist out of action but are implicated in its production and reproduction (Giddens, 1984). Structuration emphasizes more than the structure of an organization. *'It is an integration of organizational structures, roles, norms, objects and processes'* (Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000). The essential part of this view is the reliance on the integrative function of organizational structures as both a medium and an outcome of the reproduction of processes (e.g. the possible formation of the organizations identity). Therefore, the focus in an organizational context is on the components of an organization such as communication, networks management and co-ordination. I therefore recognize that structuration theory has the ability to give insight into identity Giddens's ideas are being adopted more frequently (Pozzebon, 2004) and during his paper Pozzebon discussed the use of structuration theory within multiple levels of analysis and stated that the theory helps to span micro and macro levels of analysis In this thesis, in common with the discussion in Pozzebon (2004) were the occurrence of individuals acting in the name of their organisation or group and in this context micro processes begin to be shared and adopted and institutionalised. These processes becoming norms and rules at the macro level and constraining individual's perceptions and choices. Therefore structuration theory may provide an explanation for the behaviour that was recorded in the three case study sites of this thesis. I justify its exclusion because the primary focus of the thesis was on whether or not we interpreted physical artefacts and if so how we used this information and not focusing only on the behaviours themselves.

Group development literature may hold some insights in a thesis such as this and this literature was not included in the review. This literature may have some insights relevant to both the interpretation of artefacts and the formation of identity in the workplace. At the group level the issue becomes one of group processes in identity formation. In addition, an explanation of identity processes at organizational level could come from organizational learning. Organizational learning refers to the processes by which knowledge is developed within an organization. Argyris and Schon (1978) have referred to two types of learning that occurs. The first is single-loop learning that emphasizes obtaining know to solve specific problems based on existing principles. The second type of learning, double-loop learning focuses on establishing new premises and paradigms through our questioning and rebuilding existing paradigms. Related to this identity formation would be the result of an organizations response to the increasing dynamism and complexity of their environment. Identity formation processes would be the result of an amalgamation of single and double loop learning. . Some level of trust is required for many kinds of narrative presence, where trust may for this purpose be defined as feeling that you know how the other person will respond in their character (O'Neill, 2002). If there is not that sense of trust, they may be emplotted in a character where unpredictability or unreliability are built in. For example, they may be emplotted as a 'bastard'. This imposes its own kind of predictability and reliability by acknowledging that this person is not trustworthy.

I do not attempt to suggest that it is only the resulting emotion from the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts that is used in identity formation. However, within the context of the research, participants reported a higher number of interpretations which were actively used in identity formation when participants were under extreme stress and uncertainty prevailed. Gamma, the case study site which has a more stable environment reported significantly fewer interpretations and subsequent alteration to identity. I have to accept that it may have been the extreme conditions within Alpha and Beta which prompted the substantial findings on interpretation of physical artefacts rather than normally occurring phenomena within the built environment.

7.8 Implications for practice

This objective of this section is to relate the findings of the research to the implications for both managerial and design practice.

It has been acknowledged in Swann & Birke (2005) that a large body of literature has studied the relationship between workplace design and layout and behaviour including Becker (1990), Becker and Steele (1995), Clements- Croome (2000), Duffy et al (1993), Hargadon and Sutton (2000), Horgen et al (1999).

Boje (2001) proposes that we understand the social situation, in its complexity, through multiple lines of narrative through which the actors in the situation, make sense of, and attribute meaning to, events, the self and others. I propose here that physical manifestations could be an extension of language because they fulfil the same documented roles in organizational life. Although language can be imprecise, and it could be argued that the symbolic significance of artefacts is even more imprecise, viewing symbols as a language provides insight by reminding us that such meaning can be found in individual symbols in the same way we find meaning in words. This thesis has identified that participants interpreted meaning and this meaning is used to understand and/or inform their own individual, group and organizational identity with sufficient agreement on meaning to produce a coherent model of identity in the organization. Physical symbolic artefacts may then be the 'text' of a language which may help us as managers and designers understand how the changes we make to the physical environment of organisations is interpreted by organisational actors and where misunderstanding between designer and managers intentions and organisational actors interpretation may occur.

The role of the symbolic physical artefact, and consequently the organisational built environment is more important in both identification processes and managing change and this has practical implications for managers and designers involved in changes to the organisational built environment. Because image and identity are constructs that organizational actors hold in their minds they actively screen and interpret issues, issues which are in part at least interpreted from the build environment, using these reference points. In this way the organizational built environment can help or explain how the individual can push against or for these change processes. It is the inconsistency between various conditions such as the mismatch between managerial

action, the built environment and the organizational identity and image that can affect the individual's workplace identity.

In their report, DTI, (2005) stated that *'the architecture and design of the workplace may help or hinder productivity depending on its appropriateness to the focus of the organisation. The act of redesigning a workplace can serve as a catalyst for cultural change'*. Turner and Myerson (1998) also see workplace redesign as a catalyst for cultural change.

Olins (1989) quoted in Swann & Birke (2005) has argued that design can influence business performance directly by *'the visual style of an organisation affects its positioning in the market, and that' corporate purpose is made visible through design'*. It was this corporate purpose that was interpreted, sometimes incorrectly, by organisational actors and it is this misinterpretation we as managers and designers need to be aware of.

The recap, the main findings in this research were basically, that the more people are under threat, the more they turn to physical artefacts for identity construction and the worse things get, the more individualistic the process of identity construction becomes. This is significant in the practical organisational world of design management and management of change and links areas that have largely remained apart. Perhaps, significantly these areas are not only linked but fused as it becomes more apparent that the previous boundaries of a designer and a manager are now only not separate but also fused and interdependent on one another. This also highlights a danger area for professionals (the designer and the manager) whose purpose is either to control the built environment or to control the working environment as these findings imply that they are more difficult to control than previously thought. It raises a number of questions for the practitioner. If the organisational actors are under threat how do we know they feel threatened if this is not a managerial intention. When they are threatened and turn to physical artefacts for identity construction which artefacts will they choose and what will they understand from this process. As their identity construction moves further away from the workplace and becomes more individualistic, how can the practitioner predict what their reaction will be?

The implications for practice fall mainly into these two fields, that of design management and change management.

Design Management

This thesis highlights the need of designers to be aware that any designed artefact will probably at some point, depending upon context, be interpreted. Although the interpretations of the aesthetic and instrumental dimensions are fairly predictable the interpretations of the symbolic dimensions, particularly negative interpretations, are not. If designers cannot predict how and to what extent this will occur they need to implement a design management process which incorporates a process to enable designers to understand the motivations and needs of organisational actors when embarking on design projects and not simply pay attention to the aesthetic and instrumental aspects of design. This could be done by designers being involved at all stages of the management process and understanding the organisational culture and climate within which their designs will be used. This supports the call for the design role to be present at senior management and governance levels (DTI Economics Paper No. 15(2005) Creativity, Design and Business Performance).

Change Management

This thesis supports the notion that organisations using a top down management style need to be aware that although they can implement change they have no control over the way it will be interpreted within the organisation and these interpretations could be negative and result in barriers to change and in consequence these changes may not be adopted into the organisational culture. This supports research undertaken by Tsoukas & Chia (2002) and Balogun & Johnson (2004). Managers need to be closely connected to the organisational actors during the change process. In these case studies there had been a change of director but also changes to middle management so the organisational actors had no one they could turn to for emotional and managerial support to find trustworthy information on the changes and they turned to the built environment to inform them through their interpretations. Consequently, and logically there were occasions when the organisations actors did not interpret the true intentions of the direction.

7.9 Suggestions for further research

There are a number of possibilities for further research that can be suggested from this thesis. This section considers each suggestion in terms of three broad areas: various contexts, different theoretical approaches within the theoretical fields of organizational identity and interpretation of physical artefacts. Each of these suggestions would provide alternative perspectives and insights into the significance of the built environment and its interpretation, identity formation processes and identity content issues.

The case study used in this thesis was a single organization, albeit the research took place on three campuses so I would recommend conducting this study within another change situation. Further study is suggested on other than non profit education establishments. Studies could also be considered that comprise organizations from the same industry background or cross industry backgrounds. Studies from different geographical areas could be considered as this study took place in the Middle East and the conditions within this organization may be quite unique.

To be more precise, since presenting working papers describing the research I have undertaken for this thesis I have been asked to undertake research for a UK university who are planning to relocate to a new campus. This university has a strong image as a successful art school and the management of the institute believes this is closely related to the style of building they are located in. The university management is keen to retain their culture, identity and image after re-location. I am going to use the typologies created here in this thesis within an action research program to document their culture identity and image and work closely with the management and architectural team to ensure that interpretation of these changes make during the relocation program do not alter culture, identity and image in a detrimental way.

I am also involved in a research program for a hotel chain in the Middle East documenting their culture, identity and image using the typologies created in this thesis. The aim of this research is to understand how these luxury hotels are used symbolically in identity processes. The research will compare the identity formation processes of staff and clients and then relate the findings to the image of the hotels. Another objective of the research is to establish if there is a connection between how

negative symbolic interpretations of artefacts in the built environment of the hotels are used in the identity processes and if these may affect the image of the hotels through mirroring and impressing.

In terms of practical application to my own position as a lecturer, my research has been incorporated into course curriculum on MSc design management courses particularly in organisational behaviour and strategic management courses where the importance of understanding how designs can be interpreted by users and how this may affect behaviour has been demonstrated using the findings within this thesis. This has been extended to several consultancy projects where students have been involved in understanding the links between an organisations culture, identity and image and making recommendations for change.

Concerning more macro issues, there are also major government initiatives in the UK to understand the synergy between design and management and incorporate this knowledge into both education and industry (Cox, 2005). This thesis links the affect our spatial and graphic designs can have on management processes and how management processes can affect how designs are interpreted. The importance of management to make the most of design input has been a consistent theme in the literature. Developing the necessary management skills for today changing world requires more than formal education and it has been proven that much of the ability to manage design is tacit and gained through experience. Bessant et al (2005) recommend that effective management of design needs an integrated approach and this would link the specific contribution of design specialists with managers and the organisations strategy. The Cox Review makes a strong case for greater multidisciplinary cooperation between, business, management and design amongst other aspects (engineering and technology).

The Cox Review also argues that within education, creative arts courses could benefit from a more multi disciplinary approach particularly with the field of management and the same could be said for management recognising and understanding design. Cooper (2005) has already advocated that effective management of design needs an integrated approach, which links the specific contribution of design specialists with those of others throughout the organisation.

Whyte et al (2005) posited that one of the problems in managing design is that it is perceived to be apart and that other members of the organisation see the task of design as belonging to a group of design specialists and not relevant to them. This thesis highlights the dangers of this trap '*design is an organisation –wide task which needs to be managed needs to be managed in an integrated and high involvement fashion*' (Whyte et al 2005).

Therefore in terms of an extension of this thesis and further research further research questions could be addressed:

1. *How does the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts used in the identity formation processes affect business performance?*
2. *How can the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts used in the identity formation processes be used as a strategic resource within business?*
3. *What are the barriers to using the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts used in the identity formation processes as a strategic resource within business?*

These research questions echo the dilemma laid out in major research such as the Cox Review which call for more integration and a multi disciplinary approach in design and management. An answer to these questions would also give a practical response and insight in to how important integration of design is to business performance and the extent of the affect of organisational actors perceptions of the implications of design is on organizational behaviour.

7:10 Personal reflective statement

What I have learned about doing research

Firstly, the journey of understanding the implications of the chose of paradigms, and the differences and implications of ontology and epistemology was like opening an Aladdin's cave in terms of the richness it has provided for taking a holistic approach to the implications of research and understanding the underpinning philosophies.

Secondly, I have acquired the skill to be able to design a research framework that fits together like a jigsaw, each piece dependant upon and related to another. In practical terms this has meant being able to relate the questions to the defined objectives and aims; designing a methodology that will answer the research questions; deciding upon a method of analysis that corresponds equally to the questions , aims and objectives. Perhaps most importantly gaining the ability to discuss findings that are embedded in the analysis stage rather than, which had been my tendency, and is now the tendency of my own students, to pluck a partially justified conclusion from thin air.

Art and Design links

My original education has been in the field of design and the subject of my thesis has meant that I needed to connect the fields of design and management. My thesis topic joins the fields of design and management which have a history of different styles of research. Because of this I have tried to get the best of both worlds by adopting the rigour of managerial research while maintaining perhaps a more imaginative design approach using a blend of different types of research tools. Perhaps due to my background in design I had difficulties in transferring a visual knowledge into a written argument. I have subsequently found the same difficulties with my students while I am supervising Masters level dissertations for students enrolled on a MSc in Design Management. This has meant my teaching and supervising skills have been adapted to support students similar needs.

What I have taken from the research process

Above all I have learned the importance of developing a believable 'story' justifying all statements but importantly laying a trail of evidence and argument throughout a written piece of research. My PhD journey has perhaps been a long one blending study with full time academic work spanning several continents but I chose a subject I have a genuine interest in and because of this had the motivation to understand the phenomena involved. I undertook this journey from this perspective rather than studying the requirements to achieve a PhD and seeking a topic which would fulfil this requirement. If I were in a position to supervise future doctoral students I would make the existence and implications of this type of decision clear to them.

This has influenced my thinking to the extent that I now feel my personal strength is to work in the academic areas of design but to try to adapt and adopt the rigour of the field of management into the intuitive and lateral thinking of the creative arts to hopefully obtain the best from both fields. I have done this at masters' level supervision and would welcome the challenge to doing this at doctoral level.

7.11 Summary

This thesis focuses on what happens to an organization's identity during change. Specifically, this thesis sought to find out whether or not we interpreted physical symbolic artefacts and if so how this interpretation is used. This thesis contributes to knowledge by linking the fields of symbolism with identity by suggesting that we use the emotion resulting from the interpretation of physical symbolic artefacts within the formation of identity at various levels (workplace, organizational, group and self).

The thesis also contributes to knowledge by suggesting that under certain circumstances this resulting identity formation process fragments identity splintering from workplace, through to organisational, group and self.

In order to understand these processes, identity theory and literature on symbols and culture were used as a theoretical starting point to examine these issues and to frame the thesis.

To address the research questions and allow for the developmental processes of identity (both workplace and organizational) to emerge through the ongoing change to the physical environment, I used a case study research design in a non profit further education establishment which was undergoing similar changes on three of its campuses. Data was collected through participant observation, photography, interviews and review of documents. Two analytical frameworks were applied to the findings. Firstly, the Rafaeli & Vilnai (2004) model of interpretation of artefacts was used to compare with the findings of the first research question. Secondly, the Hatch & Schultz (2001) model was used as a framework for comparison of the results for the second research question.

The results of this study revealed that participants interpreted artefacts through aesthetic, instrumentality and symbolic dimensions of the artefact and that these

interpretations are used to form/ influence workplace and organizational identity. We use interpretation of artefacts to differing extents depending on the context within which we operate. The dimensions of the artefacts used may differ within the differing contexts of the organisation, in these cases the way the changes were managed and lead.

We use artefacts as a means of sense making and communicating issues of status, power and respect. We use artefacts to communicate and underscore our identity in times of flux. When issues of respect, status or power are reported, the reactions observed and analyzed were directly linked to the activities of the organizational actors and to the interpersonal relations they experienced. Participants held views of their collective self that were central, distinctive and enduring but that during the merger in ALPHA/BETA when issues of respect status and power were apparent these aspects were changing. During the changes when issues of respect, power, status were apparent the identity split into an 'us' and 'them' and organizational identity was viewed separately by the participants to workplace identity which then became a self and group definition. Data revealed that physical symbolic artefacts were interpreted to provide information for the expression, impressing, mirroring and reflection phases in identity formation or influence.

This thesis develops the constructs of workplace identity and image and uses them to link ideas for examining changing organizational relationships and the impact of the organizational built environment on its occupants and stakeholders. Whilst there are many variables that may influence the interpretation of physical artefacts in the built environment and its affect on identity processes this section highlights those that emerged as a primary catalyst in shaping identity processes. This 'language' of physical artefacts needs to be understood by both individuals and those within organizations, from a design and managerial aspect as this could prove to be a powerful medium to represent and negotiate new and complex identities and status relationships.

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Appendix 1: Definitions of terms

Artefact

The artefact is (a) a product of human action which exists independently of its creator; (b) intentional, it aims, that is at solving a problem or satisfying a need; (c) perceived by the senses, in that it is endowed with its own corporality or physicality (Gagliardi, 1992).

As defined by the Oxford dictionary 'artificial products, something made by human beings and thus any element of the working environment' (Hornby, 1974).

Aesthetics

The sensory experience the artefact elicits and the extent to which this experience fits individual goals and spirit- sensory aesthetics (colours, odours), formal aesthetics (forms, complexities) and symbolic aesthetics (associative meanings which cause pleasure) (Rafaeli, A & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2004).

Expressing

Expressing is the process by which culture makes itself known through identity claims (Hatch & Schultz, 2002)

Identity

Identity is essentially the set of beliefs or meanings that answer the question 'Who am I?' (Mead 1934) or in the case of an organization who are we?

Impressing

Impressing is the process by which culture makes itself known by identity claims. (Hatch & Schultz, 2002)

Organizational identity

It is a process in which individuals create several more or less contradictory and often changing managerial identities (identity positions) rather than one stable, continuous manager identity (Alvesson & Svingingsson, 2003).

Organizational culture

Organization culture is defined as the tacit organizational understandings (e.g. assumptions, beliefs and values) that contextualize efforts to make meaning, including internal self- definition (Hatch & Schultz, 2002).

Organizational Image

A holistic and vivid impression held by an individual or particular group towards an organization, and is a result of sense making by the group and communication by the organization of a fabricated and projected picture of itself (Hatch & Schultz, 1997). The organizational 'me' that is generated during the process of 'mirroring' (Hatch & Schultz, 2002)

Instrumentality

Refers to the extent to which an artefact contributes to performance or to promoting goals (Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz, 2004).

Mirroring

Mirroring is the process by which identity is mirrored in the image of others (Hatch & Schultz, 2002)

Reflecting

Reflecting is the process by which identity is embedded in cultural understandings (Hatch & Schultz, 2002)

Symbolism

The symbolism an artefact represents- the meaning or association it elicits (Rafaeli, A & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2004).

Workplace identity

Workplace identity refers to the distinctiveness and status self-categorizations used by an individual to signal his or her identity in a specific workplace (Elsbach, 2004a).

Self-Identity

“It is the self as reflexively understood by the person....self-identity is continuity (across time and space) as interpreted reflexively by the agent” (Giddens 1991).

Appendix 2: Consent form

Hilary Collins

ALPHA

ABC

24th January 2003

Dear Colleague,

I am a faculty member of ABC Colleges of Technology, Syri Men's College currently working on a research project which will be used towards my doctoral studies with Strathclyde University, Scotland.

I would like to make an appointment with you to discuss the following issues.

The architectural areas or physical artefacts within the college buildings that you may attribute meaning to, what that meaning is, and how you feel you apply or construct that meaning.

The main aim of this study is to uncover how individuals within an organization apply or construct meaning from symbolic physical artefacts within the organizational built environment. The research proposes that during a period of management of change within an organization, members of that organization attribute more importance to physical symbolic artefacts as a means of explaining or interpreting change policies.

Consequently, if we understand how meaning is applied and where the similarities in application exist, this knowledge can be used to add to strategic management of change and Architectural design knowledge.

All information collected for this study will be collated by institution and position type; neither individuals nor institutions will be identified by name. The interview will be recorded for the purpose of conducting a narrative analysis. The contents of the recording will remain confidential to the researcher and will not be divulged to any third party.

Attached is a short questionnaire which would accompany the taped discussion. The information here is required to provide a profile of participants and establish whether the participant responses may or may not be influenced by their country of origin, gender and education.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

Regards

Hilary Collins

PERSONAL DETAILS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name:

2. Age 20-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

3. Position within the organization:

4. How long have you worked in ABC

5. Which college do you work in?

6. How long have you worked in this college.

4. What is your country of origin?

5. What is your nationality?

6. What is the Highest Education level you have achieved?

High School Certificate

Bachelors

Masters

Doctorate

Professional qualifications

Discussion areas

All questions relate to your own experience and belief about your college

What change has occurred in the organization within the last year that, in your opinion has had the most far reaching effects?

In your opinion, what is your college's relationship with its environment e.g. dominant, submissive?

What is the correct way for staff to behave in their working environment?
E.g. dominant, pro-active, harmonizing, passive.

What kind of time units are most relevant to the college for the conduct of daily affairs.

Does the college look to the past, present or future?

Are members of the organization here basically good, neutral or evil?

What is the 'correct' way for people to relate to each other?

Is organizational life competitive or co-operative?

Is the best way to organize staff on the basis of individualism or collectivism?

Definition:

Individualism accents on individual rights and freedom

Collectivism accents the group and values harmony among members

Is the best authority system autocratic, custodial, collegial, or participative?

Definition:

Autocratic: obedience, dependence on boss

Custodial: Money, security and benefits, dependence on organization

Collegial: partnership, self-discipline, teamwork

Participative: consultation, work as a team, manager retains responsibility

Is the group best off if it is highly diverse or highly homogeneous?

Are individuals in a group encouraged to innovate or conform?

What is your impression of the buildings you work in?

Are there any contrasts with buildings you have previously worked in?

What do you think the designer was trying to achieve?

What do you think management is trying to achieve with the building design or alterations to the building?

Which symbolic physical artefact in your work environment gives meaning about the culture of the organization?

Do these artefacts contradict or support the culture?

How have you decided on the meaning of these symbols?

