Restructuring in Higher Education:
A Case Study in an Australian University

By

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Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Deakin University
July, 2017
I am the author of the thesis entitled

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I dedicate this thesis to my late brother, Muhammad Khairin bin Kamarudin whom I lost during this journey.
### KEY PERSONNEL AND INSTITUTIONS

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<td>Senior Executive</td>
<td>Refers to staff that hold or have held the positions of University Executive. This includes: Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Pro Vice-Chancellors (Deans), Vice-President, Chief Financial Officer, and the Chair of Academic Board. Senior Executives provide the leadership for the activities of University.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Academic</td>
<td>Refers to staff who are holding/have held academic positions which include: Head of School, Associate Head of School and Professors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Administrator</td>
<td>Refers to staff who are holding/have held administrative management positions in the faculty. This includes: Faculty General Manager, Faculty Managers and Heads of Department</td>
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<td>Former Dean of the former Faculty of Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Rae</td>
<td>Former Vice Chancellor of the university during the amalgamation of teacher colleges to form the university</td>
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<td>Professor Kwon</td>
<td>Former Vice Chancellor of the university in the case study</td>
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<td>Professor Sanders</td>
<td>Former Interim Dean of the former Faculty of Education during the amalgamation</td>
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<td>Darry</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fern</td>
<td>An administrator from the Human Resource Department</td>
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<td>A faculty academic (14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Huelsman</td>
<td>A faculty academic (15)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Y</td>
<td>Main campus of the University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Z</td>
<td>Waterfront campus of the university</td>
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<tr>
<td>King School of Education</td>
<td>Former Advanced Institute of Education located in a rural part of the state which amalgamated with the university in the 1990s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Queen College</td>
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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a case study that describes and analyzes a higher education restructuring, namely: the amalgamation of two faculties in an Australian university, a Faculty of Education and a Faculty of Arts, into one. This study analyzes the restructuring’s processes, impacts and outcomes as experienced and perceived by those directly involved and affected by the amalgamation.

This study is framed by a case study research design utilising the Constructivist Grounded Theory for data gathering and analysis. Through the Theoretical Sampling method, twenty eight people were interviewed. These people consisted of university executives, academics and administrators from both the former faculties, an officer from the human resource department, as well as the Amalgamation Implementation Committee (AIC) members. This is complemented with an analysis of documents related to the restructuring such as minutes of meetings, email correspondence, the faculty year book, annual reports, policies, corporate profiles and other related documents.

The findings of the study reveal that the Australian higher education sector has gone through various reforms driven by socio-economic factors, global changes, growth management strategies and industrial demands. The university in the case study was a product of several amalgamations between teacher colleges and technical institutes.

The results of the study reveal that the restructuring of the university in the case study was a top down decision from the university top management with the aim of cost saving and was completed within six months. The restructuring impacted staff and students and included changes in job positions, redundancies, emotional impacts, extra work demands, loss of institutional identity and status, loss of support from the administrative staff and disrupting academic affairs. Several main issues emerge from the restructuring: the importance of organizational context, amalgamation effects, leadership, communication, as well as budgets and finance.

This study shows that higher education nowadays is all about market values. Globalization changes the way a university operates and reforms. Market values underpin activities carried out by universities as universities take on board free market
economics and its values of choice, individualism and competition, as well as raising standards through innovation efficiency.
PART ONE: POSITIONING THE STUDY

This study provides insights into a restructuring carried out in an Australian university: namely, an amalgamation of a Faculty of Arts and a Faculty of Education.

This study is thus divided into three parts: Part 1, Part 2 and a concluding chapter. Part 1 serves to present the position of this study and consists of three chapters. Specifically, it presents the introduction, literature review, research methods and research procedures for this study. Chapter One aims to provide a general background and focus of the study. Chapter One presents the problem statement, the research goal, the significance, limitations of the study as well as an outline of the study. Chapter Two presents the literature review of the study. This includes a critical assessment of the relevant literature on organizational restructuring as well as current and pertinent issues in higher education. Chapter Three presents the research methods of the study, the justification taken for the research approach, design and instruments selected for the study. Issues of validity and reliability of research approach and instruments are also discussed.

Part 2 of this thesis provides the presentation of the data, the analysis and discussion of this study. This comprises Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven. Chapter Eight is the concluding chapter of the study. This chapter presents the conclusion of the case study outlining the crux of the issue this research illuminates and the propositions extracted from the study. The contribution of the thesis, future research suggestions as well as the autobiographical reflection are also presented.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The current context of higher education is one of dynamic change (Altbach, 2013b; Shin & Harman, 2009). Catalysts for higher education change include globalization, technological advancements, competitive forces and policy oriented towards the free market (Altbach, 2013b; Marginson, 2008; Scott, Bell, Coates, & Grebennikov, 2010). Of these, globalization forces have been shown to exert significant impetus for change in the higher education sector (Altbach, 2013b; Marginson, 2008).

According to Ulrich Beck (2007), globalization is a process whereby the national states lose their sovereignty because of their membership in international and supra-national organizations, their orientations, identities and networks. Martens and Raza (2010) define globalization as the increasing integration of economies around the world, particularly through business and financial activities. Pascal Lamy (2006) states that globalization is about market capitalism resulting from worldwide technological revolution. Additionally, globalization too denotes the movement of labour and knowledge technology across national borders and encompassing other aspects of life such as the social, cultural and political. (Michie, 2011; World Health Organization, 2006). Forest & Altbach (2006, p. 123) further state that globalization is “The broad economic, technological, and scientific trends that directly affect higher education and are largely inevitable in the contemporary world”. Scholars agree that globalization is not a recent phenomenon (Altbach, 2013a; Deem, 2001; Marginson, 2008). However, as commerce and financial services are technologically more advanced and integrated nowadays, the phenomenon is more noticed, observed and profound.

Deem (2001) states that globalization in higher education relates to four concepts. First, the global spread of business and services as well as key economic, social and cultural practices to a world market, often through multinational companies and the internet. Secondly, globalization in higher education relates to internationalisation which is defined as the sharing of ideas, knowledge and ways of
doing things in similar ways across different countries. The third is the ideology of new managerialism, that is, the extent to which contemporary business practices and private sector ideas or values have permeated publicly funded institutions and work practices. Finally, globalization relates to “… the concept of entrepreneurialism in higher education, where academics and administrative staff explicitly seek out new ways of raising private sector funds through enterprising activities such as consultancies and applied research” (Deem, 2001, pg. 7). In higher education, the word ‘globalization’ also includes the rapid expansion of information technology developments, the mass demands of higher education (also known as the massification of higher education), the rapid increase of students’ enrolment (local and international students), the use of English as the common language for instruction and communication, and higher education’s financial state of stringency (Altbach, 2013b; Shin & Harman, 2009; Vaira, 2004).

Van Damme (2001) further elaborates that the impact of globalization on higher education institutions and policies is diverse, depending on context and setting of the institutions and as such, he stresses the danger of generalisation and oversimplification when dealing with the issue of globalization. As stated by Marginson and Van der Wende (2007), globalization’s impact on higher education is different based on various factors, among others, governmental policies, governance, management, context and locality and type of institution. Van Damme (2001) highlights several impacts of globalization on higher education such as the awareness of the importance of knowledge society and the exigencies towards universities as knowledge-centers, the increase in the demand for higher education worldwide, the erosion of the national regulatory and policy frameworks in which universities are embedded and the emerging ‘borderless’ higher education market.

Globalization has also resulted in the internationalisation and multinationalisation of higher education institutions (Altbach & Knight, 2007). The former refers to the introduction of new policies and programs by governments and institutions to attract international enrolments and partnerships as a response to global demands and activities (Forest & Altbach, 2006). The latter refers to the expansion of universities into other countries such as branch campuses and the establishment of
programs such as twinning and distance learning (Forest & Altbach, 2006). Other impacts of globalization include the change in teaching and learning, research, organizational structure, higher education administration and governance, financial, policy-making, knowledge transfer and curricular development as universities adapt to wide sweeping changes (Marginson, 2006). Globalization also results in increasing demand for ‘public accountability’ and ‘value for money’. These factors have pushed universities to transform the manner in which they operate, nationally and globally. As a result, universities operate as entrepreneurial units (also known as ‘campus incorporation’) (Marginson, 2006). The priority is for high levels of operational efficiency and effectiveness across all dimensions of institutional management. Scott, Coates and Anderson (2008, p. v) aptly describe the critical situation of higher education as follows:

The external pressures for change in higher education – radical change in many instances – are increasing not decreasing. Funding per capita from the public purse is down; competition is up; the pressure to create new sources of income has grown; institutions are more commercial; students are more numerous, diverse and forthright about getting value for the money paid; instances of litigation against universities are emerging; government scrutiny is increasing; and external quality audits are in place. Rapid developments in Communications and Information Technology have made possible modes and approaches to learning unthought-of of thirty years ago (p. v).

Many universities across countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, Norway, South Africa, mainland China and Taiwan, and Australia began to transform themselves in order to keep up with the impact of globalization on the institutions (Arthur, 2010; Harman & Harman, 2003; Harman & Meek, 2002; Johnes, 2013). Many of these changes happened at the micro level (institutional level) and are

According to scholars, amalgamations within higher education institutions represent a response to increased globalised competition and are intended to gain greater benefits in administrative, economic and academic activities (Harman & Harman, 2003; Marginson, 2006). Amalgamations are carried out with the aim of forming a larger stronger academic unit. The assumption is that larger units will more likely yield qualitatively stronger academic institutions, deliver better management and make more effective and efficient use of human and non-human resources (Hay & Fourie, 2002).

Radical organizational change such as amalgamation is not an easy task (Starr, 2011). Change impacts the human side of the organization and vice versa (Starr, 2011; Kotter, 2007). During major change, micro political processes amongst stakeholders usually intensify, often resulting in resistance to change (Kotter and Rathgeber, 2006; Oreg, 2006; Starr, 2011). According to Starr (2011, p. 3), “… resistance stems from desires to challenge, disrupt and/or overturn organizational practices, discourses and power relations”. Additionally, sudden and imposed change, without consultation with all parties involved, may significantly contribute to negative emotions such as fear of losing something important, anger and anxiety, as staff view change as a threat (Starr, 2011). Thus, the important role played by the human side of the organization in any change plan needs to be emphasised. In times of change, organizations need to address and understand the needs of employees in order to retain and keep them motivated (Cartwright & Holmes, 2006).

Scholars have argued that during the change period, faculty members may experience uncertainty in various aspects of the new organizational structure (Covin, Kolenko, Sightler, & Tudor, 1997; Ospina & Foldy, 2010). Thus, leaders and managers are expected to control and mediate the after effects of change as experienced by faculty members (Covin, et al., 1997; Ospina & Foldy, 2010). The problems and dilemma of faculty members is best described by Appelbaum:
Some of these adjustment problems arise from employee’s fears over the loss of situational control, the possible loss of their job, and the financial obligations concomitant with the loss of a job. Moving into the realm of the unknown with a new manager and a new team is also disconcerting and anxiety provoking. The post-amalgamation period can be compared to starting with a blank slate in any other new organization. There is no recognition for the years of dedicated service in the original institution. Other fears include the loss of effective and close team members, as well as the uncertainty about the new team member and supervisors to be inherited. Employees have been known to experience the amalgamation as a loss of a loved one, or may vicariously live the situation as a personal crisis and panic. This panic may manifest itself as listlessness, apathy, a preoccupation with the past, lack of commitment to the new culture, and/or active resistance to the new system. Their only certainty is that nothing is certain (Appelbaum, Gandell, Yortis, Proper & Jobin, 2000, p. 653).

Scholars have also argued that adverse change consequences may prompt valued staff to leave the organization as they feel unappreciated or consider that their welfare is not well taken care of by the organization (Oreg, 2006; Starr, 2011). If this happens, retention becomes an issue; particularly if there is a risk of losing high performing staff to competitor organizations.

1.2 Problem statement

Literature on organizational change mainly points to general preconditions for change success. For example, scholars have pointed out that successful change ultimately depends on the effective and willing participation and integration of faculty members involved (Burgan, 2006; Oss & Hek, 2011; Vakola, Armenakis, & Oreg, 2013). Others state that change success requires strong leadership (Kamarudin & Starr, 2012; Kotter, 2011; Fullan, 2011; Starr, 2011), good communication (Constantin, 2012; Lewis, Schmisseur, Stephens, & Weir, 2006), understanding of context
(Rafferty & Restubog, 2010; Schultz & Hernes, 2013) and availability of resources such as budget allocations (Cheung-Judge, 2015; Grieves, 2010). Various studies have also been carried out looking at the different contexts of change and highlighting the importance of the pre-change and during change periods (Harman & Harman, 2003; Locke, 2007; Yazdifar, Golestani, Askary, & Askarany, 2005). Good leadership, excellent communication, as well as integration of the human resource factor in the amalgamation process are said to be factors important during these periods (Harman & Harman, 2003; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Skodvin, 1999).

However, research has shown that change, especially in higher education, is not an easy task. Unlike business organizations, a university has distinctive fundamental characteristics and practices (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Harman, 1989; Kezar & Eckel, 2002). For example, the presence of diverse and ambitious objectives and semi-autonomous organizational structures in the form of faculties, departments and research centers for excellence, make restructuring a complex exercise (Askling & Stensaker, 2002; Burgan, 2006). Nevertheless, research in higher education change has mainly focused on change at the macro level looking at the implementation of policy changes as well as best practices of change (Blackmore & Sachs, 2000; Fullan, 2009; Sehoole, 2005; Varghese, 2004; Wan, 2008). This finding is interesting because scholars have argued that the success or failure of restructuring efforts is largely dependent on the capacity and willingness of people, also known as the human factor, at the grass roots level to implement change (Evans, 1996; Kotter, 2007; Michaelis, Stegmaier, & Sonntag, 2010, Yuzhuo, 2007). In higher education, the roles of academics and administrative staff are crucial and contribute to the success of change because both academics and administrative staff are involved in the day to day operation of an institution (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Yuzhuo, 2007). The views, experiences and knowledge of faculty members (both academics and non-academics) need to be taken into account. These views may contribute to the success of the major change. Yet, some might also resist change (Evans, 1996; Furst & Cable, 2008; J. P. Kotter, 2007; Michaelis et al., 2010). Locke (2007) further states that planning for amalgamations should take into account the existing organizational context which includes organizational cultures and subcultures of the involved parties. A culturally
Sensitive management may prove useful to ensure the success of the merger (Locke, 2007). On the other hand, differences in organizational culture may lead to conflict and controversy. This is because differences between organizational cultures are not always adequately recognised and taken into account, leading to an intensification of these differences, which in turn leads to the creation of conflict within the new institution between factions who stay loyal to the identity and culture of the old institution.

As can be seen above, despite the increase in studies of organizational restructuring in universities—especially involving a decrease in the number of faculties in an institution through amalgamation, there are few extant case studies that document the processes, impacts and outcomes of this growing trend. This thesis aims to address the dearth of information by presenting a case study in point. This thesis responds to a case of major change involving the amalgamation of two faculties in an Australian University. The thesis reports on a research project that was designed to probe, describe and elucidate a case exemplar of higher education restructuring carried out in an Australian university through the insights and experiences of staff involved and affected by the amalgamation, as well as related extant primary documents.

1.3 The research goal

This case study sets out to describe and analyze an organizational restructuring, namely: the amalgamation of two faculties into one in an Australian university, as experienced and perceived by those directly involved and affected by the amalgamation. The case study analyzes the processes, impact and outcomes of a major restructuring in the form of a faculty amalgamation. These insights will then be interpreted and critically analyzed to contribute to research on higher education restructuring in Australia as a result of policy and practices inspired by globalization.

1.4 Research questions

This research aims to seek answers to the following research questions:

1. How and why does a university undertake restructuring at the faculty level?
2. How are the effects of restructuring experienced and perceived by stakeholders?

1.5 Significance of the study

Firstly, this study looks at the implementation of a higher education major change at the micro level (an amalgamation of two faculties) through a case study in an Australian university. A review of the literature shows that such studies are scarce (Harman, 2002; Harman, 2003). Contextual detail in the study of organizational change is crucial because “it offers a point of view of those being studied and the sensitivity to context” (Bryman, Stephens, & Campo, 1996, p. 1). Kezar, Carducci and Mc Gavin (2006) further add that little research has been conducted that analyzes the context of change in higher education as a distinct form compared to other organizations (Michaelis, et al., 2010; Segall & Freedman, 2007; Shin & Harman, 2009; Varghese, 2004; Wolverton, Ackerman, & Holt, 2005).

Secondly, many empirical studies on organizational change tend to focus only on leaders and the upper echelons of the institution’s structure such as the top executives (Kotter, 2007; Sitkin & Pablo, 2005). Recent literature has shown that change will not be a success without support from all levels of the organization, from the top to those at the grass roots. This is because the people at all levels of the organization should be involved in the enactment of change as these people are the ones who would be involved and impacted by the change process (Evans, 1996; Bahilana & Casciaro, 2013). Hence, this study attempts to provide insights into an organizational change from various perspectives and levels, within the university.

Lastly, this study differs from other studies on major change in higher education because it utilizes a Grounded Theory approach underpinned by a social dynamics perspective (Charmaz, 2006). In other words, this study will employ a methodological approach to a topic that enables a ‘deep’ engagement at one site through the involvement of many stakeholders and their various perspectives. This study will contribute towards an expanded understanding of a major change phenomenon in higher education (Day, Gronn, & Salas, 2006).
1.6 Outline of the thesis

Chapter Two presents a literature review which includes issues on organizational restructuring and its effects, as well as issues in higher education restructuring. Chapter Three sets out an argument for methodological decisions related to the research paradigm, research methods and data analysis strategies. Chapter Four describes a historical account of Australian higher education, the institution and the former faculties involved in the case study. In Chapter Five, the timeline of events within the whole amalgamation is presented, followed by Chapter Six which presents the major themes of the study and its discussion. A critical analysis of the study with the aim of situating the study in the bigger picture of the higher education scenario is presented in Chapter Seven. Chapter Eight presents the conclusion of the thesis. This chapter presents the conclusion of the case study outlining the crux of the issue this research illuminates and the propositions extracted from the study. The contribution of the thesis, future research suggestions as well as the autobiographical reflection are also presented.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to issues of organizational restructuring in the Australian higher education sector. The review is framed around three main sections. The first section presents a discussion based on the literature on the concept of organizational restructuring as well as pertinent issues surrounding it. This includes types of restructuring, strategies and effects, as well as ‘amalgamation’ as a structured change strategy. The second section presents the context of change in higher education. This section highlights the uniqueness of higher education institutions as organizational entities and issues surrounding the implementation of major strategic change initiatives in such a context. This includes the issue of globalization and the drive for universities to change. The third section presents previous studies of change and restructuring in higher education. The significance of this study is highlighted.

2.2 Understanding organizational restructuring

Conceptually, organizational restructuring may be defined in terms of major ‘organizational change’ (Daszko, Macur & Sheinberg, 2005; Hirsch & Soucey, 2006; Kezar & Eckel, 2002), evolution (Martin & Etzkowitz, 2001), ‘organizational reform’ (Larsen, Maassen & Stensaker, 2009) or ‘organizational reinvention’ (Marginson, 2000). Organizational restructuring encompasses many strategic change initiatives such as downsizing, merging, acquisition, work force reorganization, layoffs and outsourcing (Hirsch & Soucey, 2006; Probst, 2003). Fullan (2005) defines organizational restructuring as alterations in structure, form or functioning of an organization or system with the aim of overall improvement.

Organizational restructuring is also often associated with concepts such as ‘business process reengineering’, ‘business process redesign’ and ‘organizational innovation’ (Ahmad, Francis, & Zairi, 2007; Grover, Jeong, Kettinger, & Teng, 1995). Additionally, organizational restructuring may affect faculty members socially and
psychologically to varying degrees at all organizational levels (Smollan & Sayers, 2009). Organizational restructuring involves a review of current workflows and processes within the organization with the aim of making the organization more efficient in terms of operational cost and better distribution of available human and physical resources (Davenport & Short, 2003).

In the business world, organizational restructuring often involves activities such as reducing costs, increasing profits, improving product and service quality, increasing share price, and responding quickly to new opportunities (Hirsch & Soucey, 2006). Additionally, organizational restructuring occurs within various functions and at different levels of the organization (Kotter, 2007).

2.2.1 Types of restructuring

Generally, restructuring may be divided into two types, namely, first order restructuring and second order restructuring (Baumgartner, 2013; Kezar, 2001). First order restructuring refers to minor adjustments and improvements in an organization. This type of restructuring usually occurs among individuals or at the group levels (Baumgartner, 2013). On the contrary, second order restructuring is also known as radical restructuring (Baumgartner, 2013; Kezar, 2005). Second order restructuring is a process that aims to bring about changes in culture, structure and work processes (Baumgartner, 2013; Evans, 1996; Huy, 2002). Second order restructuring aims to phase out outdated or redundant practices to be replaced with those more responsive to the strategic environment the organization finds itself in.

2.2.2 Issues in organizational restructuring

Van Oss & Van't Hek (2011) found that organizational change fails because of three main factors: change strategy, characteristics of organizations (organizational context) and people’s reactions to change. Nastase, Giuclea & Bold (2012) echoed the same suggesting that the success or failure factors which influence an organizational restructuring “... may be different, depending on the type of change, the actual organization, but among them are: ideas for change, willingness to make it, the availability of resources (time, money, and information), action plans, incentives (p.
13”). Elving (2005), Johansson & Heide (2008) and Napier and Stratton (2013) stress the importance of communication during the change process. Good communication may bring about change success whereas poor communication may lead to failure. The human factor is also another important contributor to the success and failure of organizational change (Evans, 1996; Kotter, 2007; Smeltzer & Zener, 1992). Many scholars agree that leadership is important in organizational restructuring (Fullan, 2011; Kotter, 2007; Levay, 2010; Michaelis et al. 2010, Starr, 2011; Starr, 2014a).

**Organizational context**

Literature on organizational change has pointed to the importance of organizational context as a factor that contributes towards the success or otherwise of organizational change (Alvesson, 2003; Oreg, 2006). Organizational context includes the people, the history, and the system of an organization; also referred to as organizational culture (Alvesson, 2003; Schein, 2010) and organizational identity (Gioia, Patvardhan, Hamilton & Corley, 2013).

Organizational culture consists of all tangible and intangible behavioral aspects of an organization (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2015). Organizational culture is about how things are done within an organization and includes elements such as rules, beliefs, values, policies, customs, and the behaviors of the people in the organization (Schein, 2010). Espoused values are the stated values and rules of behavior of the organization, which are the beliefs the organization is built upon and by which it conducts its business (Schein, 2010).

Charles Handy (1993) further identified four types of cultures: the power culture, the task culture, the person culture and role culture or bureaucracy. The Power Culture is found in smaller organizations where power and influence stem from a central source through which all communication, decisions and control are channeled. The Task Culture is reflected in project teams and task forces. The most important people involved are the experts who have the ability to accomplish a particular aspect of the task. Such organizations are flexible and constantly changing as tasks are accomplished and new needs arise. The Person Culture is found in organizations whose purpose is to serve the interest of individuals within it. Role Culture or Bureaucracy is
usually stereotyped as promoting ‘red tape’ within prescribed roles, responsibilities and hierarchies.

Busari (2012) identified five factors that influence the organizational culture. First, organization culture is influenced by economic conditions. In recession times, organizations are known to behave in a depressed or challenged mode. Vice versa, in affluent times, organizations become complacent or adventurous with new ideas and initiatives. Secondly, organizational culture relates to the nature of the organization’s business and tasks. For example, organizations that are involved in the business of international markets and technology are known to have fast paced work conditions and environments as compared to organizations involved in research. Thirdly, leadership styles practiced by the top management of an organization determines the extent to which staff members feel involved, important or alienated. Fourth, policies and practices used in an organization relate to the level of trust and understanding which exists between staff members and executives. Finally, the structure of an organization contributes towards the shaping of organizational behaviors, systems and the identity of the organization (Busari, 2012).

According to Gioia et al (2013), organizational context also relates to the term organizational identity. ‘Organizational identity’ is what makes an organization identifiable outside the organization. This also relates to how staff members from the particular organizations see themselves within an organization. When change occurs, organizational identity is challenged as identities will change. People see change as efforts to alter their identity, culture, or history which disrupts the social relationship that has been forged over time. As such, resistance to change occurs.

During change, “Just as individuals do not easily give up the elements of their identity or their defense mechanisms, so groups do not easily give up some of their basic underlying assumptions” (Schein, 1990, p. 116). As stated by Ravasi and Phillips (2011), “If (organizational identity) is not properly managed, organizational identity may hamper strategic change” (p. 104). This is because organizational identity relates to characteristics of an organization that are context sensitive.
Uncertainties and resistance: The importance of good communication

Researchers have found that employees resist restructuring out of fear of facing an unknown and uncertain future (Bordia, Restubog, Jimmieson & Irmer, 2011). Feelings of uncertainty include feelings of doubt about one’s future and the result of restructuring towards self and the work environment (Bordia et al., 2011). One reason for this uncertainty is often attributed to the lack or absence of effective and efficient organizational communication (DiFonzo & Bordia, 1998). As stated by Bordia, Hunt, Paulsen, Tourish, & DiFonzo, 2004, p. 345), “Uncertainty leads to rumors and leads to negative consequences. Not knowing how the restructuring will affect their advancement opportunities, training requirements, or even if they will have a job in the restructured or merged organization can be highly stressful”. Additionally, uncertainties also lead to cynicism towards the restructuring (Bommer, Rich & Rubin, 2005), ‘loss of productivity, lower levels of job satisfaction, and low morale’ (Mack, Nelson, & Quick, 1998, p. 219; Kamarudin & Starr, 2014).

As such, good communication and relaying vital information during the organizational restructuring process is important (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Elving, 2005; Oreg, Vakola & Armenakis, et. al., 2011). Quality information is known to be an important factor affecting the success of any change effort (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Rafferty and Restubog, 2009). Relaying information about all aspects of the change, how it is expected to impact on the organization as a whole, and how changes may differentially impact on employees, may lead to a greater understanding of the change rationale and the roles employees can play (Jimmieson, Terry, & Callan, 2004). Oreg (2006) further illustrates how employees will more likely accept change when they perceive change will have positive impacts such as increased job security, higher intrinsic rewards and increased power, status and prestige in the organization.

In this context, effective and efficient communication can be considered as a strategic initiative to mitigate uncertainty and promote greater involvement (Elving, 2005; Lewis, Schmisseur, Stephens, & Weir, 2006). Continuous communication of vital information is important even in times when the implementers are not sure of what is to come (DiFonzo and Bordia, 1998). DiFonzo and Bordia (1998) found that continuous information will limit the possibility and impact of misinformation.
Additionally, good communication reduces employees’ anxiety, aids better understanding of restructuring realities while equipping stakeholders to handle the disequilibrium created by restructuring (Bordia et al., 2004).

A number of questions to do with ‘what’, ‘when’, ‘how’, ‘why’ and ‘who’ need to be considered in the design and implementation of effective communication strategies. Smeltzer and Zener (1992) stress the importance of content, communication channels and consideration of audience (Smeltzer & Zener, 1992). Other factors such as executive leadership support, organizational culture, legal concerns and timing of the message are also key considerations (Smeltzer & Zener, 1992). Allaying the uncertainties of the organizational restructuring helps the employees to make vital decisions about their future with the organization (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Lewis, et al., 2006). Effective and efficient communication strategies also may facilitate employee adjustment and adaptation to new work practices, possible changes in professional identity, and cultural shifts in ‘the way things are done around here’ (Elving, 2005; Oreg et al., 2011). Communication channels such as emails, newsletters, staff memos, bulletins, magazines, face-to-face meetings, posters and videos can be utilized to convey information about the restructuring.

