

**INTRODUCING A RELATIONAL APPROACH TO THE
STUDY OF EMOTIONS IN PROJECT TEAMS:**

The Case of a Public–Non-profit Partnership Programme

Hiva Rafiei

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Essex Business School
University of Essex

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I declare that this thesis is entirely my own work and that I have referenced others' ideas and concepts in the text and in the bibliography as required.

To
Mum, Dad,
and Hesam

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the nature of emotions in the context of a programme team involved in the planning phase of a local partnership initiative in the UK. Positioned in the social constructionist tradition, the study adopts a relational perspective, where primacy shifts from selves to relationships in founding social realities. Accordingly, the thesis frames emotions as *intersubjective* and *dialectical* experiences that emerge through *dialogue* and *embodiment*. Drawing on ethnographic data collected over a fifteen-month period, this study unravels the ‘actuality’ of programme work at both collective and individual levels. At the collective level, the results from the thematic analysis of data highlight emotions during the ever-changing flux of events as the team ceaselessly engage in sense-making with the hope to establish a level of coherence and stability. At the individual level, the results from the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) reveal the innermost struggles of individuals in giving rise to emotions; individual emotions are found to rise strongly when matters of 1) identity, 2) justice and 3) meaningful work are questioned. By showing the salience of emotions in the actuality of programmes as a form of project-based work, the thesis develops two major contributions. First, it proposes relational leadership as a more *pragmatic* approach to leading programmes that are commonly characterised by ambiguity, turbulence, and change. Second, the thesis urges the need to cultivate situational (rather than standardised) ethics in teams, specifically suggesting the feminist ethics of care as the moral paradigm that remains sensitive to subtleties of situations and relationships.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS

This thesis explores the nature of emotions in a programme team during the planning phase of a regional programme in the United Kingdom. Emotions, as the major focus, are studied at both collective and individual levels. At the team level, the thesis shows the collective experience of emotions in relation to real-life programme incidents that emerge over time. The ever-changing flux of events is highlighted, as well as the social flow of interactions, tensions, and competing perspectives in giving rise to the collective experience of emotions. At the individual level, the thesis dives deeper into the ‘lived experience’ of individuals as they assign deeper meanings to selves and situations – meanings that remain ‘hidden’ at the team level but are found to hinder individual perceptions and progress.

Empirically, the study draws on ethnographic data collected over a fifteen-month period, during which the team were planning a regional programme run by a public–non-profit partnership in the UK. The programme itself was part of a ten-year national initiative, aiming to improve local services to children in seven regions across the country. Project- and programme-based partnerships between the voluntary and the public sector have become popular modes of delivering public services to local communities in the UK (Osborne & McLaughlin, 2004). However, managing programmes in general and partnership programmes in particular has remained a challenge in practice (Gazley & Brudney, 2007). As clusters of projects aiming to achieve strategic advantages (Turner, 2009a), programmes are characterised by continual shift in priorities and outcomes (Pellegrinelli, 2011). In this respect, investigating the microprocesses of individuals can yield eye-opening insights into several aspects of managing and organising in these widely popular modes of project-based work (Morris, 2004; Maylor et al., 2006).

The present chapter is structured as follows. First, the chapter gives an overview of the background of this research, showing the growing importance of emotions in organisation and management research as well as the areas that have received less attention in emotions studies. Second, the selection of a programme team as the context is justified and elaborated on. The chapter further shows the evolution of research questions, followed by the main contributions that this thesis is expected to develop. Finally, an outline of the thesis is provided, explaining the details of the seven upcoming chapters.

1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Affect permeates organizations. It is present in the interdependent relationships we hold with bosses, team members, and subordinates. It is present in deadlines, in group projects, in human resource processes like performance appraisals and selection interviews. Affective processes (more commonly known as emotions) create and sustain work motivation. They lurk behind political behaviour; they animate our decisions; they are essential to leadership. Strong affective feelings are present at any time we confront work issues that matter to us and our organizational performance.

(Barsade & Gibson, 2007: 36)

Despite the above extract, emotions were traditionally left out of organisation studies in favour of a presumed 'rationality'. In her book, *Hiding What We Feel, Faking What We Don't*, Mann (1999) draws an intriguing comparison between the forced disguise of emotions in the workplace and that of the fictitious Cinderella at the ball. As with Cinderella, emotions remained hidden in organisations, as employees were protractedly seen as little 'cogs' rather than 'active actors' (Bolton, 2005). In questioning this 'myth of rationality' (Putnam & Mumby, 1993), the past four decades of research in management and organisation have witnessed what is termed the 'affective revolution'

(Barsade et al., 2003). Over the years, organisations have become acknowledged as ‘emotional arenas’ (Fineman, 1993), with emotions not only allowed to appear in work settings, but turning into valuable managerial skills (Bolton, 2005).

Yet, despite being known to permeate organisations, affect is still believed to have remained largely unthematized in organisational analysis (Thompson & Willmott, 2016). There are still several aspects of emotions in organisational life that have not received sufficient empirical attention. Ashkanasy and colleagues’ recent (2017) paper in the *Academy of Management Review* addresses these under-researched characteristics of emotions as a fruitful focus for current research on the subject. In accord with other renowned emotion scholars (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Fineman, 2004; Sturdy, 2003), they propose the need to expand our knowledge of emotions as ‘dynamic’, ‘multilayered’, and particularly ‘collective’ experience. They also discuss the little attention given to multilevel analysis of emotions where, for instance, the impacts of group-level phenomena on individual emotions are the focus.

In response to these calls, this thesis explores the experience of emotions as they are lived in their situated context. Positioned in the social constructionist tradition, the thesis conceptualises emotions as ‘relational’ enactments; relational in the sense that relationships, rather than selves, are seen as central to human experience (Gergen, 2009; Cunliffe, 2008). The thesis, therefore, puts special focus on interactions, tensions, and conflicting perspectives in shaping emotions. It aims to understand emotions as ‘dynamic’ processes in the ebb and flow of work relationships. With regard to the context-specificity of emotions (Fineman, 1993, 2004), the thesis explores emotional experience in the specific context of (project) programme teams. Hence, despite acknowledging that the findings might not be necessarily generalisable to other

settings, it is hoped that this research can provide rich, frank, and nuanced insights that do justice to the complexity of modern projects and programmes.

1.2 THE CHOICE OF (PROJECT) PROGRAMME TEAMS AS THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

Selecting (project) programme teams as the context in which to research emotions was initially inspired by my academic background in the fields of industrial engineering and project management. As part of my Master's thesis, I interviewed twelve project professionals in the oil and gas sector in my home country, Iran. The main sampling criterion was the participants' involvement in a major gas field development project, which had notably terminated with one of the best national records with regard to timing and budget. However, in spite of the technical success, it was surprising to see that most of these professionals saw the interviews as a chance to retrospectively express their dissatisfaction with several team dynamics which, despite being over, still seemed to matter. In the interview transcripts, what stood out the most in the majority of accounts was not exactly aligned with my research interest at the time, but was something worth of further exploration. The data sparked my interest in specifically exploring emotions in project-based environments.

In today's business world, project-based work (including programmes and portfolios) has become so common that a stream of research refers to this trend as 'the projectification of society' (Midler, 1995; Lundin & Soderholm, 1998). More and more organisational members are now being labelled as *project workers* or *project managers* across various sectors (Hodgson & Cicmil, 2006). Academic research confirms that several developments and initiatives in the UK are increasingly put into action through projects and programmes (Winter et al., 2006). In particular, academic research (Morris, 2004) and industry reports (KPMG, 2002) show that one of the models to

attract increasing interest in project-based work is programme management. In this regard, Maylor et al. (2006) refer to a shift from 'projectification' to 'programmification' in today's organisational life.

The development in programme management research has been similar to project management studies (Shao, 2018). The project management body of knowledge has received much criticism, due to its lack of relevance and applicability to practice (Morris et al., 2000; Packendorff, 1995). As a result, the critical movement in project studies was sparked to address the inadequacies of popular project management textbooks in dealing with the emergent nature of projects. This movement aimed to address the gap between how projects are theorised and how they actually unfold in action (Hodgson & Cicmil, 2006; Cicmil et al., 2006; Winter et al., 2006).

In an attempt to address the issue, the UK's EPSRC (Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council) funded a new research network in 2003, named Rethinking Project Management (Winter et al., 2006). The network's aim was to bring leading project researchers and practitioners together to develop an interdisciplinary research agenda for extending the intellectual foundations of the field (ibid.). Grounded on the analysis of research materials produced between 2004 and 2006, the network identified five exclusive directions for enriching the project management knowledge: 1) Focusing on the complexity (rather than the life-cycle models) of projects, 2) Conceptualising projects as social (as opposed to instrumental) processes, 3) Stressing value (instead of product) creation, 4) Developing broader conceptualisations of projects (rather than framing them within a single discipline with well-defined objectives from the start), and finally 5) Educating and developing reflective (rather than merely trained) practitioners (ibid.).

Through the lens of emotions, this thesis especially addresses the second direction raised by the Rethinking Project Management Network for researching projects as social processes. In particular, this thesis is positioned in the ‘project actuality’ stream (Cicmil et al., 2006), aiming to explore the ‘lived experience’ of projects and programmes. In contrast to the mainstream project management research that seeks one ‘best practice’ for all, actuality research defines project and programme management as ‘a social conduct defined by history, context, individual values, and wider structural frameworks’ (ibid.: 676). Seen from this perspective, one major focus is understanding the emotions that drive actions in project and programme environments (ibid.).

Current debates on emotions in project teams have suggested that project life is rich in emotional experience. Lindgren and Packendorff (2006) argue that projects can become sources of tension, isolation, disrupted family lives, and superficial work relations. Considering the challenging nature of project-based work as well as the tight schedules, costs, and the pressures from several stakeholders, demotivation and stress have been raised as the common emotions experienced by project managers (Palm & Lindahl, 2015). Whitty’s (2010) and van der Hoorn’s (2015) research especially characterise the experience of project managers as ‘an emotional roller coaster’. In this regard, Lindgren and colleagues (2014) show that a great deal of emotional experience is involved in just trying to remain ‘professional’ in project-based settings.

In this thesis, I particularly extend this inquiry to the context of programmes, which are regarded as more complex and ambiguous in nature than projects (Thiry, 2002). To the best of this thesis’ knowledge, no empirical study has previously focused on the emotional experience in programmes at the team level. It is believed that exploring the actuality of programmes from the view of their internal stakeholders (i.e. team

members) can potentially yield several insights into many aspects of work in these environments.

1.3 EVOLUTION OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As I embarked on this research journey, my initial aim was to investigate emotions during change processes. My first supervisor, however, encouraged me to shift my focus from ‘change’ to the ‘everyday processes’ as the less-studied context. A quick review of the literature on emotions also revealed that change processes had indeed been a major scene for emotion studies (e.g. Vince & Broussine, 1996; Mossholder et al., 2000). What had remained under-researched was the experience of emotions in everyday mundane work settings, of which ‘change’ would be a part. In addition, it was mentioned earlier that, despite the popularity of emotions in organisation studies, little research has addressed the fluidity, dynamism, and complexity of emotions (Fineman, 2004; Sturdy, 2003; Ashkanasy et al., 2017). Hence, the first research question developed as:

How do emotions evolve over time in (project) programme teams?

What stood out in this questions was the centrality of the word ‘process’ in understanding the nature of emotions. Becker (1966) warns that, while researchers constantly stress the importance of processes, they often tend to adopt methodologies that prevent them from uncovering the very processes they wish to explore. Hence, to address the processual nature of the question, it was decided to pursue an ethnographic approach in this thesis. The longitudinal nature of ethnography allows for viewing emotions as dynamic processes as opposed to fixed states. Moreover, an ethnographic lens helps to show the types of emotions that are experienced, while also revealing the

processes that lead to such experiences, corresponding with concerns over ‘how’ and ‘why’.

It was mentioned earlier that the thesis differs from other emotion studies in that it views emotions as relational realities. By definition, relationality favours relationships over selves in shaping human experience (Gergen, 2009). From a relational perspective, social realities, including emotions, are brought to life as one enters a relational give-and-take (ibid.). In fact, *inter-subjectivity* rather than *subjectivity* is the focus in the relational paradigm (Gergen, 2009; Cunliffe, 2008). Moreover, it was mentioned earlier that collective emotions are still believed to be a major area in need of further exploration (Ashkanasy et al., 2017). Therefore, to correspond with the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis as well as the less-studied aspects of emotions, it was decided to first understand the nature of emotions at the collective level (i.e. the team). Thus, the second research question became:

How does the team collectively enact (make sense of) their emotions in interactions?

Yet one might ask if the collective enactment of emotions is any different from the individual experience, and if it is, how? Moreover, it was noted that multilevel analysis of emotional experience (e.g. how group-level phenomena can impact individual emotions) is proposed as an area that has not received sufficient attention in the literature (Ashkanasy et al., 2017). Therefore, the third question was formulated as:

How are emotions experienced at the individual level in (project) programme teams?

It is worth noting that the focus on individuals is not to contradict the relational view mentioned above. From a relational perspective, emotions are always experienced in

relation to others, whether the others are physically present or not (Gergen, 2009). Instead, what this third question aims to understand is the more ‘private’ experience – emotions that are felt but are not necessarily enacted at the team level. Here, the more intense, profound, and concealed experience is addressed.

By responding to the above questions, this thesis aims to draw a more nuanced picture of team and individual experience in programmes as a form of project-based work in order to understand how these settings are typically experienced. Gaining a deeper understanding of emotions is not seen as the ‘end’ on its own but is believed to be the first step to critically assessing how we theorise organisation and management in a broader sense (Fotaki et al., 2017).

1.4 EXPECTED CONTRIBUTIONS

First, the findings from this thesis are expected to contribute to the literature on affective processes in organisation studies by providing a relational understanding of emotions in the specific context of programmes. In organisational research, the relational theory has increasingly become a subject of interest in leadership debates (Uhl-Bien, 2006; Crevani et al., 2010; Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011), emphasising the primacy of relationships in leadership dynamics. Similarly, research on emotions has also noted the importance of work relationships in emotion processes (Waldron, 2000). Yet, no empirical study has focused exclusively on relationships as the primary constituent of emotions at work. This thesis is expected to contribute to emotion research by addressing this gap. Accordingly, emotions are conceptualised as relational social constructs and studied as they are experienced within the dialectical tensions and relations of project-based work.

By adopting a relational theory, this thesis also addresses several under-researched aspects of emotions, including: emotions' complex and multilayered nature (Fineman, 2004; Ashkanasy et al., 2017); the embodied characteristic of emotions (Sturdy, 2003); emotions' fluidity and dynamism (Fineman, 2004; Sturdy, 2003; Ashkanasy et al., 2017); the private, 'disguised', and 'concealed' side of emotions (Sturdy, 2003); the context-specificity of emotions (Fineman, 2004); and emotions at the collective level (Ashkanasy et al., 2017). In addition, in line with the recent calls to provide multilevel analysis of emotions (ibid.), this thesis explores emotions at both collective and individual levels, assessing the impact of team-level phenomena on the individual experience. As mentioned earlier and expected later in this thesis, gaining a more detailed understanding of emotions has the potential to make further contributions to many other aspects of organising including ethics, leadership, and decision-making (Fotaki et al., 2017).

Second, by addressing the 'lived experience' of actors involved in planning a regional programme, this thesis is expected to extend the burgeoning literature on critical project studies (Cicmil et al., 2006; Hodgson & Cicmil, 2006; 2016) and especially the project actuality research (Cicmil et al., 2006). In line with the directions suggested by the Rethinking Project Management Network (Winter et al., 2006), the thesis contributes to the current debates by studying the programme as a social process. Investigating the microprocesses of individuals is argued to further cast light on leadership dynamics in projects and programmes (Geraldi & Söderlund, 2018). Hence, the thesis is expected to ultimately contribute to the current debates on project and programme leadership.

1.5 THE THESIS CHAPTERS

This thesis is structured in seven chapters:

Chapter two provides an overview of emotions as the major phenomena of interest in this thesis. This chapter includes two main sections. Throughout the first part, the several conceptualisations of emotions will be explained and emotions will be distinguished from moods and other affective terms. This section also outlines the various philosophical paradigms that have been dominant in emotions studies. The second section of the chapter presents the history of emotions in organisation and management research. The chapter concludes by choosing the social constructionist view of emotions as the philosophical foundation of this research.

Chapter three elaborates on the relational approach to social constructionism (Cunliffe, 2008; Gergen, 2009) as the study's conceptual frame. By giving primacy to relationships rather than selves, this thesis explores emotions as they are lived and enacted *intersubjectively* within *dialectical* oppositions and as they surface through both *dialogue* and *embodiment* (Cunliffe, 2008). The chapter particularly draws on *sense-making* theory and the concept of identity as the foundation to sense-making (Weick, 1995). Among the many constructs in the identity literature, *identity work* (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002) is especially chosen for this thesis as it allows for a processual (rather than fixed) view of identity (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002.; Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). Sense-making and identity work processes will be further adopted as the lens to investigate relational emotions. To clarify the context of the thesis, this chapter also includes an explanation of both traditional and critical project and programme management, partnership-led (project) programmes, and finally (project) programme teams and the importance of emotions in them.

Chapter four explains and justifies the methodological approach undertaken for this thesis. After the methodological complications of researching emotions are explained, ethnography is discussed as the research approach that can aptly address such

complexities. The chapter then explains the procedure of negotiating and maintaining access, including three 'emotional encounters' (Brannan, 2011) during this process. The adopted research techniques, including observations, interviews, diaries, and field documents, are further outlined and elaborated on. The thesis relies on two different methods to interpret the data. Thematic analysis is chosen to analyse the collective experience while interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is selected to interpret the individual emotions. The chapter ends with a discussion of quality in qualitative research and provides evidence for quality in this thesis.

Chapter five pinpoints the context in which this empirical study was conducted. The case includes a team involved in the planning phase of a regional programme led by a local partnership of non-profit and public organisations. The programme itself is part of a ten-year national initiative. The history and the scope of the programme are explained at both national and regional levels and the regional programme team members are introduced. The chapter also gives an overview of the programme's unfolding in action.

Chapter six shows the team's journey and the collective experience of emotions. This chapter is structured as a story, created through thematic analysis of the data. The team's story is presented in four chronological episodes, each explaining the real-life programme circumstances that provide the scene for sense-making of the actors. The story especially highlights the emotional experience of the team when attempting to make sense of the ongoing interruptions to their workflow.

Building on the team journey presented in chapter six, chapter seven explores the individual experience of emotions more deeply. Drawing on the results from IPA, this chapter reveals the 'lived experience' of emotions. In doing so, the findings unravel the

impact of the team's story on individual experience and perceptions. It is found that emotions in this programme are not only tied to issues of identity, but they also rise intensely when matters of justice and meaningful work are questioned.

Finally, chapter eight provides the concluding remarks of the thesis. The contributions of the study will be explained empirically, theoretically, and with regard to practitioners in complex project and especially in programme environments. Limitations of the thesis are also acknowledged in this final chapter, serving as fruitful directions for future research endeavours.

CHAPTER 2: EMOTIONS IN ORGANISATION

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Over decades, emotions have been subject to various definitions and conceptualisations in different disciplines. Several distinct perspectives have been adopted in researching emotions, ranging from positivist to interactionist and constructionist approaches. Decades of research on organisation and management also shows that existing schools and theories have treated emotions and their role in organisational life in numerous ways. This chapter provides an overview of the literature on these debates. First, the definitional and conceptual complexities of emotions are explained and the term is distinguished from other affective constructs. Second, the chapter reviews the various philosophical perspectives that have been undertaken in emotion studies. Finally, it will be shown how emotions have shifted from irrational forbidden forces to the top of research agenda in management and organisation studies (Fineman, 1993; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Bolton, 2005). The chapter concludes that a social constructionist perspective is best suited to the research questions in this thesis, as it allows for a subjective, contextualised, and dynamic understanding of emotions.

2.1 ON EMOTIONS

‘What is an emotion?’ was a question first brought forward by William James (1884) over 130 years ago. The question sparked much debate on the complications of defining the phenomena in several disciplines, including philosophy (e.g. Solomon, 1976), psychology (e.g. Izard, 1977; Plutchik & Kellerman, 1980), sociology (e.g. Kemper, 1978; Hochschild, 1983), history (e.g. Stone, 1977), and feminist studies (e.g. Smith-Rosenberg, 1975). Kleinginna and Kleinginna (1981) define emotions by referring to a set of interactions between subjective and objective factors that is mediated by the neural systems, which in turn is believed to give rise to both feelings and cognitive processes towards assessing the experience. These authors propose that emotions lead to psychological adjustment to the response-arousing conditions as well as an expressive and adaptive behaviour.

Despite the diverging definitions, scholars have traditionally agreed on the constituents of emotions. These include: 1) appraisal of a situational stimulus or context; 2) changes in physiological or bodily sensations; 3) the free or inhibited display of expressive gestures; and 4) a cultural label applied to specific constellations of one or more of the first three components (Thoits, 1989). For an emotion to be experienced, however, it is argued that not all the four components need to be present. An example is the possibility of experiencing fear without being aware of the reason for it (*ibid.*).

Notwithstanding the degree of consensus over the key constituents of emotions, the origin of emotions has remained a subject of debate. Emotions have been protractedly viewed as the antithesis of cognition. When an extreme stance on the primacy of cognitive forces is taken, emotions are seen as activated responses to cognitive appraisals (e.g. Lazarus, 1984), while the other extreme contends that it is the emotional

arousal that leads to cognitive processes (e.g. Zajonc, 1984). Contemporary research on emotion-cognition has aimed to replace these dichotomies with simultaneity and interrelatedness (Turner, 2009b). Three different perspectives have been born in this process: 1) emotions interfering with rationality; 2) emotions serving rationality; and 3) emotions and rationality entwining (Fineman, 2000).

Overall, the entry of emotions as a research concern into a variety of academic disciplines has resulted in relatively divergent outlooks on emotional experience, from strictly biological, in-the-body views to anthropological, sociological, and socio-psychological perspectives. As a result, there exists an abundance of definitions and elaborations of what emotions exactly are (Crawley, 2004). Today, looking at the extensive literature on the nature of emotions, it is evident that emotions, despite having biological roots, are overwritten by social and moral debates; the world is being viewed as the scene where ‘emotionologies’ govern our experiences and behaviours (Fineman, 2008).

2.1.1 Emotions versus other affective constructs

A major theme in emotion studies is to stress the subtle yet important definitional and conceptual discrepancies between what can be generally regarded as *affect*. Seen as a broad concept, affect is believed to demonstrate positive and negative appraisals of an object, idea, or behaviour (Heise, 1979). More narrowly, Barsade and Gibson (2007) conceptualise affect as an umbrella term encompassing a wide range of feelings. This wide spectrum is classified by Watson and Clark (1984) into *feeling states* and *feeling traits*, with the former including short-term affective experiences and the latter referring to more stable and generally longer-term feelings. Table 1 provides a

summary of the different affective constructs with moods and emotions in the *feeling states* category.

State vs trait	Affective term	Definition
Feeling states: Short-term affective experiences.	Moods	Weak, diffuse feeling states with rather longer durability.
	Emotions	Strong, focused feeling states with shorter durability.
Feeling traits: The overall tendency to respond to life situations in a particular way.	Positive affectivity	The tendency to often experience positive moods and emotions.
	Negative affectivity	The tendency to often experience negative moods and emotions.

Table 1: Summary of different feeling states and feeling traits, adapted from Barsade & Gibson (2007)

In distinguishing between *emotions* and *moods*, it is proposed that moods are more stable, less strong states with supposedly uncertain origins, whereas emotions represent more intense, short-term, and purposeful states caused by a clear object (Frijda, 1993; Forgas, 1995; Jones & George, 1998; Fisher, 2000; Kelly & Barsade, 2001; Brief & Weiss, 2002; Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Moods are believed to refer to the day-to-day feeling of an individual without interrupting his/her ongoing activities but rather being felt subtly (Thayer, 1989). Emotions, on the other hand, are shown to result in expressive behaviour and neurological/psychological transformations (Frijda, 1993).

With regard to *feeling traits*, research has identified the importance of *dispositional affect*. As explained by Watson and Clark (1984), the term refers to an individual's underlying predisposition to experience positive and negative moods and emotions. As such, dispositional affect is believed to be more stable and fundamental than both moods and emotions (Goldsmith & Campos, 1986; Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Dispositional affect is also capable of influencing the entire set of the individual's

affective experiences by serving as a background to consciousness (Watson & Clark, 1984).

In this thesis, emotions are the phenomena of interest as the more observable form of affect that can also be traced down into a clear cause within a certain context. In order to discuss the importance of the underlying context in the experience of emotions, the next section of this chapter provides a brief overview of the different philosophical perspectives from which emotions have been researched.

2.1.2 An overview of different philosophical traditions in researching emotions

2.1.2.1 The materialistic approaches to emotions

Among all the existing perspectives on emotions, materialism has always been a dominant theme. From this perspective, emotions are approached as material objects that are constituted biologically and expressed through facial muscle movement, changing blood pressure, and hormonal processes. This stream views human psyche as a generic pattern constituted by ‘hard-wired’ instincts (Lutz & White, 1986; Ekman, 1980). In addition, despite the highly influential role of the underlying cultural settings, individuals are considered as coping with the emotion’s given materiality (Lutz & White, 1986). Centred around this view are the positivist, evolutionary, ethological, and cognitive approaches to the study of emotions. The following subsections provide an introduction to these perspectives.

2.1.2.1.1 The evolutionary, biological, and ethological views of emotions

The evolutionary (also referred to as biological, positivist, and naturalist) view of emotions is founded on Darwin’s (1872) propositions. In *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, he portrays emotions as adaptive functions to organise human behaviour in ways to meet environmental demands. In other words, the

evolutionary approach views emotions as modes of functioning that exist as a result of natural selection. In a broader sense, natural selection is believed to coordinate psychological, behavioural, cognitive, motivational, and subjective responses in a way that boosts the ability to satisfy the adaptive challenges of various situations (Nesse, 1990). Hence, the emotional responses are considered as 'instinctual' or 'hard-wired' (Solomon, 1998). Proponents of this approach confirm the existence of at least some culturally universal emotions as they believe some reactions to situational challenges are wired in (Thoits, 1989).

Darwin's interest in the universality and taxonomy of emotions further became the idea behind one of the most widely accredited cross-cultural research projects, called 'neuro-cultural' (Ekman, 1980). Ekman's study of the facial expression of emotions among the Fore of New Guinea confirmed 'happiness', 'surprise', 'fear', 'anger', 'disgust', and 'sadness' as universally equal emotions. In the same vein, the ethologist Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1980) studied a range of emotion-expressive non-verbal behaviours among various societies and verified the universality of at least a few emotional states.

One major drawback of the evolutionary and ethological approaches stems from overlooking the social influences in construction of emotions. Kemper (1987) addresses this neglect by attempting to integrate the evolutionary approach with the social constructionist perspective on emotions (which is further discussed in detail). As he argues, even culturally universal emotions 'extend through the attachment of social definitions, labels, and meaning to differentiated conditions of interaction and social organization,' (ibid.: 276).

2.1.2.1.2 The cognitive view of emotions: emotion and appraisal

The cognitive approach was originally grounded on William James's pioneering definition of emotion as feelings of our bodily changes: 'We feel sorry because we cry, afraid because we tremble' (in Gergen, 1995: 8). A stream of research further began to explore the physiological differentiations of various emotional states. As the attempt to discover clear-cut physiological discrepancies among different emotions failed, this stream came to conceptualise emotions as: 'a general pattern of excitation of the sympathetic nervous system' (Schachter & Singer, 1962: 379).

From the cognitive perspective, physical responses serve as precedents to the emotion and are interpreted based on one's judgement of the situation (Lupton, 1998). Cognitivists thus show their interest in the context and one's recognition of an emotion. They even view appraisal as a product of socialisation: 'how a situation is appraised by an individual from one culture may differ from the appraisal given by another individual from a different culture' (ibid.: 13). However, despite emphasising the importance of one's interpretation of the situation, cognitivists only consider available cognitions as the framework to interpret (Schachter & Singer, 1962).

Despite having less biological concerns, suggesting the existence of a few primary emotions brings cognitivists closest to the evolutionary approach to emotions (Lupton, 1998; Manzoor, 2012). Emotions are still viewed as the experience of an atomistic individual rather than one immersed in a unique sociocultural context, with subsequent unique implications for emotional experience (Lupton, 1998).

2.1.2.2 The non-materialistic approaches to emotions

Unlike the materialistic approaches that are grounded on human physiology, other philosophical traditions address the link between emotional states and the context in

which they are shaped and expressed (Lupton, 1998). These perspectives view emotions as dynamic functions of the underlying context. The following subsections provide an introduction to the most dominant traditions opposing the materialistic view of emotions. These perspectives link the experience of emotions to different contextual factors, such as power structures, the unconscious, and language. Ultimately, the most relevant approach to the present study, namely social constructionism, will be discussed as the perspective through which emotions are argued to be shaped and expressed.

2.1.2.1.3 The symbolic interactionist view of emotions

Grounded on the work of Mead (1934), symbolic interactionists believe that environmentally specific events lead to generalised arousals, which are interpreted and expressed as a particular emotion (Thoits, 1989). Emotions, therefore, can be regarded as: ‘the joint product of generalized arousal and specific sociocultural factors’ (ibid.: 320). Hence, symbolic interactionists argue that emotions considerably vary across different social environments where different interpretations and emotion labels are developed.

As one of the founders of symbolic interactionism, Shott (1979) outlines the four tenets of this perspective on emotions. These are: 1) the particular focus on the actor’s definitions and interpretations; 2) the emergent nature of human behaviour as it is simultaneously constructed and executed; 3) the strong emphasis on the actor’s internal states and impulses as well as external events and stimuli; and finally 4) the presentation of social structures and normative regulations as a framework to shape human actions rather than a determinant of them.

Taking the symbolic interactionist perspective, the major emphasis is put on the individual's efforts to sustain a self-perception and identity of him/herself in different situations. In other words, it is contended that one is always in quest of congruency between the self-conception, cultural norms, and the society's responses to construct and experience a specific emotion. Positive emotions, such as pride, are experienced when the cultural norms and society's response are in line with the self-view. On the other hand, negative emotions, such as shame and anger, are produced in times of incongruence between self-image, cultural norms, and the society's response (Turner, 2009b). Symbolic interactionism further became the foundation for another major perspective on emotions: the dramaturgical approach.

2.1.2.1.4 The dramaturgical view of emotions

Initially developed from symbolic interactionism, dramaturgical perspective depicts the society as a stage on which the human being is expected to give a presentation of self to the audience (Goffman 1956). Accordingly, individuals appear on the scene using a cultural script of norms and ideologies, with the hope of presenting themselves both dramatically and strategically (Turner, 2009b). There is thus a constant attempt to avoid the subsequent embarrassment of a possibly unsuccessful performance (Goffman, 1956).

Attempting to develop Goffman's early conceptualisation, Hochschild (1979; 1983) introduced the concept of *emotion culture*, referring to a set of ideologies in terms of attitudinal and emotional responses in a generic set of circumstances. Moreover, Hochschild (1979) and Ekman (1982) elaborated the two concepts of *feeling rules* (also called *emotion norms*) and *display rules* (also called *expression norms*). Feeling rules explain a range of feelings within the acceptable range, intensity, and duration with

regard to a specific situation. Display rules refer to the regulation of this range, intensity, and duration.

By studying a group of airline stewards, Hochschild (1979) also observed the difficulties of complying with display rules, a situation that pushed the stewards into the presentation of what they actually did not feel, which she called *emotional labour*. She further observed the several strategies involved in emotional labour processes. These include the alterations in both inner feelings and their public display (i.e. *deep acting*) or the mere change of public display while keeping the internal experience (i.e. *surface acting*).

The dramaturgical perspective on emotion differs from symbolic interactionism in that it views the presentation of self as only one of many other strategies to manipulate situations (Turner, 2009b). One major critique of this perspective argues that dramaturgy is best suited to the study of total institutions (Flecha et al., 2003), a concept first introduced by Goffman (1956). In Goffman's definition, the expression 'total institution' refers to a situation in which a number of similar people work and reside far from a wider community for a considerable amount of time. Orphanages, ships, and monasteries are among Goffman's examples of total institutions.

2.1.2.1.5 *The structuralist view of emotions*

Sharing similar ideas with cognitivists on the link between cognitive appraisal and emotional response, structuralists take a further step by incorporating the impact of the macro-level context in which emotions are enacted (Lupton, 1998). In other words, emotions are viewed as fully embedded in social structures such as social class (Barbalet, 1996–97), interaction rituals (Collins, 2004), or power and status relationships (e.g. Gordon, 1990; Kemper, 1990). Hence, an individual's emotional

experience is directly related to his/her position in the social system or in a social group (Lupton, 1998). The four major themes in the structuralist school and their approach to the study of emotions are elaborated on below.

2.1.2.1.5.1 The 'power' and 'status' view of emotions

Similar to many other approaches to emotion in sociology, the power and status perspective is believed by Turner (2009b) to address the link between relative resources of individuals and their enacted emotions. Kemper (1981) was one of the first authors to demonstrate power (authority) and status (prestige) as the two fundamental elements of social relationships, which he argued act as universal emotion-elicitors. According to this perspective, emotions are produced when power and status are either maintained or changed (Thoits, 1989).

Kemper and Collins (1990) further threw light on the role of expectation in the power and status approach. Accordingly, when an individual expects to gain power and this expectation is not fulfilled in reality, negative emotions such as fear and anxiety are produced. Moreover, a major role in differentiating emotions is also played by attribution theory, meaning that internal attribution and blaming oneself for the loss of power and status results in the experience of emotions such as shame and embarrassment, whereas external attribution leads to the experience of anger and aggression (ibid.).

2.1.2.1.5.2 The stratification view of emotions

From the stratification perspective, not only power and status but also other valued resources are argued to be unequally distributed in the society. This is believed to result in the creation of social classes with a given level of emotional energy (Turner, 2009b). Taking a pioneering step, Collins (1975) argued that a human's control of resources

such as power, prestige, and money has an unavoidable influence on his/her micro-level encounters. Hence, within the larger stratification system, one's own share of resources as well as those of others are believed to arouse emotional responses in individuals (Turner, 2009b).

The proponents of stratification perspective believe that positive emotions such as confidence are more likely to be observed in the upper echelons of the class system, due to the circulation of power, prestige, and other material resources (Turner, 2009b). By contrast, the higher prospect of getting involved in physical, undesirable, or somewhat dangerous work is argued to result in the increased likelihood of experiencing aggression among people in the lower classes. Recalling Marx's view of stratification, under specific circumstances such negative emotional arousals can potentially facilitate social movements to further break the stratification system (ibid.).

2.1.2.1.5.3 The exchange view of emotions

Broadly defined, the exchange theory suggests that people incur costs to secure resources from one another (Turner, 2009b). Brought to the study of emotions, the exchange theory argues that positive emotions are aroused when there is an excess of payoffs compared to the incurred costs, whereas negative emotions are experienced in times of deficit (ibid.). Exchanges are further categorised by Lawler (2001) into four major types: 1) productive exchanges where behaviours are coordinated to secure resources; 2) negotiated exchanges through constant bargaining; 3) reciprocal exchanges where a resource is given to another actor in expectation of future compensation; and 4) generalised exchanges where resources are given to a receiver who further passes the resource to another actor in the chain.

Taking Lawler's classification, regardless of positivity or negativity, productive exchanges are believed to cause emotions with the highest level of intensity among all the other types. The second most intense emotions are believed to result from the second type of exchange. Molm (1997) indicates that tension and conflict are integral components of negotiations. Reciprocal exchanges are believed to arouse less intense emotions, with positive and negative emotions arising when the giving of the resource is either reciprocated or not. Ultimately, the least intense emotions are supposedly correlated with generalised exchanges where there are more than two actors in the 'give-and-take' chain (Turner, 2009b).

The final determinants of emotional experience in the exchange perspective are power, expectations, and attribution dynamics (ibid.). For instance, in conditions of total high power (when both giver and receiver of the resource are equally dependent on one another), frequent positive emotions are believed to arise (Thye et al., 2002). Similarly, the more payoffs are congruent with the prior expectations of the actors in an exchange, the more intensely the positive emotions will be experienced. Eventually, Lawler (2001) proposes that an individual's attribution to the task, self, others, and the social unit in which the exchange takes place can highly influence the direction of one's feelings.

2.1.2.1.5.4 The ritual view of emotions

Interaction rituals are believed to commence when individuals become co-present (Collins, 2004; 2008). This refers to situations where individuals are involved in a common activity. Turner (2009b) argues that co-presence starts with ritual greetings through which a set of transient emotions, a common mood, and a mutual focus of attention are established. The more the interaction proceeds, the more collective emotions are aroused, a process which is believed by Turner (2009b) to result in the

symbolisation of an emotionally charged group. Such symbolisation is argued by Collins (2004, 2008) to produce a 'particular cultural capital', referring to common memories and experiences.

Briefly put, the ritual view argues that when the symbolisation of the group is juxtaposed with a particularised cultural capital, this can create an environment where symbols become morals (Collins, 2004; 2008). As a result, violation of these morals by either insiders or outsiders leads to the experience of negative emotions. In reconciling the ritual view with symbolic interactionism, Summer-Effler (2002) indicates that it is self-affirmation that creates positive emotions, a situation which in turn boosts the likelihood of demonstrating the discussed commitment to group symbols. Hence, verification of the *self* once again becomes the key to experiencing positive or negative emotions (Turner, 2009b).

2.1.2.1.6 The post-structuralist view of emotions: emotions as discursive practice

Similar to structuralism, post-structuralism confirms the importance of interpretation in one's emotional experience. Post-structuralists, however, assign a substantial weight to the role of language in interpreting the self and the surrounding world (Lupton, 1998). For post-structuralists, discourse is not only a reflection of the self, the reality, the social relationships, and institutions, but is also a constitutive practice: 'a practice not just representing the world, but of signifying the world, constituting and constructing the world in meaning' (Fairclough, 1992: 64).

By privileging the role of language and other cultural artefacts in emotional constitution, the post-structuralist approach contends that physical adjuncts of emotion are peripheral to an individual's emotional state (Lupton, 1998), an argument in stark contrast with materialistic views of emotions explained earlier. In a similar manner,

post-structuralists strongly oppose the notion of ‘true’ or ‘false’ self that is also reflected in the work of symbolic interactionists and structuralists (e.g. Hochschild, 1979; 1983; Denzin, 1984). Both feeling and display rules are viewed as approaches to self-government and constitution (Lupton, 1998).

Yet the strong emphasis on discourse should not be misinterpreted as the self’s passiveness (ibid.). Being in love, for instance, is depicted by Jackson (1993) as a process of immersing oneself in discourses of love, including novels, plays, and songs that come to describe one’s feelings and passion. Jackson further regards women as the type who tend to be ‘emotionally literate’ by taking steps such as learning a love story or reading romance novels, in contrast to men, who are typically far from construction and manipulation of romance narratives or more general discourses of emotion. Contrary to the traditional view of women as inherently emotional and men as ‘rational’, post-structuralism justifies this difference by referring to ‘gender acculturation’. The concept refers to the individual’s accessible discourses and the degree to which these discourses make sense for them. Such discourses are believed to shape one’s capacity to identify and experience emotions (Lupton, 1998).

2.1.2.1.7 The phenomenological view of emotions: emotion and selfhood

Moving further from the macro factors such as social structure, institutions, and power relations, phenomenologists draw attention to individual agency (Lupton, 1998). From a phenomenological point of view, the key constituent of emotions is the individual’s ‘lived experience’, ‘self-understanding’, and ‘self-judgement’. Hence, contrary to the biological perspective that views an individual’s behaviours as emotions, phenomenologists claim that emotions are, in fact, the individual’s *interpretation* of bodily sensations (ibid.). In line with this school of thought, Finkelstein (1980) contends that different emotions such as boredom, love, and anxiety are manifestations

of the personal and private understandings that one has developed about self, others, and the social milieu.

Moreover, Denzin (1984) argues that emotions are, in fact, central to the ontology of human existence: 'People are their emotions, to understand who a person is, it is necessary to understand emotions' (ibid.: 1). Similar to other phenomenologists, he puts emphasis on the subjective nature of emotional experience, arguing that the emotional labels are subject to different interpretations. Subjectivity aside, he further draws attention to two other major dimensions of emotions, namely *self-reference* and *self-justification*. The former refers to the process of *self-management* instead of the widely believed notion that an emotional experience is about emotion management. The latter indicates that one cannot experience an emotion without attempting to justify it.

In sum, owing to its strong focus on the link between emotion and selfhood, phenomenology is argued to provide valuable insights into the understanding of emotional self (Lupton, 1998). Despite its important similarities with structuralism, such as the confirmation of some forms of emotion work, the phenomenological approach views emotions as 'manufactured aspects of reality' instead of innate phenomena (Finkelstein, 1980: 119).

2.1.2.1.8 The psychodynamic view of emotions: emotion and the unconscious

The psychodynamic perspective on emotions is more or less grounded on the concepts first introduced by Sigmund Freud and further developed by Arieti (1970) and Brenner (1980). According to this perspective, emotions are psychological sensations of the body that originate from one's cognitive appraisals (Domagalski, 1999). Emotions are

seen as intrapersonal, isolated phenomena in an individual's body and, when understood poorly, are referred to as 'diseases of the mind' (ibid.: 839).