Appendix 3: Participants personal details

Sample Characteristics

No = number, PKI = Primary key informant, KI = Key informant, P= Participant, P1= Phase 1 interviews, P2 = Phase 2 interviews, P2G= Group interviews, P3 =Phase 3 interviews, P4= Phase 4 interviews
PO = Participant observation

| NO | PKI | KI | P | PI | P2 | P2G | P3 | P4 | PO |
|----|-----|----|---|----|----|-----|----|----|----|
| 1 | X | | X | X | X | | X | X | X |
| 2 | | | X | | X | X2 | X | X | X |
| 3 | | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X |
| 4 | | | X | | | X1 | X | | X |
| 5 | | | X | | | X1 | X | X | X |
| 6 | | | X | | | X2 | X | | X |
| 7 | | | X | | X | | X | x | X |
| 8 | | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X |
| 9 | | | X | | X | | X | X | X |
| 10 | | | X | | X | | X | | X |
| 11 | | | X | | X | | X | | X |
| 12 | | | X | | X | | X | | X |
| 13 | | | X | | | X3 | X | | X |
| 14 | | | X | X | | X3 | X | X | X |
| 15 | | | X | | X | | X | X | X |
| 16 | | | X | | X | | X | X | X |
| 17 | | | X | | X | | X | X | X |
| 18 | | | X | | X | | X | | X |
| 19 | | | X | X | | X3 | X | X | X |
| 20 | | | X | | X | | X | X | X |
| 21 | | | X | | X | | X | | X |
| 22 | | | | | | | | | X |
| 23 | | | X | | X | | | | X |
| 24 | | | X | | X | | | | X |
| 25 | | | X | | X | | | | X |
| 26 | | | | | | | | | X |
| 27 | | | X | | X | | X | | X |
| 28 | | | X | | | | X | | X |
| 29 | | | | | | | | | X |
| 30 | | | | | | | | | X |
| 31 | | | X | | X | | X | | X |
| 32 | | | X | | X | | X | | X |
| 33 | | | | | | | | | X |
| 34 | | | X | | X | | | | X |
| 35 | | X | X | | X | | X | X | |
| 36 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 37 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 38 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 39 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 40 | | | X | | X | | | | |
| 41 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 42 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 43 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 44 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 45 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 46 | | | X | | X | | X | | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|--|
| 47 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 48 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 49 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 50 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 51 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 52 | | | X | | X | | | | |
| 53 | | | X | | X | | | | |
| 54 | | | X | | X | | | | |
| 55 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 56 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 57 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 58 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 59 | | | X | | X | | X | | |
| 60 | | | X | | X | | X | | |

Sample and participation details in emergent order

| NO | M/F | NATIONALITY | POSITION | COLLEGE | DATE OF INITIAL INTERVIEW | PHOTO |
|----|-----|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | F | British | English faculty | ALPHA | 29/3/04 | YES |
| 2 | F | Lebanese/Canadian | Business faculty | ALPHA | 30/03/04 | Student services |
| 3 | F | British | English faculty | ALPHA | 29/03/04 | Students computing |
| 4 | F | Lebanese | Design Faculty | ALPHA | 29/03/04 | Design depart |
| 5 | F | | Supervisor acting Design GA | ALPHA | 29/03/04 | Design department |
| 6 | M | Lebanese | Business faculty | ALPHA | 30/03/04 | Ss work stations |
| 7 | M | Indian | Support | ALPHA | | |
| 8 | F | British | Support | ALPHA/BETA | 31/03/03 | personal workstation areas |
| 9 | F | British | Faculty Education | ALPHA | 30/03/04 | SS classes |
| 10 | F | Canadian | Faculty Education | ALPHA | 30/03/04 | Faculty area |
| 11 | F | Canadian | Business Faculty | ALPHA | 30/03/04 | Cafeteria building, theatre |
| 12 | M | South African | Business faculty | BETA | 29/03/04 | Parking, cafeteria building |
| 13 | M | Dutch/NZ | Business faculty | BETA | 4/04/04 | faculty workstations |
| 14 | F | Australian | Business faculty | BETA | 4/04/04 | Faculty areas, meeting rooms |
| 15 | M | Canadian | SS supervisor | BETA | 03/11/03 | Service dept |

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------|----------|---|
| 16 | M | Brit/Aus | Bus supervisor | BETA/ ALPHA | 03/11/03 | chair |
| 17 | M | British | Engineering supervisor | BETA | 03/11/03 | |
| 18 | M | Australian | Bus faculty | BETA | 03/11/03 | parking |
| 19 | F | Canadian | Business faculty | BETA | 4/04/04 | New library |
| 20 | F | Irish | English faculty | BETA | 02/01/04 | Faculty area |
| 21 | F | Lebanese/Canadian | IT faculty | BETA | 02/01/04 | Faculty area |
| 22 | M | Australian | Supervisor ILC | ALPHA /BETA | 04/01/04 | library |
| 23 | M | British | Head of Instruction | BETA/ ALPHA | 04/01/04 | Own office |
| 24 | M | British | Head of Instruction | BETA | 04/01/04 | Own office |
| 25 | M | British | Head of Instruction | ALPHA | 04/01/04 | |
| 26 | M | Australian | Supervisor CD1 | BETA | 04/01/04 | |
| 27 | M | South African | Supervisor SS | ALPHA | 03/04/04 | Own office |
| 28 | M | Iranian/Canadian | Supervisor IT | ALPHA /BETA | 03/04/04 | |
| 29 | F | British | Supervisor QA | ALPHA /BETA | 03/04/04 | Own office |
| 30 | F | British | Supervisor CD1 | BETA | 03/04/04 | |
| 31 | F | Lebanese | Support Graphics | ALPHA | 01/02/04 | Own work area |
| 32 | F | Emirati | Support Graphics | ALPHA | 01/02/04 | Own work area |
| 33 | F | Emirati | Supervisor PR | ALPHA | 01/02/04 | Own office |
| 34 | M | Palestinian/Canadian | Director | BETA/ ALPHA | 04/09/03 | Own office |
| 35 | F | British | Support Ed Tech | GAMM A | 5/04/04 | NO |
| 36 | M | Lebanese | Support Student rep | GAMM A | 6/04/04 | |
| 37 | M | British | Business /Finance faculty | GAMM A | 6/04/04 | Faculty workstations, sup offices |
| 38 | M | Indian | Support IT Tech | GAMM A | 6/04/04 | Support offices |
| 39 | M | British | IT Faculty | GAMM A | 6/04/04 | |
| 40 | F | British | Acting Director | GAMM A | 04/11/03 | Own office new facilities |
| 41 | M | British | Design Com Tech Faculty | GAMM A | 6/04/04 | Old/new |
| 42 | M | British | HD English faculty | GAMM A | 6/04/04 | |
| 43 | M | Indian | IT Maths faculty | GAMM A | 7/04/04 | Old/new |

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|-----------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------|------------------|
| 44 | F | British | Support HR | GAMM A | 7/04/04 | Management suite |
| 45 | F | Indian | Bus/ Maths Faculty | GAMM A | 7/04/04 | |
| 46 | M | British | Business faculty | GAMM A | 7/04/04 | |
| 47 | M | Pakistani | IT Faculty | GAMM A | 7/04/04 | |
| 48 | M | British | Mech. Supervisor | GAMM A | 7/04/04 | Faculty areas |
| 49 | M | Jordan | IT Supervisor | GAMM A | 8/04/04 | |
| 50 | M | British | FND English | GAMM A | 8/04/04 | |
| 51 | M | Canadian | Support ILC | GAMM A | 8/04/04 | |
| 52 | M | Indian | Support Student Services | GAMM A | 8/04/04 | |
| 53 | M | NZ | Business faculty | GAMM A | 8/04/04 | Faculty areas |
| 54 | F | British | Student services supervisor | GAMM A | 8/04/04 | Faculty areas |
| 55 | F | British | Design Comm. Tech | GAMM A | 9/04/04 | |
| 56 | F | Indian | Support Work placement | GAMM A | 9/04/04 | |
| 57 | M | Lebanon | Eng Head | GAMM A | 9/04/04 | New building |
| 58 | F | British | Support LRC | GAMM A | 9/04/04 | |
| 59 | M | Indian | Support Finance & Admin | GAMM A | 9/04/04 | Support offices |
| 60 | F | British | HD Eng Supervisor | GAMM A | 9/04/04 | |

Appendix 4: Summary contact sheet

Contact summary form

Contact type: Interview Photography..... Participant observation.....
Site:

Contact date:

Written by:

1. What were the main issues or themes that struck you in this contact?
2. Summarize the information you got (or failed to get) on each of the target questions you had for this contact.

Question Information

3. Anything else that struck you as salient, interesting, illuminating or important in this contact?
4. What new (or remaining) target questions do you have in considering the next contact with this site?

Appendix 5: Summary descriptions of the 24 incidents

VIGNETTE DESCRIPTION OF EACH INCIDENT

ALPHA1

Change in workstation allocations

This incident concerned individual faculty members who were relocated within the ALPHA campus. After Director F announced he was also going to be in charge of the BETA campus he included in that statement the need to work efficiently across both campuses and that this may involve faculty and management working across both campuses. His first initiative was to interview the current management team of ALPHA and BETA and consequent to these interviews he announced to the then assembled management teams of ALPHA and BETA a new joint structure which involved some changes in position, some demotions and relocation of some of the management team. These were not discussed with the team prior to announcement. A new staff organization chart was drawn up and work took place on both campuses to create or adapt offices for the revised management team. Subsequent to this, changes at faculty and staff level were announced and some members of staff were relocated to either ALPHA or BETA and occasionally to a different department.

BETA1

Change in workstation allocations

This incident concerned both the management of the change in workstation allocation process and the physical layout, design and location of the old and new workstations allocated to faculty members. This was the same incident that occurred in ALPHA1 except that the changes were more radical on the BETA campus in both management and faculty cases. The change process and leadership style of Director Sassan was a radical change for the staff and they were unsure of the resultant long term unstated consequences of these changes. What had been under the old director a consultative process now became an 'allocation'.

GAMMA1

Change in workstation allocations

At the same time, the beginning of the new semester in August 2003, there were changes in workstation allocations within GAMMA. This was because the planned relocation to the new campus had not gone ahead over the summer break because the new campus buildings had been delayed. New staff and faculty had been hired and other staff had resigned. There was a need to find accommodation in the old buildings which were also in the process of being packed up ready for the re-location. The old director had retired and an acting director from within the college appointed to oversee the move. Some additional workstations were erected in an ad hoc fashion where space allowed and with the consultation on staff in those areas. Everyone lent a hand to find accommodation for the new staff and on occasion shared a desk where necessary- amongst the packed boxes.

ALPHA2

Re-location of faculty areas

This incident concerned the re-location of departmental faculty areas to alternative buildings within the ALPHA campus. On this campus faculty and staff were located by academic discipline and the English language staff located in the academic department they provided support to. To provide more control over the now larger departments (after the re-organization of the management structure) under one supervisor, the English faculty were moved into one area located next to their supervisor. This move was announced to staff in a staff meeting by their own supervisors and then affected faculty and staff asked to pack up their belongings which would be moved by support staff over the weekend. No discussion took place with faculty over the personal and academic implications of these moves. Some members of faculty were then moved into what had been a disused area over the cafeteria. It had remained a storage area before because of the low ceiling height and poor ventilation and the smells from the cafeteria which drifted up to this floor. There was a meeting of the health and safety committee who pointed out the lack of fire escape, proximity to large gas tanks, poor ventilation but this was not taken into consideration and the move went ahead.

BETA2

Re-location of faculty areas/circular building

This incident concerned the re-location of faculty areas to another building on the BETA campus. Prior to this move all faculty were located in one large staff block. The building which had been built to house the continuing education department was now to be used as a teaching and faculty accommodation block for the business department. The director Sassan had decided to close the continuing education department, demote the supervisor, reallocate the staff and use the new building as a teaching block announcing to the management meeting that the objective of ABC was to teach nationals not a few Indians and the occasional South African and that this was a better use of resources. The business faculty members of BETA was relocated to this area which included the teaching and lecture rooms for the business department. There were no separate staff toilets and no ladies toilets at all so female staff had to walk through the campus to the next building to use the facilities there which took about 7 minutes in varying temperatures from 30 to 50 degrees. The director, Sassan, said he would arrange to put in toilet facilities but up until the research had finished in June 2004 this had not been done. Nor were there any fire escape, smoke alarms, opening windows, lift to allow disabled access, or staff coffee facilities.

GAMMA2

Re-location of faculty areas/ Porto cabins

This incident concerned the re-location of faculty within alternative accommodation as the staff increased and the new campus had been delayed. This move included placing staff in Porto cabins on campus as a temporary measure until the move to the new buildings could take place. This was done in consultation with staff and management who 'volunteered' to move the department, which was in numbers, the best fit for the accommodation. Some faculty who did not want to move were allowed to remain in their own area. Consultation took place at all levels and it was generally considered to be making the best of a bad job.

ALPHA3

Re-location within campus

BETA3

Re-location within campus

After the announcement of the changes in management structure and the subsequent reporting structure of staff and faculty to management there were changes made to the layout of the supervisors' offices. Supervisors' offices were now to be located next to their reporting staff so staff and faculty had to pass by their supervisors office to get the their faculty or staff workstations. This meant that more supervisors' offices were required and as some supervisors were required to manage across the two campuses a new post of faculty manager was created. Each supervisor who worked across two campuses had a faculty manager in each campus so there was always a manager present. These posts were created by the director and an additional payment was made per semester on top of the faculty salary. A reduction of 4 hours teaching load was given for the post. The consequence of this to the physical layout of the building was that more offices were created and to do this staff lost meeting rooms and coffee areas. This occurred over both campuses but the degree of resentment was higher in BETA to the changes.

GAMMA3

Re-location to new campus

This incident concerned the re-location of supervisors' offices which was occurring at the time of data collection and was done to try and free up space in a confined environment. Supervisors deliberately chose to have offices away from their reporting staff as they did not want to give the impression of checking up on them. Supervisors wanted this to continue when they were relocated to the new campus for the same reasons.

ALPHA4

Change in use of existing management suite

Prior to his appointment of BETA Sassan had relocated the management suite at ALPHA from its original location at the front of the main building. The location and specification of the management suite at BETA was the same. He authorized the refurbishment of an area to the rear of the building which afforded Sassan a private car parking space next to the door, an extensive office of 100 sq m and private bathroom. He located the boardroom next to his office and glazed management offices in front of his office. This left the existing management and director's office empty. The standard of specification of the interior was luxurious. For this he obtained authorization from the Sheik.

BETA4

Alterations to existing management suite

When Sassan took over BETA the directors and management suite were in their original location and to the original specification. This was a mid range specification comparable with the rest of the campus. Sassan maintained the original director's office as a second office for himself without changing the interior and had the original boardroom converted to three offices creating a new boardroom to the same spec as in ALPHA at the left hand side of the main entrance. He put the heads' and a visiting professor in the three offices. During this renovation he also authorized the upgrading of the main reception area.

GAMMA4

Re-location to new campus and existing management suite

The existing management suite was old and in need of refurbishment. The actor director kept it this way as they were about to relocate but the old director had always said money could be better spent elsewhere and had lived with it the way it was. New furnishings were being ordered for the new suite in the new campus but

the old director had authorized it before retiring and the specification was simple and practical, certainly not ostentatious.

ALPHA5

Use of security gates

Security gates and a one way system had been in place since F took over this campus. This meant staff had to allow 20 minutes to get through the gates in the morning as all transport was stopped and checked. The security guards were always fearful and followed the regulations on procedure carefully. Although staff did not like the security system it was always stated that it was there to protect the female students and give their families the confidence to send them to the college knowing they would be well looked after.

BETA5

Construction of security gates

Security gates had never been in place at BETA because security was present at the main gates to the University City and the male students could come and go as they pleased. There was a high fence with a gate mid way and a road between the two campuses but this had always remained locked. Now that some staff were required to drive between two campuses the gates were opened and security guards put in place to make sure no students went between the mens' and womens' campuses. Some of the staff had no transport and were unable to walk the 2km in the heat between campuses. Sassan joked that he would put golf carts going between the campuses and call it Sassan's train service. This never happened and staff had to find a way to get across campus. The security gates also slowed up access to the campus in the morning as all cars were checked before being allowed on campus.

GAMMA5

Use of security gates

Security gates had been in place for some years at the old campus and they had been designed into the new campus particularly in light of international security issues in the Middle East. The security staff were confident and friendly and guests or visiting faculty from other campuses were asked to provide ID and quickly signed on to the premises.

ALPHA6

Quality and quantity of staff parking

ALPHA was a larger campus than BETA and had built an additional four blocks which were used for the design department, health sciences, cafeteria and library. The building of covered car parking facilities had not been evenly dispersed throughout the campus which meant some blocks had an adequate supply of covered car parking and some did not. There was no consultative process by which staff could make a request or have their concerns voiced in this event and had to await the benevolence of the director who may or may not notice, or it may or may not be brought to his attention by one of the heads on his twice weekly campus walkabout.

BETA6

Quality and quantity of staff parking

The car parking facility had originally been designed to be adjacent to the main admin block where staff entered and exited. There was a limited number of covered car parking facilities which was reserved for the director and the heads leaving 10 other places on a first come first served basis. Each year, prior to the new director Sassan being appointed, there had been a 'best faculty' and 'best support staff' award. A light hearted end of year award where staff voted for the person who they thought should receive the award. The prize was a reserved covered car parking place for the next academic year. This was well received amongst the staff. In this country where temperatures can rise as high as 50 degrees going out to a car in that heat when the internal temperature of the car could be even higher was a very unpleasant experience and the previous director had been requested to supply more

covered parking. Because the new director had allocated a new building as a teaching block, which had no adjacent parking, this issue became even more pressing. Comparisons were drawn with the extensive covered parking available to staff in ALPHA. One of the first improvements F made was to authorize the construction of an additional 100 covered car parking places. However, he had authorized an additional 100 at the ALPHA campus and the contractors started the work on the women's campus first and only moved to the men's campus in Jan 2004, when the weather had cooled to about 30/35 degrees. Sassan had announced in his initial staff meeting that he recognized the urgency of the parking issue and would authorize building as soon as possible.

GAMMA6

Quality and quantity of staff parking

At the new campus there were extensive covered and non covered parking places and discussion was held between facilities management faculty and staff as to how they would best be allocated. There was a pressing problem at the old campus as there were no covered car parking, or parking places and staff and students alike had to leave their cars on a piece of waste ground in front of the campus. Any one arriving later than 8 am would probably have to look around for a parking place in the area and face a long walk. It was a problem that had grown out of the fact that the college had expanded quickly in a busy part of town and now were behind schedule in moving to the new campus.

ALPHA7

Use of intranet portal

The intranet portal was introduced by the director, Sassan, for ALPHA as a pilot project within ABC. It is a Virtual Knowledge Campus and provides a single web-enabled point of entry based on identity verification. It provides tools and information views structured on organizational hierarchy; i.e. you only see what you need to, have to and have permission to see based on Knowledge Management (KM) principles governing the management of explicit¹ knowledge in conjunction

with data-mining techniques according to the strategic and operational needs, mission and vision of the institution and its directorship. The Virtual Knowledge Campus draws on an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system which integrates information, business processes and workflow allowing data entry at a single point and then sharing it throughout the organization. It was initially introduced in ALPHA in August 2002 with the following implications. Staff had to log in attendance up load all pedagogic materials, all staff timetables were on the intranet so meetings could be arranged with a number of staff at a mutually convenient time. Staff entered assessments during published window times and these could be checked by the supervisors. There was no consultation with staff or management on this issue. The intranet also had a live camera on the campus which meant that images of what was happening on campus were relayed on the internet.

BETA7

Use of intranet portal

The intranet system was installed in the BETA campus in August 2003. The director, Sassan, instructed that the IT staff conduct training sessions with all faculty and staff on how to use the facility. Again, no discussion took place but the director had instructed the supervisors to inform staff of the regulations for use of the intranet facility. Staff had been used to a more autonomous way of working and had up until then kept all teaching materials as their own private source and now were told to load them up on the intranet in a specified format. Faculty had kept their own attendance records and only notified the supervisors if there was a problem with student attendance and now had to enter the attendance for every session before the end of the day otherwise they would be locked out of the system.

GAMMA7

Use of intranet portal

At the same time, August 2003, GAMMA were researching the possibility of adopting the intranet portal system and a voluntary committee had been set up to research the implications of the intranet work processes and the possible benefits. One the aims of the committee were to establish whether or not the portal could be adapted to meet the needs of GAMMA. The committee comprised of IT staff and faculty and heads to ensure it was representative.

ALPHA8

Use of new buildings

The director was solely responsible for obtaining funding from the Sheiks' for new buildings and although did not have an input into the external architecture, decided on his own the use the buildings were to be put to. He kept plans and specifications of new buildings in his office and would ask his visitors their opinions and then make his decision about what use they would be put to or the standard and design of the finishes.

BETA8

Use of new buildings

The previous director had consulted his management team about the use, requirement and specification of the new buildings donated by the Sheik and a management decision was taken on this basis. After the appointment of Sassan the same policy that was in place for ALPHA was used in BETA and F decided on the use of all buildings.

GAMMA8

Use of new buildings

The design of the new campus was a spec building supplied by the local government. It was after the main design scheme was completed and construction began that the college was consulted. The director then set up a voluntary consultative committee that included internal staff and industrial specialists to consider how best to use the buildings and the interior specification required.

Appendix 6: Account of ‘faculty workstations’ incident over three case sites

INCIDENT FACULTY WORKSTATIONS ALPHA

This is an account of one of the incidents as it occurred across the three campuses between August 2003 and Jan 2004.

Interview discussing history of incident/ Russell

Allocations are always done by the supervisor. Sassan doesn't want staff choosing where they will sit and then they will band together and just chat. Everyone's got to work hard here and if they don't they're out. I'm not sure how Gail got a prime spot like the window and now you're moving to a window spot- it shouldn't happen – no-one should choose. I suppose Paul isn't really bothering because he's leaving anyway. But wait and see it'll come up at the management meeting. My wife works in the American school and she says she doesn't know how I put up with it- she couldn't do it- but there is good and bad in everything. You might as well just do what you are told it's easier that way. Sassan got micro management techniques- he hears everything and he wants everything done yesterday. His standards are very high and he checks everything. So he knows where everyone is and it's easier to check up on that way.

Reflections of researcher

Russell had recently been the Business supervisor but had been moved to Student services supervisor so up until recently had managed faculty work station allocations. Everything in this college was allocated, even the pens and paper. Everything was controlled and checked so even the smallest triumph, like actually choosing where you sat but without anyone finding out about was considered to be important.

Change in allocations Yvonne/Michelle/ Gail

Yvonne

I'll have a word with Anna, she's the department secretary. You can have my old window seat because I'm moving. If I sit next to Caroline any longer I'll kill her. It's a window seat and it's quiet. You are not supposed to choose, the supervisor will do that, but if you have a word with Anna she'll sort it out. I'll do it for you if you like, and then you won't need to go up to the witches' coven until it's really necessary.

Michelle

You know what happened to me don't you. I was the supervisor of student services. I'd worked in marketing for years and was offered that job. I gave it everything but after 6 months Sassan was tired of me and did a re-shuffle. I was offered a teaching job and took a cut in salary of 35% because I had no teaching experience so was put on the lowest band. I had a great office down in the management suite and when I was demoted I was put up above the cafeteria next to the photocopier. There's no privacy and my back is to the corridor- we're treated like cattle round here. I couldn't resign because the house came with the job and my husband was out of work. I just had to get on with it. I didn't get to choose where I sat I had to come up here and find the panel that my name was on. Good work areas are given out as a reward in just the same way as a bonus. You got Tim's office and he got sent to the men's. Mind you it's no fun sitting in front of Sassan's office. I've got the kids photos to make it feel more personal.

Gail

*You know I had a great workplace at BETA next to two windows. When I was transferred to ALPHA I was glad to see at least I had a window- most people don't. I know Tim arranged that and knowing that made the move a bit easier. The equipment and facilities we have as faculty compared to the quality of equipment the students have and again the quality of equipment in ALPHA is higher than BETA. For example BETA staff had laptops when Derek was there but ALPHA staff gets the computers that are out dated once the student computes have been replaced. ALPHA have a lovely coffee shop that is relaxing to sit in, of course it was put there for the students and not for us but still. There's nothing like that at BETA and they even took the coffee out of the staff room. **The overall appearance of the college building suggest that there is really some quality work done here particularly scholarly achievement but the reality is so different and anything is staff driven the students never come up with anything.***

PK1H is a photo of me at my workstation. It's not to say that I prefer the photo but I think it encapsulates some of the issues that we have discussed. The photo shows me as an individual. I don't dress up for work because there is no point. I'll dress up and wear make up when I go out at night. But from an Islamic perspective I need to

wear loose clothes and don't want to appear to wear a lot of make up although some of the students do. On the workstation itself I've tried to put a few things on it that are important to me but also there are items that symbolise the organisation. I've bought a poppy for poppy day but kept it there. That shows my background and where I come from but it's not offensive to anyone and would not mean anything to anyone who doesn't come from the UK. There is a clock next to the computer which I use to make sure I'm always in time for my classes and meetings- we are really driven by time here which is so unlike Islamic traditions. My name tag is on the panel – in yellow the same as everyone else- just in case I walk past my own area and sit at someone else's because they are all the same. It also means the supervisors can see if I'm at my desk and if not my timetable is on the wall or on the intranet so she can check up on me and doesn't have to remember where I sit. There are photos of my kids on the panel which reminds me that I stay here at the college to give them a reasonable standard of living. The computer is fairly old fashioned- I'm not a computer whiz kid- but it's a bit slow and all the money here seems to go on student's equipment. The workstation itself is the same as everyone's but at least I'm next to a window and my chair is comfortable- some aren't. You can see on the photo how low the ceiling is and I've got the AC fan directly over my head which blows cold air on the back of my neck- it doesn't help the migraines at all.