**Leadership capabilities and competencies**

Various scholars have stressed the importance of leadership during an organizational restructuring (Appelbaum, Habashy, Malo & Shafiq, 2012; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Kotter, 2007). Fullan (2009) and Kotter (2007) state that failure of leaders to act upon restructuring wisely has been seen as an important factor contributing to failure of organizational restructuring. Additionally, the role of leaders in the implementation of restructuring is understood to shape employee responses to the organizational restructuring (Fullan, 2009; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Levay, 2010). Kavanagh and Ashkansy (2006) suggest that leaders assume the role of chief architect in a restructuring process (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006). In ways similar to the role of a chief architect, leaders ensure that restructurings are correctly carried out and that stakeholders understand and are aware and involved in the change (Kotter, 2007). This is because the implementation of organizational restructuring is complex,
dynamic and multidimensional with external and internal forces that act as threats and opportunities and that play into the success or otherwise of the change intervention. Outcomes of organizational restructuring processes often can be mixed – they are rarely either ‘successful or ‘failures’. Thus, the presence of leaders helps mediate the whole process (Evan, 1996; Fullan, 2011, Starr, 2011).

As restructuring agents, leaders take on responsibilities for identifying, implementing, monitoring and maintaining the dynamics of restructuring strategies (Gilley, McMillan, & Gilley, 2009). Educating organizational members to have the willingness and enthusiasm to embrace the challenges posed by change is an important task of leaders (Fullan, 2011). Learning to manage people’s emotions also is known to increase the probability for restructuring success (Liu & Perrewé, 2005). Thus, engaging employees throughout the restructuring process should be a priority for building employee trust and employee empowerment (Fullan, 2011). Kotter (2007) outlines eight stages to create successful and permanent restructuring. The eight stages are:

1) Establishing a sense of urgency;
2) Creating the guiding coalition;
3) Developing a vision and strategy;
4) Communicating the restructuring vision;
5) Empowering broad-based action;
6) Generating short-term wins;
7) Consolidating gains and producing more restructuring; and
8) Anchoring new approaches in the culture (Kotter, 2007, p. 21)

Throughout the eight-stage restructuring process, leaders are expected to motivate and inspire employees towards adopting new work practices and to encourage employees to help shape the emergent new culture to accord with the new organizational culture (Kotter, 2007), although Kotter’s conceptions of leadership may be criticized for their inherent traditionalism (see for example, Starr, 2014a).
Leadership in restructuring

The issue of leadership is also commonly found in higher education restructuring research (Blackmore & Sachs, 2012; Kulati, 2003; Geoff Scott, et al., 2010). According to Fullan (2009), effective leadership is a strong factor contributing towards successful organizational restructuring. Effective leaders learn to ask relevant questions pertaining to the directions of higher education: aspects such as partnerships and collaborations, financial resources, teaching and learning, the business mission and vision, as well as IT development issues need to be effectively and strategically planned (Haynes, Krebs, Buehler & Phillips, 2012; Starr, 2011). These questions should be shared with other leaders and staff at all levels of the organization to promote greater involvement. According to Avolio and Gardner (2005), contemporary leadership approaches require a focus on the restoration of confidence, hope and optimism at work in the work environment, thus enabling individuals to display resilience to bounce back after challenging events while actively helping individuals in their search for meaning and connection.

Managing organizational restructuring: The human factor

Management researchers such as Collins (2005), Dawson & Andriopoulos (2014), Fullan (2011) and Kotter (2007) agree that organizational restructuring is largely about managing the human dimension of that process - ‘the human side’ of the organization (see also Evans, 1996; Seo & Hill, 2005), also known as the ‘human element’ (Ozag, 2006), as well as ‘the human factor’ (Bovey & Hede, 2001; Oreg, Michel and By, 2013).

Organizational restructuring is understood to impact individuals in the organization and vice versa, individuals can impact the organization through their individual and group responses (Levay, 2010). Restructuring impacts employees by driving them to function in a different manner (i.e. new job scope, new procedures and policies) and in turn, employees impact restructuring from their behaviors such as being resistant or consensual (Starr, 2011). Organizational change literature has shown that during the implementation of restructuring initiatives, phenomena such as job loss, employee resistance and outsourcing of organization activities may constitute
significant wide reaching outcomes of the restructuring process (Evans, 1996; Kotter, 2007; Smeltzer & Zener, 1992).

Although some employees may find it intriguing, motivating and exciting to be involved in a restructuring process, others may find it upsetting, disturbing and view restructuring as a threat to their current values, employee status and professional identity (Kotter, 2007; Levay, 2010). Additionally, the act of restructuring is often seen as a challenge to the present status and past achievements of the organization and the employees (Choi & Ruona, 2013; Oreg, 2011, Piderit, 2000). Employees also may perceive that there is no recognition for their years of dedicated service to the organization and activities and achievements to date (Cooper & Markus, 1995; Evans, 1996). Other fears include the loss of effective and close team members, as well as the uncertainty about the new team members and supervisors to be inherited (Marks & Mirvis, 2011). Affected employees also often see restructuring as a breach and violation of the psychological contract between them and the employer (Sahlin-Andersson, 1996, Oreg, 2006). The changing nature of organizational culture and structure, along with possible fluctuations in commitment may lead to feelings of mistrust, sarcasm and cynicism towards the organization (Rubin & Dierdorff, 2009).

Emotions such as frustration, disillusionment, and distrust towards the leadership, anger and fear may be experienced by faculty members (Evans, 1996). These negative outcomes may lead to absenteeism, turnover and decrease of productivity (Rubin & Dierdorff, 2009). Slocum and Hellriegel (2007) use the term ‘passive resistance’ to describe the phenomenon of employee’s refusal to participate in restructuring efforts without being overtly hostile. Examples of passive resistance include sabotage, tardiness, absenteeism, resignations, transfers, request for resignation and transfer, loss of motivation and work errors (Bordia et al., 2004). This contributes to the slowing of the restructuring process (Fullan, 2005; Kotter, 2007). If not managed well, resistance to restructuring may impede restructuring initiatives and processes (Evans, 1996; Furst & Cable, 2008). Subsequently, these negative feelings lead to a detachment from organizational restructuring activities and programs (Furst & Cable, 2008).
Michaelis et al., (2010) argue that when faced with side effects of organizational restructuring, the existence of restructuring interventions help mediate side effects, minimize feelings of uncertainty and associated threats. Interventions must not be a single-shot, quick fix approach, but comprehensive and holistic (Michaelis et al., 2010). Characteristics of effective interventions include: a) specific and broad interventions targeting both individuals and groups (Kan & Parry, 2004) b) being ongoing c) containing cyclical activities that require comprehensive, longer-term interventions at both micro and macro organizational levels (Michaelis et al., 2010) d) increased communication about restructuring through training programs e) educating targeted employees to understand and cope with stress.

Having employees with positive attitudes and supportive behaviors is seen to assist and facilitate the implementation of an organizational restructuring (Battilana & Casciaro, 2013; Oreg & Sverdlik, 2011). Accordingly, restructuring efforts that take employees’ reactions into account may prevent employees’ resistance from developing and at the same time enhance employees’ psychological well-being (Bordia et al., 2004; Furst & Cable, 2008; Levay, 2010; Piderit, 2000).

**Amalgamation as an organizational restructuring strategy**

Amalgamation (also known as ‘merger and/or acquisition’) is implemented by companies for several reasons related to economies of scale (Andrade, Mitchell and Stafford. 2001). Ravindhar (2007) stated that business companies implement amalgamation to achieve organizational efficiency (overall performance). By synergizing two companies or sections of companies, the `2 + 2 = 5' effect may happen (Ravindhar, 2007). As described by Evans:

The underlying principle behind mergers and acquisitions (M &A) is simple: 2 + 2 = 5. The value of Company A is $ 2 billion and the value of Company B is $ 2 billion, but when we merge the two companies together, we have a total value of $ 5 billion. The joining or merging of the two companies creates additional value which we call "synergy" value (p. 29).
Additionally, the synergy of two companies may lead to increased competitive advantage and organizational growth (Risberg, 2013). Nevertheless, Cartwright and Cooper (1993) argue that potential synergism does not guarantee the increase of competitive advantage. Other reasons for amalgamation include an alternative to investment (Jovanovic and Rousseau, 2002) and a response to unexpected shocks in the industry structure (Mitchell and Mulherin, 1996; Andrade et al., 2001).

In the higher education sector, Ripoll-Soler and De-Miguel-Molina (2013) point out those amalgamations occur for reasons related to economies of scale. This includes delivering services at a lower cost and ‘elimination of duplication’ as a means of cost saving. Many of these amalgamations are involuntary as evidenced in Australian Universities (Harman, 1986; Meek, 1988). Ripoll-Soler and De-Miguel-Molina (2013) further argue that not all amalgamations will bring about cost savings. The reason is because the process of amalgamation requires resources: managing duplications of jobs and managing increases in organizational size, which all leads to higher cost of administration (Kyvik, 2002, Harman & Harman, 2003, Ripoll-Soler & de-Miguel-Molina, 2013).

**Change planning**

Change needs to be planned well. Kotter states:

The most general lesson to be learned from the more successful cases is that the change process goes through a series of phases that, in total, usually require a considerable length of time. Skipping steps creates only the illusion of speed and never produces a satisfying result (1995, 59).

Proper planning for change allows an organization to take into consideration all important aspects of the change process. This includes creating change readiness for the involved staff to enable feedback, establish a sense of urgency for the organizational change to take place and for the management to overcome and
troubleshoot unexpected problems (Choi and Ruona, 2013). The creation of a proper change strategy is also important to oversee the organizational change from the original decision making, its implementation and the post change effects (Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Senge, 2014). Kotter further states, “… critical mistakes in any phases can have a devastating impact, slowing momentum and negating hard-won gains” (1995, pp. 59 – 60).

2.3 Issues in higher education restructuring

Restructuring in the higher education sector is not a new thing. As a social entity, higher education aims to be responsive to global changes occurring in the sector (Altbach, 2013b; Gumport, 2000, Marginson & Van de Wende, 2007). Although some organizational changes within higher education are common to all globally competitive organizations, changes in higher education are unique due to issues of academic identity, academic workload, academic performativity, work intensification, the new public management as well as differences and similarities between academics and university administrative staff (Henkel, 2005; Jensen & Morgan, 2009; Kezar, 2001; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Factors of higher education restructuring also include workforce casualization, changing staff composition, competition, increasing enrolments and research output, massification and student diversification, technological capability, funding, organizational renewals (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Brown, Goodman, & Yasukawa, 2010; Marginson & Considine, 2000). According to Delprino (2013), there are several external and internal factors that are the driving forces for change in higher education. The external driving forces include influences of larger systems, technology, education reform, competition, location and economy. The internal driving forces involve human resource characteristics (staff and students), organizational leadership, infrastructure and logistics.

The context of higher education

Higher education around the world has been undergoing rapid and remarkable changes over the past 30 years (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Marginson, 2008). One of the main reasons for these changes is the phenomenon of globalization. Globalization
results in the free movements of communication, information, goods, services, capital and people across borders. Trade relations, financial flows, and mobility of labor across the world occur at a rapid rate (Marginson, 2008).

Globalization has had dramatic effects on higher education. This includes the physical and virtual mobility of students and faculty, information and knowledge, virtual access, and sharing of policies and practices (Altbach, 2013a). Universities are also more than ever involved in activities such as massification, internationalization and marketization. Massification is the move from a system that served an elite group of people only to one that serves all sectors of society and a far greater number of students (Altbach, 2012; Shin & Teichler, 2014). Internationalization is the implementation of academic activities that meet the needs of the international community such as internationalization of curriculum, research, establishing campuses abroad, acquiring academics and students from various countries, and establishing international alumni (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Marketization is the implementation of market-oriented activities and establishing a market-oriented identity in higher education. For example, students are treated as customers, education as a commodity, and university as a knowledge industry alongside the belief that all academic activities can be measured and quantified through performative measures (Brown & Carasso, 2013)

In the globalised world, global university rankings are considered important measures of a university’s status, success and prestige (Marginson & van der Wende, 2007). Elite long-standing universities compete to expand and reach as many students as possible with their reputation. The middle range universities strive not only to climb the global rankings through their niche area driven by aggressive marketing, they also compete aggressively to be established research universities. Universities at the bottom of the rankings continuously strive to find their status and better their ranking positions through emphasis on collaborations between research and academic activities, mostly with elite universities (Hazelkorn, 2009). Overall, each university invests heavily in facilities, academics and research to continuously improve its status in the global ranking system.
Higher education and the New Public Management

With increasing globalization, higher education is increasingly seen to practice the New Managerialism also termed as the New Public Management (NPM) (Blackmore & Sachs, 2000; Marginson, 2013). NPM’s characteristics include practices such as the rationalization of bureaucratic procedures, improving the quality and effectiveness of public organizations, reducing spending and creating an environment conducive for private sector investments (Chittoo, Ramphul and Nowbutsing, 2009). In higher education institutions, NPM practices include monitoring staff work performance, accountability and regulatory regimes to achieve financial and organizational targets (Brown, 2013). Ferlie, Musselin & Andresani (2008) further outline indicators of NPM practice in higher education based on the following:

a) Market based reforms:

- Stimulation of competition for students between HEIs, such as development of real ‘prices’ for teaching fees as a basis on which trading in this market can take place, introduction of higher student fees to empower students as consumers and drive up teaching quality levels, use of vouchers for students or other forms of student support can be seen as a quasi-market based reforms;
- Market based research funding (for private and public higher education and research institutions);
- Policy stress on diversity and choice rather than integration and planning;
- Encouragement of private sector providers to enter the market;
- Market exit of failed public providers is acceptable;

b) A hardening of soft economy constraints:

- Stress on financial control in state/governmental policy;
- Efficiency and value for money;
- ‘Commodification’ of activities in policies (for instance the introduction of intellectual property rights), and in explicit narrative;
c) Stress on performance: elaboration of explicit measurement, assessment and monitoring of performance in both research and teaching; development of audit and checking systems (‘auditisation’ variant of NPM);
d) Concentration of funds in the highest performing higher education institutions (incentivisation on the supply side);
e) The Ministry and its agencies attempt to steer the system vertically, through setting explicit targets and performance contracts;
f) Higher education institution governance:
   ▪ The development of ‘strong rectorates’ and non-executive members drawn from business;
   ▪ Move to appointed rather than elected senior posts;
   ▪ Reduction in the representation of faculty and trade unions in higher education institution governance;
g) Managerial roles:
   ▪ Stronger overt managerial roles of rectors, deans, head of departments;
   ▪ Development of ‘management must manage’ doctrines and practices, i.e. who has responsibility for management must have the means and the will to manage (liberation management NPM subtype);
h) Growth of performance related pay for faculty and private sector style Human Resource Management (pp. 12 – 13).

These practices have been criticized by academics who believe that the practices of the NPM may not suit higher education since it is generally a non-profit organization and NPM is associated with profit-driven organizations (Kickul, Lester & Finkel, 2002; Marginson, 2013). Others argue that NPM leads to increased workloads, intensified academic labor and reduced faculty autonomy (Blackmore & Sach, 2000; Brown, 2013).
Higher education and the government

In the globalised world a knowledge economy, innovative ideas and technical expertise are viewed as the keys to the new global competitive advantage (Shin and Harman, 2009). As such, creating high-skilled, high value-added and high-technology products through highly skilled faculty members is seen as the route to economic prosperity (Altbach, 2013a; Marginson, 2007). In this regard, higher education institutions are looked upon to produce faculty members for a knowledge society. Knowledge workers are important because they contribute to developing more innovation; innovation ensures that the nation’s economy is stronger (Leydesdorff, 2013). Additionally, higher education is looked upon by governments as providing cutting edge research to enable the continuous discovery of new knowledge contributing to quality products and services that enhance national competitiveness in the global market (Altbach, 2013b; Leydesdorff, 2013).

Despite the importance of higher education to the governments, many higher education institutions are faced with declining funding from governments (Altbach, 2013b). According to Oliff, Palacios, Johnson and Leachman, this is “the product of both the economic downturn and states’ reluctance to raise additional revenues” (2013, p. 1). In response to the decline of funding from government and private sectors, higher education institutions compensate for variations in federal funding support by raising revenues such as increasing tuition, attracting full fee paying students, and cutting human resource and operational service costs (Marginson & Considine, 2000). As stated by Oliff et.al, “Tuition increases have made up only part of the revenue loss resulting from state funding cuts. Public colleges and universities also have cut faculty positions, eliminated course offerings, closed campuses, shut down computer labs, and reduced library services, among other cuts” (2013, p. 2).

Universities’ market behaviours

A decline of funding resulted in the growing commercialization of higher education. Some of universities’ actions are based on activities similar to businesses (Altbach, 2014). Knowledge is increasingly seen as a commodity. Some public universities are selling knowledge products and partnering with private corporations –
activities which include skills and training, and awarding degrees or certificates to students who are viewed as customers. Research includes areas based on private sector demands and universities charge for the skills of inquiry. Paradoxically, this takes time and personnel away from advancing the frontier of knowledge (Altbach and Teichler, 2001).

Universities also compete to expand their business in other countries as a strategy to attract international students and to initiate, develop and sustain mutually productive research and industry partnerships. Universities expand their services in various ways such as through distance learning, branch campuses, franchised programs, partnerships and online courses, all of which are made possible through the advances of information technology (Shin & Harman, 2009). Most international students in Australian universities come from the rapidly emerging economies of Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, China, Fiji, South Africa, and the Gulf States. The Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (Australian Department of Education, 2016) states that there has been an upsurge in the number of foreign students coming to Australia to pursue tertiary education. In 1994, there were only 93,722 international students enrolled in Australian higher education. By 2015, the number of students had increased to more than 650,000 students (Australian Department of Education, 2016). Accordingly, in 2015, Australia’s international education industry became the third largest export service sector contributing $18.2 billion to the Australian economy (Australian Trade and Investment Commission, 2015).

Students are now customers, also termed ‘shoppers’, who pay for their education and, as such, many believe that as customers, students are always right (Hil, 2012). Students are attracted to a university due to its facilities, new design courses, online services, designer campuses that treat students more like tourists than scholars, and through comparative online data sources such as the ‘My University’ website and international university league tables. “Large droves of student ‘shoppers’ have been elevated to the status of royalty” (Hil, 2012, p. 19). Full-paying overseas students contribute 18 percent to universities’ income. Thus, reputational issues among universities are important to attract these students. Vice chancellors are worried about
the “haemorrhaging of students to other universities” (Hil, 2012, p.38). Scholars, however, believe that there is a contradiction between getting a genuine academic education and purchasing a service as a customer. Unlike business, education is a series of activities which challenges students to move away from their comfort zone into a new spectrum of discoveries through a series of inquisitive, insightful and meaningful experiences. This process triggers the learner’s curiosity and imagination as the student explores new knowledge.

Additionally, universities also compete to get the best academics into their institutions to raise the profile of their universities and to attract further and high impact academics and students (Altbach, 2004). Getting top quality professors is important to ensure that a university engages itself with ground-breaking research. Although academics do not necessarily expect top salaries, efforts to attract and retain established academic staff must be carried out by universities by providing favourable working conditions which includes arrangements for job security, competitive salaries and benefits, and, increasingly, bonuses for achieving work targets.

**Academic workload**

Another issue in higher education is that of academic workloads. Along with all the developments the higher education sector is undergoing, academics are seen as being pressured from all directions; the top management of the university, federal government, students and employers (Marginson & Considine, 2000). Academics are often expected to keep up with on-going advances in their field as well as fulfilling their obligations to their faculty in relation to teaching, research, publication output and consultation with students, colleagues and administration, and performance management duties (Jensen & Morgan, 2009; Umbach, 2006). Macfarlene (2011) illustrates a comprehensive picture of university academics’ workload as can be seen in the following diagram:
Figure 2: Academic practice disaggregation (Macfarlane, 2011, p. 61)

Academics have mainly three main activities: teaching, research and service. Besides having to compete for research grants, academics also have to teach hundreds of students, face to face and online, mark hundreds of assignments and undertake other academic activities (Blackmore & Sachs, 2000). Additionally, academics are also expected to take on a wider range of administrative activities which includes increasingly complex administrative tasks as a result of performative measures (Hil, 2012). In higher education institutions, the growing use of KPI (Key Performance Indicators) as performative measures results in academics having to compile administrative evidence for all their academic work. Many academics believe that growing administrative work impedes their academic productivity (Hil, 2012, p. 17). In the event of a restructuring, academics tend to resist because this will bring along more work, at least, the load of trying to make sense of the new system employed in the new entity (Kyvik, 2002). As a result, resistance to change may occur.
**Academic and institutional identities**

Academic and institutional identities are other pertinent issues in higher education restructuring (Henkel, 2002). Becher and Trowler’s (2001) ‘Academic Tribes and Territories’ provides a comprehensive explication of the concept of academic identity arguing that academics are loyal to their respective disciplines more than their institutions. Furthermore, academics tend to have more respect for respected colleagues consisting of senior academics (Blau, 1994). According to Kogan & Hanney (2000), academic identity in a university context may be expressed in many different ways. In some situations, academics may identify with a particular racial or ethnic group. This may be more so the case where the academics’ university is historically grounded in these groups’ traditions (Lora-Kayambazinthu, 2006). Academics may also be bound together by an academic disciplinary identity as a consequence of their ‘membership’ of a particular knowledge culture with specific methods, discourses and standards (Becher & Trowler, 2001; Winter, 2009). Additionally, institutional identity is the identity of an institution in relation to its institutional culture, reputation, status, educational standards, values and practices (Brown & Humphreys, 2006). When academic institutions are involved in an amalgamation and where academic and institutional identities are challenged during a higher education restructuring process, these two factors (academic and institutional identity) often emerge as a powerful bloc within the university (Brown & Humphreys, 2006), or conversely, the academic ‘fit’ may not be right.

**University Administrative staff**

The administrative staff in higher education are often referred to as ‘the invisible worker’, the ‘non-academic’ and ‘others’ (Conway, 1998; Sebalj & Holbrook, 2006; Szekeres, 2004). Nevertheless, their importance to any higher education is beyond doubt (Conway, 1998). Szekeres defines administrative staff as:

> Those people in universities who have a role that is predominantly administrative in nature, i.e. their focus is about either supporting the work of academic staff, dealing with students on non-academic
matters or working in an administrative function such as finance, human resources, marketing, public relations, business development, student administration, academic administration, library, information technology, capital or property (2004, pp. 7 - 8).

Administrative staff in universities undertake a wide variety of duties, including those performed by Data Entry Clerks, Analysts, Secretaries, Personal Assistants and Executives. The work is both varied and demanding, and by its nature is difficult to categorize and grade. Universities require of their administrative staff dedication, efficiency, and ability to work alone or as part of a team, to delegate and to accept delegated work. They are also expected to be responsive to changes in policy and practice. During higher education restructuring, administrative staff are often the victims of lay-offs, forced early retirements, retraining or deskilling (Sebalj & Holbrook, 2006). As such, when an amalgamation is planned, administrative staff tend to resist change (Sebalj & Holbrook, 2006; Szekeres, 2004).

**Reforms and renewal efforts of universities**

With the rapid development of higher education, reforms in higher education institutions are gaining much attention. Scholars believe that universities should put their efforts into renewal initiatives to ensure survival in a globalized world, fulfil the needs of the society such as human resources and expertise, and, most importantly, to face future challenges (Kogan & Bauer, 2006; M'Gonigle & Starke, 2006). At the heart of organizational renewal are concerns about how the role of the university can be defined in contemporary society (Gumport, 2000; Inayatullah & Gidley, 2000). According to some commentators, a shift from the notion of the ‘traditional university’ to that of ‘modern higher education’ is taking place (Etzkowitz, Webster, Gebhardt, & Terra, 2000; Gidley, 2012; Inayatullah & Gidley, 2000; Nasruddin, Bustami, & Inayatullah, 2012). The former implies the idea of the traditional university as a place for intellectual activities such as teaching, learning and research for the quest of new knowledge and public good, whereas, the latter makes an attempt to capture the idea of a modern university that not only acts as an intellectual institution that produces
human resources, but also intellectual products that meet the needs and wants of the state and the public in the new globalized environment (Stensaker, Välimaa, & Sarrico, 2012).

Ideas of university reform are not something new. One popular idea of university renewal was Clark Kerr’s 1963 ‘Multiversity’ (Kerr, 2001) where Kerr foresees the university’s changing role to fulfil society’s demand and the changing world through the outreach of university communities (students, academics, nonacademic personnel and administrative staff) to other communities within the larger society. Other university renewal ideas include ‘The service university’ (Tjeldvoll, 1997), ‘The corporate enterprise’ (Henkel, 1997), ‘The entrepreneurial university’ (Clark, 1998), ‘The learning organization’ (Dill, 1999), ‘The network university’ (Dill and Sporn, 1995), ‘The A’ la Carte University, ‘The Invisible University, ‘The State University, ‘The University in the Garden (Nasruddin, Bustami, & Inayatullah, 2012) and the ‘UniverCity’zhe. Other scholars highlight the need for universities to focus on their role in research and enhancing innovation such as the ‘World Class University’ (Salmi & Liu, 2011) and the ‘Global Research University’ (Mohrman, Ma & Baker, 2008). The emphasis is on universities’ central role in enhancing global networks, innovative and cutting-edge scientific research, increasing mobility and worldwide engagement, and branding the university within the framework of worldwide comparisons and rankings.

Other scholars believe that what is more important is a need to make the present university more cost effective by ‘trimming the edges’ (i.e. reducing costs by limiting the scope of university work). These scholars believe cost savings can occur through organizational restructuring such as an amalgamation (Etschmaier, 2010; Harman & Harman, 2003; Kyvik & Stensaker, 2013). Amalgamation of higher education occurs worldwide including in Australia, USA, Europe and South Africa (Kyvik & Stensaker, 2013). Many of these amalgamations are involuntary as evidenced by many Australian and US higher education amalgamations (Harman, 1986; Meek, 1988; Kyvik & Stensaker, 2013).
2.4 Previous studies in higher education restructuring

In this section, the literature relating to previous research in organizational restructuring in higher education is reviewed. Generally, research on higher education organizational restructuring covers a variety of issues such as restructuring processes (i.e., pre-during-post) and outcomes; as well as factors leading up to the decision to implement restructuring strategies.

Some of the higher education restructuring research literature is focused on government initiated institutional amalgamations (Chapman, 1988; Harman, 1986; Harman & Harman, 2003; Kulati, 2003; Kyvik, 2002; Mabokela & Evans, 2009; Nyeu, 2007; Sehoole, 2005; Jenny Su & Chang, 2010; Xiang, 2006). The reported amalgamations occurred in countries including Australia, China, South Africa and Norway. Notably, similarities between these studies pointed out those institutional amalgamations are sometimes used by governments to confront national issues concerning human resources and economy (Jenny Su & Chang, 2010).

Tirronen & Nokkala’s (2009) research focused on the Finnish Government’s higher education reform as a strategic initiative, or ‘instrument’ to enhance the competitiveness of Finnish universities in response to globalizing forces and increasing pressures to commercialize research and education. Universities were persuaded by the Finnish Government to amalgamate and to develop strategic agreements and partnerships at the institutional level and within the universities’ local academic communities. The general aim of the government’s reforms was towards modernization of universities while creating a high-quality national university system able to compete internationally as well as fulfilling the nation’s need for human skills and expertise essential for the development of a knowledge-based economy. The government’s reforms were also aimed at making more efficient use of public resources leading to maximized cost savings. Through this national restructuring process, higher education was reorganized to put in place more decentralized management systems to enhance governance practices and to make decision-making more effective and efficient. As shown in Tirronen & Nokkala’s study, this type of amalgamation often involves significant changes in the legal status and financial administration of the universities. This study is significant because it suggests that
government mandated higher education restructuring focuses on meeting the challenges of a new innovation-based and market-oriented era.

In South Africa, a number of researchers report on amalgamations of several colleges carried out to create more equity and accessibility of higher education to the masses (Lora-Kayambazinthu, 2006; Mabokela & Evans, 2009). Lora-Kayambazinthu’s study (2006) focused on an organizational restructuring at the University of Malawi. This university offered different program orientations and degree offerings across five colleges. According to the study’s findings, restructuring in a higher institution is not easy due to academic resistance caused by ‘tribe’ and disciplinary traditions. The research by Loya-Kayambazinthu strengthens the point made by Gibbon, Habib, Jansen and Parekh (2001) that academic identity plays a vital role in the micro politics towards any restructuring in an academic institution, as restructuring challenges established academic identities (e.g., ethnic, disciplinary and professional identities) even though reforms may only be concerned with program and structural organizational restructurings.