Psychodynamic approaches to emotions are classified as either anthropological or psychiatric/psychological (Lutz & White, 1986). What is mutually agreed on is the psychic unity of human emotional experience (ibid.). Instead, what remains a source of debate is where this emotional unity is found. Taking the anthropological standpoint, the emotional unity is argued to be observable in psychosocial experiences such as grief or aggression. Here, a greater weight is assigned to the social context and cultural norms in interpretation of cognitive appraisals. By contrast, the psychiatric/psychological class views emotional unity in eliciting situations or in psychobiology (ibid.). In both branches, a few emotions (i.e. fear, anger, depression, and satisfaction) are believed to be culturally universal (Kemper, 1987).

In spite of the initial links with human physiology, the contemporary psychodynamic stream has been drifting away from the materialistic view of emotions towards embedding the critical importance of sociocultural structures (Lupton, 1998). More recent psychoanalytic theories emphasise the role of childhood memories, individual biographies, and previous emotional experiences in controlling the emotional aspects of life (ibid.). Therefore, the contemporary psychodynamic approach can be fruitful, as it provides strong support for irrational behaviours of humans that cannot be easily traceable, as they are believed to lie somewhere in our unconsciousness (Manzoor, 2012).

2.1.2.1.9 The social constructionist view of emotions

Broadly put, social constructionism (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) starts with a lingering doubt about the taken-for-granted world and invites a more critical, challenging

perspective on our daily lives. Accordingly, the objective basis of conventional knowledge is questioned (Gergen, 1985). This is reflected in Kessler and McKenna's (1978) study of the social construction of genders, where the pre-assumption of having merely two gender types is put aside. Brought into the study of emotions, social constructionism opposes the conventional approaches that are too drowned in human biology to appreciate social and cultural influences (Gergen, 1985).

Therefore – unlike the proponents of the evolutionary and cognitive approaches, who view emotions as a response to either physiological or cognitive appraisals, or the symbolic interactionists, who assign a relative lower weight to such elements as constituents of emotional experience – social constructionists believe emotions are to be fully understood and appreciated when explored from the lens of the underlying social context (Lupton, 1998). The concern is over the processes through which individuals come to describe their surrounding environment (Gergen, 1985). From a social constructionist perspective, emotions are learnt rather than biologically inherited (Lupton, 1998).

Following a model of symbolic interactionism, social constructionists take more interest in the social and cultural aspects of emotions. From this view, emotions are not mechanical products of biological, in-the-body changes. In fact, something intervenes between how an individual is supposed to feel in a given society and how s/he actually feels, and that is how the condition is interpreted (Kemper, 1987). Thus, individuals experience emotions when they start to interpret their surrounding situation (Shott, 1979; Hochschild, 1979; Averill, 1980). Emotional experience is about how an individual perceives the environment and its constraints and gives meaning to them (Fineman, 1993). Different interpretations from one individual to another give an intensely subjective image to social constructionism. As a result, societies are able to

‘shape, mould, or construct as many different emotions as are functional within the social system’ (Averill, 1980: 326).

Taking social constructionism as a continuum, the ‘weaker’ end contends the notion of a few ‘natural emotion responses’ that are biologically granted and are therefore independent of the contextual factors (ibid.). Here, a few emotions, including fear, anger, depression, and satisfaction, are seen as the primary emotions, which are argued to be universally equal (Kemper, 1987). These primary emotions, when altered or combined together, are believed to produce emotions that are termed as ‘secondary’. Guilt and pride, for instance, are seen as the transformed versions of fear and satisfaction (ibid.).

The other extreme in social constructionism assigns the entire weight to the context. Here, emotions are viewed as purely social constructs that are not divisible into separate entities (Lupton, 1998). From this perspective, emotions are subjective and interpersonal rather than objective and individual; they demand ‘an active perception, identification, and management on the part of individuals’ (ibid.: 16). As such, emotions are dynamic phenomena, which change in response to the historical, social, and political contexts in which they emerge (ibid.).

In this thesis, social constructionism is chosen as the perspective from which to explore emotions. Choosing social constructionism allows for understanding emotions as ‘lived experience’. Moreover, this perspective ultimately provides a contextual view of emotions. By situating emotions in their context, the study can yield valuable insights into the lived experience of project-based work. The next chapter elaborates on the *relational* approach as a specific orientation to social constructionism that was

employed as the conceptual frame for this thesis. Before that, the following section locates the role of emotions in management and organisation literature.

2.2 EMOTIONS IN THE ORGANISATIONAL AGENDA

Early management theories such as Taylor's *scientific management* and Weber's *ideal bureaucracy* were founded on the notion of the mechanistic organisation. A mechanistic organisation is expected to function in a reliable or, as believed by Taylor (1911), its 'one best' way. The best practice was believed to be achieved through strong emphasis on efficiency, formal hierarchies, and systematic division of labour. Later, other classic management scholars, including Barnard (1938) and Fayol (1949), shifted the focus from the shop floor to the managerial level. Still, it was believed that all actors in organisations were obliged to resemble an 'organisational personality', which in turn left no space for emotions in organisation (Bolton, 2005).

The dehumanising aspects of classical management approaches were gradually believed to ignore the fact that organisational actors are, in fact, complex human beings having their own social needs (Watson, 2012). In his longitudinal study of workers in the Hawthorne plant of the Western Electric company, Elton Mayo (1946) revealed an 'informal social system' in organisations. Mayo further put the focus on work-group affiliations as well as on work behaviour with the intention of addressing 'the human side of the enterprise'. Despite their strong emphasis on the social interactions of the workers, the *human relations* school still viewed the actors as an inseparable entity of the organisation (Bolton, 2005).

A strand of the human relations school, known as *psychological humanism* or the *neo-human relations* approach, was then established to maximise the inclusion of workers in their task-related decision-making processes (Watson, 2012). In line with this school

of thought are Maslow's (1954) *hierarchy of needs*, Herzberg's (1966) *motivation-hygiene factors*, and McGregor's (1960) *theory X and theory Y*. Despite their pioneering attempt to shift the focus from 'organisation' to 'people', this school is mainly criticised for neglecting the role of the social systems in shaping the needs and desires of those people (Watson, 2012). Taking a Durkheimian stance, even an extremely individual act such as suicide is fully understood if and only if explored through the lens of the individual's social relations within a group or community (ibid.).

In other words, neither the human relations approach nor psychological humanism addressed the role of the external environment upon which the organisation is dependent. In response to this neglect, the *open system* perspective on organisation emerged, contending that organisations must achieve equilibrium with both their internal subsystems and their external surroundings (Bolton, 2005). Despite the attempt to correct the over-individualistic perspectives of the organisation, the open systems approach is believed to have made the mistake of overreacting to its preceding thoughts by making human individuals secondary to the social system. Hence, this approach failed to acknowledge that organisational members might be actively involved in the construction of the world around them (ibid.).

As the polar opposite of the systems approach, the *interactionist* approach was developed to view organisations as social constructs that are created by the actions of their members (Watson, 2012). This approach viewed organisational actors as determinants of structures that were once believed to dictate the actions of members (Bolton, 2005). As a result, the interactionist approach has largely contributed to understanding the 'emotional life' of the organisation (ibid.). Examples include Strauss and colleagues' (1982) attempt to theorise organisational emotionality within the context of nursing and Fine's (1988) study of humour in a restaurant kitchen. From the

interactionist perspective, human emotions play an integral role in all walks of the organisation (Bolton, 2005).

Yet a general drawback of the interactionist approach was believed to, once again, stem from neglecting the forces outside the organisation (Bolton, 2005). The connection between the employee's actions inside the organisation and his/her cultural community was first observed in the *institutional* theories of organisation (Goldthorpe et al., 1968). Adopting a broadly Weberian perspective, institutionalists argued that organisations are established and run, not based on a set of efficiency criteria but based on the employees' perception of how things should work (ibid.). Therefore, the employees' values outside the organisation were seen as culturally embedded within the organisation, which was itself seen as part of the socially constructed reality (ibid.).

As explained earlier, the *social construction of reality* (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) is the perspective to contend that people 'make the social world' through processes of institutionalisation (Watson, 2012). Society, as argued by Berger and Luckmann (1966), is a human product; the human is in turn shaped by his/her society. The 1970s and 1980s further became the years of rapid alterations from the classicists' passionless bureaucracy to a *post-structuralist* view, reversing all the old structures of functionality and standardisation (Clegg, 1990). This approach aimed to replace hierarchical systems with notions such as corporate culture, a committed workforce, and empowerment (e.g. Drucker, 1981; Senge, 1999). By this stage, emotions were not only legitimised to appear in organisational life, but gradually turned into valuable managerial tools.

The tempo of research on the role of emotions at work started to increase in the 1990s, reconciling emotionality with rationality (Putnam & Mumby, 1993; Albrow, 1992; Fineman, 1993). In particular, much debate was sparked by Hochschild's seminal

work, *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* (1983). By suggesting that some jobs inherently require a continuous management of emotions, Hochschild brought emotions to the top of the organisational agenda. Later, Weiss and Cropanzano's (1996) *Affective Event Theory* proposed emotions as the key mechanism to form the work attitudes and behaviours of the workforce. Moods and emotions came to be seen as the fundamental aspects of trust among the members of a team (Jones & George, 1998).

Current research suggests that gaining a deeper understanding of emotions can help one better understand the barriers to improving work conditions (Coupland et al., 2008). A positive relationship has been proposed between emotional abilities and job performance (Farh et al., 2012). Emotions are believed to be strongly correlated to job satisfaction (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Moreover, feeling and expressing positive emotions are even believed to enhance cognitive functioning (Staw et al., 1994). We now widely accept organisations as 'emotional arenas' (Fineman, 1993) and believe that 'the experience of work is saturated with feeling' (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995: 98). As argued by Fineman (2003), organisational procedures are shaped, rejected, reformed, fought over, or celebrated because of feelings.

2.3 DISCUSSION

This chapter presented a detailed overview of emotions by starting from the definitional complexities of the concept due to its interdisciplinary nature. Next, as the specific focus of this thesis, emotions were distinguished from other affective constructs. The chapter further proceeded to review the most dominant philosophical perspectives undertaken in emotion studies. These ranged from the materialistic approaches, where

emotions are viewed as inborn biological phenomena, to the sociocultural views, where the importance of the context is stressed.

The chapter also provided an overview of the major schools of thought in management and organisation in order to show the evolving role of emotions in the history of management theories. As employees were traditionally seen as 'economic animals' expected to abide by the rules of their 'mechanistic settings' (Watson, 2012: 35), emotions were also viewed as irrational forces in the rational settings of organisations. It was then shown how feelings gradually came to be at the forefront of research in management studies. Two similar trends were noticed in the above reviews. As with the steady transformation from mechanistic organisations into emotional arenas, emotion as a concept on its own took a long scholarly journey from being seen as a given and static state into a dynamic phenomenon, constructed and reconstructed daily through one's interactions with the social surroundings.

Social constructionism is the perspective best suited to the objectives of this thesis. Having now witnessed the burgeoning study of emotions among various disciplines in the 1990s, leading emotion scholars unanimously confirm the crucial role of social context in the interpretation of emotions (Lamb, 1992; Fineman, 2000; 2004; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Hatch, 1997). They all approach emotions as social in nature rather than isolated and individual states. It is agreed that culture, whether national, organisational, or departmental, provides beliefs and values about one's emotional experience, as well as an exclusive set of vocabularies to interpret it (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995). In addition, this study needs to go beyond the intrapersonal view of emotions as one aim is to explore the emotional experience explicitly on a collective and shared level. To emphasise this collectivity, the following chapter draws on the

relational orientation to social constructionism as the conceptual framework of this thesis.

CHAPTER 3: FRAMING EMOTIONS AS SITUATED RELATIONAL PHENOMENA IN (PROJECT) PROGRAMME TEAMS

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter builds the conceptual framework of this thesis. It is structured in two main sections. The first section elaborates on the need to study emotions as socially constructed 'lived experience'. In order to do so, the chapter first draws on the sense-making theory (Weick, 1995) and the role of emotions in sense-making processes. As the cornerstone of sense-making, the chapter will then proceed to an explanation of identity work (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002). The chapter further discusses the embodied characteristic of emotions as the rather neglected aspect of emotional experience in organisation and management studies. In order to address this embodied nature in addition to the dialogical side, the thesis frames emotions as 'relational' social constructs (Cunliffe, 2008).

The second section of the chapter further gives an introduction to the context of this thesis. It starts with an overview of major themes in project and programme management. Having shown the traditional approaches, the chapter then proceeds to the current debates aiming to develop a more critical understanding of project-based environments. Furthermore, this section explains cross-sector social partnerships (CSSP) as the actual context in which the studied programme team were working. Finally, (project) programme teams will be discussed as the social spaces where emotions are collectively enacted.

3.1 ON THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF EMOTIONS

As explained in the previous chapter, this thesis takes a social constructionist stance, contending that emotions originate from their underlying social context. Members of a

society socialise within the boundaries of a given culture and learn a specific set of vocabulary as linguistic labels to express their emotions (Harré, 1986). In other words, the social constructionist approach situates emotions in a particular context of action that gives meaning to the emotional experience (Ellis, 1991). It is believed that culture and social norms shape our interpretation and expression of emotion (Shott, 1979). They provide us with rules on how to feel and express ourselves in various situations in order to appear 'legitimate' and 'appropriate' (Hochschild, 1983; Fineman, 1993). The following section elaborates further on the importance of context in understanding the 'lived experience' of emotions.

3.1.1 Emotions as 'lived experience'

Leading emotion scholars (e.g. Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Fineman, 1993; Denzin, 1984) have repeatedly called for emotions to be studied as an everyday lived experience. The term 'lived experience' refers to 'aspects of what actually occurs and is experienced in everyday social action' (Goode, 1994: 127). These lived experiences are constituents of human emotions (Fineman, 2000). According to Fineman and Sturdy (1999), emotions are understood when studied subjectively and as embedded in the social context in which they are regulated. Example of such studies include Hochschild's (1983) work on the lived experience of flight attendants, Oatley and Duncan's (1992) diary study of lived emotions on a daily basis, and Scherer's (1992) analysis of facial expressions indicating that emotions are lived within experience.

In the same vein, Sieben and Wettergren (2010) confirm that the experience and expression of emotions is 'coined' by understandings, valuations, and social structures that are themselves historically and socioculturally grounded. Ellis (1991) argues that without examining the lived experience of emotions at individual and collective levels,

the debate is over spiritless individuals with emotions that are considered to be programmed and patterned. Accordingly, this line of thought takes a 'static' and objective view of emotions, which consequently limits our understanding of a phenomenon that is highly subjective and emergent in nature.

In a broader sense, the human world is believed to be better understood if approached in terms of 'becoming' rather than 'being' (Ashforth, 1998). Hence, to understand social realities as they are lived (as opposed to modelled), this thesis adopts a 'becoming' ontology of emotions to appreciate the dynamic nature of the emotional experience. It is acknowledged that emotions are processes that emerge, develop, and change as individuals and groups strive to make sense of their life-worlds, and more importantly, who they represent in there (Weick, 1995). The following section elaborates further on the sense-making process.

3.1.2 Emotions and sense-making

Understood as 'staying in contact with the context' (Weick, 2009: 33), sense-making refers to the processes of interpretation and meaning production through which individuals and groups reflect on phenomena and produce intersubjective accounts (Weick, 1995). It is through sense-making that people enact their social world and create shared meaning (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). The concept of sense-making has its roots in symbolic interactionism, phenomenology, and ethnomethodology (Brown et al., 2015). In organisation studies, sense-making is viewed as an aspect of organising (Garfinkel, 1967), that is both the outcome and the origin of several organisational phenomena such as culture (Bloor & Dawson, 1994) and change (Balogun & Johnson, 2004).

Sense-making is different from interpretation. While interpretation implies that there is something readily available in the world to be discovered, sense-making is more about invention than it is about discovery (Brown et al., 2015). It is the processes by which 'people generate what they interpret' (Weick, 1995: 13). Interpretation is thus an inseparable component of the sense-making process, which succeeds *perception* and precedes *action* (Weber & Glynn, 2006). In other words, apart from interpretation, sense-making implies 'the active authoring of the situation' (Brown et al., 2015: 267). Hence, sense-making is viewed as the process of labelling, categorising, and creating plausible stories that retrospectively rationalise what people are doing (Weick et al., 2005; Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012).

Weick (1995) argues that sense-making is especially an ongoing process; we are always in the middle of a flow, the reality of which becomes apparent only when it is interrupted. These inevitable interruptions are believed to induce emotional responses, which in turn influence our sense-making (Weick, 1995; Fiebig & Kramer, 1998). Mandler (1984: 118) argues the 'discrepancy between the expected and the actual' to be the major building block of human emotions. Interruption is indeed a signal for change in the environment, and emotion is what happens from the occurrence of the interruption until its removal, or substituting a response to it (Weick, 1995).

More concisely, Weick (1995) argues that we go through negative emotions when an organised sequence is interrupted and the interruption is seen as harmful. On the other hand, positive emotions occur when there is: 1) a sudden removal of interrupting stimuli; or 2) occurrence of an event that unexpectedly speeds the completion of a plan. Additionally, Weick believes that, since people know less about one another in organisational settings, their lower expectations generate stronger feelings, both positive and negative. As this thesis aims to take this enquiry into the specific context

of project-based work, which will be later discussed as a ‘temporary organisation’ with temporary relationships (Packendorff, 1995), it can be argued that project relations can induce even stronger emotions due to the lesser prior knowledge of members about one another.

In sum, when interruptions in the flow of systems cause uncertainty and ambiguity in organisations, sense-making is the means for organisational members to return to a level of stability (Dougherty & Drumheller, 2006). In other words, organisational disruptions result in the experience of emotions that serve as the starting point for sense-making, but are also the outcome of it (ibid.). Therefore, this thesis adopts sense-making as one of the lenses through which to explore emotions. As sense-making is argued to be essentially grounded on identity construction (Weick, 1995), the following section provides an explanation of the link between emotions and identity, with special focus on the notion of identity work.

3.1.3 Emotions and identity work

The act of sense-making starts with a sense-maker whose identity shapes the lens through which s/he makes sense of the surrounding world (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Sense-making is thus grounded on identity and identity construction is at the heart of sense-making (Weick et al., 2005). In fact, the very idea that sense-making is self-referential suggests that self, rather than the environment, demands constant interpretation (Weick, 1995: 23).

Identity has been a popular theme in organisation research, studied at multiple levels: individual, social, organisational, and professional (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). For this thesis, I have specifically chosen *identity work* as the second lens through which to explore emotions for two reasons. First, the notion conceptualises identity as

a process that is socially constructed through language and formed within the web of relationships (Ainsworth & Hardy, 2004; Butler, 2005; Gergen, 2009). In other words, identity is viewed as construed and negotiated between ourselves and others (Ainsworth & Hardy, 2004; Lee & Lin, 2011). Second, the notion views identity as a verb, ‘whereby self-identity is continually reproduced and transformed’ (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002: 627). Therefore, identity work as a concept allows for viewing identity as an ongoing process (as opposed to inherited or fixed) and hence emphasises its dynamic aspect (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003).

Alvesson and Willmott (2002: 626) define identity work as ‘a process whereby people are continuously engaged in forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a precarious sense of coherence and distinctiveness.’ Watson (2008) characterises identity work via tensions between individual notions of who they are (self-identity), and cultural or institutional notions of who they might be (social-identity):

Identity work involves the mutually constitutive processes whereby people strive to shape a relatively coherent and distinctive notion of personal self-identity and struggle to come to terms with and, within limits, to influence the various social-identities which pertain to them in the various milieu in which they live their lives.

(Watson, 2008: 129)

In the same vein, Alvesson and Willmott (2002) conceptualise identity processes as an interplay between a) self-identity, b) identity work, and c) identity regulation. The internal element here is the individual’s self-identity (Watson, 2009). Emphasising the reflexive nature of identity formation, Giddens (1991:53) defines self-identity as ‘the self as reflexively understood by the individual in terms of his or her biography.’ It

refers to subjective experience and provides a temporary answer to the question ‘who am I?’ (Sveningsson & Larsson, 2006).

Social contexts are regulative of identities to different extents (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002). Identity regulation in organisations is viewed as a combination of external forces that aim to regulate employees ‘inside’ their self-image, feeling, and identification (ibid.). It is evident when employees struggle to ‘live up to’ an ideal-self prescribed by their organisation and as they try to internalise externally prescribed ‘ideals’ (ibid.). In this sense, identity work is about linking the everyday micropractices (e.g. communications, emails, informal routines) with macroprocesses (e.g. formal discourses, hierarchies, contracts) (Fortin & Oliver, 2016).

As seen in the above definitions, an indispensable part of identity work is that people craft identity narratives when constructing identities, managing them, or combating identity threats (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008; Koerner, 2014). In Giddens (1991) words, one’s identity is not merely formed by one’s performance but in one’s capacity to maintain consistency in a specific narrative. Narratives are of particular importance as they give important information about the narrator (ibid.). Similarly, in their definition of work identity, Alvesson and Willmott (2002: 626) refer to the term as ‘reflexively organised and temporally informed narratives that are productive of a degree of existential continuity and security.’

Identity work becomes especially intense in situations characterised by crises, tension and constraint (Breit, 2014; Brown, 2015), or when triggered by a clash between identity and disconfirmation (Alvesson & Robertson, 2016; Fortin & Oliver, 2016). In times of transitions, contradictions, and unexpected events, people engage in identity work as a result of emotional arousals, self-doubt, and also openness to new

possibilities (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Koerner, 2014). Examples include: times of creating a professional identity (Pratt et al., 2006), transitions to a new role (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010), or when recovering from workplace trauma such as bullying (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008). All these situations can create a sense of incongruity between the individual's self- and organisational identity and thus engage the person in identity work to find the optimal balance between the two (Creed et al., 2010).

Research on identity has widely acknowledged that identity work involves a great deal of emotion (Sturdy et al., 2006, Winkler, 2018). Some studies suggest that emotional experience triggers identity work in the first place (e.g. Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). Some others emphasise that identity work is essentially an emotional endeavour (e.g. Brown & Coupland, 2015). There are also studies that display identity work as a type of emotional labour (e.g. Clarke et al., 2009). Hence, identity work is considered as a fruitful path for this thesis with special focus on emotions.

Having explained the relevance of sense-making and identity processes for this study, the following section proceeds to a discussion of *embodiment* as an important aspect of emotions that will be especially recognised in this thesis.

3.1.4 The embodiment of emotions

The above sections explained sense-making and identity work as the two lenses through which emotions will be explored in this thesis. As shown, debates on both subjects have mainly stressed the role of discourse and narratives in enacting one's environment as well as one's identity. This thesis, however, does not limit its enquiry to linguistic processes, and if it did, an important part of what we call an emotional experience would remain unexplored. In fact, one major critique of discursive analysis in emotion studies stems from assuming language as the sole constituent of emotions (Sturdy,

2003). In this sense, what is believed to be surprisingly missing in emotion studies is the unconscious forces behind them (Fineman, 2000; Gabriel, 1999).

Broadly put, organisational phenomena, including work-related emotions, might not be always a matter of sense-making and representational processes, but sometimes learnt first in ‘the experiential immediacy by a sensible-significant body’ (Flores-Pereira et al., 2008: 1021). Hence, the body is important in the study of emotions since there is essentially no human experience that is external to the corporeality of the lived body (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). We experience emotions and make sense of them, not just with our brains but with our whole bodies (Küpers, 2013).

Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenological philosophy of ‘lived body’ has served as the starting point in understanding embodied experience in organisations (Thanem & Knights, 2012). His view of the body was considerably influenced by Heidegger’s concept of being in the world (Gieser, 2008). From a Heideggerian perspective, *being* is not just located in ourselves as the subject nor in the objects we deal with, but in our relationships with the world; being is always being-in-the-world (ibid.). The concept of embodiment emphasises ‘the lived body of a subject who knows the world through bodily perception’ (Haynes, 2012: 493). Thus, the body is a phenomenologically lived entity through which we experience our everyday lives, as well as the socially constructed realities, such as emotions.

In Merleau-Ponty’s philosophy, an individual is conceptualised in a knot of relationships that opens him to the world (Benner, 2000), with emotions developing through an interplay of various aspects of this world (Gieser, 2008). Elaborating on his view of embodied emotions, Merleau-Ponty (1964) emphasises that emotions are not hidden psychic facts but types of behaviour that are visible in one’s conduct, face, and

gestures. Hence, an embodiment perspective contends that emotions are not just embedded in words but also in gestures, facial expressions, and body language (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). Embodied emotions are especially evident for service workers when they embody emotional labour through their bodily language, gestures, and appearance (Bolton, 2005).

This study attests to the embodied characteristic of emotions in addition to its linguistic aspect. Yet it is worth noting that the thesis does not aim to measure emotions in the conventional manner of laboratory studies and clinical psychology with body language as the focus. These studies are believed to overlook the context of emotional experience and are thus in contradiction with the social constructionist view adopted in this thesis. Instead, taking an embodiment perspective implies that this study will take a special note of paralinguistic cues and visual gestures in order to bridge the occasional gap between *what is said* and *what is actually 'lived'*.

3.2 EMOTIONS AS 'RELATIONAL' SOCIAL CONSTRUCTS

As explained in chapter two and elaborated on further in this chapter, this thesis views emotions as socially constructed realities. From a social constructionist view, emotions are not inborn biological phenomena, but emerge as one responds to one's environment. For the purpose of this thesis, a relationally responsive orientation to social constructionism (Cunliffe, 2008) is selected to frame emotions. A relational view is argued to be especially relevant to studies with interest in everyday micro-level processes in a particular setting (*ibid.*), as is the case in this research.

The first debates on relationality in organisational research date back to the early 1900s, establishing the view that personal and cultural consciousness are not independent from one another (Mead, 1934). This view replaced the traditional binaries of subject-

object/self-society with a new relational understanding of being (Gergen, 1999). Relationality contends that real meaning is born out of the relationships between the mind and the world; the objective and the subjective; the global and the situational (Leontiev, 2017: 51). The relational approach is interested in exploring what Buber (1970) initially termed as the ‘space between’ self and the other. Accordingly, it is within this ‘space between’ that real meanings emerge between people and phenomena in organisations (Bradbury & Bergmann Lichtenstein, 2000).

More narrowly, emotions by their very nature cannot be processed in isolation from relationships, as we often tend to possess emotions when participating in a relational give-and-take (Gergen, 2009; 2011). One goes through emotions as an answer to a particular object, an object often referring to another individual possessing his/her own agenda, goals, and behavioural characteristics (Campos et al., 2011). In line with this argument is Lazarus’s (1993) definition of emotion as a response to a relational meaning. He views emotions as phenomena that are not only caused by an external demand, constraint, or resource, but are also labelled by juxtaposing them with the individual’s motives and beliefs in relation to the attributions that s/he makes about those emotions. For instance, holding *another* accountable for a negative outcome leads to experience of ‘anger-related’ or ‘other-focused’ emotions such as anger and frustration, whereas viewing *oneself* as responsible for the same outcome results in the production of ‘self-focused’ emotions such as shame and anxiety (Lazarus, 1993; Game, 2008).

In other words, the relational view replaces the term ‘construction’ with ‘co-construction’ (van der Haar & Hosking, 2004). The primacy is given to ‘relationships’ rather than ‘selves’ (Gergen, 2009; Gergen et al., 2004). If we acknowledge the precedence of relationships and approach the reality as a co-construction, we also agree

that having multiple relationships and being part of multiple co-actions brings about multiple local realities (van der Haar & Hosking, 2004; Hosking, 2011). Our actions can receive different supplements and so they may result in multiple, simultaneous, and ongoing construction processes. If reality is seen as ongoing, multiple, and processual, human-being can also be seen as multiple-being (Gergen, 2009). In short, one carries different potentials for action, potentials that can come to life depending on the relationships one enters (ibid.)

In organisation studies, the relational view has been previously adopted in leadership research. In contrast to the more traditional leadership paradigms that are centred around an individual leader, a relational view demands a shift of focus into more collective dynamics (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Here, leadership is not a mechanically controllable act of formally assigned leaders, but is constructed and reconstructed in the social flow of relationships (Crevani et al., 2010). In other words, instead of looking at discrete traits located in individuals, a relational view explores leadership as it emerges in people's interactions, connections, and negotiations (Liu, 2017).

Similar to leadership enquiries founded on relationality, this thesis conceptualises emotions as relational realities that come to life when one participates in a relational give-and-take (Gergen, 2011). In doing so, the thesis especially draws on Cunliffe's (2008) suppositions of a relationally responsive approach to social realities and the implications it brings to the methodological aspects of researching them. According to Cunliffe, the first step to relationality is to acknowledge the *intersubjective* nature of human experience. Shotter and Cunliffe (2002) draw on the work of Merleau-Ponty to show how everything we do, say, and feel is in relation to generalised or particular others such as groups and categories.

As the second tenet, a relational approach attests to the role of *dialogue* in shaping human experience. In Cunliffe's (2008) view, it is in our moment-to-moment dialogue with others that we experience new ways of being, acting, and feeling. Yet, as explained in section 3.1.4, Cunliffe contends that human experience is not all bounded to speech and language. In this sense, a relational approach would also aptly treat emotions as *embodied* in gestures, facial expressions, and body language in addition to words and narratives (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). Finally, a relational view would also emphasise a *dialectical* understanding of experience with 'meaning emerging within the dialectical interrelationship of speakers/listeners, body/language, and speech/silence' (Cunliffe, 2008: 131).

To encapsulate the four mentioned tenets of a relational approach, this study explores emotions as intersubjective realities that emerge through both dialogue and embodiment within the web of competing perspectives in (project) programme teams. Before proceeding to (project) programme teams and the emotional dynamics at the team level, the following section provides an introduction to project- and programme-based work as the context of enquiry in this thesis.

3.3 AN INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT-BASED WORK

In most project management literature, it is agreed that a project is defined as a unique, one-off task with a predetermined date of delivery, which is subject to one or several performance goals, and which consists of complex and/or interdependent activities (Packendorff, 1995: 320). Project management (PM) is historically rooted in US Department of Defense contracts during the 1950s and 1960s, when the concept of PERT (Programme Evaluation and Review Technique) was established and further became synonymous with project management (Shenhar & Dvir, 1996). Accordingly,

PM was defined as ‘the application of a collection of tools and techniques to direct the use of diverse resources towards the accomplishment of a unique, complex, one-time task within time, cost and quality constraints’ (Oisen, 1971 in Atkinson, 1999: 337). Gradually, project management became more than just planning of sequential activities and the importance of participants’ satisfaction was emphasised (Project Management Institute, 1987; Shenhar & Dvir, 1996).

A widely known framework for project life cycle is proposed by King and Cleland (1983), suggesting that projects consist of four phases. The first phase, referred to as *conceptualisation*, is when the strategic need for undertaking the project is recognised. During this phase, project goals are established and available resources are explored. The second stage, *planning*, starts as a more concrete plan is developed to achieve the preliminary goals of the first stage. Moreover, during the planning phase, required resources (e.g. budget, human, etc.) are enlisted to support the developed plan. The project is then expected to enter the *execution* phase, where resources are transformed into the final desired outputs. Once the actual work of the project is completed, the project goes through the *termination* phase, which involves releasing the resources and reassigning the project team to other duties.

With regard to success criteria, there has been a long-established debate on what makes a project successful. Traditionally, project success has been defined within the ‘iron triangle’ of time, cost, and quality, the criteria that had been subject to much criticism (e.g. Atkinson, 1999, Baker et al., 1983). Over time, criteria for assessing project success have developed to bring various factors into the picture, including the human aspects (Pinto & Slevin, 1988; Morris & Hough, 1987). Yet there is no universal framework to assess project success as projects differ essentially in size, uniqueness and complexity (Westerveld, 2003). On the other hand, people approach project

success from widely different perspectives based on their status within and benefits from a project (Lim & Mohamed, 1999).

In today's business environment, project-based work is viewed as the normal work form in many industries that execute numerous projects on a daily basis (Hodgson & Cicmil, 2006). A stream of project scholarship refers to this revolutionary movement as 'projectification of society' (Midler, 1995; Lundin & Soderholm, 1998), contending that more and more organisational members are gradually becoming known as *project workers* or *project managers* across sectors (Hodgson & Cicmil, 2006). Projects are nowadays used extensively for bringing balance to diverse interests, making effective use of resources, and developing new capabilities towards the achievement of strategic goals (Pellegrinelli, 2011).

As briefly mentioned at the outset, one of the topics to attract growing interest in project management practice has been programme and portfolio management (Morris, 2004). In fact, programmes have become an especially common mode of organising, as they are believed to link projects to the broader organisational strategies (Shao, 2018). This empirical study is also conducted in a programme team. Therefore, the following subsection elaborates further on programmes and the actual context in which the studied programme team was involved.

3.3.1 Programmes as a form of project-based work

Programmes are seen to have their origin in project management research (Artto et al., 2009). There has been a long-standing debate between advocates of a distinct programme management discipline (e.g. Thiry, 2002, Pellegrinelli, 1997) and those questioning the uniqueness of programme features in comparison to projects (e.g. P2M, 2008). Pellegrinelli and colleagues (2011) argue that although projects and

programmes are both parts of a purposeful change, the two have qualitative differences. Studies especially emphasise the strategic orientation of programmes in comparison to projects (Artto et al., 2009).

A common definition of programmes is the one proposed by Turner (2009a), referring to the term as a cluster of projects that contribute to a higher-order objective. More specifically, Pellegrinelli's (1997) pioneering work provides six major distinctions between projects and programmes. A comparative bibliometric study of programmes versus projects by Artto and colleagues (2009) also concludes a number of major characteristics that distinguish programmes from projects. Table 2 gives a summary of these differences based on the above studies.

Characteristic	Programmes	Projects
Basic structure/theme	An organising framework for several themes.	A process for delivering a specific outcome e.g. product development.
Duration	Duration might be indefinite.	Duration is always fixed.
Outcomes	Broad and fuzzy set of impacts that evolve over time.	Concrete and set objectives.
Focus	Long-term implications.	Short-term outputs.
Deliverables	Strategic extra-project objectives.	Delivery of an asset or change.
Role of programme manager	Facilitating the interactions of several managers.	A single point responsibility for project success.

Table 2: The key differences between programmes and projects. Table developed based on Pellegrinelli (1997) and Artto et al., (2009)

Pellegrinelli (1997) also makes distinctions between three archetypal forms of programmes. *Portfolio* programmes represent a group of relatively independent projects aiming to exploit a common theme (e.g. knowledge, resources, skills, etc). These programmes are mainly concerned with the process of managing projects through an efficient use of resources or leveraging the existing knowledge or skills. *Goal-oriented* programmes represent the one-time initiatives outside the routine

operating systems. Pellegrinelli (1997) states that goal-oriented programmes are usually used to initiate one-off change initiatives where neither an exact implementation process nor the final outcomes are definitively known in advance. Finally, *heartbeat* programmes aim to achieve an incremental improvement to existing systems, procedures, or infrastructures. These programmes consist of enhancing existing practices while sustaining operations (Miterev et al., 2016).

With regard to their pattern of activities, programmes are believed to go through five distinctive phases (Pellegrinelli, 1997). The first phase, *initiation*, involves determining the benefits that the programme is expected to achieve. In this phase, the programme team is formed and the programme manager is selected. In the next stage, *definition and planning*, the programme plan, including the objectives, are developed. Moreover, in this phase responsibilities are allocated to each programme team member. The third stage refers to *project delivery* when the projects (as units of delivery for the overall programme) are delivered, with the programme team monitoring progress and identifying possible new requirements.

While the projects are delivering their objectives, the programme moves on to a renewal state. As the fourth phase, *renewal* involves two levels: first, work is proposed for the fiscal year with funding agreed to ensure that the programme will continue to run. Second, the programme is reviewed to address the necessary change and adjustments in order to achieve the desired benefits. In other words, renewal involves the decision whether to continue the programme or not. If the decision is for the programme to cease, it moves on to the *dissolution* phase, where the uncompleted work is reallocated to other programmes and the programme team is dissolved. Overall, it is expected that programmes generally have a less linear life cycle compared to projects,

as they go through several ‘spirals’ and ‘loops’ once they are initiated (Pellegrinelli, 1997).

The non-linearity of programmes can also vary in different cases. In programmes (and also in projects) that belong to the ‘soft’ category, the changing and emergent nature can be potentially more dominant. In this regard, Crawford and Pollak (2004) have developed a framework to assess the ‘hardness’ and ‘softness’ of projects and programmes. According to this framework, hard and soft projects and programmes can be distinguished based on seven characteristics (Table 3). These are: 1) goal clarity, 2) goal tangibility, 3) success measures, 4) project permeability, 5) number of solution options, 6) participation and practitioner role, and 7) stakeholder expectations.

Hard vs soft dimension	Description
Goal clarity	The degree to which objectives are clearly defined.
Goal tangibility	The degree to which objectives are tangible.
Success measures	The measures used to judge project success.
Project permeability	The degree to which a project can be affected by external sources.
Number of solution options	The degree to which the project approach is predefined or is open to exploration.
Participation and practitioner role	The degree to which team members can participate in the overall management of project.
Stakeholder expectations	The degree to which the stakeholders value technical performance and efficiency vs relationships and negotiations.

Table 3: Characteristics of hardness/softness for projects and programmes. Developed based on Crawford & Pollak (2004)

Considering the rather non-linear life cycle of programmes, programme work is subject to continual shift in priorities and desired outcomes, which make programmes essentially ‘soft’ in nature (Pellegrinelli, 2011). To appreciate this emergent aspect, it is considered to be more fruitful to adopt a ‘becoming’ perspective to study programmes and projects as their constituting units (ibid.). The following section

elaborates further on this ‘becoming’ view of project-based work as a major theme of debate in critical project studies.

3.3.2 Towards a critical understanding of project-based work

Projects have been traditionally viewed as tools, designed to achieve an end. What the ‘project as a tool’ perspective neglects is the very fact that projects are subject to the same sorts of dysfunctions as most organisations (Packendorff, 1995). This dominant view of projects has resulted in development of mainstream PM practices with an extensive scholarly literature of technical and prescriptive solutions (Hodgson & Cicmil, 2006). The strong focus on project efficiency has led to the production of endless tools, models and checklists to achieve perfection (Packendorff, 1995). What remains neglected is the very heart of project work: project teams and their everyday practices and experience (Nocker, 2006).

Alternatively, critical project studies suggest that projects should be approached in terms of cultures, conceptions, and longitudinal processes, and that they should be researched as ‘temporary organisations’ (Packendorff, 1995: 326). The ‘project as temporary organisation’ approach values research on human interactions within the project (ibid.). From this perspective, project work shifts from the linear stages of ‘plan, control, and evaluation’ into a continuing circle of ‘expectation, action, and learning’ (ibid.: 328). Therefore, researching projects as temporary organisations requires an ontological shift from ‘being’ into ‘becoming’ (Lineham & Kavanagh, 2006).

The ‘being’ ontology casts projects as discrete entities within given boundaries (Chia, 1995). It privileges the objectified view of projects and views the project manager as working on this objective reality (Pellegrinelli, 2011). In contrast, the ‘becoming’ ontology is interested in the social processes that initiate and sustain a project; the

sense-making processes that shape understanding and action (ibid.). In short, the ‘becoming’ view of projects gives primacy to change rather than stability and favours praxis over artefacts (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002).

On the ‘becoming’ ontology of projects, Cicmil and Marshall (2005) suggest that neither facts (e.g. plans, documents) nor the very nature of the project remain static, but are subject to continual change. This emergent nature is best exemplified in their research, where they show how the ‘truth’ of the situation develops for project participants over time (ibid.). Therefore, to understand the ‘actuality’ of projects, the first step is to make a theoretical shift from a normative approach to a more developmental perspective where projects are not seen as ‘given’ but are believed to be co-constituted through the actions of interdependent actors (Cicmil et al., 2006).

This thesis takes a shift from the traditional project management approaches to explore the human side of it. The ‘becoming’ view of projects and programmes is especially a suitable foundation to capture the ‘lived experience’ of project-based work and its emotional dimension. The ‘becoming’ ontology is also aligned with the dynamic nature of emotions previously discussed. Having explained this, the following section gives an overview of cross-sector partnerships as the actual context in which the studied programme was positioned.

3.3.3 Projects and programmes in cross-sector partnerships

This thesis explores the unfolding of emotions in a team working on a partnership-led programme. According to Lasker and colleagues (2001: 180), partnerships are becoming popular modes of collaboration, as they enable different people and organisations to support each other by ‘leveraging, combining and capitalizing on their complementary strengths and capabilities.’ In this sense, cross-sector social

partnerships (CSSPs) are usually formed to address complex social issues such as community development (Babiak & Thibault, 2007). Waddock defines social partnerships as inherently cross-sectoral:

[It is] the voluntary collaborative efforts of actors from organisations in two or more economic sectors in a forum in which they cooperatively attempt to solve a problem or issue of mutual concern that is in some way identified with a public policy agenda item.

(Waddock, 1991: 481–2)

In other words, a CSSP is formed when organisations from more than one sector collaborate to address a mutually prioritised social problem (Parmigiani & Rivera-Santos, 2011). Examples include: economic or educational development, healthcare, environmental sustainability, poverty alleviation, or community capacity building (Selsky & Parker, 2005). CSSPs can differ in size, scope, and purpose. They range from dyads to multi-stakeholder arrangements, short- to long-term time frames, and voluntary to fully mandated ones (Selsky & Parker, 2005; Clarke & McDonald, 2016). CSSPs can form in four ‘arenas’: business–non-profit, business–government, government–non-profit, and trisector (Selsky & Parker, 2005).