Reflections of researcher

Health Sciences locked area Gail B

The Health Sciences faculty area was in a separate building on the second floor with the lecture rooms and labs on the first floor. The faculty area was a closed room with a security lock on the door. The supervisor explained that the lock was there to keep students out of the area as they were obsessed with the only male emirate teacher on the campus. The female students would then enter the faculty area under any pretext so Gail B had put the lock on the door to 'protect' the teacher. This meant that all health science staff were apart from the other teaching staff and no-one could pop in to discuss any issues as they did not know the code. It meant disturbing another member of staff to open the door so they did not do it. The other members of staff interpreted this action as the emirate teacher being more important than them as his workstation was next to a window and away from the door.

Management meeting on allocations/ observation same as ALPHA

Reflections of researcher/ same as ALPHA

FACULTY WORKSTATIONS BETA

When the director Sassan was appointed he did a reshuffle of faculty across two of the campuses. Some staff were obliged to move from their faculty workstations located in BETA to a new location above the cafeteria in ALPHA. At this point there were a lot of changes, none of which subject to staff consultation and several staff had had their contract of employment terminated. There was a great deal of fear and uncertainty across both campuses.

Interview discussing history of faculty workstation allocations/ Chris

.... Faculty allocations are always a concern. Everyone thinks they can choose to sit where they want. We go to a lot of trouble to try and balance the allocations but at the end of the day everyone moves wherever they want. Derek (previous director) was keen to create a family atmosphere in the place. Most staff don't have extended family in the UAE so he encouraged us to be friendly that's why he turned a blind eye to staff moving from one area to another- unless there is some problem of course. Now it's all changed but hopefully it will be more efficient.

Allocations story Gail/Hans

Gail/Hans

Oh good you want to come and sit here. We've been hanging on for someone. In fact Russ asked only last week but I said Dymphna had said Ok to someone already. It's a great spot here we've got a view on both sides and being in the corner at least it's not like being under the dome where you are and everything you say echo's up. I'll put your stuff here and then you can sort it out after the holidays. I just hope we all get some work done and don't chat too much.

Email Chris and tell him you've moved.

Email to Chris

Hi Chris,

Just to let you know I'm moving from faculty workstation 426 to 342. Phil said they are going to use 426 for a recording area so I had to go quick; Hope it doesn't cause any problems.

Sue

Email from Chris to Sue

It's not really the way it should be done but in this case OK.

Hans

You get all sorts of staff coming up and asking to move into our quadrant, because it's about the best. It's taken us years to get here and you can't have part time staff that have just arrived thinking they can get a prime spot like this you know. You need to be careful because we are not conformists here and we don't want someone repeating conversation- you don't know who gets to hear about it. We've got two sets of windows so we can see everyone coming and going, but we are tucked away in the corner so someone has to enter the quadrant to see if we are here and they very rarely bother.

Reflections of researcher

Faculty really appreciated being able to choose who they worked with and where they sat. There was so little under their individual control in terms of work responsibilities and they felt the teaching itself was very basic that to work in a friendly atmosphere was very important. This changed when director F was appointed and all workstation allocations went through facilities manager via the academic supervisor.

Management meeting Sept 15th 2003

Director Sassan: *There seems to be a lot of staff moving from one allocation to another in the men's. That will stop. I want a plan drawn up -see to it Ali- put all faculty names on it. I want to know where all staff are at all times. No one can move without permission- is that clear. Otherwise they will all be off playing tennis and I won't know where they are. No feeble excuses either. That Al Hafid women with the red shoes- why is she next to a window?*

Tim- Head

'She suffers from migraines Sassan.'

As long as there is a good reason. We can't have people coming in here doing what they want. They need to know who's in control. And that's me. I'm going to look into all these allocations and put people with the team they are working with.

Ok now the security gates.....

Gail's interview after moving from BETA to ALPHA

It's not really the noise, you get used to noise, and it's just that I don't want to be near the photocopier. It's not a good work area and seems inferior to the others and that makes me feel inferior. If you are in a poorer position in relation to people who are the same grade as you then everyone thinks you have done something wrong. Why have you been given this workstation? We can't choose our own work area, sometimes there is a bit of negotiation but essentially it's allocated to us, so if we're allocated one for example with a position next to the printer then we are in a less favourable position, especially if someone who is essentially doing the same job has a better one. It also makes me wonder if I've done something wrong to be allocated a work station like this. Is something happening that I don't know about? Is something happening on CD2??

I've tried to put a few things on it that are important to me but also there are items that symbolise the organisation. I've bought a poppy for poppy day but kept it there. That shows my background and where I come from but it's not offensive to anyone and would not mean anything to anyone who doesn't come from the UK.

There is a clock next to the computer which I use to make sure I'm always in time for my classes and meetings- we are really driven by time here which is so unlike Islamic traditions. My name tag is on the panel – in yellow the same as everyone else- just in case I walk past my own area and sit at someone else's because they are all the same. It also means the supervisors can see if I'm at my desk and if not my timetable is on the wall or on the intranet so she can check up on me and doesn't have to remember where I sit. There are photos of my kids on the panel which reminds me that I stay here at the college to give them a reasonable standard of living. The computer is fairly old fashioned- I'm not a computer whiz kid- but it's a bit slow and all the money here seems to go on student's equipment. We are supposed to be valued well educated staff- It's a joke isn't it? The workstation itself

is the same as everyone's but at least I'm next to a window and my chair is comfortable- some aren't. You can see on the photo how low the ceiling is and I've got the AC fan directly over my head which blows cold air on the back of my neck- it doesn't help the migraines at all.

My work station then I would relate to other staff work stations above me or in my department or in other departments. The building is unfortunates being above the cafeteria but the furnishing are simple yet practical. There is not a lot of privacy but then there isn't a lot of privacy for anyone. Only supervisors and heads have an office so it can sometimes be difficult to speak to students when you may disturb other faculty. The meeting rooms have gone now too which doesn't help. I like to be able to put my kids photos on the panels that makes me feel as though I am still me- a human being- and somehow not exactly the same as everyone else. It reminds me who I'm working for as well- the kids well being.

Researchers' reflections

Staff did not act outwardly to these moves but sought reassurance about their position and future from a personal and group perspective. This reassurance was not forthcoming from management so stories circulated and the physical environment and changes were discussed more intensely. Faculty discussed the location of the workstations and what the implication were for them as individuals and group members.

Emirates airline story

At the beginning of August 2002 there were a number of new staff employed. Two staff had applied for a transfer from Ras al Hanam (Phil and Ben), Martin had been recruited from Paul's (business supervisor) old university in Australia and they were allocated to sit in a faculty quadrangle next to Nasser. Towards the last few weeks of the academic year, May 2003, Phil and Ben had been dismissed but still had to work out their remaining weeks of contract. Martin did not survive probation and Nasser, after 9 years service was told his contract was not going to be renewed. Therefore all four in the quadrangle had lost their jobs and consequently their homes and rights to stay in the country but still had to wait until the end of term. Three of the staff worked under the engineering supervisor, Nigel whose office was next to the

quadrangle. Nigel was also dismissed and a few days later took all his personal belongings and left the country, leaving a photograph of his face on a stick in his office chair. Staff from the engineering department took all the end of term photos which included Nigel's face on a stick.

Martin-*Have you seen my sign?*

Researcher – *I can hardly miss it really*

Reflections of researcher

Martin had put up a sign above the quadrangle which said 'Emirates Airline departure lounge'. All the staff were talking about this quadrangle and how unlucky it was to enter. Due to the then developed fear culture few staff did not want to be seen talking to staff who had been dismissed. However the staff involved were determined to regain their identity and re instate themselves as individuals by putting up the sign. They realized that other staff were not willing to be involved with them for fear of recrimination and acknowledged this in forming an identity associated with departure. All the work stations in the quadrangle are the same and they felt they were treated in the same underhand manner regardless of their abilities or who there were as individuals, treated as a physical object in an identical manner. Their identity as outcasts was transferred to the physical workstations which they happened to be in. They also put up photos of where they were going- back to Australia or England to illustrate that they were not victims but individuals and to quote 'there is life after ABC'

Faculty workstations GAMMA

Interview discussing history of incident/ Juresh

You can see how cramped we are. Ten years ago I had this office on my own and now there are ten of us in here. It isn't very comfortable we can't even get in an out very easily but we'll get by the new campus in more than ten times the size. We won't have enough furnishings to fill it. That will be the next problem. Norm never really bought in a lot of furnishing although he could do anything he wanted but he was more interested in equipment for the students. I'll get you a copy of the plans and the facilities meetings memos if you want. Barbara said to give you anything you wanted.

Reflections of researcher

GAMMA, on the existing site, is a college located in the centre of the older part of Diba. It is constructed primarily of older prefabricated buildings which have been built up gradually on an ad hoc basis since the set up of the college in 1990? At the front of the building is an old car park which is laid out in gravel. The entrance is manned by security guards who are friendly and keen to give direction. Once you enter the building there is a reception, which is glazed and manned by a security guard. To the right of this is a display cabinet showing all the cups and awards the college has won. The corridors are long with low ceilings and the floor is sprung timber which gives you the impression of bouncing along. The college is rather like wearing an old coat- it has it's imperfections but you enjoy wearing it. When you arrive at the executive area it is rather rundown and informal. The staff has all worked there for a long time and welcomes you as a friend and with interest- all keen to help. In no way do they seem under duress or stress and everyone seems comfortable in their working environment although the working environment itself is not comfortable. The staff areas are squashed. The staff and students having grown in number but there being nowhere for the college to expand into. The faulty areas themselves are old, in need of decoration, badly lit and the accommodation for staff blatantly inadequate, yet the working atmosphere is pleasant.

The Executive area containing the director's office and HR office is off the main corridor leading from the reception. I stumbled into it to ask direction on the first day I arrived there and didn't realize it was the Directors suite. There is one large square room, with natural lighting. This room has the Directors office to the right and HR office to the left. The main central room has three workstations in it, one for the PA of the Directors and two others for staff of the HR office. The floor is carpeted and the office furniture functional yet unpretentious. The director's furniture is old, comfortable and unassuming. The director at GAMMA is in an acting position since the retirement of the previous director in January who had been with the college since it started. The old director, Norm, was a large personable man with great charisma who appeared to feel at ease in any situation. The staff and students adored him and when he retired a large number of staff took this as their queue to call it a day and leave the Emirates. The Acting Director is trying to make the place more efficient in line with the colleges move to a new state of the art campus and also to mark her mark before the new director takes over in September.

The faculty area are low level open partition 'pens' the same throughout ABC. Although the furniture is the same as other colleges the main difference is in the supervisors offices. Perhaps due to the constraints of the building itself, but also partly due to the management style the supervisors offices are not necessarily facing the faculty area, nor are they glazed. Staff do not feel they are visually under surveillance. Staff come and go from their areas and there is no impression of the 'clock in clock out situation that happens at ALPHA and BETA.

GAMMA new

The new location is in University City, an area on the outskirts of the city and a building 4 times the size of the original GAMMA. The building although purpose built for GAMMA is being built for the municipality and on completion will be handed over to the college. The building is located on the outskirts of the city along a new road for which there is as yet no purpose to travel along yet, other than to go to GAMMA. The buildings are in a large plot with plenty of recreational area, football and games park, yet to be grassed over. The plot then is still uncultivated desert which gives the buildings the appearance of being beamed down and dropped there. When the building is handed over the college intends to move all the old furniture from the existing building to the new campus. Although inadequate there are seemingly budget constraints. This happens a lot in the UAE and then at the last minute the sheik of that emirate will provide funds from his own purse and the most expensive furnishings will be bought.

Coffee pot story/Reflections of researcher

When staff then relocated they compared the workstation and surroundings with that of their previous location, with that of other staff in and out of their groups and comparisons were made. From this information conclusions were drawn about their own status, respect and power both as an individual and the group or department as a whole. However the only real conflict appeared to be over coffee pots. The supervisors had coffee pots supplied to them in their office and these were refilled by support staff. As a consequence faculty bought there own coffee pots and installed them at their workstations. They said there were not many opportunities for promotion at GAMMA and therefore they felt that those who were promoted to supervisor were just lucky. They felt that all teaching and supervisors were equal

and the action over giving supervisors coffee pots was interpreted that the supervisors were in some way superior to teaching staff so this was equalled out when the faculty brought in their own coffee pots.

Applications for new campus/ Belinda

GAMMA Belinda: 'The supervisors' offices are just where it is practical to build them. This is an old campus and it's not ideal so the supervisors are necessarily with their faculty. We're respected and trusted to get on with the job. I don't mean its perfect or anything but I and I think most of us appreciate that. Now we're moving to the new campus everyone's worried where they'll be located but only because they want to be close to their team or someone they can talk to.'

GAMMA Belinda 'We're all fairly laid back here. Even the way we dress is more casual than some colleges. You can't wear anything too dramatic because it's a men's college but at the same time we've got to be practical we're stepping over boxes all day. We're not into status dressing though. It's the same with the furniture. If it works it's OK. If it doesn't well....'

Meeting with head on allocations

Amongst the management team we decided which departments should be allocated which buildings. This was really a practical decision as some buildings were plane hangars and it made sense to put engineering next to it. It wasn't a difficult decision and everyone agreed. The main problems were in allocating the workstations. Since we will have to use existing furnishings the CAD guys have drawn up plans of workstation areas and we've allocated the zones to say engineering or business and then the plans were posted in the staff coffee area. We then asked staff to request an allocation and give the reasons for it so hopefully people who work in a team will bid together for an area. There aren't too many difficulties but some people won't get what they want but if they don't it will be for a practical reason so, hopefully, they'll understand.

Reflections of researcher

Within this campus staff interpreted their environment to a lesser degree but they were secure in their position and knew that whatever actions were taken to change the interiors were done so in a collegial manner as far as practical possible.

Appendix 7: Transcript of directors' interview

Jawaher Magazine Article:

Dr. Sassan Interview questions:

1. Could you please tell me something about the changes that have occurred in the ABC system in general and the college in particular?

I think that you are interested in some of the changes that are happening in the college probably more than the changes in the system, but let me start by telling you something about what has been happening in the system and the way it affects us at ALPHA.

If we want to maintain the quality of our teaching we can only accept a fixed number of students so we cannot accept all the students who apply and this is a big problem for us at ALPHA. Every year, for the last 2-3 years, we have had to turn away about 200 or 300 students because of the lack of budget.

In some way it's good because it means we have students who really want to be at this college and that our college has a good reputation. On the other hand, it's bad because it means we can't accommodate all students who want to come and study with us.

Now, how do these changes affect ALPHA? Well, I know that students are interested in what is happening with the Director because before you had Director Sassan all for yourselves, and now you have to share him with the Men's College. Having one director for two colleges is a bit difficult but what we are really doing is pooling (bringing together) different resources and this is a concept that I hope you can explain to your reader. It is called "synergy". By pooling our efforts we can do more with the same number of people. So, in fact by having one director for two colleges we have a synergy because we have access to more people, more supervisors and more experience

We will be putting on events that interest both colleges. For example a lecture that is of interest to both men and women students such as the Mohammed Al Farim lecture. When we invited him we were able to bring students from both colleges to listen to the lecture. Whereas, before this may not have been possible. We are also going to get our sport complex soon and use it for both colleges. The auditorium,

which will be finished sometime in 2004 year, will also be available for both colleges. I always wanted to offer Engineering programs for women and that might be possible now because we may be able to make use of the resources at the Men's College. For the men we hope to be soon offering the Graphics Art program. It's possible in the future that the two colleges will make use of the same facilities, but only where it's appropriate and within the cultural boundaries.

2. Do you think there will be any other changes in the ABC system in the near future?

For sure, what makes the ABC different from many other institutions is that we constantly change because everything around us is changing and we respond quickly to those changes. I have no doubt that change is something that the ABC will go through all the time. We will offer new programs, we will change programs, and we will delete programs and with all that come new responsibilities and challenges.

3. What is your reaction to all these sudden changes?

Change makes some people uncomfortable, but it doesn't make me uncomfortable. I love change especially if it results in improvement. Not all changes are good, but if change makes us better and if it allows us to offer better services to our students and better services to our community, then I welcome that and I thrive on it.

4. When any system changes there will be some negative and positive effects. What are they?

The negative effects usually have to do with people's ability to adjust to change. There are many people who become comfortable with what they have and changes are threatening to them. But if we are good managers, then we manage the changes in such a way that it does not make people feel insecure and fearful. Sometimes when there are changes, the people in the organization become a bit insecure because it is something new for them and they don't know exactly what is going to happen. That's why it's very important that we keep communication lines open with everyone and that we try to let people know what we're doing and how we're doing it. That way you reduce the amount of tension that comes with change. You can see by the changes to the buildings and the offices that we have made a great investment here- you can see the quality of what we are doing all around you.

5. Was your responsibility increased when you started the two positions and what has been the most difficult part?

That's easy to answer. As you know, before I was available 100% to the students at the women's campus. Now I have to split my time and make sure that I pay enough attention to both colleges. That has been hard but I will still try my best to make myself available to students on both sites.

6. As far as we know, there are some teachers who transferred from the Women's to the Men's college. Do you think that in the near future there will be joint classes with men and women?

There is one such Bachelor program at another college. I don't think that we'll have classes for men and women, but we are looking for ways in which we can bring students from both campuses together through activities, projects and conferences. It is possible that in the future we may have joint classes at a very senior level.

7. Do you think that teachers are happy with the new changes?

Any change is a bit disruptive and some people may feel a bit disoriented, but there's no need for teachers to worry about anything. On the contrary, I think there are some teachers who may in fact like it because they welcome the opportunity of teaching female students and others may enjoy the experience of teaching male students. The most important thing is that students and learning should always be uppermost in our mind and I know that they are all working to the best of their abilities.

Appendix 8: Criteria for classification of meanings participants sought from the interpretation of the physical symbolic artefacts.

The following guide was used to classify the purposes behind the use of physical symbolic artefacts into four main areas:

Information

Interpretation motivated by the need to obtain information to compare with identity includes (new knowledge: seeking knowledge about a new issue. Self confirmation: seeking information to verify a pre-conceived opinion reactive verification: seeking back up information in order to check out or compliment information provided by another .pulse taking: seeking input and opinion of other.

Communication

To communicate ideas to others;

Direction and control

To ensure action on the part of subordinates.

Symbolic purposes

Physical symbolic artefacts used for symbolizing action: to give the impression that action is being taken, or to impress others. Symbolizing rationality: to give the impression that management is interested in line concerns. Procrastination to gain time or to postpone decision making.

Appendix 9: Field Notes taken across all interview stages with one participant PK1

Question topics within phases

Phase 1 Pilot interviews with 4 participants on a semi-structured basis

Discussion areas

All questions relate to your own experience and belief about your college

- 1 What change has occurred in the organization within the last year that, in your opinion has had the most far reaching effects?
- 2 In your opinion, what is your college's relationship with its environment e.g. dominant, submissive?
- 3 What is the correct way for staff to behave in their working environment?
E.g. dominant, pro-active, harmonizing, passive.
- 4 What kind of time units are most relevant to the college for the conduct of daily affairs.
- 5 Does the college look to the past, present or future?
- 6 Are members of the organization here basically good, neutral or evil?
- 7 What is the 'correct' way for people to relate to each other?
- 8 Is organizational life competitive or co-operative/

- 9 Is the best way to organize staff on the basis of individualism or collectivism?
Definition:
Individualism accents on individual rights and freedom
Collectivism accents the group and values harmony among members

- 10 Is the best authority system autocratic, custodial, collegial, or participative?
Definition:
Autocratic: obedience, dependence on boss
Custodial: Money, security and benefits, dependence on organization
Collegial: partnership, self-discipline, teamwork
Participative: consultation, work as a team, manager retains responsibility

- 11 Is the group best off if it is highly diverse or highly homogeneous?
- 12 Are individuals in a group encouraged to innovate or conform?
- 13 What is your impression of the buildings you work in?
- 14 Are there any contrasts with buildings you have previously worked in?
- 15 What do you think the designer was trying to achieve?
- 16 What do you think management is trying to achieve with the building design or alterations to the building?
- 17 Which symbolic physical artefact in your work environment gives meaning about the culture of the organization?
- 18 Do these artefacts contradict or support the culture?
- 19 How have you decided on the meaning of these symbols?

Selection of 3 key informants and discussions

Discussion took place about what was happening at the college in terms of managerial decisions and the built environment, who might want to get involved

in the research and who might not. How to access information and who would be the relevant gatekeepers

Primary key informant- trial interviews- phase 2- 63 informants

Phase 2 Initial issue focused Interviews

What do you do in this college?

How long have you worked here/

Has it changed a lot since you started?

What do you think are the most important issues at the college at the moment/

How do you think this affects you, your group, department, the college the system?

How do you see the built environment you are in with respect to these issues

How do you feel about this

Do you interpret your situation, group, department, college from the built environment

If so, what are the elements of the built environment you look to

Primary key informant

Return to literature

Phase 3 Interview using auto driving techniques with photographs and documents- 45 informants

Describe yourself as a person –

Are you different at home

Describe yourself at home

Describe yourself as a person at work

What is your perception of the organization

How does your department fit into the organization

How does your group fit into the organization

Describe your working environment

How does that fit into the organization

Looking at the photos of the built environment areas previously highlighted by you. How do these areas help you make these perceptions of yourself, your group, your dept, your college

Return to literature

Primary key informant- trial interviews

Phase 4 Interviews using laddering techniques with photographs and documents- 11 informants

We looked before at the photos and document and now we've narrowed these into a few which you feel are important to you

Lets talk about the main issues in the photos and documents

Why are these important **Laddering**

Eliciting Distinctions

- Triadic sorting (areas chosen by participants)
- Preference- artefact differences
- Differences by occasion
- Selecting key distinctions to ladder

Techniques

- Evoking the situational context
- Postulating the absence of an object or state of being

- Negative laddering
- Age aggression contrast probe
- Third person probe
- Re-directing techniques

Analysis

Content analysis

The implication matrix

Constructing the hierarchical value map

Determining dominant perceptual orientations

Reflections from the researcher

After confirming during a conversation over coffee that Gail would participate in the research and that she would prefer to be interviewed alone, I emailed the letter of authority document to her so that she could be reassured about confidentiality and also look over the discussion areas. I made an appointment with her to conduct the interview, which took place in a location of her choice. The interview setting was a small room off the library which is normally used to conduct speaking exams. It offers acoustic privacy but at the same time the frontage is fully glazed giving an open aspect. The room had a round table and four chairs. The lighting was given by an overhead fluorescent fitting. Gail chose her seat and I sat next to her. We discussed the overall topic prior to taping and since Gail is one of my primary informants I also asked her to give me feedback after the interview on my interviewing technique. I explained that I didn't want to say too much during the interview so I didn't influence the conversation. The interview then proceeded and was taped.

After the interview Gail said some of the terms were not clear to her particularly with her background as a language teacher.

Consequent to the first three interviews with other participants having taken place Gail said that she thought I wasn't getting the information I wanted and that although all the informants were keen to help they weren't sure what I was looking for. I explained the research area in further depth and she suggested conducting a mini-tutorial with photos of symbolic artefacts, not associated with the case itself, and then discussing their meaning. I am going to return to the literature on methodology to see if I can solve this one.

Phase 1 interviews PKI

1. For me the most far reaching change has to be **Sassan taking over BETA**. From my point of view I'm out of it because I go the transfer to ALPHA after that horrible incident with Anne but everyone apart from you is left there. Everyone worried about what is going to happen. I suppose **Derek let things go a bit** and of course when Chris was supervisor he left most of the organization to me. Now I'm here with no responsibilities other than my teaching but at least life is calm.