Mabokela & Evans’ (2009) research examined faculty and administrative staff’ perceptions of a newly amalgamated institution, North-West University in South Africa, and how they understood issues of access towards fostering a national vision to create a ‘rainbow nation’ environment in a country deeply entrenched in racial, ethnic, linguistic and gender disparities. The amalgamation implementation process was based on a number of assumptions made by the government, including that the North-West University amalgamation would:

a. Create greater equity through the formation of new organizational cultures.
b. Create a financially manageable and affordable higher education system.
c. Allow for more effective and efficient sharing of human resources.
d. Eliminate duplication of programs and course offerings to increase operational efficiencies.
e. Dismantle deep-seated institutional cultures that resulted from the ethnic and racial history of universities. (Mabokela & Evans, 2009).
The findings of the study echo studies carried out by Furst & Cable (2008), Harman, et al. (1985) Lora-Kayambazinthu (2006); and Oreg (2006), which highlight the challenges of implementing a restructuring strategy. These challenges relate to language and its impact on the culture of the post-amalgamation institution, the continuing impact of race in hiring decisions, and access issues for students. The study also found that although the government mandated this amalgamation in an effort to create an equitable, accessible post-amalgamation university, three years after the amalgamation, core problems remained, suggesting that deep-rooted institutional identities and organizational identity shared by faculty members may not easily be changed, or re-invented, through a top down implementation of amalgamation processes.

In another study Li (2010) investigated amalgamation, expansion, quality assurance and innovations in a university in China. Two aims were outlined: the first aim was to evaluate the implementation or 'situated practices' of national higher education reform policies, and the second was to elaborate on the locally-grounded innovative ideas and practices. Li’s findings suggested that at the institutional level, the university’s faculties, administrative staff, and students were highly reflexive, resilient and pragmatic towards restructurings implemented top down. The findings also showed that China’s national higher education reform policies were devised to ensure they would have meaning and relevance in the local context by implementing innovations of higher education policies grounded in local people's perceptions and understanding. These strategies increase the chances of amalgamation success despite being a top down directive from the government. Comparing this study to others that stress the importance of context (Avgerou, 2001; Bryman, 2004; Burke, 2010), Zhang (2010) highlighted that restructuring studies are better looked at from diverse interrelated and contextualized social, political and cultural perspectives. This study highlighted the types of strategies that have the potential to result in more successful restructuring outcomes.

In Australia, a body of research on university restructurings was conducted during the Dawkins Reform era, abolished in the 1980s, highlighting many involuntary amalgamations (Chapman, 1988; Harman, et al., 1985; Harman, 1986, 1989; Harman,
Harman’s (1986) research on the Australian experiences of institutional amalgamations illustrates how such restructurings can be used to manage problems around funding, equity and accessibility in higher education (Harman, et al., 1985). Although these amalgamations led to positive outcomes, such as the strengthening of academic programs, broader and more diverse course offerings, and improved facilities; the process of merging was found to be more complex than expected with resultant increased levels of academic and administrative staff stress, anxiety and turnover. In addition, not all restructuring interventions resulted in cost savings. On the contrary, in some cases, the universities’ recurrent costs had not been greatly reduced, as all staff retained their continuous employment status (Harman et al., 1985).

Chapman’s (1988) historically significant case study focused on restructuring activities that culminated in the establishment of the University of South Australia. This study found that the amalgamation was prompted by a decline in funding from the state and federal governments. Similar to Harman’s (1985) study, Chapman (1998) found that the amalgamation process created stress among staff as they stated that they were not consulted on the amalgamation decision making and process. Nevertheless, staff felt that there were significant advantages in having a larger more diverse and collaborative institution in which collegial identities and the college’s reputation could thrive. Through this amalgamation, the creation of a single higher education organizational entity in the University of South Australia, was considered by all stakeholders to be, in structural terms, a success. That this successful amalgamation outcome was due in large part to faculty staff and other stakeholders ‘willingness and determination’, highlights the critical need for consultation and involvement of all who will be likely impacted in some way.

Besides involuntary government mandated amalgamations, other studies on higher education restructuring focus on university staff and student perspectives (Clark, 2009; Sullivan, 2004; Warren, 2009). Clark (2009) studied students’ perceptions of organizational cultures and identities in a university amalgamation. The study focused on the amalgamation of New York University and the Polytechnic University of New York. The study’s focus was to present the voice and perspectives of students as stakeholders. The study’s findings revealed both positive and negative
responses to the survey and questionnaires on issues to do with course location, administrative processes and procedures and the availability of resources. Concerns about the costs, timing, and availability of inter-campus travel, as well as problems of accessibility to academic facilities were expressed. Additionally, there were also positive responses which reflected that some staff and students viewed the amalgamation in terms of the creation of distinct advantages. For example, some students considered that the perceived post-amalgamation boost in the university’s reputation would enhance their career. This study suggests that effective and efficient communication among stakeholders in all aspects of restructuring mission is vital to make amalgamation a success (Clark, 2009).

Sullivan (2004) identified twenty possible academic restructuring ‘success criteria’ in the establishment. These included amalgamation and elimination of colleges within state supported institutions of higher education. The twenty criteria are:

1. Affinity of departments/ programs
2. Inter-disciplinarity
3. Effectiveness in serving student needs
4. Effectiveness in serving faculty needs
5. Effectiveness in serving state needs
6. Effective span of control
7. Cost/revenue relationship
8. Economies of scale
9. Other costs and benefits
10. Quality of faculty
11. Quality of students
12. Quality of library resources
13. Quality of facilities and equipment
14. Centrality to mission
15. Present student demand
16. Projected student demand
17. Demand for graduates
18. Locational advantage
19. Comparative advantage
20. Future opportunities.

These criteria later formed the construction of a survey that was distributed to the Chief Academic Officers of 27 selected institutions. Survey participants were asked to rank the criteria on the basis of each criterion’s importance to a decision to establish a college or a school in a state-supported higher education institution. The survey results showed significant differences in participants’ amalgamation ‘success criteria rankings’. The research also revealed no significant correlations between how the participants ranked the three most important criteria. The findings revealed that perceived importance of criteria for amalgamation differs from one participant to another. This study is significant because it suggests that the survey method to seek staff and students perspectives through the use of the twenty criteria for academic restructuring may not provide sufficient information for academic restructurings decision making. A richer description of each criterion associated to the contextual basis is thus needed for meaningful feedback.

In another study, Hay & Fourie (2002) explored staff perceptions on a South African university amalgamation. Hay & Fourie (2002) distributed a questionnaire to 97 faculty members, probing main aspects such as general perceptions on the amalgamation, reasons for the amalgamation, aspects that might hamper the amalgamation and the amalgamation implementation process. Interestingly, this study found that staff perceived that universities should be allowed to find their own amalgamation partners as opposed to being assigned a partner. As for factors motivating the amalgamation decision, staff rated three factors highly: better facilities, better management of human resources and better management of physical resources (i.e.: classrooms, sports facilities, libraries). Staff identified good leadership, vision, realizable goals, and effective communication to be key factors in the successful implementation of amalgamation intervention. Hay & Fourie (2002) suggested that amalgamations be guided by:
a. A feasibility study  
b. An initial proposal of intent to restructure  
c. Tentative time frames  
d. A consultative stakeholder process  
e. On-going teambuilding initiatives  
f. A well-developed amalgamation proposal

Weaver conducted research on the establishment of the University of Cumbria out of the amalgamation of St Martin’s College, Cumbria Institute of the Arts, and the Cumbrian campuses of the University of Central Lancashire in the UK (Weaver, 2008). Rather than taking a macro perspective (i.e., government level), Weaver’s research highlights a micro perspective focusing on the amalgamation’s impact on the Learning and Information Services (LIS) – the library and various integration projects and the impact these projects had on staff. Weaver’s research highlights several valuable lessons for library amalgamations in higher education institutions. Firstly, in an amalgamation, the importance of the library as a single functional unit should not be underestimated in terms of its interdepartmental complexity and extent of the work involved. Secondly, in circumstances where there are only marginal differences between the merging libraries’ cultures, managing these differences is important. Lastly, positive outcomes for the merged libraries may lead to organization- and community-wide benefits such as increased library resources and organizational facilities.

Other higher education restructurings highlight the ‘post amalgamation effect’ as a key theme emergent from the research findings (Wan, 2008; Yuzhuo, 2007). Wan’s (2008) thesis Managing Post-amalgamation Integration: A Case Study of an Amalgamation in Chinese Higher Education looked into key factors affecting the process and outcomes of managing post-amalgamation integration. Several integration issues emerged around the question of how to integrate organizational policies, systems, and procedures related to the organizations’ physical and human resources, and how to approach the restructuring of staff, both academic and administrative. Wan’s (2008) research found that administrative and academic restructuring is
complex for several reasons. Firstly, both administrative and academic restructuring involves human resource issues related to the need to rationalize staff numbers through terminations. Secondly, academic restructuring involves the loss, or re-invention of academic identities. In this study, good communication, strong leadership and good management skills were deemed important in addressing these complexities.

Yuzhuo (2007) conducted a study titled Academic Staff Integration in Post-amalgamation Chinese Higher Education Institutions. In this study, factors that affect academic staff integration were investigated. The case study involving a provincial Chinese university that was formed through an amalgamation of three institutions, utilized qualitative interviewing techniques and a quantitative survey questionnaire. Yuzhuo’s (2007) findings indicated that three possible factors affected the outcomes of academic integration: cultural compatibility between pre-amalgamation institutions, management transparency, and the elevation of school image. This study is interesting because unlike much of the other research literature reviewed thus far, it focuses on the notion of post-amalgamation staff culture.

The processes of amalgamation come under scrutiny as a key theme in other higher education restructuring literature. Nyeu’s (2007) qualitative multi-case study described the implementation of amalgamations in China’s higher education, specifically the amalgamation process and post-amalgamation performance. The study focused on theoretical perspectives of organization and environment, policy implementation, and organizational leadership. These factors were then integrated to form a conceptual model for the purpose of the study. The proposed model recognized that amalgamations be looked at in broader socio-economic and political contexts. The findings revealed that several primary factors such as the government, the institutions, amalgamation policy objectives and resources, inter-organizational communication and enforcement activities, and the disposition of implementers and constituencies are important considerations towards making the amalgamation a success. Among these factors, the government was found to have the last say in the amalgamation process and its implementation. The government provided direction, leadership and affirmation during uncertainties and anxieties. Conflicts during the amalgamation were minimized by favorable funding as well as good communication techniques.
Warren’s (2009) quantitative dissertation focused on faculty and administrator perceptions of the amalgamation of Kentucky-wide community colleges and technical institutes. The study builds on role-theory as proposed by Biddle (1986, p.68) that human beings “behave in ways that are different and predictable depending on their respective social identities and the situation”. The results of the study suggested that administrative staff held more positive views on the amalgamation than academic staff. Open-ended comments offered by some faculty staff in relation to positive amalgamation outcomes suggested the following underlying themes: increased educational access and attainment and improved technical training. However, several negative themes emerged from the findings interpreted as possible downsides to the amalgamation, such as uncontrolled growth of bureaucracy, too many administrative staff, lowered academic standards and declining quality of instruction, irreconcilable differences of cultures/missions, too much emphasis on enrollment numbers, lack of local college autonomy, loss of faculty authority and influence in college governance, politically-motivated reforms, and the move from a higher education model to a business model. The findings show that understanding faculty and administrator perceptual differences, as well as identifying the conditions under which successful postsecondary education reforms may thrive is an important element in guiding successful amalgamations and organizational change. This study is significant in highlighting the differences of perception between the academics and administrative staff and the importance of the role-theory by Biddle (1986).

From the literature reviewed, the issue of educational merit in higher education amalgamation interventions provides another higher education research focus. From the previously reviewed research, most amalgamations were conducted to fulfill either governmental or institutional objectives such as expanding national human resource needs (Tirronen & Nokkala, 2009), establishing more equitable higher education access to the public (Lora-Kayambazinhu, 2006), as well as for the purpose of developing more effective financial management strategies (Harman, et al., 1985; Harman, 1989; Meek, 1988). In research by Ursin, Aittola, Henderson, & Välimaa (2010), the issue of educational merit as a key factor in higher education amalgamations is investigated. The study presents results from an analysis of
amalgamation planning documents (e.g., reports, strategies, official records, memoranda, and other relevant documents). The study findings show that insufficient attention was given to educational outcomes related to the amalgamations. However, as frequently evidenced in other research, more attention was placed on administrative issues than on educational issues. Ursin et.al. (2010) concluded that the lack of attention to educational ramifications of amalgamations constituted significant weakness in the planning process reported in the case study. Ursin et.al.’s study addresses a significant void in the higher education restructuring literature in that it reports research utilizing document analysis as a method in higher education amalgamation research and focuses on student achievement outcomes.

A study by Brown (2008) looked at the pre-amalgamation process in an amalgamation of higher institutions in New Zealand. This study investigated the social dynamics of a pre-amalgamation process between two tertiary education organizations in Christchurch (Brown, 2008). An ‘insider’ researcher approach was used as the author was an employee of one of the merging organizations. Primary data were collected through personal observations and unstructured and semi-structured interviews with thirty amalgamation participants consisting of general and academic staff, management and one student. Secondary data sources included existing amalgamation literature, organizational communication and change policy documents, and press articles. Staff attributed different meanings to the change compared to those with management responsibilities for the amalgamation. Overall, staff felt excluded from the amalgamation process and as a result, they exercised a range of distancing behaviors including escapism, withholding of effort, disengagement, and defiance. This study suggests that minimizing dysfunctional exit behavior can be achieved through inclusive communication processes, transparent decision-making, and acknowledgement and management of emotions. The study found that the rationale and implementation processes of amalgamations are likely to be contested. As a result a high level of management skill is required to defuse stress and tension, to resolve conflicts, and to engage all stakeholders at every stage of the amalgamation process (Brown, 2008).
The challenges inherent in attempts to merge divergent campus cultures during an amalgamation intervention is a research theme undertaken by Harman (2002). This paper which focuses on the challenge of integrating culture in amalgamations among higher education pointed to several interesting points. First, amalgamating different academic entities involved a change in ingrained academic culture, with academic culture defined as “Historically transmitted patterns of meaning expressed in symbolic form through the shared commitments, values and standards of behavior peculiar to members of the profession, as well as the traditions, myths, rituals, language and other forms of expressive symbolism that encompass academic life and work” (Harman, 2002, p. 97). In addition, Harman showed the following differences between universities and colleges with respect to academic roles, professional loyalties, teaching and research activities, reward structures, and governance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Universities</th>
<th>Colleges</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic role</td>
<td>Roles ambiguous and marked by divided loyalties</td>
<td>Roles more clearly prescribed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional loyalties</td>
<td>Loyalties directed more to the disciplines and learned societies</td>
<td>Loyalties directed more to the institution and respective professions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching versus research</td>
<td>A strong research culture and less value ascribed to teaching</td>
<td>Less emphasis on research but teaching highly valued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward structures</td>
<td>Research a key criterion for scholarly recognition and promotion</td>
<td>Less emphasis on research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Collegial, democratic decision making structures highly valued</td>
<td>Structures more hierarchical and bureaucratic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 1.0: Loyalties and values of academic staff in universities and colleges
Harman (2002) stated that as a professional group, university academics were characterized (and mostly still are) more by divided loyalties, role ambiguities, heterogeneity, anarchical tendencies, conflict and self-interests, than probably any other professional group such as doctors, lawyers, and engineers. Despite their overall commitment to the idea of the university as the ivory tower, academics in major research universities varied greatly in their opinions about the directions of the university as well as in the orientation of their professional loyalties (Harman, 2002). If the post-amalgamation settling down period is poorly managed, the impacts of the amalgamation on morale and loyalty of staff can be destructive. Harman (2002) further pointed out that a common misconception of amalgamation is that there must be total assimilation of different cultures in the new entity. Rather, Harman (2002) suggests that through different models and levels of cultural integration, it is possible to retain some elements of the old cultures in the new entity. Understanding the bases of cultural differences is a vital first step for leaders who have the task of amalgamating institutions with disparate missions and cultures into a coherent educational community characterized by new loyalties and broadly accepted attitudes, values and conditions.

The influence of organizational politics in higher education amalgamation was investigated by Sehoole (2005). This research focused on how political forces come together to influence amalgamation forms and outcomes. Three case studies of amalgamations that took place in South Africa provided the platform for the analysis. The case studies reported on the context and circumstances surrounding the incorporation of the South African College for Teacher Education (SACTE) into the University of South Africa (UNISA); the Johannesburg College of Education (JCE) into the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and Giyani College of Education (GCE) into the University of Venda (UNIVEN). This study set out to discover whether amalgamations follow different processes and deliver different outcomes within social, economic and political contexts. Sehoole (2005) highlights the primacy of politics in organizational transitional contexts and illustrates how government mandates are mediated within institutions, and how institutional responses to these mandates determine the amalgamation outcomes. The research used document analysis, which
included minutes of Council and Senate meetings, incorporation or amalgamation agreements, expert group reports, facilitation reports, media reports, official speeches and submissions by stakeholder groups. A semi-structured interview schedule was also designed for combinations of individual interviews, focus group interviews with students and academics, as well as the institutions’ administrative and technical staff. The research findings show that politics and culture, strategic leadership and strong governance play important roles in influencing restructuring outcomes. Effective strategic leadership, reflected in consultative decision-making styles and the effective use of the organization’s resources, enables the restructuring process to progress more smoothly. In addition, strong governance helps to ensure that amalgamation processes go smoothly through critical decision making.

As the focus of her doctoral thesis, Dalzell (2000) researched principles for effective organizational change using a qualitative case study of a cross-sector tertiary amalgamation. The research objective was to provide an objective, analytical account of this amalgamation and to generate a substantive theory of change. A modified Grounded Theory approach was used to gather and analyze data in this case study research. Data were gathered over a period of twelve months from four main sources: staff interviews, official amalgamation records, organizational change literature and survey questionnaires. The study found that there were two main amalgamation factors: strategic-financial and professional academic factors (Dalzell, 2000). The first factor, strategic-financial, is defined as the economic aims of the organizational change. The second factor, ‘professional academic’ relates to the intellectual aims of the amalgamation. It was found that amalgamation negotiations were initially stalled because of various issues related to staff resistance, poor communication, implementation ‘hiccups’ and the different institutional cultures. Nevertheless, when negotiations resumed, the amalgamation was successfully carried out. Factors contributing to this success included staff cooperation and an overall commitment to the success of the amalgamation negotiations. The study found that the initial amalgamation’s failure was due to factors such as politicking among stakeholders, strong staff resistance and inadequate resources.
Hatton’s (2002) paper focus on the establishment of Charles Stuart University in 1989 after the amalgamation of several colleges of Education (CAEs), namely the Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education (RMIHE) based in Wagga Wagga and Albury, and the Mitchell College of Advanced Education (MCAE) based in Bathurst. In this study, the research participants were asked to comment on the amalgamation: managerial efficiencies, and enhancement of benefits to staff and students. Participants’ responses suggested several significant themes related to the new Vice Chancellor’s autocratic leadership style, the accessibility of leaders during the amalgamation process, and cost savings efforts. The study found that there were mixed views on the Vice Chancellor’s leadership style. Some responses implied that the autocratic style was much needed at some points during the amalgamation process. Others felt that this leadership style was too dominating and hindered progress. Issues relating to the accessibility of managers, including Deans and Heads of Departments, were also frequently highlighted with geographical distances said to be a contributing factor. However, the leaders disputed this claim saying that the use of technology such as video conferencing, emails and fax, as well as the availability of university cars minimized the assumed adverse impacts of distance. As for the cost saving aspect, some staff believed that investment in technology and the cost of university car maintenance services across campuses was too high. Others felt that the savings made through streamlining certain operations, reductions in the duplication of some activities and redundancy decisions were worthwhile amalgamation outcomes.

Norgard’s and Skodvin’s (2002) research stresses the importance of geographical and cultural factors in higher education amalgamations in Norway. The study found three significant challenges: first, distinctive cultural differences between the colleges; second, long distances between the campuses; and third, the different organizational structures of the former institutions. The study found that the amalgamation at Telemark College was a forced amalgamation initiated by the government in order to pursue its national educational goals. As a result, staff involved in the amalgamation put up strong resistance. Other factors included centralized decision making, as well as disagreement on management and administration issues. The study further found that geographical distance presented a barrier to the
development of cohesive social networks as well as to the kind of organizational structures that could be created.

Case studies, by Rhoades & Slaughter (2004), Lingenfelter (2006) and Altbach and Teichler (2001), focused on the impacts of reduced higher education funding. These studies confirm that funding shortfalls have significant impact at the meso and micro levels of higher education. For example, Rhodes (2004) highlighted that Heads of Departments were faced with growing pressures to generate revenues for their department in order to compete with other departments for grants and other financial resources. The study further revealed that academic departments were being forced to support their basic activities with monies allocated from the state in addition to those generated through their own efficiencies (Rhodes, 2004).

2.5 Conclusion

As can be seen from the above discussion, the literature review reveals that organizational restructuring is not easy as it involves various factors, including organizational context, communication, leadership, as well as the management of change itself by the change agents. In much the same way, these factors have impact on the implementation of change and restructuring in the context of higher education.

This chapter also highlights the context of the present higher education sector that is much affected by globalization. In one way or another, globalization has resulted in various changes in higher education such as the intrusion of the new managerialist style of leadership, market behaviors and continuous renewal efforts. This has led to activities such as internationalization, marketization and massification among higher education providers. Additionally, higher education institutions are now more responsive to both internal and external factors such as the students, staff, and academic programs, as well as the global character of economic competitiveness. Studies in this literature review also reveal that most previous research provided a one-sided view of the restructuring; either from the perspective of the implementers or those affected.

The literature review, however, did not reveal the impact of higher education change such as amalgamation on the human factor at the micro level: the dilemmas,
emotions, communication and further consequences, despite being mentioned by numerous scholars. Studies on the impact of change in higher education in Australian at the micro level are still lacking. In this light, the present study hopes to fill the gap in the literature of higher education restructuring in this respect. In the move to my methodological argument in Chapter Three, the research literature conversation remains open. In the next chapter, Chapter Three, I outline and explain my research methods for this study.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The general purpose of this study is to probe, describe and elucidate the effects of major change through an amalgamation of two faculties, a Faculty of Arts and a Faculty of Education, in an Australian university. This case study focuses on the staff in the Faculty of Education as they are impacted significantly by the amalgamation as revealed in the following chapters. The following discussions attempt to illustrate and describe the strategies this research employs to seek responses to the research questions.

The four purposes of this chapter are to (1) present the philosophical assumptions underpinning this research, (2) describe the research methodology used in this study, (3) describe the procedure used in designing the research and collecting the data, and (4) provide an explanation of the procedures used to analyze the data.

3.2 Justification for the qualitative approach to research

Scholars agree that the choice of research method is determined by the research question and the types of data and/or understandings required to respond to this question (Cohen, Manion, Morrison, & Morrison, 2013; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). Literature on higher education sector organizational strategic restructuring, such as an amalgamation suggests that various research methods may be utilised depending on the specific purpose and aims of the research. Studies on staff perspectives on amalgamation may adopt quantitative methods such as structured questionnaires (Hay & Fourie, 2002; Sullivan, 2004), qualitative methods (Mabokela & Evans, 2009), or a combination of these methods as in a mixed methods approach. Studies focused on processes within amalgamation as an organizational change strategy have generally utilised qualitative research approaches and have employed semi-structured interviews and document analysis (Etschmaier, 2010; Hatton, 2002; Tirronen & Nokkala, 2009; Ursin, et al., 2010; Weaver, 2008). Institutional amalgamation case studies may draw on a combination of
methods from both qualitative and quantitative methods (Chapman, 1988; Sehoole, 2005; Warren, 2009).

The main purpose of the study reported in this thesis is to respond to questions of ‘how’ and ‘why’ regarding the amalgamation process and its effects. This case study involves investigating and seeking responses to questions about the manner in which the amalgamation was implemented: why it took place, who was involved and in what particular manner, what were the decision-making processes, how were proposed changes communicated, what actions were taken and, in what ways did the amalgamation outcomes impact on staff, processes and procedures. All of this information relates to social processes such as decision making, team work and leadership at various levels. This case study also entails looking at faculty members’ and leaders’ accounts of their experiences and perspectives. Martin and Turner (1986, p. 1) state, ‘Work organizations are complex entities that operate in divergent and often conflicting ways’. Understanding the ‘meanings’ and ‘experiences’ of leaders and faculty members enables the comprehension of how a phenomenon is conceptualized (Gunter, 2005, p.170). Studies involving social concepts such as leadership, team work and organizational behaviors should be seen as embedded in an evolving process involving multiple levels of perspectives and dimensions and thus cannot be measured in static time (Krueger & Neuman, 2006). This case study research will acknowledge and pay adequate attention to the inextricably interrelated structural, social, and power issues at play in the organizational change-related aspects of the restructuring.

The use of a qualitative research approach is argued to be appropriate because it enables the researcher to look into and analyze the dynamic experiential complexities occurring both within and across organizational hierarchical levels (Hoepfl, 1997). As Dalzell (2000, p. 85) states, qualitative researchers ‘search for patterns, looking for pluralism and complexity’, thus resulting in more richly nuanced experiential understandings of the amalgamation case study (Fendt & Sachs, 2008). By employing qualitative methods, the richness and significance of individual experience in the theory-building research process can be illuminated (Corley and Gioia, 2011).

One other unique feature of qualitative research is that it ‘permits you to follow leads that emerge’ (Charmaz, 2006, p. 14). With this, participants’ experiential
understandings may yield insights that a researcher might not foresee. Thus, a researcher is able to refine and reshape data collection directed towards understanding the phenomenon under study.

Further, qualitative research approaches take into account the context under investigation as ‘a crucial and integral element of analysis’ (Temple, Edwards, & Alexander, 2006, p. 2). Bryman (2004) reiterates the importance of contextual aspects such as organizational types, historical background and group context. The use of a qualitative research approach allows the extraction of rich contextual data that may assist in understanding dynamic and complex processes of the work environment’s social systems (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Kan & Parry, 2004; Yukl, 2009). In this case study, the faculty/university’s history and background; and the broader Australian higher education ‘change scenario’ context are of central research interest. A qualitative approach was adopted as apt for the study.

3.3 Case study research design

A case study is defined as ‘a research strategy that focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings’ (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 534). The strength of a case study is its ability to allow the researcher to retain the holistic characteristics of real-life events and undertake a thorough investigation into a phenomenon in its particular context (Yin, 2009). A case study focuses on an entity in itself and allows in-depth examination (Gibbert & Ruigrok, 2010; Gibbert, Ruigrok, & Wicki, 2008). Case study researchers probe deeply and intensively to analyze the subject of the study, “instead of studying a thousand rats for one hour each, or a hundred rats for ten hours each, the investigator is likely to study one rat for a thousand hours” (Woodside, 2010, p. 2). The result of such analysis may reveal insights that contain typical characteristics of events observable in and adaptable by, other contexts.

Case studies are also studies of multi-perspectives in that the researcher gathers data from various actors and relevant groups of actors for a comprehensive view of the research phenomenon (Yin, 2009). In order to do this, typical case study research uses multiple sources and evidence such as documents, interviews and observation. As such, the use of a case study has the potential to generate multiple understandings of the
phenomenon being studied, and as such, allows a more holistic comprehension of real life events (Gibbert & Ruigrok, 2010). The use of a case study research design provides the researcher with a systematic way of looking at events, generating and analyzing data, and reporting the research results (Yin, 2009).

This study looks into the amalgamation of two faculties into one in an Australian university focusing on the insights and experiences of staff from the former Faculty of Education. Nevertheless, this case study involved looking into the particular university as well as the faculties involved in the amalgamation; specifically, the history, background, institutional work culture, operation systems, organizational structure and individuals that make up the institution were analyzed and examined. Additionally, interviews were conducted with various stakeholders involved in the amalgamation, including decision makers and the change agents, along with others affected by the amalgamation. Data such as documents on the case study’s institution and the amalgamation process were gathered. In this respect, the case study research design was deemed appropriate for this study due to two main reasons: to provide a holistic understanding of the phenomenon under study (the amalgamation of the two faculties) and to have a flexible research framework that allowed for in-depth data collection.