These partnerships are particularly important for the third sector, which is also referred to by other names such as the voluntary sector, the non-profit sector, the social economy, civil society, or voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) (Brandsen & Pestoff, 2006). Linden (2002) notes that partnerships for VCOs are growing in number as they agree to offer their social assets in exchange of training, technology, and funds from the state. Over the past three decades, the relationship between VCOs and local government has become more important in delivery of public services to local communities in the UK (Osborne & McLaughlin, 2004). For local governments,

partnership with VCOs provides access to the community experience and views, particularly to those of the disadvantaged parts. For VCOs, on the other hand, these partnerships offer a valuable source of funding from the government.

Yet project-based partnership between VCOs and the voluntary sector also presents considerable risks of its own kind. Inter-organisational alliances can come with potential institutional costs such as mission drift, loss of each organisation's autonomy, and greater difficulty in evaluating the results of the project (Gazley & Brudney, 2007). Moreover, establishing a true cooperation is itself a goal that is not always easily achieved (*ibid.*). Tension in such partnerships is often evident when state values are forced onto communities (Mirabella & Wish, 2001) or when the VCO sector maintains a confrontational rhetoric towards the state as a result of anxieties over loss of identity (Farrington et al., 1993). Power disparity between the non-profit organisation and the state can indeed bring the nature of the partnership into question (Selsky & Parker, 2005).

Although the focus of this thesis is not the collaboration processes within partnerships, they are still believed to be important as the context in shaping the experience of the programme team in question. Having noted this, the following section provides an overview of (project) programme teams by highlighting the main themes of debate in the team literature that are relevant to this thesis. Finally, group emotions and emotional sharing processes will be defined and explained further.

3.4 (PROJECT) PROGRAMME TEAMS AND EMOTIONS

Successful project completion is contingent on people working together effectively as a project team (Kloppenborg & Petrick, 1999). A team is traditionally defined as a bounded and stable group of individuals who work interdependently to achieve a

common purpose (Hackman, 1987). Having turned into a popular organisational form, project teams are set to take coordinated actions towards the accomplishment of a non-routine goal (Rickards & Moger, 2000). Predominantly, project teams are found in areas of R&D, design, innovation, and quality assurance (ibid.). It is believed that project teams form a relatively simple group to study by having a precisely defined task focus, identifiable allocated resources, and a relatively stable leadership and membership (ibid.).

The importance of team building is widely acknowledged in projects. It is accepted that even the best plans can be sabotaged with a poorly developed team (Thomas et al., 2008). Team building is especially regarded as an ongoing process in project-based work as people join and leave the team to fulfil the needs of the project at each stage (ibid.). Various models have been proposed on team building and development stages (e.g. Spitz & Sadock, 1973; Lacoursiere, 1974; Dunphy, 1968), with the best known being Tuckman's (1965) four-stage model of *forming*, *storming*, *norming*, and *performing*. Tuckman and Jensen (1977) later added a fifth stage to their model, called *adjourning*. Table 4 provides a description of these five stages.

Stage	Description
Forming	In this stage, the task is identified, rules are established, and the boundaries for task and interpersonal behaviour are tested.
Storming	This phase is characterised by interpersonal conflict, where team members resist the formation of a group structure.
Norming	Group cohesion is achieved at this stage. The group becomes an entity, with members having in-group feeling for one another. At this stage, task conflicts are avoided in favour of harmony.
Performing	At this stage, the group develops 'functional role relatedness'. Members take on roles that enhances task performance.
Adjourning	This stage was added later to address the separation of the group members as the work terminates. The group is disbanded at this phase.

Table 4: Tuckman's team development stages. Developed based on Tuckman (1965), Tuckman & Jensen (1977), and Bonebright (2010)

Despite its prominence, Tuckman's stage model has been subject to much criticism. In her qualitative analysis of group development literature from the three disciplines of management, education, and therapy, Cassidy (2007) found that themes such as individual concerns, conflict, and work goals do not belong to a single stage but are permanently present in group life. She also argues that Tuckman's storming stage may not always be an actual stage separate from the others. Moreover, scholars have questioned whether such stage models address the mechanisms for change over the group's life (Bonebright, 2010).

In particular regard to project-based work, Chiochio and Essiembre's (2009) study shows that cohesion is of crucial importance for teams in these settings compared to production and service teams. Conceptually, *group cohesion* is defined within three dimensions: social cohesion, task cohesion, and group pride (Mullen & Copper, 1994). *Social cohesion* refers to the emotional bonds between the group members and their shared attraction to the group. *Task cohesion*, on the other hand, addresses the team's commitment and coordinated effort towards the work goal (ibid.). *Group pride* has mainly been a subject of study for sports teams (Chiochio & Essiembre, 2009).

Social and task cohesion in teams fall into the two broad categories of task and maintenance functions (Bales, 1958; Ancona & Caldwell, 1988). Task functions include factors that contribute to the accomplishment of a group task. Examples of task behaviours are information sharing, role and goal clarification, and evaluation (Benne & Sheats, 1948). Maintenance functions are factors that contribute to the maintenance of the group. Examples are harmonising, encouraging, and relieving tension (ibid.). More concisely, early research on teams identified that emotional components play a crucial role in team dynamics (Bales, 1950). However, with regard to project-based work, the empirical literature on teams has been extended in favour of the task

component, paying relatively less attention to the maintenance functions, such as a team's emotions (Lindgren et al., 2014).

Team or group emotion is defined by Barsade and Gibson (1998) as a joint product of the 'bottom-up' components (i.e. affective compositional effects) and the 'top-down' factors (i.e. affective context). Group emotion is believed to result from the combination of both individual-level factors that each group member possesses and the group/contextual-level factors (Kelly & Barsade, 2001). More extensively, the top-down perspective suggests that collective norms within a group or organisation form the type of emotions that are allowed to be expressed in that group context (Kelly & Barsade, 2001; Barsade & Gibson, 2007; 1998). Grounded on this perspective, there exists a wealth of research on emotion norms and emotional labour (e.g. Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989). The 'bottom-up' approach, on the other hand, views group emotions as a composition of the various affective states of each individual in the group (Barsade & Gibson, 2007; 1998). Kelly and Barsade (2001) propose that individual-level emotions combine together through emotional sharing processes and form the group-level emotions.

The concept of group emotions is especially important for this thesis, as one aim is to understand emotions at the collective level. Having noted this, the following section provides a discussion of this chapter and concludes the frame within which the empirical study will be conducted.

3.5 DISCUSSION

This chapter showed the development of the conceptual framework for this thesis. Accordingly, the thesis will adopt a relationally responsive approach to exploring emotions. Informed by the work of Cunliffe (2008), a relational view aims to reach an

intersubjective and dialectical understanding of human experience as it is embodied and shaped through dialogue. In the same vein, this thesis frames emotions as relational phenomena that emerge in the web of relationships in a team, through dialogues and ‘in-between’ conflicting perspectives. Emotions will be especially explored in the sense-making accounts of the team members in their ongoing interactions.

Since sense-making is essentially grounded on identity construction (Weick, 1995), the thesis also explores emotions as team members engage in processes of identity work. The concept of identity work is especially chosen as it gives the chance to look at identity construction as a process (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003), and is therefore ontologically in line with this thesis’ view of social realities as dynamic phenomena. Aside from the sense-making aspect, which is essentially a cognitive process, the relational approach also acknowledges that individuals and their emotional experience are embodied in the first place and are not always products of values and attitudes (Sturdy, 2003). Hence, the thesis also focuses on emerging body languages, laughs, cries, sighs, and vocal outbursts as a key constituent of emotional experience.

As the second part of the chapter showed, this thesis will study emotions as they emerge in a team (hereafter referred to as the programme team) involved in a regional partnership-led programme. It will be further explained in chapter five that the studied programme included a redesign of services to a local community over a ten-year time frame. Since the initiative proposed an incremental improvement to existing services while still sustaining operations, the programme is considered as a *heartbeat* type (Pellegrinelli, 1997; Miterev et al., 2016). Also, the novelty and intangibility of the programme objectives, as well as the myriad partnering organisations within the CSSP, positioned the programme towards the ‘soft’ end of the hard/soft spectrum (Crawford & Pollak, 2004).

It is worth noting that this empirical study corresponds with a fifteen-month work period during the planning stage of the programme, which is not to be confused with the whole planning phase or the overall programme life cycle. The following chapter explains the methodological lens through which the empirical study was conducted.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the methodological approach adopted in this thesis. Providing the methodological details is especially important for qualitative inquiries, where terms such as ‘rigour’ are replaced with ‘trustworthiness’ (Lincoln, 1995). In this way, it is hoped that a thorough and detailed coverage of the methodological steps undertaken will help the reader develop a fair judgement of the trustworthiness of the research process and the resulting findings.

The chapter first gives an overview of the need to study emotions qualitatively as the approach that has been less dominant in emotion research. Next, after outlining the complexities involved in studying emotions, the chapter explains ethnographic case study design as an appropriate means to deal with the outlined complexities. The process of gaining and maintaining access to the field is further explained, in addition to some of my personal ‘emotional encounters’ (Brannan, 2011) during the fieldwork. The adopted research techniques are also presented in details. These include: observations, interviews, weekly diaries, and field documents. The chapter further shifts into the methods used in interpreting the data. The use of two analysis methods – thematic analysis (TA) and interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) – will be justified and explained as undertaken step by step. Finally, the chapter presents a detailed discussion of quality criteria and provides evidence for quality in this research.

4.1 AN INTERPRETIVIST PHILOSOPHY

This research is founded on the interpretivist philosophy, aiming to understand the ‘culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world’ (Crotty, 2015: 67). As its core ontological assumption, the thesis views emotions as

intersubjective realities that are relationally embedded in interactions between people in moments of time and space (Cunliffe, 2011). Hence, the aim is to understand emotions as they emerge from situated dialogue and interactions between participants (ibid.). Epistemologically, this research draws on relational social constructionism (Cunliffe, 2008), whereby meaning is believed to be produced and embodied dialectically in the back-and-forth struggle between people. Having noted these underlying assumptions, the following section proceeds to the explanation of the research methodology adopted in this thesis.

4.2 A QUALITATIVE STUDY

In our haste to measure and quantify, we researchers have sometimes sanitized the emotional messiness of working life.

(Waldron, 2000: 64)

While studying emotions has been a matter of sustained interest over the past decades, the socially constructed nature of emotions yet remains an area to explore further (Domagalski, 1999; Coupland et al., 2008). The abundance of quantitative research in emotion literature has resulted in the favouring of one form of emotion knowledge (e.g. statistical trends) and the silencing of others (e.g. interpersonal dynamics) (Fineman, 2004; Sturdy, 2003). As discussed in the previous chapters, this thesis aims at understanding emotions as dynamic phenomena rather than fixed and given states. What we feel is always believed to be fluid (Fineman, 2004). Moreover, this study especially frames emotions as relationally constructed phenomena within a web of social relationships, which themselves are subject to continual change. Therefore, to reflect the ontological and epistemological assumptions explained in previous chapters, this thesis relies on a qualitative methodology to explore human emotions as they are intersubjectively lived and made sense of.

The choice of a qualitative methodology is indeed one of the aspects that it is hoped will distinguish this inquiry from the mainstream emotion studies. In addition, the expanding literature on critical project studies suggests that emotions in project life are indeed a crucial area in need of more *in-depth* research (Cicmil et al., 2006; Winter et al., 2006; Hodgson & Cicmil, 2007; Lindgren and Packendorff, 2006). At the programme level, little attention has been given to the role of emotional intelligence for programme managers (Shao & Müller, 2011; Shao, 2018) while team members' emotions have been largely overlooked. The exploratory nature of qualitative inquiry can aptly capture the *actual* behaviour of team members to understand how they typically experience their work environment. In particular, this thesis takes an ethnographic approach, aiming to produce rich and multidimensional insights into the experience of emotions in complex programme environments. The following section elaborates further on the rationale behind choosing ethnography as the specific qualitative approach that can deal with the complexities of studying emotions.

4.3 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDYING EMOTIONS: PEARLS OF AN ETHNOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY

Emotions are messy (Fineman, 2004; Hadley, 2014) and so is researching them (Ashkanasy et al., 2002). The complex nature of human emotions has long challenged the conventional modes of analysis (Höpfl & Linstead, 1997; Samra-Fredericks; 2004). To begin with, emotions are difficult to access, not merely for the researcher but at times for the researched themselves. Emotions can be 'beyond (but also part of) reason and consciousness' (Sturdy, 2003: 86). At another level, emotions are broadly considered to belong to the private realm and are therefore regarded as 'the unknowable' (ibid.). There are differing degrees of sensitivity around emotions. One

might prefer suppression over expression, whereas another might engage in other forms of emotional labour.

Especially when painful, emotions are protectively concealed (Fineman, 2004). In this regard, ethnography is suggested as the approach to make emotions 'knowable' (Sturdy, 2003; Samra-Fredericks; 2004). In this thesis, choosing ethnography as the research approach proved especially valuable in gradually 'earning' the authentic display of emotions. On the one hand, the longitudinal nature of ethnography helped in forming a trustful relationship between me and the research participants over time. On the other, ethnography helped in seizing emotive situations *in situ* where emotions leaked out not only via language but through embodiment (Manzoor, 2012).

Embodiment is itself another complication of exploring emotions (Sturdy, 2003). Emotions are as much about verbal communication as they are about gestures, body language and facial expressions (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012). Similarly, as discussed in the previous chapter, emotions are not always a matter of conscious sense-making processes but at times merely exist in the experiential immediacy of our bodies. To capture the non-verbal aspect of emotions, ethnography helped through intensive face-to-face engagement with the participants. Less engaging approaches might fail to capture the non-verbal expression of emotions such as body language, cries, laughs, sighs, and vocal outbursts.

Another complexity of studying emotions stems from their dynamic and interactive nature (Ellis, 1991). This dynamism cannot not be addressed through one-off surveys, single interviews, or other conventional research approaches. In fact, researching shifting and volatile processes, such as emotions, demands methods that are more than predicting how they will play out in the same way (Godbold, 2015). The dynamism

and temporality of emotions is best appreciated when one spends time in the settings in which emotions emerge (Manzoor, 2012). Therefore, ethnography is suggested as the means to capture the processual nature of emotions through observation of interactions over time (Sturdy, 2003; Fineman, 2004).

Seen from another perspective, emotions are also complex as they rarely consist of one single feeling. Instead, they are often mixed and ambivalent (Fineman, 2004). One might have contradictory feelings at the same time towards the same situation. In the same vein, in the following chapters the thesis will particularly highlight the programme team's ambivalence towards certain programme situations. In this sense, no other research approach would have truly captured the multifacetedness of emotions as they emerged at the team level.

Ethnography, as initially expected and ultimately proved, was the best-suited lens through which to address the research questions in this study. During the fieldwork period, several 'revelatory moments' (Trigger et al., 2012) arose that opened new insights into contextual aspects that had not been otherwise communicated to me as an 'outsider'. Gaining such insights into the 'reality' of the field that I was studying wouldn't have been achieved without lengthy immersion and engagement, as the cornerstone of ethnography. Having noted the merits of ethnography in addressing the complications of studying emotions, the following subsection gives an overview of this research approach.

4.2.1 Ethnography

Often interchanged with labels such as 'qualitative enquiry', 'fieldwork', 'case study', and 'interpretive method', ethnography is distinctively defined as:

The study of people in naturally occurring settings or ‘fields’ by methods of data collection which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner but without meaning being imposed on them externally.

(Brewer, 2000: 10)

The term ethnography originated in the nineteenth century, when Western anthropologists adopted the method to provide a descriptive account of often non-Western communities (Schwartzman, 1993). Ethnography, therefore, was traditionally viewed as both contrasting with and complementary to ethnology, as the ‘historical and comparative analysis of non-Western societies and cultures’ (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007: 1). During the twentieth century, anthropological ethnography entered Western sociology. A celebrated example is the work of the Chicago school, using observation as a method of exploring groups within the industrial society of the United States in the 1920s and 1930s (Brewer, 2000; Schwartzman, 1993).

With their emphasis on ‘naturally occurring settings’, different scholars label ethnography differently. Malinowski (1922) views it as a method of understanding the ‘native’s viewpoint’. Schwartzman (1993) regards ethnography as the study of culture from ‘inside out’. Geertz (1973) describes it as a way of generating *thick* descriptions through prolonged interactions between the researcher and the researched. Hammersley (1992) outlines the main features of ethnographic research as follows: 1) people’s behaviour is studied in everyday life rather than unnatural circumstances; 2) various data collection techniques, predominantly observation, are adopted; 3) to avoid pre-fixed arrangements and impositions on participants, data collection is quite flexible and unstructured; 4) the focus is typically either on a few small-scale groups or most

probably a single case; and 5) data analysis includes the attribution of the meanings of human actions.

As explained, ethnography does not prescribe sequential stages (Brewer, 2000), which is especially important when unpredictable human emotions are to be explored. The flexible nature of ethnography allows the possibility of capturing emotions as they emerge over time in relation to the context they are lived in. Ethnography is thus the research approach equipped enough to address the processual nature of emotions, as they emerge in social interactions over time (Fineman & Sturdy, 1999). Also, as the researcher is meant to 'immerse' him/herself in the field, s/he also gains insights into the historical development of the context under study (Riain, 2009). In this sense, ethnography gives the opportunity to precisely relate the microprocesses to the macrostructures (Falzon, 2009).

4.2.2 Case study

Case studies are considered as most suitable when the context of the research is crucially important (Saunders et al., 2012). The case study method is mainly practiced when the researcher aims at gaining a deep and holistic grasp of real-life events (Yin, 2009). More specifically, when it comes to 'how' and 'why' questions, case studies are best suited to the nature of the research, where conducting surveys or examining archival records are less likely to generate the desired outcomes (ibid.). Hartley (2004) regards the case study approach as especially useful when the researcher aims at exploring the social and organisational processes as well as the emergence of new ones.

Although all case studies are not necessarily qualitative, all ethnographic research involves case study (Brewer, 2000). Ethnographic case studies are particularly helpful as they enable the researcher to study the phenomena in their natural settings through

direct involvement and participation, which further results in the generation of rich data. Collecting such rich data is a resource-demanding process both time- and cost-wise, therefore it is not often possible for ethnographers to devote themselves to more than one or two fields (ibid.): ‘the more settings studied, the less time can be spent in each,’ (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007: 31).

On the other hand, one must consider the practicalities of gaining access to more than one case. As the prerequisite of conducting research (Burgess, 1984), negotiating access can be a demanding process in any fieldwork research (Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016). This can differ from study to study, depending on the research phenomena under question. In this thesis, having emotions as a sensitive topic proved to complicate the negotiation process. The following section gives a detailed overview of how access was negotiated and further maintained in this study.

4.4 ACCESS TO THE FIELD

Securing access for this thesis was not an easy task. I approached three organisations both formally and informally through personal and university contacts. The very idea of my ‘being there in the organisation’ did not seem to appeal to any of the project teams I approached. Instead, collaboration was promised in case I had questionnaires to be filled. Coupled with having emotions as the research interest – which inevitably brought assumptions of studying workers’ mental health – my choice of ethnography as the research approach brought more complications to the negotiation process. The first two ‘trial and errors’ helped me as a novice ethnographer learn the diplomacy of negotiation, which ultimately helped in securing access to the ‘right’ field.

On choosing the ‘right’ field site, Burgess (1984) outlines five major criteria: 1) simplicity (i.e. the site granting the possibility of moving to its sub-sites), 2)

accessibility (i.e. the site granting the permission of access and entry), 3) unobtrusiveness (i.e. the site in which the researcher could keep a low-profile), 4) permissibility (i.e. the site where research is permissible), and 5) participation (i.e. the site granting the possibility of the researcher's presence in the ongoing activities). In light of these criteria, the fit between my field and my research interests was initially 'sensed' when I finally approached the third organisation. In practice, however, it took months to fulfil the above criteria while constantly negotiating and renegotiating access during the fieldwork.

4.3.1 Negotiating access

The final team I negotiated access with was introduced to me through a peer colleague. I initially contacted one of the team managers, who instantly told me that I had 'come to the right organisation as they are very research-friendly,' (Business manager, first phone conversation). Feeling confident again after two failed negotiations elsewhere, I then emailed her some introductory information about my research. This included a letter to potential participants on the study's overall objectives, a confidentiality agreement, and a sample of the consent form that they would be required to sign prior to the interviews and observations (see appendices A and B). Two weeks later, I was asked to meet the team in person for a discussion and presentation of my research objectives.

In my two previous trials, I had presented my research as 'the study of emotions in project work'. In this third attempt, I briefly introduced my research as an endeavour to better understand 'the human side of project work'. Even then, I tried to remain cautious in my wording throughout the meeting. I had learnt that, despite showing interest in a study which focused on the emotional aspects of workplace, people did not

necessarily find it easy to be the subject of such studies. Nevertheless, I was proved wrong as one team manager instantly asked:

Why don't you especially look at our emotions? You know, I think the emotional side of this project is huge ... I mean I've been on a journey!

(Senior manager, introductory meeting with the programme team, January 2016)

During the meeting, I also realised that the team, and particularly the director, were concerned with confidentiality issues. The programme director especially emphasised that they would have to consider the potential consequences of participation in a study that could highlight 'private' team dynamics. The team also included a researcher who had several questions about my research methodology and the interpretation methods I would later utilise.

Although that meeting ended on a positive note, a week later I was told that two of the members were reluctant to be observed in team meetings. I was worried again, as I knew this could result in having to take observations 'off the table'. In response, I requested one-to-one conversations with the two members to assure them that I would not cause distractions in their meetings. I hoped I could win their trust by explaining my aims further. In this sense, Brewer (2000) argues that gaining access is a process requiring constant negotiations and renegotiations; it demands compromises that he regards as 'research bargains'. I was also bargaining with my participants to let me into their circle.

Eventually the two members agreed to be observed and I was given a date in late January 2016 to attend the programme's stakeholders meeting. From then onwards, I was also included in the team's internal address book and was invited to my first team meeting two weeks after observing the stakeholders for the first time. Yet, for several

months to come, I would still need to strive not just to maintain access but to be trusted enough to get what I was there for: emotions.

4.3.2 Maintaining access: tales of doubt, fear, and guilt

Gaining access is not a one-off activity but an ongoing debate. Regardless of the participants' view of social research, Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) argue that participants constantly try to verify the extent to which the ethnographer can be trusted, manipulated, or even exploited. This is where the importance of Goffman's 'personal front' comes to the fore. The ethnographer's expertise in 'impression management' is believed to play a major role where identities have to be created and established in the field. It is important to find a neutral ground where it is possible to have some 'mundane small talk' rather than be constantly 'pumping the host' about matters related to the research interests (ibid.). In maintaining this 'neutral ground', I had several 'emotional encounters' (Brannan, 2011) throughout the period of my fieldwork. The following tales highlight three of them.

4.3.2.1 Tale one: the first revelatory moment

The fieldwork started with an observation of a stakeholders' meeting, of which I did not understand a word. The second observation, which was an internal programme team meeting, was not any better in terms of understanding the content of discussions. Yet this meeting observation helped in capturing some team dynamics between members as they were interacting. I then had a round of interviews with all team members, where they would briefly explain their professional background, their current role within the team, and their general views on the dynamics of collaboration between team members. Some would talk more about stakeholders' disengagement in the programme, whereas

other members would particularly elaborate on how complex the programme was with its broad objectives.

After the first round of interviews with all team members, scheduling more proved difficult, as team members all had very busy diaries. On the other hand, as the team was based in a local government building with rather high security, every time I was there I had to be accompanied by either a guard or one of the team members. As noted in the fieldwork literature, constant controls and barriers are highly likely to be imposed throughout the fieldwork, the situation referred to by Hornsby-Smith (1993) as ‘closed’ access.

Aside from the lack of participation, I started to doubt the ‘rightness’ of my field as I was not getting the data I had hoped for. No major emotions had surfaced during the initial interviews and observations. Being promised an emotionally charged team during my access negotiations had raised false hopes in me. At this stage, I was genuinely worried that I would end up with no data to interpret.

Disappointed with my field, I attended another team meeting, where I met a newly joined interim manager. At the time of that meeting, she had been in post for only three days. In a ‘burst’ of opportunistic impulse, I asked her for an informal chat immediately after the meeting. In retrospect, I am glad I asked and I am even more glad that she agreed to have a conversation, despite her extremely busy schedule that day, because when explaining the programme conditions and the reason she was recruited, she suddenly said:

I’ve been brought in as a six-month interim contract to bring in some project discipline and professionalism and to drive delivery **because the funder has**

threatened to pull the funding because of the lack of delivery, are you aware of that?

(Interim manager, interview no. 1)

To hide my surprise, I nodded, immediately saying I was aware while I did not even have the slightest of clues. The programme I had been studying for nearly four months was in a crisis stage and the team had not given me a hint, neither during the meetings nor throughout the individual interviews. This new manager further explained how she had been dealing with team members literally crying in her office due to the programme situation. Either she was new in post and therefore was not 'in sync' with other team members on what to share with me and what not to, or she genuinely did not care. That fifteen-minute chat was filled with several revelatory moments (Trigger et al., 2012) for me. As promised initially, this was an emotionally charged team. I as the researcher however was not meant to access the emotions ...

4.3.2.2 Tale two: trusted or tested?

As the fieldwork went on, I gradually 'settled' into the team. One day, on my arrival for a scheduled interview, I heard the director's personal assistant telling others, 'Oh, she [referring to me] is a regular now.' The very same day, I left the field hearing 'see you tomorrow' rather than a simple goodbye. I also gradually felt I was becoming more than just 'a fly in the room'. I started to feel more confident, especially after the change of programme director. After all, I had been studying this programme team for months before the change took place and knew the history of this team and the programme more than the new team members would.

Yet I still had several encounters which felt out of my control (Gilmore & Kenny, 2014). These were particularly those moments when the interviews took an unexpected turn. For instance, during the third interview with the new programme director, she

suddenly asked my opinion about the performance of a team member, who also happened to be my initial gatekeeper in the field. I downplayed my views, saying, ‘I’m too much of an outsider to be able to properly comment on someone’s performance.’ As the director insisted on hearing my views, I started to feel a deep fear inside; my current gatekeeper was asking for my opinion about the performance of the previous one and all I was thinking in that moment was what to do if one of them stopped my fieldwork.

In another instance after the change of director, a team member told me she was extremely happy with the change and that I was the only person she could show this happiness to. She mentioned other team members were all so negative about the change that it had made it for her ‘difficult to celebrate openly’ (Strategy manager, interview no. 2). She then made me promise to keep her true feelings only between us.

Despite looking as if I was becoming gradually trusted in the field, such moments doubled my fear of losing access. Was I truly trusted or was it all a test to examine my duty of confidentiality? Similar to reflexive accounts of many ethnographers (Gilmore & Kenny, 2014), such encounters brought me an extraordinary level of fear and anxiety.

4.3.2.3 Tale three: guilty of being just a temporary researcher

My feelings of anxiety gradually alleviated as the fieldwork was close to end. Over the last months in the field, I started to feel genuine trust from the participants. There were particularly moments of praise, when team members occasionally told me how they valued the work I was doing. In a few instances, team members even called or emailed to inform me of the important incidents that had happened in my absence so that I remained updated. Despite raising feelings of satisfaction, such moments equally

brought me a sense of guilt; I could see that over time I had become a trusted member, with whom the participants could openly share their emotions. This made me feel guilty, especially when thinking of departure.

The sense of guilt increased further as I received an email from a team member, informing me of the programme partners' recruitment plan in the following month and that the team would like me to apply to officially work for them. In an interview after this email, this member elaborated that the team members felt they needed 'someone to talk to' on a part-time basis (Strategy manager, interview no. 4). Upon this suggestion, I was instantly pleased to see the sense of trust that had developed mutually between me and the team members. Yet I also felt my eventual exit from the field would mean a betrayal of this very trust.

Exit from the field is particularly regarded as an emotional process (Michailova et al., 2014) and I was especially concerned with the impact it would have on the team I had studied for fifteen months. Upon encounters such as the one explained above, I had to remind both myself and the participants that I was, and would *just* be, a researcher. Although I had become socially involved with the participants, I needed to remind them (and also myself) of the need to maintain a professional distance, which involved a mental detachment from the field (Anteby, 2013). I actively had to avoid the danger of 'going native'.

4.4 RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

The following section outlines the research techniques used in this thesis, including observations, interviews, diaries, and document analysis. Using a variety of methods addresses the four imperatives of social research outlined by Brewer (2000). These are: 1) asking people for their views, meanings, and construction; 2) asking them in a way

that they can respond in their own words; 3) asking them in depth in order to appreciate the taken-for-granted yet problematic and complex meanings; and 4) addressing the social context to give meaning to their constructions. Figure 1 gives an overview of the research techniques as well as the summary of the overall data collected over time. The ‘episodes’ and the incidents shown in the figure will be briefly explained later in this chapter and more elaborated on in chapter five (The context of the study) and chapter six (The collective experience of emotions). The research techniques are further explained.

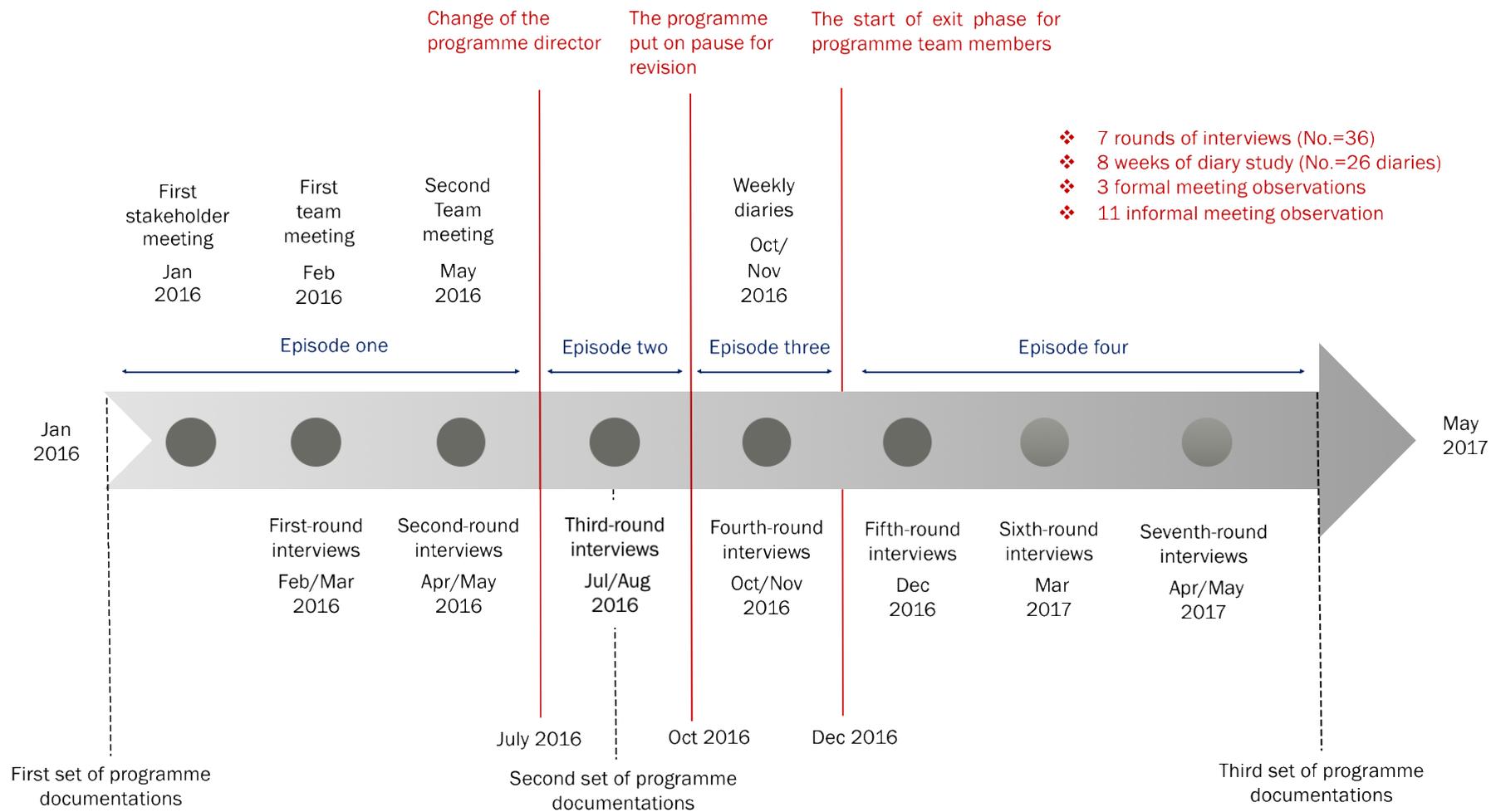


Figure 1: Summary of the research methods used during the fieldwork

4.4.1 Participant observation

Ethnographies are rooted in observation (Zickar & Carter, 2010). Observation refers to:

Data gathering by means of participation in everyday life of informants in their natural setting: watching, observing and talking to them in order to discover their interpretations, social meanings and activities.

(Brewer, 2000: 59)

Whether or not the researcher is familiar with the studied setting has implications for his/her role in the field. There is a blurred distinction between the various roles that an ethnographer can adopt in fieldwork. When studying an unfamiliar setting, Lofland (1971) describes the ethnographer as an 'acceptable incompetent'. Gold (1958) and Junker (1960) believe that the ethnographer's role lies somewhere between the *outsider*, *insider*, and *native* states. Brewer (2000) mandates a balance between the researcher's dual role as simultaneously both outsider and insider. The main danger is believed to lie in 'going native', when both the observation and later the analysis can be affected by the bias arising from 'over-rapport' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007).

Depending on the researcher's degree of familiarity with the field, as well as the newness of the role s/he takes, Brewer (2000) outlines the four main types of observation. *Pure participant observation* is when the researcher has no contact with the researched, meaning that he/she is 'complete observer' (Junker, 1960; Gold, 1958). By contrast, *pure observant participation* refers to the situation where the researcher is part of the community of the researched or a 'complete participant' (Brewer, 2000). Most ethnographies, however, involve a status between the two, i.e. the variation of participant observation or variation of observant participation. The researcher's adopted status in the field is also dependent on the purposes of the research and the

settings (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Typically, these field roles are not fixed, as the ethnographer's role in the field naturally shifts over time (Lofland, 1971).

During my fieldwork, I was invited to attend three formal meetings; one stakeholders' meeting and two programme team meetings. The stakeholders' meeting lasted an hour, while the first and second team meetings took two hours and one hour and 30 minutes respectively. In the sixth month of fieldwork, the programme director was unexpectedly replaced by an interim manager, who then removed the internal meetings from the team schedule. However, as the team meetings ceased, I gradually created the opportunity of 'being there' at the site to observe people in interaction. This included trying to arrive earlier for interviews or leaving later than expected, both of which gave me the chance to have several informal observations. It was also in between the scheduled interviews that I had the chance to participate in some of the team's informal meetings. In one instance, I was asked to wait for my next interview in the programme management office, which was just in the set-up phase at the time. This gave me the chance to assist the team members in action while I was waiting there for about twenty minutes (see appendix C for details about all the formal and informal observations).

As initially expected, taking notes was challenging during both formal and informal observations. During the formal meetings, I realised that taking notes would draw the team's attention to me and distract them from their conversations. Therefore, in most cases all I would note down was a 'key word' to later remind me of the dynamics in the meeting. For instance, once in a team meeting two members started to raise their voices and talk simultaneously for a few seconds; all I wrote down in that moment was, 'Susan and Sandra speaking.' I would not write any more in such situations, as I knew other team members sitting next to me would be curious to see what I was jotting down. I would then elaborate further on the 'key words' on my way back in the train.

During the informal observations, note-taking was not much possible either. Especially if the members were in the middle of an informal conversation, having me taking notes would make them uncomfortable and therefore take all the informality away. Instead, I had to postpone note-taking until the immediate moments after I left the site. In general, the insights I developed through each observation were too significant and at times too revelatory to be forgotten by the time I left the field. In case of the formal observations, listening to the audio-recorded meetings was a major help in remembering the dynamics I had noticed and writing further explanations around the 'key words' mentioned above.

4.4.2 Interviews

If observations are the researcher's account of the field, interviews serve as the first-hand accounts of the researched; they are integral to ethnography as they reveal reports of behaviour and feelings that are not always captured in observations (Brewer, 2000; Sturdy, 2003). Interviews were crucial in this study as the aim was to explore the actors' interpretation of the situation and the way they assigned meanings to it. Emotions are particularly better appreciated through what Sarbin (1986) calls 'narrative emplotments'. Moreover, when the formal team meetings were stopped by the new director, interviews came to serve as the major feasible technique to study emotions.

For participants to talk freely, a number of criteria have to be met. First and foremost, the more they trusted me as the interviewer, the more they would 'let it out'. This could, arguably, serve as another rationale for the use of observation prior to or in parallel with interviews, as the respondents are likely to gradually change their view of the researcher as a 'spy' (Manzoor, 2012). Second, one should bear in mind that interviews are commonly viewed as soliciting answers for 'social approval', a fact that typically

makes the interviewee's statements inconsistent with what they might actually do or believe (Brewer, 2000). This 'interviewer effect' is minimised through the use of un- or semi-structured interviews where the conversation starts informally and is then 'manipulated' towards the research interests (ibid.).

In this thesis, a topic guide was initially developed for semi-structured interviews (see appendix D). The aim was to give greater freedom to the interviewee, while remaining within the boundaries of research objectives. Such 'conversations with a purpose' (Burgess, 1984) are also more favourable in the sense that they are in more compliance with the ethnographer's central mission to explore within the 'naturally occurring settings' than an artificial one created by the interviewer (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

Having this in mind, a total of 36 interviews were conducted throughout the period of study. Interviews ranged from brief conversations prior to or after meetings (taking approximately fifteen to twenty minutes) to longer, scheduled ones (taking up to two hours). In some cases, team members were interviewed in different rounds. This was mostly viable for permanent members who remained in the team throughout the period of fieldwork. In the case of some interim members, repetition of interviews was not possible as they either worked part-time and had tightly scheduled diaries for their working hours or they simply left the programme soon after their first interview. Table 5 presents the number of interviews with each team member and the total number of interviews throughout the fieldwork period.

Team role	No. of interviews
Group manager	2
Business support manager	4
Research & service design	2
Programme director	1
Communication & marketing	5
Monitoring & evaluation	5
Business support apprentice	3
Finance assistant	3
(Interim) programme manager [replaced programme director]	4
(Interim) programme manager	1
(Interim) project manager	2
(Interim) executive assistant to director	2
(Interim) project support officer	1
(Interim) admin support	1
Total	36

Table 5: Overall number of interviews with each participant

Over the period of the study, I noticed that the boundaries between me and my interviewees were gradually changing (Cunliffe & Karunanayake, 2013). Conversations gradually became ‘ongoing negotiations of meaning rather than pure data collection’ (ibid.: 371). Kvale (1996) suggests six criteria to assess the quality of interviews (table 6) which were achieved over time in this research.

Quality criteria for an interview
The extent of spontaneous, rich, specific, and relevant answers from the interviewee.
The shorter the interviewer’s questions and the longer the subject’s answers, the better.
The degree to which the interviewer follows up and clarifies the meanings of the relevant aspects of the answers.
The ideal interview is to a large extent interpreted throughout the interview.
The interviewer attempts to verify his or her interpretations of the subject’s answers in the course of the interview.
The interview is ‘self-communicating’: it is a story contained in itself that hardly requires much extra descriptions and explanations.

Table 6: Quality criteria for interviews based on Kvale (1996)

In Kvale's criteria, I purposely started the interviews with an open-ended question to elicit a full range of affective events and emotions experienced in relation to them (Kiffin-Petersen et al., 2012). As a result, interviewees had the chance to freely elaborate on any matter that had emotionally impacted them at work. This would further lead to several interviews during which I was highly confided in through sharing moments of genuine anger, tears, and laughter. Especially as the team environment became more tense and emotional, team members found me as a reliable 'ear to open up to'. According to them, over time I had become 'insider' enough to know them well, while still 'outsider' enough to have the means to take advantage of their information.

4.4.3 Diaries

As mentioned earlier, changes in the field resulted in the omission of monthly team meetings. Although informal observations before and after interviews were full of insights into the informal dynamics, they were not sufficient in providing a view of the daily activities of the team members and their relational emotions. Therefore, diaries were introduced to the study to capture the team members' everyday feelings. Symon (2004: 98) suggests diaries are 'the way to capture the ongoing everyday behaviour at work in a relatively unobtrusive manner.' In line with Bolger and colleagues' (2003) review of diary methods, diaries were especially beneficial to this thesis for two reasons. First, they helped in capturing emotions in their natural, spontaneous context. Second, diaries helped by minimising the likelihood of retrospection, by significantly reducing the time elapsed between the experience and giving the account of it. Moreover, use of diaries in this thesis sparked several follow-up interviews, which although brief in duration were extremely rich in insight.

Time-based diaries were designed as the *ongoing* experience was at the focus (Bolger et al., 2003). Weekly intervals were selected as it required lesser degree of commitment from the participants, which itself increased the likelihood of more participation. Moreover, compared to daily diaries, weekly diaries allow for longer duration of study (Wood & Michaelides, 2016). Of all team members, six initially agreed to fill in diaries and eventually four members committed to it throughout the study period. In line with Radcliffe and Cassell's (2014) recommendation, I had a brief conversation with all team members explaining exactly what they were asked to include in their diaries.

As the study started, I sent out the diary template on Monday mornings, followed by a reminder on Friday afternoon for the filled diaries to be returned via email. Each week, participants were required to answer six open-ended questions. Questions were designed to cover the participants' weekly activities, the members they were working most closely with, and finally the emotional impact they had felt from those activities and collaborations (See appendix E for diary template).

The diary study covered a total period of eight weeks. As a data collection technique, I was later told by participants that they enjoyed the method, as it gave them the chance to regularly reflect on their activities, team relationships, and their overall work environment. Some informally mentioned that during the emotional days at work, filling diaries had been a relief.