2. I'm not sure. The colleges are run by the Sheik for the country so I suppose it's submissive. From this colleges point of view I think **Sassan does what the community expects of him** and Amal advises him. So he wouldn't take any risk to ignore Islam or any traditional values. DWC being in Diba is more radical in this respect.

3. This is a big difference between last semesters when **Derek was the director. Then everyone worked together as a team**, with a few exceptions of course, but you could say what you thought within reason. On the down side everyone was supposed to play in the darts team. Now at BETA nobody is talking have you noticed how quiet the faculty area is now? I don't know where the dart board has gone. Remember, when we were in our corner we used to have such a laugh. And those emails Madeline used to send round- everyone had something witty to say in response. Now no one knows who they can talk to. In ALPHA no one is talking to me because I've come from BETA they don't know if they can trust me.

4. Time. **Time is really important here** isn't it. Classes start at 8 o'clock and even if you are late because security have held up the buses, I've been told staff have been sacked for being late for that reason. With the intranet we have to put in all attendance by the end of the day and the students need to log on in the morning. It seems to me that the time units are based on the **50 minute class lengths**.

5. There isn't much of a past here is there. I suppose the religious aspects of life look to the past and because of the religion the emeriti's don't look to the future. From Sassan's perspective I think he'll retire in **2 or 3 years time so he wants to make**

his impression within that time. I don't see anything in the college looking further than that.

6. I think most people are **basically good but everyone's treated as though they are evil** maybe not evil but **lazy** and everything is put in place to catch us out. Security checks the time the evening classes end. Security even checks the cars in the car park at night to see if anyone's left early.

7. The correct way. It used to be that everyone should be friendly. Remember Derek had a big thing about staff meeting up in the faculty area and us having lots of nights out and informal gatherings. That's all gone now and **it's only the job.** The increase in teaching loads hasn't helped either.

8. When I first came to BETA I was really pleased how cooperative everyone was. It's like that in education. In England if a teacher wasn't succeeding all their colleagues would support them, offer advice or teaching materials. It wasn't a competitive world. **Here everyone now seems to want to score a point over everyone else somehow.** Everyone wants to keep their own evaluations up so they can renew their contract.

9. I'm not sure what the best way is. Teaching can be individualistic. I like to produce my own material and speed up on some aspects of the curriculum if they are understood whereas it leaves me time to concentrate on other things. It was like that before. In Cd2 here there are at least 14 sections doing the same material and if I've got 2 there are seven teachers and we all have to be teaching the same material at the same time or Deborah wants to know why. There are class tests every week and it's the same test for everyone so we need to have covered the same material. Then the classes are ranked by the results so no one wants a poor class because they are judged by the result of the class not the difference in the level of English or the improvement.

10. I think **collegial** that's the way most education systems work but here it is autocratic now. Mind you it was autocratic before with Derek but perhaps less noticeably so. Remember when they increased the teaching loads last semester. He

just gathered us into the hall and informed us of the change there was no opportunity to ask questions and no one said anything about it.

11. We had highly diverse groups when we had team meeting and I worked on English for the Engineers. Now all the **meetings are homogenous** because all the English teachers meet and decide the curriculum which is the same whether the students are enrolled in business or engineering. Sometimes it was difficult to adapt the curriculum to engineering for example when I was working with Russ. He's a lovely person but I don't know how to wire a plug and so it was difficult to think of ways to get the language across. Also he'd be the first to admit his language and grammar wasn't great either.

12. Now we have to **conform** but before Sassan took over we could **innovate** to an extent.

13 **I wish the quality of the work we got from the students matched up with the quality of the buildings.** The surroundings are beautiful and the students have every facility. I don't think any of the women go into the sports complex it's always empty and yet there is an Olympic size swimming pool in it and all the gym facilities. On the other hand our workstations are above the cafeteria. Where I sit there; there is an air-conditioning vent directly over head. Sometimes it's freezing, that's why I keep my cardigan on my chair. But if I'm freezing someone else in the same area will be too hot so you can't ask security to alter the setting. The ceilings are very low as well so it seems to blow cold air directly on to you- I'm just waiting for a migraine to start up. You know how early I come in. I'm in by 6.45 after dropping Aysha off at the bus stop. I don't have breakfast and when I come in all I can smell is frying onions. It just comes up from the cafeteria and its none to pleasant at that time of the morning.

14 If I compare it to BETA then the buildings are a bit simpler. I know they were built at the same time but Derek never went in for all that pomp did he. He was a plain Yorkshire man. Sassan puts in all the gilt and glitz. Before that we ran our own business in Plymouth and I ran it from the house from one room in fact so **there is no real comparison.** But it was all we needed and because we did training we were in

other company's offices. Before that I was a French teacher in an inner city secondary school in Plymouth so they didn't have much there so it is a real contrast. But in the UAE all the new buildings are like this so you just get used to it.

15 Well I'm no designer. **An Arabic style , a feeling of luxury** I don't know

16 Sassan is definitely trying to **make his mark and go out in style**. If you take for example the new building and the donation he announced of 8,000,000 dhs. The building has come before the purpose. Now everyone is waiting to see which department or which purpose the building will have.

Inside the building the major thing at the moment is Sassan's decision to have most of the supervisors responsible for areas in the two colleges and giving each supervisor an office on both sites. It means that all our meeting rooms have gone. In our faculty area little Derek has an office and I came in for a meeting and half the meeting room had been turned into his office. I nearly walked into it by mistake. All the program team meeting notes and course outlines are kept in the meeting room. I suppose someone will get the other half of the meeting room next. I suppose he's trying to make the place more efficient at least that's what he says

17 This is something that's difficult for me. **It's easier for me to think of text**. Deborah sent an email to all her staff last week telling them that student results had to improve. We know that Sassan's taken the face off her in a management meeting but it was the way it was written. A warning that if they don't improve we'll lose our jobs. Her attitude is way out of line and all the CD2 teachers really sat and analyzed all the words, text layout but then we are all English teachers. I haven't thought about the building that much but when I do the faculty area above the canteen says a lot to me. It's silent for a start you don't hear anyone talking like you did at BETA. The air-conditioning and the way we are all in pens no individualism. That's the same for all faculty but the low ceilings and the canteen smell say a lot. I bet they wouldn't put students up there.

18/19 I think it shows that **faculty is not really valued here**. I'm not sure how I've got these impressions but I will think about it over the next few days

Participant observation

Sports pavilion

The sports pavilion is placed between the men's and women's college although officially belonging to the women's college it is occasionally timetabled for use by the men. It is a complex of an international standard with Olympic swimming pool, a main hall which can function as a basketball stadium and various other snooker, fitness salons etc. When you enter the building it is very quiet because apart from a few staff operating the building there is normally only two or three people using it. You have to drive or walk 1.5km from the college building to get to it and due to the heat this road is also normally empty. To me it always seems like a ghost town and such a shame that marvellous facilities are there for the students but never really used unless an event is put on there.

Cafeteria building

The cafeteria facility area is part of a two storey building and the main cafeteria with a full working kitchen is on the ground floor. The upper floor which had been used as storage space was pressed into use as the college expanded and was converted into a faculty workstation area for business faculty and the English language faculty who worked with that department. Initially there was a lot of resistance to its use and this was voiced, not directly, but via the health and safety committee, made up of faculty members. Their concern was for the safety of staff as at the rear of the canteen directly under the workstation area were huge gas containers used to fuel the cooking in the canteen. The argument was that should one of these tankers explode then people above would be injured or killed. Incidentally there was no mention of the predominantly Indian staff working in the kitchen being injured or killed in this event. The H&S committees also argued that the existing HVAC system was inadequate for housing 80 people in this area. The discussion was held in an H&S committee meeting chaired by the director and also headed by his two heads of instruction. The argument was overturned and the conversion took place and the staff was housed there. This incident has become one of the 'stories' frequently told throughout the campus to highlight the lack of respect given to staff and to illustrate just how replaceable they are.

The area itself is accessed by the side of the building. The building itself faces on to an attractive quadrangle with a fountain in the centre and there are a number of main doors to access the canteen. On my first visit there I had difficulty finding out how to get upstairs to the faculty area and at first tried to enter through the canteen and look for a set of stairs because I couldn't see any entrance point outside. This sense of urgency comes about because of the temperatures here which can be as high as 50 degrees c and 97% humidity so I was trying to get into the building before I was dropping of heat exhaustion. There was no entrance within the canteen. One of the canteen staff told me to go round the side of the building. This meant I was coming off the quadrangle and on a small narrow pavement, but the set of doors was only 50m down the path. I'd missed it before because there were a few maintenance people outside the door working on a drain which had blocked and had flooded the entire areas. I'd been looking at this incident and not at the door! Apparently this drain blocks at least three times a week because of the waste from the canteen. And the consequence of this is that staff who have to use this entrance need to pick there way through the waste water to get to their office area. In front of this door is a large piece of waste ground which served as the parking area for the staff of the building. This can be contrasted with parking bays and overhead sheltered parking in other areas of the college. Also in the waste ground is a large bin area with some recycling waste containers? The rear elevation of the building has the rear staff emergency exit and exit areas for the canteen and overlooks a desert area.

When you enter the staff access point there are toilets to your right which are locked and require a code to be entered before the door opens. There are stairs to your left going up into the staff area with a reception desk at the top and photocopiers crammed in to your right. The first office you see is a full height partitions business supervisor's office. The first impression I got was how quiet the area was, people were working there, or apparently working there and there heads were bowed over computer in total silence. The areas seems quite dull in colour a soft greyish green on the carpets pale grey laminated workstations and upholstered office chairs, which is a standard specification throughout the colleges. Due to the tinted windows and low ceilings and inadequate fluorescent overhead lighting is did appear dark. The temperature varies throughout the area from 19 to about 26 depending on the location of the ventilation system.

I did not feel I could speak to anyone unless it was in a whisper and then I wasn't sure who to approach, who was safe or not. The ceiling height of 2.5m added to a sense of oppression as I felt as though the ceiling was pressing down on me. During the main interviewing stage of my research I was moved to this area as I had resigned from my managerial position so served my 6 months notice as faculty. It was deemed as a punishment for resigning from such a position by the other members of staff. After some time another member of staff approached and told me she had 'suffered' like me and had resigned from student services supervisor and went down to faculty level. She sat at the workstation behind me and I interviewed her later.

Phase 2 Interviews with PK1

Reflection

This interview took place 2 weeks after interview 1. I felt that interview 1 which had also been done with the primary informant did not achieve much depth, so this time we made the interview more informal and I took notes. The interview or discussion took place in the college coffee shop at a quiet time about 3pm at Gail's suggestion. I wanted to see that if by using Sackmann's issue based interview technique I may achieve more depth of meaning. Gail likewise had thought about the issues she had brought up and I gave her a copy of the transcript of the interview to reflect over. I had also been working in the faculty area she had mentioned and made my own notes as a participant observer.

PHASE 2 interviews

1 I'm a CD2 English teacher, nothing more now and in a way I'm glad of it. I've less pressure now and I've noticed the difference in my migraines. You now I haven't had one since I moved to ALPHA. Mind you I'm bored.

2 This will be my 5th year. Do you remember last time I had to sign of for another three years and I kept the contract in my desk until the last moment- it hardly seems

any time at all and now it will be the same again. I wonder if I'll need to sign on for another three years.

3 Its changed, it's become so formal whereas it was informal and friendly. The day we came over we were staying in the office with Barak we had nowhere to live. I got this job after we arrived and for us it was great because with Barak having his own business he obviously doesn't get housing or schooling. So when I got the job I started the same day as Chris Bryant which was almost the year this BETA opened. Chris was facilities manager but he'd come from Bahrain and didn't know anything about the UAE and said as much. Barak had been here for 6 months so he knew his way around. So Barak found our house and gave the contract to Chris and he signed it. He said- I'm sure it's OK if you are happy with it and Barak knows what he is doing. That wouldn't happen now would it. Someone would be sent out to check the house and there is a lot of fuss if you want to change houses. Look at Hans and Lotty.

4 What do you think are the most important issues at the college at the moment?

Like we discussed before **Sassan taking over.** He has a real reputation for firing people for no reason that everyone's wondering if it will be them or not now because the staff of the two colleges are being mixed up and there is co teaching across the campus staff are unsure of who they can trust.

5 Here seems to be more accountability and less individualism the intranet portal makes sure of that. You've noticed that when you enter the faulty area you have to pass the supervisors office and the secretary's workstation. They both check if staff are arriving on time or leaving early. The secretary is accountable to the supervisor and the supervisor has to be seem to check up on staff and report to the heads, that why their office is at the top of the stairs. The students are accountable to us and we have to enter the attendance daily on the intranet and we are accountable if we don't. If a student is failing or has low attendance then its picked up by the supervisors and we have to explain, hopefully the supervisors gets to us for an explanation before the heads get to the supervisor.

6 Well in our group we **all watch our back and justify all failure** and everything is reported to the supervisors. It means instead of speaking to one another we email everything and copy everyone. The department wants to maintain high success rates on the exams and this reflects on the colleges overall performance within the system.

7 I think the way the faculty areas are laid out and the way the classes are it's done for maximum control over faculty and students. Have you noticed that even though there are some seating areas outside none of the staff sit there and talk **they don't want to be seen having nothing to do?** Everyone has their head down at the desk even if they are answering their personal email or surfing the net for cheap flights for the holidays. How do you see the built environment you are in with respect to these issues?

8 We are supposed to be professional faculty we don't need- well most of us **don't need all this supervision** it makes you want to go home early in a way.

9 You know I had a great workplace at BETA next to two windows. When I was transferred to ALPHA I was glad to see at least I had a window- most people don't. I know Tim arranged that and knowing that made the move a bit easier. The equipment and facilities we have as faculty compared to the quality of equipment the students have and again the quality of equipment in ALPHA is higher than BETA. For example BETA staff had laptops when Derek was there but ALPHA staff gets the computers that are out dated once the student computes have been replaced. ALPHA have a lovely coffee shop that is relaxing to sit in, of course it was put there for the students and not for us but still. There's nothing like that at BETA and they even took the coffee out of the staff room. **The overall appearance of the college building suggest that there is really some quality work done here particularly scholarly achievement but the reality is so different and anything is staff driven the students never come up with anything.**

Participant Observation

Hans and Lotty story

The first time I heard part of the Hans and Lotty story was when it was referred to in company in the coffee shop. A faculty of Education where Lotty worked as part time

English teacher a member of faculty asked PKI if they had 'sorted out their problem' PKI replied that she thought everything would be worked out. There was a degree of reticence on the part of the member of faculty to discuss this story in front of me because at this point she didn't know me. It soon became a story that was told throughout both ALPHA and BETA. Hans worked as Business faculty in BETA.

This was the story as told to me by Hans. They wanted to move from Syri to Diba but were in housing provided for by the college. This meant the college paid the rent but any deposit or estate agent fees were paid by the member of staff. Normally no deposit was paid because the lease was in the colleges name and the college was part of the government but if an estate agent were used then either the fee could sometimes be rolled into the first years rent and the college would pay it or if this was not possible then the member of staff would pay. So Hans and Lotty decided to move to D which was not in the eyes of the director a particularly acceptable option. It was preferred that staff who worked in S lived there. However there is not a good English curriculum school at secondary level and their kids were going to move to a secondary school and wanted to live near the school rather than their kids face a long and often dangerous (road safety in the UAE is not good) journey to school. This is one of the acceptable reasons for moving. They were offered a house in the right area which had been recently vacated by a member of staff. In fact this member of staff had left in the middle of the night and flown home to New Zealand without telling anyone. Another story which was kept as quiet as possible. Hans and Lotty preferred a different house and a member of Chris's staff in facilities told (Mark) told him it was OK to pay the deposit. Hans paid 6,000 dhs (about 1,000 pounds sterling) and prepared to move into the house the college was processing the lease for payment. Unfortunately the estate agent had rented the house to over 30 people and taken deposits from them and then promptly disappeared. Hans was very unhappy about this and asked the college to refund his deposit since they had asked him to pay it in the first place.

At this point in the story there was a meeting called by the director to discuss the issue. Sassan, Chris and Mark attended the meeting and since my office was opposite the directors at this point I listened and took notes for the purpose of the research. Sassan asked for an explanation of what happened and told both Chris and Mark that the affair had not been handled properly and the member of staff had gone

through the proper channels to move house and had the right to expect that the housing was checked out – particularly since the lease was in the college's name. They were told to find Hans another house quickly and try to get the money back from the estate agent.

Hans was then called to Chris's office and told he would have to move into the first house (vacated by the NZ runaway) as his old house had been given to someone else. There would be no need for Hans to pay a deposit as it was in the colleges name so Hans was lucky. Hans asked for his deposit back and was told that if the college got a refund from the estate agent it would be returned to him. It never was and the story was closed from a management perspective.

Sassan then announced during the next management meeting that staff should not consider moving to D as an estate agent fee was payable, whereas it wasn't in Syri, and staff may end up losing money.

Hans and Lotty moved into to the NZ runaways house and the story quickly circulated both colleges interpreted that staff housing only underpinned the colleges opinion that staff are dispensable and not valued. This started a number of staff housing stories which are mentioned in further interviews.

Phase 3 interviews

1 This is difficult because you know me. Most importantly **I'm a wife and a mother** so my focus at home is on the kids and their welfare. I love cooking and I really enjoy trying different recipes and collecting kitchen equipment. Barak works after I come home so I spend a lot of time well we both do ferrying the kids to judo and music classes and then most of my time is spent making sure their homework is done and the house is tidy.

2 **I'm a Cd2 English teacher programmed to teach the same thing to 4 sections** and prepare them for an end of week exam. I care about the students and sometimes really feel sorry for some of the girls. They have such high expectations of life. I would like to resign tomorrow and read Keats in my garden but I can only do that when Barak can support us so I keep on going

3 I don't have a very good perception of the organization or particularly the college. **It doesn't get to grips with the main issues of low academic standards and lack of work by the students.** It accepts things and the teaching staff have to work even harder to find a way to get the students to pass an exam. There are beautiful facilities and marvellous equipment too but that doesn't help. Mind you it's the same for the whole country.

4 This is an **English medium college in an Arabic bi lingual community.** Most of the students come from an Arabic speaking school and with some of them their English is limited. This means that the English department is crucial in getting the students up to speed in English so they can study content. That's why all the colleges in the system compare the externally assesses English exams so they can judge who is more successful.

5 **My group is the CD2 teaching group.** All of us are dedicated CD2 teachers. It wasn't like that in BETA as Derek made sure everyone moved about from semester to semester and had loads from different classes but at ALPHA they believe you become more expert in a certain area- so CD2 group would then fit into the English department which would then act as a support department for all content areas

6 **I would say I have 3 working environments. The first is my work station above the cafeteria, the second is the coffee shop where I seem to be spending more and more time and the third are the classes I'm in with my students.**

7 It's all very standard. The classes are fine and for me the classes don't say much about me as an English teacher because the girls are for example business students and the classes are in the business block so that block would say more about the power of that supervisor than mine as English CD2 supervisor. The coffee shop again is for any staff or students but I do think that says something. It would be nice to have our own coffee area so we could relax and talk .The students are always coming up to you and asking questions when you are in the coffee shop. It's just another statement about our status here really.

8 My work station then I would relate to other staff work stations above me or in my department or in other departments. The building is unfortunates being above the cafeteria but the furnishing are simple yet practical. There is **not a lot of privacy** but then there isn't a lot of privacy for anyone. Only supervisors and heads have an office so it can sometimes be difficult to speak to students when you may disturb other faculty. **The meeting rooms have gone now too which doesn't help.** I like to be able to **put my kids photos on the panels** that makes me feel as though I am still me- a human being- and somehow not exactly the same as everyone else. It reminds me who I'm working for as well- the kids well being.

Looking at the photos of the built environment areas previously highlighted by you. How do these areas help you make these perceptions of yourself, your group, your dept, your college?

Researcher's reflections

PK1 looked at a range of photos which I had taken of the areas she had brought up in the discussion from these photos she chose five photos of each area which she thought encapsulated her thoughts. It was at this point that we moved to Phase 4 and examined the photos using laddering technique. At this point PK1 and I had spent a lot of time together and there was a great sense of trust between us. If she had a problem with something on the research we would discuss it and likewise if I felt we were not achieving the required data we would discuss this out of the interviews, perhaps over coffee.

The photographs were randomly numbered according to the area e.g. External areas
1

Then PK1 described the photographs

Eliciting distinctions

1 Triadic sorting

For each group of three you will have the opportunity to tell me about the differences among the areas. There are no right or wrong answers. As I present you with each group, take some time to think about what you have discussed about the three areas. Specifically, I want you to tell me some important way in which two of the three areas are the same and thereby different from the third.

*There is one way of looking at them and that is to say that one of the sets of photos is external and two sets are internal. Another way of looking at them generally is that the **quality** of the external areas and the internal student's areas is similar whereas the internal staff areas are of a lower quality.*

2 Preference- artefact differences

Preference differences can also be a useful device for eliciting distinctions. Respondents, after providing a preference order (what was most important in terms of meaning to them) for, the photos within the areas of their choice. PKI was asked to say why one photo had more meaning to their second most preferred photo.

To illustrate:

You said your most preferred photo of internal staff areas is PK1H and the second choice is PK1J. Why is that?

*PK1H is a photo of me at my workstation. It's not to say that I prefer the photo but I think it encapsulates some of the issues that we have discussed. The photo shows me as **an individual**. I don't dress up for work because there is no point. I'll dress up and wear make up when I go out at night. But from an Islamic perspective I need to wear loose clothes and don't want to appear to wear a lot of make up although some of the students do. On the workstation itself I've tried to put a few things on it that are important to me but also there are items that **symbolise the organisation**. I've bought a poppy for poppy day but kept it there. That shows my background and where I come from but it's not offensive to anyone and would not mean anything to anyone who doesn't come from the UK. There is a clock next to the computer which I use to make sure I'm **always in time** for my classes and meetings- we are really driven by time here which is so unlike Islamic traditions. My name tag is on the panel – in yellow the same as everyone else- just in case I walk past my own area and sit at someone else's because they are all the same. It also means the supervisors can see if I'm at my desk and if not my timetable is on the wall or on the intranet so she can **check up on me** and doesn't have to remember where I sit. There are photos of my kids on the panel which reminds me that I **stay here at the college to give them a reasonable standard of living**. The computer is fairly old fashioned- I'm not a computer whiz kid- but it's a bit slow and all the money here seems to go on student's equipment. The workstation itself is **the same as everyone's***

but at least I'm next to a window and my chair is comfortable- some aren't. You can see on the photo how low the ceiling is and I've got the AC fan directly over my head which blows cold air on the back of my neck- it doesn't help the migraines at all.

I chose PK1J because it said more to me. I know it is the faculty area in education but it was like the one we had in this building before it was turned into a supervisor's office and also it's like the one in BETA. They must bulk buy those sofas. Education has managed to keep their faculty area but Business and English have lost theirs. I think it shows how important education department is and where Sassan's intentions are. The external photo of the new case building illustrates this as well. He's been given money for a new building and it has been given to Case. The staff area we had a BETA had a darts board- not that I like darts but Derek put it there so staff could relax and talk together. The daily papers were there as well, but here in ALPHA this is probably the only staff area left and yet you can see it's also a work area so it has a computer, a spiral binder and a guillotine. It also contains the course binders for everyone to access- so it's not a relaxation area. You wouldn't want to just talk because you may disturb someone who is working. The photograph I like least but more because of what it means to me is PK1G. The photograph is taken just outside the former faculty meeting room which is now a supervisor's office. It's just two workstations away from mine. You can see the course binders which were in the faculty room piled on the floor. The photocopier is next to the faculty area all printing and photocopying is sent to this machine and it's difficult to concentrate with the noise from it. There is no meeting room now so if staff needs to have a quick meeting they do it in the staff kitchen where the cleaners and security guards make their lunch. The printer is right next to Kathy's workstation, next to the bin and the photocopier behind her. Kathy used to be the Directors PA with that lovely work area outside the directors office and now she is working in amongst that mess. It shows what Sassan thinks of BETA staff. She was moved out of BETA and put here- and her salary was cut.