3.4 Rationale for a Grounded Theory approach to data collection and analysis

According to Glaser and Strauss (2009), Grounded Theory is an inductive research method in which theory is grounded in the data gathered. Grounded Theory generates theory from the data to better understand the relationships involved in the whole phenomenon and explains it through the eyes of research participants (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Its principal technique involves reflexive reading of the texts generated in the study and inductive analysis through coding (Flick, 2009). Strauss and Corbin (1990) argue:

Grounded Theory is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon. Therefore, data collection, analysis, and theory
stand in reciprocal relationship with each other. One does not begin with a theory, then, prove it. Rather, one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 23).

In other words, unlike deductive research approaches whereby researchers go into the field with a hypothesis with the objective to affirm or reject that hypothesis, in Grounded Theory, researchers enter the field without any preconceived notion or hypothesis (Dalzell 2000). Rather, they seek to understand the data’s multiple perspectives in order to generate theoretical conceptualizations (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Fendt & Sachs, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 2009). As stated by Strauss and Corbin, ‘A Grounded Theory is one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomena it represents’ (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 23) undertaken by capturing the essence of meaning or experience drawn from varied individuals and social contexts (Strauss & Corbin 1994). Themes derived from patterns and processes that emerge from the data during analysis will generate a Grounded Theory. With reference to this, Glaser used the term ‘conceptualization’. He stated:

For Grounded Theory, a concept (category) denotes a pattern that is carefully discovered by constant comparing of theoretically sampled data until conceptual saturation of interchangeable indices. It is discovered by comparing many incidents, and incidents to generate concepts, which shows the pattern named by the category and the sub patterns which are the properties of the category (Levay, 2010).

A core element of Grounded Theory is that inquiry is shaped by the intention to understand and discover social and social psychological processes in various fields (Glaser & Strauss, 2009). The analytical method employed by the researcher prompts theory discovery and development rather than verification of pre-existing theories. The term ‘Theoretical Sampling’, the process of selecting ‘incidents, slices of life, time periods, or people on the basis of their potential manifestation or representation of
important theoretical constructs’ (Patton, 2001, p. 238), is a vital concept. Glaser & Strauss state:

The process for data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects codes and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them in order to develop his (sic) theory as it emerges. This process of data collection is controlled by the emerging theory, whether substantive or formal.’ (Glaser & Strauss, 2009, p. 45).

Theoretical Sampling is a technique whereby the researcher determines, chooses and develops the sampling population and data through his/her theoretical ideas and understanding of the phenomenon with respect to the data already gathered and analyzed (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). The developing conceptual understandings take the sampling in certain directions. This sampling technique leads towards the expansion, refinement and elaboration of conceptual categories. Sampling stops as data becomes saturated (Glaser, 2009). This means no new conceptual insights are generated regarding the phenomenon that may “advance, modify, qualify, extend or add to the theory developed” (Cohen, Manion, Morrison, et al., 2013, p. 116). In the Grounded Theory, sampling size is determined by data saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 2009; Mason, 2010).

Another distinctive feature of the Grounded Theory is that data collection, analysis and sampling occur simultaneously (Glaser & Strauss, 2009). This implies that the researcher persistently interacts with the data and remains constantly in touch with the emerging analysis. This analytical process leads the researcher towards other possible theoretical explanations. On this point, Charmaz (1990, p. 2) asserts:

Most qualitative approaches stress collecting copious amounts of data before delving into the analysis; researchers using such approaches often complete their major analytic work long after they have left the field. In contrast, grounded theorists use their emerging theoretical
categories to shape the data collection while in the field as well as to structure the analytic processes of coding, memo-making, integrating and writing the developing theory. The ‘groundedness’ of this approach fundamentally results from these researchers’ commitment to analyze what they actually observe in the field or in their data. If they find recurrent themes or issues in the data, then they need to follow up on them, which can, and often does, lead grounded theorists in unanticipated directions (1990, p. 2).

Through the constant comparison technique, each item of data is compared with every other item of data (Glaser, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 2009). This diversity is achieved by comparing incidents and properties of a category, and attempting to observe as many underlying uniformities and diversities as possible. This rigorous iterative comparative process between empirical data and emerging analyses may result in the development or substantiation within Grounded Theory building (Glaser & Strauss, 2009). According to Glaser and Strauss (2009, pp.113-14), the constant comparative method facilitates the generation of complex “theories of process, sequence, and change pertaining to organizations, positions, and social interaction [that] correspond closely to the data since the constant comparison forces the analyst to consider much diversity in the data” (Glaser & Strauss, 2009, pp.113-14). In summary, Grounded Theory’s analytical strategies can be identified as:

a. The simultaneous involvement of the researcher in data collection and analysis;
b. The construction of analytic codes and categories from data, rather than from a preconceived, logically deduced hypothesis;
c. The use of the constant comparative method, which involves making comparisons during each stage of the analysis;
d. The development of theory (theory building) during each step of data collection and analysis;
e. Memo-writing to elaborate categories, specify their properties, define relationships between categories, and identify gaps;
f. Sampling aimed towards theory construction, not for population representativeness;
g. A review of the literature that follows on after developing an independent analysis (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 5 - 6).

Charmaz (2006) argues that Grounded Theory is based on constructivism as well as interpretivism. “Constructivist Grounded Theory places priority on the phenomenon of study and sees both data and analysis as created from shared experiences and relationships with participants and other sources of data” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 130). Charmaz (2006) further states that Constructivist Grounded Theory methodology is a set of principles and practices to construct grounded theories through researchers past and present interactions with people, perspectives and research practices. Events that happen today have their influence in the past experiences of people that surround the situation. Thus, humans generate knowledge and meaning from their experiences (Charmaz, 2006). Constructivist Grounded Theory is interested in an interpretative portrayal of a social setting by the co-construction of reality by multiple social actors, including the researchers and participants (Charmaz, 2006). Charmaz (2006) claims that Grounded Theory is not a set of rules to be strictly followed, but a flexible set of principles and practices.

This study employs a Constructivist Grounded Theory approach to data collection and data analysis. This was chosen for several reasons: (a) there is a scarcity of research focused on amalgamation as an organizational change strategy in higher education, (b) this case study studies the effect of a major change through people’s experience and insights, (c) the importance of context in this study.

Because there is scarce research on the topic of higher education amalgamation, let alone faculty amalgamation, the use of the Grounded Theory approach allows the researcher to study the case study amalgamation through theory building by collecting data, analyzing it and letting themes emerge inductively. The use of the Constructivist Grounded Theory allows the researcher to study people’s experiences and insights through their interactions, actions, and engagement, as well as the integration of contextual features such as the university’s history, faculty organizational structure,
setting and main players and subsequently construct meanings out of these (Charmaz, 2006). Finally, The Grounded Theory approach allows an in-depth look at contextual aspects because it accommodates on-going development and modification processes of theory building. With its ability to incorporate new data, Grounded Theory techniques have the potential to add depth to the field of this study by taking into account contextual aspects such as the specific socio-political uniqueness of the case study setting. Glaser (1978, p. 4) states that Grounded Theory is “readily modifiable, based on ever-emerging notions from more data”.

3.5 Research methods

Two main methods for data gathering were selected for the study:

(i) Unstructured in-depth interviews, and

(ii) Document analysis

3.5.1 Unstructured in-depth interviews

This study’s research questions pointed to the interviews as the most appropriate method for generating rich insights into and understandings of the phenomena of interest. As stated by Charmaz (2006):

Qualitative interviewing provides an open-ended, in-depth exploration of an aspect of life about which the interviewee has substantial experience, often combined with considerable insight. The interviewer can elicit views of this person’s subjective world. Interviewers sketch the outline of the views by delineating the topics and drafting the questions. Interviewing is a flexible, emergent technique; ideas and issues emerge during the interviews and interviewers can immediately pursue these leads (p. 29).

Interviews may consist of both closed and open-ended questions. These questions are developed such that they closely align with the research questions. Powell (1997, p. 113) states that “It is generally believed that the interview is better at
revealing information that is complex and/or emotionally laden.” In this study, in-depth interviews were used which permitted “an in-depth exploration of a particular topic or experience and, thus, are a useful method for interpretive inquiry” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 25). Using carefully constructed questions, the researcher can probe deeply into specific topics of which participants have first-hand experience. In this process, the interviewer plays the role of the attentive and sensitive listener, always encouraging the participant to share relevant experiences and reflect upon their unique experiences so as to shed light on the phenomenon under study (Charmaz, 2006). By inviting participants to reflect on the topic, the researcher can probe more deeply into underlying meanings, thus, enhancing the possibility of generating rich data. In-depth interviews encourage the researcher to further examine earlier research phenomena-related events and perspectives. Taking a participant perspective, Charmaz summarizes the possible advantages of in-depth interviewing in asserting that they allow participants to:

a. Express their views
b. Draw on the interview questions to more coherently frame their stories
c. Reflect on earlier events
d. Be taken as experts of their own experiences of the research phenomena of interest
e. Choose what to relate and how to relate it
f. Share significant experiences and understandings within a mutually respectful and trusting dialogical environment
g. Express thoughts and feelings more openly (Charmaz, 2006, p. 27).

In relation to Grounded Theory, in-depth interviewing allows a shared dialogue in which both participants and the interviewer shape the interview process and outcomes. This flexibility, according to Charmaz (2006), is what makes in-depth interviewing suitable for the Grounded Theory approach. In this study, the in-depth interviewing method was selected as a means of generating rich experiential insights into and understandings of the participants. Faculty members who have first-hand experience of the amalgamation changes were identified as potential
recruits/participants. Issues around representation were also taken into consideration as follows:

a. To have representatives from both the academic and administrative staff from both faculties
b. To have representatives from the Amalgamation Implementation Committee (AIC)
c. To have representatives from the university’s executive.

It should be noted that equal representation from both the faculties does not denote that there has to be an equal number of representatives from the academics and administrators from both the faculties since this study utilizes the Grounded Theory approach and the theoretical sampling method. This means that the selection of interviewees depended on the theoretical ideas and understanding emerging from the data analysis.

3.5.2 Interview procedures

The new Faculty of Arts and Education is a large faculty. The new faculty consists of four schools and the former Faculty of Education is one school. Due to the size of the faculty, this case study is focusing extensively on the staff from the former Faculty of Education.

Prospective interview participants were contacted via phone and email. As required by the ethics committee, the following information was emailed to prospective participants:

a. A letter of invitation
b. Plain Language Statement
c. Details of the ethics approval.

Of the 35 prospective participants, 20 individuals gave their consent to participate in this study. The 15 non-respondents included three former university executives who declined to participate, two senior university executives and two senior academics. The rest of the individuals who declined cited work or personal
commitments such as sabbatical leave and being out of the country or being on holiday. It is interesting to note that all the administrative staff contacted conveyed their willingness to participate. Over the course of the interview process, anecdotal evidence in the interview transcripts provided led to six further prospective participants. These included one former university executive, two former university academics and two former senior faculty administrative staff members. These people were then contacted and subsequently interviewed. In total, twenty eight people participated in this study, all believed to possess the necessary experience of this amalgamation and they occupied diverse roles across both former faculties to create rich perspectives on the amalgamation effects and related social dynamics. The table below describes the 28 interview participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Academic Members</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Administrative Members</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation Committee</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Executives</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.0: Distribution of interview participants

According to Charmaz (2006) and Mason (2010), a sample size is complete when there is nothing left to code in the data because you have reached ‘saturation’ which means that the data does not appear to offer any new insights into the categories, or the relationships between the categories, also termed as the theoretical coding (Charmaz, 2006).

The interviews were designed to extract the information generated from the experiences and voices of interview participants on the amalgamation in the particular setting. Four key themes provided a framework for the guiding interview questions (see Table 3):
Table 3.0: Interview Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Background of the interviewee</td>
<td>- Experience of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Area of expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Perspectives on the faculty prior to the amalgamation</td>
<td>- History and background of the faculty/university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third The Process of the amalgamation</td>
<td>- How decision were made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- How messages were relayed to faculty members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Amalgamation timeline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth The effects of the amalgamation</td>
<td>- Initial responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Views and perspectives on the implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Opinions about changes observed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By way of an introduction to the interview setting, the background-related questions (first and second phase questions) were designed to explore the participant’s background, area of expertise, and role in the faculty. Guiding questions related to ‘perspectives’ before amalgamation, including the time when the participant first started working in the faculty. This part gives a picture of the interview participant’s viewpoint on ‘the way things were’: the time prior to the amalgamation. The third set of guiding questions focused on the amalgamation process and the forth phase questions were designed to prompt responses related to participants’ experiences and perspectives on the effects of the amalgamation.

Some interview questions were shaped by the on-going analysis process from which further questions emerged. In this respect, a key feature of Grounded Theory building is the freedom to make adjustments during the data collection process to validate previous information and to extend existing information for better understanding of the phenomenon (Charmaz, 2006).
3.5.3 The interview process

A few days prior to the interview, an email reminder was sent to participants with details about the interview time and location. The interview protocol highlighted specific questions that needed to be directed to particular interview participants. The specific questions differed from one participant to another based on their position, job description and leads given by the previous interviews. To illustrate, during the interview with the university executives, questions on decision making at the executive level of the university, as well as specific questions about the university budget were asked. Another senior university academic was asked to describe a ‘peculiarity’ that was raised in relation to the former Faculty of Education. The formulation of more specific questions helped to corroborate and clarify assumptions and claims raised during prior interviews.

All the interviews were conducted from February 2011 to July 2011. Each interview was audio-taped and generally took from 60 to 75 minutes. The interviews ranged from 30 minutes to one hour and 15 minutes. Note-taking was kept to a minimum to avoid this possible distraction getting in the way of the interview’s ‘back and forth’ conversational flow. An attempt was made to make participants feel comfortable and at ease when responding to the interview, with guiding questions to enhance the prospects of arriving at expanded understandings of participants’ organizational change experiences. The participants chose interview locations that were convenient for them (i.e., the participant’s office, participant’s house, a café). Three participants requested telephone interviews. For one, this was due to their remote location and for the other two, their personal preference. After each interview, the interview audio files were transferred to a personal computer and into a secure password protected computer folder to ensure its safe keeping and participants’ confidentiality and privacy.

Interview questions were progressively re-worded to reflect and explore themes emergent from prior interviews, as well as to follow on more closely from participants’ responses (Rubin & Rubin, 2011). For example, many participants mentioned that budget problems were key in the amalgamation issue. Thus, a question on the financial implications of the amalgamation was included during the interview with the university
executives and several senior academics that held senior management positions for validation and clarification.

All the interviews followed the designed interview protocol consisting of a greeting, signing of the consent declaration form, conducting the interview, thanking the participant and concluding the interview session appropriately. The interview audio files were transcribed verbatim as soon as possible after each interview for two main reasons: a) to allow maximum reflection of the interview process; b) to assist towards the modifications of the following interview. Participants were informed that they could request a copy of their interview transcript for review.

The process of completing the interviews was a moving experience. The outpouring of emotion from some participants was obvious especially when participants shared how they felt unappreciated and uncertain about their future. For example, one participant cried, a few resorted to strong language to express their points with greater emphasis. These feelings underpin much of the content in the chapters of this thesis that chronicle the findings of this research.

3.6 Analysis of interview transcripts

Each interview was transcribed verbatim. Each completed interview transcript was reviewed at least twice for errors such as wrongly spelt words or acronyms. The reformatting of transcriptions is required before importing into QSRN9. QSRN9 is the ninth version of the QSR International software product. It is a system designed to manage unstructured data and store documents such as transcripts, pictures and audio materials. In addition, it is an index management system for data analysis.

After transcripts were imported to the QSRN9, three types of coding were carried out: open, axial, and selective. Open coding is “the part of the analysis concerned with identifying, naming, categorizing and describing phenomena found in the text. Essentially, each line, sentence, paragraph etc. is read in search of the response to the repeated question "What is this about? What is being referenced here?" (Borgatti, 2008, p. 3). Axial coding involves the process of relating codes (categories and properties) to each other, via a combination of inductive and deductive thinking. To simplify this process, rather than looking for any and all kind of relations, grounded theorists
emphasize causal relationships, “and fit things into a basic frame of generic relationships” (Borgatti, 2008, p. 4).

In selective coding, the researcher examines previous nodes, conceptual labels for themes emerging in data that is used in QSRN9, to identify and select data that will support the conceptual coding categories that were developed earlier (Krueger & Neuman, 2006; Saldana, 2009). In this process, the researcher looks into notes and related data gathered in order to support the categories identified. Boyatzis (1998) identifies three key capabilities a researcher needs to exercise the best code data: a) The ability to recognize patterns in data, b) The ability to think in terms of systems and concepts, c) An in-depth background knowledge of the research and relevant information (background of the study related to the context).

Using the QSRN9, interviews were open coded and nodes were used to represent themes. These a priori nodes assisted the researcher in the understanding and building of theories. Marshall and Rossman (2014) describe the coding process as “difficult, complex, ambiguous, creative and fun” (p. 114). The fundamental concern here is to understand the meaning and aspects related to ‘leading major change’ inherent in the responses to the amalgamation or restructuring. As stated by Marshall and Rossman (2014, p. 114), this process necessitates the researcher to have a high awareness of the data, “a focused attention to those data, and an openness to the subtle, tacit undercurrents of social life”. He further adds that “identifying salient themes, recurring ideas or language, and patterns of belief that link people and settings together is the most intellectually challenging phase of data analysis …” (2010, p. 114). In this process, the researcher notes and identifies regularities or resurfacing themes, that is, “consistent themes that are distinct from one another” (Marshall & Rossman, 2014, p. 114). As the research develops, the researcher continually reviews and revises the transcripts according to the designated categories, and then seeks to distinguish and identify the relationships between them again and again until stable sets of categories and relationships are developed (Charmaz, 2006). After the initial interview transcripts were open coded, axial coding was prescribed to the data. This resulted in the emergence of tree nodes. Tree nodes are labels of coding given to themes that emerge
through causal relationships with other nodes through similarity of ideas and concepts that could be combined.

Throughout the data analysis process, the researcher simultaneously and continuously carried out memo-writing using QSRN9. Memo writing is a technique whereby the researcher noted his discussion of thoughts and ideas during the coding process (Krueger & Neuman, 2006). Saldana (2009, p. 32) provides a vivid description of memo-writing as “somewhat comparable to researcher journal entries or blogs – a place to “dump your brain” about the participants, phenomenon, or process under investigation by thinking and thus writing and thus thinking even more about them.” On the content of memo-writing, Saldana (2009) advises:

Whenever anything related to and significant about coding or analysis of the data comes to mind, stop whatever you’re doing and write a memo about it immediately. Future directions, unresponsive questions, frustrations with the analysis, insightful connections, and anything about the researched and the researcher are acceptable content for memos (p. 33).

Memo-writing is a crucial process in Grounded Theory “because it prompts you to analyze your data and codes early in the process” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 72). The main benefit of using memo-writing is that it helps the researcher to manage the data during the coding process as well as act as a basis for establishing grounded theories in the study. Thus, in this study, memo-writing was carried out from the outset of data analysis.

3.7 Document analysis

The second main method used in this study to generate data was document analysis. This involved documents such as minutes of meetings, email correspondence, the faculty year book, annual reports, policies, corporate profiles and other related documents. Some of these documents were provided by the interview participants. Information from the documents played a valuable role in this research:
a. To clarify and validate information given by interview participants.
b. To extend and complement information gathered through the interview method.

Livingstone (2007) mentioned that analysis of documents serves the following purposes:
a. Enhancing research validity and reliability
b. Enhancing researcher’s insights into ‘what is, and is not known’
c. Sharpening research focus on issues under investigation
d. Complementing information gained from the other research tool (interview) and filling information gaps (p. 98).

As stated by Ryan (2005, p. 4), “rigorous research is research that applies the appropriate tools to meet the stated objectives of the investigation.” Usage of both documents and interviews as multiple sources of the case study added rigor, breadth and depth to the existing research (Yin, 2009).

3.8 Evaluation criteria

Problems associated with evaluating the quality of qualitative research have been highlighted by many researchers (Charmaz, 2006; Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1994; Tracy, 2010). Northcote (2012) argues that the problems associated with selecting the appropriate criteria to evaluate research quality are associated with the research paradigm and intention, as well as the epistemological beliefs of the researchers and research participants. Based on the work of many scholars such as Lincoln and Guba (1994) and Tracy (2010), Northcote (2012) outlines five guiding principles to evaluate the rigor, validity, reliability and dependability of qualitative research:

a. Contributory: Contributory in advancing wider knowledge or understanding about policy, practice, theory or a particular substantive field.
b. Rigorous: Rigorous in conduct through the systematic and transparent collection, analysis and interpretation of qualitative data.

c. Defensible: Defensible in design by providing a research strategy that can address the evaluative questions posed.

d. Credible: Credible in claim through offering well-founded and plausible arguments about the significance of the evidence generated.

e. Affective: Affective in nature by acknowledging the excitement associated with research discoveries, the emotional involvement of the participants and the enthusiasm of the researcher (pp. 9 – 10).

3.8.1 Validity, reliability and dependability

In qualitative research reliability is referred to as “a fit between what researchers record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched”, such as a degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of coverage (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 48). In Grounded Theory, the issues of accuracy and comprehensiveness are resolved when data is saturated. The goal of reliability is to minimize errors and biases in the study so that the results are viewed as consistent and dependable.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Several strategies were carried out to ensure that this thesis adheres to the guidelines of the Research Ethics as prescribed by the Human Ethics Advisory Group (HEAG).

Firstly, when transcribing the interviews, participants’ names and position in the university (Academic/ Administrator/ Amalgamation Implementation Committee/ University Executive) were replaced with codes. The use of codes ensured retrievability and confidentiality of interview data and interviewees’ identities. The code for each participant citation followed the following sequence: pseudonym, position, number and date of interview. Thus, the code [Walt: Academic1, p.11, 2011] refers to Mr Walt who is the first academic participant to be interviewed in 2011 and the quotation is from page 11 of the interview transcript. [Gee: Admin10, p.2, 2011] refers to Ms Gee, the tenth administrator interviewed for the study in the year 2011,
and the quotation was taken from page two of the interview transcript. Table 4 below presents the coding used for the position of the interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Executive</td>
<td>UniExec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator (Human Resource Division)</td>
<td>Admin-HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amalgamation Implementation Committee</td>
<td>AIC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.0: Interview codes for participant’s position

Secondly, names of institutions, faculties and campuses were replaced with pseudo names, for example, campus X, Y, Z.

3.10 Limitations of the study

The focus of this thesis is on the processes and effects of major change in an Australian University. The Major change in focus is the amalgamation of two faculties into one. As in most research, certain factors may affect the investigation in question. The following limitations are acknowledged:

a. Data for the study was gathered from January 2010 until September 2010. Meanwhile the events of the restructuring took place from June 2007 until 1st January 2008. The lapse of two years between the amalgamation and the interviews may results in some impairment in participant’s recall of the restructuring event. Nevertheless, the significant events that participants witnessed and lived through have been captured, particularly the effects of the restructuring.

b. Since the restructure, many individuals have moved on to other positions. All the main figures involved in the amalgamation and who were part of the Amalgamation Committee have left the university except one. The Vice Chancellor who instigated the amalgamation has left the university. A Pro Vice Chancellor who had led the amalgamation has moved out of the
university. Both Acting Deans from the two former faculties during the amalgamation have moved to other universities. One faculty administrator representative left the university. Another remains in the faculty and holds a senior managerial position. The interviews captured the views of all these players after the amalgamation, which provided a platform for these players to reflect on the significant events that had happened, and subsequently provided rich reflections about the event.

c. This study involves interviews with twenty eight staff (university executive, administrative staff and academics) involved in the restructuring. Therefore, only the experiences of these participants are reflected in the findings and discussions.

d. This study utilises the constructivist Grounded Theory approach (Charmaz, 2006). This approach assumes that data and theories are neither emergent nor discovered but rather are ‘constructed’ by both the researcher and the research participants (Charmaz, 2006). However, the selective nature of transcript excerpts chosen for reporting may influence the meaning as constructed in the study.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter has explained the methodology underpinning this research. This study employs a case study research framework utilizing Constructivist Grounded Theory as an approach for data gathering and analysis. This study is based on the premise that insights from people involved and affected by the amalgamation will provide a rich description of the change process and impacts, not only for the organization but also for the people of the organization.
PART II: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Part II of this study follows and consists of four chapters. The discussion in Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 focuses on the findings of the study, thus:

In Chapter Four, I present the data, analysis and discussion of the study. Chapter 4, ‘Putting the Research into Context’, presents the contextual background. Organized into three main sections, the first section highlights the context of Australian higher education including a brief history of the sector up until the amalgamation which took place in 2007-2008. The second section presents the context of the higher education institution in focus, and the third section presents the context of the faculties prior to their amalgamation.

Chapter Five describes the amalgamation timeline’s initial inception, negotiation and discussions, the amalgamation processes and lastly, the responses of people affected by it.

Chapter Six presents the major themes extracted from the data. Five major themes have been identified, namely: organizational context, the amalgamation effects, leadership, communication and the issue of budget and economy.

In Chapter Seven, a discussion of the major findings of this study is presented. Additionally, these findings are related to previous work in restructuring of higher education. This chapter aims to situate the study in the larger context of higher education change.

In Chapter Eight, the conclusions, implication of findings, implications for future research, and the summary of the research are presented.
CHAPTER FOUR
PUTTING THE RESEARCH INTO CONTEXT

4.1 Introduction

Research literature has shown that the issue of context plays an important role in studies on organizational behavior and change (Burke, 2010; Pye & Pettigrew, 2005; Rafferty & Restubog, 2009; Van Dam, Oreg & Schyns, 2008). Embedding studies in context provides the basis for a better understanding of factors that influence restructuring processes, the strategies chosen for their implementation and stakeholder feedback and responses (Burke, 2010).

The key focus of this chapter is to illuminate the multiple historical contexts in which the case study resided during the restructuring period 2007-2008 and to then bring these contexts into conversation with research participants’ experiential perspectives on higher education reform. The chapter takes shape around the context of Australia’s higher education (pre-2008) and the historical context of the institution and the faculties in focus in this case study prior to the amalgamation.

4.2 Australia’s higher education system prior to the case study restructuring

Australia’s higher education sector has gone through various changes since the first university was established in the 1850s until the present time (2010). These changes have largely been driven by socio-economic factors as well as changes taking place through globalization. The following information concerns changes in Australian higher education since the establishment of the university under study and provides a prelude for the information that follows.

In the mid-1970s the Australian higher education system was faced with similar problems to those in the U.S.A.: a decline in student numbers, aging faculty members, rising costs in all areas, changing demands for new and different course offerings aligned to Australian socio-economic changes, higher public expectations, management issues, as well as the move towards more technologically based courses
which resulted in the consolidation and amalgamation of higher education institutions (Chapman, 1988).

As part of a major reform process in 1987 the Commonwealth Government decided to address these problems by removing the binary divide between Australia’s 19 universities and other higher education institutions, such as the Colleges of Advanced Education (Harman, 1989). A large-scale reform of the higher education system and its financial base was achieved through the Unified National System of Higher Education (Harman, 1989). This strategically oriented reform sparked a major program of amalgamations and rationalizations, resulting in significantly fewer higher education institutions. Over the next few years from 1987, the total number of institutions was progressively reduced from 78 to 37 public universities through informal inducements such as various forms of financial encouragement from the federal and state governments (Harman, 1989). The reforms saw a consolidation of various tertiary institutions characterized by multi campus and multipurpose colleges structured to be more responsive to socio-economic and national agendas (Chapman, 1988).

These Dawkin reforms (also known as the Green Paper and named after John Dawkins who was Federal Minister for higher education at the time) are commonly described as creating a 'revolution' in Australian higher education (Harman, 1989). The main thrust of Dawkin’s reform was to create the 'Unified National System' which combined universities and colleges of advanced education (Harman, 1989). These reforms were designed to address a number of key concerns including the development of more efficient and effective growth management strategies, and the generation of a human capital (or resources) base better matched to Australian industry demands for particular and specific knowledge and skills in an emergent global economy (Department of Employment, Education and Training, 1993).