4.4.4 Collecting documents

Documents are used to provide wider information about the field and help the researcher gain a basic understanding of it:

In the scrutiny of documentary sources, the ethnographer recognizes and builds on his or her socialized competence as a member of a literate culture. Not only

does the researcher read and write, but also he or she reflects on the very activities of reading and writing in social settings. Thus, such everyday activities are incorporated into the ethnographer's topics of inquiry as well as furnishing analytic and interpretative resources.

(Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007: 133)

In line with the above recommendation, I used documents to develop a basic knowledge of the broad programme context and its objectives. Moreover, the documents that I was given access to in the beginning of the study were more relevant to the programme outcomes than they were related to the programme team I was studying. Regardless, for confidentiality purposes I was explicitly asked to not use any of the documents when publishing the thesis.

Moreover, once I asked my gatekeeper and other team members for documents that are typically used in projects/programmes (e.g. Gantt chart, stakeholder map, or programme governance structure) they did not seem to be using any such documents. There was also no programme organisation chart in the beginning to map the lines of reporting. During this period, the documents most useful to me were the programme's outcomes framework and an annual service plan, both of which became obsolete over time.

I also regularly researched online to see if there was more about the programme in the public domain that would help me make better sense of the overall programme, its objective, and its stage at each given time. As the programme director changed, the team's working structure was also drastically transformed. The new director developed a detailed programme governance structure, to which I was given access but was again asked explicitly not to use it for publication. Yet the documents that I received in total did not much help in terms of my research interests. Instead, what the documents helped

with was to give me information on the formalities of the programme. This mostly gave me the ability to understand the content of discussions while observing or interviewing team members.

4.5 INTERPRETING THE DATA

Having elaborated on the techniques used for data collection, this section proceeds to the methods adopted in interpreting the gathered data. As explained in previous chapters, the thesis aims at understanding emotions in a programme at both team and individual levels. Therefore, two different methods of analysis were undertaken to interpret the data for each unit: 1) thematic analysis for interpreting emotions at the collective (team) level, and 2) interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) for understanding the individual experience of team members. Different data materials were also used for each level of interpretation; observations were used for understanding emotions at the collective level whereas diaries were mostly useful for interpreting the individual experience. The following sections provide a detailed overview of the steps of analysis undertaken for both methods. The sections will also provide the justification behind using two different methods of analysis rather than a single one.

4.5.1 Transcription of interviews and observations

Data analysis was started by transcription of audio-recorded data, defined as the process of ‘transforming talk into written text’ (Reissman, 2002: 249). Interviews and observations were all transcribed within 48 hours of being recorded. Immediate transcription of data was especially important to this study for two reasons. First, the non-verbal data (e.g. body language, facial expressions, or any incident during the interviews) were still ‘fresh’ in my mind and hence could be added as my reflections

to the margins of the transcription sheet. Second, immediate transcription of data helped me in modifying my interview topic guides for further rounds of interviews.

Bird (2005) regards transcription as a key step of the analysis process, which already requires the analyst's meaning-making in interpretation. In this sense, I transcribed the data verbatim, i.e. word by word. I also included the many pauses, silent moments, or other bodily movements that I had discreetly noted down during the interview. This in turn resulted in transcripts that were less coherent as a written text but could vividly picture *what* was said and *how* it was said as the emotional aspect of the talk was the main research interest. A transcript sample is shown in appendix F.

4.5.2 Identifying emotions in the text

During the fieldwork and later during the text analysis, I needed to label emotions as they had emerged over time. To do this, I had to rely on a list of emotion labels as a valid guide. The emotion literature suggests several classifications, broadly divided into the basic models of emotions (e.g. Ekman, 1973; Plutchik, 1962; Frijda, 1986; James, 1884; Izard, 1977) and the dimensional approaches (e.g. Russell, 1980; Mehrabian & Russell, 1974).

The proponents of the basic model argue for the existence of a few universal *basic emotions*, the variance or combination of which is believed to further result in *secondary emotions*. The dimensional approach, on the other hand, classifies emotions based on one or more dimensions such as *valence* and *arousal* (Russell, 1980) or the dimensions of *pleasure*, *arousal*, and *dominance* (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). The *basic approach* views emotions lodged in human physiology, while the *dimensional approach* proposes that an interconnected neurophysiological system produces all affective states (Posner et al., 2005).

Adopting a social constructionist approach is in epistemological contrast with the above classifications. According to Kantor (1921), attempting to classify emotions as either basic or secondary leads to marginalising the exact circumstances under which an emotional response is stimulated. Of cardinal importance, he points out, is the researcher falling into the trap of conventional labels given to these emotional responses and forgetting the actual behaviour that needs to be classified. Similarly, Kagan (2007) sees such classifications as barriers to exploring what exists beyond these names.

Realising the shortcomings of the above approaches, a few scholars have attempted to classify emotions in ways other than the basic and dimensional models. Examples include the *semantic atlas of emotion concepts*, in which Averill (1975) presents a list of 558 emotions without attempting to classify them. He then undertook a semantic analysis while raising three points. First and foremost, his view is that provision of a comprehensive and finite list of emotions is impossible as the border between the emotional and non-emotional human actions are fairly blurred. He then sheds light on the indispensable subjectivity of human emotions and the fact that a particular word might not represent an emotion for all. His last argument is in line with that of Russell (1991), contending that the language of emotions as the key factor is influenced by different cultural settings.

Therefore, to have a list of emotions as a 'guide' during fieldwork and analysis, I had to search for emotion studies with theoretical underpinnings similar to this thesis. In this regard, Brundin's (2002) study of emotions during radical change processes was of particular relevance (see appendix G). Her classification had also been previously validated and slightly modified by Manzoor (2012) in an ethnographic study of boardrooms (see appendix H). In order to include the widest range of emotion labels, a

combination of the two classifications was used for the purpose of this thesis. Using two classifications proved especially helpful as some of the emotions that later emerged in the empirical study (e.g. contempt) were only included in one and not the other.

As I had to prepare this list prior to starting the fieldwork, I started using it when I was collecting data and also during transcriptions. Later, when I started the systematic interpretation of data, I had to approach these labels even more cautiously by double checking the meaning in different dictionaries with different examples to also see the context in which each label was used and compare it with that of the interview/observation/diary that I was analysing. Table 7 shows an example of an interview extract with the identified emotion.

Emotion	Relevant quote	Oxford English Dictionary, 2018
Resignation	It's slightly annoying [emphasis] when they are looking at things and they think they can make a judgement but hey, if that's what it takes to make something happen, and it is better to get something happening rather than nothing.	The acceptance of something undesirable but inevitable.

Table 7: Example of identifying emotions in text

The above example shows the way I identified emotions in text as they were communicated to me via *language*. However, as previously discussed in chapter three and considered in designing the conceptual framework of this thesis, emotions are not always products of linguistic communications, but are also communicated via body language, paralinguistic cues, and facial expressions. The identification of embodied emotions will be more elaborated on over the following sections on the actual steps of analysis.

4.5.3 Thematic analysis for the collective (team) journey of emotions

Thematic analysis (TA) was chosen as the method to ‘construct’ the collective journey of emotions. TA is regarded as especially useful when the research aims at examining different perspectives and highlighting the similarities and differences among all research participants (Braun & Clarke, 2006; King, 2004; Nowell et al., 2017). Another relevant advantage of TA is that it can potentially provide unanticipated insights (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In line with the overall epistemological assumptions of this study, the analysis adopted here is informed by social constructionism, seeking to identify emotions as they emerge in relation to their social context (i.e. the programme situation and relationships). Therefore, the analysis relied on constant comparisons between the cases (Tuckett, 2005). Moreover, analysis was conducted at a more *latent* rather than *semantic* level in order to identify the contextual factors behind the experience of emotions (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

TA was conducted step by step according to the guide provided by Braun and Clarke (2006). I first familiarised myself with the data through different rounds of reading the transcripts, which at times also involved going back to the audio-recorded interview. This process began when I was still in the field and involved in transcription of the data. Next, I started to code the data based on the list of emotions I had prepared. In line with Braun and Clarke’s (2006) suggestion, I first finished coding across the whole data set. Table 8 gives an example of a basic code assigned to an interview extract. After I finished coding, I started searching for themes within the generated codes. This phase involved bringing basic codes together and grouping them into a theme.

Data extract	Coded for
<p>Paul and Susan, they're aware that we've got to get governance, we've got to change governance to make it more worthwhile really, otherwise it's like the risk register that we have and the risk register that we have is just a document that we've put the risks on and we don't really use that as an effective tool to manage risk; we just have a risk register because we have been told that we have to have a risk register. And again, that's something else that we just need to step up against and start thinking, why do we actually have this? What is the point of anything we do? Because if it is not making its change as we're thinking then really there's no point in having it in the way that it is ... so it's the same with the governance.</p>	<p>Concerned with the lack of programme governance.</p>

Table 8: Example of assigning basic codes to data

A theme is defined by DeSantis and Ugarriza (2000) as:

An abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations. As such, a theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole.

(DeSantis & Ugarriza, 2000: 362)

The flexible nature of TA allows for themes to be developed in a number of ways (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017). In this thesis, I grouped codes (i.e. emotions) based on the contextual cause behind them (i.e. overall programme team situation/concerns at a given moment). Then, when reviewing the generated themes, I produced thematic categories as a higher level of abstraction to group related themes together. The longitudinal aspect of the study allowed me to arrange themes based on their sequence of occurrence over time. In other words, I built the overall story by defining a series of sequential episodes with the emotion most prevalent across all team members in that episode as my thematic category. Table 9 shows an example of developing thematic categories.

In developing thematic categories, the question of theme prevalence was tackled differently in each of the defined episodes. For instance, despite minor individual differences in episode one, all team members showed a sense of being pressured by the

Thematic category	Themes	Basic codes (main emotions)
Episode two: facing a turnaround; feeling ambivalent in making sense of change.	Gazes of confidence at the new director.	Confidence
		Conviction
		Optimism
	Threatened by the status shift.	Threat
		Indignation
		Betrayal
	Two teams within one and feelings of exclusion	Resignation
		Frustration
		Feeling excluded
	Tensions of the professional becoming personal	Tension
		Defensiveness
		Sarcastic

Table 9: Example of developing thematic categories

external environment (e.g. the programme funder). Also, to a greater or lesser degree, all members showed feeling uncertainty about the internal dynamics of teamwork (e.g. vague job descriptions). Therefore, in this episode feelings of *uncertainty* and *pressure* were the prevalent emotions that were added to the thematic category.

In episode two, however, team members each expressed different emotions. Most members showed *confidence* in the new director's ability to turn the programme around. But some felt especially threatened by the change, which they thought might result in their losing their position in the programme. Altogether, mainly positive emotions were expressed towards the change agent (i.e. the director) while the change itself sparked a degree of negativity in a few members. In this case, I chose *ambivalence* as the thematic category to cover the range of positive and negative emotions experienced in this episode. For a detailed description of steps taken for TA, refer to appendix I. Table 10 provides a description of all the thematic categories as the four episodes of the team story.

Thematic categories	Descriptions
Episode one: the ‘stuck’ team- bewildered but light-hearted	<i>Refers to the first episode of the team story. The team is externally pressured to speed the progress while there is no firm structure to proceed based on. Yet the team atmosphere is at its friendliest at this stage.</i>
Episode two: facing a turnaround- feeling ambivalent in making sense of change	<i>Refers to the first few weeks after the change of director. While positive emotions are expressed towards the new director, the overall change is difficult to adapt to. Positive and negative emotions exist at the same time.</i>
Episode three: one step forward, two steps back- resignation behind the mask of resilience	<i>Refers to months after the change of director, when the programme is put on pause for revision. Team members start to feel the change of director has not completely solved the problems in episode one but they try to adapt to the new situation.</i>
Episode four: the breakdown- drained and disappointed	<i>Refers to the time when silence is replaced by action. Team members lose hope in the future of the programme and most of them decide to leave.</i>

Table 10: Summary of the thematic categories and their descriptions

The final team story is presented in depth and in detail in chapter six. As expected, in each of the episodes above, there would be team members experiencing various situations either differently from or more intensely than others. These were mainly the permanent members, who were involved in the programme for a longer period. The following section explains the analysis method undertaken for interpreting the individual experiences of emotions for these members.

4.5.4 Interpretative phenomenological analysis for the individual experience of emotions

As explained in previous chapters, one aim of this thesis is to understand the individual experience of project and programme environments. Therefore, as the previous section gave an overview of using TA for constructing the team’s journey, this section will explain the procedure undertaken to understand the individual experience of emotions. It was shown previously that TA was justifiably used to highlight the patterns of emotions across all the team members. For the individual side, however, the aim is the depth of the emotional experience as opposed to its breadth. This is where the use of

interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) can be justified as the method that allows for detailed analysis of a single case, around which rich data has been collected (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).

IPA is seen as the best fit when the research aims at understanding how individuals make sense of their lived experience owing to its roots in phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith & Osborn, 2008; Smith et al., 2009, Larkin & Thompson, 2012). The phenomenological aspect of IPA is evident in its mission to understand the participants lived experience from their own perspective and description (Eatough & Smith, 2008; Larkin & Thompson, 2012). For the IPA searcher, this means the need to 'bracket one's pre-conceptions and allowing phenomena to speak for themselves' (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012: 362).

Also, the analytical steps in doing IPA are seen as a *double hermeneutic* or dual interpretation process (ibid.). In other words, IPA involves a process whereby the participant makes sense of an experience, followed by the researcher attempting to make sense of the participant's sense-making (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Finally, IPA is pitched at the idiographic level of analysis as the aim is to capture the particular rather than the universal (Larkin & Thompson, 2012). This means that every single case is analysed in detail prior to concluding a general statement (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). The third tenet of IPA particularly distinguishes it from thematic analysis. While TA involves undertaking all steps of interpretation simultaneously across all cases (Braun & Clarke, 2006), analysis in IPA is conducted case by case (Smith et al., 2009).

Samples in IPA studies are usually small, ranging from one to fifteen (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). Purposive sampling is regarded as crucial, as the participants must represent the sample in relation to whom the research problem is of particular relevance

(Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Eatough et al., 2008). Accordingly, among all the team members participating in this study, four were purposively selected for the IPA study. The selection was based on three criteria: 1) these members were involved in the programme for a considerable duration of time; 2) their accounts were particularly emotional; and 3) the data collected from them was considerably rich, both in quality and in quantity. Table 11 gives an overview of the team members who were included in the IPA study and the data collected from them.

Pseudonym	Team role	Interview data	Diary data
Susan	Group manager	2 rounds (3h)	NA
Deborah	Business support manager	4 rounds (2h 20m)	NA
Gemma	Communication & marketing	5 rounds (2h 30m)	8 weekly diaries
Sandra	Monitoring & evaluation	5 rounds (3h 30m)	8 weekly diaries

Table 11: Introduction to participants in the IPA study and their corresponding data

In general, IPA studies use first-person accounts in the form of one-to-one interviews (Smith et al., 2009). Written accounts are also used in some cases (Larkin & Thompson, 2012). In this study, two of the IPA participants agreed to fill weekly diaries. In case there was a report of particular incident during the week with emotional impact on the diarist, a brief follow-up interview was arranged immediately. Considering that the purpose of the interview was to clarify the diary's information, the two data units were treated as one in analysis. An example of the same approach is provided in an IPA study by Eatough and colleagues (2008). The following section gives an overview of the actual steps undertaken for IPA in this study.

4.5.4.1 Exploratory comments and emergent themes

As in any other IPA study (Smith et al., 2009; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012), I started the analysis by multiple readings of each data unit while simultaneously making notes of my personal observations and reflections on the overall interview as well as the separate

extracts inside. Using Smith and colleagues' (2009) guidelines for making exploratory notes in IPA, my notes included descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual comments. I tried to capture the content as well as the pauses and the repetitions. In most cases, I also made immediate links with the relevant conceptualisations of the study. Where necessary, my personal reflexive accounts were also included in the notes (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). Table 12 exemplifies an interview extract with my comments.

Interview extract	Exploratory comment
<p>This has been the worst two weeks of my career [tears in eyes]; in my whole career [pauses] then people realise that the human side is dead, forgotten, Hiva; they'd forgotten the core of what this bid is about, which is people being at the heart of it. It's been really hard to think about trust, am I so naïve? You then start challenging; it's really weird to think like that and then I think 'do I ever wanna change? Do I?' So it is a lesson for you to think about as well; my daughter especially is very much like me but I tell her in life as well you have to have a devil side ... and I'm telling you coz it's good for you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She cannot trust her organisation as she sees them responsible for the change of director in her absence. • She is questioning her inner self and her overall outlook on how to live and behave. • She constantly pauses during the interview. • There is a rapport between us, influenced by my age and gender. She sees me as her daughter.

Table 12: Example of an interview extract with relevant exploratory comments

As the commenting completed for each interview and diary unit, I started to go through my notes to find the emerging themes in them. Despite the noting stage, which was more participant-led, developing themes were more centred around my interpretation of notes (Smith et al., 2009). Hence, to do the interpretation independent of the participants' sense-making, I transferred all comments to a sheet separate from the original interview. I then started to capture the main essence behind each comment and condense it into a theme. Table 13 shows this process for the above comments.

The emergent theme for each note was the emotion underlying it. In some cases, the emotion was highly apparent in the text or the participant had directly referred to it. In some others, the underlying emotion was rather hidden and I had to refer back to my

Exploratory comment	Emergent theme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She cannot trust her organisation any more as she sees them as responsible for the change of director in her absence. • She is questioning her inner self and her overall outlook on how to live and behave. • She constantly pauses during the interview. • There is a rapport between us, influenced by my age and gender. She sees me as her daughter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of distrust. • Loss of confidence in self.

Table 13: Example of exploratory comments with relevant emergent themes

notes on the participant's body language, voice, and the manner in which she was giving the account (e.g. laughter, sarcasm, crying etc.). The embodied characteristics of emotions was of especial help in those cases.

4.5.4.2 Developing superordinate themes

As the final step, I started to seek connection between the emergent themes to form superordinate themes. Among the several methods of developing superordinate themes in IPA suggested by Smith and colleagues (2009), I used *abstraction* as it naturally became useful in bringing the relevant themes together. I traced the reason behind each emergent theme (i.e. emotion) and then grouped emotions based on their common cause.

The analysis steps were conducted from initial commenting to developing superordinate themes for each interview separately. After the individual case analyses were completed, I started to look across the data to find connections between the cases as most IPA studies present the cross-case interpretations in the end. All superordinate themes (causes behind emotions) were similar across the cases but the experienced emotions were somewhat different. For instance, while identity work was accompanied with loss of confidence for three members, it had only resulted in experience of strain for the fourth IPA participant. Table 14 gives an overview of the final results.

Superordinate theme	Emergent themes (sub-themes)	Participants contributing to this theme
Emotions and identity work.	Grief	Susan
	Defensiveness	Susan
	Strain	Deborah, Gemma, Sandra
	Loss of confidence	Susan, Deborah, Gemma
Emotions and perceived injustice.	Indignation	Susan, Deborah, Sandra
	Distrust	Susan
	Empathy	All
Emotions and perceived meaninglessness of work.	Contempt	Susan, Deborah
	Frustration	Gemma, Sandra
	Disappointment	Gemma, Sandra

Table 14: Summary of findings from the IPA study

The findings from the IPA study are presented in chapter seven. An example of cross-case IPA with indicative quotes is provided in appendix J.

4.6 RESEARCH QUALITY

The final section of this chapter addresses the quality consideration in this thesis. Traditionally, the term *rigour* has been used to assess the quality of research in a scientific paradigm. Rigour refers to three quality criteria. First, *internal validity* refers to the extent to which the data accurately reflects the phenomena under study (Brewer, 2004: 319). Second, *external validity* or *generalizability* pertains to the applicability of the data to other cases (ibid.). Third, the question of *reliability* addresses the consistency of the research findings (Kvale, 1996).

However, as the quality considerations are different in qualitative studies, the quality of this thesis also needs to be assessed differently. Fundamentally, the term *rigour* is replaced with *trustworthiness* in qualitative inquiries (Lincoln, 1995). As developed by

Lincoln (1995), trustworthiness includes four methodologic criteria, parallel to those mentioned above, as well as the criterion of *authenticity* or *ethical criteria*. Table 15 gives an overview of the quality criteria used for the constructionist paradigm and outlines the evidence for quality in this thesis.

For instance, to fulfil the *credibility* criterion, known as the degree of confidence in the ‘truth’ of the findings, I openly discussed my evolving insights with different participants during the fieldwork. Legitimising the data by organisational members is specially suggested as a useful way to assess the accuracy of the data in ethnography (Schwartzman, 1993; Zickar & Carter, 2010). In the case of this thesis, the participants’ input especially assisted me in finalising my decision to incorporate identity issues into my conceptual framework as presented in chapter three. The extract below showcases the confirmation of an interim project professional on the importance of identity for her fellow colleagues:

Interviewer: So would you say identity is especially an issue in this team?

Interviewee: I would say some are a star in their own right; it’s a huge part of their identity; they got the employee of the year; they’ve got this presentation from the mayor; I’ve seen the photo, all dressed up in their evening gowns. So in terms of identity, something took them out of anonymity into being the stars here, dressed up, photos! massive, massive part of their identity!

(Programme interim staff, interview no. 2)

	Criterion	Definition	Evidence in this study
Criteria parallel with scientific paradigm	Credibility (vs internal validity)	Refers to the confidence in the ‘truth’ of the findings and is mainly achieved via triangulation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving triangulation naturally via ethnography. • Occasional random sampling as freshly joined members were also interviewed. • Regular participant (and research supervisor) checking of developing ideas and interpretations. • By provision of persuasive accounts in findings, the thesis <i>shows</i> emotions rather than <i>telling</i> them from my perspective as the researcher.
	Transferability (vs external validity)	Refers to the degree of applicability of the findings to other contexts. Through the provision of ‘thick’ descriptions, qualitative research can help the readers judge the degree of transferability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of detailed background information about the study’s context as well as rich descriptive accounts in the findings chapters assist the reader in deciding over the degree of transferability. • By explaining the details of methods used in this study, the reader can follow the same methodological steps in other contexts.
	Dependability (vs reliability)	Refers to the consistency of findings and the degree to which findings can be repeated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coverage of the ‘operational’ details in collecting data. • The reflective notes mentioned in this chapter as well as in the conclusions of the thesis.
	Confirmability (vs objectivity)	Refers to the degree of neutrality and being mindful of one’s identity as the researcher.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triangulation helped in minimising the bias inherent in this study and as shown in the reflexive self-critical accounts. • Constant comparison of evolving interpretations with the original transcripts. • Regular member checking for confirmation of developing ideas and interpretations.

	Criterion	Definition	Evidence in this study
Authenticity/ethical criteria	Fairness	Presenting an objective and balanced view of all existing stakeholders.	Presenting the competing views of different parties, including both the management and the team rather than relying on one.
	Ontological authenticity	Assisting the research participants to develop and expand their views.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of several chances to speak about the emotional aspects of their work is believed to have offered the participants a degree of relief in times of tension as well as a space to elaborate and critically reflect on the emotive situations. • Upon request, a copy of the transcripts were sent to the interviewee for their personal reflections.
	Educative authenticity	Helping the research participants hear and appreciate others' viewpoints.	When probing into a participant's answers, competing perspectives were mentioned anonymously, which in turn served to trigger the participant's reflection on the circumstances in question.
	Catalytic authenticity	Stimulating some form of action.	Through detailed explanations of internal team conflicts, their causes and potential impacts on the team members, the thesis is believed to provide catalytic insights for management of teams in project and programme environment.
	Tactical authenticity	Empowering the research participants to act/address issues.	Participants starting to address their concerns to the HR department of the lead programme partner.

Table 15: *Quality criteria in qualitative research with evidence for this thesis. Table developed based on Lincoln (1995), Seale (1999), Shenton (2004) and Morrow (2005)*

Moreover, ethnography inherently builds on *triangulation* by involving various methods of data collection (Brewer, 2004). In this study, diaries were also used in addition to the more common methods used frequently in ethnographic research. Yet, it is worth noting that the study did not purposely aim at adopting a triangulation technique, and if it had, its theoretical underpinnings would have been jeopardised. According to Fineman (2004), triangulation's core assumption as having a fixed social reality that needs verification via multiple measurements is in contrast with a socially constructed view of emotions.

Last but not least, one must acknowledge that doing an ethnographic study of emotions can itself be an emotional process (Brannan, 2011). There were several times during my fieldwork that I realised my age and gender had resulted in a 'closer' social involvement between me and the participants. An example was shown in explaining the IPA steps as a team member told me 'life lessons' that she said she would also tell her daughter. Yet I firmly believe that my emotional engagement in the field played a more significant role than my gender or my age. Specific to the relational frame of the thesis, Hosking (2011) stresses that the enquirer is at the very heart of the relational processes in focus, as s/he ongoingly constructs identities and relations. When observing emotions, it is not possible to remain emotionally mute; our reactions as researchers can shape the responses of the researched (Hansen & Trank, 2016) and hence can result in potentially unique insights (Cunliffe & Karunanayake, 2013). Such insights can be especially helpful in understanding not only the participants' experience but also the context of the inquiry, which is further elaborated on in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5: THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

5.0 INTRODUCTION

In studying organisational behaviour, acknowledging the context is believed to be of special importance for the researcher to fully understand the person–situation interactions (Johns, 2006). In this study, the experience of emotions was explored in a team involved in the planning phase of a regional partnership programme as part of a national initiative in the United Kingdom. This chapter presents a description of the programme history (at both national and regional levels), its objectives as well as the partnering organisations. As the focus of this study, the team members involved in planning the regional programme are further introduced. In order to protect the participants' identities, names of people and organisations have been pseudonymised.

The final section of the chapter provides an overview of the major programme incidents as they unfolded in action during the fifteen-month period of the study. This section specifically highlights the many twists that are further shown to emotionally impact the team in chapters six and seven.

5.1 THE PROGRAMME HISTORY

The origins of the programme dated back to three years prior to the start of my fieldwork. In 2013, one of the largest public funding bodies in the United Kingdom, Funds for Good Cause (FGC), announced its decision to invest a grant of up to £350 million in a national system change programme. The programme, named Better Children Better Britain (BCBB), aimed to improve the local services to children over a ten-year period. The announced grant was to be shared by seven local partnerships, as the final winners of the programme bid. By securing a funding of approximately £50 million, each of the winning partnerships would be required by FGC to put a special

focus on health, nutrition, education, communication, and ultimately social development of children in their region.

In 2014, FGC announced the seven grant-receiving locations across the country, all of which were selected based on their innovative and forward-thinking approach in writing the programme bid. Reflecting the nature of the programme, the winning partnerships were all led by a voluntary-sector organisation with prior experience in supporting children development. The selected partnerships each recruited a team of experts to initiate, plan, and further execute the programme delivery in their local region.

The present thesis explores emotions as they were experienced by the programme team in one of these seven areas, referred to as Area 7. The partnership in this region included three voluntary-sector organisations and thirteen governmental institutions. Similar to its six counterpart partnerships, BCBB in Area 7 had a voluntary-sector organisation as the leading partner, pseudonymised as the Children Support Union (CSU). The other major partners included the city council in Area 7, the regional police, and the local educational institutions. Table 16 provides a summary of the programme in Area 7.

Better Children Better Britain, Area 7	
Time frame	Ten years
Funding body	Funds for Good Cause (public body)
Grant amount	Up to £50 million
Type of partnership	Voluntary-public
Number of institutions	Up to twenty (all public or non-profit)
Lead partner	Children Support Union (non-profit organisation)
Second major partner	Local authority in Area 7
Programme major outcome	Improving local services to children in the community
Programme type	Heartbeat (incremental improvement while sustaining services)

Table 16: Summary of the programme

5.2 THE PROGRAMME TEAM

The programme team in Area 7 initially started with three members, who had originally developed the programme bid between 2013 and 2014. These three members were all seconded to the programme from either the CSU (the lead non-profit partner) or the city council. Once the programme was officially initiated in 2014, the three members were given permanent positions in the programme. As the lead partner, CSU further recruited a director in May 2015. The rest of the team members gradually joined the team between October and November of the same year. By the start of fieldwork in January 2016, the programme team consisted of eight members altogether. In May 2016, CSU recruited an interim programme manager, who replaced the director two months later. Several project professionals later joined the team on interim basis.

As in any other project/programme environment, the membership in BCBB7 team was subject to constant change depending on the actual needs of the programme at each stage. Hence, the team composition did not merely change through entrées but also several withdrawals took place throughout the period of study. Table 17 gives an introduction to all the team members who participated in this research over the fifteen-month period of fieldwork.

Once the observations started, it was noticed that the programme team were not using the common project and programme management tools such as those of stakeholder mapping or scheduling systems such as the popular Gantt chart. In addition, lines of reporting were rather vague with no formal organisational structure in place. The initial observations and interviews revealed that all the newer members were required to consult the bid-writing team prior to proceeding with any activity or negotiation with

the partners. Besides, all team members seemed to directly report to the director. This was especially evident as the director had reportedly to be copied in all email

Pseudonym	Team role	Date joined	Date left
Susan	Group manager	Bid-writing team	Aug 2016
Deborah	Business support manager	Bid-writing team	NA
Kate	Research & service design	Bid-writing team	NA
Paul	Programme director	May 2015	Jul 2016
Gemma	Communication & marketing	Oct 2015	Mar 2017
Sandra	Monitoring & evaluation	Oct 2015	NA
Sophie	Business support apprentice	Nov 2015	Sept 2016
Mathew	Finance assistant	Nov 2015	NA
The start of fieldwork (Jan 2016)			
Megan	Interim programme director	May 2016	May 2017
Steve	Interim programme manager	Jun 2016	May 2017
Sally	Interim project manager	Jul 2016	Dec 2016
Tara	Executive assistant	Jul 2016	Apr 2017
Alex	Project support officer	Oct 2016	Nov 2016
Lucy	Admin support	Oct 2016	Oct 2016

Table 17: Introduction to programme team members

conversations between the team and the lead organisation, the other partners, or other programme stakeholders. However, the change of director resulted in changes in the management structure. The new director developed a programme structure with a formal chart shown in figure 2. This figure shows the team structure as finalised in April 2017 and the displayed roles correspond with the members who were still part of the programme team to this date. Therefore, the chart does not show four members of the team (Paul, Susan, Sophie, and Lucy) who participated in this research but left the programme before the chart was finalised. Other than these four members, the remaining participants are presented with blue colouring.

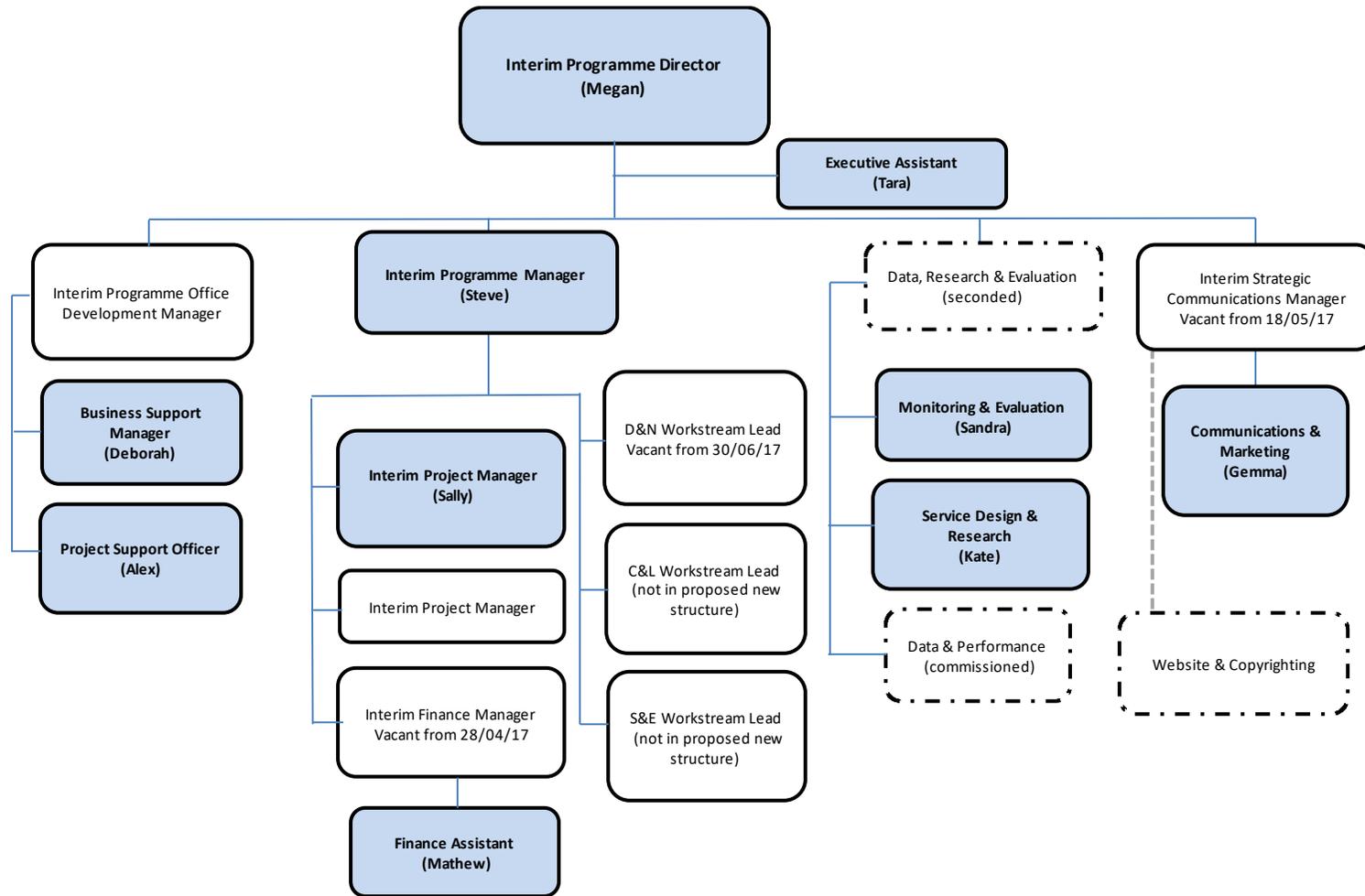


Figure 2: Programme team structure

5.3 THE PROGRAMME IN ACTION

5.3.1 Initiation, definition, and planning

As mentioned above, the programme was officially initiated in 2014. The initiation stage of programmes is generally seen as a complex and ambiguous phase, since the goals and objectives are rarely clear from the beginning (Nieminen & Lehtonen, 2008). As the fieldwork started in January 2016, there were several conversations with the team members to try to define the programme and its broad objectives. During the interviews, the team members were shown to have relatively different views on what the programme was about. When describing, some referred to it as a ‘project’ whereas some others called it an ‘organisation’. Only a few used the word ‘programme’. This difference in language and definitions during this phase was also brought up in a conversation with Paul who was the programme director at the time:

We had that conversation about describing what it is that we are doing as an organisation. It’s a bit like creating a new organisation to deliver. The second bit is being able to understand the complexity of what we do and one of the things that we haven’t properly done and is in our list of things for 2016/17 is being able to consistently describe every function; every knot and every bot of the machine of BCBB so that if I was run over on the way to work or just because one of us was missing wouldn’t have a negative impact on [pauses]... because at times we only have one person doing a particular role because we are still quite small. So there is something about having a common language.

(Paul, interview no. 1)

During this stage, team members mentioned their need to have a more robust governance in place. Since the programme’s initiation in 2014, the bid-writing team

had made a degree of progress which seemed, however, difficult to pin down due to the lack of governance. Structures, policies, and regulations were yet to be defined clearly:

Paul the director and Susan, they're aware that we've got to get governance. We've got to change governance to make it more worthwhile really otherwise it's like the risk register that we have and the risk register that we have is just a document that we've put the risks on and we don't really use that as an effective tool to manage risk. We just have a risk register because we have been told that we have to have a risk register and again that's something else that we just need to step up against and start thinking why do we actually have this? What is the point of anything we do? Because if it is not making its change as we're thinking then really there's no point in having it in the way that it is. So it's the same with the governance.

(Deborah, interview no. 1)

The team also seemed to be in the process of redefining some of the early conceptualisation in the programme. An example was the need to refine the programme's service plan. When asked about the problem with the existing version, team members mentioned its lack of clarity with regard to each team member's role in the team. A few members stated that the plan was too complicated and wide in scope and hence needed to be modified to become more specific. Team members also explained how having different versions of the service plan had resulted in confusion between themselves and also with external stakeholders. They believed a refined plan would bring together all the programme deliverables within an agreed and realistic timeline:

I think it was felt that service plan was too restrictive and maybe too ambitious at the time and to bring it down and make it real now ...

(Sandra, interview no. 1)

Another team member added that the service plan needed to change as it had drifted from the original programme bid. Besides, she mentioned the risk of having shifted from the original objectives of the programme:

I think a lot of work was probably done beforehand and actually somewhere along the line it's been forgotten and it needs to sort of happen again so I think people are trying to reinvent a will a little bit. I think you do look for the best practices, coz the bid was done a couple of years ago so actually whether it's still current or the actual physical plan. I think that's what's happened. So I think we're trying to get back to the bid which is part of the strategy job that I'm working on as well to actually remind us what is it that we are meant to be achieving.

(Gemma, interview no. 1)

Although this phase was about definition and planning for the programme team, it was yet more about *initiation* for the wider team as the partnering organisations had not been as involved as the programme team. This included both the strategic partners (e.g. the regional police service) and the delivery partners who would eventually deliver the services to children, such as schools and GP practices. Therefore, one major activity at this stage for team members was to get the partners on board. In effect, this involved familiarising them with the basics of the programme from the start.

5.3.2 The programme in transition

As my fieldwork started, the funder (FGC) stated that the programme's progress had not been satisfactory in Area 7. In February 2016, the funder started a period of one-year supervision, during which the team would need to significantly speed its progress. More specifically, within this year-long supervision the programme team was required to establish a robust programme governance; fully engage the strategic and delivery partners; and also start the delivery of the projects. Depending on the level of progress

by the end of the supervision period, the funder would decide to either continue or dissolve the programme. FGC also mandated the recruitment of an interim programme manager to first find the blockages that had slowed the progress and then set up a programme management office. As a result, a programme manager joined the team in May 2016 on a six-month contract.

In July 2016, this interim programme manager replaced the director following an unexpected decision from the funder and the partnership's lead organisations. Having been in post for two weeks, the new director gave a brief explanation of how this sudden change happened:

When I arrived, it became clear to me in a couple of days that Paul was completely out of his depth and wasn't really providing any leadership or management and actually didn't really understand the difference between a programme and a project delivery and business as usual. There was absolutely no project or programme governance or framework or structure; nothing at all! So whilst Paul was a barrier, clearly there were other factors that I needed to address ... the long and short of it was that Paul was asked to leave so he was out from the office for two weeks and didn't return; they [referring to the lead organisation] didn't follow the normal HR processes; they dismissed him immediately.

(Megan, interview no. 2)

The new interim director believed that the team was lacking a clear work structure and guidance in the programme. Therefore, once she became the director, her mission changed from merely establishing a programme management office into what she regarded as 'turning the programme' within the supervision period by FGC. In fact, gaining more control over the programme gave her the power to introduce a vast degree of changes during her first few weeks in post. At the team level, these changes included:

- Changing the reporting lines and developing a solid management structure and organisational chart.
- Redefining all team members' job descriptions.
- Expanding the programme team by recruiting project professionals on an interim basis.

At the programme level, the changes included establishing programme governance from the start and adopting a different approach to engage the strategic partners:

The feedback that I've had from senior directors and colleagues from the public partners and the voluntary sector is that they were desperate to be part of this programme and he [referring to the previous director] just shut the door. So basically since I've been the director, I've opened up the programme; I've opened the door; people have stepped in; people are just coming into the programme again and actively getting engaged and taking responsibility. So my role has been to elevate the aspiration and ambition of the programme to system transformation but also to spread out the programme across the system!

(Megan, interview no. 2)

At this stage, the new director and the recently joined project professionals specifically engaged with the partners through 'test and learn' operations, where the delivery partners' services were tested to evaluate their impact and assess the need for change. The new director also started to review the very few projects that had been started under the delivery phase by the previous leadership. The new management believed that these projects had been started without proper governance processes to support them.

By early autumn 2016 and the seventh month of my fieldwork, the programme was officially put on hold to go back to the initiation phase. The interim senior management, whose contract had now been extended for an extra six months, decided that the programme needed to be reviewed from the start:

Every time I looked at something, every time I lifted a stone I found more muddle and mess underneath so I ended up having to do a review of the whole programme.

(Megan, interview no. 3)

During this period, the overall programme was critically reviewed to assess the number of projects and their feasibility. Ultimately, the revision resulted in a drastic change in the number of projects, down from 48 to only 9. On top of that, as shown in the team structure (figure 2), two of the work streams were stopped for the next two years in order to focus merely on one stream: the children's diet and nutrition. The team's major focus became to create a robust governance behind each project within that stream. This included writing the project plans, budget plans, and establishing the relevant test and learn criteria for each.

5.3.3 The renewed programme

As the supervision period ended, the funder announced that the team's progress had been satisfactory and that the funding would continue, within an entirely redefined structure and governance. In May 2017, the interim management left, handing over a newly developed programme structure for the coming years. It was expected that a new management regime would take the programme over as of June 2017, when my fieldwork also ended.

It was noted previously that the start of my fieldwork coincided with the start of the supervision period by the programme funder, mandating the recruitment of a programme manager. This entrance further marked a 'turnaround' for the programme team. The following chapter covers the team's story and their emotions before, during, and after this turnaround as they try to make sense of the several unfolding incidents explained in this chapter.