The summary ladder for (2) FACULTY AREA is

(V) STATUS REDUCED
I
(C) WORK ETHIC
I
(C) DIRECTORS STRATEGY
I
(C) MESS
I
(C) CHECKING ON STAFF
I
(A) TIMEKEEPING

3 Difference by occasion

It was desirable to present PK1 with a personally meaningful context within which to make the distinctions. This contributes to more important distinctions being elicited as respondent distinctions are being examined in the context of the setting in which they naturally occur. Attention to the context of an individual's behaviour provides a more meaningful context for laddering to proceed. People do not use or construct meaning for artefacts in general; they do so in particular contexts. What is important is to provide a meaningful basis for the respondent to keep in mind when thinking of the differences among the stimuli. In this manner their distinctions are more likely to lead to a meaningful consideration of outcomes accruing to the respondent, which relate to making distinctions among the artefacts of the built environment.

To illustrate:

Where would you go to have an informal meeting with a colleague?

It depends on what I wanted to discuss. If it was something about work, a student report or something like that, that I didn't mind someone overhearing then I'd have the meeting at my workstation. I don't have the right to go to the education faculty area that would raise eyebrows. If it was something that I didn't want overheard

then I'd go to the cafeteria because then it can be a chance meeting and with all the noise no one will hear me plus it's just below the faculty area.

Where would you prefer your workstation to be?

*The photo in PK11 is taken as BETA I think or it could be in education because that's the same building design, I would rather have this work station. We had **good times at BETA** and at least the ceilings were domed which meant the AC didn't take the face off you. I wouldn't have Kathy's workstation which is in PK1F and PK1G with everyone walking around you, the emergency exit and all the **noise from the photocopier**. The key thing is the environment and at BETA we were **respected and it showed;***

The summary ladder for (3) WORKSTATION is

(V) RESPECT FOR STAFF
I
(C) PRIVACY
I
(C) OVERHEARD CONVERSATIONS
I
(A) POOR ACOUSTICS

4 Evoking the situational context

Laddering works best when respondents are providing associations while thinking of a realistic occasion in which they would use the artefact. It is the person that is the focus of the study, not the artefact. Therefore it is important to elicit from respondents the most relevant how and when they construct meaning from the artefact.

Researcher: You said you would prefer your workstation to be PK11 why is that?

Researcher: Why does the noise bother you?

It's not really the noise, you get used to noise, and it's just that I don't want to be near the photocopier. It's not a good work area and seems inferior to the other and that makes me feel inferior.

Researcher: Why would it make you feel inferior?

If you are in a poorer position in relation to people who are the same grade as you then everyone thinks you have done something wrong. Why have you been given this workstation? We can't choose our own work area, sometimes there is a bit of negotiation but essentially it's allocated to us, so if we're allocated one for example with a position next to the printer then we are in a less favourable position, especially if someone who is essentially doing the same job has a better one. It also makes me wonder if I've done something wrong to be allocated a work station like this. Is something happening that I don't know about. Is something happening on CD2??

Researcher: Why?

The management team are forced to make everyone feel insecure. We are all here with families and if we lose our job we lose our home, our kids are out of school so a lot of us in that position just put up with it and maybe look for another job to get out.

The summary ladder for (4) WORKSTATION is

(V) INSECURITY
I
(C) LOW STATUS
I
(C) INFERIOR STATUS
I
(C) INFERIOR WORKPLACE
I
(A) NOISE

5 Postulating the absence of an object

Researcher: You mentioned that you would have an informal meeting in the canteen. Where would you go if it was closed?

If I was meeting with someone in this building that would be hard to find anywhere so we'd probably stay at my workstation. If they were in a different building I might suggest the student service area. There is a coffee area at the back of that and again although it's next to the management suite not many people hang around there. There is also an outdoor seating area just through the door.

Researcher: why is it important that not many staff is there

It's not important but I don't like to think of someone listening to what I'm saying. You don't know who tell who which pieces of information here. So you don't want things taken out of context.

Researcher: why would that be?

If I was for example talking about a students grades and someone could hear me depending on what I was saying the member of staff may think I was going against Deborah and let her know and that wouldn't do me any good so they may decide we want to influence the grade and again if that gets back it won't be doing me much good.

Researcher: Why do you think of this?

So many people here have been sacked or demoted for no reason- or no apparent reason you end up a bit paranoid. I wouldn't want to be seen in the canteen area too often anyway because someone may think I'm not doing enough work

The summary ladder for (5) MEETING AREAS

(V) INSECURITY

I

(C) FEAR OF DISMISSAL

I

(C) RECRIMINATION

I

(C) CONFIDENTIALTY

I

(A) ACOUSTIC PRIVACY

6 Age regression contrast probe

Moving respondents backward in time is another affective device for encouraging respondents to think critically about and be able to verbalize their feelings and behaviour.

Interviewer: You said you were concerned who heard what you were talking about. Was this the same two years ago?

Well two years ago we were at BETA and no I wouldn't have been. There wasn't the atmosphere of fear then that there is now. I'd have happily discussed say students work, not where students could have overheard certainly but in any of the faculty areas and if we needed to have a meeting we just found an empty seating area of which there were plenty. It was a comfortable working atmosphere where we all, mostly all, tried to help each other.

Interviewer: Why was there no fear?

Derek could be a bit of a pain, but you could voice your opinion and it was a fairly new college so everyone was trying to build it up. The teaching allocations were fair and people had time to work on new ideas. It seemed that management were there to help not to find fault. We had plenty of working space and the supervisor's offices weren't overlooking us – we were treated as professional but also individuals.

Researcher: Is it important that you are treated as a professional and an individual

Yes we are in a foreign country and we are employed here supposedly because of our qualifications and experience. I'm not only a teacher but I'm a wife and mother and I'm also someone who likes reading poetry. This was encouraged before. Derek put on the sports camps because he knew we would be back at work before the schools and it's a worry knowing what to do with the kids. It didn't matter that the kids came in to see you in fact it was encouraged to get to know everyone in the family. The kids could wait in the coffee lounge from 8am when I started to 8.30

*when the camp started and they could wait and watch a movie in the library afterwards. Have you ever seen any of the staff's kids in ALPHA?
Because Derek arranged that we felt valued as a professional and a family member.*

Researcher: Why?

He treated staff as people and not employees. He recognised we were in a foreign country with no extended family support and we were encouraged to form that support within the college

To me that kind of thing symbolised respect and value as staff and as a human being

The summary ladder for (6)WORKING ENVIRONMENT is

(A) RESPECT
I
(C) VALUED AS STAFF
I
(C) FAMILY ATMOSHERE
I
(C) FAIR TREATMENT
I
(A) WORKING ATMOSHERE

7 Preference- artefact differences

Internal student areas

To illustrate:

You said your most preferred photo of internal student areas is PK1M and the second choice is PK1O.

Preferred is not a good word perhaps capturing' or encapsulating the meanings they have for me is better- as far as I am concerned. I chose this photo, well I chose the area first before you photographed it, but I chose this photo because it's actually a photo of the women's campus holding the IT challenge and this was the day when

*the men came in to work on the challenge. For me there are two important facts. The first that struck me but not necessarily the most important was the men in the women's college. Of course that was radical but what I thought of more was the facilities in terms of your area of research. The **facilities** that even the student has in the women's are **superior than the men** have in their own college. This has history. I don't know if you know but before you came to the college and before Derek came, Sassan was the director of this college. Everyone said including, Chris (facilities managers) said that **Sassan stripped all the finances from the men's** and took the money over to the women's so Derek spent his time trying to build up the college without any resources. So the guys have ordinary computers in the men's and the women have these state of the art computers. It says a lot about **Sassan's power** that he could not only have taken the money but also got all these facilities. The men's have always been **the poor relations**. Secondly is the comparison between the facilities that the students have and the facilities that the students have. Half the students are barely of the academic standard of our kids (age 8) and they have everything at their disposal – it's all a **big show for the sheik**. Sassan looks great when the students take part in an IT challenge that certainly my 13 year old could surpass. **The facilities and quality of equipment are all for show** and by comparison the equipment we have is quite **out dated**. For me PK1N shows the leisurely pace but also the attention that the faculty give to students.*

*The least preferred photo is PK1K is more that it is a contrast to the others. They show a **high standard for student's equipment** but this photo is of the canteen. It's from the ones you took for the Al Manar magazine isn't it. All the staff are there and they don't look too happy. Everyone was forced to make an appearance, in their own time after work. You can see they are forced to be there. All staff sitting with the students eating for Iftar and just wanting to get out as soon as possible. There is no **mixing between students and staff** and everyone is sitting with people they know.*

Researcher: Why is this important?

*From the design of the building it isn't, it's just the **atmosphere of the college** now means **people feel safer** when they know who they are talking to.*

The summary ladder for (7) INTERNAL STUDENT AREAS IS

(V) JOB SECURITY
I
(C) ATMOSHERE OF COLLEGE
I
(C) DISPLAY OF POWER
I
(C) POWER OF DIRECTOR
I
(C) LOWER QUALITY IN BETA
I
(A) DIFFERENCES IN QUALITY OF AREAS (BETA V ALPHA)

External areas

8 Preference- artefact differences

These photos divide I think it comes from the Arabic culture and the values they have here, the sheik and the director to an extent are seen as benevolent father figures who can bestow presents or give punishment. It has nothing to do with a European education system where we operate to a budget. Here the director asks and is given if he in turn is behaving correctly. Gosh I'm becoming pedantic these days.

One category includes the gate and the security posting. The gate is positioned between the men's and women's campus and is open at certain time to allow staff to go from one campus to the other. Other than that it is closed off presumably to stop the men and women rushing together and copulating on the lawn. I'm a Muslim but restraint is taught and I think it's outdated now to lock the men away from the women. Al lot of our male students are working and they work with women. For me it's a sign that ABC are paying lip service to this custom. The security guards are on the entrance to the women's campus. Its chaos getting in, in the morning because all the buses with the girls on are checked in and all cars are checked to make sure no unknown make can get onto the campus. Some of the female students are married with children and yet they are bussed in like 10 year olds. If you look where the gate is between the colleges it leaves the auditorium and the sports facilities in the

women's campus. The women never play sport and the guys have nowhere to play sport. The gates seem to divide the rich college from the poor and even the guys felt they had less than the women had.

Now they feel that **Sassan only cares about the women's college and not about the men's.**

Researcher Why is that?

Well if you look at the other photos, the city hall, the cafeteria building and the new case building, they are all for the women. Well city hall isn't but the men never seem to get there. Seemingly it is a 75% model of the Albert Hall. Luxurious inside and used about 4 days a year. The new building was denoted to the women's before a use for it had been decided so it's not a case of need is it. It's like a reward system. The college is running well so here's the prize.

The Sheik comes to the women's more often and the students see that as a compliment to the college and the more new building and facilities the college is given in comparison to another are a sign of the relative importance of the director.

Researcher: Why would that be?

I think from the student's point of view its back to the benevolent father thing. The staff wants to see success and stability because we feel safer.

The summary ladder for (8) EXTERNAL AREAS is

- (V) DIRECTORS POWER
- I
- (C) REWARD SYSTEM
- I
- (C) ALPHA MORE CARED FOR THAN BETA
- I
- (C) PAYING LIP SERVICE TO CUSTOM
- I
- (C) BEHAVING CORRECTLY
- I
- (A) REQUEST FOR FACILITIES

9 Difference by occasion

You chose the photo of the city hall. How would you use the building if you were arranging an event.

The building is really impressive and the auditorium has great acoustics. It seems such a shame that it's used so seldom. I would try and rally the students together to arrange a charity event perhaps a musical event with tickets sold to staff and students in the University City to raise money for a charity that means something to the people here. Iraq for example.

Researcher: Why a charity event?

To me the luxurious ness of the surroundings here in University City compared to the surrounding areas and the building sites where you see men living in camps with one toilet between 300 and no AC is quite disgusting. These people live so close by but hardly anyone notices them. Perhaps by arranging a charity event like this it would get the locals to think more about people who have less than them. It doesn't seem right really that there is so much here in terms of facilities and they are not fully utilised.

Researcher: Why is that?

It's socially unjust. We are here as part of those facilities bought in for our qualification just like the tiling. Have you seen the street lamps? They've got those poor Indians up there washing the lamps on the street light every week. These guys wear flip flops and don't have any safety equipment. They are paid 500 dhs per month (about 100 sterling) and those reproduction 19th century gas lamps must cost thousands. The gardens round city hall and the campus have lovely seating areas, are beautifully landscaped an yet its 50 degrees out there- who can walk in them and how much water is used to keep the plants alive it's quite disgusting. Don't tell me it's required for a good education. It's the imbalance that gets me between the conditions the emirates and the expat live in- the difference between the quality of the surroundings and the quality of the students work. Its all pomp and ceremony. There is no social responsibility.

The summary ladder for (9) CITY HALL is

(V) LACK OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

I

(C) POMP AND CEREMONY

I

(C) IMBALANCE

I

(C) SOCIALLY INJUST

I

(C) DISGUSTING

I

(C) LUXURY

I

(C) NOT USED

I

(A) IMPRESSIVE

10 Evoking the situational context

Researcher: You indicated that ensuring stability was more important because the whole family are here. Why is that

My salary and contract gives us the house and the kid's education. If I didn't have it, it would be a problem because Barak works for himself and doesn't get these benefits. So I know I do and I know others think of the consequences to their family before voicing an opinion. Do you remember when the teaching loads were increased? Derek held a meeting and just told everyone. There was no discussion and no one said anything. Those who didn't like it- well no one liked it- either put up or looked for another job

I think that why everyone compare teaching allocations, facilities meeting areas to try and see what's happening. Nobody really tells us what happening

Researcher: Why is that?

The managers work for Sassan. They do what they are told. The students aren't told anything but are important. I think as faculty we are a replaceable resource. Short term because of the contract type and expendable. It is an Arab system of management there is no real consultation.

11 Postulating the absence of an object

Researcher: What do you think would happen if there were no security gates?

*I think it would be seem as a sign of liberation. It's like coming into a prison. The girls would be glad of it because they are always complaining that they are **not trusted** whereas the men can come and go as they please. The staff would be pleased to because they wouldn't be held up at the door all the time. Russell wouldn't be happy because he **couldn't monitor** who was coming and going and Amal would have a fit. The gates are only there to please the girls' families and to show that this college respects Islamic traditions. Remember what happened in Frees. The sheik thought Islamic tradition weren't being held and the VC sacked the director and heads and all supervisors had to reapply for their positions. **That was all show**. So if Sassan took the gates away it would have to be at the **direct instruction of the sheik**- that's what I think anyway. It's not worth the risk and Sassan doesn't take political risks like that.*

Researcher: Why

*Because he's near retirement age and want to go **out in Glory**. He wants the **prestige** of having built up the college. That's why he wouldn't mix the students during Mosaic*

*The summary ladder for (11) **SECURITY GATES** is*

(V)PRESTIGE
I
(C)ALLSHOW
I
(C) CONTROL
I
(C) IMBALANCE OF FREEDOM
I
(A) LACK OF TRUST

Pilot interviews

| Categories | Phase 1 Pilot interviews with 4 participants on a semi- structured basis TABLE I |
|---|--|
| <p>New director submissive</p> <p>before- team work after- task completion</p> <p>50 minute class lengths. 2 or 3 years future</p> <p>basically good but everyone's treated as though they are lazy</p> <p>was co-operative now competitive ----</p> <p>collegial</p> <p>meetings are homogenous</p> <p>conform used to innovate</p> <p>Quality of the work less than the quality of the buildings. An Arabic style , a feeling of luxury For status of director It's easier for me to think of text that faculty is not really valued here</p> | <p><u>Discussion areas</u> All questions relate to your own experience and belief about your college</p> <p>What change has occurred in the organization within the last year that, in your opinion has had the most far reaching effects.</p> <p>In your opinion, what is your college's relationship with its environment e.g. dominant, submissive?</p> <p>What is the correct way for staff to behave in their working environment? E.g. dominant, pro-active, harmonizing, passive.</p> <p>What kind of time units are most relevant to the college for the conduct of daily affairs. Does the college look to the past, present or future?</p> <p>Are members of the organization here basically good, neutral or evil? What is the 'correct' way for people to relate to each other? Is organizational life competitive or co-operative/</p> <p>Is the best way to organize staff on the basis of individualism or collectivism? Definition: Individualism accents on individual rights and freedom Collectivism accents the group and values harmony among members</p> <p>Is the best authority system autocratic, custodial, collegial, or participative? Definition: Autocratic: obedience, dependence on boss Custodial: Money, security and benefits, dependence on organization Collegial: partnership, self-discipline, teamwork Participative: consultation, work as a team, manager retains responsibility</p> <p>Is the group best off if it is highly diverse or highly homogeneous? Are individuals in a group encouraged to</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>innovate or conform? What is your impression of the buildings you work in? Are there any contrasts with buildings you have previously worked in? What do you think the designer was trying to achieve? What do you think management is trying to achieve with the building design or alterations to the building? Which symbolic physical artefact in your work environment gives meaning about the culture of the organization? Do these artefacts contradict or support the culture? How have you decided on the meaning of these symbols?</p> |
| | <p>Selection of 3 key informants and discussions Discussion took place about what was happening at the college in terms of managerial decisions and the built environment, who might want to get involved in the research and who might not. How to access information and who would be the relevant gatekeepers</p> |
| | <p>Primary key informant- trial interviews- phase 2</p> |
| <p>New director more accountability and less individualism fear of failure and recrimination Quality of student work lower than quality of building.</p> | <p>Phase 2 Initial issue focused Interviews</p> <p>What do you think are the most important issues at the college at the moment/ How do you think this affects you, your group, department, the college the system? How do you see the built environment you are in with respect to these issues How do you feel about this Do you interpret your situation, group, department, college from the built environment If so, what are the elements of the built environment you look to</p> |
| | <p>Primary key informant</p> |
| | <p>Return to literature</p> |
| <p>I'm a wife and a mother English teacher low academic standards and lack of work by the students English medium college in an Arabic bi</p> | <p>Phase 3 Interview using auto driving techniques with photographs and documents Describe yourself as a person – Are you different at home Describe yourself at home Describe yourself as a person at work What is your perception of the organization How does your department fit into the organization</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>lingual community My group/ CD2 teaching group 3 working environments. Work station - coffee shop - classes I'm in with my students. My work station – relation to the status of others -not a lot of privacy No meeting rooms- Personal photos</p> | <p>How does your group fit into the organization Describe your working environment How does that fit into the organization What are some of the key values at ALPHA/BETA/GAMMA/ABC What adjectives would you use to describe ALPHA/BETA/GAMMA/ABC What is distinctive about ALPHA/BETA/GAMMA/ABC</p> <p>Looking at the photos of the built environment areas previously highlighted by you. How do these areas help you make these perceptions of yourself, your group, your dept, your college</p> |
| | Return to literature |
| | Primary key informant- trial interviews |
| <p>Internal staff areas Unequal facilities Staff Treated as a facility/resource timekeeping change after takeover by new director atmosphere of fear previous good times Internal student areas Unequal facilities = unequal status Power of director Buildings intended to impress External areas Atmosphere of fear and insecurity Unhappiness Behaviour conformist ALPHA more important than BETA Luxurious surrounding contrast to poor external areas No consultation</p> | <p>Phase 4 Interviews using laddering techniques with photographs and documents We looked before at the photos and document and now we've narrowed these into a few which you feel are important to you Lets talk about the main issues in the photos and documents Why are these important</p> |

Appendix 10: excerpts from interview guide

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>cluster of responses from participant</p> | <p>Phase 1 Pilot interviews with 4 participants on a structured basis</p> |
| <p>New director submissive before- team work after- task completion 50 minute class lengths. 2 or 3 years future basically good but everyone's treated as though they are lazy was co-operative now competitive</p> <p>collegial</p> <p>meetings are homogenous</p> <p>conform used to innovate</p> <p>quality of the work less than the Quality of the buildings. An Arabic style , a feeling of luxury status of director that faculty is not really valued here</p> | <p><u>Discussion areas</u> What change has occurred in the organization w the last year, that, in your opinion has had the m reaching effects. Does the college look to the past, present or future Are members of the organization here basically neutral or evil? What is the 'correct' way for people to relate to Is organizational life competitive or co-operative</p> <p>Is the best way to organize staff on the basis of individualism or collectivism?</p> <p>Is the best authority system autocratic, custodial, collegial, or participative?</p> <p>Is the group best off if it is highly diverse or highly Homogeneous? Are individuals in a group encouraged to innovate or conform? What is your impression of the buildings you worked in? Are there any contrasts with buildings you have worked in? What do you think the designer was trying to achieve What do you think management is trying to achieve with the building design or alterations to the building</p> |
| <p>New director more accountability and less individual fear of failure and recrimination quality of student work lower than quality of building.</p> | <p>Phase 2 Initial issue focused Interviews What do you think are the most important issues at the college at the moment/ How do you think this affects you, your group, department, the college the system? How do you see the built environment you are in with respect to these issues How do you feel about this Do you interpret your situation college from the built environment</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>I'm a wife and a mother / English teaching low academic standards and lack of support by the students English medium college in an Arabi bi lingual community My group/ CD2 teaching group 3 working environments. work station - coffee shop - classes I'm in with n students. My work station – relation the status of others -not a lot of priv</p> | <p>Phase 3 Interview using auto driving techniques with photographs and documents Describe yourself as a person – Are you different at home Describe yourself at home Describe yourself as a person at work What is your perception of the organization How does your department fit into the organization How does your group fit into the organization Describe your working environment How does that fit into the organization</p> |
| <p>Internal staff areas Unequal facilities Staff Treated as a facility/resource timekeeping change after takeover by new directo atmosphere of fear previous good times</p> | <p>Phase 4 Interviews using laddering techniques with photographs and documents We looked before at the photos and document and now we've narrowed these into which you feel are important to you Lets talk about the main issues in the photos and documents Why are these important</p> |

Appendix 11 Summary codes for laddering

Table summary content codes for PKI

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>VALUES</p> <p>(42) STATUS REDUCED (43) RESPECT FOR STAFF (44) INSECURITY (45) INSECURITY (46) RESPECT</p> | <p>(47) JOB SECURITY (48) DIRECTORS POWER (49) LACK OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (50) PRESTIGE</p> |
| <p>CONSEQUENCES</p> <p>(10) WORK ETHIC (11) DIRECTORS STRATEGY (12) MESS (13) CHECKING ON STAFF (14) PRIVACY (15) OVERHEARD CONVERSATIONS (16) LOW STATUS (17) INFERIOR STATUS (18) INFERIOR WORKPLACE (19) FEAR OF DISMISSAL (20) RECRIMINATION (21) CONFIDENTIALITY (22) VALUED AS STAFF (23) FAMILY ATMOSPHERE (24) FAIR TREATMENT (25) ATMOSPHERE OF COLLEGE (26) DISPLAY OF POWER (27) POWER OF DIRECTOR</p> | <p>(28) LOWER QUALITY IN BETA (29) REWARD SYSTEM (30) ALPHA MORE CARED FOR THAN BETA (31) PAYING LIP SERVICE TO CUSTOM (32) BEHAVING CORRECTLY (33) POMP AND CEREMONY (34) IMBALANCE (35) SOCIALLY INJUST (36) DISGUSTING (37) LUXURY (38) NOT USED (39) ALLSHOW (40) CONTROL (41) IMBALANCE OF FREEDOM</p> |
| <p>ATTRIBUTES</p> <p>(1) TIMEKEEPING (2) POOR ACOUSTICS (3) NOISE (4) ACOUSTIC PRIVACY (5) WORKING ATMOSPHERE</p> | <p>(6) DIFFERENCES IN QUALITY OF AREAS (BETA V ALPHA) (7) REQUEST FOR FACILITIES (8) IMPRESSIVE (9) LACK OF TRUST</p> |

Appendix 12 Documentary Coding Methods

Documentary Coding Method (Axelrod)

+ Positive influence

- Harmful influence

++ will not hurt, does not prevent, is not harmful to

-- will not help, does not promote, is of no benefit to

a may or may not be related to, affects indeterminately

m effects in some non-zero way

o does not matter for, has no effect on, has no relation to

Appendix 13 Sample Contact summary Form

Contact Summary Form

Illustration with coded themes

Type of contact:

Place:

Date:

SITE:

artefact

discussion

workstations

Staff have no decision making power/
no consultation with staff

intranet

Faculty feel there is no respect for staff
as professional no trust

Security gates

Lip service to tradition
Controlling staffs entry and exit times

Security gates

Ensure directors own position is safeguarded

Classes

Student facilities compared with staff facilities

IT facilities

intranet

Controlling actions of management

Staff

areas/student

areas

Compared with other staff areas and
with student facilities

Luxurious ness
of buildings

The image of quality through the facilities
does no match the internal quality of work by students

Appendix 14 Sample Documentary coding

Phase 1 interviews PKI

For me the most far reaching change has to be **Sassan taking over BETA**. From my point of view I'm out of it because I got the transfer to ALPHA after that horrible incident with Anne but everyone apart from you is left there. Everyone worried about what is going to happen. I suppose **Derek let things go a bit** and of course when Chris was supervisor he left most of the organization to me. Now I'm here with no responsibilities other than my teaching but at least life is calm.