In the two years between 1980 and 1982 the number of Colleges of Advanced Education was reduced from 68 to 35. In Victoria at that time there were 26 higher education institutions, four universities and 22 colleges of advanced education in 1980. By 1992, only eight institutions of higher education remained (Department of Employment, Education and Training, 1993). This sudden reduction in the numbers of
higher institutions through amalgamations had significant consequences for all stakeholders including academic and administrative staff, facilities management staff, contractors, the local community, prospective students, and others with an interest in local engagement with educational institutions. Many staff members, both academics and administrative staff, were either transferred internally to other departments, lost their positions, or sought employment elsewhere in the education sector (Harman, 1989).

The early 1990s saw the Australian higher education sector experiencing more profound changes. The rapid increase in student numbers that accelerated throughout the 1980s and 1990s had seen a 33% increase in the student-staff ratio of 12:1 to 16:1. There was also continued decline in government funding from 90% in 1981 to approximately 55% in 1996 (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent, & Scales, 2009). One government-endorsed strategy to manage the rapid expansion of higher education was to encourage institutions to diversify their funding base and to adopt market-like behavior (Bradley et al., 2009). As a result, universities since 1996 started to rely on other means of funding such as competing for grants and contracts from research funding agencies and public instrumentalities, as well as other income sources such as from private companies and philanthropic foundations, while raising fees through campus services, student union fees and alumni fundraising (Currie & Vidovich, 2000).

In 2008, in an effort to improve Australia’s higher education, an academic panel, headed by Professor Dennis Bradley, was commissioned to review Australia’s higher education system and make recommendations for Australia’s future higher education in 2008 (Bradley et al., 2009). This review was to be prepared for the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (Australian Department of Education, 2010). Released in December 2008, the Bradley Review prompted the Government to propose a range of changes to be implemented over Australia’s higher education sectors. This included setting a target to achieve 40% of the population with tertiary education. To achieve this, the government planned to increase the number of low Social Economic Status (SES) background students and other minorities in universities, and to fund universities according to students’ course selections. This funding model is known as the ‘student demand driven model’, where
funding would be demand-driven and follow students’ university and course selections (Bradley, et. al., 2009).

The Bradley review further highlighted the following areas in Australian higher education as needing significant improvement:

a. The quality of teaching and learning;

b. Access and outcomes for low SES students;

c. Funding support for higher institutions; and

d. Resources for research and investment in world class tertiary education infrastructure (Australian Department of Education, 2010).

The Bradley Review’s findings have been reflected in policy changes related to funding and the increasing de-regulation of the higher education sector to enable universities to respond to the external environment in distinctive and competitive ways.

4.3 The University

The University in this case study (unnamed in accordance with ethical requirements) has been in existence in various forms for over 40 years. It comprises several campuses, four large faculties, two institutes, two research institutes, and a number of diverse strategic research centers. From the outset, the primary objective of the university has been to create a tertiary education institution that can provide opportunities for students whether resident within or outside the particular state through the development of many modes of course access. The university’s first Campus was established in the late 1970s. Since then, the university has established several other campuses by amalgamating with several previous Colleges of Advanced Education.

The University has responded to various challenges, issues and changes since its establishment. Generally, the university’s history can be summarized as the story of one university with a quest to maintain its relevance in the face of competitive economic and educational local and global pressures (Livingstone, 2007). From some of the research participants’ interview responses, the university was modeled after the
Open University in the UK and developed a sound reputation as a provider of distance education in Australia and abroad.

Professor Donald stated that the wide geographic reach of the university through its multi-modal courses was what attracted him/her to the university:

One of the things that attracted me to the university was the fact that we could reach a large number of students who wouldn’t otherwise have had the opportunity to be educated through - primarily and almost exclusively though not entirely - through the off campus program which was excellent. It was very impressive and we went all over, mainly around Victoria. We used to travel quite a bit. We have a lot of students from around Victoria [Donald: Academic14, p.2, 2011].

Another senior academic, Professor Harry, stated that the 1980s was a time of reputation building and restructuring as well as one of renewed enthusiasm for education:

Well, the university was created out of an amalgamation between part of a technical institute and a provincial teacher’s college. The Dean of the Faculty of Education and Psychology, as it was then, set about creating a new structure for the faculty, reorganizing staff. And I was brought in, along with a couple of other people in particular to set up a program in social administrative studies. And later on we were joined by a number of other people. During the 1980s we created a pretty strong reputation for the school. It was a period of growth, excitement and new ideas. And we had very exciting decade in the 1980s [Harry: Academic8, p.3, 2011].

The two excerpts above showed that the university was recognized for its multi-modal learning programs. Through this mode of learning, the university managed to attract many students from across Victoria and beyond. The university was also a
product of several amalgamations between teacher colleges and technical institutes. These amalgamations had occurred in stages.

### 4.4 The Faculty

Data revealed that both faculties involved in the restructuring in focus in this case study attracted worldwide recognition for their prestigious academics – most notably, the involvement of the pioneering academics in both faculties who helped shape the academic reputation of the faculties.

In a special edition of the former Faculty of Education’s newsletter entitled, ‘The End of the Faculty’¹, an academic described that faculty staff had been leaders in various research and professional associations in Australia, as well as established members of the editorial board of internationally high-ranking education journals. In the same newsletter, another academic, Professor Huelsman, described the golden years of the former Faculty of Education. S/he stated:

> The early years of the former Faculty of Education were great years for education and educational research. The university was expanding and laying down its research programs. There was money to bring wonderful scholars from around the world to work with us. So many of the people at the university in those early years have gone on to become leaders in educational research in Australia and internationally. Having experienced that enormous surge of energy, enthusiasm and ideas, a number have gone on to create new programs of research development in other places. We learned together what it is to remake educational research and to contribute to the re-make of education. We learned the joy – not just the pain – of collaboration. Collaboration made us strong [Huelsman: Academic15, p.2, 2011].

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¹‘The End of Faculty’ is a newsletter which was published in 2007 by the former Faculty of Education. It contains writings from former and existing staff about the former faculty.
Former members of the former Faculty of Education also stated that former leaders of both the university and the former Faculty of Education had helped to create an intellectual environment which became the basis for the university’s and former faculty’s success in years to come. In an elaborate description, an academic stated:

The first Vice Chancellor did much to transform the new faculty. Research was high on the agenda and a number of significant academic staff appointments were made (referring to Professor Beck and a few other former academics). He outlined the off campus dimension of the university’s vision and promised support for the production of print, audio, and video teaching materials. Multi-disciplinary course teams promised to break down the traditional structure of the university subjects and create new and innovative course materials. The Faculty of Education continued to consolidate its reputation for excellence in multi-modal education and in particular in curriculum design and development. The foundation had been laid for what was to become the most innovative faculty in the Southern hemisphere. Staff and students from this period came to occupy a significant number of senior appointments, elsewhere in Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Scandinavia. The Faculty can claim the highest output of professors at the university and they currently hold or have held Chairs, Deanships, Deputy Vice Chancellorships or Vice Chancellorships elsewhere [Beck: Academic7, p.4, 2011].

Another former academic of the former Faculty of Education, in the newsletter ‘The End of the Faculty’, described the good leadership of the first Dean of the former Faculty of Education. S/he stated:

Professor X, the first Dean of Education at the university, put in place a concept of ‘course teams’ that would form and disband on a needs
basis. This created an intellectual environment designed to be ‘cutting edge’. One outcome was staff members who were not afraid to joust over ideas, assumptions, theorists and educational practices. On occasions this could lead to individuals, with coffee cups in hand, becoming engaged in heated debate in corridors or under cover-ways. Eventually the exchange would end, the participants would separate and the coffee would be cold but the ideas would continue to simmer (The End of the Faculty, 2007, p.5).

The following selected interview excerpts illuminate a number of key contextual factors of the former faculties: collegiality, a congenial work environment, multiple faculty locations and the impact of previous restructuring.

During the university’s early days of establishment, the majority of participants interviewed identified the faculties as places that used to have good collegiality and conducive working environments, as apparent in the following excerpts:

Collegiality was good because in this big staff room, you could just go and sit with the Dean at 11 o’clock and have a cup of tea - just because it was smaller (referring to the number of staff). The bigger an organization gets, the more impersonal it becomes. Because it was small, people mixed [Jean: Admin9, p.2, 2011].

I think I never had, in my academic career such an intense intellectual experience and such a strong collegial experience as well. Terrific! [Beck: Academic7, p. 1, 2011].

I thought it was a great place to work. There was a very congenial feel for the area. There were still issues with the faculty being multi campus. There was a lot of staff along at X Campus Who were making decisions. Some of the decisions that they made – you got a feeling they didn’t quite understand some of the issues that face us at

The collegiality was good. Yeah! I found that there was a good bond. They really were easy to talk to and very welcoming. There are always politics and teething – classic problems. But generally speaking they pushed together quite well and there was a fairly general feeling of belonging [Ince: Academic3, p.2, 2011].

In the newsletter, ‘The End of the Faculty’, an academic stated:

I became a member of the then Faculty of Education as part of the new University, at its inception on April 1, 1977 having joined a State Teachers College the previous year. Those early years saw the foundation of what was later to become a multi-school Faculty of Education with the merger with Institute W, and then various school configurations since the amalgamation with Queen College. One of my fondest memories of those early days was having time during the working week (usually on Wednesday afternoons when there were no classes timetabled), when I could enjoy the collegiality of working with other members of staff (The End of the Faculty, 2007, p.5).

Interestingly, the academic further noted that the feelings of collegiality have changed over the past decade (2000s). The academic quoted above stated, “Regrettably things have changed and that precious commodity of time has become so scarce that such activities no longer seem possible” (The End of the Faculty, 2007, p.5).

Secondly, the former Faculty of Education was known to have gone through several amalgamations prior to the one reported in this case study. Professor Beck stated:
The 90s was a period of amalgamations. Firstly was the King School of Education, which was … not a strong college. Initially it was a Teachers College … It wasn’t a strong institution but Teacher Education was one of the attractive degrees there. So, there was an amalgamation, followed very soon afterwards by an amalgamation with V College under the Vice Chancellorship of Professor Rae. At the end of that, then [the next Vice Chancellor] was appointed who set about re-organizing the university. The amalgamated Faculty of Education in 1991/92 had a staff of about 300. It was a big faculty and the Vice Chancellor decided that much of the resources of that faculty should be redistributed to help develop others - particularly science and technology, health and behavioral science. Over a period of two to three years we lost nearly 200 staff in the faculty. Some were transferred to other faculties. Some of them were sacked [Beck: Academic7, p.2, 2011].

Thirdly, interview participants stated that the previous Faculty of Education restructurings were initiated in response to issues around funding, staffing and programs:

One of the weapons that have been used against the faculty and still was in later years when I came back was that the central admin would be arguing that the faculty was spending more than it was earning – not earning its keep kind of thing, it was in debt and all that stuff [Carr: Academic11/AIC4, p.4, 2011].

Well, firstly there was a huge cut in the budget. As you would have imagined, a lot of staff were transferred out, other staff being sacked. There was an enormous treachery in the budget for the faculty and that was a little dramatic. Secondly the integration of programs across previously the five or six campuses was a major problem. Particularly
as the structures that we wanted from the undergraduate programs didn’t really match the staff that has been left behind and because we had no growth, we couldn’t recruit in the areas that we really needed staff – economic problems, secondly, program management problems. Thirdly, staffing was a significant issue. And finally, trying to retain those people who led the faculty’s research and publication programs during the 1980s. We lost people like (academics named). We lost a lot of people. Despite its history, it was no longer an easy place to be productive in [Beck: Academic7, p.3, 2011].

When I was working here from 1999 to 2006, I was very well aware that we had to work within a limited budget. And at that time this created problems. And as I remembered, the faculty in those days had budget constraints. Until 2006, there were 2 or 3 restructures. We were always under pressure to work harder and faster, cheaper, but nevertheless I was basically happy because my team in the office continues to work very hard and very well despite all of those constraints. I didn’t realize it at the time because I’ve since worked at another institute, another university, in another faculty and I can now reflect better on what it was like to work with the faculty. I think communication channels were not very good, from above and general staff were not always kept well informed on what was happening and I think there was a greater divide between the general (administrative) staff and the academic staff than there should be [Ellen: Admin3, p.1, 2011].

Gee, a senior administrator, stated that the previous restructuring left a negative impact on the intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational culture of the faculties:

There were always tensions whenever there was a movement – of people around, moving of jobs and responsibilities. With regards to
the actual administration also we try to make sure those procedures and policies across the three campuses were the same. They often had to change the way they had done things. And that’s always difficult. For many staff - especially for those who lost their job - it was traumatic. For those who obviously stay and remain, it was difficult because we had a huge number of pipe lining students. We had a very high student to staff ratios. We also had to deal with the integration of quite different programs at [the different campuses] all running completely different programs. We had to try and bring these together as well reorganize our relationship with schools when we placed our students [for the teaching practicum]. So, it was a very difficult decade [Gee: Admin10, p.2, 2011].

Some of the participants expressed their concerns about the existence of multi-campus faculties arising from the amalgamation of institutions.

The integration of programs across the five or six campuses was a major problem. Particularly as the structures that we wanted from the undergraduate programs didn’t really match the staff that had been left behind and because we had no growth, we couldn’t recruit in the areas that we really needed staff [Beck: Academic7, p.3, 2011]. We were having problems, operating over 4 campuses [Ted: Academic9, p.1, 2011].

To summarize, the selected participants’ interview excerpts revealed several important contextual characteristics of both the former faculties. Foremost was the collegial cultural environment staff encountered. People were friendly to each other and this fostered a campus culture that valued collegiality and civility as contributing to a vibrant, productive, stimulating academic environment. All participating academic and administrative faculty members claimed to have experienced a collegial environment underpinned by trust, respect, and transparency in which staff seemed
free to express their divergent and even conflicting views. As a consequence, staff worked together to carry out their duties and responsibilities in a professional manner as well as the sharing of problems and other work related issues. According to the participants’ accounts, discussions amongst fellow academics were often passionate and led to substantial academic growth and reputation, the initiation and successful implementation of various research projects, and educational consultation opportunities.

Secondly, the former Faculty of Education had experienced several restructurings prior to the current amalgamation. These previous amalgamations had affected the staff negatively. In previous amalgamations, there were cases where staff were made redundant and increased anxieties ensued because of disruption to daily work processes.

Thirdly, both faculties in the case study had established academics as well as long serving administrative staff. Some of these staff had been with the faculties since before the establishment of the university, with the former teacher colleges and institutions. These staff members were steadfast to the institutional culture and collegiality of their previous institutions. Amalgamations had disrupted this employee loyalty and commitment.

Lastly, the former Faculty of Education was a multi-campus faculty. It had campuses in several cities (within half an hour to 4 hours’ drive from one campus to another). This had resulted in problems of management in terms of academic courses as well as staff mobility.

4.5 Conclusion

The chapter summarizes the historical literature in an attempt to sketch the times in which the university at the center of this case study had been established. This overview has been augmented with what some of the research participants had to say about their recent experiences of higher education reform in the university.

This chapter reveals that the Australian universities have undergone many changes in terms of major policy reforms in higher education. These changes of policies had substantial impact on higher education institutions and the sector in
general. The university and the two former faculties in the case study were impacted by the changes and had gone through several earlier restructurings, incurring major and minor changes. Additionally, these changes impacted the staff. These events provide the backdrop to the case study.

The following chapters will present the study’s findings. Chapter Five focuses on findings in relation to the amalgamation timeline, starting from pre-amalgamation, during amalgamation and the post amalgamation period. Chapter Six then presents the major themes extracted from the case study – the amalgamation.
CHAPTER FIVE
THE AMALGAMATION PROCESS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter chronicled the historical background and context of the Higher Education sector in the years prior to the 2008 amalgamation, information about the university itself, and the faculties at the center of the case study. In this chapter, the amalgamation timeline is presented and discussed. This timeline takes in the period prior to the amalgamation to the point where the once distinctively separate Arts and Education faculties merge as one. The focus in this study is on the Faculty of Education as the restructuring alters its status to that of a School of Education in an amalgamated faculty with three Schools from the previous Faculty of Arts.

This chapter also provides an overview of a number of significant events that took place prior to the actual amalgamation: amalgamation negotiations and the decision to amalgamate. These events are explained because they affected the amalgamation process in ways that contributed to the amalgamation outcomes which adds to the comprehensiveness of the case study.

5.2 Amalgamation negotiations

Several participants believed the intention for the restructuring existed prior to the actual announcement by the University’s Vice Chancellor. This was because an amalgamation of the Faculty of Education with another faculty in the university was always seen as an option to address the longstanding financial issues facing the faculty. Several participants from both the former Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Education recalled rumors about a possible amalgamation circulating in both faculties.

Hazlyn, a senior administrator, who was elected to be in the Implementation Committee recalled, “Amalgamation was always on the cards and I guess that the Vice Chancellor of the day had talked about it for a long time” [Hazlyn: Admin11/AIC2, p.2, 2011]. Gee, a former senior administrator stated, “There have always been rumbles [about an amalgamation]. There have always been talks about merging Education with other faculties.” [Gee: Admin10, p.3, 2011]. Joan, a senior
administrator, recalled hearing rumors of an amalgamation on her arrival at the university in 2004. S/he stated, “There is a whole lot of baggage (referring to problems related to financial standing of the former Faculty of Education) sitting in the background. It has been tough and I think it (the idea of the amalgamation) has been brewing for some time. There were always little whispers of the amalgamation happening. Then, it would die. But it was always underlying. I think it was quite a few years. It’s been an underlying issue that we might merge” [Joan: Admin2, p.6, 2011].

The idea for the amalgamation was also known to the two Deans of the former faculties. Ivy, a former Executive of the University confirmed this.

The issues of the Faculty of Education ran for a number of years. It’d been raised with the then Dean, because there’d been a series of Deans. So, the Deans were aware of the problems in the faculty. Amalgamation as a concept was raised twelve months before the decision was made [Ivy: AIC1, p.1, 2011].

Ivy further stated that there would have been discussions about the amalgamation:

I believe prior to that, there had been viable discussions. I don’t know whether it was necessarily on paper with the faculty, albeit the fact that it (the former Faculty of Education) was in trouble (financially) and something needed to be done. One concept was an amalgamation. My understanding was between the conversations at Council, I think there was something from the Vice Chancellor, and subsequently a paper was taken to Council to say that the decision had been made to amalgamate. There was a paper floating in the faculty asking for comments [Ivy: AIC1, p.1, 2011].

Despite the existence of amalgamation rumors, several commentators argued that it was not known why this strategic change intervention had not been implemented
earlier. Subsequently, when in mid-2007 the Vice Chancellor announced the amalgamation, many staff raised the question as to the reasons why the amalgamation idea was being promoted at that point of time.

One probable reason is suggested by Professor Ted, a senior academic from the former Faculty of Education who believed that the former Dean of the Faculty of Education would not agree to the amalgamation. Professor Ted stated: “I think it would not have happened then if Professor Kwon (referring to the Dean of the former Faculty of Education) remained till the end of his/her contract”.

These participants revealed some insights into initial speculative rumors about the amalgamation in that:

a. The former Faculty of Education was experiencing financial difficulties.

b. The faculty members from both the former faculties, as well as the University Executives knew about the financial difficulties.

c. The option of an amalgamation as a strategy to address the Faculty’s financial situation had been the subject of ongoing discussions at the University Executive level.

d. Both the Deans of the former faculties opposed the amalgamation idea.

Prior to formally announcing the faculty amalgamation to the broader university community, the Vice Chancellor held separate pre-amalgamation discussions with the two faculties involved. The intention of these discussions was to consult faculty staff about the impending amalgamation and to gather some feedback as to how this strategic intervention was being received. From what participants had to say, faculty academics’ amalgamation views were mixed, with some receptive to this major change and others more critically inclined. In contrast, faculty administrative staff were united in their opposition to the amalgamation.

Interview respondents in this research suggested that academics from the former Faculty of Arts were generally more receptive and open to the amalgamation. This openness could be put down to two possible reasons. Firstly, many believed that the amalgamation would have little overall impact on their everyday work expectations
and arrangements. In the main, the Arts academics assumed they would still be in the same department, the same school, teaching the same course and doing research in the same academic fields. Secondly, many academics viewed the Education academics as colleagues and therefore welcomed the move by the university’s top management as a way to further cement these collegial relationships.

Interview responses from academics from the former Faculty of Education suggested more critical leanings towards the amalgamation. In the following, seven possible reasons for such critical responses are outlined.

Firstly, some senior academics believed that the faculty’s financial circumstances were the result of previous as well as current university policies and strategies. As an example, some believed that what was understood as a financial predicament was partly the result of discriminatory university budgeting policies. Some academic staff cited examples where Commonwealth funding allocated to the faculty by the university finance division was lower in comparison to the funding allocated to education faculties in other Australian universities. As a result, the faculty found it a challenge to manage the high cost of administrating and managing students. This was particularly so in the financial management of mandatory teaching practicum programs with their relatively high associated costs.

Secondly, many academics were of the view that the proposed amalgamation would downgrade the local and international reputation of the former Faculty of Education as it would become a School of Education within the larger faculty. This ‘demotion’ would have an impact on the former Faculty of Education’s image.

Third, the amalgamation would result in the absence of a representative from education academics at the management level of the university. In this regard, the academics believed that having strong faculty representation at this strategic management level of the university’s operations was crucial not only to voice staff views on key issues, but also to ensure that the faculty had a role to play in relation to the university’s management and policy decision making.

Fourth, some academics felt that an amalgamation with the Faculty of Arts would impact negatively on the high level of research performance of the former
Education faculty staff who perceived their performance would be diluted if aggregated with other schools in the faculty.

Fifth, some believed it would be in the best interests of the faculty to remain independent so that established ongoing collaborative arrangements with other faculties within the university could remain in place. These arrangements included collaborations with the Faculty of Health in relation to undergraduate degree programs (e.g., Bachelor of Health and Physical Education and Bachelor of Teaching Science).

Sixth, senior academics believed that the faculty had performed at a high level with respect to all faculty expectations, and perceived the faculty as having established a reputation as one of Australia’s leading Education faculties. According to the participating academics, the faculty’s ‘esteemed’ national standing constituted a key consideration to be kept at the forefront of the university’s determinations on the future of the faculty. The feeling of the academics was well described by one senior academic who stated, “Being told that you are not good while you have done your very best is disappointing, frustrating and degrading” [Beck: Academic7, p.3, 2011].

Lastly, some academics resisted the amalgamation because they viewed the amalgamation as having narrowly focused motives. In their view, university management’s attention to the faculty’s financial situation seemed to be at the expense of preserving and sustaining the faculty’s demonstrated capacity to produce high academic outcomes.

Many administrative staff interviewed were concerned about their job security. An amalgamation of two faculties would result in overlapping administrative positions that were likely to result in redundancies. This possibility created job insecurity among some of the administrative staff interviewed in that they were very concerned they may have to either apply for their own job, or risk losing their current position.

Many opposed the amalgamation because they believed that there may be no provision for redundancy packages, although apparently the issue of redundancies was mentioned by a University Executive during initial amalgamation discussions with faculty staff.

Some administrative staff resisted the amalgamation because they resented the idea of having to learn new knowledge, such as adjusting to a new system of work and
a new organizational structure. If relocated to a new position, problems of adjustment could emerge. This included having to understand the new role and job description.

A significant number of administration staff were angered, frustrated and upset as they viewed the university’s top management as failing to consider the possible far-reaching negative impact of the amalgamation on staff members, morale and productivity. Staff felt that their hard work, loyalty and contributions to the faculty and the overall university over many years were not being given due recognition or consideration.

5.3 Decision for the amalgamation

Despite critical feedback from the education academics and administrative staff and concerns voiced by both faculties, a decision was made by the Vice Chancellor to go ahead with the amalgamation. The majority of the participant group comprising University Executives, academics and administrative staff viewed the decision for the amalgamation as a top down decision:

“The mandate came from the top (referring to the Vice Chancellor)”
[Ince: Academic3, p.5, 2011]

“The decision was made primarily by the Vice Chancellor”

“The Vice Chancellor made the decision but it was ratified by the University Council [Ivy: AIC1, p.1, 2011].

Professor Walt, a senior academic, recalled how the former arts faculty was informed about the decision to amalgamate. S/he stated, “The Vice Chancellor made the decision! The Dean resigned to get another job - the Education Dean. And so our Dean (of Arts) was told, “Well! You now have another school. I want you to work out how to bring them together into your processes” [Walt: Academic1, p.4, 2011]. It was
the general consensus from most of the staff that the decision was top down – a fait accompli – despite the consultation period. Gee, a former senior administrator recalled:

   It was very much a top down decision. We were virtually told what was going to happen. Although we put in a lot of alternative suggestions on how it could be managed, it was obviously a decision that had been made by the Senior Executives of the university that Education was going to be merged with the Arts [Gee: Admin10, p.4, 2011].

   To seek further confirmation, a former University Executive was queried and recalled how the decision was made:

   I recalled I was at a Senior Executive meeting. This is the Senior University Executive Meeting, and so we’d decided to take a vote on whether the faculties should be merged. Of course all the other hands went up [Carr: Academic11/AIC4, p.4, 2011].

   Document analysis of a University Council report revealed evidence that the amalgamation was indeed a decision made at the Senior Executive level of the University. This report stated that it had considered the proposal from the Vice Chancellor and that the resolution to amalgamate the two faculties would come into effect from 1st January 2008. Although representatives from the Faculty of Education were present at the Council meeting to put forward their arguments, the decision by Council to support the Vice Chancellor’s proposal to amalgamate the two faculties was unanimous. Many staff felt that their arguments were not given due consideration. Although the university council did not state financial factors as the main reason for the amalgamation, many staff interviewed in this study assumed that finance was a strong reason for the restructuring.
5.4 The amalgamation

In this section, a discussion of events that took place over the period of the amalgamation process, along with some of the issues emergent from these events is presented. These events and issues included the establishment of the AIC, issues of the Amalgamation Committee members and the transition process.

5.4.1 Establishing an Amalgamation Implementation Committee

The announcement that an AIC would be established was made in a letter sent from the Vice Chancellor on 14 August 2007 to staff in the Faculties of Arts and Education and to the Chair of the Staff Liaison Committee. This announcement included an outline for the amalgamation process. As the Vice-Chancellor states:

I will establish an Implementation Committee, the role of which will be to address the implementation issues arising from the amalgamation. The Implementation Committee will be chaired by Dr Kentvy (The Pro Vice Chancellor of Development). Other members will be: The Acting Dean of the Faculty of Arts; the Acting Dean of the Faculty of Education; the Director of the Human Resources Services Division (or nominee); a member chosen by the Faculty of Arts; a member chosen by the Faculty of Education.

The Vice-Chancellor went on to say:

I ask that the Acting Deans identify the member chosen by their Faculty by whatever process their Faculty wishes to adopt. The Human Resources Services Division is happy to provide assistance in relation to this matter if required. Please note that I would like the Implementation Committee to commence work in September; it follows that the Faculty members of the Committee will need to be identified by 31 August.
In this letter, several interesting points can be extracted. Firstly, the composition and structure of the Implementation Committee, the appointment of a University Executive to be the Chair of the committee and the appointment of other committee members were fixed; a decision made by the Vice Chancellor. Secondly, the whole amalgamation process, the time frame from the establishment of the AIC to the structural implementation of the amalgamation, was four months. As stated in the letter, the AIC should “… commence work in September” and that the new amalgamated Faculty of Arts and Education must be in operation by the 1st of January 2008.