CHAPTER 6: ENACTING EMOTIONS IN THE PROGRAMME TEAM

6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the programme team's story in relation to the programme issues that emerged throughout the period of fieldwork. As the change of director took place, team meetings were ceased and therefore other than the two formal observation of team meetings, this chapter mainly draws on the data collected from interviews, informal observations and diaries. To visualise the collective journey of emotions, this chapter also uses the 'six stage plot structure' proposed by the renowned author and script consultant, Michael Hauge. Figure 3 displays the team story's six stages and five turning points based on Hauge's story paradigm. In a nutshell, the story begins as the team starts to undergo a period of fifteen-month supervision by the programme funder. Throughout the supervision, several incidents (turning points) take place, with the most influential being the sudden change of programme director (turning point no. 2). The story further covers the aftermath of this unexpected change and finally ends as the fifteen-month supervision terminates.

With regard to data interpretation, it was previously noted that the thematic analysis undertaken for this chapter resulted in the emergence of four thematic categories. Therefore, the findings in this chapter are structured as a four-episode story. Episode one and four include two stages of Hauge's plot structure. Each episode consists of the emerging programme themes (as shown in figure 3) that led to the experience of specific emotions within that episode. Episode one, for instance, shows the team as it is 'stuck' in a state of bewilderment due to pressures from the funder, disengaged partners as well as the vague team structure. A discussion of team emotions and the relevant causes and consequences is further included at the end of each episode.

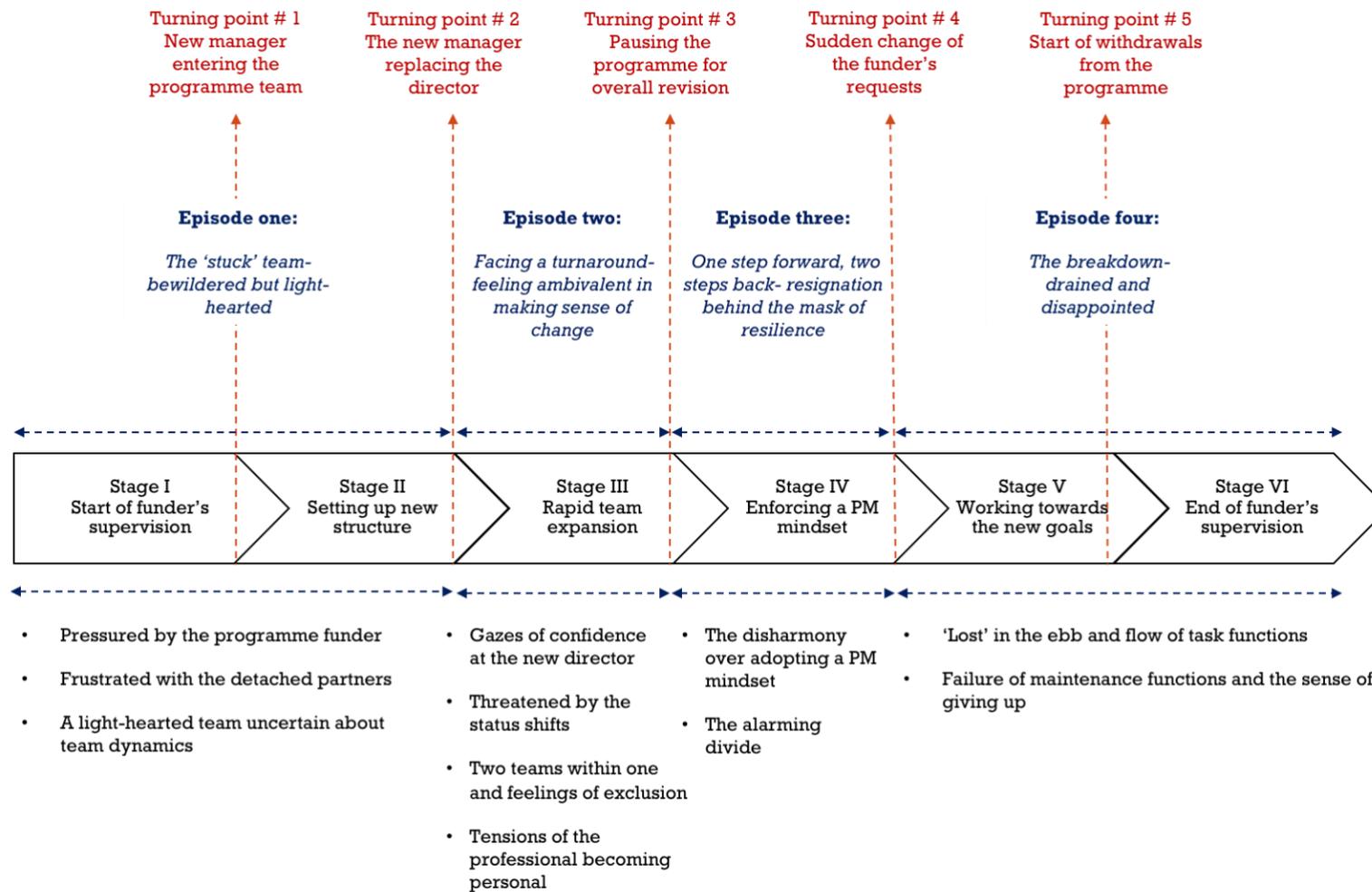


Figure 3: The programme team journey. Adaptation of Hauge's stage plot structure (Nocker & Rafiei, 2017)

6.1 EPISODE ONE: THE ‘STUCK’ TEAM – BEWILDERED BUT LIGHT-HEARTED

The opening episode refers to the first four months of data collection, during which three formal team and stakeholders’ meetings were observed and two rounds of semi-structured interviews were conducted. During this first phase, emotions were mainly enacted in relation to three major concerns that were shared by all members to a greater or lesser degree. These were: 1) feeling pressured by the programme funder; 2) struggling to engage the detached strategic partners; and 3) the vague teamwork dynamics and structure. Because the team had fallen behind the programme schedule in comparison with other programme sites, the funder urged it to immediately recruit a programme manager for troubleshooting purposes. This episode gives voice to both the permanent team and the freshly joined interim programme manager.

6.1.1 Pressured by the programme funder

It was in the very first interview with one of the team’s senior managers that the pressures from the funder were instantly noticed. The interview was scheduled prior to the first team meeting observation, in which the programme director would not be present due to the monthly meeting with the funder. This first interview revealed a degree of inconsistency between the pace of work within the team environment and the funder’s expectations:

We’re still very external deadline driven; so if the funder said they have got to have something by this day everyone will drop everything; so Paul [referring to the programme director] is in their office today and everything has been dropped for the last week or so for the preparation of the meeting this morning.

(Deborah, interview no. 1)

When asked about pressures from the funder, another team member stressed the magnitude of the grant at stake, which in her view justified the reason for the funder to be so concerned. Yet she also mentioned that the team was on track with the progress as planned in the programme bid and thus she believed further pressures were unnecessary:

It feels a bit like they are trying to push us but we are actually on our track with our bid, so that I suppose is a bit of a grey area for Paul and Susan [referring to the most senior team members] to manage.

(Gemma, interview no. 1)

When the director was asked about the relationship with the funder and the outcome of his recent meeting with them, he emphasised that the grant was publicly owned and therefore he believed it made sense that the funder required constant reassurance of the team's progress. Despite this, he also noted that the funder needed to trust the team further on its ability to deliver the programme. He also elaborated on the novelty of the programme as another aspect doubling the concerns over team's progress:

They [referring to the funder] hold public money; they have to spend it wisely and they have to be reassured that we are spending it wisely ... [but] last year in December I had a conversation with them about how my perception was that they were trying to micromanage what it was that we were doing with the delivery partners; so they've awarded us this money so they should trust us to be able to deliver that; however they have never ever invested this amount in one area over such a long period of time so we always have to remember that they are using public money and they have to be publicly accountable for that.

(Paul, interview no. 1)

As with Paul's perception of the funder trying to micromanage the programme team, Sophie, a junior team member, also believed that it was in fact the approach of the

funder that had affected the team negatively. She believed the funder had to take a more constructive approach in communicating with them:

I wasn't at the meeting the other day but I think the approach they came across [pauses] ... you know when like your naughty child is going and you're being told off by their teacher; I think it should have been more supportive, more like 'this is going right, this is what's going wrong,' more constructive rather than feeling like you're being yelled at, if that makes sense.

(Sophie, interview no. 1)

Among the many requirements of the funder, it had urged the team to expand to at least twice its current size. The team was also asked urgently to recruit a programme manager. According to the team members, the other sites had been operating with remarkably larger teams and they had proved to be ahead of the programme team in Area 7 with regard to programme delivery. Despite acknowledging that, all team members expressed an initial reluctance towards team expansion to a greater or lesser extent. As it appeared in the interviews, for most of the members the reluctance stemmed from the notion that more money spent on staff would ultimately result in less funds spent on the programme outcomes:

Definitely this area very much took a very firm view originally to have a very small team because we wanted to make it sustainable, so we would use the stakeholders to deliver the roles and then we would possibly focus as much of the money as we could on the community.

(Kate, interview no. 1)

For some other team members, recruiting new staff was a matter of suitable timing, which they believed was not in the current planning phase:

Are we in the right phase to double team? Or do we need to see where we are going and where we see a gap and then plug the gap, rather than bringing twenty

people in and then they are wondering where they are going. I'm not sure if this is the right stage as we are not yet implementing; I am now writing the strategy for monitoring and evaluation which I am still writing, now imagine we go get another person for doing the same; not much programme is running now and having two people to monitor what?

(Sandra, interview no. 1)

During the first three months of the study, team expansion was found to be a major pressure from the funder. As mentioned briefly in chapters four and five, it was only by the fourth month of fieldwork that the real extent of pressures 'leaked out' in one of the interviews. When asked about her purpose in joining the team, the new interim programme manager said:

I've been brought in as a six-month interim contract to bring in some project discipline and professionalism and to drive delivery because the funder has threatened to pull the funding because of the lack of delivery.

(Megan, interview no. 1)

According to the new programme manager, the funder had urged the team to turn around the programme within a one-year period of close supervision. Megan also mentioned that the funder had mainly been concerned by the lack of evidence that the programme had been grasped at the strategic level, compared to other programme sites. Evidently, the start of the supervision period had coincided with the start of data collection and yet it had been kept quiet during the observed meetings and interviews. Nevertheless, subject to satisfactory progress by the end of this year-long scrutiny, the funder would announce if the funding would continue or cease.

6.1.2 Frustrated with the detached partners

Since the programme was meant to be partnership led, getting the partners on board seemed to be a major concern for almost all the team members. As the evidence

showed, the team was struggling to engage the strategic partners in the programme. When explaining the reason for partners' disengagement, a team member referred to the general complexity of the programme as well as its lengthy time span:

It's a ten-year programme; it's much more difficult and challenging and people aren't used to it; they are used to much shorter funding spans. So this is what we do for a six months or a year but really we got to focus on a year but we also got to look towards the future.

(Kate, interview no. 1)

In fact, Kate believed that partners were not initially aware of the extent and scope of what they had agreed to embark on. She also elaborated that the programme team and the partners were not in sync with regard to the programme progress. When explaining a particular example, she suddenly paused with frustration:

... It's like, 'Oh we didn't know that you had an outcomes framework!' Well ... yeah that was consulted with 120 people! [with sarcasm] It's memory or people's roles have changed and they've forgotten; it's all sorts of variety of ways that that has happened but you know I've just been frustrated; I've done major pieces of work and they are just sat there [goes silent].

(Kate, interview no. 1)

The programme director also believed that partners were not as collaborative as they were supposed to be. He further attributed the issue to their potential lack of capacity, competence, and general engagement:

Before I came into post, the team had developed a partnership agreement which all the partners just refused to sign, however, we were able to unblock some of those things. So for instance, a lot of activity was assigned to one of our delivery partners and there were some delays in relation to them; I think that it's a

combination of capacity, principally, and also some competency stuff. So it's not firing on all cylinders.

(Paul, interview no. 1)

Another team member referred sarcastically to the difficulties the team were experiencing in engaging the partners:

It's like you are asking for favours of these people to help enhance their services! [with sarcasm]; it's looked upon, you know, the programme team wants to have meeting time, you know, to get together to discuss things that are in their service; we don't want it to be imposed on them, we want it to come from them really!

(Deborah, interview no. 1)

In tackling the disengagement and bridging the gap between the programme team and the partnering organisations, a team member explained the team had just started to update the partners regularly on the programme's progress. She mentioned that some partners did not even have a clue of exactly what the programme was about:

They offer support but it's not followed by actions so I think that will change. I think before we all started there was sort of lack of communication with the wider team and partners to just say what we were doing so I think people were like 'where has all this money gone?'. Actually we were getting people saying they don't know what the programme is, they don't know what happens... so a quick thing that we implemented was the monthly updates so that people knew that we were delivering stuff.

(Gemma, interview no. 1)

The team showed a considerable amount of frustration with being the sole running body of a programme that was principally partnership led. On the other hand, when the new programme manager, Megan, joined the team, she stated that the situation had in turn been frustrating for the partners. According to her and the information she had from

the lead partner, it had been the case that colleagues from partnering organisations had long been seeking ways to support the programme. However, Megan elaborated that they would all blame the programme director for having refused any form of collaboration with them. Megan stressed that such refusals were not a matter of deliberation, but due to the fear of the lack of progress being exposed to the partners .

6.1.3 A light-hearted team uncertain about team dynamics

Although during the first episode the main sources of emotions were related to external forces (i.e. the funder and the partnering organisations) there were also instances when emotions seemed to revolve around internal team dynamics and the working relationships. At this stage, interpersonal relationships between team members seemed rather strong and they seemed to be supportive of each other also in non-work-related matters:

When I had a bereaving, they [referring to the team] were like ‘should you actually be here?’ Or ‘have a day off!’... because, you know, you want a distraction by doing work but your mind is not in place and they are supportive by asking ‘do you want to be here?’.

(Gemma, interview no. 1)

Gemma also elaborated that the team members were supportive of each other when one had a meeting with either the funder, the strategic partners, or other stakeholders and especially if the meeting had not necessarily been constructive. With regard to support, Sophie, a junior team member, emphasised how team members were appreciative of each other’s opinion, especially during the team meetings:

Even in our meetings where there is a hierarchy, everyone's opinion is so valid; they ask for mine too. I think everyone has their own part and I think that's very important that everyone has a say.

(Sophie, interview no. 1)

Moments of praise and laughter but also of discord were picked up in the first team meeting observation. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the progress in the 'test and learn' phase as well as refinement of the service design framework. The meeting took a total of 118 minutes, with one of the senior managers, Susan, taking the lead in conversations and asking everyone to provide the team with an update on their individual area of work.

When starting the update on marketing of the programme, Gemma first gave credit to the two junior members who had helped her in the past few weeks to test the programme branding. Susan also acknowledged the two junior members' contribution to the team. It all seemed a friendly ambience until Sandra started to update the team on her work. When Susan asked her about a piece of work on measuring the impact of their training system, Sandra mentioned the work was yet to be completed due to lack of pieces of information from a strategic partner. The matter seemed a misunderstanding between the two on what tasks to prioritise, followed by both speaking rather loudly at the same time for a few seconds. It was Sandra who finally stopped and Susan was the one to continue and finish her point. Deborah, another senior member, then joined Susan by adding a few comments to her concerns.

Overall, the meeting finished with smiley faces. However, Sandra revealed her feelings of uncertainty in an interview a week after that meeting:

One thing that I don't like now is where I actually stand within the team, which is now a bit vague; I don't know to what extent I can speak; to what extent I could give advice!

(Sandra, interview no. 1)

Not knowing her exact role in the team was not merely Sandra's concern. Over time, it was noticed that other members were also not certain about the actual tasks they needed to deliver on as the scope of responsibilities was rather wide for some:

I'm a catchall for what everybody else doesn't do really. On one level, I've got administration and I've got the apprentices trying to get them to have responsibility for that but on the other side I've got the governance and the contracts, you know, just overseeing everything that goes out, so it's quite wide.

(Deborah, interview no. 1)

When asked about how she prioritised her work within such a wide scope, Deborah pointed that she would prioritise based on Susan's view and would proceed with what Susan believed should be completed at each stage. Another team member, however, seemed more concerned with her own scope of responsibilities and expressed hopes to be able to focus on more specific tasks by getting an assistant to focus on other areas:

My first initial role was researcher that basically encompassed any task that might have been allotted and it was so broad that what myself do and Susan did. [So] it's great to be able to have another person so that somebody can put all their focus and energy into one of those tasks.

(Kate, interview no. 1)

To explain the level of ambiguity in the team members' roles and responsibilities, the recently joined interim programme manager, Megan, drew a simile between the staff roles in the programme and a football team:

When I arrived here I felt like the team was like a group of small boys' football where they went around the pitch following the ball; no one held their position, the defence didn't stand the defence, the attack didn't stand the attack, they all just clogged together!

(Megan, interview no. 1)

In Megan's view, the programme team was in fact in desperate need of a clear structure and guidance. She believed that the team members were all working very hard but she also pointed out that it was difficult to link their activities to the strategic outcomes of the programme. The reason, she thought, was that there was no evidence of what they had done, 'It's all in people's heads; there's multiple versions of action plans and project plans,' she said. The programme director seemed to be aware of the fact that team members required a more clear work structure. Yet he believed the structure had been sufficiently provided and hoped that recruiting Megan as the programme manager could improve the matter further:

The team members hanker after a really firm structure and so project management gives them that structure; that is wrapped up in supervision conversations; one-to-one conversations. Bringing Megan in now also means that what we do is aligning those particular activities that those staff are doing against the projects that Megan is working on.

(Paul, interview no. 1)

The lack of a clear work structure aside, observing team meetings also revealed moments of informalities and laughter in the team. In the first meeting, for instance, when Deborah suggested that the team needed to come up with a distinguishable colour for their badges, Susan made a joke by saying how colour-coordinated Deborah actually looked that day, a comment leading to everybody's laughter in the room. A similar moment was also picked in the second observed meeting; when Susan and

others clapped Sophie's progress in her correspondence with a delivery partner, Paul jokingly said clapping is only the habit of people in that particular region in England and that he struggled to join the team in clapping. Despite most members laughing, a few seemed unable to relate to the jokes that day. The recently joined manager, Megan, was one:

This is like everyone is sort of chatting; it's like an informal [pauses with irritation] ... This is a largely funded programme [emphasises every word while raising voice] and to me it's operating like someone's little private local project! This is part of a national programme which starts to develop national evidence-base [pauses] and there is a massive mismatch between the scale of the funding, the ambition of the senior people and then what's happening in this team.

(Megan, interview no. 1)

As it was evident from this interview, Megan's entrance to the team would bring major transformations to the programme work as she hardly seemed to approve of any of the existing team dynamics and practices.

6.1.4 Discussion

Corresponding with Hauge's first and second plot stages (figure 3), episode one displays a typical (project) programme situation, with conflicting interests and demands from different areas (Nordqvist et al. 2004). The episode especially showcases the ambiguities that exist at several levels. Referring to the 'existence of multiple and conflicting interpretations' (Thiry, 2002: 222), the episode shows that ambiguity does not only exist in the programme team's dealings with the funder and the partner organisations, it also features as lack of a clear work structure within the team. Team meeting observations in episode one also revealed moments of *task conflict*, referring to disagreement among group members due to discord in opinions

regarding the task (Jehn, 1995). In times of ambiguity and vagueness, project workers are expected to display feelings of uncertainty (Atkinson et al., 2006). Episode one specifically highlights a situation in which team members are uncertain about their roles and responsibilities within the programme and the specific tasks they have to deliver on.

According to Thiry (2002), projects that are closer to the 'soft' end of the hard/soft spectrum are typically expected to demonstrate higher levels of uncertainty and ambiguity. Episode one exemplifies the situation where the unique characteristics of the programme (i.e. the amount of the grant, its wide scope as well as its novelty, the myriad partnering organisations, etc.) have added to the expected level of ambiguity. In this highly ambiguous situation, team members were constantly trying to make sense of what was going on in the programme. This was evident in their accounts when referring to the programme as 'difficult and challenging' or when defining their roles as 'a catchall for what everyone else doesn't do.'

Ambiguity in the workplace is argued to produce feelings of stress (Styhre et al., 2002). Stress in episode one was indeed revealed in later stages of the fieldwork as the team members started to give plausible accounts to justify the change of director (Weick, 1995). Stress in episode one was particularly associated with the increasing pressure from the programme funder to speed up progress while lacking a firm programme structure and framework as a base to proceed on.

In showing ambiguity, episode one also highlights the importance of team identity in dealing with such ambiguities. In this episode, team members demonstrate their highest sense of 'oneness' with the team (Gundlach et al., 2006). They are seen to attach high emotional significance to their group (Van der Vegt & Bunderson, 2005), especially

when having to deal with their out-group members (i.e. the programme funder and partnering organisations). Interpersonal relationships within the team are at the friendliest level compared to the following episodes. Therefore, episode one ultimately pictures a team that, despite sounding collectively cheerful and light-hearted, is in fact, significantly ‘stuck’ and overwhelmed.

6.2 EPISODE TWO: FACING A TURNAROUND – FEELING AMBIVALENT IN MAKING SENSE OF CHANGE

The start of episode two was marked by a sudden change of programme director. Paul was dismissed unexpectedly, with Megan, the interim manager, taking over as the director. Upon her appointment to the new role, she introduced a vast degree of transformation to the programme in a very short period of time. One such change was the omission of team meetings as they had taken place under Paul’s leadership. As a result, the section below draws mostly on the interview data as well as a few instances of informal observations. Data analysis revealed four major themes around which emotions were mostly expressed in this phase: 1) the team’s sense of confidence in the new director’s ability to turn the programme around; 2) feelings of exclusion as interim members join the programme; 3) feelings of threat as statuses shift within the team structure; and 4) the increasing tensions that start to surface openly as the professional becomes personal for a few team members, also having emotional impact on others.

6.2.1 Gazes of confidence at the new director

Although no unanimous dissatisfaction with the leadership was openly expressed in the previous episode (despite Sandra’s over vagueness about her role and status in the team), further interviews with team members revealed that they mostly believed this change was needed for the programme to proceed with a faster pace. They had previously worked with Megan as the programme manager and pointed to the

contributions they believed she could make to the programme now that she had more control over it. Thus, they mostly seemed to prefer having her as the director despite the unavoidable uncertainties that such a sudden change could lead to.

Every team member showed different reasons for welcoming her as the director. For Mathew and Sandra, the ultimate reason was that Megan made them both feel more included and appreciated in the team. They both mentioned that the new leadership made them feel more valued and important compared to the previous director:

[I feel] more involved and more wanted in a way. So yeah I actually prefer this new, current management style.

(Mathew, interview no. 2)

Really I'm now a different person from the person that you met last time; last time I was down for not knowing what is going on; for not being engaged enough but it's different now! Now I get my work recognised; they are pleased with my work which I'm happy about!

(Sandra, interview no. 2)

Similar to Mathew and Sandra, others also seemed to approve the change as they all pointed to Megan's sense of drive, commitment, and decisiveness during their interviews:

To me, Megan's got drive which I personally much respect; she got a lot of drive and commitment and she's done some great things like she started a weekly email update which I think is absolutely great!

(Kate, interview no. 2)

Gemma explained that she was especially positive about Megan setting up a programme office that could provide the team with the big picture of the programme structure and show where each member's work would fit in. She believed this was a

key component that had been missing with the previous leadership. Setting up the programme management office was meant to be led by Steve, an interim programme manager who was recruited by Megan soon after she became the director. In fact, Steve was on board to continue Megan's work prior to becoming the director. He referred to the programme management office as the way to bring back the missing structure to the programme:

They [referring to the permanent team] are very capable people; most have done quite a bit of work but in isolation, so if you imagine we got a house to build, we got the bricks but they haven't been laid in the right order yet and that's where we were at. So now we are putting in place a structure that enables us to build the house. So we can pull in all the work that's been done and make some sense of it for the programme.

(Steve, interview no. 1)

Similar to Steve, in Megan's view, lacking such a structure had prevented the team members from making a sense of what it was that they were doing and how exactly their contribution would fit in the strategic programme outcomes. This, Megan believed, had largely impacted the team members emotionally as they had worked hard individually and yet had failed to make sense of the broader, collective picture:

In the first two weeks, I had five members of the team in my office crying; literally crying! And I've had some members of the team crying repeatedly over the last few months. I would say that people have been quite damaged by the process; so when people were stepping into the vacuum, they were working incredibly long hours on a regular basis, taking work to home at the weekend, and so ...

(Megan, interview no. 2)

Overall, the permanent team seemed to have accepted the change of director with the hope of getting a programme governance and structure in place. Although they had not

shown an explicit discontent with the previous leadership in episode one, their sense of confidence towards the new director showed that they had been negatively affected by poor leadership in the previous phase. In a similar fashion, some of the strong emotions behind this change only came to be expressed in the next stages of the change unfolding; when issues of status were at stake.

6.2.2 Threatened by the status shifts

From her first days in post as the director, Megan started a review of the roles and responsibilities of each team member. The first member affected by this review was Susan, one of the senior managers and a significant figure in the programme as part of the bid-writing team that had initiated this programme in the first place. Other team members also seemed emotionally impacted by Susan's situation:

There'll probably be a lot of change to Susan's job and she's not very happy and that's the thing, you know, some people are such characters in the team that when they are unhappy or not impressed with something it then kind of reaches out to the group.

(Gemma, interview no. 2)

Megan elaborated in detail on the struggles she had with Susan as she kept rejecting her reviewed role. In Megan's view, the new role was not accepted by Susan as it would lower her level of seniority in the team hierarchy. Altogether, Megan believed Susan was 'stuck in the past' and stressed how difficult it had been for her to convince her to 'move on':

Susan wants to be in a senior strategic role in the new structure which she hasn't got the skills or capability [for] and I'm not willing to design a structure around individual people! So there is a role here for her, she will either need to align to this role or she'll need to leave and I get someone else to do it. I mean she's

very hard work; she cannot stop talking about the past and the fact that she got the money into this and it's too much of a drain on my time!

(Megan, interview no. 2)

Steve, the interim programme manager, also agreed with Megan by explaining that Susan's role was not required in the programme any more at this stage. In fact, he even questioned the legitimacy of Susan's role prior to the change of director:

I think specifically to this programme, there are a number of political issues around roles and responsibilities that were current and relevant at the start of the programme but have not changed as the programme moved forward ... it's a bit difficult; we are trying to create and develop a role for Susan but she wants to be the deputy director and there was never such a post in structure; you can draw your own conclusions from how that happened [Scoffs].

(Steve, interview no. 1)

Susan, who was on annual leave when the change of director took place and was just 'hit' by the change on her first day back in the office, explained how her status had drastically shifted since the appointment of the new director. She pointed at the 'people management' side of project work, which she believed was missing with the new director. She also felt offended by the fact that her job description had changed:

On my job description, I'm Paul's [referring to the previous director] number two and since I've been back I've been totally excluded [sighs]. Project management is so good but you have to take people on that journey too; your first port of call should always be to stop and find out what you've got. I was just excluded literally from everything and that's the very first time in sixteen years of working [with strong emphasis] that I needed my job description!

(Susan, interview no. 2)

Deborah, another senior manager who was personally close to Susan, also expressed her dissatisfaction with regard to some status-related clashes with the interim

management team. Yet she explained that she could cope with the situation as long as she believed the change would ultimately benefit the programme:

Although I cringe inside when I have to make someone a drink or if I have to collect someone, coz I'm a manager and I've always been [pauses]; [but] it's painless ...

(Deborah, interview no. 2)

In the same interview, Deborah also briefly mentioned the change of status for Gemma who now had an interim line manager above her. Deborah believed that this new manager was treating Gemma as if she was her 'boss'. Other than these few members, the rest of the team showed thorough satisfaction with the shift in their responsibilities. They mostly explained that their roles had become more specific and focused, whereas before it had felt as if they were doing plenty of tasks and still did not know where exactly their work would fit in the overall programme framework. Yet even those who were satisfied with the change in their responsibilities seemed emotionally affected by tensions between others. In fact, Sandra explicitly mentioned that, although she was very happy with the slight changes to her role, she could not openly celebrate her happiness as most members were feeling the opposite.

6.2.3 Two teams within one and feelings of exclusion

Having a new director paralleled with recruitment of several project professionals on the interim basis. The first two, as mentioned earlier, were Steve as the programme manager and a new marketing and communications manager. The next freshly recruited members were three project professionals who were each leading one of the three work streams (see details in chapter five). Finally, a project support professional and a personal assistant for Megan also joined the team. Populating the team at such a fast

pace seemed to provoke a sense of losing control in some of the permanent staff, especially those who had been involved in writing the programme bid:

She [referring to Megan] got them in but that's like her team now; it's a bit like sort of a bloodless coup that these new people have come in and they are all very nice – nothing personal – but they seem to just really think they are the ones that are in charge and they are not really respecting all that's gone on beforehand whereas a lot has gone on it! You know, it is a bit heartbreaking!

(Deborah, interview no. 2)

Mathew also confirmed Deborah's view of this divide between the permanent and the interim members:

Sometimes it's like they are the leadership and we are kind of the workforce in general; it does feel like that sometimes ...

(Mathew, interview no. 2)

When Megan was interviewed, she also appeared to feel professionally closer to the interim project professionals than to the permanent members:

It was great for me when Steve came in because suddenly I was able to talk to someone who understood project delivery; who spoke the same language; before it was like I was speaking a foreign language to people; they just didn't understand that a programme is different! [Scoffs].

(Megan, interview no. 2)

Aside from Megan, other interim members appeared to also feel the divide in the team. Megan's personal assistant mentioned that she had noticed the divide after only being in post for less than a week. She specifically referred to the dynamics she had noticed in the staff away day, which happened to be one day prior to her first interview:

What I observed is that there is almost two teams within a team; the original people that set this up and won the bid, [and] perhaps I shouldn't say this but it's like they [pauses] ... they are finding it difficult with the new people that have come in; I think they just keep repeating that they won the bid and it's not like that they are moving forward!

(Tara, interview no. 1)

Steve, the interim programme manager, also believed the divide mainly originated from the members who had been involved in writing and winning the programme bid. He referred to a collusion between Susan and Deborah preventing the team from collaborating effectively as a cohesive unit:

It is collusive; I asked one of our delivery partners to meet with me and I got an email last week from Deborah saying that she was arranging this and I'd asked for this three weeks ago and she just said she's doing it now coz [before] she didn't feel it was appropriate around what was happening with Susan. So that's collusive and it's information for me in terms of where we have to look and be careful around!

(Steve, interview no. 1)

Over time, the divide was shown to gradually grow from merely professional matters into more personal aspects. For instance, upon an informal observation in the office, the team of permanent and interim staff were noticed to occupy two different tables during the lunch break. For more elaboration on this issue, the next section presents the findings on the reasons that were found to extend this divide. The section especially shows how the situation affected the team emotionally.

6.2.4 Tensions of the professional becoming personal

Along with the changes in statuses of the permanent members, the new senior management started to review the projects that had gone under delivery within the past

year. As the senior management decided to review all the documents and service level agreements, members of the original bid-writing team started to take this revision as a disrespect to their years of work prior to entrance of the new regime. Kate, who had been part of the original team explained how difficult it can be to not take things personally and exemplified the way she was dealing with the situation:

I think there is gonna be a lot of unpicking of what people have done and that can be hard and it can feel like it is a personal thing and always in my opinion if you can try and stay not defensive and stay positive about it then it will be a supporting process. It is really taking a step back, reflecting on it, and thinking about the alternative ways of seeing it; so if an email, for instance, comes across as saying that I've not done something very well, I will step back and not reply, and leave it long enough that I can reflect on it and then come back positively and just respond by saying 'Ok, peers haven't done this in the way that you would want it, how can I present it in a way that you do want?'

(Kate, interview no. 2)

Similar to Kate, Deborah, who had also been a key member of writing the programme bid explained how she had been trying to cope with the current dynamics in the team:

It's slightly annoying when they are looking at things and they think they can make a judgement but hey, if that's what it takes to make something happened [pauses] ... and it is better to get something happening rather than nothing!

(Deborah, interview no. 2)

In contrast to Deborah perceiving herself as accepting the circumstances for the good of the programme, Megan still believed that Deborah was indeed taking the situation personally. In her opinion, Deborah had shown herself to be sensitive around making the slightest of changes to the work that had been previously done prior to having the interim members. Megan, in turn, expressed her anger over having to deal with her objections:

So if I'm having that conversation with Deborah, she's constantly challenging and saying, 'But we did that three years ago, why are you doing this? Why are you doing that?' and that's actually really wearying. For example, she said 'is that a typo? Calling it this instead of that? That'd be a real shame that we've lost the focus on quality;' I mean [raises voice] I'm working my ass off and turning the programme around; I'm elevating the ambition, and people are saying to me that 'If you are changing the name, you are then going far from values,' and actually I'm absolutely clear that I'm taking it back to its original values!

(Megan, interview no. 2)

Megan also drew on another example to show how Deborah had been sensitive towards certain tasks that she had assigned to her:

It's not personal, it's bloody business! Deborah was refusing to set up the meetings that I got, saying so and so shouldn't be going to that and I said 'look, I'm the programme director!' [pauses and scoffs with frustration].

(Megan, interview no. 2)

Sally, a freshly joined interim project professional, also pointed to what she perceived to be defensive behaviour. She referred to a similar situation she had experienced with a permanent team member:

There's lots of defensive language use; some other day they [referring to the permanent team] overheard me having a conversation with someone else about the business case and they then sent me an email saying, 'Why on earth are you doing that!? You don't need to do that!' it was very, very defensive!

(Sally, interview no. 1)

The interim members especially pointed to Susan as the permanent member whom they perceived as most defensive. As the major figure in winning the programme bid along with Deborah and Kate, Susan was reported to be struggling the most in drawing the

boundary between the personal and the professional. Steve, the interim programme manager, explained:

I think Susan was the reason why the programme got funded and it's very clear, that's where her skill set is. She has found it very difficult in terms of first Paul leaving and then Megan taking over ... and she's found it very difficult to see where she fits in so she's carrying a lot of baggage around the past and that's impacting on her and particularly me and Megan but also because this is a turnaround programme and because we got to do it within six months sometimes it sounds hard, but the priority is to turn this programme!

(Steve, interview no. 1)

Megan also elaborated further on Steve's point about not having the resources to deal effectively with Susan. She offered as an example a situation where Susan had pointed at her high salary, which she saw as crossing the professional boundaries. She also mentioned that she had been trying to reach a middle ground with Susan but had found her difficult to engage with. Megan's frustration was at peak when she elaborated on a meeting where Susan could not stop her tears:

I would say that Susan doesn't have any professional boundaries; she just operates on a personal level; she said some things which I think were quite unprofessional referring to how much I was being paid indeed. We had a meeting and it ended up being a two hour session with her crying; I didn't have any lunch; I went home that evening absolutely exhausted. Afterwards she did email me to say, 'I've realised I've taken this very personally,' so she did hear what I was saying and things have shifted a bit but it's not shifting fast enough within my timescales for turning the programme around ... it's a drain! [raises voice] you know, I'm not a staff counsellor, I'm a programme director [scoffs]... It's hard [raises voice]!

(Megan, interview no. 2)

In response to Steve and Megan, Susan also explained her struggles and her reasons for taking the changes personally:

They [referring to Megan and Steve] have got no respect, no regard for all of the work that's been going on. It seems that anything that is attached to me or anything that would be brought in, they got rid of and that's how it's kind of felt personal and I've struggled to take the personal side out of it and I still struggle to take the personal side out of it and at times I suppose 'did I take it personal?' Yes, I did! Coz I was the lead! [raises voice].

(Susan, interview no. 2)

At this stage, Susan would suddenly burst into tears during her interviews. She would also explain how the work-related challenges had impacted her private life to the degree that she could barely sleep at night. Her individual story during this episode and beyond is presented in chapter seven, as the individual emotions become the focus.

6.2.1 Discussion

Episode two displays a turnaround situation (referring to Hauge's third stage in figure 3), whereby a radical shift takes place within a short period of time. Turnarounds in general, and also particular to this case, aim to replace ambiguity (as shown in episode one) with direction, progress, and structure (Engwall & Westling, 2004). In line with Engwall and Westling's (2004) use of the term *peripety* as a dramaturgical concept that highlights sudden shifts, the unexpected change of director in this episode can be seen as this programme's *peripety*, which marks a sudden change to the team's entire working scene. In their study of a turnaround situation in an R&D project, Engwall and Westling (2004) highlight time pressure and confidence as the major post-turnaround emotions. Episode two in this team story, however, pictures a more emotionally nuanced situation weeks after the *peripety* has taken place.

In particular, the appointment of a new programme director initially resulted in the team experiencing confidence in her and thus a sense of optimism emerged towards the faster progress of the programme. From a sense-making perspective, the first weeks after change provide a strong example of a sudden removal of an interrupting stimulus (i.e. weak programme structure) resulting in experience of positive emotions (i.e. confidence and optimism) (Weick, 1995). Yet, despite expression of positive feelings for the programme and its new direction, the team members were also concerned with their statuses within the new structure. Change is believed to result in identity ambiguity (Corley & Gioia, 2004; Hakak, 2014), as it did for a number of members, particularly those involved in writing the programme bid. More specifically, as interim members joined the programme, some team members started to feel a threat to their jobs and professional identities as they felt they were gradually losing control over what they had initiated in the first place.

The team was further divided into two sub-teams consisting of permanent and interim members. It is shown how members of each sub-team confirmed this divide, not only when describing their in-group but also in their accounts of their out-group members (Ybema et al., 2009). The bid-writing team accused the interim members of ignoring the history of the programme and disrespecting the hard work behind it. The interim members, on the other hand, saw the bid-writing team members as the 'less professional', who lacked the essential skills for project and programme management and were believed to have remained 'stuck' in the past. The findings in this episode show how the team started to gradually lose its sense of unity.

Despite the change resulting in a clearer working structure and job descriptions, the relationships became gradually at stake. The professional divide between team members started to become personal and defensive behaviours surfaced in this episode.

In other words, the task conflict in episode one was gradually replaced with relationship conflict, referring to disagreements among team members stemming from interpersonal discord (Jehn, 1995). Relationship conflict is believed to potentially result in feelings of tension in teams (ibid.). The findings in this episode provide a strong case for tensions mutually experienced by both permanent and interim team members due to increasing relationship conflict in the programme environment.

As the team were shown to have contrasting emotions towards the change and the change agent (i.e. the new programme director), the episode ultimately highlights the team's emotional ambivalence during the first weeks after the change. Ambivalence is defined as demonstrating both positive and negative orientations towards an object (Ashforth et al., 2014). Oreg and Sverdlik (2011) argue that it is the different orientations towards the notion of change and the change agent that result in the experience of ambivalence. In this episode, the importance of emotional sharing is especially highlighted in reaching ambivalence at the collective level. As seen, it was mainly the bid-writing team who experienced status threats and expressed negative emotions. However, their emotions also influenced other members, gradually resulting in a less positive orientation at the collective level.

6.3 EPISODE THREE: ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK – RESIGNATION BEHIND THE MASK OF RESILIENCE

As the programme went on, a major incident led to the intensification of the emotions explained above. As explained in episode two, right after the change took place the new management began to set up a programme infrastructure and review the few projects that had entered the delivery phase. Episode three started as the management decided to put the whole programme on hold for revision. In order for the team to realise the

rationale behind this pause and the overall revision, the management emphasised the need to adopt a ‘project/programme management’ perspective as opposed to ‘business as usual’, which was the approach attributed to the previous leadership. This in turn extended the previously explained divide between the team members.

To picture the team situation, this episode highlights the collective emotions in relation to two major areas through the analysis of the interview and diary data. These areas are: 1) the disharmony arising from enforcing a project management approach; and 2) the team’s feelings of deep concern that the continued divide between members might detrimentally impact the programme. In this episode, Susan left the programme and moved to another department in the same organisation. Yet, despite being physically absent, she seemed considerably relevant to the proceeding of matters in this episode. Therefore, interviews with her continued as before and her views are included in the following accounts.

6.3.1 The disharmony over adopting a project management mindset

By this episode, Megan started to refer to the programme as one of the toughest assignments that she had ever led. The reason, as she stated, was that although she was originally brought in to set up a programme management office, she had gradually realised that she would have to put the entire programme on hold for revision. She believed the trouble stemmed from the fact that the programme had progressed without a firm structure in place. In this episode, Megan’s focus shifted to enforcing a ‘project management mindset’ in team members in order for them to see the reason behind putting the entire work on pause. In the same vein, a newly joined interim project support member described his view of the situation, stressing the importance of

developing a different approach towards the programme than that of the permanent team:

From what I heard it's like previously there was no clear structure and no governance. You can see that before it was a bit of a mess and now there is this clear structure in place and it's actually going forward. Before, they obviously had the knowledge and the drive and the desire to win the bid but from a project/programme delivery [point of view] it's very different; you need a different mindset.

(Alex, interview no. 1)

Yet Alex also believed that the idea of pausing and reviewing the overall programme was not so straightforward in practice. As he believed, this was mainly due to the fact that some projects had already undergone the delivery phase prior to the change of management:

It's very confusing; I've never been in a project that's been done like that, where things have been delivered and then afterwards you build the business case as why should we deliver it; it's been very confusing; when I read or I talk to people I realise actually this's already happened so why am I doing this? But then again the project management structure has not been in place for that long so that's probably why it doesn't look like progress has been made because I don't see how it's possible to be creating plans now when things here already been delivered.