Sassan taking over BETA /-/ Everyone worried about what is going to happen horrible incident with Anne /m/ I got the transfer to ALPHA /m/ I'm here with no responsibilities other than my teaching

Derek let things go a bit /a/ **Sassan taking over BETA**

I'm not sure. The colleges are run by the Sheik for the country so I suppose it's submissive. From this colleges point of view I think **Sassan does what the community expects of him** and Amal advises him. So he wouldn't take any risk to ignore Islam or any traditional values. DWC being in Diba is more radical in this respect.

The colleges are run by the Sheik for the country /m/ **Sassan does what the community expects of him**/m/ So he wouldn't take any risk to ignore Islam or any traditional values

This is a big difference between last semesters when **Derek was the director**. Then everyone worked together as a team, with a few exceptions of course, but you could say what you thought within reason. On the down side everyone was supposed to play in the darts team. Now at BETA nobody is talking have you noticed how quiet the faculty area is now? I don't know where the dart board has gone. Remember, when we were in our corner we used to have such a laugh. And those emails Madeline used to send round- everyone had something witty to say in

response. Now no one knows who they can talk to. In ALPHA no one is talking to me because I've come from BETA they don't know if they can trust me.

Derek was the director/++/ Then everyone worked together as a team

Derek was the director./++/ you could say what you thought

Derek was the director./a/ everyone was supposed to play in the darts team

This is a big difference between last semesters/-/ Now at BETA nobody is talking

Derek was the director./++/ we used to have such a laugh

Derek was the director./a/ those emails Madeline used to send round

This is a big difference between last semesters/++/ Now no one knows who they can talk to

In ALPHA no one is talking to me because/++/ I've come from BETA/++/ they don't know if they can trust me.

Time. Time is really important here isn't it. Classes start at 8 o'clock and even if you are late because security have held up the buses, I've been told staff have been sacked for being late for that reason. With the intranet we have to put in all attendance by the end of the day and the students need to log on in the morning. It seems to me that the time units are based on the 50 minute class lengths.

if you are late because security have held up the buses,/++/ I've been told staff have been sacked for being late for that reason.

There isn't much of a past here is there. I suppose the religious aspects of life look to the past and because of the religion the emeriti's don't look to the future. From Sassan's perspective I think he'll retire in 2 or 3 years time so he wants to make his impression within that time. I don't see anything in the college looking further than that.

the religious aspects of life look to the past and because of the religion/++/ the emeriti's don't look to the future.

he'll retire in 2 or 3 years time so/++/ he wants to make his impression within that time.

I think most people are **basically good but everyone's treated as though they are evil** maybe not evil but **lazy** and everything is put in place to catch us out. Security checks the time the evening classes end. Security even checks the cars in the car park at night to see if anyone's left early.

everyone's treated as though they are evil maybe not evil but **lazy** everything is put in place to catch us out.

everyone's treated as though they are evil maybe not evil but **lazy** Security checks the time the evening classes end

everyone's treated as though they are evil maybe not evil but **lazy** Security even checks the cars in the car park at night to see if anyone's left early.

The correct way. It used to be that everyone should be friendly. Remember Derek had a big thing about staff meeting up in the faculty area and us having lots of nights out and informal gatherings. That's all gone now and **it's only the job**. The increase in teaching loads hasn't helped either.

The increase in teaching loads hasn't helped either./++/That's all gone now(informal gatherings

That's all gone now(informal gatherings/++/ and **it's only the job**

When I first came to BETA I was really pleased how cooperative everyone was. It's like that in education. In England if a teacher wasn't succeeding all their colleagues would support them, offer advice or teaching materials. It wasn't a competitive world. **Here everyone now seems to want to score a point over everyone else somehow**. Everyone wants to keep their own evaluations up so they can renew their contract.

Everyone wants to keep their own evaluations up so they can renew their contract./++/ **Here everyone now seems to want to score a point over everyone else somehow**.

It wasn't a competitive world. /++/was really pleased how cooperative everyone was.

I'm not sure what the best way is. Teaching can be individualistic. I like to produce my own material and speed up on some aspects of the curriculum if they are understood whereas it leaves me time to concentrate on other things. It was like that before. In Cd2 here there are at least 14 sections doing the same material and if I've got 2 there are seven teachers and we all have to be teaching the same material at the same time or Deborah wants to know why. There are class tests every week and it's the same test for everyone so we need to have covered the same material. Then the classes are ranked by the results so no one wants a poor class because they are judged by the result of the class not the difference in the level of English or the improvement.

they are judged by the result of the class/++/ no one wants a poor class

There are class tests every week and it's the same test for everyone so we need to have covered the same material /--/I like to produce my own material and speed up on some aspects of the curriculum

I think **collegial** that's the way most education systems work but here it is autocratic now. Mind you it was autocratic before with Derek but perhaps less noticeably so. Remember when they increased the teaching loads last semester. He just gathered us into the hall and informed us of the change there was no opportunity to ask questions and no one said anything about it.

it was autocratic before with Derek/++/ He just gathered us into the hall and informed us of the change there was no opportunity to ask questions and no one said anything about it.

We had highly diverse groups when we had team meeting and I worked on English for the Engineers. Now all the meetings are **homogenous** because all the English teachers meet and decide the curriculum which is the same whether the students are

enrolled in business or engineering. Sometimes it was difficult to adapt the curriculum to engineering for example when I was working with Russ. He's a lovely person but I don't know how to wire a plug and so it was difficult to think of ways to get the language across. Also he'd be the first to admit his language and grammar wasn't great either.

Now we have to **conform** but before Sassan took over we could **innovate** to an extent.

Sassan took over/a/ we could **innovate** to an extent.

I wish the quality of the work we got from the students matched up with the quality of the buildings. The surroundings are beautiful and the students have every facility. I don't think any of the women go into the sports complex it's always empty and yet there is an Olympic size swimming pool in it and all the gym facilities. On the other hand our workstations are above the cafeteria. Where I sit there; there is an air-conditioning vent directly over head. Sometimes it's freezing, that's why I keep my cardigan on my chair. But if I'm freezing someone else in the same area will be too hot so you can't ask security to alter the setting. The ceilings are very low as well so it seems to blow cold air directly on to you- I'm just waiting for a migraine to start up. You know how early I come in. I'm in by 6.45 after dropping Aysha off at the bus stop. I don't have breakfast and when I come in all I can smell is frying onions. It just comes up from the cafeteria and its none to pleasant at that time of the morning.

If I compare it to ALPHA then the buildings are a bit simpler. I know they were built at the same time but Derek never went in for all that pomp did he. He was a plain Yorkshire man. Sassan puts in all the gilt and glitz. Before that we ran our own business in Plymouth and I ran it from the house from one room in fact so there is no real comparison. But it was all we needed and because we did training we were in other company's offices. Before that I was a French teacher in an inner city secondary school in Plymouth so they didn't have much there so it is a real contrast. But in the UAE all the new buildings are like this so you just get used to it.

Derek never went in for all that pomp did he/a/ the buildings are a bit simpler.
Sassan puts in all the gilt and glitz./a/ UAE all the new buildings are like this so you just get used to it.

Well I'm no designer. **An Arabic style , a feeling of luxury I don't know**

Sassan is definitely trying to **make his mark and go out in style**. If you take for example the new building and the donation he announced of 8,000,000 dhs. The building has come before the purpose. Now everyone is waiting to see which department or which purpose the building will have.

trying to **make his mark and go out in style/++/** the new building and the donation he announced of 8,000,000 dhs

Sassan is definitely trying to **make his mark/++/** which purpose the building will have.

Inside the building the major thing at the moment is Sassan's decision to have most of the supervisors responsible for areas in the two colleges and giving each supervisor an office on both sites. It means that all our meeting rooms have gone. In our faculty area little Derek has an office and I came in for a meeting and half the meeting room had been turned into his office. I nearly walked into it by mistake. All the program team meeting notes and course outlines are kept in the meeting room. I suppose someone will get the other half of the meeting room next. I suppose he's trying to make the place more efficient at least that's what he says

Sassan's decision to have most of the supervisors responsible for areas in the two colleges/++/ and giving each supervisor an office on both sites.

giving each supervisor an office on both sites /++/ It means that all our meeting rooms have gone.

I suppose he's trying to make the place more efficient at least that's what he says/++/

half the meeting room had been turned into his office.

This is something that's difficult for me. **It's easier for me to think of text.** Deborah sent an email to all her staff last week telling them that student results had to improve. We know that Sassan's taken the face off her in a management meeting but it was the way it was written. A warning that if they don't improve we'll lose our jobs. Her attitude is way out of line and all the CD2 teachers really sat and analyzed all the words, text layout but then we are all English teachers. I haven't thought about the building that much but when I do the faculty area above the canteen says a lot to me. It's silent for a start you don't hear anyone talking like you did at BETA. The air-conditioning and the way we are all in pens no individualism. That's the same for all faculty but the low ceilings and the canteen smell say a lot. I bet they wouldn't put students up there.

I think it shows that **faculty is not really valued here.** /++/the faculty area above the canteen says a lot to me. It's silent for a start you don't hear anyone talking like you did at BETA

I think it shows that **faculty is not really valued here.** /++/ The air-conditioning and the way we are all in pens no individualism.

I think it shows that **faculty is not really valued here.**/++/ the low ceilings and the canteen smell say a lot.

I think it shows that **faculty is not really valued here.**/++/ I bet they wouldn't put students up there.

I think it shows that **faculty is not really valued here.** I'm not sure how I've got these impressions but I will think about it over the next few days.

PHASE 2 interviews

I'm a CD2 English teacher, nothing more now and in a way I'm glad of it. I've less pressure now and I've noticed the difference in my migraines. You now I haven't had one since I moved to ALPHA. Mind you I'm bored.

I'm a CD2 English teacher, nothing more now and in a way I'm glad of it. /++/I've less pressure now and/a/ I've noticed the difference in my migraines. /a/You now I haven't had one since I moved to ALPHA.

**I'm a CD2 English teacher, nothing more now and in a way I'm glad of it. /++/
Mind you I'm bored.**

This will be my 5th year. Do you remember last time I had to sign of for another three years and I kept the contract in my desk until the last moment- it hardly seems any time at all and now it will be the same again. I wonder if I'll need to sign on for another three years.

It's changed, it's become so formal whereas it was informal and friendly. The day we came over we were staying in the office with Barak we had nowhere to live. I got this job after we arrived and for us it was great because with Barak having his own business he obviously doesn't get housing or schooling. So when I got the job I started the same day as Chris Bryant which was almost the year this BETA opened. Chris was facilities manager but he'd come from Bahrain and didn't know anything about the UAE and said as much. Barak had been here for 6 months so he knew his way around. So Barak found our house and gave the contract to Chris and he signed it. He said- I'm sure it's OK if you are happy with it and Barak knows what he is doing. That wouldn't happen now would it. Someone would be sent out to check the house and there is a lot of fuss if you want to change houses. Look at Hans and Lotty.

changed, it's become so formal/++/ Look at Hans and Lotty.

**it was informal and friendly./m/ He said- I'm sure it's OK if you are happy with it
it was informal and friendly./m/ So Barak found our house and gave the contract
to Chris and he signed it. He said- I'm sure it's OK if you are happy with it and
Barak knows what he is doing**

What do you think are the most important issues at the college at the moment?
Like we discussed before **Sassan taking over.** He has a real reputation for firing people for no reason that everyone's wondering if it will be them or not now because the staff of the two colleges are being mixed up and there is co teaching across the campus staff are unsure of who they can trust.

Sassan taking over/++/ campus staff are unsure of who they can trust.

staff of the two colleges are being mixed up/m/ campus staff are unsure of who they can trust.

Here seems to be **more accountability and less individualism** the intranet portal makes sure of that. You've noticed that when you enter the faulty area you have to pass the supervisors office and the secretary's workstation. They both check if staff are arriving on time or leaving early. The secretary is accountable to the supervisor and the supervisor has to seem to check up on staff and report to the heads, that why their office is at the top of the stairs. The students are accountable to us and we have to enter the attendance daily on the intranet and we are accountable if we don't. If a student is failing or has low attendance then its picked up by the supervisors and we have to explain, hopefully the supervisors gets to us for an explanation before the heads get to the supervisor.

the intranet portal /++/**more accountability and less individualism**

when you enter the faulty area you have to pass the supervisors office and the secretary's workstation/m/ They both check if staff are arriving on time or leaving early.

their office is at the top of the stairs/m/ seem to check up on staff and report to the heads

we have to enter the attendance daily on the intranet /++/**more accountability and less individualism**

Well in our group we **all watch our back and justify all failure** and everything is reported to the supervisors. It means instead of speaking to one another we email everything and copy everyone. The department wants to maintain high success rates on the exams and this reflects on the colleges overall performance within the system.

we email everything and copy everyone./++/ **we all watch our back and justify all failure**

The department wants to maintain high success rates/m/ **we all watch our back and justify all failure**

I think the way the faculty areas are laid out and the way the classes are it's done for maximum control over faculty and students. Have you noticed that even though

there are some seating areas outside none of the staff sit there and talk **they don't want to be seen having nothing to do?** Everyone has their head down at the desk even if they are answering their personal email or surfing the net for cheap flights for the holidays. How do you see the built environment you are in with respect to these issues?

the way the faculty areas are laid out and the way the classes /++/are it's done for maximum control over faculty and students

they don't want to be seen having nothing to do?/m/ Have you noticed that even though there are some seating areas outside none of the staff sit there and talk
Everyone has their head down at the desk /m/maximum control over faculty and students

We are supposed to be professional faculty we don't need- well most of us **don't need all this supervision** it makes you want to go home early in a way.

You know I had a great workplace at BETA next to two windows When I was transferred to ALPHA I was glad to see at least I had a window- most people don't. I know Tim arranged that and knowing that made the move a bit easier. The equipment and facilities we have as faculty compared to the quality of equipment the students have and again the quality of equipment in ALPHA is higher than BETA. For example BETA staff had laptops when Derek was there but ALPHA staff gets the computers that are out dated once the student computers have been replaced. ALPHA have a lovely coffee shop that is relaxing to sit in, of course it was put there for the students and not for us but still. There's nothing like that at BETA and they even took the coffee out of the staff room. **The overall appearance of the college building suggest that there is really some quality work done here particularly scholarly achievement but the reality is so different and anything is staff driven the students never come up with anything.**

I had a window/++/ I know Tim arranged that and knowing that made the move a bit easier.

The overall appearance of the college building suggest /0/that there is really some quality work done here particularly scholarly achievement /0/but the

reality is so different and anything is staff driven the students never come up with anything.

Phase 3 interviews

1 This is difficult because you know me. Most importantly I'm a wife and a mother so my focus at home is on the kids and their welfare. I love cooking and I really enjoy trying different recipes and collecting kitchen equipment. Barak works after I come home so I spend a lot of time well we both do ferrying the kids to judo and music classes and then most of my time is spent making sure their homework is done and the house is tidy.

2 I'm a Cd2 English teacher programmed to teach the same thing to 4 sections and prepare them for an end of week exam. I care about the students and sometimes really feel sorry for some of the girls. They have such high expectations of life. I would like to resign tomorrow and read Keats in my garden but I can only do that when Barak can support us so I keep on going

3 I don't have a very good perception of the organization or particularly the college. It doesn't get to grips with the main issues of low academic standards and lack of work by the students. It accepts things and the teaching staff have to work even harder to find a way to get the students to pass an exam. There are beautiful facilities and marvellous equipment too but that doesn't help. Mind you it's the same for the whole country.

There are beautiful facilities and marvellous equipment too but that doesn't help./0/
doesn't get to grips with the main issues of low academic standards and lack of work by the students

4 This is an English medium college in an Arabic bi lingual community. Most of the students come from an Arabic speaking school and with some of them their English is limited. This means that the English department is crucial in getting the students up to speed in English so they can study content. That's why all the colleges in the system compare the externally assesses English exams so they can judge who is more successful.

5 My group is the CD2 teaching group. All of us are dedicated CD2 teachers. It wasn't like that in BETA as Derek made sure everyone moved about from semester to semester and had loads from different classes but at ALPHA they believe you become more expert in a certain area- so CD2 group would then fit into the English department which would then act as a support department for all content areas

6 I would say I have 3 working environments. The first is my work station above the cafeteria, the second is the coffee shop where I seem to be spending more and more time and the third are the classes I'm in with my students.

7 It's all very standard. The classes are fine and for me the classes don't say much about me as an English teacher because the girls are for example business students and the classes are in the business block so that block would say more about the power of that supervisor than mine as English CD2 supervisor. The coffee shop again is for any staff or students but I do think that says something. It would be nice to have our own coffee area so we could relax and talk .The students are always coming up to you and asking questions when you are in the coffee shop. It's just another statement about our status here really.

The classes are fine and for me the classes don't say much about me as an English teacher /--/ the girls are for example business students
so that block would say more about the power of that supervisor/m/ than mine as English CD2 supervisor
It's just another statement about our status here really./++/ The coffee shop again is for any staff or students

8 My work station then I would relate to other staff work stations above me or in my department or in other departments. The building is unfortunates being above the cafeteria but the furnishing are simple yet practical. There is not a lot of **privacy** but then there isn't a lot of privacy for anyone. Only supervisors and heads have an office so it can sometimes be difficult to speak to students when you may disturb other faculty. **The meeting rooms have gone now too which doesn't help.** I like to be able to **put my kids photos on the panels that makes me feel as though**

I am still me- a human being- and somehow not exactly the same as everyone else. It reminds me who I'm working for as well- the kids well being.

My work station then I would relate to/+/ other staff work stations above me or in my department or in other departments.

Phase 4 interviews

Looking at the photos of the built environment areas previously highlighted by you. How do these areas help you make these perceptions of yourself, your group, your dept, your college?

*There is one way of looking at them and that is to say that one of the sets of photos is external and two sets are internal. Another way of looking at them generally is that the **quality** of the external areas and the internal student's areas is similar whereas the internal staff areas are of a **lower quality**.*

Internal staff areas

You said your most preferred photo of internal staff areas is PK1H and the second choice is PK1J. Why is that?

*PK1H is a photo of me at my workstation. It's not to say that I prefer the photo but I think it encapsulates some of the issues that we have discussed. The photo shows me as an **individual**. I don't dress up for work because there is no point. I'll dress up and wear make up when I go out at night. But from an Islamic perspective I need to wear loose clothes and don't want to appear to wear a lot of make up although some of the students do. On the workstation itself I've tried to put a few things on it that are important to me but also there are items that **symbolise the organisation**. I've bought a poppy for poppy day but kept it there. That shows my background and where I come from but it's not offensive to anyone and would not mean anything to anyone who doesn't come from the UK. There is a clock next to the computer which I use to make sure I'm always **in time** for my classes and meetings- we are really driven by time here which is so unlike Islamic traditions. My name tag is on the panel – in yellow the same as everyone else- just in case I walk past my own area and sit at someone else's because they are all the same. It also means the supervisors can see if I'm at my desk and if not my timetable is on the wall or on the intranet so she can check up on me and doesn't have to remember where I sit. There are photos of my kids on the panel which reminds me that I stay here at the*

college to give them a reasonable standard of living. The computer is fairly old fashioned- I'm not a computer whiz kid- but it's a bit slow and all the money here seems to go on student's equipment. The workstation itself is the same as everyone's but at least I'm next to a window and my chair is comfortable- some aren't. You can see on the photo how low the ceiling is and I've got the AC fan directly over my head which blows cold air on the back of my neck- it doesn't help the migraines at all.

I chose PK1J because it said more to me. I know it is the faculty area in education but it was like the one we had in this building before it was turned into a supervisor's office and also it's like the one in BETA. They must bulk buy those sofas. Education has managed to keep their faculty area but Business and English have lost theirs. I think it shows how important education department is and where Sassan's intentions are. The external photo of the new case building illustrates this as well. He's been given money for a new building and it has been given to Case. The staff area we had a BETA had a darts board- not that I like darts but Derek put it there so staff could relax and talk together. The daily papers were there as well, but here in ALPHA this is probably the only staff area left and yet you can see it's also a work area so it has a computer, a spiral binder and a guillotine. It also contains the course binders for everyone to access- so it's not a relaxation area. You wouldn't want to just talk because you may disturb someone who is working

The photograph I like least but more because of what it means to me is PK1G. The photograph is taken just outside the former faculty meeting room which is now a supervisor's office. It's just two workstations away from mine. You can see the course binders which were in the faculty room piled on the floor. The photocopier is next to the faculty area all printing and photocopying is sent to this machine and it's difficult to concentrate with the noise from it. There is no meeting room now so if staff needs to have a quick meeting they do it in the staff kitchen where the cleaners and security guards make their lunch. The printer is right next to Kathy's workstation, next to the bin and the photocopier behind her. Kathy used to be the Directors PA with that lovely work area outside the directors office and now she is working in amongst that mess. It shows what Sassan thinks of BETA staff. She was moved out of BETA and put here- and her salary was cut.

Where would you go to have an informal meeting with a colleague?

It depends on what I wanted to discuss. If it was something about work, a student's report or something like that, that I didn't mind someone overhearing then I'd have the meeting at my workstation. I don't have the right to go to the education faculty area that would raise eyebrows. If it was something that I didn't want overheard then I'd go to the cafeteria because then it can be a chance meeting and with all the noise no one will hear me plus it's just below the faculty area.

Where would you prefer your workstation to be?