5.4.2 Emergent issues on the appointment of committee members

Subsequent to the letter from the Vice Chancellor, a document listing the committee members, entitled ‘Faculty of Arts and Education Amalgamation Implementation Committee – Summary Notes’ was distributed to the Arts and Education faculty staff. Drawing on this document, the committee comprised members drawn from the University Executive and from the Arts and Education faculty as follows:

a. The Pro Vice Chancellor of Development (Chair)
b. Director, Human Resources Services Division
c. Acting Dean, Faculty of Arts
d. Acting Dean, Faculty of Education
e. Faculty General Manager, Faculty of Arts (Staff Representative),
f. Faculty Business Manager Staff, Faculty of Education (Staff Representative)
g. Manager, Consultancy Services, HRSD (Executive Officer/Nominee for Director Officer, Human Resources Services Division as required)

Avis, a member of the committee viewed the appointed ‘Chair’ of the Amalgamation Committee as a ‘no nonsense’ leader who would not hesitate to ‘put
his/her foot down’ to ensure that the amalgamation was implemented as planned. S/he stated:

That (the Amalgamation Committee) was going to be run by ‘Dr Kentvý’. S/he was the Pro-Vice Chancellor at that time and possibly the toughest person I’ve known. S/he was very down the line, straight person, and s/he definitely said what s/he thinks. And s/he vetoed a few decisions to make sure s/he bulldozed his/her method, to make sure that things are moving on [Avis: Admin6, AIC5, p.6, 2011].

On the other hand, Professor Carr, a senior academic, was not only critical of the appointment of the Chair of the Committee but critical of the amalgamation having financial targets and being driven by university staff who were not academics. Describing it as the ‘worst picture’ possible s/he stated:

The discourse that was floating at the time was to push the two faculties together and the worst picture of the whole process was that a Pro Vice Chancellor was appointed to oversee the amalgamation, worked with the Interim Deans, me and a guy in the Arts. The logic-there was all of this money that was to be saved. The cost of the disruption is huge. And what it did, it terrified staff because they had a target of the amount of money that was going to be saved. And this Pro Vice Chancellor would come to the meeting and say “We’ve got to save 1 million dollars” and people looked around and said, “That’s my job and your job”. The amount of job redundancies in a crazy attempt to justify this as an economic move was the ridiculous part of it. When you live in a university that is dominated by management, managing staff, they don’t know anything about intellectual leadership. They don’t understand anything about the importance of having some sort of academic coherence that has emerged in the early days and what the university is committed to achieving.
Besides the issue cited above the Faculty of Education did not have its most senior general staff member representing administrative staff who were most likely to lose their jobs. Representation on the AIC was ‘top heavy’ with academics indicating that general (administrative) staff were not as influential in the university hierarchy. The AIC membership was seen to be top heavy with academics and under representative of general staff members who were more likely to lose their jobs. (This view was prevalent because the amalgamation was to achieve cost savings, and job duplication across the two original faculties was an obvious source of achieving savings.)

The former Education Faculty Business Manager confirmed that s/he was elected to the AIC after having the majority vote during the faculty election. Some staff members were supportive of him/her but others gave him/her the ‘cold treatment’. S/he recalled:

There was a lot of animosity towards me from staff who felt that I was taking [a more senior staff member’s] role. S/he should have been that person and I should step aside… I just continued and some were thankful that I was that person … but when I explained to people that I had the vision they understood and they thought that it was a good idea. I continually consulted with them (the Administrative staff) throughout that process. There were people who were going to lose their position and I sat down one-on-one with any of those people who had concerns and shared whatever I could at the time [Avis: Admin6, AIC5, p.9, 2011].

As can be seen above, despite getting some negative reactions from staff to his/her appointment in the AIC, the former Education Faculty Business Manager continued to help the Education staff by sharing useful information.
Many staff members, particularly general staff including senior administrative staff, took the opportunity to retire. Others postponed personal retirement plans to ensure a smooth transition to the new amalgamated faculty structure, especially as key personnel had already resigned to take up posts elsewhere. However, in this latter case, there were concerns about people whose resignation was imminent having an influence on outcomes when they would not be around to see the longer term results of the amalgamation.

5.4.3 The task of the committee

After the AIC was formed, a meeting was held with members to discuss the transition process. The first meeting, held on the 23rd August 2007, deliberated over two key questions:

a. What is the main task of the AIC?
b. What key outcomes are hoped for?

According to the task document of the AIC, the role of the committee was ‘…to address all the implementation issues arising from the amalgamation of the Faculties of Arts and Education. As stated, the intention of the amalgamation was to realize significant financial savings. In addition, it was expected that the process would not interrupt the academic program, nor academics’ work. When the Chair of the Amalgamation Committee was queried about the key tasks of the committee, she replied, “My brief was to bring about the amalgamation. I was told not to touch the academic structures. I was to amalgamate the two administrative structures and if possible to make a million dollars saving” [Ivy: AIC1, p.2, 2011]. Professor Sam, who was a member of the AIC recalls this main task:

Dr Ivy seemed to have the brief from the Vice Chancellor to take forward the amalgamation and save a certain amount of money. That particular brief was never in writing – like we have never been presented with documents. The business of saving money was
something that she pursued in conjunction with the Faculties’ General Managers because the merger was all to do with the administrative or professional structures of the faculty [Sam: Academic10, AIC3, p.4, 2011].

Another AIC member stated that since the primary aim of the amalgamation was to make financial savings, considerations about the impact on staff became secondary. S/he stated:

There were budget savings that had to be made. I felt that if a figure has been identified then we needed to come up with an administrative structure that actually concurred within that amount. If you can introduce humanity into that, that’s great but that was a secondary consideration [Hazlyn: Admin11, AIC2, p.8, 2011].

The Chair of the AIC, Dr Ivy, was queried on the strategies s/he took to implement the amalgamation. She replied, “My instructions were … there was to be an amalgamation, and to make those savings. Yes, to the VC’s satisfaction because s/he was my boss” [Ivy: AIC1, p.2, 2011].

5.4.4 The transition process and procedure

In discussions centering on the task of amalgamating the two faculties, committee members looked closely at the former faculties’ organizational charts. The intent of the committee members here was to better understand how each faculty had previously operated and to familiarize themselves with the roles at each level of each administrative position. As one committee member stated:

Basically, it was around designing a new organizational structure and the way that they did that was by looking at what position they were in both faculties at the time. What would be the ideal structure first without thinking about the people? [Avis: Admin6, AIC5, p10, 2011].
In other words, the AIC was asked to make decisions ‘objectively’; to come up with savings and identify redundant positions without considering the welfare of staff involved as the over-riding concern.

The Chair of the AIC also stated that they began by looking at the organizational charts of both the faculties. Names of the people in each position on the two organizational charts were omitted. After studying the organizational charts of both the former faculties, the AIC then built a new organizational structure for the new Faculty of Arts and Education. In doing this, several questions were raised. The Chair of the AIC elaborated:

And then, as a group, we looked at what functions were needed for administration of the new faculty. What were the implications? And then we asked the questions, ‘What is the best way to deliver that function? Is it to deliver it within the faculty or outside the faculty?’ And we worked through each of those functions and then, the questions we asked ourselves were, ‘How many people do you need to deliver these functions and at what level?’ So we took two organizational charts and we then came up with what we thought was the organization chart for the new faculty and had at the back of our mind how this function is to be delivered [Ivy: AIC1, p.4, 2011].

Consequently, the minutes of the AIC meetings and the suggested organizational structures of various units were communicated to both staff of both the faculties. This was done through emails, letters and briefings. The aim was to get feedback from the faculty members and as well as to ensure transparency in the process. Additionally, the faculty representatives were responsible to get feedback on issues raised by the faculty staff to submit for discussion in the committee. This was recalled by the Chair of the AIC:
We decided that we would publish each of our discussions and send them to the Dean for distribution to the faculty. The minutes of our meetings were [made] public and they were distributed around the faculty after every meeting. So, people knew what we were doing. The role of the faculty reps was to go back to the faculty and send out some of these things or to do further investigation and bring back [feedback] to the committee [Ivy: AIC1, p.5, 2011].

As a result of this, a document entitled, ‘Translation principles and procedure for implementing the new Faculty structure of the Faculty of Arts and Education: A guide of translation principles’ was produced. The six principles intended to underpin the transition to the new organizational structure are outlined below.

The [transition] process would:

1. Apply to all continuing and fixed term staff (whose contract extends beyond 1 January 2008) of both faculties, including those staff on extended leave, but not to staff on secondment from other areas of the University, staff in fixed term backfill roles and casual staff.
2. Be transparent and fair.
3. Minimise disruption to staff, wherever possible.
4. Ensure a merit selection process is used.
5. Advise staff of outcomes as soon as practicable.
6. Involve redundancy as a last resort.

From this list, Principles 2, 3, and 6 reflect the AIC’s concerns about possible adverse impacts of the amalgamation on staff welfare.

In addition, several transition steps were identified in the amalgamation documentation. In this document, a guide on the translation steps, and procedures that were relevant to administrative positions included:
a. Eligibility for matching  
b. Consideration for lower level roles  
c. Promotions and appointments  
d. Potential displaced staff  
e. Redundancy/ redeployment/ voluntary early separation

The AIC discussion around the above transition considerations was recalled by the Chair of the AIC:

The first option was looking at whether the staff could be redeployed within the faculty in other roles. The second option, they could be redeployed within the university and the third option would be redundancies [Ivy: AIC1, p.5, 2011]

Avis, an AIC member, said that communications to staff were designed to convey the intent to democratize the amalgamation implementation process, particularly in relation to decisions about ‘employing’ and ‘deploying’ staff. S/he stated, “And this is actually part of trying to be democratic whereby for each position you would advertise that to the people and let them decide whether to apply or not” [Avis: Admin6, AIC5, p.12, 2011].

By the end of September 2007, several divisional structures of the new Faculty of Arts and Education were proposed. These structures were identified as:

a. High Level Academic  
b. High Level Administration  
c. International and Development  
d. Business  
e. Student Experience  
f. Research and Training
g. Education Development
h. Curriculum and Governance
i. Schools Administration

Staff were invited to apply for the job they considered themselves best qualified and suited for. This ‘re-employment process’ was carried out formally with application forms and supporting documents. When queried why this method of transition was selected, a committee member stated that this method provided equal opportunities for staff of the former faculties’, and in this way attempted to maintain a high level of integrity throughout the whole process.

However, this method of transition led to several repercussions. First, although many staff applied for their same position in the new faculty, there were also many whereby staff applied for different positions to those they previously held. These situations arose from some staff deciding that their experience and knowledge qualified them to apply for more senior positions. Secondly, this ‘recruitment’ method generated competition such that the same position may have attracted more than one applicant which means the best applicant would be employed. However, there were also cases whereby only one person applied for a particular position. This situation was more likely to occur for faculty specific positions (i.e., belonging to either Arts or Education). Thirdly, in a few complicated cases, there were instances of staff who, although previously holding the now ‘vacant’ position, were now not able to apply for this same position after the amalgamation because they were deemed ‘unqualified’. A few former Faculty of Education staff faced this situation as their previous positions did not align with their qualifications such that they were regarded as over qualified and underpaid. The former Faculty of Education’s financial constraints meant that these staff were paid at a lower HEW level than they should have been. Such adverse impacts on some staff during the transition process are not surprising, but it resulted in several problems that will be further discussed in the next chapter.
5.4.5 The new faculty and significant events post amalgamation

By the 1st January 2008, both faculties had been the amalgamated. The first Dean of this newly formed entity, the Faculty of Arts and Education, was Professor Huelsman, the former Dean of the Faculty of Arts. The former Dean of the Faculty of Education had, by then, accepted a job offer at another university, as a faculty Dean. The new faculty comprised four Schools; three Schools were retained from the former Faculty of Arts while a new School of Education came into being.

The amalgamation process was completed in less than six months, with projected savings estimated to be one million dollars. As planned, there were minimal disruptions to the academic program over the amalgamation period. However, administrative staff experienced much more of an upheaval during this time. As a consequence, many administrative staff from the former Faculty of Education left the university. Others moved to other universities, some retired, while others who were not offered new positions, or who were unsuccessful in their job applications, were made redundant. A few felt that they had been “forced out”, such as one interviewee who believed his/her opposition to the amalgamation was the cause. “I had opinions and I expressed them in a way that was not well received and I knew that these people would try and get me (that is, take revenge)” [Hazlyn: Admin11, AIC2, p.11, 2011]. The rest, managed to secure a position in the new faculty.

However, confusion and disorder continued for some time in the new faculty. Some participant administrative staff gave accounts of experiences related to not knowing what to do, who to report to, and not knowing their new office locations.

Shortly after the amalgamation, the new Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Education left the new faculty to take up a position at another university. Her replacement, Professor Lambert held the Deanship for a short period before deciding to concentrate on his research and other academic activities. Subsequently, two senior academics from the former Faculty of Arts applied for the position. The first applicant, Professor Phillips, was the former Interim Dean of the Faculty of Arts during Professor Huelsman’s absence on sabbatical leave during the amalgamation process. Professor Phillips was also a member of the AIC. The other applicant for the position of the new Dean was Professor Creswell. Professor Creswell was given the Deanship. All this
culminated in Professor Phillips leaving the new faculty for a position at another university, as several others had. These events will be further presented and discussed in the following chapter.

5.5 The dust has settled

This study began in 2011, four years after the amalgamation was completed. The majority of the study respondents believed that the amalgamation was a thing of the past. As stated by a senior academic, “The dust is settled. People are now no longer double guessing ‘why’ or contesting, ‘why we had to have the amalgamation’ It’s happened now. It is settled. The faculty is operating in a more settled way.” [Ince: Academic3, p.12, 2011]. S/he further stated:

Well I think people are getting on with their work in a way that is uninfluenced by the fact that the amalgamation occurred in that fashion and their work is still shaped by the fact that they are now within an amalgamated faculty of Arts and Education that is shaped by opportunities and limitations … Limitations in terms of having to compete with people from Arts for resources. In a way we didn’t use to do. So, there are opportunities and constraints that emerged from the new structure. But the dust is settled in so far as people are now no longer double guessing [Ince: Academic3, p.12, 2011].

An administrator further stated, “Gradually over time those feelings have gone from negative to more positive feelings now that the amalgamation is behind us. It happened several years ago and now we are looking forward – we have more positive feelings towards the university.” [Mark: Admin1, p.9, 2011]. Payne, a senior administrator, agreed and stated that although some considered that the amalgamation was poorly carried out, staff accept the amalgamation. S/he stated, “We moved through it and the dust is settled and you know, we have moved on and I think things are working very well now” [Payne: Academic5, p.10, 2011].
Others believed that amalgamation was a sound strategic decision to make under the circumstances in play at the time. They believed that the amalgamation elevated the faculty to a better position as it is now one of the largest faculties in the university. The new faculty currently enjoys high student enrolment, has a well-established academic and administrative staff base, and is well resourced. This means, the faculty is now in a position to have a greater say in the decision making of the university. In response to a question related to the faculty’s present status (2011), a senior academic stated:

Now I know that the faculty needs to be a large faculty to compete within the university to have its bargaining power because of the number of students, the number of staff, the impact of performance of research and teaching .But I think at the time we thought that it was being done very quickly and perhaps there were some people who were disenfranchised by it. But I think it is better to do it quickly but you certainly have to have a very good replacement team ready to go [Matt: Academic6, p.12, 2011]

Interestingly, a university executive stated that the amalgamation had succeeded in bringing the two entities together but had, unfortunately, failed to address the precarious financial circumstances the faculty found itself in:

We have said already that one plus one, the hope, would be less than two. It would appear that one plus one has continued to be two. So did it lead to dramatic financial saving because of the amalgamation? The response is “No!” Has it lead to the creation of one faculty of more critical mass size? “Yes!” Has that translated to significant financial saving? “No!” [Barny: UniExec1, p.9, 2011].

Sam, an academic, talked about unanticipated benefits of the amalgamation:
I thought that the new Head of School of Education took the opportunity given by the Vice Chancellor to hire staff and we settled down into a very successful school. And I think for the administrative staff, the issue had settled down. Partly because the new Faculty General Manager who was very applied and determined to settle the staff’s structure there [Sam: Academic10, AIC3, p.11, 2011].

Commenting on the yearly performance survey conducted by the faculty, for the three years after the amalgamation, Matt, a senior academic, stated:

During these three years we had a staff survey. The result of the first staff survey showed that there were some areas where there were significant issues. The next two surveys have given us outstanding results showing improvement and that is through a process of empowerment and engagement. I think that we are one faculty now [Matt: Academic6, p.13, 2011].

However, a senior administrator, Halle, expressed a different opinion. S/he stated that traces of some of the negative aspects of the amalgamation remain such that even after four years people still identify with their former faculties.

According to Halle, some former Education staff had a strong attachment to the former faculty and still believed that the amalgamation should not have taken place. As such, these staff would still refer to themselves as the “Education people”.

5.5.1 The renewal

Staff stated that there were several factors that contributed to the seemingly positive renewal in the faculty.

Harry, an academic from the former Faculty of Education, was of the opinion that an injection of funds to the new faculty from the university had been very helpful in employing new staff, which together with strong leadership, contributed to the Faculty’s (and its schools’) enhanced positive atmosphere:
There were two things: I think it was the effort of the people. There was a lot to do. We made quite a lot of appointments there and the Head of School provided the leadership. And I think that and the money to appoint the new staff meant the university took a risk in a way [Harry: Academic8, p.1, 2011].

Another academic stated that factors related to the new staff profile contributed to an invigorated outward-looking culture. S/he stated, “There is a lot of new staff coming in who have none of that baggage (referring to attachment to previous faculties). And they just accept the conditions that they are offered” [Beck: Academic7, p.12, 2011].

Others believed that the new Dean’s initiatives contributed to the sense of renewal in the new faculty. Ince, an academic, stated:

…this Dean has initiated campus meetings for new staff, celebrated the arrival of new staff s/he meets with, sits and creates the situation where regardless their schools can come along and celebrate the arrival of new staff. We have at least two faculty general meetings every year, where everybody can mix and interrelate. And of course there are the formal structural forums like the Faculty Board where representatives of all schools come together to work through faculty business. So there are plenty of opportunities for meeting, mixing, and engaging collegial work as a faculty [Ince: Academic3, p.10, 2011].

Another former Faculty of Education senior academic pointed out similar examples of the new Dean’s initiatives:

There were very practical things such as being on the committees together and making sure that for example the Research Committee of
the Faculty of Education and research committee of the Faculty of Arts had to be reconfigured to one committee [Payne: Academic5, p.10, 2011].

Echoing the same opinion, Charles, an academic, recalled:

In some ways both have done a good job…The Head of School of Education has been terrific. I think the timing of getting an outside person not long after the amalgamation, to bring someone from outside, who didn’t have the history and all the tradition and was just concentrating on the job, is what needed to be done - wasn’t locked down by the history, that was terrific. That worked really well for the School of Education [Charles: Academic12, p.12, 2011].

Staff also shared their opinions about the new School of Education. Many shared their understanding that that the new School is doing well in all respects. Ince, an academic, stated:

I think the School of Education is developing very well with new senior appointments with a very strong research background. I think the School of Education, which currently is the most productive in terms of research among any of the Schools in this Faculty, will actually enhance its standing as a research active School of Education. I think that is very clear… When you look at the data summarizing the research achievements of the Faculty, the School of Education is seemingly the most productive in most of the measures [Ince: Academic3, p.11, 2011].

Sam agreed, but had one area of regret:
The School of Education as it is now has become very strong, with a strong commitment to renewals. Once the structure was in place the financial imperative dropped and in fact the school got financial support to grow its staff. What I don’t know is whether they lost good staff in that process [Sam: Academic10, AIC3, p.8, 2011].

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the chronology of the amalgamation in terms of its processes, was presented. These included the decision making process, the announcement of the decision, the formation of the AIC, the transition process, and lastly, the formation of the Faculty of Arts and Education.

Throughout the processes of the amalgamation, it can be seen that the amalgamation was clearly a top down decision from the top management of the university, forced upon both the faculties with the aim of financial savings. As a result, there were constraints on decision making impacting staff, most especially the administrators. Furthermore, the amalgamation was rushed to meet a deadline and not much time was given to get staff feedback.

The following chapter is entitled ‘Major Themes’; it presents and discusses five major themes emergent from the case study interviews.
CHAPTER SIX
MAJOR THEMES

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the major themes of the restructuring that emerged from content analysis of the qualitative data, which was derived from interview and document analysis. A detailed discussion of findings will be presented in the next chapter.

The major themes are as follows:

a. An erosion of reputation and respect
b. Adverse effects
c. Leadership
d. The issue of communication
e. Budgets and finance

In the following, these major themes, along with emergent sub-themes, are further explicated.

6.2 An erosion of reputation and respect

Data from the participants’ interviews and analysis of documents related to the amalgamation revealed that the issue of erosion of reputation and respect is a major theme in this study. The issue of the erosion of reputation and respect can be further classified into three main subthemes: history, people and organizational culture.

6.2.1 The history

In the previous chapters (Chapter 4 and Chapter 5), the history of the former faculties and the institutions were presented. In this chapter, the insights, feelings and experiences of the participants about the history of the former faculties and institutions is presented.
The two former faculties have had a long history since the university’s establishment in the 1970s. Respondents from both the former faculties shared their feelings and emotions when reminiscing about ‘The Good Old Days’ (a term used by interviewees) with reference to their previous history, mainly during the period from the mid-1970s through to the 1980s, known also as the formative years of the university. They referred to best academic practices, the work environment, collegiality, important events and the successes that they had achieved.

Participants revealed that the university and the former Faculty of Education had gone through several organizational restructurings. The formation of the university itself was a result of several amalgamations of teacher colleges (refer Appendix A – timeline of university amalgamation).

This was also a time when several key academic staff were brought in to assist with the establishment of new academic programmes and multi-modal education that contributed towards establishing the university’s academic reputation. Ince, a professor from the former Faculty of Education stated,

The Faculty of Education rapidly established itself as one of the foremost Faculties of Education in the country without doubt. We had some key academics and they were highly effective in establishing an original approach to research in the faculty. So it became very well known internationally. At that time, the university was involved in off campus forms of delivery and multi-modal education in an Open University model. So it established a reputation in Australia and abroad as a provider of multi-modal education. And in doing that, it developed a series of monographs and study guides and readers in each study and the publishing of those monographs in particular, served to spread the word about the university internationally because each of them was in the original perspective on a particular discipline, or a sub-discipline written by foremost academic staff [Ince: Academic3, p.1, 2011].
Professor Ince further described the collegiality and high commitment among academic staff as recalled below,

It was a very exciting time because we were a very new university. We knew we were competing against established universities. We knew we had an original perspective on instruction, course delivery with decent education. No other university was doing that. Staff were involved in all levels of course material preparation, design work, editing, and of course the actual scholarly academic substance of the work. It was a very exciting collaborative time – a group course team in a true sense not just teaching of a particular course or unit, but also in all stages of the development including the physical development of these materials. We would do mud pasting of text. Text would be printed. We would arrange text on a page and stuck it into place with adhesive, and that would go off to be proofread and then to the printers. So we knew in the early days, we were involved in every stage of development of course material. It was a very exciting time. And also on each unit, there were these expectations that we would develop our course material based on our current research interest. So, all of us were also undertaking Masters or PhD studies at that time. Some were established researchers. But yes! Very collegial! Quite exciting! Very new ways! New ground that we’re breaking at that time in the late 70’s and 80’s [Ince: Academic, p.3, 2011]

Donald, a professor from the former Faculty of Arts, too recalled the presence of established academics in the former Faculty of Arts. Professor Donald stated, “And I would say we had some pretty good people at the beginning. Excellent staff, good academic programmes as well as collegiality also contributed to the performance of the faculties.” [Donald: Academic14, 2011, p.7].
The former Faculty of Education was also known to produce outstanding research outputs when compared to other established universities despite a relatively frugal research funding base. Beck, a senior academic, stated:

There was significant support (research funding) but what we did in those two areas, Curriculum and Social Administrative study; we were recognized as one of the top three or four faculties in the country in Education. Interestingly enough when we compared to other top universities in Australia, we had a quarter of the research funds but we were producing more research. So, Yes! The support was there but certainly it wasn’t extravagant [Beck: Academic7, p.1, 2011].

Senior academics from the former Faculty of Education also pointed to ‘practices’ that contributed to the success of the former Faculty of Education such as:

a. Appointing staff with a fundamental background in a core specialization not related to education and later providing professional educational training. For example, one staff member had a Chemical Organics qualifications background and expertise in Information Technology. Another faculty member’s background was in the History and Philosophy disciplines. The practice of appointing staff with a background in a core specialization not related to education resulted in the development of a staff base that was producing educationists that were strong in their area of expertise but critical towards the education practices of the time. Additionally, these staff brought in new ideas through research and publications.

b. Funding new staff to conduct their doctoral studies in the United States rather than the United Kingdom. According to a senior academic, the education system in the United States enjoyed a reputation for producing excellent academics that were critical and aligned to social justice issues such as equality and solidarity. These academics produced
research that was rich in original ideas and helped to introduce the faculty members of their home university to a world of new creative teaching practice and learning ideas. Social justice and equity issues were first given air in these early days and continue to spark vigorous educational discourse.

c. Producing quality monographs for multi-modal learning programmes. These monographs propagated original and new perspectives reflecting critical scholarly views about disciplines related to Education and Arts. As a result, the monographs helped to introduce the faculties’ academics to the international stage.

Unlike the 1980s which were known as the Faculty of Education’s formative years, rich in intellectual activity, the 1990s were recognized as a time of major faculty-level restructurings. A number of logistical, financial and staff morale issues emerged from these Arts and Education school and departmental level restructurings. These issues included:

a. A sharp increase in the number of academic staff from 70 to approximately 300 (participant’s estimate). This had led to increases in operating costs.
b. The creation of a multi-campus faculty that presented some logistical difficulties in the management of academic programs and for students enrolled in multiple faculties, and cost of campus transfers.
c. Financial challenges to the management of operational costs (i.e. salaries; recruitment costs; multi-campus maintenance and facilities costs).
d. An exodus of staff to competitor universities presented a clear challenge to staff retention.
e. The unfamiliarity of newly appointed staff from teachers’ colleges with the university’s research culture; an outcome of which was a rapid departure from the faculty.
f. The development of tensions within the Education faculty between university and former teacher college academics.
In relation to (e) above, Carr, a senior academic stated, “It was interesting because the first Dean was an ex primary school teacher. There’s a bit of tension between the older teacher as a teacher educator and the academic because they didn’t really quite intersect” [Carr: Academic11, AIC4, p.1, 2011].

Other senior academics pointed to other issues originating from seemingly flawed government funding and the university’s management policies that seemed somewhat harsh and likely out of touch with what needed to be happening in the university sector at that time in terms of developing both a competitive research profile and high quality teaching and learning programs. As an example, Professor Beck, a senior academic, mentioned that the university leadership of the 1990s made what s/he considered to be several questionable strategic decisions and took what was perceived by some staff as a hostile stance towards the Education faculty. These actions were understood to have negative repercussions in the erosion of the Education faculty’s status as a leading national academic center, and concomitantly impacted on the university’s academic reputation. Participants’ responses and content analysis of university’s documents revealed insights into:

a. Perceptions that the university had adopted a hostile attitude (lack of support for the faculty’s academic and research activities) towards the former Faculty of Education.

b. The lack of recognition given to multi-modal education as one of the strengths and distinctive competencies of the university.

c. The closure of city campuses and the opening of alternative campuses.

d. Promoting the university as a rural university. The new focus on rural study did not help the university attract more students as many rural students come from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds².

²Although the term ‘low SES’ is an accepted terminology used by the university and the Federal government, the term is contested (Stan, 2011).
e. The transition of all course units to an online environment. On this decision, Professor Beck noted:

And foolishly again I think the Vice Chancellor made a strategic mistake, by saying that all units of the university should go online. Now, I think it would have been better to concentrate resources strategically in those areas for which online education was particularly appropriate, and that is Postgraduate Professional Education. And the result of that is that a lot of students no longer come to the university, because they can pick it up all online - why would they come? [Beck: Academic7, p.4, 2011].

6.2.2 Faculty staff networking

The notion of networking among faculty staff emerged from the study findings as a significant shaper of professional relationships within the university’s culture. Over time, staff from the former faculties had developed strong personal and working alliances. The relationships among the staff were strong and were an essential part of the organizational context.