(Alex, interview no. 1)

By now, Deborah would also put the story as the interim members would. At this stage, she started to express her consent to the overall change of work structure and the overall direction the programme had taken:

I think things evolve and that's just happened the way it's happened; there might have been a happy medium, the project was full of passion but no project

management skills and now it's full of project management skills and not necessarily the same amount of passion; there is no point having a team full of passion and all this money if we still can't spend it.

(Deborah, interview no. 3)

In contrast to Deborah's projection of coping with the situation, Susan expressed her frustration in full. By this episode, she had refused to collaborate with the interim management and had left the programme to work in another department. However, she remained in contact with the programme as she had control over some major delivery partners. Not being part of the programme but having an overview of its progress seemed to allow her express her feelings more openly compared to others:

Another group of people have taken it up but what's happened is that the heart and soul of it is torn now; it's become just a project management industry. What she [referring to Megan] is brought in to do is leadership and governance and that's what, to me, she hasn't done if you ask me; but she's just paused the programme saying, 'This was wrong;' well, no actually it wasn't, read the bid! Read the bid! [raises voice].

(Susan, interview no. 2)

Furthermore, contrary to Deborah's projection of coping well, Susan believed Deborah had been silenced when opposing some of decisions of the senior management:

So when Deborah says, 'No, look, we've got this with the funder' she [referring to Megan] is not interested to know; she ignores it!

(Susan, interview no. 2)

Responding to Susan's view, Megan highlighted the difference between a programme and business as usual, stressing that in programmes the long-term outcomes are more important than the instant delivery. At this stage, in addition to the team members, she

also had to convince the leading partners, who were questioning the pause of programme:

The battle I'm having with the team here and the lead partners is that they are saying, 'We've got families who need services now,' and I'm saying, 'This is a ten-year programme; we should be testing and learning interventions for the first four years and then in year five, looking at the evaluation of everything we've done, then deciding what we are gonna upscale across the borough; we are not thinking of what we are providing across the borough in year one or two,' and you know, people don't just [pauses with frustration] ...

(Megan, interview no. 3)

The disharmony in people's manner of thinking and approaching the programme appeared to gradually amplify the divide between them. In this situation, team members each expressed sympathy for a certain way of running the programme; while some adapted to the changes and tried to adopt the enforced 'project delivery mindset', some saw the changes as breaching the original programme bid. The team seemed to lack a shared approach to fulfilling the programme outcomes.

6.3.2 The alarming divide

As the divide between the members increased, some started to openly express their desire for team cohesiveness. In her weekly diaries, Gemma referred to a team development session as the highlight of her week:

I was at my happiest yesterday after the team development session. I think it was just so useful for us all to be together, hear the same message- as messages are often translated differently recently- and be a bit creative together in the exercise.

(Gemma, diary, week no. 2)

In a follow-up interview, she explained the overall team atmosphere further:

I can sometimes literally see the frustration in Megan's face because obviously we all need to be flexible and adapt otherwise you are not gonna help this project work! I think there is still a bit of a divide; some people like Susan have moved away from the project and from a personal point of view [lowers the voice] I think that helps but obviously there was a circle of friends there and it sounds awful but I think their way of thinking isn't gonna change.

(Gemma, interview no. 3)

Sandra also seemed to share Gemma's concern, believing that the divide had become worse than it was in episode two. This was to the extent that she saw the programme's overall objectives at stake:

The people in the team need to come together really, you know, forget about the personal preferences. I have so many things that I prefer but my goal should be the work, you know we have a goal rather than individual preferences. We need to make sure that the work doesn't suffer; hopefully it won't suffer but there are people who are loyal and Megan thinks that there are people who still take information to Susan!

(Sandra, interview no. 3)

Sophie, one of the junior members, who had just left the programme, emphasised the lack of bonding between team members during the recent weeks at work. She compared the current situation with the team ambience under the previous leadership:

I think it's like lack of bonding. They're all together but they are doing their own thing. I think [before] there was definitely more of a bond; there was definitely more excitement; there was good changes happening and everyone was excited about them but now the changes are happening and no one is excited. I think the new team kind of were their own team; we were our own team and it was a bit separated; they would all hang out together; we would do our own things ...

(Sophie, interview no. 4)

As evident in the accounts, at this stage the divide was not simply between the permanent and the interim members. Sandra and Gemma were examples of permanent staff who shared the new management's view. What seemed to cause the divide was loyalty to a certain interpretation of the programme bid. Lucy, an interim admin support, believed the divide was quite obviously because interim members were less emotionally attached to the programme:

I think you can tell that the interim project managers are interim because [pauses] they do have that slight emotional detachment.

(Lucy, interview no. 1)

The bid-writing team, which included Susan, Deborah, and Kate, had each reacted to the changes in the programme in a different way. Kate was regarded by Megan as the member adapting the best to the new situation within this whole period. Her view of the programme was now closer to the interim staff. As in episode two, Deborah herself also projected that she was effectively collaborating with the interim members. Yet Megan referred to a recent issue she had experienced with Deborah over delivering a timetable of events for the upcoming weeks:

I can't tell you [raises voice with frustration] how many conversations I've had with Deborah; I was talking about it with her today and she was just saying, 'Give me another week,' and I just said, 'No, we've had this conversation so many times, my observation is that you are struggling.' Steve is now gonna be providing her with some coaching and will be providing her with much closer level of supervision and support but she's been quite defensive saying, 'I have managed a team before,' but she hasn't managed a team in a programme as complex as this!

(Megan, interview no. 3)

Despite Megan's account of supporting Deborah, Susan believed that Deborah had been in fact excluded to the degree that she had lost her confidence in delivering the work. In the same vein, Gemma also confirmed in a further interview that in the case of the above example, Deborah had indeed prepared the requested documents but did not show them to Megan due to her lowered self-confidence. This revealing interview with Gemma took place just after Deborah left the office one afternoon to come back three months later, after a period of rest and reflection. Her individual story is presented further in chapter seven.

6.3.3 Discussion

This episode corresponds with Hauge's fourth stage, shown in figure 3. Recalling the turnaround situation in episode two, this episode highlights the team's situation months after the change of director as the turnaround. The pictured scenario is best described through Engwall and Westling's proposition: 'a project which has already passed through its *peripety* may be forced to abandon the defining conceptualisation and revert to a new frustrating stage of ambiguity, exploration and problem-setting' (Engwall and Westling, 2004: 1574). More recently, Musca and colleagues' (2014) study of a project renewal also reveals how turnarounds might not always lead to a problem resolution mode.

In adding to these studies, the findings from this episode characterise a situation whereby the programme turnaround results in a backward shift into the beginning of the planning and definition stage, specifically highlighting the team's emotional experience in dealing with this backward shift. As the entire programme is put on hold for revision, the team once again goes into a stage of confusion and frustration. The episode especially highlights feelings of resignation as the leading emotion after the

turnaround results in redefining the programme. Despite feeling the confusion and frustration, team members strive to accept their inevitable work conditions.

Moreover, programme revision was shown to result in a situation of task conflict, not only between the new director and the members of the bid-writing team, but evidently between her and the lead programme partners. Each party seemed to keep holding a different view of how the programme should progress. In addition to the task conflict, programme revision also worsened the relationship conflict that had started in episode two. The backward shift seemed again to be taken personally by those involved in the planning phase before. They each displayed different levels of defensiveness, which in turn increased the overall tensions within the team. In this situation, each team member was shown to be *coping* with the tense office environment.

Although team members did not all express their frustration verbally, the dissonance between what they felt and what they expressed was specially captured in *how* they gave their accounts. As previously discussed, emotions do not only surface verbally, but at times they are expressed in non-verbal vocalisations such as laughter (Owren & Bachorowski, 2003) or micro bodily movements (Adams & Kleck, 2003). In this episode, embodied emotions are evident in Susan's tears in silence, Sandra and Gemma's sighs and distressed voice in their interviews, and Megan's constant pauses with tight fist when speaking about her struggles with Deborah, Susan, and others. Emotional dissonance and regulation is particularly highlighted in the case of Deborah, as she only agreed to show her 'real' feelings off the record, and also later in episode four when she returned from her 'sick' leave period. Her detailed story can be found in chapter seven.

6.4 EPISODE FOUR: THE BREAKDOWN – DRAINED AND DISAPPOINTED

The one-year supervision was eventually extended to fifteen months, a year of which was spent under the interim leadership. Episode four pictures the last four months of this period. At this stage, not only the interim members but some of the permanent staff also left the programme, due to different reasons that are explained further. Data in this episode was collected via rounds of interviews with the key team members: Megan, Gemma, Sandra, Sally, and finally Deborah, who returned to work after a season of leave. Reflecting on their year-long journey of turns and twists, the team members each expressed their emotions in relation to task and maintenance functions.

6.4.1 ‘Lost’ in the ebb and flow of task functions

Towards the end of the study, team members expressed their perceptions of the programme having become stuck in design loops:

A lot of changes is going on; at the start of this change process I was happy that we’d proposed change and now we are moving on but then I started to feel like, ‘You don’t know anyone;’ it’ll be this thing today and then tomorrow another thing; I don’t mind change, I love change as long as it is going to lead to something; [but] now it’s like we all run and do it and then it’s like, ‘No, no, we’re not doing that; we’re doing this,’ and then it feels like, ‘What’s the point?’!

(Sandra, interview no. 4)

In response to the accounts such as above, Megan also explained how a sudden shift in the funder’s requirements had elevated her own frustration:

The funder changed the goal posts; we’ve been working against this remedial action plan and there were five major areas that we needed to address, making good progress. And then at the end of November, they suddenly said, ‘We don’t

think you are gonna be turning it around soon enough so we are putting that remedial action plan to one side and we want you to develop a strategy and plan for your portfolio for next year and we want you to do it by the end of January and it's got to involve all your strategic partners and be co-produced and be costed!' So they suddenly massively changed the goal posts and again we were just about to be getting to business as usual and then we had this whole new requirement ... [pauses and sighs].

(Megan, interview no. 4)

Moreover, once again team members' roles and tasks became ambiguous. Members mainly expressed their frustration over being excluded from decision-making processes. They also stated that they felt their input was not valued and that their work was disrespected. In this regard, Sandra gave a prominent example of how she felt her months of effort on arranging the service level agreements (SLAs) had been neglected by the management:

I was working on SLAs and I just got an email from Megan on a Friday afternoon saying, 'From now on you don't do SLA any more, Steve will be doing it,' and I emailed back saying, 'Where did that come from? You just stopped me abruptly from doing what I'm doing ... What is it? I would like to really continue with this if you don't mind ... and also it's not fair ... I've been assigned a task that I'm in the middle of doing, it's not fair to just leave that.' She emailed back [saying], 'Ok, we pick this up with Steve next week,' and the following week it was only Steve who met me and he was like, 'You are not doing it.' He didn't give me any reason, just said, 'You are not doing it' [pauses and sighs].

(Sandra, interview no. 5)

Sandra's voice when explaining the incident was unprecedentedly upset and tired. She had previously shown to be one of the most positive members of the permanent team

during the most turbulent of times. In a follow-up interview, Megan explained the issue with Sandra over the piece of work in question:

We gave her the role of sorting all the SLAs with providers but she went off and decided to redesign the SLAs and then when it came to the lawyer here she just said you cannot change that, and we didn't ask Sandra to change the actual document. We asked her to work with the suppliers to populate the individual details of the individual projects. Steve was line-managing her and he found it very challenging that he said he had to tell her everything six times before she actually grasped it. She was like a cottage industry, she would just go off and do something; she has got some ability but it's been difficult to focus her on something and stop her going off!

(Megan, interview no. 4)

For Sandra, this was not the first time she had felt her work had been disrespected. Sally, one of the interim project managers described another situation where exclusion of Sandra from a decision relevant to her work resulted in her proceeding with another task, which ultimately came to be perceived as pointless:

We were looking at the evaluations of the current projects and that's something that Sandra does. In a programme meeting we decided that let's stop the evaluations and just put them on hold until we get proper process in place. So that afternoon I said to Steve 'I'm really concerned coz Sandra's about sending out another evaluation and if we got it on hold we need to let her know, can you please speak to her and let her know?' 'Yeah, yeah, yeah, I do it,' [he says] and then again as he was leaving I said 'Steve, you'll inform Sandra, won't you?' he said, 'Yes, I will' and he didn't. So the next day Sandra had sent the evaluation form and had copied me in and I said to her, 'We are not doing this now; we've stopped with evaluations,' so then that caused a problem and she got really upset with me.

(Sally, interview no. 2)

As the other member of the permanent team who had initially welcomed the change of management, at this final stage Gemma also expressed frustration over a number of task-related matters. The first issue, as she explained, was that she felt she had been recently forced to take on tasks that did not relate to her official role in the team. This happened when Deborah was on leave and Gemma was asked to cover for her:

He [referring to Steve] would just basically load me with stuff and it's a business support role; it's not comms and I get it coz people try to cover each other if anyone is off; he gave a lot of stuff and I was like this isn't my job; not just because I don't wanna do it but also because I don't know how to do it coz it's not my job; it's not like I just don't want to do it but I don't have time to do it; I don't know how to do it!

(Gemma, interview no. 4)

In further interviews, Gemma also explained how the whole team had been in trouble since one of the interim project managers had left unexpectedly without providing the team with a proper handover of his work:

At the minute Adam has gone and there has been no handover; we have to find all these documents and we've got no idea where they're saved, we don't know what he was up to with his projects. Also it's difficult with providers; so if he's having difficulties with providers we'd now have to step in and sort it out; we don't know who he's been talking to and what the conversation were and we look unprofessional and I constantly feel that we look unprofessional [emphasis].

(Gemma, interview no. 5)

In Gemma's case, despite seeing the prospects for doing more tasks related to her official team role, she eventually decided to leave as she seemed too drained from the overall journey with the programme:

To be honest, recently I felt we are gonna be doing more comms which is obviously exciting and I've enjoyed it. I'm passionate about it but I feel too drained from it all now and I don't wanna be like that; although I'm still enthusiastic but you can be drained as well at the same time, does that make sense?

(Gemma, interview no. 5)

Altogether, it was not only the permanent members who demonstrated frustration over task-related issues. Sally, an interim project manager, explained tearfully how she had been recently excluded from decision-making procedures:

So they often have meetings [referring to Megan and Steve] and I know that they are really stressed; I know that; what I don't understand is that why wouldn't they bring us into help to reduce that stress. You know, they are off doing things we got no idea what they are doing; no idea! Then decisions are made and we don't know why and we haven't had any input into it; it's like our voices aren't heard. In fact, we are not being listened to but then criticised later on for doing what we'd been forced to do rather than what we would naturally do so it's not [pauses] ... they are stressed but I think, 'for God's sake! Delegate! Speak to us!' [with tears in eyes].

(Sally, interview no. 2)

As shown, from the most senior to the least, the team members seemed to have lost the objective of their individual work, the overall programme, and the direction it was going. Additionally, what Gemma and Deborah pointed out at this stage was that a year of working with strict project management protocols had not led into actual work being delivered to the targeted community and that it had merely resulted in more and more paperwork. Their perceptions of the work becoming gradually meaningless is included in the following chapter.

6.4.2 Failure of maintenance functions and the sense of giving up

As shown above, the team atmosphere became considerably tense due to the lack of consensus on each member's tasks as well as some of the decisions above the hierarchy. Yet the last interviews revealed that for most team members the task functions were just part of the reason to leave the programme. Despite the previous episodes where tensions were mainly seen between the bid-writing team and the interim staff, in this last episode tensions also grew further between the interim members themselves. The divide was now between the senior management and all others to a greater or lesser degree. Two weeks prior to leaving, Sally explained with tears in her eyes:

There is a real divide between the senior management and the project management team; there is massive gap. The people management skills are missing at the top, definitely, and I'm leaving because of this! Yeah! I think I can't do my job properly; I just would hate being here [tears in eyes] ... it's a shame but people at the top think that they know everything and we know nothing!

(Sally, interview no. 2)

When Megan was asked about Sally leaving, she first mentioned that her contract was coming to an end but then gave more elaboration on the clashes she and Steve had been experiencing with her:

I would describe her [referring to Sally] as a diva. When I appointed her last summer there was no infrastructure or process in the programme at all and actually what Sally's strength was around process and forms and designing templates; she really helped set up that infrastructure and as we got more on top of the portfolio the work became more about building relationships with stakeholders and actually that wasn't such a strength of hers. And there were a couple of things like we had a project support officer and actually Sally was using her like PA like getting her to manage her diary and I'm like what the

fuck! I'm not paying someone to be your PA! She also didn't get on with Steve and I think that had to do with status and hierarchy.

(Megan, interview no. 4)

With regard to her relationship with Steve, Sally mentioned in her last interview that she believed Megan had shown a degree of favouritism towards him and also towards Tara, her personal assistant:

There's very much this favouritism going on. I don't understand why Megan is so supportive of Steve; she's also very supportive of Tara, who doesn't get on well with many people and she didn't get on with Deborah and Lucy stepped up for Deborah and the next day she was got rid of. Now Tara doesn't get on well with Judy so we are expecting that to happen again!

(Sally, interview no. 2)

Tensions escalated even further during this episode. The clashes started to emotionally affect others who were not directly involved. As a result, the final episode became the period with a high degree of absenteeism, as members pointed that they preferred to stay distant from the work environment:

I have felt incredibly frustrated this week at work and overwhelmed, not because of workload but by the office environment. Coupled with other factors outside of work I then got quite upset in the office on Weds and decided I needed Thursday off.

(Gemma, diary, week no. 7)

Gemma further mentioned that the reason for being upset was hearing that Sally would be leaving the team soon. A few months after this diary entry, losing Sally, Lucy, and Alex, and having Deborah on leave was mentioned by Gemma as a main reason to decide to leave the programme. She was one of the members on permanent contract and had shown a great deal of enthusiasm in episode one towards the programme and

its objectives. However, now her frustration over the high team staff turnover had brought her to the stage that she said she had decided to quit the job:

There have been more changes in terms of the staff; Alice's gone now [scoffs] and I believe she was asked to leave; Lucy was before her, then Alice, then Monica who's also gone now, and now there is a lady in called Jane; Adam has left; he went yesterday due to personality clashes. So yeah it's just constant change and I understand why we had constant change but it's just not a good environment to be in when people are just in and out!

(Gemma, interview no. 5)

In response to the high staff turnover explained above, Megan believed the situation was not surprising in what she described as a fast-pace programme environment populated mostly with interim staff:

We had a number of junior admin support people working with the team like Lucy and she couldn't basically do the job and I gave her notice. I mean in a fast pace programme environment you can't afford to carry passengers. So that's the great thing about having temps, they are on a week's notice. We give people induction and support but if they can't deliver ...

(Megan, interview no. 4)

What seemed to have made the team members especially frustrated was that the high staff turnover was not justified to them by the senior management. Accordingly, all they would receive in such cases was an email informing them of a colleague's leaving without any further explanation:

Sally left; Adam left ... I was on annual leave or something and I came back and they said he's gone! Shocking! I don't know what happened; it was actually an email saying that as off today he's not working with the team and that's it; no discussions; nobody talks and I think that's one of the things maybe I'm

unhappy about. I have had roles in the past where I've led a team of people, and none of this [pauses] it's not the ideal style that you don't talk to people.

(Sandra, interview no. 5)

In line with Sandra's view, Gemma especially mentioned how lack of follow-ups from management in times of withdrawals had led the team to gossiping:

We are not given reasons; it just seems to happen or you hear gossip and gossip is the worst thing that can happen.

(Gemma, interview no. 5)

As well as the team members mentioned above, Gemma also left the programme by the end of this episode. Deborah returned from her three-month leave, hoping that she had retrieved her strength to continue her role. Sandra decided to leave after Gemma's withdrawal. However, she reconsidered her decision after an unexpected announcement from the funder. In the last month of this study, the funder announced that the interim senior managers were no longer affordable for the programme. As a result, a new management regime was expected to take over from the following month.

6.4.3 Discussion

As the end of the team story, this episode refers to the two final stages of Hauge's model. The episode shows team members' accounts as they reflect on their work environment after several incidents and interruptions during the supervision period. At this stage, team members expressed their perceptions of the programme getting stuck in design loops. Design loops are shown by Gällstedt (2003) to be among the many incidents that can impact project teams' perception of their working conditions as well as their commitment to the project. This episode shows the team members' perception of design loops due to the several changes and disruptions to their workflow throughout their overall journey.

The episode especially highlights feelings of drain and disappointment for all team members. One expresses disappointment of others when referring to one's higher expectations of them (Johnson & Connelly, 2014). In this episode, while the team members openly express disappointment with the senior management for both task and maintenance functions, the senior management also expresses disappointment with the programme funder for having suddenly changed the previously agreed deliverables. In fact, it is this feeling of disappointment that distinguishes this episode from episode three. While in episode three team members showed themselves to be *coping* with the several team and work dynamics, in this final stage they refuse to cope and decide to leave the programme. Those who do not leave are at least considering the decision to do so. Disappointment is known to result in holding a pessimistic view of the future (Bell, 1985). Similarly, team members were shown to engage in withdrawal behaviour as they lost hope that their work environment would become any more stable.

In turn, withdrawals themselves were shown as a major source of negative emotions. Withdrawals are considered to be part of any project setting, as the team composition is expected to change based on the project needs at each stage (Eskerod & Blichfeldt, 2005). What this episode highlights is *ongoing* withdrawals in the team and their interruptive nature. Especially, in line with Eskerod and Blichfeldt's (2005) study, this episode shows short-notice withdrawals as a major source of frustration in project settings. The episode further builds on their findings by highlighting the reasons that can add to the frustrations of the team when a team member leaves at short notice. First, the team experienced frustration as the withdrawals were not justified for them by the senior management. Over time, this left the team not only frustrated but also it was shown to lead them to engage in gossip (e.g. 'If the director's PA does not get on well with a member, they will be asked to leave.'). The second reason behind the frustration

was that the extremely high staff turnover within a very short period of time resulted in a lesser sense of group identity. Coupled with the team divide and having members off sick, the high staff turnover resulted in losing the sense of being part of a team. Finally, some members experienced frustration when short-notice withdrawals resulted in poor handovers and therefore resulted in work overload for the remaining members.

6.5 CONCLUSION

The team journey presented in this chapter exemplifies a programme where the momentum is lost in several occasions, causing strong emotions for the team. The chapter presented the details of the several incidents that emerged over time in the programme, serving as 'shocks' to the team's work scene. To deal with the ambiguities and uncertainties following such shocks, the team engaged in sense-making with the hope of returning to a level of stability (Dougherty & Drumheller, 2006). The flow of disruptions, however, never ended but each time a new set of interruptive forces either replaced or intensified the old concerns. In this sense, the study shows that intensive sense-making is not exclusive to the programme initiation stage (Thiry, 2002; Martinsuo & Lehtonen, 2007) and provides a case where sense-making is always present and is, in fact, always intense.

From the programme team's standpoint, it is seen how the programme work gradually became more about *coping* than it was about making actual progress. Starting from a state of bewilderment but light-heartedness, the team members initially felt ambivalent when making sense of the first set of changes (i.e. change of director and team expansion); they experienced resignation in dealing with further disruptions; and ultimately ended up in disappointment as conflict, uncertainty, and ambiguity became the sole stable features of the programme. Eventually, coping and resignation was

replaced by action as several team members voluntarily withdrew from the programme. To particularly emphasise the relationality of all scenarios and resulting emotions, this chapter attempted to give voice to all parties involved, including the programme bid-writing team, the rest of the permanent team, and the interim management.

Studies in project management suggest that project teams are continually dealing with a wide range of emotional experiences such as frustration and disappointment (Stephens & Carmeli, 2016). As argued by Gällstedt (2003), emerging incidents in projects can affect the team's perceptions of working conditions. Yet it is acknowledged that when compared to projects, programmes entail an even higher degree of ambiguity (Pellegrinelli, 1997; Pellegrinelli et al., 2011; Pellegrinelli, 2011; Martinsuo & Hoverfält, 2018). They also consist of more stakeholders with evolving expectations (Thiry, 2002) and they have to remain continually responsive to their outer environment (Thiry, 2004). Having traced the actuality of such programme dynamics in practice, this thesis argues that programmes can become subject to never-ending incidents and thus they potentially entail a higher risk for developing negative perceptions of working conditions at the team level. The intense negativity is especially shown in the high staff turnover throughout the final episode.

Each of the episodes presented in this chapter highlights the major set of reasons behind ambiguity, which further gave rise to the experience of emotions. The ambiguity in episode one is seen as partly inherent in any programme environment, as the programme goals are believed to be rarely clarified from the beginning (Nieminen & Lehtonen, 2008). The explained ambiguity was also partly due to the lack of a clear work structure. Coupled with the demanding external forces, such as the programme funder and the detached partners, the programme team was shown to feel pressured to progress while it was 'stuck' in a state of bewilderment.

Regardless of the overall bewilderment shown in this episode, the sense of ‘oneness’ between the team members was shown to result in a state of light-heartedness at the collective level. However, as the director changed in episode two, the ambiguity gradually shifted from the work and programme structure to previously cheerful relationships. Ultimately, the entrance of interim members with an entirely different approach to the programme resulted in the formation of two teams within one. When striving to make sense of the overall impact of this change, the team members showed emotional ambivalence; while they perceived the change to have a positive effect in task-related aspects, they were concerned with the tensions in intra-team relationships and the overall team identity.

Further along the journey as the whole programme was put on hold for revision in episode three, the team returned to the task ambiguity of episode one while still carrying relationship ambiguities from episode two. In other words, episode three shows a situation of both relationship and task conflict within the team. As a result, the team members experienced feelings of resignation as they had to cope with the inevitable circumstances. Coping and resignation specially surfaced through the discrepancy between what members said they felt and how they actually seemed to feel based on their non-verbal behaviour or through third-party accounts. The resignation in episode three ultimately evolved into a sense of disappointment that was beyond coping in episode four.

The final episode showcases the rise of absenteeism and voluntary withdrawals from the programme team. This is the episode where members finally start to act upon the task and relationship conflicts that have been present in the programme team and have built up throughout the previous episodes. The accounts in this episode show that relationship conflict in this programme team was more important than task conflict in

leading to voluntary withdrawals. Turnover itself is known to negatively disrupt the project team's performance (Parker & Skitmore, 2005). The importance of managing withdrawals in project teams has been previously raised by Eskerod and Blichfeldt (2005) but has not been taken any further on what happens when withdrawals are poorly managed. This thesis extends their study by showing two important consequences of inadequate attention to short-notice withdrawals in project and especially programme teams. Team members in this study engaged in gossip to justify the unexplained withdrawal. Also, some were shown to experience high levels of frustration due to having to cover for leaving colleagues with poor handovers.

The story especially highlights the importance of losing team identity in developing negative emotions. Feeling a sense of identity and belonging within members is suggested to be crucial for the very existence of a project team, which is cooperation (Nocker, 2009: 150). Defined as the extent to which members perceive a sense of 'oneness' with a team (Gundlach et al., 2006), team identification is suggested to directly impact team effectiveness (Druskat & Wolf, 2001). The literature on group identification stresses the role of satisfactory interpersonal relationships for members to identify with the group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Gaertner et al., 1990). Ding and colleagues (2014) suggest that project managers need to pay special attention to the cultivation of members' team identification. The findings in this chapter further highlight this importance by revealing the costs of the failure to effectively address relationship conflict at the team level.

With a focus on negative emotions, the team literature warns of the long-term consequences of short-term suppressions (Waldron & Krone, 1991; Kahn, 2005; Druskat & Wolf, 2001). Specific to project teams, Stephens and Carmeli's (2016) recent study confirms that the constructive expression of negative emotions facilitates

knowledge sharing and hence improves prospects for the overall project success. This research provides further evidence on how the failure to effectively address negative emotions at the team level can ultimately result in a negative group affective tone (George, 1990). Regardless of their seniority, both permanent and interim team members overtly expressed their negative emotions consistently and unanimously during the final episode.

Altogether, this chapter shows how negative emotions can start with a few individuals and reach out to the team. To focus further on the experience of these key individuals as the main 'actors', the following chapter elaborates on their stories.

CHAPTER 7: THE INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE OF EMOTIONS

7.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings and the discussion of the IPA study for four individual team members based on the data collected from their individual interviews and diaries. As explained in chapter four, the reason for choosing these four members was their prolonged participation in the study as well as their comparatively ‘richer’ emotional experience. The findings reveal that individual emotions were mainly experienced around three major issues: 1) emotions experienced during the individuals’ identity work; 2) emotions caused by a perceived sense of injustice; and 3) emotions that emerged as the members gradually perceived the work to become meaningless. Accordingly, the chapter is structured in three major sections, each presenting the emotions experienced in relation to the above (superordinate) themes. The discussion of the findings is included at the end of each section.

7.1 EMOTIONS AND IDENTITY WORK

Throughout the study, all four members showed evidence of professional identity struggles, which consequently led them to engage in a form of identity work. The process of identity work was shown to be infused with strong negative emotions for all team members. Table 18 displays the emotions experienced for each member participating in the IPA study. Identity work particularly emerged as a source of emotions for the team members once the programme director was suddenly replaced. Each member embarked on identity work in a different stage after the change.

For Susan, who had been on holiday when the change took place, identity work started immediately after her return. Once a senior manager, she was now confronted with a severe threat to her high status in the team hierarchy. As briefly shown in chapter six,

she mentioned that she had been systematically excluded from all the senior management meetings.

Superordinate theme	Emotions (sub-theme)	Emotion definition (Oxford English Dictionary, 2018)	Team members contributing to this sub-theme
Emotions and identity work	Grief	Intense sorrow, especially caused by someone's death.	Susan
	Defensiveness	The quality of being anxious to challenge or avoid criticism; the behaviour intended to defend or protect.	Susan
	Strain	A state of tension or exhaustion resulting from severe demands on one's strength or resources.	Deborah, Gemma, Sandra
	Loss of confidence	The loss of self-assurance arising from the lack of appreciating one's own abilities or qualities.	Susan, Deborah, Gemma

Table 18: Summary of the emotions and identity work

On the other hand, an interim programme manager (Steve) had joined the team during her leave period, who Susan believed was essentially filling her previous position. Susan's identity struggles were also more intense than the other three members' as she had been the major figure of the bid-writing team and was therefore widely known as the 'creator' of the programme. As a result, the new working arrangements seemed to have caused a sense of grief for her:

So, I came back from my annual leave; all happy came in on a Monday; my diary had been cleared; I'd been blacklisted I suppose for no reason or for no detail. I met really quickly with Megan and said what's happening [Megan said], 'Oh, all I want you to do,' and that's how she spoke to me, 'is this area of work.' I said, 'No thank you! You know, I'm a senior manager; that's not my role; that's not my job!' So I came back and my whole world was in bits really! It's been hard! It's been hard [bursts into tears].

(Susan, interview no. 2)

As in the above extract and previously explained in chapter six, Susan kept refusing Megan's offer to take another role, which essentially meant taking a lower position in the programme team hierarchy. She was fighting to remain the senior manager she had always been. Two months after the change of director, she forcefully left the programme for a part-time role in another department in the same organisation. The new job essentially involved the role she had prior to being seconded to the programme once it was initiated. However, leaving the programme did not seem to help her in overcoming the grief. In an interview after her leave, she tearfully explained how she had not been able to 'sleep for even one night' and how she daily came to work 'dreading it'. She also described how the overall situation had resulted in a loss of confidence in her personal identity and the values that she had lived by during her whole life:

It's been really hard to think about trust ... am I so naïve? you then start challenging; it's really weird to think like that and then I think, 'Do I ever wanna change? Do I?' [and the answer is] 'no... I don't.' So it is a lesson for you to think about as well; my daughter especially is very much like me but I tell her in life as well you have to have a devil side!

(Susan, interview no. 2)

Susan stressed that she had finally decided to stand up to the new management, especially after recently meeting with Deborah, the other bid-writing team member who was still part of the programme team under the new leadership. Susan and Deborah were indeed the two members who had initially taken the initiative to write the programme bid. Susan's sense of defensiveness seemed to be at its peak at this stage, not only for herself but also in defence of Deborah:

It's gone really wrong to a stage that when I saw Deborah last week, I actually said, 'I'm going down the hard line;' I'm gonna make them pay for what they've

done not just to me but I have to stand up for Deborah. So I've decided now to seek legal advice.

(Susan, interview no. 2)

Deborah's identity struggles, however, manifested differently from Susan's and so did her emotions. The change of director had resulted in a change in her responsibilities, most of which did not seem to be in her skill set (as also briefly explained by the new management in chapter six). Her wording and the impression she was trying to give during the interviews was remarkably different from Susan's and others' accounts about her:

I am being pulled sharply by Megan and Steve who are saying, 'Come on! You are actually a senior manager and you need to be acting more strategically and making some decisions for yourself and blah blah blah ...' I find that quite difficult because with the previous director we weren't really empowered to make decisions and there is a fine line between making a decision and asking a question that you know the project managers know the answer to, so it's now just finding the balance at the moment.

(Deborah, interview no. 3)

Despite Deborah's attempt to keep the façade of coping, she actually seemed to be under a severe strain due to her considerably increased workload. The overload aside, she seemed to be lacking the skills and knowledge to deliver some of the tasks she was asked to. The inability to adjust and live up to the standards of the new management gradually eroded her sense of confidence. During the above interview, Deborah's strain was evident in the very fact that she had rather 'rushed' and 'prepared' answers to all the questions. Her true feelings only became more evident as I accidentally learnt that a week after her third interview she left the programme for a 'sick' leave period, which

lasted for three months. It was only upon her return that she admitted she had been under severe strain:

I'm not sure if I was able to be completely honest because I think I gave the impression that I was coping and I wasn't really coping and I was off quite soon after our last interview. So I just had [pauses] ... I honestly don't know why and I'm so embarrassed about it but I think I just had so much to do and so many varied things to do ...

(Deborah, interview no. 4)

Similar to Deborah, Gemma and Sandra also experienced a significant strain on their professional identities after the change. Their strain initially manifested in the weekly diaries. They both had to work overtime or occasionally compromise their personal plans to fulfil their workload. The following diary extracts reveal how they both dealt with the situation. In Gemma's case, she also had to cover for members who were absent or had left the team, the tasks of whom seemed to be out of her skills set:

Wednesday I felt overwhelmed with the amount of work and got a bit teary. Lucy departing means that her workload has had to be split between us. We had a lot of responses coming into the generic inbox that she would normally have dealt with. I then had to reply to some tricky emails straight away, which was just an added frustration after a busy and stressful day!

(Gemma, diary, week no. 4)

Feels like people are just trying to pass work onto others where we have no expertise because people are sick/leaving etc. I'm exhausted and looking forward to the weekend. It's been quite stressful as I've been working on things that aren't in my remit and feel that I have little support when doing them. Apprehensive about next week as I already have a lot to do let alone anything else additional next week.

(Gemma, diary, week no. 5)

Not enough time in the week. I missed my Springboard training due to a meeting at work. ☹️

(Sandra, diary, week no. 2)

I superseded my own set goals for this week, I managed to get quite a lot done and I think this is largely due to me coming to the office very early as early as 7:15 am on average.

(Sandra, diary, week no. 4)

Over time, both Gemma and Sandra also engaged in a form of professional identity work. Sandra simply tried to remain ‘a good member of this team by taking whatever that was thrown at [her],’ (Sandra, interview no. 5). She strove hard to rise above the strain. She also remained part of the team until the end of the study. For Gemma, on the other hand, it was not just the strain she had to deal with, but only after nine months did she eventually confessed that the change in status had resulted in her losing her confidence:

So before I would have reported directly to the director who was Paul and now there has been a middle manager put in. It’s happened across the board and it’s not a personal attack on me but I have lost confidence, which is part of the reason that I thought I’d go to a job where I’ve got 100 per cent backing behind me that what I’m saying is correct. I’d feel more confident in that environment whereas at the minute I don’t have that confidence, which I’ve told to Megan and Angela, I mean I love doing the day job but I don’t really get much involvement now in the strategic stuff, which I’m capable of doing and I have done in previous roles. So it’s more a confidence thing; my confidence has been knocked and again that sort of trust that I don’t feel; all they want from me is to get on with the job and deliver, I feel like it’s not as high as it was if that makes sense.

(Gemma, interview no. 5)

A week after this interview, Gemma finally withdrew from the programme.

7.1.1 Discussion

Identity work becomes especially intense in situations characterised by crises, tension and constraint (Breit, 2014; Brown, 2015). In times of transitions, contradictions, and unexpected events, people engage in identity work as a result of emotional arousals, self-doubt, and also openness to new possibilities (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Koerner, 2014). The team story in chapter six presented the details of several unexpected incidents at the collective level, including the change of director, which brought threats to the statuses of some members. In line with the literature on threat and identity work (Snow & Anderson, 1987; Brown & Coupland, 2015), individuals in this research were shown to engage in different approaches to maintain their identities. As seen above, Susan protected her identity by leaving the programme while others decided to 'survive' the change. To discuss their individual emotional experience, Collinson's (2003) three identity strategies of *conformist*, *dramaturgical*, and *resistant* were found especially relevant to the findings presented above.

Identity threat for Susan was felt instantly after the change of director. Initially, she adopted the *resistant* strategy by showing her discontent towards the new management and several of their transformational procedures (Collinson, 2003). Likewise, she further resisted the new management's decision to assign her a lower position in the programme team hierarchy. Her former role eventually became redundant to the restructured programme and as she kept refusing the new role, she had to leave the team. In fact, resisting the change resulted in Susan eventually losing her job. Job loss is seen as the loss of work identity (Shepherd & Williams, 2018). It is regarded as especially painful for those who invest a large deal of their time, effort, and identities in their career (Gabriel et al., 2013), as was the case for Susan in this programme. Therefore, it is not surprising that Susan's story is filled with a strong sense of grief.

She does not merely grieve her professional identity but also questions her very sense of 'self'. Her case also highlights defensiveness and a desire for retaliation against the people who are perceived to have caused the grief.

With regard to the other three members, the emotional journey is essentially different as they engage in other forms of identity work proposed by Collinson (2003). Having decided to remain in the programme, the restructure is shown to result in role stress for the other three members. Role stress is defined as 'the strain resulting from ambiguity, conflict, or overload in multiple task requirements or roles of employees' (Savelsbergh et al., 2012: 68). The two concepts of role conflict and role overload became particularly relevant in the experience of emotions. *Role conflict* refers to the presence of more than one set of pressures, in a situation where complying with one would hinder compliance with the others (Savelsbergh et al., 2012; Kahn et al., 1964). *Role overload*, on the other hand, is believed to occur in either quantitative or qualitative forms. Quantitative role overload occurs when there is inconsistency between the demands on an individual and the time and resources available to meet those demands. Qualitative role overload is experienced when the individual lacks the knowledge and skills to fulfil the expectations (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1980). In attempting to survive the programme restructure, Deborah was shown to be dealing with role overload that subsequently resulted in feelings of severe strain. In her case, qualitative role overload is shown as particularly relevant as she was shown to lack the skills to meet some of the demands of the new management.

Deborah's role overload not only resulted in her experiencing strain but also gradually caused her a lack of confidence. Moreover, Deborah's strain was shown to be considerably more intense than that of the two other members, which arguably

stemmed from her engaging in a *dramaturgical* strategy of identity work (Collinson, 2003). The dramaturgical strategy is inevitably involved with a great deal of surface acting (*ibid.*) and the existing literature suggests large evidence for the relationships between surface acting with strain and the overall employee well-being (Hochschild, 1983; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; Côté, 2005; Pugh et al., 2011; Becker et al., 2017). Deborah's story shows further evidence for the experience of strain as a result of surface acting during dramaturgical identity work.

Finally, Gemma and Sandra displayed behaviours typically attributed to *conformist* identity strategy (Collinson, 2003). Their strategy included working longer hours and meeting tight deadlines even if it involved compromising personal plans. Both members experienced role stress and went through the subsequent strain. While mainly resulting from role overload for Sandra, the strain experienced by Gemma was more associated with role conflict as she had to continually take on others' jobs in addition to her own. She also used the term 'firefighting' in her diaries, when referring to weekly tasks she had been undertaking. Eventually, in response to the increasing strain and the decreasing confidence due to the shift in her status, Gemma decided to leave the programme. Altogether, the findings present evidence for the intense experience of negative emotions through three distinguished forms of strategies to identity work suggested by Collison (2003).

7.2 EMOTIONS AND PERCEIVED INJUSTICE

As the change gradually unfolded in the programme management team, all the four team members started to perceive a sense of injustice and unfairness. This perception was in relation to either the manner they were treated personally or the way they believed their close colleagues had been subjected to unfair treatment by the new

management. Table 19 displays the emotions accompanied by this perception of injustice.

Superordinate theme	Emotions (sub-theme)	Emotion definition (Oxford English Dictionary, 2018)	Team members contributing to this sub-theme
Emotions and perceived injustice	Indignation	Anger or annoyance provoked by what is perceived as unfair treatment.	Susan, Deborah, Sandra
	Distrust	The feeling that someone or something cannot be relied upon.	Susan
	Empathy	The ability to understand and share the feelings of another.	All

Table 19: Summary of the emotions and perception of injustice

Similar to identity struggles, the injustice perceptions manifested at different stages of the change's unfolding for each team member. The first two members speaking about injustice were Susan and Deborah. Having won the programme bid in the first place, they both believed it was unfair that the new management was disregarding all their past effort. Susan especially emphasised that all the work they had done for the programme stemmed from good intent, speaking of which seemed to further fuel her injustice judgement. She expressed her indignation as below:

She [referring to Megan] has ended my career [bursts into tears] ... for doing what? Just for bringing money in! But it just shows that if in business you put your head above the parapet, then you have to take the consequences of it and that's exactly what I'm doing and so is Deborah; we've done no crime [keeps crying]. I can't tell you ... they've got no respect, no regard for all of the work that's been going on; it's like suddenly someone takes all your college work and throws it out of the window; if you are passionate and committed to your

work then it can [pauses and keeps crying]. What they've done is unlawful and that's what you get when you bring money in [says sarcastically].