The photo in PK11 is taken as BETA I think or it could be in education because that's the same building design, I would rather have this work station. We had good times at BETA and at least the ceilings were domed which meant the AC didn't take the face off you. I wouldn't have Kathy's workstation which is in PK1F and PK1G with everyone walking around you, the emergency exit and all the noise from the photocopier. The key thing is the environment and at BETA we were respected and it showed

Researcher: You said you would prefer your workstation to be PK11 why is that?

Researcher: Why does the noise bother you?

It's not really the noise, you get used to noise, and it's just that I don't want to be near the photocopier. It's not a good work area and seems inferior to the other and that makes me feel inferior.

Researcher: Why would it make you feel inferior?

If you are in a poorer position in relation to people who are the same grade as you then everyone thinks you have done something wrong. Why have you been given this workstation? We can't choose our own work area, sometimes there is a bit of negotiation but essentially it's allocated to us, so if we're allocated one for example with a position next to the printer then we are in a less favourable position, especially if someone who is essentially doing the same job has a better one. It also makes me wonder if I've done something wrong to be allocated a work station like this. Is something happening that I don't know about. Is something happening on CD2??

Researcher: Why?

The management team are forced to make everyone feel insecure. We are all here with families and if we loose our job we loose our home, our kids are out of school so a lot of us in that position just put up with it and maybe look for another job to get out.

Researcher: You mentioned that you would have an informal meeting in the canteen. Where would you go if it was closed?

If I was meeting with someone in this building that would be hard to find anywhere so we 'd probably stay at my workstation. If they were in a different building I might suggest the student service area. There is a coffee area at the back of that and again although it's next to the management suite not many people hang around there. There is also an outdoor seating area just through the door.

Researcher: why is it important that not many staff is there

It's not important but I don't like to think of someone listening to what I'm saying. You don't know who tell who which pieces of information here. So you don't want things taken out of context.

Researcher: why would that be?

If I was for example talking about a students grades and someone could hear me depending on what I was saying the member of staff may think I was going against Deborah and let her know and that wouldn't do me any good so they may decide we want to influence the grade and again if that gets back it won't be doing me much good.

Researcher: Why do you think of this?

So many people here have been sacked or demoted for no reason- or no apparent reason you end up a bit paranoid. I wouldn't want to be seen in the canteen area too often anyway because someone may think I'm not doing enough work

Interviewer: You said you were concerned who heard what you were talking about. Was this the same two years ago?

Well two years ago we were at BETA and no I wouldn't have been. There wasn't the atmosphere of fear then that there is now. I'd have happily discussed say students

work, not where students could have overheard certainly but in any of the faculty areas and if we needed to have a meeting we just found an empty seating area of which there were plenty. It was a comfortable working atmosphere where we all, mostly all, tried to help each other.

Interviewer: Why was there no fear?

Derek could be a bit of a pain, but you could voice your opinion and it was a fairly new college so everyone was trying to build it up. The teaching allocations were fair and people had time to work on new ideas. It seemed that management were there to help not to find fault. We had plenty of working space and the supervisor's offices weren't overlooking us – we were treated as professional but also individuals.

Researcher: Is it important that you are treated as a professional and an individual

Yes we are in a foreign country and we are employed here supposedly because of our qualifications and experience. I'm not only a teacher but I'm a wife and mother and I'm also someone who likes reading poetry. This was encouraged before. Derek put on the sports camps because he knew we would be back at work before the schools and it's a worry knowing what to do with the kids. It didn't matter that the kids came in to see you in fact it was encouraged to get to know everyone in the family. The kids could wait in the coffee lounge from 8am when I started to 8.30 when the camp started and they could wait and watch a movie in the library afterwards. Have you ever seen any of the staff's kids in ALPHA?

Because Derek arranged that we felt valued as a professional and a family member.

Researcher: Why?

He treated staff as people and not employees. He recognised we were in a foreign country with no extended family support and we were encouraged to form that support within the college

To me that kind of thing symbolised respect and value as staff and as a human being

You said your most preferred photo of internal student areas is PK1M and the second choice is PK1O.

*Preferred is not a good word perhaps capturing' or encapsulating the meanings they have for me is better- as far as I am concerned. I chose this photo, well I chose the area first before you photographed it, but I chose this photo because it's actually a photo of the women's campus holding the IT challenge and this was the day when the men came in to work on the challenge. For me there are two important facts. The first that struck me but not necessarily the most important was the men in the women's college. Of course that was radical but what I thought of more was the facilities in terms of your area of research. The facilities that even the student has in the women's are **superior than the men have in their own college**. This has history. I don't know if you know but before you came to the college and before Derek came, Sassan was the director of this college. Everyone said including, Chris (facilities managers) said that **Sassan stripped all the finances from the men's** and took the money over to the women's so Derek spent his time trying to build up the college without any resources. So the guys have ordinary computers in the men's and the women have these state of the art computers. It says a lot about Sassan's power that he could not only have taken the money but also got all these facilities. The men's have always been **the poor relations**. Secondly is the comparison between the facilities that the students have and the facilities that the students have. Half the students are barely of the academic standard of our kids (age8) and they have everything at their disposal – it's all a **big show for the sheik**. Sassan looks great when the students take part in an IT challenge that certainly my 13 year old could surpass. **The facilities and quality of equipment are all for show and by comparison the equipment we have is quite out dated**. For me PK1N shows the leisurely pace but also the attention that the faculty give to students.*

*The least preferred photo is PKIK is more that it is a contrast to the others. They show a **high standard for student's equipment** but this photo is of the canteen. It's from the ones you took for the Al Manar magazine isn't it. All the staff are there and they don't look too happy. Everyone was forced to make an appearance, in their own time after work. You can see they are forced to be there. All staff sitting with the students eating for Iftar and just wanting to get out as soon as possible. There is **no mixing between students and staff and everyone is sitting with people they know**.*

Researcher: Why is this important?

From the design of the building it isn't, it's just the atmosphere of the college now means people feel safer when they know who they are talking to.

These photos divide I think it comes from the Arabic culture and the values they have here, the sheik and the director to an extent are seen as benevolent father figures who can bestow presents or give punishment. It has nothing to do with a European education system where we operate to a budget. Here the director asks and is given if he in turn is behaving correctly. Gosh I'm becoming pedantic these days.

Into two categories for me. One category includes the gate and the security posting. The gate is positioned between the men's and women's campus and is open at certain time to allow staff to go from one campus to the other. Other than that it is closed off presumably to stop the men and women rushing together and copulating on the lawn. I'm a Muslim but restraint is taught and I think it's outdated now to lock the men away from the women. A lot of our male students are working and they work with women. For me it's a sign that ABC are paying lip service to this custom. The security guards are on the entrance to the women's campus. It's chaos getting in, in the morning because all the buses with the girls on are checked in and all cars are checked to make sure no unknown make can get onto the campus. Some of the female students are married with children and yet they are bussed in like 10 year olds. If you look where the gate is between the colleges it leaves the auditorium and the sports facilities in the women's campus. The women never play sport and the guys have nowhere to play sport. The gates seem to divide the rich college from the poor and even the guys felt they had less than the women had.

Now they feel that Sassan only cares about the women's college and not about the men's.

Researcher Why is that?

Well if you look at the other photos, the city hall, the cafeteria building and the new case building, they are all for the women. Well city hall isn't but the men never seem to get there. Seemingly it is a 75% model of the Albert Hall. Luxurious inside and used about 4 days a year. The new building was denoted to the women's before a use for it had been decided so it's not a case of need is it. It's like a reward system. The college is running well so here's the prize.

The Sheik comes to the women's more often and the students see that as a compliment to the college and the more new building and facilities the college is given in comparison to another are a sign of the relative importance of the director.

Researcher: Why would that be?

I think from the student's point of view its back to the benevolent father thing. The staff wants to see success and stability because we feel safer.

You chose the photo of the city hall. How would you use the building if you were arranging an event.

The building is really impressive and the auditorium has great acoustics. It seems such a shame that it's used so seldom. I would try and rally the students together to arrange a charity event perhaps a musical event with tickets sold to staff and students in the University City to raise money for a charity that means something to the people here. Iraq for example.

Researcher: Why a charity event?

To me the luxurious ness of the surroundings here in University City compared to the surrounding areas and the building sites where you see men living in camps with one toilet between 300 and no AC is quite disgusting. These people live so close by but hardly anyone notices them. Perhaps by arranging a charity event like this it would get the locals to think more about people who have less than them. It doesn't seem right really that there is so much here in terms of facilities and they are not fully utilised.

Researcher: Why is that?

It's socially unjust. We are here as part of those facilities bought in for our qualification just like the tiling. Have you seen the street lamps? They've got those poor Indians up there washing the lamps on the street light every week. These guys wear flip flops and don't have any safety equipment. They are paid 500 dhs per month (about 100 sterling) and those reproduction 19th century gas lamps must cost thousands. The gardens round city hall and the campus have lovely seating areas, are beautifully landscaped an yet its 50 degrees out there- who can walk in them and how much water is used to keep the plants alive it's quite disgusting. Don't tell me it's required for a good education. It's the imbalance that gets me between the conditions the emirates and the expat live in- the difference between the quality of the surroundings and the quality of the students work. Its all pomp and ceremony. There is no social responsibility.

Researcher: You indicated that ensuring stability was more important because the whole family are here. Why is that

My salary and contract gives us the house and the kid's education. If I didn't have it, it would be a problem because Barak works for himself and doesn't get these benefits. So I know I do and I know others think of the consequences to their family before voicing an opinion. Do you remember when the teaching loads were increased? Derek held a meeting and just told everyone. There was no discussion and no one said anything. Those who didn't like it- well no one liked it- either put up or looked for another job

I think that why everyone compare teaching allocations, facilities meeting areas to try and see what's happening. Nobody really tells us what happening

Researcher: Why is that?

The managers work for Sassan. They do what they are told. The students aren't told anything but are important. I think as faculty we are a replaceable resource. Short term because of the contract type and expendable. It is an Arab system of management there is no real consultation.

11 Postulating the absence of an object

Researcher: What do you think would happen if there were no security gates?

I think it would be seem as a sign of liberation. It's like coming into a prison. The girls would be glad of it because they are always complaining that they are not trusted whereas the men can come and go as they please. The staff would be pleased to because they wouldn't be held up at the door all the time. Russell wouldn't be happy because he couldn't monitor who was coming and going and Amal would have a fit. The gates are only there to please the girls' families and to show that this college respects Islamic traditions. Remember what happened in Frees. The sheik thought Islamic tradition weren't being held and the VC sacked the director and heads and all supervisors had to reapply for their positions. That was all show. So if Sassan took the gates away it would have to be at the direct instruction of the sheik- that's what I think anyway. It's not worth the risk and Sassan doesn't take political risks like that.

Researcher: Why?

Because he's near retirement age and want to go out in Glory. He wants the prestige of having built up the college. That's why he wouldn't mix the students during Mosaic

Appendix 11 Table of summary ladders

| Table of Summary Ladders | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| No. PK1 | No. | Ladders | Attribute | Consequences | Values |
| | | External Areas | | | |
| 8 | 1 | External areas | Request for facilities | Reward system ABCw cared for more than ABCm Paying lip service to customs Behaving correctly | Reduced status |
| 10 | 2 | City Hall | Impressive | Pomp and ceremony, Imbalance, Socially unjust Disgusting Luxury Not used | Lack of social responsibility |
| 11 | 3 | Security Gates | Lack of trust | All show Control Imbalance of freedom | Prestige |
| | | Internal Areas (Staff) | | | |
| 2 | 4 | Faculty Area | Timekeeping | Work ethic Directors strategy Mess Checking on staff | Status reduced |
| 3-4 | 5 | Work stations | Poor acoustics Noise | Privacy Overheard conversations | Respect for staff |
| 5 | 6 | Meeting Areas | Acoustic privacy | Low status Inferior status | Insecurity insecurity |

| Inferior workplace | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|------------------------|--|---|--------------|
| 6 | 7 | Working Environment | Working atmosphere | | Respect |
| | | Internal student areas | | | |
| 7 | 9 | Internal student areas | Difference in quality of spec between colleges | Atmosphere of college Display of power Power of director Lower quality in ABCm | Job security |

Appendix 12- Extract from field notes

Field notes: Description

Interview 1: Gail

After confirming during a conversation over coffee that Gail would participate in the research and that she would prefer to be interviewed alone, I emailed the letter of authority document to her so that she could be reassured about confidentiality and also look over the discussion areas. I made an appointment with her to conduct the interview, which took place in a location of her choice. The interview setting was a small room off the library which is normally used to conduct speaking exams. It offers acoustic privacy but at the same time the frontage is fully glazed giving an open aspect. The room had a round table and four chairs. The lighting was given by an overhead fluorescent fitting. Gail chose her seat and I sat next to her. We discussed the overall topic prior to taping and since Gail is one of my primary informants I also asked her to give me feedback after the interview on my interviewing technique. I explained that I didn't want to say too much during the interview so I didn't influence the conversation. The interview then proceeded and was taped.

After the interview Gail said some of the terms were not clear to her particularly with her background as a language teacher.

Consequent to the first three interviews having taken place Gail said that she thought I wasn't getting the information I wanted and that although all the informants were keen to help they weren't sure what I was looking for. I explained the research area in further depth and she suggested conducting a mini-tutorial with photos of symbolic artefacts, not associated with the case itself, and then discussing their meaning. I am going to try this out with Gail to see if it results in more in depth information.

Interview2: Betty

I confirmed during a conversation that Betty was willing to be interviewed and then emailed the letter of authority to her with the discussion areas attached. She came

back to me to say that she thought the research very interesting and although she wanted to be assured of confidentiality was keen to take part. Again an interview was arranged at Betty's convenience in the location of her choice. Although I suggested the interview room she chose the faculty meeting room with the door closed, which gave both visual and acoustic privacy. This is a room used by faculty whose workstation is in that location so for Betty it is familiar territory. Again, Betty asked for clarification of some terms and was unsure if she gave me what I wanted. After this interview I added the definitions of terms.

Interview 3: Queenie

This interview took place after confirming with Queenie that she would participate in principle, sending her the revised schedule with the definition of terms and the interview took place in the interview room. Queenie is admin staff, Former PA to the previous Director of BETA so I thought she was unaware of this facility in the ALPHA campus. Afterwards she said she preferred the privacy it offered. She added that she didn't think she would disclose so much of her own personal feelings about her working environment as it were not something she did as a rule. She said she was an optimist by nature so if a situation arose that she was not happy with she tended to cut that off and focus on the more positive side. She also added that she had never thought of these aspects of her environment but that having started to do so she thought she may have more to add later and was keen to go through the process again.

After the interview with Queenie I took additional photos of the areas we discussed.

Interview 4; Lauralee, Hans, Sue

This interview took place at BETA. The letter of authorization was sent to Lauralee after having discussed the possibility of her participating in the interview. Lauralee agreed and an appointment was made. When I got to BETA she had left me a note to say she was in the café with a colleague Sue and to join them. I took the opportunity to ask Sue if she minded being interviewed at some time and gave her a hard copy of the letter of authority. Sue agreed right away. Hans joined us and I asked him too as

he had also been on my list. They suggested a joint interview. Although this meant the methodology was slightly different from the previous interviews I wanted to see if discussion provoked more in depth analysis. These three members of faculty work as a team on the BA in E-Commerce and I have worked closely with them for two and a half years. It was interesting that although the ALPHA staff wanted privacy the BETA didn't mind airing their views. I don't think this is a reflection of there personal trust of my confidentiality because both Queenie and Gail had previously been at BETA and I had on occasion worked with them both. The interview proved to be a lively discussion over coffee in a student filled cafeteria. I thanked them all by email afterwards.

Interview 5: Belinda

The first GAMMA interview was conducted. The arrangements were authorization by email, an appointment setup, location of participant's choice. Belinda was candid and open in the interview but the prevailing message was certainly that the atmosphere is more relaxed and friendly at GAMMA. There are far less political issues and more of achieving home comforts in the work environment. Belinda chose the interview area, which was in an unused classroom. She was casual and not threatened either by the experience or the information she was giving me. Initially we discussed personal issues, problems with kids and then went on to the general interview format.

Field Journal: Ideas

31/March/03

Of the three interviews conducted one participant stated that, in relation to their own experience, meanings are applied, one that meanings are emitted and one that meanings are socially constructed. Is this because the participants haven't really thought about this and the physical environmental artefacts are something they don't really notice or is it because the way the meaning is derived is different under different conditions and at different times. The implications of this are that meaning can be influenced by our colleagues, or events. In turn this would mean that if we

are influenced by people , our interpretation can be influenced and these artefacts can be manipulated to mean certain things and the environment can be designed to assist certain change processes.

Research Diary

31/March 03

Interview with Queenie, photography of the areas of symbolic interest she discussed.

29/ February/04

Email to Barbara (Acting Director at GAMMA) asking permission to undertake my research

2/ March /04

Email from Barbara - permission granted

3/March/04

Contacted Belinda and she sent me details of all the supervisors in GAMMA

7/ March/ 04

Meeting with Suresh from facilities at GAMMA. He gave me a soft copy of all the plans of the new building and a paper copy of all the plans of the old building.

8/March/ 04

Barbara asked me to liaise with Susanne , who in turn only wanted to know when I would be on campus.

23/March/04

I realized that people prefer to speak individually about their interpretations, for fear of recrimination. In addition photography will have to be completed after the interviews, because the interviewees will be dictating what is symbolic to them and this will have to be recorded. I wrote a letter of authority which confirms that each interview is confidential. Gathered information on the nationality of employees. Wrote to HR Debra to ask for a telephone list and nationality profiles of staff.

24/March/04

Wrote out personal questionnaire and set up a schedule of interviews.

26/March/04

Photographed the campus at ALPHA

27/ March/04

Letter to Pauline to get plans of GAMMA workstation layouts

28/March/04

Revised questions for interviews

Will ask people in person, before writing to them to add the personal touch factor

29/ March/04

First two interviews done in privacy at an appointed time. Some refining of the questions required to give definition of terms. Copy of the plans of ALPHA obtained from George . Called GAMMA to check on HR and the plans will arrive today. Spoke to Pauline

30th March/04

Received info from BETA on the numbers and nationality

Received plans of GAMMA from Douglas

Kathy agreed to interview (Queenie)

Sent request for interview to Lauralee, George and Michele

31/March/ 04

Interview with Queenie, photography of the areas of symbolic interest she discussed.

4/April/04

Interview with Lauralee, Hans, and Sue photography of the faculty areas afterwards. Unfortunately haven't been able to photograph Dr Sassan's coffee pot which was a subject of discussion.

5/April/04 Interview with Belinda at GAMMA

10/April 04

Went to photograph the new GAMMA buildings which are stuck in the middle of the desert.

15/April/04

Experiencing a lot of difficulties getting material through to Gerry on email, I think it must be a virus.

15/May04

Seeking and reading other methodologies in order to refine mine

1/June/04

Collection of historical and secondary photos

6/June/04

email from Gerry telling me to read methodologies and try out a few alternative but just to use this as a pilot

Reflection

4.1 Reflection on finding participants

Initially all the research was planned to take place at GAMMA and concerned the GAMMA move to a new campus with a new Director. While setting up the research schedule and gathering secondary evidence I realized that there were similarities with the ALPHA and BETA campuses. Since last year they had come under the management of one director, the director of BETA having left the system. Since this time two new buildings are in the process of construction, a library and an auditorium. The colleges are adjacent to one another but were separated a large fence. BETA is a college for male students and ALPHA is a college for female students. I decided to look at all three campus's to see if there were differences or similarities across the three campuses on the organizational culture and interpretation of meaning.

In addition I knew the staff of BETA a lot better having worked there for nearly three years and was sure I would find supportive colleagues willing to be interviewed and observed. I approached initially three colleagues, one with an admin background (Queenie) one with a teaching background who had travelled extensively (Betty) and one who had teaching and research experience who has a natural empathy with people (Gail). I knew Gail well as a colleague and asked her both to be interviewed but also to give me feedback on my technique as an interviewer and her experience as an interviewee. During a discussion with Gail, she suggested that although I was very much in tune with the research it was a area that not a lot of people had given much thought to so although prior to the interview I had given an overview of the research area, a min-tutorial may help to get participant in tune with the concept. I am very aware of creating a bias so had wanted to keep the topics as open as possible but at the same time recognize that

some people had difficulty. For example Queenie had asked 'Is that what you are looking for' I've decided to include a preamble with photos of different objects not related to the research and then discussing any meanings they may have. This part of the research will not be recorded.

With the GAMMA side of the research, a colleague has offered to help me locate information and guide me round the new site. This is proving very helpful as although we are now working on the same educational program across three sites, I still don't know all the employees and Belinda's involvement, introducing the research has given the employees there an element of trust in me as I have come 'recommended'. I have used this when phoning HR for information and saying 'Belinda thought you could help'. The research overall has been authorized by the director so if need be I can quote the director's approval but have found that the more informal approach of quoting a colleague gives a more friendly affect.

4.2 Reflection upon myself as a researcher

After the first interviewee I realized that the participant had difficulty understanding some of the terms, so I made a revision to the research discussion document to include these definitions.

I have found that participants are genuinely interested in the research topic although all to date have said they had never really thought of this topic before but are now looking at things around them differently. They have asked my opinion on different aspects of the researcher and I have tried to avoid lengthy discussion on this as I don't want to taint the research

4.3 Reflection upon participant's values

Conducting this research is becoming more productive with the assistance of the two key informers Gail and Belinda. The informants one for GAMMA and the other for BETA and ALPHA has introduced the research to other potential participants and helped enlist them for interviews. Once the study began, the informant's assistance has contributed to the effectiveness of the research. To begin, they helped me gain

entry into different departments of the three sites and gain acceptance by the staff. The informant themselves had gained their own acceptance from long professional associations with the campuses.

The informant's status as insiders was transferred to me when they introduced me as a credible, worthy colleague. Thereafter I made a point of referencing my relationship with each of the informants to establish myself as an insider.

4.4 Reflection upon unanticipated events

I had wanted initially to conduct focus groups to discuss my research questions, but then had second thoughts about this after Betty mentioned she did not always trust some of her colleagues and was always scared of saying something that may jeopardize her position. I asked her about the interviews and although she was keen to participate, she wanted assurance that what was said would remain confidential (hence the letter of authority) and that she could speak in private if the conversation was to be taped. She preferred to give a fictitious name on the personal questionnaire as well. Therefore on the interview schedule I have put the participant's real name and then the fictitious name if they chose one, to keep track of the research.

Interview 3: Queenie' saying she would like to add to her own interview after further reflection was unexpected and something I will certainly do if she feels she has something to add.

4.5 Reflection on unanticipated findings

The first finding in chronological order is that participants hadn't always given that much thought to their built environment and also it seems that participants from a design or management education give more thought to these issues.

The most important finding is that in times of change, the more unstable environment when the employees are not involved or fully informed of changes leads to more speculation. This factor is well documented in organizational

behaviour but what does not seem to my knowledge to be documented is their interpretation of the built environment or their seeking meaning within the built environment increase. I.e. location of offices standard of furnishing, departments being allocated new equipment or buildings.

4.6 Reflection upon methodology

Although the interview format has gone well and photography has provided me with a lot of details of the building there are some issues that need to be resolved.

The first and most important is that I am not getting the depth of information I thought I would get from this. I'm not sure if it's the method or simply that the participants don't really read too much into their built environment. It has to be said that these buildings were spec built before the college moved into them and as such there were no real managerial intents to be interpreted. The interpretations can come as alterations happen and this is the case but these interpretations are difficult to separate from stories, myths, and other cultural aspects. I also think that there needs to be a second stage of discussion with participants and to design this I have been reading methodologies from other writers in this field. Johnson, Sackmann, Geertz, Rafaeli etc to refine the methodology.