Participants revealed that these relationships created a strong bond of networking and alliances that impacted on the success or otherwise of the amalgamation in some ways. For example, few staff used their networking to secure their positions in the new amalgamated faculty. Halle, a senior administrator, stated that her former manager helped her to secure his/her position in the new faculty. S/he stated:

I had a good relationship with my manager and the Faculty General Manager, and there were areas among the admin staff that were being targeted (for redundancy). I was reassured that even if there was a restructure or change of the admin staff, I would always have a place (position) somewhere (in the faculty) [Halle: Admin4, p.4, 2011].
In another example, another senior administrator stated that his/her close relationship with a senior academic secured his/her position in the new faculty. S/he stated:

Thanks to the Associate Dean whom I have known for many years, I was given that [specified] job. S/he told me a couple of years later that I didn’t have a job. S/he couldn’t believe it. S/he went to the Faculty General Manager and said, “Jean doesn’t have a job. Why doesn’t she have a job? I need some help in my role as the Associate Dean. I want Jean to be in that role. So that is how I got the job [Jean: Admin9, p.3, 2011].

Hazlyn, a senior administrator who was also a member of the AIC mentioned that some committee members brought matters of personal interest into meetings of the committee. S/he stated:

I think people are people and they would bring their interests to the table and we were talking about a group of people whom some of the members of the committee have worked with for a very long time and they don’t want to see those people losing their jobs [Hazlyn: Admin11, AIC2, p.4, 2011].

Hazlyn further stated, “As a result, some decisions were not carried out objectively and resulted in a decision favouring certain individuals on the committee” [Hazlyn: Admin11, AIC2, p.4, 2011]. Hazlyn elaborated that there were also some other decisions made as a result of pressure from external forces (influences from senior academics and managers of the faculty) despite the agreement among the committee members that discussions and decisions made by the AIC be kept within the committee as confidential. S/he mentioned that the purpose of having the committee was to enable objective decision making and to improve the weakness of the previous structure,
which included the aspect of human resources. However, in the view of some, the AIC failed to be true to its mission.

6.2.3 Organizational culture

Organizational culture refers to an organization’s work systems, beliefs and values (Ravasi and Schultz, 2006). Interview data revealed that the organizational culture of the former faculties, especially the former Faculty of Education, was important to the participants. Many staff felt that the work system and practices of their former faculties needed to be maintained. This included factors such as the number of students, type of programmes and budget constraints. As such, staff felt that changes to the system may disrupt the functioning and performance of the faculty.

A senior academic provided an example of the organizational culture of the former Faculty of Education and stated that the former faculty had different work systems in terms of managing research money and the distribution of workload in comparison to other faculties. According to him, the difference of managing the research money was because the Faculty of Education had problems with their budgeting. The faculty too had a large number of Education students, many of whom had enrolled under the distance learning program. This resulted in the faculty using its own peculiar way of distributing the workload to the staff. This example shows that even at the level of administering university policies and practices, there were distinctive differences between the two original faculties that created ruptures in their amalgamation.

Another example of organizational culture in aspects of work systems is the case of the Professional Experience Office (PEO). Staff from the PEO of the former Faculty of Education revealed that the task of placing students in their assigned teaching practicum schools was a complicated process requiring specific knowledge about the schools’ programme requirements and good relationships with the schools. Additionally, as universities needed to compete for student practicum places with other universities, this heightened the need for building and maintaining productive relationships. An administrator from the PEO described the complex work system of his unit as follows:
It involved all the students who do Education courses and who needed to be placed in schools at various times during their Education courses. There were probably about five to six courses and there were well over several thousand placements we had to do. We had to ask the schools whether they would accept the students to be supervised in the classroom for maybe ten to fifteen days. There were lots and lots of placements we needed to organize. So, therefore we are contacting schools all the time. And for all those placements the schools have to be paid for supervising the students. Before the students can go out for work placements, they have to have a ‘working with children’ (police) check, or apply for ‘working with children check’ and then they receive a card with their photo on it because schools won’t accept students into the schools before they have a card. It’s a security thing. So, I have to organize all the working with children check cards. We keep a record of each one. We get a photocopy of it from the students. I have to chase up all the students and I have to make payments to all the schools. Sometimes when there are a lot of placements or there are shortages of staff I will arrange some of the placements as well. Last year I arranged for all the first year students and sent out information to school, phoning schools. And then we have to work out geographic areas where you want the students to be placed because they need to be placed between a reasonable distances from where they live (Mark: Admin1, p.1, 2011).

As such, when the Amalgamation Committee proposed that the PEO comes under the bigger umbrella of the faculty, many staff from the PEO were frustrated with the lack of understanding on the part of the amalgamation implementers about their complex work system. Ellen, a senior administrator, described the situation as follows:
One concern we had was that in the Professional Experience Office, we still wanted to be part of the School of Education (organizational structure). We didn’t want to be under the structure of the new Faculty of Arts and Education. We wanted to be part of the school because we deal with the academics from Education. We are contacting Education academics all the time because they need to get out into the schools to check on students. Our office [staff] don’t really go out to schools, to check on the progress of the student teachers. We ask the academics to do that. That’s part of their role and it’s not our role in the professional experience office. We provide the placements for the students but we don’t go out and check on the progress. So we feel we are close to the academics, the Education academics. In the new faculty, you got the Education academics and the Arts academics, and we thought we should be part of the School of Education. But they said when they are creating the new structure, “No! You’ll be part of the Faculty of Arts and Education” [Ellen: Admin3, p.2, 2011].

The excerpt above shows that there were concerns that not all administrative tasks could come under general supervisory practices – they were quite particular and specifically related to one previous faculty only and the complexity of the work could only be understood in that context.

The senior administrator further recalled how she had successfully convinced the implementers that the PEO needed to be retained under its current operating arrangements. She stated,

It was not an easy process going through the amalgamation. I think there were people in other areas that suffered in those restructures. We survived fairly well in this office because of the nature of our work. The nature of our work deals with schools outside the university and this is not something that you can sort of mess around with because it
is a compulsory component of every educational course and students have requirements. We were fairly lucky that we were protected during the previous amalgamations because the people who were doing the restructuring understood that what we doing for the educational course was crucial and that we needed the resources to get placements for the student teachers [Joy: Admin5, p.2, 2011].

6.3 **Adverse effects**

The effects of the amalgamation, in terms of their overall adverse impacts on faculty staff and in some respects, the university, constituted a significant theme in this study. The following discussion takes up seven key issues within this theme:

a. The scramble for positions;
b. The emotional effect;
c. The loss of staff;
d. The extra work load;
e. The loss of status and identity;
f. The loss of support from administrative staff; and
g. Staff departures.

6.3.1 **The scramble for positions**

One of the main roles of the AIC was to come up with a new organizational structure for the new faculty. As the main aim of the amalgamation was to save money, the new organizational structure had fewer positions. Some positions were made redundant as work units were amalgamated. That there were fewer openings for administrative staff from the former faculties meant there was a competitive scramble for available positions. A senior academic remembered the situation and stated, “It came down to people trying to fight for their jobs.” [Carr: Academic11, AIC4, p.7, 2011]. Halle, a senior administrator, recollected her experience:
What happened was that the two teams ultimately merged. We all waited. The organizational chart prescribed new teams which had less people in them. So there was a dilemma there right until the last several weeks. And then there was upset from the Arts point of view. For example, one job, there’s someone working at my level, might be similar, quite similar work. When the organizational chart came out, there was one job. So it’s fairly clear she and I were the likely contenders. She was at another branch campus, I was in another. In the organizational chart, the title came up and it said this campus. From my point of view, that’s the job I’ll try and get. We’ve been told we would need to apply for our jobs. They had a system. The transitional committee had worked out a term for job appointments in the new faculty [Halle: Admin4, p.8, 2011].

The implication is that amalgamation decision makers used various methods by which they chose who would get jobs and who would not. The location of any given positions was seen as indicative of this preference.

Others were caught in confusion because there were either no jobs for them to apply for or the jobs did not suit their eligibility (knowledge and qualifications), “There was no job for me to apply for. There was no job. I got emails to apply for the jobs but the jobs were there in Student Support, and higher than me (she was not eligible to apply for the position)” [Jean: Admin9, p.4, 2011].

Many administrative staff felt that the transition process was unfair because their years of hard work and commitment were not taken into consideration. This feeling was shared among many of the administrative staff from the former Faculty of Education. A senior administrator stated, “And I think probably it felt to me that this was an unnecessary way of doing things. Probably quite a harsh way of doing things” [Payne: Academic5, p.4, 2011].
6.3.2 Emotional effects

The motional effects of the amalgamation process were intense among many staff especially the administrative staff. Words such as ‘stressed’, ‘frustrated’, ‘depressed’, ‘mistrust’, ‘disappointed’, ‘low morale’, ‘upset’ and ‘exhausted’ were used to express the state of emotions during the time. These emotional effects were mostly felt by the administrative staff. An administrator stated that, “The main impact seemed to be within the administration, the administrative staff. That was a very painful process” [Payne: Academic5, p.2, 2011].

Ellen, a senior administrator who had been with the university since 1999, recollected the situation:

The year following the amalgamation for Faculty of Arts and Education was a very ugly year for General Staff. A lot were squeezed out. I remember I was walking with someone from the car park to work. She was telling me she was on sleeping tablets. She was depressed because staff were treated very badly in the restructure. And those who came from the Faculty of Arts, who were doing let’s say, Student Support, had to explain to students the new core structures. They weren’t given any support. They were just expected to perform. So, it was a damaging time and bad for morale [Ellen: Admin3, p.4, 2011].

In other words, through the amalgamation some general staff members were assigned to jobs where they had no background knowledge and expertise. Reena, an administrator, recalled that during the amalgamation many staff were stressed because it was “a massively busy time”. She stated:

It was pretty awful. I mean you’re come to work and see people crying at their desk and the 1st January was probably one of the worst times for us to merge because we have got VTAC selection. The student Support (office) drives a lot of the selection there. And then you have
got new student enrollment. You have got students enquiring about their enrollment in that year and it was a massively busy time [Reena: Admin7, p.7, 2011].

She believed that the timing of the amalgamation was not appropriate and this contributed to the chaos that reigned among the staff. She recalled her colleagues having to take stress leave; “So, it was really awful. A lot of them (administrative staff) ended up really stressed, and exhausted. A number of people had to take stress leave and I was seriously thinking of calling the Union and shutting this office down because it was no longer a safe work place” [Reena: Admin7, p.7, 2011].

An administrator who worked as a casual faculty member recalled a similar experience when several of his colleagues took time off from work to deal with their emotions. S/he stated, “And I knew the administrative staff pretty well. I knew from the personal contact with them how difficult it was. I mean several went on stress leave.” [Payne: Academic5, p.6, 2011].

The reason for the emotional stress was because many staff were concerned and worried about their job security. An administrator recalled being stressed because s/he felt her position would not be secure. Another administrator stated, “They (the administrative staff) were more concerned about their positions disappearing because there were less positions needed after the amalgamation. And there were real concerns about their jobs” [Mark: Admin1, p.9, 2011]. Joan, a senior administrator who had been with the university since 2005, recalled the situation and stated, “Definitely! Definitely stressful!” [Joan: Admin2, p.5, 2011]. When queried why it was a stressful time, s/he related,

I think that there is a condition (a university clause) that the university can find a place for you. So, if there’s no job in your particular area they find you a similar job. But I think, when control is taken from you; you actually have the decision made for you. So, while I was trying, people were saying, well, a job will be found for you, it’s a bit different. Like for me, I’ve got my family here in Melbourne.
Someone could say, we’ve got a similar job for you in Geelong, and if that commitment is filled, Geelong might not be where I want to go [Joan: Admin2, p.5, 2011].

Jean, a former administrator from the Faculty of Arts, also recalled the stress caused by the amalgamation process that affected many of her colleagues. Jean related how the administrative staff were asked to apply for jobs during the transition and that they had to compete with others for a particular position. S/he stated:

There were lots of people on stress leave. Even from Arts because they would advertise a job and you would actually get an email saying this job is here, apply for it. Some people would not apply for jobs because somebody had been in that job, doing that job well. And there were friends going against friends - that was awful [Jean: Admin9, p.4, 2011].

Jean further recalled the advice given by a union official:

They (the AIC) were saying that there would be no redundancy packages, so, people were saying, "Well! If I don’t get a job, then what?" So the union was saying, “If there are no jobs, or if there’s a job there that doesn’t suit your ability and skills, do nothing.” So, that was the whole thing. Do nothing! People in Education (referring to the administrative staff from the former Faculty of Education) jumped ship. They just quit. Nobody in Arts did that [Jean: Admin9, p.4, 2011].

There were also others who were ‘wounded’ for a slightly different reason. These people had hoped for a promotion during the amalgamation. Wills, a senior administrator recalled:
See, people, their experience was different to mine. They had wanted jobs that they didn’t get. So, they were much wounded. Very wounded! It took all this time, for the [senior administrator] to get her promotion and another has just got hers (after waiting three years - 2008 to 2011). Three years! So, they hurt for three years [Wills: Admin8, p.5, 2011].

There were also other faculty members who felt stressed because they felt that they were losing their ‘Education staff’ identity. A senior administrator stated:

Like there was a part like I think we might have been feeling that we were losing our identity. With the Faculty of Education we had our identity. All of a sudden we were going to be little fish in a big pond. We were only going to be one quarter of it (that is, one School of Education out of a newly amalgamated Faculty comprising four schools) [Joan: Admin2, p.8, 2011].

An academic who had recently joined the faculty remarked that the morale of many of the administrative staff was low. S/he assumed that this feeling was caused by Faculty of Education staff feeling anxious about losing their identity and jobs:

Yeah, I have heard they talked about their morale being very low - that it was a very turbulent time. I have heard people talked about that it was very turbulent. It was very draining. Morale was very low. I knew that they started the School Forum [an informal meeting for all School staff] because of it (the amalgamation) so that people could have a voice. They could share what was going on and then they could get information back and I supposed there may have been a loss of identity. I supposed, being a Faculty going to a School, would be seen as losing one’s identity and perhaps all the good work people had done would be no longer recognized [Angle: Academic2, p.3, 2011].
Others felt frustrated because of the transition procedure that created uncertainties. Joan, an administrator stated, “I think everyone felt frustrated. We all felt frustrated at the procedure, not being clear of the procedure and the timeline.” [Joan: Admin2, p.10, 2011].

As a result of the stress, many developed feelings of mistrust towards the university’s top management. On this issue of trust, Mark, a senior administrator, observed: “There are lots of feelings of mistrust towards the administration above us. Mistrust in the real purpose of the amalgamation or ‘takeover’ as they cynically called it” [Mark: Admin1, p.5, 2011]. According to another administrator, the feelings of stress, of feeling wounded and mistrust were apparently translated in the yearly appraisal during the amalgamation year. Mark further stated, “When staff filled in the university [staff opinion] survey, there were a lot of negative feelings towards the University. Negative feelings towards their workplace.” [Mark: Admin1, p.5, 2011].

Halle, a senior administrator, remembered how her former Faculty General Manager had to deal with staff disappointment and emotions: S/he stated:

I knew she was terribly stressed at the time because she felt probably a little powerless. Terribly stressed because she had a barrage of upset, disappointed, stressed, worried people. So, she certainly saw a lot of the sadness there. She experienced a lot of it (administrative staff’ disappointment and stress) first hand and I had to try console people or help them through [Halle: Admin4, p.7, 2011].

In contrast to the administrative staff, many participants felt that the academics were less stressed by the amalgamation. This was because they were not so affected personally and no academic jobs were changed or lost.

6.3.3 The loss of staff

Another effect of the amalgamation was the loss of staff. After the decision to amalgamate was made, some administrative staff from the former Faculty of Education
decided to resign their positions. Some staff opted for retirement while others moved to other higher education institutions. Participants revealed that some staff decided to leave because they felt that their hard work, commitment and sacrifices made to the university were not appreciated despite many of the constraints put on them such as a lower salary and increased work loads, as well as having to put up with the upheavals inherent in various restructurings. This type of fallout from the amalgamation was mentioned frequently by the study participants, as reflected in this recollection by an administrator:

They all responded in different ways. Some walked off the job straight away. We never saw them again. Some were around waiting to get a redundancy package and that was difficult watching them. They had no job, had no future and had to negotiate leaving the university. That’s not good because those people had a bad karma about them and that is not good for business [Will: Admin8, p.2, 2011].

Mark shared his view about the event:

A number of people just resigned and left. They did not like it. Just the feeling that they were not being listened to. That the senior people (the university leadership) outside the faculty were not taking any notice of their feelings and they just ignored them. Everyone had negative feelings towards them. It’s the feeling of ... negative feelings towards the senior people outside our faculty who were responsible for the amalgamation in the first place. The people in the Vice Chancellor’s office probably saw Education as just a small faculty and that they could conveniently be amalgamated with Arts and they could save a lot of money that way [Mark: Admin1, p.5, 2011].
The implication is that the university leaders were uncaring and unconcerned about the negative consequences of the restructure. Mark further explained why many staff made the decision to leave the university:

They realized there were going to be job cuts. They realized there were going to be financial cuts as well and that they would not have the money they had before (before the amalgamation). There was never a lot of money around in the first place and now there was going to be less money to run the faculty. So, they just thought that nothing good could come from that [Mark: Admin1, p.8, 2011]

A senior administrator shared like feelings about the amalgamation:

By the time the final major structural change came, I was really fed up with what they were doing to us again and again. We would have to justify our work. Again we would have to work faster and harder. I think the final crunch was the proposal that we drop a pay level. So, I looked to another job and I got one very easily. It was the last straw. And because everyone was so unhappy and depressed with the final restructure, and I guessed we knew that there was very little chance of us succeeding in any of our demands. There was going to be a restructure. They probably were going to squeeze us down on the pay level [Ellen: Admin3, p.6, 2011]

The stress caused by the amalgamation was felt by general staff from both the two former faculties. However, the participants revealed that the anxiety among administrative staff from the former Faculty of Education employees was more intense. This outcome was mainly due to a general perception among the Education administrative staff that the amalgamation was a “takeover”. A senior administrator stated, “I can understand why there were a lot of people in Education that really felt quite disappointed about the restructuring and how it all happened. I think the outcome
is good, but the process was pretty disappointing” [Ince: Academic3, p.11, 2011]. Some staff felt that the amalgamation would jeopardize their jobs. Others felt that there would be no benefit for them by the end of the amalgamation.

Interviews further revealed that in some administrative units, there were more staff leaving compared to other units. For example, an administrator shared that many staff from the former Faculty of Education, in particular the Student Support Unit, decided to quit their jobs. One of the reasons was because there were rumors that the unit would be made smaller. Importantly, interviewees were aware of the costs of staff losses, especially in terms of institutional knowledge loss and its impact on productivity and administrative effectiveness.

We lost a lot of good knowledge. A lot of people actually left, the administrative staff and especially in the School Support area. A lot of people with lots of knowledge down there actually left because they were worried about their jobs. The Student Support was one area that people (the AIC) said that it’s this amount (referring to the number of administrative positions) and we are going to bring it down to this amount. All of those people (the staff) were thinking I need to get a job and left. So, that was one where they really felt like they were going to be chopped up [Joan: Admin2, p.11, 2011].

Faculty members who decided to stay had found themselves needing to learn new knowledge and skills because some experienced faculty members had left the faculty. This was particularly the case in one administrative unit, the Student Support Unit. This role of this unit was to assist and advise students on their academic courses. When the amalgamation was announced, many former Faculty of Education administrative staff left. As such, after the amalgamation, faculty members from the Faculty of Arts who stayed on at the Student Support Unit needed to learn new knowledge, specifically related to Education programs. A senior administrator recalled how an Acting Manager for the Student Support unit came to see her to ask and learn about the Education courses:
She (The new Acting Manager of the Student Support unit) came and said she didn’t understand the requirements of the courses (Education courses). All of her team came from the Arts faculty and they had no understanding of the professional requirements of the Educational courses [Joy: Admin5, p.5, 2011]

When the Acting Manager was queried on how she managed to do her work, s/he explained:

Basically, on the fly! I just had to learn and pick up knowledge from places. For example, the only person that was left from Education that stayed with us, she’s a HEW 4. She didn’t have a lot of Education course knowledge or things like that. Things like other previous roles. Just basic administrative stuff – assignments, sorting mail and things like that. We lost a lot of historic knowledge, certainly course knowledge (Education courses) and stuff like that. It was quite traumatic and laborious to build up a lot of that knowledge again. For us it was almost sink or swim. So, we just battled each day and kept our heads above water and just learned as we went along [Reena: Admin7, p.6, 2011].

From another faculty member’s perspective, “I’ve had to learn the Education stuff and it is still happening. The sort of knowledge we had taken years to acquire” [Wills: Admin8, p.5, 2011]. This had an impact on the kinds of support and advice students could expect to receive.

Another senior administrator supported the above claim. S/he stated that many senior staff from the former Faculty of Education decided to move on to another place or retire. As a result, in some units, such as the Student Support Unit, the units ended up not having enough staff from the former Faculty of Education. As Reena put it:
Most of the Education people would have gone on, particularly the senior ones. I think basically what happened in Education was they stopped replacing people as they left and basically it kind of just ran down the staff in numbers. And then a lot of those who remained, particularly from a management or student support point of view either moved on or took the package (a redundancy package was available at the very end of the amalgamation). So, we ended up with not a lot of people historically who worked in Education. So, I know from Education’s point of view, they’d probably felt like it was a bit of a ‘takeover’ and Education being the smallest faculty but we just didn’t end up with many Education people at the end of the day for various different reasons [Reena: Admin7, p.6, 2011].

Despite many faculty members leaving, there were also more hopeful staff who remained as they were hoping to receive redundancy packages. A senior administrator from the Human Resource Services stated, “Yes, there were quite a few people who did choose to opt for redundancy” [Fern: Admin-HR, p.4, 2011]. Participants revealed that staff who stayed behind waited anxiously and worriedly. Payne, a senior academic manager, recalled the difficulties of retaining staff at that time:

Certainly the months in transition were very hard and in terms of student selection in January and the people who were desperately needed inside the administrative staff, which are going through a period of regret that they actually did not know that they were going to have a job for the next couple of months. That was quite hard. They were very good [Payne: Academic5, p.5, 2011]

Mark, a senior administrator, recalled how middle managers communicated negative information concerning the amalgamation to staff and if this situation might have influenced some staff to decide to quit:
We were also receiving negative feelings from some of the managers above us in the faculty. Some of them lost their positions. Positions disappeared in the new amalgamation structure. So, we were getting negative feedback all the time from our senior managers above us. In the management tree – there are other managers, a lot of them. Some (senior staff) resigned, and some got transferred to other parts of the university [Mark: Admin1, p.9, 2011].

By contrast, a committee member provided a quite different perspective. She stated that faculty members left not only because they felt negative but because they were seizing the opportunity to retire:

A lot of that (staff leaving the faculty) were in Education. They had a long standing staff. There were faculty members that were close to the end of their career at that time. When people knew it (the amalgamation) was happening, staff started to leave. So, there was a lot of staff that had a head start to leave the Faculty of Education [Avis: Admin6, AIC5, p.17, 2011].

Another reason behind the mass resignations was that many felt that it was a waste of time to continue in what they understood to be tenuous positions since the university initially was not offering a redundancy scheme. As a result of this, many faculty members, especially the administrative staff, were disappointed. Faculty members felt that the redundancy option should have been made available for the staff since the amalgamation was forced upon them. Faculty members also felt that the redundancy scheme would enable them to decide on their future (whether to stay in the faculty or leave). The Chair of the AIC had the following recollection:

And then when it became obvious that there would be no redundancies, we sat down and came up with a set of principles on how we were going to fill these roles (vacant positions in the new faculty). If there was enough work for the existing staff to do, then we
kept it (the position) there. If there were to be fewer faculty members, then the two groups (unit) had to be together. Because this thing (the issue of whether to have redundancy or not) has been going on for a bit, some faculty members had gone. So, there were a number of vacancies. We also looked at how we could fill in the vacancies. If there are two areas together, could the other staff do a job somewhere else? [Ivy: AIC1, p.4, 2011].

Fern, a Human Resource Service Division officer, provided his/her insight on the issue surrounding the redundancy. S/he stated:

You don’t know what the outcome is but you knew what the likely outcome could be. You just estimated as to what was required, what was ideal and that was what the senior managers in the university had input into – thinking about how many staff were required in this new set up. What was the ideal structure and that was what we worked towards and in determining that, it became clear that we had 10 positions but we had 13 people. What’s going to happen to the other three in the end? So, we had to talk about redeployments. In the first instance, we didn’t look at redundancies. We looked at redeployment and made effort to redeploy and if that was not the case, people could choose voluntary redundancy and if redeployment didn’t happen, we went down the path of involuntary redundancies which was when the university would say, “Ok, we had made every effort but there was no position available.” And all of this was listed in the enterprise agreement [Fern: Admin-HR, p.6, 2011].

According to Fern, above, in an amalgamation process it was difficult to determine who would be “excess to requirements”. However, if there were excess faculty members, efforts would be made to redeploy the “at risk staff” to other faculties. The redundancy package was therefore the last resort.
Another interesting event that had happened as an effect of the amalgamation process was the departure of several key players. One noticeable individual was a former amalgamation committee member. In the interview, s/he revealed that s/he was actually “… forced to quit” [Hazlyn: Admin11, AIC2, p.7, 2011] the university. Several other participants also mentioned this event. A senior administrator recalled that one of the reasons for the former AIC member resigning was because “her reputation was so tarnished by having been a major processor (being in the AIC)” [Halle: Admin4, p.13, 2011]. S/he further stated that being the implementer of the change process, people began to dislike the former AIC member. The senior administrator recalled:

> For some reason she had a groundswell of people who resented her. I think it had to do mostly with the amalgamation. We had an Acting Dean and she/he was asked to leave. It was pretty extreme [Halle: Admin4, p.13, 2011].

Another senior academic recalled the event and stated that the Vice Chancellor and the new Dean of the amalgamated faculty received complaints about the former AIC member and took action.

In her statement during the interview, the AIC member recalled that she was being advised by the new Dean of the new faculty to quit her job or “They would pursue me for poor performance and see to have me sacked” [Hazlyn: Admin11, AIC2, p.7, 2011]. S/he related that this was despite her having good performance evaluations. S/he recalled:

> There were certain outcomes that people wanted and if you were seen as to be opposing them, you knew that you are going to have a tough time. I knew that there were scenes that I had put my hands up for in

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3 ‘Key Players’ refers to the academic and administrative leaders who played an important part during the amalgamation process
the part of the amalgamation that certain individuals on the committee did not like that. I had opinions and I expressed them in a way that was not well received and I knew that these people would try and get me. There were very subtle ways that were reminders that you had express your views or you had voiced something in a particular way that was not well received and you knew that there would be consequences. Yes! I left the university because I was basically forced out [Hazlyn: Admin11, AIC, p.8, 2011].

However, other departures were not due to staff being forced out but rather because these individuals took up positions at other institutions. The following staff, who were also members of the AIC, left the university:

a. The first Dean of the new amalgamated faculty (who was also the former Dean of the Faculty of Arts prior to the amalgamation).

b. The Acting Deans from both the former faculties (Arts and Education).

When the former Acting Deans were queried as to why they left the university, they stated that it was because of their particular research interests and better job offers.

As can be seen from the excerpts above, the culture of the faculty and staff during the time of the amalgamation was that the ‘high flyers’ left for ‘greener pastures’ and others who have expressed opposition to the change were asked to leave.

6.3.4 Extra work demands

One other immediate effect of the amalgamation process was increased workloads. The reason for this outcome might be put down to the fact that the faculty had decided not to replace staff who decided to leave after the amalgamation announcement. A senior administrator stated, “I think basically what happened in Education was they stopped replacing people as they left.” [Ted: Academic9, p.7, 2011]. Another staff member stated:
When the amalgamation happened, lots of staff left. And there is this financial thing. We cannot employ any more people because we could not get any finance and things needed to be done. But eventually people realized that there were things that actually needed to be done. Put someone on. So, we employed a lot of contract staff [Joan: Admin2, 2011].