(Susan, interview no. 2)

Susan's perception of being treated unfairly was not merely a result of her interactions with the new management regime. In fact, from her first interview after the change, she stressed the fact that neither she nor Deborah (as the two bid-writing team members) had been included in the decision-making processes that had led to the change of director in the first place. This exclusion was shown to have damaged her sense of trust towards her employing organisation, which was a major leading partner in the programme:

My people around that table are making those decisions; it's very hard then for you to think, 'Hold on, these people that I've worked with for sixteen years ...' [pauses] you know, I've led a whole department; I've done a lot. I've been awarded and I work at that level and I know these people really well and even if your body is physically not there, they can say hold on, we can contact Susan ... nothing! So it's very difficult; I came back and was faced with all of this. I think it's now made [pauses] ... in my whole career, I've never not trusted really; for the first time I'm feeling that I'm not trusting.

(Susan, interview no. 2)

Susan's perception of injustice was also reinforced by the fact that she felt her voice was not heard by her organisation now that she was trying to stand up for herself:

We've worked hard, we've worked hard and the only reason that I won't go off is, 'What have I done wrong?' and I if I have let me justify that! You know, we've been hung in a kangaroo court!

(Susan, interview no. 2)

With regard to their past work being disregarded, Deborah also shared Susan's view:

It's annoying; they [the management team] are not really respecting all that's gone on beforehand whereas a lot has gone on it, it's just in a bit of a chaotic, disorganised way.

(Deborah, interview no. 2)

In fact, Deborah's perception of injustice was fuelled by the responses she received from the new managers as she tried to remind them of the work that had been done prior to their entrance. In chapter six, tensions between her and the interim management were explained, giving voice to both sides. Specifically with regard to justice expectations, Deborah added:

They [the management] don't value us, they never asked [refers to rationale behind the direction of the programme prior to the change] and now when you wanna say, they say: 'Oh don't talk about the past all the time!'

(Deborah, interview no. 4)

Sharing the same feelings, Deborah and Susan expressed a great degree of empathy for one another. In her interviews, Deborah constantly referred to how Susan had been treated unfairly:

There's been a new team completely disregarding the knowledge and the experience of the team that were there! Some like Susan were completely deleted from everything even though she created it; it was her drive and her passion for the subject that helped us get the bid!

(Deborah, interview no. 4)

Susan seemed equally concerned with how Deborah was being treated by the new management as she was still part of the programme. Susan pointed to the fact that Deborah was being treated unfairly, despite having played a major role in winning the

bid. In addition to this, Susan believed that Deborah was in fact being bullied by the new management:

Deborah was here with me right from the beginning writing that bid; every weekend; every night; early in the morning; her commitment was second to none and how she's been treated is truly appalling! It's Deborah that I'm mainly concerned about and her life has been made hell because she's seen as one of the old team! she's been indirectly accused of things, which is really difficult, isn't it? She feels she can't do anything right, everything she does is wrong; that's bullying! that's bullying and that's appalling ... that is truly appalling and people are clever; you know, bullying isn't sometimes like you wouldn't see that person for that so they are all smiling and they are all [pauses] ... and then it's drip-fed every day and that's the point she's got; she said she cannot do one thing right!

(Susan, interview no. 2)

Experiencing injustice was different for Gemma and Sandra, as they were not part of the bid-writing team. For Sandra, injustice was perceived with regard to two matters: First, as seen in chapter six, she especially perceived the situation to be unfair once she was stopped from continuing with the tasks she had been assigned without being given further explanations. Her perception of unfairness was included in the previous chapter in order to also show the management's view on her concerns. The experience of unfairness, however, did not end with the task functions for Sandra. She believed her efforts to remain a flexible member of the team were not recognised and reciprocated by the management. She elaborated on an example:

There's been times that I've requested annual leave in email, when he [referring to Steve, her line manager] said it's not reasonable, I replied and said, 'Look, I have been very reasonable as a member of this team! Everything that you have thrown at me I have taken without complaint! Now I'm only asking you for annual leave and you say I'm not reasonable.' I said, 'Can you tell me what is

reasonable?’ No reply! No reply! Not from him and not from Megan and I had said in that email that, ‘I’m concerned that I don’t get enough support that I should;’ I was trying to establish a conversation with them but none got back to me!

(Sandra, interview no. 5)

Sandra’s perception of injustice worsened as she felt her voice was not heard:

I wasn’t well and you [referring to the management] pass a comment that, ‘If you continue to be sick, you can lose your job?’ Why would you be telling me that? I just said OK. I don’t challenge. I would challenge if I know you’ll listen to me and you’ll be genuine with me but when they are just full of themselves and think only they know, I say OK. You know, it’s not worth contributing when you know your voice is not needed really!

(Sandra, interview no. 5)

Sandra believed other team members were not treated fairly either. When asked about the general environment in the office, she said:

I see grown-up women, adults, crying in the office because of the way they’ve been spoken to! What for?! What for?! [repeats with anger and rises voice] How are you so insensitive to people’s needs? It’s horrible way to treat people! We are not machines! We are human beings! We have emotions! You don’t do that to people!

(Sandra, interview no. 5)

Similar to the empathy between Susan and Deborah, Sandra and Gemma showed a great deal of mutual empathy for one another. Gemma’s empathy for Sandra emerged as she found her overwhelmed with her workload. This paralleled with the time that Sandra had to cover for the leaving team members (shown in chapter six) in addition to her own day job:

Sandra; bless her, she's doing like three people's job at the minute. I think she's just totally overwhelmed with the amount she's got to do and it's totally unfair. I don't know how you can expect that, people left and they gave all her work to her; it's just ridiculous!

(Gemma, interview no. 5)

Sandra, in turn, expressed her empathy for Gemma once she left the programme. According to her, the management had instantly agreed with Gemma's giving notice without trying to change her decision or trying to understand her reason for leaving. Sandra believed it was not fair that the management had let a hard-working team member leave without trying to address the problem that led to her leaving. In fact, when Gemma left, Sandra also said that she was feeling it was not worth working for this programme any more.

7.2.1 Discussion

Organisational justice is defined as the fairness of the treatment that employees perceive from their organisations and their agents (Greenberg, 1993; Manville et al., 2016). Perceived injustice is known to result in several negative reactions such as dissatisfaction, potential loss of trust in leaders, and emotional distance (Andiappan & Treviño, 2010). Studies have specifically confirmed the link between perceived injustice and experience of anger in employees (Fitness, 2000; Domagalski & Steelman, 2005). Colquitt (2001) distinguishes between four dimensions of organisational justice. These are: *procedural* justice (i.e. the perceived fairness of decision-making processes), *distributive* justice (i.e. the perceived fairness of decision outcomes), *interpersonal* justice (i.e. perceptions of being treated with respect and dignity) and *informational* justice (i.e. perceptions of the adequacy of information

provided by authority figures). The two dimensions of *procedural* and *interpersonal* justice are particularly relevant in discussing the above findings.

In Susan's accounts it was seen that she was on annual leave when the change of director took place. She also mentioned that during her leave period, she did not receive any notice from her managers on their decision, while other work-related matters had been communicated to her via email. As a result, she only learnt about the change on her return. Facing this exclusion from decision-making was especially difficult for her as she had been highly embedded in the programme, initiating it from the start. Moreover, she continually emphasised that she had been working with this organisation for several years, during which time she had led departments and won awards. Recalling all this seemed to fuel her perception of *procedural* injustice, which resulted in her sense of distrust towards her organisation. The findings are in line with previous studies showing the link between injustice judgements and distrust in leaders (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002).

Along with Deborah and Sandra, Susan also experienced interpersonal injustice. The three members gave accounts of what they perceived as disrespectful behaviour and being unheard by the new management. Deborah and Susan felt unheard when raising concerns over all their past efforts, which they perceived to be disregarded. Sandra felt unheard as the management refused to engage with her once she tried to open a conversation about how she felt she was being treated unfairly. As a result, all were shown to experience indignation, defined as the morally grounded form of anger (Jasper, 2014). Indignation is especially evident in tales with 'conviction of one's own rightness and the other's wickedness' (Sims, 2005: 1627). This rightness versus wickedness is evident in the accounts of Susan and Sandra, and partially in those of Deborah.

Finally, all four members experienced empathy for one another with regard to justice expectations. Of the many existing definitions of empathy, most include the idea of trying to ‘sense, perceive, share, or conceptualise how another person is experiencing the world’ (Bohart & Greenberg, 1997: 419). Research shows that perceived similarity contributes to the experience of empathy (Krebs, 1975, Hoffman, 2000). The above findings showcase further evidence for the experience of empathy as a result of perceived similarities. As seen, Susan and Deborah were shown to mainly empathise with one another. They both belonged to the bid-writing team and they were both excluded from the decision-making processes. Gemma and Sandra, on the other hand, expressed their empathy for one another as they both joined the team in later stages of planning; both were subject to role stress and finally both were the only permanent members working in the team while Deborah was on leave. This last was indeed of crucial importance in bringing them closer. In particular, the findings show how similarities in the form and also the context of perceived injustice resulted in the experience of empathy within the two dyads.

7.3 EMOTIONS AND PERCEIVED MEANINGLESSNESS OF WORK

Towards the end of this study, all the four members started to state that they felt their work had become meaningless. This perception of futility was shown to be mainly due to the rather slow progress of the programme. In fact, three years after the programme initiation and by the fifteenth month of this research, the programme had not yet entered the delivery phase. Lack of tangible outcomes seemed to have gradually resulted in a sense of meaningless work, which in turn induced negative emotions for the team members. The table below displays the emotions experienced in relation to this perception.

Superordinate theme	Emotions (sub-theme)	Emotion definition (Oxford English Dictionary, 2018)	Team members contributing to this sub-theme
Emotions and meaningfulness of work	Contempt	The feeling that a person or a thing is worthless or beneath consideration.	Susan, Deborah
	Frustration	The feeling of being upset or annoyed as a result of being unable to change or achieve something.	Gemma, Sandra
	Disappointment	Sadness or displeasure caused by the non-fulfilment of one's hopes or expectations.	Gemma, Sandra

Table 20: Summary of the emotions and perception of meaningless work

Perceiving the work to be meaningless started for Susan and Deborah once the programme was put on hold for a major review (explained in chapter six). Feelings of contempt emerged in the accounts of both Susan and Deborah as they were essentially the two members behind the programme's history and previous direction. Susan was the first to express her feelings of contempt for the new management:

It doesn't matter how many files you have on project management if nothing happens coz it's paper; paper doesn't take our children out of poverty; paper doesn't make a difference to our children out there and that's why we brought the money in. What a waste; what a waste of opportunity!

(Susan, interview no. 2)

Unlike Susan, Deborah did not openly express her contempt immediately after the pause of the programme, understandably as she was still part of the team working under the new leadership. As explained before, she unexpectedly left the programme for a three-month leave and on her return, she was found to be more explicit in her emotional expressions during the interviews. With regard to expressing contempt openly, she did so once she found that the number of the projects had significantly reduced during her leave period. Moreover, two months after she returned, the funder announced that the

interim managers had to leave the programme immediately as they were not affordable any more. Deborah's contempt surfaced only then:

We've just had a year of paper pushing project management sort of things rather than thinking about [pauses]... really, we [now] got projects that are easiest to deliver based on paper exercises rather than what would give the best outcomes to children.

(Deborah, interview no. 4)

Gemma's accounts were particularly in line with Susan's and Deborah's with regard to the lack of delivery after a year of restructure, constant change, and close supervision by the funder. Yet, rather than contempt, she expressed lots of frustration, which had gradually increased over time. Lack of delivery especially resulted in Gemma perceiving her own personal role within the programme team to be meaningless. Her strong sense of frustration initially emerged in her diary when explaining her meeting with a major partnering organisation:

Members of the group who have been involved a while are clearly starting to get frustrated about the lack of delivery, and I share this frustration with them. I am being asked to draft communications but it is difficult to do this when there aren't many outputs yet.

(Gemma, diary, week no. 1)

Her frustration seemed to increase week by week:

I can see work in the wider team is being done but still no outputs so it is quite frustrating, particularly for comms as I need delivery to communicate!

(Gemma, diary, week no. 2)

Three weeks after the above diary, in a follow-up interview, Gemma elaborated further on her frustration over the lack of delivery:

For us, it's actually hard to sell something to people coz there is no tangible outcome for people at the minute!

(Gemma, interview no. 4)

As time went on and the programme did not enter the delivery phase, Gemma's frustration also peaked and she eventually stopped believing in the delivery happening any time in a near future. This was among the many reasons she explained for leaving the programme. In fact, she emphasised in her final interview that she might try to return in a few years once the programme has entered the delivery phase.

Similar to Gemma, Sandra's perception of meaningless work initially emerged in the diaries. She also seemed frustrated by the slow progress of the programme:

There are so much going on, it feels like a step forward and two backward at the moment. I may be wrong as things may improve.

(Sandra, diary, week no. 6)

Five months after the above diary, Sandra elaborated on her frustration, which had increased over time. In her final interview, she openly expressed her true reflections on a year of what she perceived to be meaningless work:

It's been like two steps backward and then crawl again to where you came from, what's the point? What is it? What is it that we can all say we've achieved? Yes, we've done things, I'm not saying nothing has been achieved but I'm seeing it as ten steps forward two steps backward, ten steps forward, twenty steps backward!

(Sandra, interview no. 5)

The longitudinal observation of both Gemma and Sandra also revealed a great deal of disappointment for both. As the only two members of the permanent team who openly welcomed the change, they had initially believed that the change would result in a faster

progress of the programme. Moreover, as the change unfolded, they both made every effort to facilitate this progress. In their initial accounts after the change (episodes two and three in chapter six), they both believed that others should also change their mindset and adapt better to the new work structure. In the end however, unmet hopes and expectations with regard to the programme delivery resulted in both experiencing a great deal of disappointment.

7.3.1 Discussion

The above findings reveal the team members' emotions as they perceived their work had lost meaning. Meaningful work refers to the employees' judgement that their work is worthwhile and significant (Rosso et al., 2010). In their review of literature on meaningful work, Rosso and colleagues (2010) stress work context as one of the main sources to shape employees' perception of meaningfulness. Among the many dimensions of work context, organisational mission is a major factor in influencing one's perception of meaningful work (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003). In the same vein, Steger and colleagues (2012) contend that work is perceived to be meaningful when employees are assured that their efforts work towards a clear purpose and potentially some greater good. In this sense, the above findings highlight the four team members' perception of the programme mission as being lost, which is shown to result in perceiving the overall work to be meaningless.

In the project management literature, Gällstedt (2003) argues that project incidents can affect how individuals perceive their working conditions. One such incident is getting stuck in design loops (*ibid.*). Design loops were shown in the previous chapter as the team had to go back to the planning phase, once informally after the change of director, and once officially as the programme was put on hold. The above findings complement

the insights from the previous chapter by showing how constant change can result in individuals gradually perceiving the work to be meaningless. This is in line with previous research arguing that projects can lose their momentum and even their meaning along the way (Weick, 2004). This thesis shows how perceptions of meaninglessness can form over time for individuals in project/programme environments. More importantly, the findings in this section highlight the emotional impact of such perceptions.

Presented as the first emotion, the feeling of contempt is experienced when one perceives another as worthless and beneath consideration (Oxford English Dictionary, 2018). Susan and Deborah both point to the worthlessness of the work led by the interim director, referring to it as 'paper pushing project management'. Both members state that the new direction of the programme is not as beneficial to the target population as the previous direction that they were in charge of. Similarly, contempt is believed to essentially involve a feeling of superiority over others (Jones, 2002; Pelzer, 2005). In this sense, Susan and Deborah explicitly contend that their conduct was superior to that of the new management, as it would ultimately deliver better outcomes to the community.

Another emerging emotion in relation to meaningless work was shown to be frustration. Frustration is a negative emotion experienced in response to undesirable outcomes such as impediment of goal attainments (Weiss et al., 1999). In the same vein, lack of goal attainment (i.e. delivery to the target population) is what led Gemma and Sandra to gradually perceive the work as meaningless and experience frustration as a result. In their case, the frustration was coupled with a sense of disappointment. Johnson and Connelly (2014) propose that expressing disappointment communicates that one had higher expectation from another. Similarly, Gemma and Sandra were

shown to express disappointment as they had both welcomed the change and had remained adaptive to it, expecting that it would result in a faster progression of the programme.

7.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter aimed to provide deep and detailed insights into the individual experience of emotions, in addition to the collective experience discussed in chapter six. Drawing on the IPA study of four individual team members, three major themes were shown to induce strong emotions for individuals involved in this programme. These themes include identity work, injustice judgements, and finally the perceived meaninglessness of work. The emotions experienced by members in relation to these matters were displayed and discussed thoroughly. The findings in this chapter complement and deepen the findings in the previous chapter.

First and foremost, strong emotions were shown as a result of individual identity work triggered by a sudden change in the programme structure. Grief, defensiveness, strain, and loss of confidence were shown and discussed as the main emotions developing throughout the identity work of individual team members. The results particularly provide novel insights into the emotional experience accompanying the different forms of identity strategies proposed by Collinson (2003). It is shown how pursuing a *resistant* strategy can ultimately result in the experience of grief and defensiveness while both *conformist* and *dramaturgical* approaches can lead to experience of strain over time. Moreover, it is found that the dramaturgical approach can result in a comparatively higher degree of strain as it naturally involves an element of surface acting and emotional dissonance, both of which are also proved by previous research to increase work strain (e.g. Pugh et al., 2011; Becker et al., 2017).

Second, the findings cast light on the individual emotions arising from the perception of injustice in the programme environment. Indignation, distrust, and empathy were shown as the emotions experienced when the team members faced what they perceived to be unfair treatment. It is particularly shown how perceptions of similarity in the team members' backgrounds and in the form of unfair treatment (interpersonal vs procedural) can result in the experience of empathy. In this regard, the findings respond to the calls for deeper insights into the *in situ* experience of injustice from the employee's viewpoint rather than the widely explored managerial perspective (Weiss & Rupp, 2011).

Last but not least, the findings in this chapter show how team members are emotionally affected when the programme loses its meaning. As shown, due to getting stuck in design loops, the programme failed to enter the delivery phase as expected. This gradually resulted in the team members perceiving the work to be meaningless. Contempt, frustration, and disappointment were displayed as the major emotions experienced in response to this meaninglessness. In this regard, the chapter also provides insights into the lived experience of contempt as an emotion largely overlooked in organisation studies (Pelzer, 2005).

Together with the findings in chapter six, this chapter provided a detailed view of how programme work is lived and experienced in practice by the programme team. The following chapter further concludes these findings.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSIONS

8.0 INTRODUCTION

This study explored the nature of emotions in a regional programme team during a fifteen-month period of the programme's planning phase. This chapter presents the concluding remarks, contributions, and limitations of this thesis. The previous chapters have shown the research journey undertaken to study emotions in programmes as a popular mode of project-based work. This thesis is specially positioned in the critical project studies (Hodgson & Cicmil, 2006; 2016), where issues of interactions, emotionality, and ethics are addressed in projects. The aim, as Hodgson and Cicmil (2016) argue, is not to contradict but to establish a dialogue with more functionalist approaches that give primacy to planning, scheduling, and control.

In a nutshell, what this thesis shows is how the emotional aspect of projects in general, and programmes in particular, can become dominant and consequential, and yet be surprisingly underestimated in the literature on project-based management. In revealing both the intensity and the complexity of the emotional experience in this programme, the sharp and longitudinal lens of ethnography provided the edge by allowing me to record the detailed sequence of events and emotions in a comparably longer time frame. Additionally, less interactive approaches might not have yielded equally rich and frank accounts of emotions. Continued presence and interaction in the field helped in establishing a desired level of trust, which was clearly crucial in gaining access to the participants' 'real' feelings.

This ending chapter is structured as follows. First, a brief review of the previous chapters is given to recall the research journey from the start. Second, the chapter responds to the initial research question as understanding the nature of emotions in

project-based work. In doing so, emotions are explained as relational processes that cast light on several aspects of managing and organising. Among all such aspects, issues of leadership and ethics in project-based environments will be discussed as the two major subjects for which the findings in this thesis are especially insightful. Third, the study's contributions are explained in detail with regard to both theory and practice. Last but not least, the limitations of the thesis are acknowledged, providing potential directions for future research.

8.1 SUMMING UP THE ARGUMENT

This thesis aimed at exploring the nature of emotions in project-based work. Emotions were explored as collective enactments as well as individual 'lived' experiences in a programme team's environment. The study shows the unfolding of emotions in the knot of programme relationships as team members tried to make sense of their roles, activities, and the overall programme situation at each stage. The thesis also casts light on what lies beyond the team's journey, revealing how issues of identity, justice, and meaning can evoke strong individual emotions. Other than the specificity of the research context, what is believed to make this study especially distinct from other enquiries of workplace emotions lies in the relational lens of the thesis. Drawing on ethnographic, *in situ* study of a programme team, this thesis tracked emotions as they were enacted *intersubjectively* within the web of programme relationships and in response to real-life programme issues.

As explained in chapter two, the body of knowledge on workplace emotions has been extended in favour of measurement and quantification of the phenomena (e.g. Ekman, 1973, Lazarus, 1984, Plutchik, 1962). The result has been an abundance of emotion studies that provide an objective, static, and universal view of what is believed to be

essentially subjective, fluid, and context-specific (Fineman, 2004; Lupton, 1998; Forgas, 2000). Thus, this thesis was founded on the constructionist view of emotions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Coupland et al., 2008; Fineman & Sturdy, 1999), aiming to arrive at interactional and socially situated accounts of emotional experience.

With regards to the context, this research was initially inspired by a personal interest and background in project management studies. The management of projects, including programmes and portfolios, is currently a major model in many organisations, as well as in areas such as infrastructure renewal, community development, and urban regeneration (Winter et al., 2006). Nonetheless, the current conceptual foundations of project management have been subjected to much criticism due to their lack of relevance to practice (Morris et al., 2000; Packendorff, 1995) as well as their neglect of the emergent nature of projects (Cicmil & Marshall, 2005; Winter et al., 2006). Accordingly, there is a need to address this gap between the theory and practice of project management in order to understand the actuality of projects as a 'lived experience' (Cicmil et al., 2006).

Positioned at the intersection of these research gaps in both emotion studies and the project management literature, the main research question in this thesis was to explore the nature of emotions in teams involved in project-based work in order to understand how these environments are typically experienced from the point of view of their internal stakeholders. In emphasising the hard-system models of project management, most project studies tend to overlook the role of emotions at work. At their best, they stress emotions for the pursuit of project effectiveness and success (Lindgren et al., 2014). This thesis took this enquiry into the context of programmes as a form of project-based work that has been a subject of growing interest over the years (Morris, 2004; Maylor et al., 2006).

The relational paradigm (Gergen, 2009; Shotter, 1989; Cunliffe, 2008) was further adopted to frame emotions conceptually. Accordingly, much stress was put on the context that led to the experience of emotions. I had to continually track the team (and individuals') emotions down into the overall programme's situation, their everyday activities, and most importantly the network of relationships in which they were involved at each stage of their work. Emotions were also captured in moments of non-verbal behaviour such as facial expressions, body language, and silence. As for the research methodology, an ethnographic case-study approach was designed to capture emotions in the natural settings in which they arose. Owing to its longitudinal and flexible nature, ethnography allowed for studying emotions as they emerged, developed, and shifted over time. Moreover, as emotions are widely believed to belong to the private worlds (Sturdy, 2003), my continued presence in the field resulted in a gradual rise in trust, which itself was key to gaining access to the participants' emotional experience. Ethnography also helped in seizing emotions that were meant to be silenced but leaked out through embodiment (Manzoor, 2012). In this study, I aimed for a single case to achieve the desired richness of final descriptions.

The methods used for collecting data varied over time, depending on the degree of access at each stage of fieldwork. I used a variety of techniques including formal/informal observations, interviews, weekly diaries, and analysis of the programme documents. In interpreting the texts, two distinct methods were used for each level of analysis. At the team level, I made use of thematic analysis as the approach that allowed for highlighting the similarities and differences between the team members (Braun & Clarke, 2006; King, 2004; Nowell et al., 2017). Here the aim was to understand the collective enactment of emotions throughout the team's journey. At the individual level, interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was chosen to

explore the ‘lived’ emotions of four purposively selected team members and understand how they made sense of their experience.

The fifth chapter provided an overview of the context of this thesis. The context involved a public–non-profit partnership programme, funded by a public body over a ten-year period in seven regions across the UK. The studied team were involved in the strategic planning of a regional branch of this national initiative. A description of the details of the programme objectives, structure, and the changes that unfolded over time served as the background to the accounts that were further provided in the empirical chapters.

Following the sequence of major events explained in chapter five, chapter six presented the team’s collective experience of emotions as the programme proceeded. In particular, this chapter showed how emotions emerged and evolved as members were constantly trying to make sense of the programme work and relationships. Different perspectives were provided in order to highlight the similarities and differences in programme-work experience for all actors involved. The journey started with a ‘bewildered but light-hearted’ team, which ultimately broke down in disappointment. By showcasing the constant interruptions in the team’s flow of work, this chapter displayed the typical occasions for sense-making in project-based work (Weick, 1995; Musca et al., 2014).

The focus further shifted from the team to the individuals’ lived experience of the journey shown in chapter six. Drawing on the data from four permanent team members, chapter seven aimed at understanding how the team-level incidents and enactments impacted the individual emotions. The results of the IPA study revealed the inner struggles of these four team members around which intense emotions were

experienced. Beyond the surface of formal structures, activities, and interruptions, the four individuals experienced strong negative emotions as they came to question issues of identity, justice, and eventually meaningful work in this programme. Individually felt emotions were partially different from those enacted at the team level as individuals were shown to feel a loss of confidence, strain, and contempt.

Having overviewed the seven previous chapters, the following section shifts forward to answer the initial research questions proposed at the outset.

8.2 BEHIND THE MYTH OF RATIONALITY: THE SALIENCE OF EMOTIONS IN THE ACTUALITY OF PROJECT-BASED WORK

This thesis navigated emotions in the light of relationships rather than individual selves. To respect the dialectical and contested nature of experience from a relational paradigm, the thesis gives voice to varying accounts of the programme team and the interim programme management as the two opposites. What the thesis ultimately shows is that emotions are especially salient in this programme for both parties; while the permanent team feels overwhelmed, excluded, and frustrated, the interim project and programme professionals feel extremely pressured to turn the programme around on one hand, while also struggling to deal with the divide and the reportedly defensive behaviour of the permanent team on the other. Despite the difference in extent, ‘emotionalities’ increasingly surface for both parties over their journey of fifteen months under the funder’s supervision. Feelings of drain and disappointment eventually override, leading to high levels of either withdrawal or consideration of withdrawal.

At the collective level, emotions were particularly enacted in response to the interruptions to the programme flow. In line with sense-making theory (Weick, 1995),

the constant interruptions in the flow of work triggered sense-making processes which themselves were continually interrupted by a new set of disruptive forces. In fact, the ever-changing flux of activities, relationships, and the overall programme direction resulted in the team members ultimately failing to introduce a sense to the situation (Colville et al., 2012).

At the individual level, emotions intensified as issues of professional (and personal) identity, justice, and the overall meaning of work were perceived to be at stake. The two levels of analysis especially revealed how team-level enactments can form the individual perceptions of the actors, which in turn reached out to the team level. By drawing a vivid picture of how programme work can be experienced at both levels, this thesis shows that programme life can be indeed as emotional as it is presumed in the conventional project and programme management literature to be rational.

Despite the plan-driven approaches of project and programme management, uncertainty is established as a key element of projects (Perminova et al., 2008), with ambiguity often overcomplicating the picture in the case of programmes (Thiry, 2002; Nieminen & Lehtonen, 2008). Portraying the lives of people involved in the real complexities and ambiguities of a programme, this thesis shows how emotions especially intensify in response to continual changes in roles, tasks, activities, and relationships. Change was, in fact, the sole stable feature of this programme, and although expected in theory for projects (Geraldi et al., 2010; Gällstedt, 2003) and especially for programmes (Pellegrinelli, 2011), the thesis showcases a scenario in which a programme team fails to deal with a vast array of changes in practice as members increasingly engage in withdrawal behaviours.

An influential incident in this team was the change of programme director, seen as the beginning of programme turnaround. In times of turnaround and renewal, Weick (1996) argues for a ‘drop your tools’ approach by drawing an analogy with firefighters who fail to drop their heavy tools and are consequently overrun by fire. Taking ‘drop your tools’ as an allegory for individuals to modernise the past values, update interpretations of the situation, and construct project renewal (Musca et al., 2014), this thesis draws attention to the emotional struggles of dropping one’s tools in project renewal episodes. In attempting to drop their tools, the permanent team experienced a considerable deal of negative emotions such as defensiveness, resignation, and frustration. Despite the attempt, getting stuck in design loops and the shifting preferences of the programme funder resulted in feelings of drain and disappointment, not just for the permanent team but also for the interim management.

Seeing the complex web of changes, relationships, and consequent emotions in this programme, one might question the aim and the necessity of showing emotions as a salient aspect of project-based work; the ‘so what?’ question arises here. As noted at the outset, understanding affective processes is believed to open further insights into several other aspects of organisational life (Fotaki et al., 2017). In the same vein, the findings in this thesis highlight a broad array of issues that altogether bring us to two overarching aspects of organising in projects-based environments – issues of leadership and ethics. Figure 4 displays the major conclusions of this thesis.

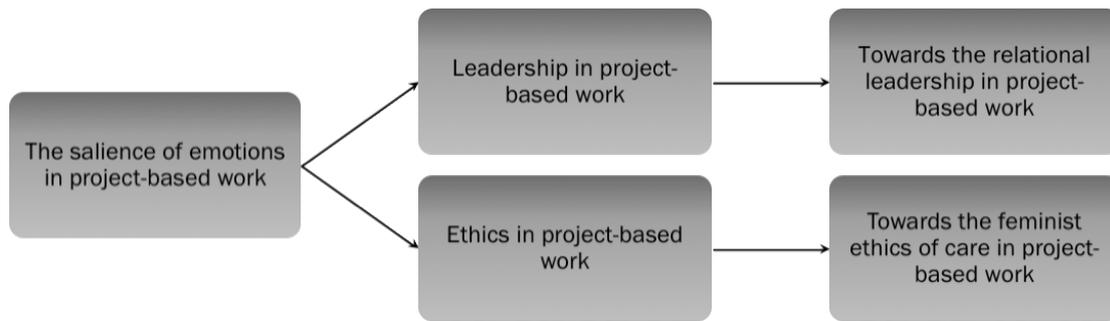


Figure 4: Summary of the conclusions

The following section elaborates on leadership dynamics as well as ethical dilemmas faced in project-based work. *Relational leadership* and the *feminist ethics of care* are further proposed as the two approaches to tackle the negative team and individual emotions that were previously discussed.

8.2.1 Emotions as a guide to leadership: towards relational leadership in project-based work

Although this thesis did not exclusively aim at understanding leadership, studying individuals and their microprocesses is believed to raise sharp insights into how processes of leading and following unfold in modern project and programme environments (Geraldi & Söderlund, 2018). Project managers are increasingly seen as both managers and leaders (van der Hoorn & Whitty, 2017; Müller et al., 2018). In fact, scholars have argued for the need to focus more on project leadership than solely on ‘management’ (Tyssen et al., 2014; Zhang et al., 2018). At the programme level, it is suggested that programme managers need to demonstrate even more leadership abilities as the ambiguous and dynamic nature of programmes demands a highly co-creative atmosphere (Shao, 2018).

In this regard, transformational leadership is especially seen as the leadership style suitable to project-based environments, as leaders are expected to raise creativity in the team rather than merely giving instructions (Tyssen et al., 2014; Müller & Turner,

2010; Clarke, 2010). Recent studies especially focus on the need for project and programme managers to develop human skills such as emotional intelligence, which is argued to be important for fostering a collaborative environment (Rezvani et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2018; van der Hoorn & Whitty, 2017; Shao, 2018).

By contrast, the findings in this thesis suggest that the failure to collaborate effectively is not the responsibility of a single individual (i.e. the programme leader). In fact, the new programme director in this programme initially adopted a transformational leadership approach where team members were empowered to make decisions. An example was shown in the case of Deborah, who was found in a dilemma between making decisions or asking the management to decide for her. Yet, over time, the vast extent of the turnaround expected in such a short time frame, as well as the shifting requirements of the funder just before delivering the previously agreed work, resulted in drain and disappointment for the leaders as it did for the rest of the team. In fact, one could argue that in such conditions, leaders are subject to even higher levels of drain and exhaustion as they are the ones ultimately accountable to the external stakeholders.

In the studied programme, the leaders (i.e. the programme director and the programme manager) were responsible for delivering an entire programme turnaround within an extremely short time frame while also having to sort out the relationship conflict in the programme team. Worse yet, just a month before delivering the turnaround objectives, they were told by the funder to change direction and work towards new goals. In scenarios like this, the leaders' stories bear a closer resemblance to those of *victims* and hence expectations of demonstrating heroic leadership abilities seem far from realistic in practice.

In this sense, what this thesis reveals is that, despite their popularity in theory, attributes like emotional intelligence and approaches such as transformational leadership might not always be the *practical* solution, at least not in situations characterised by turnaround, ongoing disruptions, and shifting requirements from the stakeholders. In such conditions, this thesis shows how the leaders themselves are struggling to just *cope* rather than *lead*.

To tackle such problems, distributive and shared leadership have been previously suggested as less individually centred approaches to leading in contemporary projects (Lindgren & Packendorff, 2009; Hsu et al., 2017). Yet, despite acknowledging the benefits of a more flat structure, such approaches still rely on the distinction between the leaders and followers (Hosking, 2007). The act of ‘sharing’ still lies on the shoulders of an ‘emotionally intelligent’ individual.

Instead, the findings in this thesis are in alignment with Lindgren and colleagues’ (2011) suggestion for the need to adopt relational leadership in project-based work. From a relational perspective, leadership is defined as processes that are relationally co-constructed through several interactions (Hosking, 2007; Uhl-Bien, 2006; Crevani et al., 2010). Here, leadership is not a predictable act of a formally assigned leader, but emerges in the social flow of interactions (Crevani et al., 2010). A relational approach by definition shifts the focus from a heroic individual to more collective and interactional dynamics (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Cunliffe and Eriksen (2011) emphasise that relational leadership involves paying special attention to differences in situations; to the subtleties of relationships; to moral accountability; and to the need for dialogic conversations.

This study provides empirical support for the importance of relational leadership in project environments (Lindgren et al., 2011) and especially extends this proposition to the context of programmes. First and foremost, the relational view of leadership is believed to aptly address the dynamic nature of projects and especially programmes, where every aspect of organising is under constant re-construction (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). Second, as seen at the outset, a relational view gives primacy to relationships and relationship management is itself regarded as the central element of modern project management (Davis & Pharro, 2003; Meng & Boyd, 2017). Above all, as higher levels of collaboration enable the team to better cope with uncertainties and ambiguities (Walker et al., 2017), a relational approach to leadership assists the team in such situations by naturally demanding more collaboration and communication between all members.

In adding to Lindgren and colleagues' (2011) study, this thesis further argues that relational leadership can be especially influential in dealing with perceptions of meaninglessness that can potentially arise after episodes of turnaround or renewal. When describing renewal as a dilemma, Weick (1996) cites Carlos Fuentes when he refers to the danger of losing meaning in the renewal process. For Fuentes, renewal means:

To accept the diversity and mutation of the world while retaining the mind's power of analogy and unity so that this changing world shall not become meaningless.

(Cited in Weick, 1996: 301)

With regard to renewals in project-based work, previous literature suggests that turnaround truly takes place only when the team arrives at a shared reconceptualisation of the project mission (Musca et al., 2014).

In this empirical study, renewal took place once informally as the programme director changed, and later officially as the programme was paused for revision. At times, the ultimate programme purpose seemed lost as the team members showed widely different interpretations of what it was that they had to collectively achieve. While the programme team was keen to finally see evidence of project delivery, the management believed what the programme needed at this stage was strategic progress rather than the actual delivery of projects. From a relational view, such dysfunctions do not arise due to divergences in opinion, but as a result of neglecting the differences in views and interpretations (Lindgren et al., 2011).

By having emotions as the focus, this thesis shows how different interpretations of the programme mission at the team level can ultimately result in individual members perceiving the work to be meaningless. The thesis suggests relational leadership to deal with such perceptions. On its own, relational leadership might not save project or programme teams from getting stuck in renewals, design loops, and episodes of conflict, neither can it avoid the potential loss of meaning in projects and programmes. Instead, what a relational approach to leadership does is help to cope with and possibly overcome such feelings and perceptions through listening, responding and addressing the differences (Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011). Fostering this atmosphere necessitates a fundamental shift from the dominant moral paradigms in organisations.

8.2.2 Emotions as a guide to ethics: the inadequacies of the ‘male’ view and the need for the feminist ethics of care

Having become a mature discipline on its own, project management scholarship has seen a growing interest with regard to ethical issues in project environments (Loo, 2002; Helgadóttir, 2008; Bredillet et al., 2015). In their *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*, the International Project Management Association (2015) outlines the

minimum duties of project managers when dealing with the project owner, teams, stakeholders, and the overall environment. As for project leadership discussed above, such guidelines address ethics as a set of standardised rules to be followed by the project manager.

In contrast to this individually centred view of ethics in projects, Nocker's (2009; 2017) ethnography of an information system project team reveals how actual team ethics stand far from a set of externally imposed criteria as they are enacted collectively by internal actors in emergent situations. She further argues that team ethics are not pre-established, but emerge as interactions unfold. Her view of shared ethics is especially in line with the findings in this thesis, stressing the significance of interpersonal and procedural justice in a programme team. Individuals in this programme felt disrespected and excluded but, on top of that, what fuelled their perceptions of injustice was the lack of responsiveness not only from the interim management, but also from the lead partnering organisations.

The findings in this thesis show that what was strikingly missing in the programme team was a commitment to be responsive to the needs, opinions, and feelings of one another. The need for responsiveness and ongoing negotiations were also previously discussed as key characteristics of relational leadership (Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011). In essence, relational leadership means being morally accountable to others by being fundamentally concerned with the impact of one's actions on others (Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011; Liu, 2017). Together with Nocker's (2009; 2017) shared view of ethics, relational leadership necessitates an alternative moral paradigm that views individuals as essentially relational rather than independent of one another.

In response to the ethic of justice as the central paradigm in moral theory, which was founded on hypothetical dilemmas of men, (Kohlberg, 1969), Gilligan (1982) investigated the actual moral dilemmas faced by women, suggesting an alternative moral orientation where the decision is not about conflicting rights but about trying to understand the interests of each party. Although originating from a study of women, an ethic of care perspective is not exclusive of men and entirely gender differentiated (Simola, 2003; Simola et al., 2010). Rights are themselves an essential component of caring but not all (Liedtka, 1996). While a justice-based approach ends with a single winner, the care-based view aims to reach a greater array of possibilities where each party can win (Simola et al., 2010). In this regard, Held (2014) warns against viewing care as altruism and the opposite of egoism, since the aim is to achieve a state ‘good enough’ for all involved. In short, while the justice approach stresses universal moral principles, a care-based view is more sensitive to the actual context in which moral judgements arise (Held, 2005).

This sensitivity to the specificities of situations rather than a set of standardised guidelines is what distinguishes ethics of care and makes it suitable to the programme scenario presented in this thesis. For this programme team, coping with the ever-changing flux of events seemed beyond the universal, plan-driven methods of project and programme management, as was dealing with the unique ethical dilemmas during the journey. In this sense, the feminist ethics of care guides to form a moral inquiry that is not merely based on rationalistic reasoning and calculations (Gilligan, 1982; 1995; Held, 2005) and instead treats certain moral emotions (e.g. empathy) as enablers of understanding what would be best to do in actual interpersonal contexts (Held, 2005). What is important is to consider how one’s actions impact others’ feelings and ultimately the relationship with them (Simola, 2003). This study showed that this

neglect not only resulted in forming perceptions of injustice at individual levels, but also led to questioning self and professional identities over time.

Thus, other than directly addressing the injustice judgements, this thesis proposes that adopting a care-based approach to team ethics can reduce the individuals' identity struggles and moderate its emotional ramifications. Through the IPA study presented in chapter seven, it was shown how individuals in this programme pursued resistant, dramaturgical, and conformist strategies (Collinson, 2003) while feeling strained, insecure, and defensive. As the guide to act carefully in relation to others (Gilligan, 2014), ethics of care can assist teams in establishing a climate of mutual respect to the other's viewpoints, needs, and abilities.

8.3 CONTRIBUTIONS

First and foremost, this thesis extends the literature on emotion research by proposing a relational understanding of the emotional experience, showing how emotions are lived and enacted within the back-and-forth struggles between team members and managers in the context of project-based work. The relational theory had been previously suggested as a fruitful pathway in emotion research (Waldron, 2000), without being taken any further. This thesis addresses this gap by showcasing the emotional journey of a programme team within the knot of work relationships, tensions, and conflicting perspectives. As the relationship conflict starts in episode 2 and worsens by episode 4, the team adopts a negative affective tone, leading to the short-notice withdrawal of several team members.