The second is the use of photography and there are two separate issues here. The first is the inability to include students in the photographs, due to cultural restraints. Although the students are not included in the research itself their lack of appearance in the photos on the women's campus gives the photos a deserted feel. This is accurate in one respect and that is that the women cannot appear in photos but does not show the bustling chatty atmosphere of the women's college as a contrast to the laid back casual feel in the men's.

The second aspect of photography is that I feel it is a powerful tool in ethnography and can record events in more detail than the most powerful words. For that reason I have devised a section to look at photography which follows.

The second phase of the interviews used Sack Mann's issue focus rather than a direct questioning. Amazingly everyone is honing in on the change of director at BETA or the fact that the ALPHA director has now amalgamated both colleges

which is the ALPHA talking. These concepts have lead quite nicely into talking about meaning but it still draws a blank as to how this happens. I don't think participants know how they go about this and so we left off at this point and most have asked to think it over. I need to go back to the literature. Gerry and Nic have suggested laddering and it seems a viable option so I'll try it out.

4.7 Reflection upon photography as a research tool

The use of photography was preconceived in this study but no prior strategy was devised as it was envisaged that the photography would be a recording of the buildings and their interiors to aid understanding of the research itself and to give substantiation to comments. It seems appropriate therefore, to describe its use chronologically to illustrate how it shaped its own application. There were three. It will be seen that each of the above phases loosely parallels the ethnography whereby the researcher (1) gains access (2) collects data and identified substantive issues and (3) conducts creative 'play' in order to establish emergent theory.

Phase 1 Acceptance

The first hurdle as a researcher wanting to undertake a participant-observation role was access and acceptance. Since the use of photography was not envisaged at the outset of the study the topic was not raised during the initial discussions with the management of the three sites.

One of the sites, ALPHA is a women only college and here in the UAE women cannot be photographed without the written consent of their guardians. Although this is not a written law, having been involved in catalogue and brochure design which required photos of national women, I found this issue extremely complicated. At a later date even if permission is given the guardians can retract that permission and subsequently any published material has to be withdrawn. The religious issue here is that only the close male relatives can see the women and so if the photo is published this goes against the cultural and religious norms of the area. I knew that should I request permission for this from the director I would be unlikely to receive

it and since the research involved the employees not the students I used photography only in areas where there were no students. This consequently meant that a lot of the photos were taken on the weekend. There are some photos included to illustrate building and student life but these I had taken professionally for the catalogue design and the students are paid models.

The other two sites are men only colleges and these issues do not apply.

Employees of the college were used to me taking photos and filming as it was part of my responsibility in my job function. Although, if I asked to photograph an individual for this research I made sure the participants knew that this was for personal research and not for college publication purposes. At this initial stage the intention was merely to record traditional events and the layout of buildings. This follows Collier & Collier's (1986) who suggested taking photographs from the very first day, using them as social 'can openers'.

Throughout the initial access phase notes on participants were collected in order to aid the establishment of what Benyon (1983) terms 'bridges', i.e. notes on background and interests in order to enhance rapport, and record initial responses of participants to the camera. Typical of the information noted during this period was that people wanted to get caught in their best flattering pose but staff were used to getting filmed and photographed for other publications. Some Islamic followers declined when I told them it was for personal reasons and I respected this wish feeling that it added to the capturing of the culture rather than detracting from it.

The photographs taken during phase 1 were 'safe', in that they were unlikely to offend participants, or 'positive' in that they were useful/beneficial to the school. These photographs included: buildings illustrating the college layout, its architectural evolution, and the difference in character between the public front of the school and its more private and 'underworld' back; social, traditional, and public events staged by the college; and a wide range of positive images intended for inclusion in the college catalogue.

Phase 1 came to an end when I realised something of the potential of photography in a case study situation. This awareness prompted a number of significant technical decisions which were implemented during phases 2 and 3. Initially I had a borrowed digital camera but then went on to buy a small discreet digital camera I could carry with me at all times and one which produced high quality image 300 dpi and above suitable for publication. The camera also gave the possibility of filming motion for up to 5 minutes and I increased the memory so I could take a large number of high quality images without dashing off to download onto my laptop.

This meant I could literally take hundreds of shots and store them at no cost and do the cropping myself. It also meant a lot of the photos were opportunistic and stored for future reference.

Phase 2 - Application

I had not envisaged using photography in the study since there was little justification. The traditional role of photography in qualitative interpretive research is not a particularly inspiring one although ethnography and social anthropology have traditionally employed film and photography. During the second phase photographic practice extended to the employees in the college and was refined for use in the present case study situation. Four categories of image were produced during this period: historical, illustrative, visual record and images to be used as an interview device. These categories were the result of applying photographic practice to the needs of data collection and storage.

Historical photographs are essentially 'found' documents and are relatively common forms of data within the qualitative tradition (see Bogden & Biklen, 1982). There are many sources of old photographs ranging from old college journals and prospectuses, press releases and pictures taken by enthusiastic amateurs on the staff. One of the problems associated with 'found' photographs is lack of context at the time of taking. When I viewed a photograph I had not taken or been party to, I perceived it from my own experience and knowledge, lending it a past, a present and a future. Thus historical photographs are limited as forms of evidence since they are

records of an instance and often relatively contextless. However, they may contain specific information which, used in conjunction with other forms of evidence, provides a basis from which tentative conclusions may be drawn.

In my study, which sought to understand how a participant interprets their built environment and what relation this may have with management and designers intentions there was a need to establish what each of the three sites brought to the 'new' college in the process of change and old photographs enabled some sort of backward mapping to be made. BETA prior to the new director taking over had very few photographic memorabilia in contrast to ALPHA which has a rich store of photography of every student event. GAMMA on the old site mirrored the attitude to photography of BETA although it prominently displayed signs of achievement such as cups and trophies. By a process of labelling and elimination it was possible to identify a large majority of objects, symbols, commemorative plaques, memorabilia and traditions which were part and parcel of the old BETA and now encultured in the 'new' BETA/ALPHA. This data helped establish the significance of past site ownership and accompanying *in situ* objects and rituals on the culture of the 'new' college.

Illustrative photographs are not 'snaps' for they go beyond mere replication by serving to elucidate by example. Various basic illustrative photographs were taken during my stay in ABC site, some of which, in photographic terms, were straight 'standers or sitters'. All the photographs in this category were taken in a considered context - in a setting in which the sitter took most pride or which represented their everyday work environment.

Sontag (1977) suggests that photography cannot be objective because it distorts that which it seeks to represent. The choice of lens, film, filter, the quality of the lighting and the precise framing of the object of interest, all of which affect the final image and are determined by the skill and interpretation of the photographer, are contributors to what Sontag terms 'bias'. However, each of these choices is no different from a researcher selecting where, when or how to collect data. What is

required of the qualitative researcher/photographer is to make explicit what choices were available (within reason) and the reason for one particular choice over another. The photograph of the 'Queenie' was an attempt at what could be termed objective photography which seeks to take account of and limit the bias endemic to all photography.

I tried to develop a strict code of practice which included using only standard lenses without filters, emphasising the frontality of the subject matter and flatness of space, taking sitters in their working/living environment, and using images in full frame, in order to achieve an objective illustrative record of people and their lives and the environment they are working in. This way I interpreted what I saw but made thoughtful and considered photographs. The illustrative images were used to support descriptive data in what Berger (see Berger & Mohr, 1989) termed 'another way of telling'.

Ethnographers have in the past used the camera's ability to record in order to establish cultural inventories. Using this approach I photographed a variety of places and events. In each case the photographic record allowed careful perusal. Using the photographs I was able to explore the contents of the Directors office; to seek interpretations and meanings of objects décor, choice of furnishings, lighting and wallcoverings, contents of bookshelves, notices on notice boards, and the general layout of the room; and to reflect on the titles of books left not so casually on the coffee table for visitors to see. The ability to record such detail is important to this research giving information about the occupant, and information about how the occupant would like others to behave when in his or her office.

Thus, in general terms, the benefits of a photographic cultural inventory to this research is that photography accurately records a considerable amount of detailed information and allows for leisurely analysis. The resulting data may be compared and contrasted with data from other sources.

Following on from 3 years in the colleges, 6 months doing this research, I gathered sufficient field data to establish a list of issues which I wished to explore, and key individuals whom I wanted to interview. On some occasions interviews were carried out casually in the form of conversations in the staffroom, on others more formally in a quiet place. One of the many problems associated with interviewing is accounting for procedural reactivity. In the past, researchers, aware of the problems of interviewer bias, have used photographs as a tool to seek from members of a college community their interpretation of the meanings the photographer has captured. This approach is not without problems since the act of photographing requires choice and selectivity and therefore bias. But this was turned to a strength using the photos to elicit responses or to communicate complex messages and to get the participants to think and talk reflectively.

Supplanting possibly leading questions or questions with implicit or unintended messages with an image and its attendant ambiguity, is a dubious exchange, unless a more refined method is used. During the study I explored three possibilities. The first approach attempted to make explicit the many choices available at the time of taking a photograph, to explain decisions made and generally un-pack the process of selection. These points were noted and later compared with comments from interviewees. The task, to examine the relationship between the bias of 'taking' and inherent image ambiguity and interviewee comments, quickly became complex. As a research method it required painstaking trials and consequently more energy and time than I had available, in order to develop its potential and make it applicable. It was only later when a 'short-hand' approach was developed, which accepted many shortcomings and limitations, that photographs as an interview device became practicable.

A second approach was to use the same photograph, usually chosen for its recognisable content, with a range of college participants. This technique is a form of structured interview schedule. With little other than an encouraging "tell me about them", participants made comments about the images which usually led to a "what do you mean by that?" sort of question. Using this approach it was possible to illicit

a variety of interpretations, affiliations, beliefs, attitudes and perspectives from participants and make comparisons.

The third approach to using photographs as an interview device exploited image ambiguity to the full. This strategy is comparable to a projective technique where incomplete sentences or ink blots are used as stimuli. Here, I did not consciously 'know' the meaning of the event photographed (although I could suggest one) and the interviewee (who also may not 'know' the meaning of the event) was asked to suggest one. Photographs used as an interview device, particularly of the projective sort, 'triggered' a gamut of insightful but unexpected comments from the interviewees. Although by nature hit and miss, the ambiguous photograph provides unexpected and rich data for the ethnographer.

Photographs used in each of the three approaches came from the 'image bank' of photographs taken in the college or taken specifically for interview purposes. A conscious decision was taken to encourage interviewees to accept photographs as a vehicle for discussion, and occasionally images were used where alternatives were possible, for example, the actual book could have been used).

Experiences during phases 1 and 2 led to recognition of the importance of sensitive and reflexive field notes in relation to photography. By the end of the second phase they included a discussion of situations, events and 'no-go' areas where photography may have caused unacceptable annoyance; a list of staff who did not want to be photographed; a discussion of choices and decisions prior to the act of taking; and the relationship between those being photographed, and the relationship between those being photographed and myself.

Phase 3 - exploration

The use of photography in this study as a tool of research closely followed the ethnographic process. Hence during the third phase photography was used occasionally to collect further data, but more often to reflect emergent substantive issues. The photography of this phase differed from that of other phases because no precedent had been set in educational research, no appropriate or applicable

guidelines were in place, and thus was mostly experimental. Essentially two areas were explored - the application of camera technology as an aid to data collection, and the production of conceptual images.

Camera technology may be misused and if ill-conceived inevitably leads to contrived or 'gimmicky' images. Using photography in the study has gone well. It helped gain acceptance and access to the school community, and had developed into a useful data collecting tool. Armed with reflexivity, experimental fervour and the comfort that photography was accepted by college participants, I began to consider approaches which explored or expressed ethnographic issues emerging from the data rather than techniques for collecting data. And then it happened - my field diary explains:

Now image-making shifted emphasis from being a tool of data collection and interpretation to illustration of research findings. The object was not merely to illustrate substantive issues superficially but to articulate meanings via visual statements. These statements helped to clarify my own thoughts since each photograph asserted 'this is what I mean by ...', thereby aiding crystallisation of issues, and also made them more public and more accountable.

Many of the photographs taken during the third phase explored the issue of taken-for-grantedness. The study had demonstrated that during much of the first year of the new colleges' existence, participants seek to establish mutually agreed notions of what constitutes the college. The objective was to photograph everyday events, minor and major rituals and traditions, the essence of the generic culture of the college. A major problem throughout lay in recognising the limitations of my own skills which determined what I was capable of 'capturing' on film. Emphasis was placed on the development of photographic skills, particularly how visually to communicate interpretation issues and abstract concepts, rather than pre-defining the contribution of photography in this area.

Initial attempts to photograph taken-for-grantedness failed, being trite and the result of reductionism. More successful images were obtained by discarding empirical

photography for ethnographic photography. This entailed perceiving phenomenological, i.e. in a way that appears immediately to the consciousness, and from the college participant's point of view. I treated taken-for-granted objects, places, traditions and events as exotic.

5 **Epoch:** Description of my own experience

GAMMA

GAMMA, on the existing site, is a college located in the centre of the older part of Diba. It is constructed primarily of older prefabricated buildings which have been built up gradually on an ad hoc basis since the set up of the college in 1990? At the front of the building is an old car park which is laid out in gravel. The entrance is manned by security guards who are friendly and keen to give direction. Once you enter the building there is a reception, which is glazed and manned by a security guard. To the right of this is a display cabinet showing all the cups and awards the college has won. The corridors are long with low ceilings and the floor is sprung timber which gives you the impression of bouncing along. The college is rather like wearing an old coat- it has it's imperfections but you enjoy wearing it. When you arrive at the executive area it is rather rundown and informal. The staff has all worked there for a long time and welcomes you as a friend and with interest- all keen to help. In no way do they seem under duress or stress and everyone seems comfortable in their working environment although the working environment itself is not comfortable. The staff areas are squashed. The staff and students having grown in number but there being nowhere for the college to expand into. The faulty areas themselves are old, in need of decoration, badly lit and the accommodation for staff blatantly inadequate, yet the working atmosphere is pleasant.

The Executive area containing the director's office and HR office is off the main corridor leading from the reception. I stumbled into it to ask direction on the first day I arrived there and didn't realize it was the Directors suite. There is one large square room, with natural lighting. This room has the Directors office to the right and HR office to the left. The main central room has three workstations in it, one for the PA of the Directors and two others for staff of the HR office. The floor is

carpeted and the office furniture functional yet unpretentious. The director's furniture is old, comfortable and unassuming. The director at GAMMA is in an acting position since the retirement of the previous director in January who had been with the college since it started. The old director, Norm, was a large personable man with great charisma who appeared to feel at ease in any situation. The staff and students adored him and when he retired a large number of staff took this as their cue to call it a day and leave the Emirates. The Acting Director is trying to make the place more efficient in line with the colleges move to a new state of the art campus and also to mark her mark before the new director takes over in September. The faculty area are low level open partition 'pens' the same throughout ABC. Although the furniture is the same as other colleges the main difference is in the supervisors offices. Perhaps due to the constraints of the building itself, but also partly due to the management style the supervisors offices are not necessarily facing the faculty area, nor are they glazed. Staff do not feel they are visually under surveillance. Staff come and go from their areas and there is no impression of the 'clock in clock out situation that happens at ALPHA and BETA.

GAMMA new

The new location is in University City, Diba an area on the outskirts of the city and a building 4 times the size of the original DMB. The building although purpose built for GAMMA is being built for the municipality and on completion will be handed over to the college. The building is located on the outskirts of Diba along a new road for which there is as yet no purpose to travel along yet, other than to go to GAMMA. The buildings are in a large plot with plenty of recreational area, football and games park, yet to be grassed over. The plot then is still uncultivated desert which gives the buildings the appearance of being beamed down and dropped there. When the building is handed over the college intends to move all the old furniture from the existing building to the new campus. Although inadequate there are seemingly budget constraints. This happens a lot in the UAE and then at the last minute the sheik of that emirate will provide funds from his own purse and the most expensive furnishings will be bought.

ALPHA and BETA are located in a University City .University City was constructed in 1998 and is made up of a number of separate university buildings within one main campus. The area around University City is quite poor by comparison so as you drive into it from one direction you pass the municipal dump and the other is passing the cargo airport road. The campus is built on a huge scale with a main avenue running through the centre reminiscent of Paris with the Eiffel Tower at one end although missing completing any of the ambiances attached to the Paris setting. The campus was the brain child of the local sheik who then attracted American University and local university to locate there. The two campuses allocated to ABC for BETA and ALPHA where originally designed for another organization. They were identical but one for women and one for men. In August 1998 when they were nearing completion they were offered to ABC and ABC were given a week to decide whether they wanted colleges in University City. ABC is a government owned further education establishment set up to specialize in vocationally oriented courses for national students. The staff is mainly 'expat' on three year contracts coming mainly from UK, Canada and Australia.

Since this time the women's campus has expanded with additional buildings being erected, the Men's campus BETA has also expanded but at a slower pace. This is due to the both the strategy of the respective directors but also because the women's colleges tend to have more students than the men's as the women have fewer alternatives in education than the men do. The men have more employment options in government such as the police and the military and this attracts the lower academic achievers. The women's college now has 2000 students and staff 176. BETA has 800 students and 85 staff. BETA was managed by a British director with a background in engineering until June 2003 when his contract was terminated. At this point the director from ALPHA who had managed ALPHA since 1999 took over both colleges. He now has offices in both campuses and his management team spans both campuses.

ALPHA

The design and building extensions that have been made in ALPHA also reflect the local culture. The female students are not allowed to leave the campus before the end of their study day and come to college by bus or car. There is security on the gate checking who is entering and exiting the college, so the impression you first get when entering the campus is one of strict regulations. The main entrance was identical to BETA but alterations and extensions have been made. When you enter the reception you find a marble floor, domed ceiling circular reception hall empty except for some pictures hanging on the wall of the sheiks and a reception desk with a female security guard and a receptionist. To the left are the Facility and finance offices and to the right was the director's office which has now been relocated into a management suite accessed through the student services area. There are a lot of students milling about covered in black gliding through corridors while staff scurry from place to place looking slightly harassed and busy- always carrying papers. The furniture is of a good quality but bland. Lots of low seating scattered in different area invariably with the students chatting on them. The management suite has no natural daylight with the exception of the Directors office and the boardroom on one side. On the other side there are four offices 2 for the heads of instruction, one vacant but used by a secretary and one for the supervisor a royal family figure head. These offices have no window and are fully glazed facing the director's office the suite is glazed walled from the other area. The directors PA acts as a gatekeeper to his office.

The board room is large with a barrel shaped mahogany table with 30 leather high back executive chairs. There is a window but the blinds are kept permanently closed so the overhead lighting is required at all times. The room is equipped with excellent multi media projection and conferencing facilities. The temperature of the room is kept at 18 – 19 degrees c at the request of the director. The director's office is approximately 100 sq m. It is almost square with sheer drapes blocking the direct light and light coloured curtains the flooring is block wood unlike any other flooring in the college. Whenever you enter the room you are conscious of the click clack of your own shoes. The desk is large with executive bookcases behind. The office is

tidy and well kept. There is a round table with 4 chairs opposite the entrance. The director always sits facing the door when he sits at this table. There are a 3 low leather sofas and a coffee table.

The temperature here is also kept at 18° c, the director believing that this temperature keeps you alert.

The rest of the campus consists of large Arabic style building with interconnecting corridors or walkways. The staff is located depending on the department they work in e.g. business or education. All faculty have low level work stations in an open area with the supervisors in full height partitioned offices off to one side. Any meeting rooms or faculty rest areas will be located in the same area if space permits. There are two cafes on the campus and a cafeteria open both to staff and students.

BETA

When you enter the college you are greeted by security guards. These guards are pleasant and polite but they require you to state your business and will contact whoever you are visiting for authority. The guards are placed on each corridor, and although in an official uniform are so timid they will never enforce any order when required. The faculty area is dimly lit and the faculty workstation re 1500 panel screening with no acoustic and little visual privacy. There are over 50 faculty in the main area. Faculty has to conduct student counselling at their desk and although the security should stop them students just walk in looking for the faculty they want to see. Around the side are 'supervisors' office glazed so they can watch the faculty area. It gives the impression that the movement of staff is being monitored. These offices are in a row and whoever is more in favour or has higher status has a larger office or with better furniture. Off this main area is a faculty rest area, which is quiet with only one or two faculty eating lunch. The main reception area is about 200m² with a marbled floor and no furniture. To one side is a receptionist desk with a receptionist and a security guard. To the left of this is the newly constructed boardroom decked out in leather seating and a mahogany conference table to seat thirty people. Due to the change in management structure and managers having an office on each campus, any meeting rooms staff had have now been converted to

managers offices. The Directors office is off to the right of the reception. A PA's desk is situated outside the Directors office as a gatekeeper. The atmosphere is 'stiff' the director office has remained unchanged from the day of the old director, Derek. They are furnished in new but mid- range quality furniture. The room is long and the desk area is at the end of the room some 10m from the day. This can be a long walk sometimes. The room is furnished with leather sofas and coffee table and a round meeting table and four chairs. It has a cold atmosphere but not over bearing. A stark contrast is seen in the car park. The student's car park is separated from the staff car park. The staff car park has saloon cars and four wheel drives but the student's car park contains the top range Mercedes and Lexus models. There is a limited number of covered car parking places in the staff car park. The directors parking place is under cover, with a 'director' sign over it and his top of the Mercedes, provided with the employment package, parked under it.

Management meetings

I joined in the first management meeting today. Sassan asked me to take on the acting supervisor position of marketing and outreach. We had the meeting in his office in the women's college and the board room is next door. He promoted me and then invited me to join the meeting. This was only the second management meeting since he took over both colleges. The meetings are held in ALPHA so all the BETA supervisors and heads have to drive over to attend. The board room is kept very cold 19 degrees. The curtains are closed and the lighting is bright and harsh. The room has one large mahogany table to seat up to 30 people. Sassan's PA puts his notes at the top of the table and everyone slowly and quietly enters the room. Three of the BETA supervisors, Ron, Paul and Nigel seem like naughty school boys sending discrete signals to each other when a comment is made by Sassan, or a response. It isn't a discussion though. There may be a few things on the agenda but may be changed a t will by Sassan The meeting starts at 2, normal working hours are until 4.30 so Sassan announces he will talk until 6pm because there is a lot to do. Nobody protests, wants to be seen to disagree or enough comment. In fact nobody talks at all unless talked to it seems set to be a long and cold experience. After about 10

minutes I'm freezing because of the fan in the room. Sassan announces my appointment and then announces. There will be a further set of changes so everyone had better keep on their toes. The subject of Professional staff development comes up. The old BETA director would support staff on certain courses like computer skills or e curriculum development. Sassan announces that will all stop and other staff will develop staff training to reduce costs. He mentions that the management team haven't developed critical thinking and I can't help but wonder how anyone can demonstrate their critically thinking ability in this cold temperature when they are not allowed to speak. Sassan announces that to rectify the situation we will all read Neill Postmann End of Education and each take a turn to present a chapter. There are only 9 chapters and 20 people so with luck I will be left out. Oh no the book is given to me and I have to choose. I go for the last chapter. I want to see what everyone else presents hopefully this means I'll be last that should be 9 weeks away any way. Ahah he grins- why the last chapter he demands- Oh it's on symbols I respond- my favourite topic. The other 8 chapters are distributed. The meeting actually finishes at 5.30 and no one has spoken but Sassan. I've never experienced anything like it.

After wards during my meeting with Sassan about I asked why the curtains were closed all the time and he replied that it stopped management looking out of the window when they should be looking at him. The cold temperature was also used to focus everyone attention- too warm and it would be too relaxing.