This thesis also responds to Ashkanasy and colleagues' (2017) recent paper by providing a multilevel analysis of emotions, showing the impact of team-level enactments on individual lived experience. In doing so, the thesis especially provides

interactional accounts of the team and individual emotions, where emotions' dynamism, complexity, and multifacetedness is portrayed and emphasised. Through the lens of emotions, this thesis has developed two major contributions.

Positioned in the project actuality research (Cicmil et al., 2006), this thesis contributes to this stream by emphasising the importance of leadership rather than mere 'management' in the actuality of project-based work. Despite confirming previous research on the importance of leadership in projects and programmes (Tyssen et al., 2014; van der Hoorn & Whitty, 2017; Zhang et al., 2018; Müller et al., 2018; Shao, 2018), this thesis contrasts with the majority of those studies that emphasise the development of transformational leadership (Tyssen et al., 2014; Müller & Turner, 2010; Clarke, 2010) or individual traits such as emotional intelligence (Rezvani et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2018; van der Hoorn & Whitty, 2017; Shao, 2018). Instead, by showcasing the lived experience of a programme team, this thesis provides empirical evidence for the fit between relational leadership and programmes as a particularly challenging mode of project-based work. In extending the debates on relationality of leadership in project-based environments (Lindgren et al., 2011), this thesis proposes relational leadership as a particularly valuable approach in dealing with the potential loss of meaning following turnaround episodes.

Specific to programmes, Pellegrinelli (2011) suggests that the ever-changing flux of incidents is best addressed through a social constructionist approach to programme management and leadership. This thesis extends Pellegrinelli's argument by proposing a relational orientation to social constructionism as the perspective that is especially open and sensitive to the subtleties of situations and relationships. By suggesting relational leadership, the thesis also responds to recent calls to propose less individually centred paradigms of leadership in project-based work (Geraldi & Söderlund, 2018).

Second, the thesis contributes to research on team ethics by urging a shift from the ‘male’ view towards the feminist ethics of care. Having shown how emotions are particularly tied to procedural and interpersonal forms of injustice in this programme, the thesis suggests that both perceptions can be dealt with through the ethics of care as the approach that urges more sensitivity to the actual context of experience rather than to pre-established guidelines (Held, 2005). This is especially significant in project-based settings, where ethics have remained a standardised set of prescriptions specific to project managers (IPMA, 2015; Helgadóttir, 2008; Bredillet et al., 2015).

Other than the two major contributions above, this study also contributes to the current debates on identity work by having emotions as the focus in the process (Winkler, 2018). In particular, the thesis addresses Brown’s (2018) recent call to explore how the macro performances of groups can stimulate micro identity processes. This was dealt with by first showing the programme team’s collective journey in chapter six, based on which the analysis was extended into the individual identity work of four key team members in chapter seven. The thesis addressed the emotional dimension of individual identity struggles through Collinson’s (2003) three identity strategies of resistant, dramaturgical, and conformist.

With regard to identity work in project-based settings, empirical studies have mainly focused on the experience of project managers (Hodgson et al., 2011; Paton et al., 2010; Cowen & Hodgson, 2015; Hodgson & Paton, 2016; Paton & Hodgson, 2016; McKevitt et al., 2017), with a few focusing on identity struggles of individual team members (Lindgren & Packendorff, 2007; Nocker, 2009; Toivonen & Toivonen, 2014). This thesis provides further empirical evidence on the intense identity work of teams as the less emphasised actors in projects and programmes.

Methodologically, this thesis has aimed at responding to several calls by renowned emotion scholars (e.g. Fineman, 2004; Sturdy, 2003) for real-life, *in situ* study of emotions in order to achieve ‘thick’ descriptions of the phenomena. Together with the longitudinal nature of ethnography, the combination of several research techniques allowed this thesis to provide extensive accounts of emotions. The ethnographic design in this research helped in capturing emotions and situations (such as grief over job loss) that could not have been explored via alternative methods such as laboratory studies, where replicating such emotions is fundamentally unethical (Ashkanasy et al., 2017). From the analysis perspective, adoption of the two different methods – thematic analysis and IPA – was beneficial as it allowed for approaching and analysing the collected accounts from two different perspectives, yielding multifaceted insights.

As a minor contribution, the findings in this thesis are believed to also provide implications for programmes in cross-sector social partnerships. Although the inter-organisational partnership was not specifically the focus, the findings in the thesis provide empirical support for Nguyen and Janssens’ (2018) suggestion to adopt a more emergent view of partnerships as the partnership processes unfold over time. The findings in this study show how, after three years of official initiation, the programme still remained stuck between the initiation and planning phases. The detachment of the several partners especially raised frustration at the team level. Having a view of the team-level struggles is believed to be insightful for research on cross-sector partnerships, which has mainly focused on collaborative processes between partnering organisations rather than the actual team running the programme or project.

8.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The findings in this thesis are believed to be especially important in an era of ‘agile project management’, where the focus shifts from processes and tools to individuals and interactions (Serrador & Pinto, 2015). In essence, agile project management is about embracing change and uncertainty (Conforto et al., 2016). Having shown the *actuality* of a programme with *change* as the ever-present feature, this thesis raises important implications for practitioners in this field.

First, managing the situations described in this thesis is believed to be beyond the capabilities of traditional project management approaches. This thesis gives a thorough and detailed picture of ambiguities, tensions, and turnarounds that can potentially unfold in any project or programme, especially in those with fewer degrees of repetitiveness and higher levels of novelty. The thesis especially highlights the costs of failing to achieve a shared interpretation of work after turnaround episodes. Lacking a shared conceptualisation not only results in feelings of disappointment and raises existential judgements, but can also inhibit the very essence of renewal as transition from ambiguity to clarity. To come to a shared conceptualisation of the project or programme mission, a relational approach to leadership is suggested, where creating an open dialogue, listening, and responding to others is stressed.

Second, by showing how constant entrées and withdrawals can lead to loss of the sense of unity within the team, this thesis highlights the need for managers to regularly monitor their team’s composition. The findings have special implications for managing short-notice withdrawals, where the lack of follow-up explanations from managers is shown to result in internal team gossip, as well as feelings of frustration for members who have to take on the workload of the departing colleagues.

Finally, the findings re-emphasise the importance of HR practices in project-based settings (Bredin & Söderlund, 2006; 2011; Lindgren et al., 2014; Burke & Morley, 2016). Keegan and colleagues' (2018) analysis of twenty years of research into project management with regard to human resource management (HRM) reveals that when it comes to project-based organisations, HRM is more concerned with selection and recruitment than it is with employees' well-being and experience. This thesis highlights the costs of such neglect during emotionally turbulent times in a programme. In fast-paced programmes such as the one described here, senior management might not always be equipped with the time and resources to deal fully with individual concerns and team-level tensions. This is where the HR department can effectively intervene. In fact, throughout the fieldwork, a common surprise arose from moments when the participants expressed their gratitude for 'being listened to'. Diaries were also remarkably appreciated, as the participating members felt the need to express and share their experience. In this regard, developing strategies and practices to establish regular conversations with teams in project-based settings can be a simple but effective step for HR departments to take.

8.5 LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The first limitation of this study stems from the lack of access to formal interactions between team members. Although two team meetings were observed during the first stages of fieldwork, the change of management led to the discontinuation of monthly team meetings. This in turn put more burden on other techniques such as informal observations, interviews, and diaries. Having the opportunity to observe formal interactions would have provided deeper insights into *performance* of emotions at the team level. It is acknowledged that from an enactment (sense-making) perspective,

emotions are as much about reactions to the work context and relationships that they are about defining, abusing and manipulating them (Waldron, 2000).

In this sense, by putting a stronger emphasis on formal interactions, future research on emotions in project and programme teams can explore the politics of emotions in these settings. An interesting area to explore would be the gap between formal situations and informal moments. Through focus on 'emotional editing', future research could also give more weight to the embodiment aspect of emotions in project-based work to show what regulating and editing emotions can look like (Sturdy, 2003).

Second, although this thesis aimed to give equal voice to all team members, being presented equally was also a matter of each participant's availability and willingness to share their experience. Especially, team members on temporary or part-time contracts were difficult to track, due to their tight schedules or part-time presence in the field. Yet, regardless of the quantity, the quality of the information provided by temporary members during the comparably brief conversations suggested that they too struggled emotionally. Future research can exclusively explore the emotional experience of temporary membership in project-based environments. One potential avenue is to turn the focus of the individual-level enquiry towards temporary staff in project-based organisations.

Third, this thesis has not looked at gender issues in the studied team. Initially the team members were predominantly female. As the team expanded, more male members joined the programme on an interim basis, and they willingly joined the study. Altogether, this study has given voice to both, while the female perspective still dominates. This might have influenced the data, as women are typically considered to be more emotionally expressive (Game, 2008). Therefore, it would be of interest to

specifically investigate a male-dominated setting and explore the role of gender in emotional experience and means of expression in project-based environments.

In the end, it is fully acknowledged that findings from all case studies are limited to the context of the case. Hence, despite the potential guidance and insights into other project and programme settings, it is realised that the findings in this thesis are not fully transferable to other contexts. In the same vein, it should be noted that this thesis explored emotions through an interpretivist lens and hence the findings might not necessarily fit into other philosophical traditions. As noted by the renowned emotion scholar, Stephen Fineman (2004), different research philosophies can each yield a different kind of knowledge on emotions. The aim is not to contradict but to unitedly arrive at a richer understanding of what is believed to be fundamentally messy, multilayered, and often hidden:

Emotion's potential multifacetedness suggests that any one approach to understanding 'it' will be just that – one approach. It is necessarily partial, meaningful only in terms of the philosophy that informs it, the medium through which it is conveyed and the receiving audience.

(Fineman, 2004: 721)

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APPENDIX A: Participant information sheet

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Essex Business School
University of Essex

Purpose of the study:

This doctoral study aims at developing a better understanding of the human side of project work by looking into the everyday experience of team members. In particular, the focus is on collaboration processes at the team level. The study will include regular observation of team meetings as well as interviews with individual team members to see how they experience the challenges of project work. The outcome of the research will help to develop deep insights into the dynamics of effective team work in project environments.

Working title of the study:

The Human Side of Project-based Work: The Case of a Team in a Partnership-led Programme.

Confidentiality concerns:

The study abides by all the confidentiality and anonymity regulations set by the University of Essex and the studied institution. Accordingly, all names will be pseudonymised for publication purposes. The data gathered through observations and interviews are safely restored by the researcher and will only be discussed with her PhD supervisors.

What is next?

You are invited to attend this study by giving your consent to be observed when in a meetings with other team members. You will also be interviewed individually. Audio-recorded interviews are expected to last between 30 to 60 minutes.

What are the benefits of attending this study?

By giving your consent to be observed and interviewed, you are essentially making a contribution to:

- Understanding the collaboration processes at the team level
- Understanding the challenges of project-based work

*Upon further agreement, the researcher can provide the team members with monthly feedback from the observations.

Will I have access to the results of the study?

The findings will be available to you under further request and through the appropriate method (email, publication, post, etc.).

Please do not hesitate to contact me or my first PhD supervisor on the details below should you have further questions or concerns.

Hiva Rafiei

PhD Candidate at University of Essex
Essex Business School
Southend Campus,
Elmer Approach
SS1 1LW Essex
United Kingdom
Email: hrafie@essex.ac.uk

Dr Manuela Nocker, PhD

Senior Lecturer in Organization and Sustainability
Editor, Journal of Organizational Ethnography
Essex Business School
Southend Campus,
Elmer Approach
SS1 1LW Essex
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)1702 328397
Email: mnocke@essex.ac.uk

Thank you for taking time and reading the above information.

Sincerely yours,
Hiva Rafiei

APPENDIX B: Interview consent form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Working title of the project: The Human Side of Project-based Work: The Case of a Team in a Partnership-led Programme.

Outline of the research project: This doctoral thesis aims at developing a better understanding of the dynamics of team collaboration in project environments. The focus is on the team's experience and actions while they are engaged in the project activities. As a longitudinal study, this doctoral research adopts a qualitative and ethnographic approach that will allow to better understand the dynamics of collaboration over time. It will involve observation of the regular team meetings that allows understanding the collective action and individual interviews that will help to better understand the personal experience of project work. Any schedule for observation and interviews will be agreed beforehand.

For confidentiality purposes, the data gathered through the observations and interviews will be carefully stored by me and discussed only with my doctoral supervisors. all names will be pseudonymised for publication purposes.

Thank you for your collaboration. I will be happy to discuss any further questions.

Sincerely yours,
Hiva Rafiei

I understand that this research project is a doctoral study abiding by the confidentiality and anonymity regulations. Having carefully read the information above, I agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw from this study at any time for any personal reason.

I agree that interviews can be recorded by the researcher, Hiva Rafiei. I have been provided with a copy of this consent form. I understand and agree that my real name will not be used in any publication.

Full Name:.....

Signed: Date:

APPENDIX C: Details of the formal and informal observations during the fieldwork

Observation	Description
(Formal) stakeholder meeting	Programme's strategic partners meeting
(Formal) programme team meeting	Team members' monthly meeting
(Formal) programme team meeting	Team members' monthly meeting
Observation of team members in interaction	Three team members working in the office.
Observation of team members in interaction	Three team members working in the office.
Observation of team members in interaction while waiting for an interview	Observing two groups of team members occupying two different tables at lunch.
Observation of team members in interaction while waiting for an interview	Participating in setting-up the programme management office.
Observation of team members in interaction while going to the interview room	Observing two team members' conversation as they 'bumped into' each other in the staircase.
Observation of team members in interaction while going to the interview room	Observing two team members' conversation as one stopped by the office of the other.
Observation of team members in interaction while waiting for an interview	Observing the programme director and her PA going through the director's diary.
Observation of team members in interaction while waiting for an interview	Observing two team members talking about their workload.
Observation of team members in interaction while waiting for an interview	Observing two team members working on a document together while joking.
Observation of team members in interaction while leaving the interview room	Accidentally observing team members welcoming a colleague who had been off sick for three months. I also joined the team in welcoming her.
Observation of team members in interaction while waiting for an interview	Observing two team members' conversation as they 'bumped into' each other.

APPENDIX D: Interview topic guide

1. THE INDIVIDUAL ROLE IN THE PROGRAMME

- 1.1. Previous work experience
- 1.2. Current responsibilities/tasks in the programme
- 1.3. Current work priorities
- 1.4. General view of interactions with other team members

2. THE PROGRAMME SITUATION

- 2.1. Understanding of the programme, its scope and outcomes
- 2.2. Team member's personal view of the current programme situation
- 2.3. Past versus present assumptions about programme progress
- 2.4. Ideas on future developments

3. INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM ACTION

- 3.1. Views on the current teamwork dynamics
- 3.2. Challenges of teamwork
- 3.3. Ideas for teamwork improvement

4. THE TEAM MEETINGS

- 4.1. Personal view on the dynamics in team meetings
- 4.2. Ideas for improving team meetings

5. THE OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1. Identification of important stakeholders
- 5.2. Views on current relationship dynamics with the important stakeholders
- 5.3. Evaluation of the stakeholders' engagement in the programme
- 5.4. Views on how to improve stakeholder relationships

APPENDIX E: Diary template

Dear participant

I would like to firstly thank you for taking time and recording your work-related thoughts and feelings in this template.

The template includes six broad questions regarding your day-to-day life at work. Please note that this is YOUR diary and therefore it is up to you to elaborate as much as you want to. The completed template will be collected by the end of this week. Meanwhile, please do not hesitate to contact me on hrafie@essex.ac.uk if there are further questions or concerns.

Sincerely yours,
Hiva Rafiei

.....

1. What went well this week and what didn't?

2. Please explain your major programme activities for this week.

3. Who were you working most closely with and how did the collaboration go?

4. What happened this week that had the most impact on you and why do you think it had such a special impact? (it would be great if you can specify the particular event/activity/meeting that made you feel this particular way).

5. What are your activities/meetings/plans for next week?

6. How do you feel now after another week of work in this programme? (regarding the overall work environment, teamwork, the so-far progress etc.)

APPENDIX F: Sample of interview transcript

Interviewer: *So how did it happen that you decided to leave the programme?*

Interviewee: I wasn't looking for a job but I got approached by someone that I'd previously worked with, who's got a comms job going and he was like "we'll give you good money if you come along" and I was like "emmm I don't know..." and the work here felt quite [pauses] what's the word [pauses] quite frustrating when that director approached me so I was like "maybe I think about it...". He initially mentioned it just before Christmas, but I was a bit like "no..." and then he mentioned it again in January and he was like "I really think you should apply". So I did and I got it. But my feelings towards the programme; I really still believe in it; what they are trying to achieve have not changed whatsoever, but I have been very frustrated as you know with the lack of progress and I really can't see anything happening at least for a year and I just found it incredibly frustrating. In two years-time, if there is a job for me I'll be back but now it's just been so frustrating. There have been more changes in terms of the staff; I don't necessarily agree with some of the decisions that have been made and the sort of management styles I suppose, and also I'm not really doing the job that I was brought in to do. In the new job they trust me, they know that I know my job, and I just think it'll be a better working environment to be in. So that was my decision but it was actually a really tough decision because I believe in this programme so much and what it could achieve and everyday I'm like "did I make the right decision?...". I just don't know but I've made the decision. So it was difficult...and yeah in a couple of years-time when they are actually delivering stuff and things are a bit smoother and they are more stable, then actually I'd love to come back but who knows.

Interviewer: *In terms of staffing, you mentioned in your previous interview that permanent people will be recruited in Jan/Feb time, did that happen?*

Interviewee: No, so the last I heard was that they will recruit in April and that is also not going to happen because we are waiting to hear from the funder on our approach next year. So all that they are saying to us is "get ready for the first of April" and we can't recruit; there is no point in recruiting permanently coz until we hear from them, we don't know if it's going ahead. So no, there have been no permanent recruitments. There have been some business support staff, sort of admin type people, SLAs and Governance people in and out so it's been a constant change...

Interviewer: *Yeah, last time you mentioned about Alice coming in...*

Interviewee: So she's gone now [smirks]; I believe she was asked to leave. Lucy was before her, then Alice, then Monica who's also gone now, and now there is a lady in called Jane. Adam has left; he went yesterday, which we just got an email about, saying he'd left, so we can make assumptions...so yeah it's just constant change but I'm really glad that Kate and Deborah are now gonna be back this week; it's very exciting although it feels slightly bad to be like "it's great to see you, I'm going" but I have obviously told them a few weeks ago that I was leaving so yeah...Oh and Annette came in, she was Alice's replacement so she's in at the minute, so potentially there'll be some changes in terms of what Deborah would be working on but better to suit her because she was just doing way too much; she was doing like four people's job and they seem to have realised that which is obviously why she's been out so it'd be good to have her back.

Interviewer: *Why did Adam leave?*

Interviewee: So personally I think part of it was performance issues so I can sort of understand why it happened and I also think some of it was personality clash, which I don't think is really fair and unfortunately- I mean he only had a month left of his contract anyway- but actually it's left of us in a bit of trouble so I think there could have been some negotiations with him finishing work off before he left but I believe it's just been cut and I believe that part was a personality clash.

Interviewer: *Sally was telling me that she also had a clash with the senior people in the team, was it the same about Adam, you think?*

Interviewee: I think that particular issue was with Steve and we had two project managers: Adam and John and it was Adam who had the personality clash with Megan whereas I think Sally was probably more with Steve.

Interviewer: *Any instances of conflict that you witnessed?*

Interviewee: Only from what people have told me from meetings- because I've been separate from the meetings that they have in project management office now- but there was a lot of clashes mainly around sort of incorrect information, information's gone to funder and deadlines.

Interviewer: *Have you been in touch with Deborah while she was away? When is she coming back?*

Interviewee: So I've texted her on personal level to see how she's doing but we haven't spoken about work because I personally think that would hinder her coming back because I thought if she's out because of stress, which was known, I'm not gonna mention work. She asked me a couple of times when Megan and Steve are leaving- which I don't think she was very happy with my response because it's been extended again and it's because of this that I'm even more proud that she's coming back now; because to be honest from her messages I thought she's either not gonna come back or she's gonna wait till July and who knows coz they might just keep getting extended so it'd be tough for her to come back but she's doing it. And today, she's got meeting with Steve first, I told her I can meet her for coffee before that meeting if she would feel better, she said "*I'm terrified but I think I'd be OK*" so I was like "*Ok, just let me know*" and other than that I haven't really spoken to her.

Interviewer: *Glad to hear she's coming back today!... You also mentioned management styles that you were not happy with, can you clarify exactly what it was that you didn't like?*

Interviewee: Yeah...just some of the decisions that have been made; particularly around how people have left which I haven't been very impressed with, or the reasons haven't been explained to me so obviously we might still talk to some of these people and we get their side of the story not management's. I mean an email came out about Adam yesterday, it's just like "*he is no longer working on this programme*" and there is no explanation to go with that! It's a bit like what did they want us to make of that, in a way [pauses] and it's just some of the decisions. I think potentially because I have been here longer than some of the others so I can see that we are drifting from the original bid that was put in and which is why we got the money. Some of the decisions have been made by the funder so you know, I can't do anything about it and it is just what it is.

Interviewer: *Did you ever think your status in this team has changed?*

Interviewee: So before I would have reported directly to the director who was Paul and now there has been a middle manager put in; it's happened across the board and it's not a personal attack on me but I have lost confidence which is part of the reason that I thought I'd go to a job where I've got 100% backing behind me that what I'm saying is correct, I'd feel more confident in that environment whereas at the minute I don't have that confidence, which I've told to Megan and Angela. I mean I love doing the day job but I don't really get much involvement now in the strategic stuff, which I'm capable of doing and I have done in previous roles. So it's more a confidence thing; my confidence has been knocked...and again that sort of trust that I don't feel; all they want from me is to get on with the job and deliver, I feel like it's not as high as it was if that makes sense.

Interviewer: *How has it been with Angela? I'm asking since you two were like a small comms team yourselves...*

Interviewee: It's been fine; it hasn't been great and it hasn't been bad; it's just been fine [pauses] you know, I just get on with the job; I'm not gonna kick up a fuss; I'm paid to do the job and I deliver on it but it's just when I first got the job I was told that I'd be in a team of six people and it's just been me and Angela and still in my eyes under-resourced so it's been a struggle to juggle everything or juggle everything and do it well. I don't feel as well that they got a strong commitment to comms when we talk about budgets, it's not reflected in the budget that we are discussing even though I'm saying that we should have 10% and you know I don't get that. So it just really feels like they don't really take it seriously but at the same time it's a key part of this project to engage with residents whereas I have hardly done any; I went out today for the first time in the few weeks and that's why I enjoy meeting the parents; seeing the kids. Seeing who you're actually targeting plays such a difference; you know, none of the project managers have been out and seen the project being delivered; they've been to none of the programmes; none of the management have and I just think that's really bad. In fact, I think Sandra and I are actually the only ones out of the whole team that's been out and seen the stuff being delivered and I think that's really poor because how do they know what the project is about unless you actually go and see the people it's being delivered to, seeing the effects that it's having...so I just [pauses] I'd struggle with that and the project management, why have they not been out to see them? I just don't know [pauses] personal feelings but you know, that's how I felt.

Interviewer: *I see... You mentioned Sandra; how do you think it will be for her when you leave? You too are quite close now.*

Interviewee: Oh I don't know. She was quite upset when I told her. I think with Kate and Deborah coming back that'd help but I think she's sort of wondering if she should still be here; if it's the right position for her but I don't think she's actively looking but then neither was I because I think everyone believes in it so much, it could be so great.

Interviewer: *Any news from Susan?*

Interviewee: No, she just disappeared, I emailed her saying I am leaving and I haven't heard anything back so it's a shame. But it's probably for the best, I think. I think the relationship that we have got- not between me and her personally but between her and the programme- is a bit toxic and I think things were being said to partners, to parents, which I can understand but it's not [pauses]; it's not [sighs] conducive for the project.

Interviewer: *Is there a replacement for Sally yet?*

Interviewee: No, they don't recruit now.

Interviewer: *In retrospect, do you think you would have stayed with the team if the previous leadership was still in place?*

Interviewee: Oh! difficult question! Emmm...I don't know...with the previous leadership I could see delivery happening quicker but I really don't think Paul was right as the director because he just wasn't a strong director; he wouldn't push back to the leadership above or it didn't feel like he'd make a decision so I think Megan coming in was the right decision so it's hard to say. But in terms of delivery, it would have happened quicker; not necessarily with the right processes behind it but it would have happened so...I don't know.

Interviewer: *Some team members actually say you are the 'strategic' programme team and you are not supposed to be concerned with delivery of the projects now, what would you say to this view?*

Interviewee: Previously it's been delivered to families whereas at the minute not a lot of that has happened. So some of the work around communication and language has been delivered and that's great but with other strands of work there is not a lot delivered if anything so that is where I struggle. We need to just get some stuff [pauses] and I think if Susan had still been involved she would have pushed more stuff out through the children centres so then families would be seeing the benefits of the programme whereas at the minute they are not seeing it and

it's difficult in my job to be able to communicate what we are doing when we are not doing that much.

Interviewer: *I see, is it the third year now?*

Interviewee: Depends who you ask; I'd say it's third because I think we got the money two years ago but others might say we are in fourth.

Interviewer: *So you should be still in planning phase if it's third... I'm just asking since you mentioned delivery a couple of times.*

Interviewee: Yeah we've got 8 more years but when I started I believed we were meant to be delivering; 'test and learn'; so we test some of the projects but we haven't done much of that. When I first started we had a list of like 50 projects which weren't all gonna be delivered straight away but now we've got a list of maybe 10 projects which still is not gonna be delivered. It's been reduced dramatically and concentrating mainly on diet/nutrition for this year so they've totally changed the approach. So it's about testing; you do a test, you'd review it, you improve again, test again, review it, improve it. They've been working on communication/language but in the other strands it just hasn't happened and also in terms of the 10-year projects, there is much bigger projects that are meant to be sitting behind this like family-focused GP, that's a massive project, which I understand wouldn't be delivered immediately but some of these smaller projects could have been started. I don't know, I think about the families and what they are getting at the minute, it's minimal.

Interviewer: *I see. It's been a year now, how did your feelings evolve over time for the programme and the overall work environment and how is it now that you are leaving?*

Interviewee: I still believe in it, and I have from day one and I think it'd be really good but I think my frustration has just increased month on month on month like said in terms of delivery but also just the constant change in the team and I understand why we had constant change but it's just not a good environment to be in when people are just in and out. Deborah and Kate have been sick which obviously hasn't been nice because they are the faces that I could rely on before or to have that sanity check with whereas they haven't been around. I just think it will be really good but I think they are not quite ready yet and I'm not sure if I can continue to be this frustrated for at least another year which is how I imagine it to be. It might not and I might be totally wrong.

Interviewer: *I remember you were quite hopeful when the leadership changed...*

Interviewee: Yeah, I felt quite positive, when Megan came in I was really positive about her, she is very driven. I think some of the frustration has been with time scales coming with the programme management office which is Steve and the project managers which is not against [pauses]; it's not anything personally but obviously they are reviewing a lot of the information and I think a lot of people have come in and thought "*we can do this, no problem*" and actually it is quite complex so obviously it's taken them a longer time to get to grips with it before they start doing business processes or whatever. So I think that has been quite frustrating and some of the frustration came out when I was quite involved in some of their work which I felt I was not doing comms work but I was doing [pauses] not business support but business admin and that was over the summer and recently has just been [pauses] to be honest recently I felt we are gonna be doing more comms which is obviously exciting and I've enjoyed it, I'm passionate about it but I feel too drained from it all now and I don't wanna be like that. Although I'm still enthusiastic but you can be drained as well at the same time...does that make sense?

Interviewer: *Totally. Did you ever see yourself leaving for another job?*

Interviewee: No and I wasn't looking, I was approached and I thought maybe it's the right decision and when I made it. I just saw my family and friends reaction coz they knew how passionate I was about it but actually they've all been like "*I'm so glad you are leaving that place*". So I've obviously been quite negative about it and they could obviously see my frustration or when I was upset so for them to be quite relieved it feels "*oh, so I have made the*

right decision” because I didn’t realise that I was negative or whatever it is that they have seen that they are like “*thank God!*” which surprise me, coz I didn’t really feel like it’d affected me that much coz like I said I still feel positive about it but yeah, their reactions were interesting!

Interviewer: *Based on all the experience from here, if you were to be the director, what would you focus on? How would you lead your team?*

Interviewee: Difficult question... I think you need to be really honest and open because I think there is a lot of conversations that I’m not involved in which neither here or there but decisions are made and I’m not sure full consideration is given. It feels like a lot we have to just pick up when someone goes or help out when someone new comes in which is obviously what you do anyway but I don’t think the thought is given to the bigger picture of the programme and how it actually affects the rest of the team like in terms of workload. Also that honesty is important because we are not given reasons; it just seems to happen or you hear gossip and gossip is the worst thing that can happen. It’s been also difficult with having interims and not a permanent team so obviously that’s from the funder and I know we can’t change that but to get a permanent team would be so important and have good handovers is also very important whereas at the minute Adam has gone and there has been no handover; we have to find all these documents and we’ve got no idea where they’re saved; we don’t know what he was up to with his projects, so making sure that there is that sort of regular updates or [pauses] and also it’s difficult with providers; so if he’s having difficulties with providers we’d now have to step in and sort it out; we don’t know who he’s been talking to and what the conversation were and we look unprofessional and I constantly feel that we look unprofessional [emphasis]; we’ve given the funder data that conflicts with previous data; it’s just so unprofessional!

APPENDIX G: Classification of emotions (Brundin, 2002: 352–60)

Anger	Frustration	Concern	Confidence	Strain
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressiveness • Indignation • Rage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annoyance • Defensiveness • Disharmony • Dissatisfaction • Impatience • Irritation • Persistence • Restlessness • Feeling shut-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disappointment • Easy strain • Empathy • Sympathy • Regret • Uneasiness • Worry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calmness • Cautious optimism • Commitment • Conviction • Expectations • Hope • Loyalty • Optimism • Reassurance • Security • Self-assurance • Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatigue • Grief • Guilt • Hardship • Helplessness • Inability to express feelings • Inadequacy • Pain • Pressure • Shock • Stress • Tensions • Threat • Vulnerability
Satisfaction	Bewilderment	Abandonment	Resignation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amusement • Challenge • Cockiness • Excitement • Happiness • Joy • Pride • Relief • Self-fulfilment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distrust • Doubt • Hesitation • Reluctance • Surprise • Suspicion • Uncertainty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emptiness • Betrayal • Dependence • Helplessness • Loneliness • Sense of unfair treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of cowardliness • Lack of motivation • Listlessness • Pessimism • Sense of giving up • Tiredness 	

APPENDIX H: Classification of emotions (Manzoor, 2012: 139)

Anger	Frustration	Concern	Confidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressiveness • Contempt • Dislike (ness) • Grumble • Rage • Sarcastic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annoyance • Defensiveness • Dissatisfaction • Irritation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curiosity • Disappointment • Empathy • Sympathy • Interest • Worry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Giving) assurance • Calmness • Commitment • Conviction • Expectations • Hope • Optimism • Reassurance • Self-assurance • Trust
Satisfaction	Bewilderment	Fear	Resignation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amusement • Challenge • Excitement • Gladness • Happiness • Joy • Love • Pleasure • Appreciative • Pride • Relief • Self-fulfilment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion • Doubt • Hesitation • Reluctance • Surprise • Suspicion • Distrust/lack of trust • Uncertainty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cautious • Lack of confidence • Nervousness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of giving up • Tiredness
Sadness	Strain	Shame	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disappointment • Powerlessness/worthlessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure • Shock • Stress • Tension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embarrassment • Guilt • Regret 	

APPENDIX I: The procedure undertaken for the thematic analysis of data

THEMATIC CATEGORY	EPISODE ONE: THE 'STUCK' TEAM BEWILDERED BUT LIGHT-HEARTED	
Themes	Basic codes	Emotions
Pressured by the programme funder	Funder demanding team expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reluctance • Hesitation • Bewilderment • Doubt
	Funder mandating the recruitment of a programme manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure
	Funder demanding faster progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure • Stress • Confusion
	Funder trying to micromanage the programme team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annoyance • Irritation • Resignation
	The team stopping all their activities to prepare for the meeting with the funder.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerability • Stress • Disharmony
	Funder threatening to stop the funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat • Pressure • Dependence • Powerlessness
Frustrated with the detached partners	Partners do not know about the basics of the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern • Giving assurance • Frustration
	Partners drifted away after writing the bid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abandonment • Concern
	Partners do not offer support in action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abandonment • Lack of confidence
	Partners are not so keen about engaging in the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarcastic • Expectation • Annoyance
A light-hearted team uncertain about team dynamics	Vague/too wide job descriptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty • Confusion
	Holding different opinions about which tasks to prioritise/ task conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty • Confusion

THEMATIC CATEGORY	EPISODE ONE: THE 'STUCK' TEAM BEWILDERED BUT LIGHT-HEARTED	
Themes	Basic codes	Emotions
	Lack of a clear team structure/ vague lines of reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion • Dependence
	Attaching emotional significance to the team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciation • Trust • Cheerfulness
	Disapproval of the dynamics in the team meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dislike • Contempt

THEMATIC CATEGORY	EPISODE TWO: FACING A TURNAROUND FEELING AMBIVALENT IN MAKING SENSE OF CHANGE	
Themes	Basic codes	Emotions
Gazes of confidence at the new director	Trusting that the new director can speed up the progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimism • Conviction • Confidence
	Feeling more involved in the work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciation • Happiness
	Believing that the previous director was not directive enough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disappointment • Concern
	The new management setting up the programme governance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relief • Satisfaction • Appreciation
	Affirming the decisiveness of the new director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimism • Conviction • Security
Threatened by the status shifts	The new director re-defining the job descriptions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear • Threat • Worry
	The new director specifying/re-structuring lines of reporting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat • Fear • Worry
	Change of status also impacting others who are not directly involved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uneasiness • Tension

THEMATIC CATEGORY	EPISODE TWO: FACING A TURNAROUND FEELING AMBIVALENT IN MAKING SENSE OF CHANGE	
Themes	Basic codes	Emotions
Two teams within one and feelings of exclusion	Staff joining the programme team on interim basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tension • Challenge • Uneasiness • Powerlessness
	The bid-writing feel the interim staff disregard their work and do not appreciate the programme's history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indignation • Resignation • Powerlessness • Tension • Defensiveness
	The bid-writing team feel the interim staff do not value their knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indignation • Resignation • Defensiveness
	When the bid-writing team raise their concerns, they feel they are not heard by the interim staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling unheard • Feeling shut-in • Tension • Indignation • Frustration
	The interim staff think the bid-writing team are defensive towards the programme and think they own it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tension • Frustration • Contempt
	Interim staff speaking the 'project management language' and the permanent staff do not.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disharmony • Uneasiness • Contempt
Tensions of the professional becoming personal	The new management reviews the projects that have gone under delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defensiveness • Resignation
	The bid-writing team and the interim staff do not 'hang out' with each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tension • Disharmony • Reluctance • Dislike
	The bid-writing team question the high wages of the interim management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defensiveness • Sarcastic

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THEMATIC CATEGORY	EPISODE THREE: ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK RESIGNATION BEHIND THE MASK OF RESILIENCE	
Themes	Basic codes	Emotions
The disharmony over adopting a project management mindset	Putting the overall programme on pause.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Betrayal • Powerlessness • Resignation • Indignation • Sense of unfair treatment
	Needing to go back to planning while some projects have already entered the delivery phase.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion • Defensiveness • Commitment
	Reducing the number of projects drastically so that only the ones with robust processes behind them remain in the programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissatisfaction • Grumble • Contempt
The alarming divide	The senior management do not trust the bid-writing team with some information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspicion • Lack of confidence
	The bid-writing team feels excluded from decision making processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powerlessness • Resignation • Indignation • Feeling unheard

THEMATIC CATEGORY	EPISODE FOUR: THE BREAKDOWN DRAINED AND DISAPPOINTED	
Themes	Basic codes	Emotions
'Lost' in the ebb and flow of task functions	Members are not included in decision making about their tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling shut-in • Feeling unheard • Sense of unfair treatment • Indignation
	Members are stopped in the middle of doing tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anger • Indignation • Feeling unheard • Sense of unfair treatment • Lack of motivation
	Members have to take on tasks that do not match their roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustration • Resignation • Strain • Stress

THEMATIC CATEGORY	EPISODE FOUR: THE BREAKDOWN DRAINED AND DISAPPOINTED	
Themes	Basic codes	Emotions
	Members are overloaded with work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustration • Stress • Resignation • Strain
Failure of maintenance functions and the sense of giving up	Interim staff keep joining and leaving the team on very short notices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uneasiness • Dissatisfaction • Sense of giving up
	Management does not justify the reason for withdrawals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissatisfaction • Frustration
	The management do not communicate regularly to the team members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disappointment • Sadness • Frustration • Sense of giving up
	Members do not feel valued by the management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sadness • Frustration • Lack of motivation • Sense of giving up

APPENDIX J: Example of the cross-case IPA

Superordinate theme		Emotions and identity work	
Participants contributing to the superordinate theme		All	
Emergent themes (sub-themes)	Participants contributing to this theme	Example of indicative quote	Exploratory comment
Grief	Susan	<i>"She's ended my career [bursts into tears]"</i>	She sees the new management responsible for losing her job and she cannot stop crying.
Defensiveness	Susan	<i>"You have to stand up for who you are and your principles and that's what I'm doing"</i>	She wants to defend herself, her work, and her values.
Strain	Deborah	<i>"It's just doing too much really and it seemed that I wasn't really able to do anything so unfortunately it just got too much and I had to have time off."</i>	Work overload was to the extent that she could not deliver anymore and had to go on a leave period for rest.
	Gemma	<i>"Wednesday I felt overwhelmed with the amount of work and got a bit teary."</i>	Work overload was to the degree that made her cry.
	Sandra	<i>"I managed to get quite a lot done and I think this is largely due to me coming to the office very early as early as 7.15am on average."</i>	She had to sacrifice her non-work hours to fulfil the assigned tasks.
Loss of confidence	Susan	<i>"Maybe I'm naïve; maybe I trust too easily."</i>	She is doubting and questioning her inner self.
	Deborah	<i>"They are the ones that have got all the knowledge about how you set up a project and how you make it work."</i>	She seems rather intimidated by the fact that the new management knows more about project work.
	Gemma	<i>"It's not a personal attack on me but I have lost confidence."</i>	Going lower the hierarchy lowered her sense of confidence.

Superordinate theme		Emotions and perceived injustice	
Participants contributing to the superordinate theme		All	
Emergent themes (sub-themes)	Participants contributing to this theme	Example of indicative quote	Exploratory comment
Indignation	Susan	<i>"If in business you put your head above the parapet, then you have to take the consequences!"</i>	She sarcastically refers to the fact that her efforts have not been reciprocated but even resulted in losing her job.
	Deborah	<i>"It's a bit like sort of a bloodless coup that these new people have come in and they are all very nice-nothing personal- but they seem to just really [think] they are the ones that are in charge."</i>	She thinks it is not fair that the new people have suddenly taken the control and have disregarded all the past efforts behind the programme.
	Sandra	<i>"I've been assigned a task that I'm in the middle of doing, it's not fair to just leave that!"</i>	She thinks it is unfair that they suddenly stopped her from completing her work.
Distrust	Susan	<i>"Although they say really nice words like all of that means nothing if they don't buy you."</i>	She cannot trust her managers anymore after everything that has happened.
Empathy	Susan	<i>"I don't think it's fair what they are doing to Deborah, it is totally appalling!"</i>	She feels empathy for Deborah as she finds her being disrespected and bullied.
	Deborah	<i>"Some like Susan were completely deleted from everything even though she created it."</i>	She thinks it was not fair that Susan was dismissed while she was the one initiating the programme in the first place.
	Gemma	<i>"I think she's just totally overwhelmed with the amount she's got to do and it's totally unfair."</i>	She feels Sandra's workload is not fair.
	Sandra	<i>"They didn't ask Gemma [why she was leaving], they</i>	She thinks it wasn't fair that the new

Superordinate theme		Emotions and perceived injustice	
Participants contributing to the superordinate theme		All	
Emergent themes (sub-themes)	Participants contributing to this theme	Example of indicative quote	Exploratory comment
		<i>said "ok, fine". It's horrible way to treat people!"</i>	management let Gemma leave without even asking her why.

Superordinate theme		Emotions and perceived meaningless of work	
Participants contributing to the superordinate theme		All	
Emergent themes (sub-themes)	Participants contributing to this theme	Example of indicative quote	Exploratory comment
Contempt	Susan	<i>"They are pen pushers!"</i>	She thinks the new management has not done anything of value to the programme.
	Deborah	<i>"We've just had a year of paper pushing project management."</i>	She thinks a year of work has not led to anything valuable in terms of delivery.
Frustration	Gemma	<i>"Still no outputs so it is quite frustrating, particularly for comms as I need delivery to communicate!"</i>	It is frustrating for her that the programme is not yet at the delivery stage and there is no tangible output. Having no outputs makes her feel her job is meaningless.
	Sandra	<i>"It's been like two step backward and then crawl again to where you came from!"</i>	She is frustrated by the duplications and the slow progress of work.

Superordinate theme		Emotions and perceived meaningless of work	
Participants contributing to the superordinate theme		All	
Emergent themes (sub-themes)	Participants contributing to this theme	Example of indicative quote	Exploratory comment
Disappointment	Gemma	<i>"I really can't see anything happening at least for a year."</i>	She is not seeing the delivery happening anytime soon.
	Sandra	<i>"I love change as long as it's going to lead to something [but] now it's like we all run and do it and then it's like "no, no, we're not doing that; we're doing this" then it feels like what's the point?"</i>	She thinks all the changes they have been through has been pointless.