Commenting on the lack of support, an administrator observed:

We had virtually no support. The volume of work particularly was massive and we did not have enough staff or experienced staff to do everything that we needed to do just to keep the office functioning. I supposed that was part of the pressure. We just did not have the responses and a lot of it was unknown. I mean you took twice as long when you should have resolved the query and things like that and we didn’t have a network. So, we just had to find out where we could get responses and yes, I think I am sure that there were students who were given incorrect advice at some stage and things like that. I am sure there were quite a lot of students’ complaints [Mark: Admin1, p.2, 2011].

Another administrator related almost the same experience. When queried whether s/he was getting more work s/he said:

My work seems to just be a hell of a lot more. I am not sure whether it’s because we received more queries or more funding. More staff were coming in saying, “where do I go to? Where do I? ... And I think there was more of that side of it (not knowing what to do) [Ince: Academic3, p.15, 2011].
Besides having to learn new things, others felt that the amalgamation caused extra work because they were preoccupied with preparing documents to justify the existence of their service unit or area to the AIC. A senior administrator recalled how her team had to contribute more time outside formal working hours to prepare documents to justify their being for the AIC, “We had to spend time away from our normal work. We had to turn around and started fighting for our lives. We had to come up with statistics and the issues and put together a case” [Joy: Admin5, p.4, 2011].

Others stated that the need to secure their positions had led to physical and mental fatigue. A senior administrator stated, “My energy was about saving myself. I guess … you know, spending time like that for a long time. I actually waited for another job. So, my energy was used to secure my own job” [Joan: Admin2, p.5, 2011]. A senior academic described the situation as follows:

I also think that the amalgamation was very much harder on the administrative faculty members than the academic faculty members: the reallocation of responsibility, the shifting of people around, the transfer of administrative staff to other parts of the university, the termination of a significant number of staff – some of the administrative staff had actually applied for the same position over three or four times in a very short space of time. I think that put enormous pressure on, not only experienced staff who had felt very secure, who were very competent on their job and so on, and to be on those conditions of uncertainty all the time. Let’s face it, the young women who provided the bulk of the support staff in the university, constantly having their jobs defined, they are leaving behind the things that they knew, the expertise that they had, and they were put into a situation that they did not have much experience and expertise in. Even the people above them had also been moved around. So, I think the administrative faculty members were under tremendous pressure to keep routines of the faculty going and not benefitting from the
institutional memory and experience that had previously existed. I think that was very hard for them [Beck: Academic7, p.9, 2011].

This insight indicates the very gendered nature of the amalgamation effects. Since the restructure affected mostly general/administrative staff, it had a huge impact on women employees and especially young women who mostly fill general staff positions.

6.3.5 The loss of status and identity

The interviews revealed that the effects of the amalgamation were felt differently by the academics from the former Arts faculty and the Education faculty. Unlike the administrative staff who may have felt the most insecure about their positions, the academics’ positions were perceived as being more secure. These perceptions may have arisen because the Vice Chancellor had instructed the Chair of the AIC “not to touch the academics”. As such, former Faculty of Arts academics were either indifferent towards or were supportive of the amalgamation. The Arts academics felt that the amalgamation would not have any effect on them or their academic work. To them, it was just another school coming into the faculty.

On the other hand, responses from the Education academics signified a different reaction. Many Education academics felt that the amalgamation had an intellectual effect on the former Faculty of Education in terms of a loss of status, as well as disrupting the continuity of their academic work. The disappointment of the Education academics over the downgrading of the former Faculty to a ‘School’ was apparent as reflected in the following excerpts:

I think, a feeling, understandably among members of the former Faculty of Education, was that, their identity, if not their status, in the organization and beyond the organization was being diminished by the amalgamation [Ince: Academic3, p.6, 2011].
Academics were obviously feeling upset that they were ignored, a loss of identity [Donald: Academic14, p.6, 2011].

One is the loss of status. You feel part of –kind of – valued in your own eyes. I think it was like feeling of frustration [Sam: Academic10/AIC3, p.5, 2011].

Identity was a big part of it. They (the academics) felt the Faculty of Education had a good name. The Faculty of Education in the university had a very strong name for a lot of years. I think it was probably the leading educational institution in Australia for many many years earlier. And it had a profile in action research. There was a lot of identity associated with it. The feeling was that we would be subsumed in a bigger faculty and that identity would be lost. I think there was a strong sense of our independence [Charles: Academic12, p.6, 2011].

Another senior academic further described the concerns as follows:

There was a feeling that the focus on education, both in terms of research and teaching would be weakened and be diluted in the bigger faculty. There probably were some diminution of the quality and the standards of the courses as a result – from undergraduate through to doctoral level [Ted: Academic9, p.5, 2011].

As can be extracted from the excerpts above, the amalgamation meant that three schools from the former Faculty of Arts joined a Faculty of Education that would become a School of Education. This would thus severely diminish the former Faculty of Education’s status.

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4 Refer Chapter Three: Putting the research into perspective
The Education academics further stated that elevating the former Faculty of Education into that esteemed internationally recognized position was not an easy process. It had taken many years of dedication and commitment from the Educationists (both the academics, senior staff and the general staff). Many academics felt that downgrading the former Faculty of Education to ‘School’ status would have an adverse impact on its reputation, thus eroding years of dedication and commitment. Ince stated that he was concerned about the outside view of the university and the former Faculty of Education:

I was concerned not so much locally and not in terms of status as in self-perception of how important we were, but more externally from people looking in and saying, "Here’s a Faculty of Education. That’s a foremost Faculty of Education in the nation and really well-known internationally and it has been downgraded by its own institution" [Ince: Academic3, p.6, 2011].

Along with the loss of status, many felt that the amalgamation also meant that the former Faculty of Education was losing its voice at the level of the University Executive. To the academics, this was a substantive loss that would have various repercussions:

We felt a little bit staggered for not having as loud a voice as we used to have before. We resented our Head of School being treated as someone who is there to administer faculty and university policies rather than play out a major part in the formation of the faculty [Beck: Academic7, p.8, 2011].

When the Dean was here, she was on the University Executive and so she had the direct access to the Vice Chancellor whereas now our Head of School doesn’t have that kind of ‘a cheese burger’ thing
(close relationship). So, you’ve got another extra layer (of administration) [Harry: Academic8, p.3, 2011].

Harry, a senior academic, further stated,

“I think also there was a practical implication about having a Head of School and not a Dean. It meant that we didn’t have the same access in decision making within the university like we had before. So, both are symbolic and practical losses” [Harry: Academic8, p.3, 2011].

To the Education academics, it is important for Education to have a voice in the university management in order to present their views on the academic direction of the university.

6.3.6 The loss of support from administrative staff

The loss of support for the academic staff was also sensed and is reflected in the following comments by senior administrative staff:

We lost the capacity to give staff support, so the academics were not happy. A lot of people left over redundancy as a result of the amalgamation between Arts and Education [Reena: Admin7, p.3, 2011].

A lot of the academics were quite angry with the lack of services that were provided to them [Avis: Admin6, AIC5, p.4, 2011].

Several academics commented on the loss of support from the administrative staff:

I think people felt that we (the academics) were not getting the same support we needed. So we felt like being cut from a lot of the support
structures that we had enjoyed. So it was worse, much worse for people [Harry: Academic8, p.4, 2011].

But most of the academics are pretty cheesed off because they had lost services. We used to have a whole lot of staff support to do things like photocopying. All of a sudden they had evaporated overnight and academics were saying, “Where are we going to get this help?” [Ted: Academic9, p.6, 2011].

The support for the academic staff was interrupted for some months because the focus of the administration was distracted with the amalgamation process and also the administrative faculty members themselves were actually unclear about whether they were going to have a job or not in their future [Payne: Academic5, p.7, 2011].

To the academics, the loss of support from the administrative faculty members was disrupting their work, resulting in much wasted time and energy carrying out clerical work. In addition, the amalgamation was seen as having negative impacts on the highly productive practices which helped make the former faculty a conducive place for academic work. Referring to this, a senior academic stated, “One very significant area is the impact of the reorganization of the general staff on academic work. That was certainly a serious problem of discontinuity” [Harry: Academic8, p.6, 2011]. The senior academic further described the feelings of the former Faculty of Education academics: and said, “I think there was a lot of initial frustration and anger that had to do with the new positioning. I think there was a lot of frustration and anger about the loss of the administrative staff” [Harry: Academic8, p.6, 2011].

As can be seen above, the amalgamation was to create “efficiencies” (cost cutting) but was having a negative impact on productivity. This is paradoxical.
6.4 Leadership

Leadership was the third major theme emergent from this study. Through the participants’ eyes, the phenomenon of leadership was perceived to play a significant role in the amalgamation story from start to finish. Participants observed variations in styles, roles, characteristics and types of leadership. In the following, their responses to questions around the issue of leadership over the amalgamation process shed light on the challenges leaders faced during this time of major organizational upheaval.

In the following, seven aspects of leadership are taken up in the light of what participants had to say about leadership throughout the amalgamation process: defining leadership, autocracy, leadership characteristics, and difference of perspectives on leadership, leadership as a uniting force, emergent leadership and the need for leadership.

6.4.1 The acceptance of autocratic leadership

While conceptions of educational leadership are changing, traditionally leadership is associated with individuals who have power, hold formal leadership positions and are part of the organization’s strategic decision making process (Starr, 2014). In this study, individuals including the Vice Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellors, the Directors, the Deans, the Acting Deans as well as the Faculty General Managers were often referred to by participants as leaders. These individuals hold formal power and authority appropriate to their particular level in the organizational hierarchy. The decisions of these formal leaders are often accepted without question. For example, although other University Executives may offer the Vice Chancellor advice, the Vice Chancellor, as the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), is charged with the responsibility for making final determination on all strategic decisions through which the direction of the university is charted. A former University executive stated, “You don’t want to be on the wrong side of the Vice Chancellor or else you are going to be history” [Darry: UniExec2, 2011, p.4]. A senior academic observed, “Prof Kwon could equally and accurately be described as a CEO, the highest level of manager in the faculty. That’s how Prof Kwon conducted herself” [Ince: Academic3, p.8, 2011].
In this study, participants viewed the decision to amalgamate the faculties as one dictated by the Vice Chancellor. Hazlyn, a senior administrator, stated, “It was very much dictated from above” [Hazlyn: Admin11, p.3, AIC2, 2011]. Avis, an administrator, agreed and said, “It was something that was dictated by the Vice Chancellor and it happened” [Avis: Admin6, AIC5, 2011, p.7]. Another academic stated, “The mandate came from the top” [Harry: Academic8, p.2, 2011].

In addition, other portfolio holders such as the Deans, Deputy Deans and Faculty General Managers may also have responsibility for decision making and for providing direction at the faculty level. Nevertheless, a Dean is often given advice and assistance by the Deputy Deans, Faculty General Managers and Heads of Schools.

The transfer of power from the Vice Chancellor to an individual through a formal appointment often results in the individual being accepted as a leader. As an example, the Chair of the AIC was accepted as a leader with vested powers and authority as prescribed in the letter of appointment from the Vice Chancellor. Decisions made by the Chair were accepted and carried out by staff of the faculty.

Participants recounted some interesting observations of their restructuring experiences that reflected something of their understanding of an autocratic leadership style. In this respect, the study reveals that although many faculty members were against the autocratic decision by the Vice Chancellor to amalgamate, direct confrontation was minimal. Many faculty members continued to perform their duties as usual. Unlike in the business sectors whereby there may be a picket or demonstration orchestrated by unions and individuals, this study reveals that such actions were not taken. Although, there were instances whereby resistance appeared, the resistance still did not challenge the authority of the leaders directly. On the other hand, resistance to leaders’ decisions are often transformed into acts of sabotage such as non-cooperation with change directives. An example is a former senior academic who was elected to be on the AIC. The academic chose not to attend many of the meetings because he felt that providing cooperation may have been taken as consenting to the amalgamation decision.

There was also agreement among the participants on characteristics that define ‘good’ leaders and characteristics associated with ‘poor’ leaders during the
amalgamation. Characteristics of good leaders were associated with positive attitudes seen in the leader such as being approachable, sympathetic, respectful, likeable and charismatic. For example, talking of colleagues who were appreciated as offering effective leadership, an interviewee said:

Firstly, s/he asserted leadership in ways that you wouldn’t quite notice. S/he would solve problems very easily and simply. S/he had a manner that saw the glass always half full, never half empty and s/he saw that every problem offers opportunity. S/he never took things personally or showed it. S/he treated everyone respectfully even the greatest idiots and trouble makers. S/he somehow kept people saying ‘Yes!’ to things. S/he was never one to say ‘No!’ [Walt: Academic1, p.2, 2011].

S/he was not the sort of person that carried grudges. S/he was the sort that never looked back. S/he had a weird way, people can talk about the past and terrible things, s/he changed the conversation and moved on to something else without you realising it [Walt: Academic1, p.2, 2011].

The Dean has been very supportive – even handed! And I think generous in the way s/he is leading the faculty in this difficult time. I think the new leadership team is creating, not just creating greater confidence but are conducting themselves in ways that are honourable and supportive and creating a positive feeling of confidence in the organization [Ince: Academic3, p.9, 2011].

The Dean …. S/he was very warm and caring which helped the amalgamation process [Which helped the amalgamation process]. S/he has been very steady, nothing traumatic. I think she has done a good job [Ince: Academic3, p.9, 2011].
Likewise, characteristics of poor leaders were associated with negative attitudes as can be seen from the extracts below:

You don’t want to be on the wrong side of [X– former leader]. You wouldn’t want to be on the wrong side or else you were going to be history. She could be very nasty [Darry: UniExec2, p.4, 2011].

[X] is a very strong control freak in a lot of ways. [X] just had to control everything. Very autocratic! [X] didn’t care what you thought. She pretended to listen whereas had already make up his/her mind, no matter what you said [Darry: UniExec2, p.4, 2011].

The qualities of a leader extracted from the study can be divided into ‘good’ and ‘poor’ leaders. Table 5.0 below presents descriptive words and terms that interviewees associated with ‘good’ and ‘poor’ leaders.

<p>| Good leaders | easygoing, sympathetic, respectful, ‘nice’, decent, charismatic, someone whom people are proud to be associated and represented by, warm, charming, caring, intelligent, trustworthy, honest, affable, open minded, hardworking, does not hold grudges or hatred approachable, very applied (hands on), a good listener, supportive, visionary, breaks from the past, consultative, innovative, reliable, take matters to heart, astute, a macro manager, empowering, able to make the right decisions, creates confidence, spread positive feeling and energy |
| Poor leadership | loud (rowdy), insensitive, bully, selfish, opportunist, bragger, intimidating to others, unsympathetic, ‘control freak’ (likes to control), micro manager, poor listener, bad listener, pushy, lacking people skills, not able to control staff, non-consulting person, bad |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor Leadership</th>
<th>planner, bad organizer, bad mediator, is empowering, ‘Yes’ person (people pleaser), lack of duty (irresponsible)</th>
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Table 5.0: Characteristics of good and poor leaders

During the amalgamation, staff members identified what are considered as ‘good’ and ‘poor’ leaders. ‘Good’ leaders made the amalgamation process better for the staff members by being people oriented and communicating important phases and processes of the amalgamation. ‘Good’ leaders during the amalgamation are leaders that instilled a climate of trust between leader and the rest of the staff members. On the other hand, ‘poor’ leaders infused a climate of distrust and acted in indecipherable ways that do not seem to be in anyone's best interests. Staff members perceived this as an absence of hope.

6.4.2 Different perspectives on leadership

It is interesting that the phenomenon of leadership in this restructuring is seen differently by different participants (i.e. the academics, the general staff, and the university executives). For example, when describing the university leadership, some participants viewed the leaders as good but other participants had a different perception. There were several examples in this study that reflected this. An example is the participants’ view of the Vice Chancellor’s leadership. Academics and administrative staff who are were close to the top management of the university viewed the Vice Chancellor’s decision to amalgamate the faculties as a wise decision. University Executives and AIC members understood the rationale behind the amalgamation and viewed it as a move that would help to address the Arts and Education faculty’s financially precarious situation.

By contrast, some general staff members and academics, and some former University Executives who were against the idea of the amalgamation viewed the decision to amalgamate as poor. In relation to commenting on the top level decision makers, some faculty members mentioned “brutal decision making” and used words and phrases like “nasty”, and “very autocratic” [Walt: Academic1, 2011]. Others felt that there was a lack of concern for faculty members’ welfare and that this was
superseded by a concern with saving money. An academic, for example, stated that the Vice Chancellor “was just not interested” about the faculty and only saw the “bigger management thing, the structure and the organizational sense” [Ted: Academic9, p.12, 2011].

A group of dissenters felt that the amalgamation was not a beneficial move for either of the former faculties, but especially not for the former Faculty of Education. The dissenting group argued that the amalgamation would not solve the problems faced by the faculties since the problems were caused by flawed Federal Government and university policies (this issue will be further discussed below).

Another example of the varying perspectives towards leadership were the views towards formal leaders at the faculty level. Many faculty members, academics and administrative staff alike, held a general perception that the former Dean of Education’s leadership was ‘good’. In addition, former Faculty of Education staff saw their former Dean as practising a democratic leadership style. Many approved of the Dean’s leadership style and felt that it promoted unity and advanced the faculty’s progress. They also felt that it promoted an academic environment in which free and open debates could be had around the faculty’s future direction. Nevertheless, staff from other faculties viewed the Dean’s leadership as weak. Many from outside the faculty saw the Education Dean’s leadership as poor and lacking control over staff. A University Executive from another faculty commented, “I think that was part of the problem with education, there was too much democratic leadership” [Ivy: AIC1, p.10, 2011].

Perceptions concerning leadership also vary from one individual or one group to another. In this study, the implementation managers felt that the Chair of the AIC portrayed good leadership: a strong “no nonsense” leadership style which was greatly needed in this time of major organizational upheaval. One senior academic stated that, “S/he was strong. Wasn’t going to take ‘no’ for a response. S/he had to have it her way” [Sam: Academic10, AIC3, p.10, 2011]. A senior administrator commenting on the Chair of the AIC, expressed her admiration: “S/he was the toughest person I know. Very ‘dead on the line’ person. S/he says whatever she thinks” [Avis: Admin6, AIC5, p.7, 2011]. Others too believed that such a leadership approach was greatly needed in
uncertain times and felt that the leaders provided stable and strong leadership. A restructuring committee member recalled, “Look! It was a tough job. You know … But we had followed the right process. S/he was very determined. People might not like him/her but at the time, we needed him/her” [Hazlyn: Admin11, AIC2, p.5, 2011]. The AIC felt that getting the job done with less “hassle” was a priority.

Nevertheless, some faculty members felt that the leadership of the AIC Chair was poor. Words and phrases such as, “It was a total disaster”, “really bad”, “not well managed” and “poor leadership” were frequently mentioned many times by a number of faculty members. As stated by Walt, a senior academic, “Yes! I think it was stupid leadership. Worst manager I ever had in my life. Amalgamation could be done in better ways, I have been in a few and that was the worst” [Walt: Academic1, p.14, 2011].

6.4.3 Alliance and resistance to change

Interestingly, some participants pointed out that leadership unites people whether effective or not. As reported by Kamarudin and Starr (2012), both effective and ineffective leadership styles unite people in different ways; either to support or oppose the formal leaders and policies. According to the study participants, what was perceived as poor leadership triggered unity among some faculty members and they were united in their intention to overcome the subsequent negative amalgamation outcomes as they saw them. Throughout the interviews, it was interesting to see that although autocratic leadership had a strong presence, this leadership style actually resulted in bringing faculty members closer to one another. The word ‘we’ echoed throughout the interviews signalling the unity of those affected by the amalgamation:

I think it was very negative anyway at the time. We thought we were being told. “This is what is going to happen”. I think the whole cynical nature, we knew whatever they said, they were just going to have it their way anyway. We felt that [Mark: Admin1, p.7, 2011].

On another level, I think it actually brought us closer together. You know, to be honest, we are all fighting for the same thing. Like there
was a part like, I think, we might have been feeling that we were losing our identity. With the previous faculty we had our identity. All of a sudden we were going to be little fish in a big pond. We were only going to be one quarter of it. On another level we might have felt that we were going to get lost. But in an actual fact, it made us closer because we were fighting for the same thing [Joan: Admin2, p.5, 2011].

The togetherness of the administrative faculty members resulted in a joint struggle for their cause, which was to resist change and oppose the amalgamation. Administrative units and leaders started to plan strategies to explain the significance of their sections to the top management of the university. A senior academic stated:

I just remembered that the general staff had a couple of crisis meetings. We organized this amongst ourselves. We knew the restructuring was happening. We weren’t kept fully informed. So we formed two or three meetings where we talked and went through the issues and strategies for dealing with the proposed change, within the other admin units, within our faculty [Ellen: Admin3, p.5, 2011].

When further probed on the “resistance”, Ellen went on to say, “We wrote letters of concern to the Dean. And we became quite careful and began tabulating what we were doing to provide data on our work” [Ellen: Admin3, p.5, 2011]. According to another faculty member, this was in response to the instruction from the top management:

There was [someone from] HR and somebody who had been directed from the Vice Chancellor’s office talking about the need to curtail funding and work harder and faster. We did succeed and there was something of a staff cut or something and we were able to demonstrate
that we could not possibly work with a staff cut. We couldn’t [Joan: Admin2, p.7, 2011].

In other words, existing general staff members were aware that their positions were insecure and that some positions would be cut. One way of resisting this was to document their work and work practices to demonstrate that their work was necessary to the running of Faculty’s business.

The general assumption was that members clung together and worked closely to weather the difficulties they were facing. Everyone in their respective teams understood the huge task of arguing the importance of their section and therefore, being united was seen as a determinant of their survival. Team members often worked closely and had discussions to build an effective case to present to the AIC committee. One member stated that they needed to work long hours and work together to understand the new knowledge that was required to survive in the restructured environment. Increasingly difficult times did not diminish the tenacity of the adversely impacted faculty members who continued to make things work for the better. Ellen, a senior administrator commented:

It would have been very easy for me to be cynical about working here because general staff were being very badly treated. But I think overall staff had been very gracious. They still came to work with a lot of dignity despite all the difficulties. And I think they have done a terrific job when dealing with very difficult change and they have made the most of it and they continue. And I still don’t think those from above really understand how difficult it was. And I think fundamentally people come to work to do the best that they can, work within their units and just want peace and quiet. You know – a sense of collegiality and when that’s rocked, it really shakes your foundation and your work ethics [Ellen: Admin3, p.6, 2011].
When probed whether the top management realised the importance of the roles played by the other staff, Ellen asserted, “I don’t think they did and I don’t think they do but it seems to me most people - general staff - understand that, but they still come to work and do their best” [Ellen: Admin3, p.13, 2011].

6.4.4 Emerging leadership

This case study evidenced what could be termed ‘emerging’ leaders. Emerging leadership is a phenomenon whereby an individual emerges as a leader to champion the cause of a group of people often in a time of crisis. Unlike the formal leaders whereby by the leader formally takes on a portfolio position such as the Vice Chancellor or a Dean to exercise leadership, emergent leaders may not be in a formal leadership position (Chidambaram, & Becker, 2006; Hogg, 2011; Misiolek & Heckman, 2005). Emergent leaders are the spokespeople of the particular group they represent (Crockett, 1955).

In this study, two emergent leaders were frequently praised for their leadership qualities. Their names were mentioned and referred to by fellow colleagues as leaders who had helped to lead the faculty members in times of uncertainty and chaos. It is interesting to note that both leaders emerged after shouldering responsibility to represent the concerns of faculty members. However, the manner in which each of these leaders fought for the faculty staff’s plight differed in several ways.

The first emergent leader voiced her interest in becoming a member of the AIC. S/he made this move as she felt that the organization needed someone who understood the concerns of other faculty members and who was well-versed in the day-to-day management of the faculty and, most importantly, would persevere throughout the lengthy change process. The administrative officer felt that membership of the change committee would enable him/her to consciously and continuously monitor the change process as well as represent the concerns of the other faculty members. S/he stated:

At that time I knew in my mind that Mr/Ms X (referring to the Faculty General Manager) was not the right person (to be on the amalgamation committee). During the amalgamation s/he was going to leave. Most likely s/he was at retirement age. And it was unlikely that s/he was
going to follow through. My view was s/he was not the right person to do the deciding. I put my hand up to be in the committee. There were some other people who came forward, but I got voted on [Avis: Admin6, AIC5, p.6, 2011].

When probed who voted for him/her, s/he mentioned that s/he was endorsed by the general staff. S/he further mentioned, “I knew I was doing the right thing. So, I just continued. Staff were thankful I was that person. I don’t know whether I would do a better job than Ms X but I felt that I had a vision of what might be in the future and Ms X would be tainted because she was leaving” [Avis: Admin6, AIC5, p.6, 2011].

As a member of the AIC, this emergent leader openly and regularly shared information with the general staff. S/he stated, “I continually consulted them throughout the process. There were people who were going to lose their positions and I sat with them one-on-one and shared with them what I could at the time” [Avis: Admin6, AIC5, p.7, 2011]. This way of consulting with faculty members helped to keep the faculty informed of important information as phases of the amalgamation unfolded. It was also on a one-on-one and group basis as required. This consultative process also helped affected members to plan and decide on their future strategies.

By contrast, the second emergent leader continued leading a few faculty members from outside the restructuring committee. This ‘natural leader’, as some of her friends referred to him/her, initiated meetings, contacted the union for support and advice, and communicated faculty members’ concerns and special cases to the restructuring committee via a relentless stream of emails and face-to-face communication. An administrator indicates his/her praise for this leader in saying:

It’s about ... having a more strategic fighter. My boss has a strong union background. She’s a very strategic woman. Didn’t always work but she always put up a good fight. It’s weird. You look to leadership [formal leaders] and instead you look for natural leadership. People that may not be in leadership role – but people who had the skills [Ellen: Admin3, p.8, 2011].
A senior administrative member commented on the leadership of the second emergent leader as well as on her efforts to help adversely affected faculty staff:

S/he was a middle manager. S/he was terrific. S/he organized meetings. S/he organized meetings with an open invitation. It was very inclusive. S/he gave us opportunities to debrief. S/he was also in touch with the unions and officials and brought them to meetings. There were quite a few meetings organized by the general staff and this middle manager facilitated. S/he was terrific. S/he was very supportive. S/he did it from him/her own compassion. S/he contacted specific people that s/he knew would feel isolated and that their job might be in jeopardy [Halle: Admin4, p.7, 2011].

When this ‘natural’ leader (second emergent leader) was asked what motivated his/her strong support for adversely involved staff, s/he mentioned the feeling of sympathy towards his/her fellow colleagues. S/he simply stated, “There are good people in my office. My staff. I didn’t want to desert them. I couldn’t leave them in such a mess” [Joy: Admin5, p.8, 2011].

6.4.5 The need for leadership

According to Tannenbaum, Weschler & Massarik (2013), leadership is needed for support, motivation and a sense of security among people of an organization. An interesting observation in this study is that the top university leadership timed the amalgamation to coincide with perceptions about a lack of leadership in both the former faculties. This was because both the former Deans who were not in favour of the amalgamation were not around due to sabbatical leave. Hence, the assumption by the top university leadership was that the absence of formal leaders would lessen resistance towards the amalgamation.

However, as seen by the views of interviewees, having the amalgamation without the two Deans proved to be the wrong move. Many staff felt that they were helpless without the staunch support of their Deans. Many felt that if the Deans were
present at the time, the amalgamation would not have taken place because the Deans would have objected to the idea and protected the faculty. Although there were Acting Deans representing the two former faculties, staff felt these Acting Deans were not able to replace the authority of the two Deans. One Acting Dean was seen as a ‘Yes’ man while the other was seen as not being cooperative with the AIC.

6.5 The issue of communication

Besides the phenomenon of organizational context and leadership discussed above, another theme emergent from the data analysis is communication. Participants recounted the issue of communication frequently during the interviews from the time prior to the amalgamation to the amalgamation’s conclusion.

There were mixed perspectives on the quality and level of communication during the amalgamation. Generally, these perspectives can be divided into two main views. The first perspective comes from the group of University Executives and the AIC members who were close to the top leadership’s sources of information. The second perspective emerged from faculty members.

The first group argued that communication during the whole amalgamation process was good in that from the outset university leadership put in much effort to get feedback from faculty staff pertaining to suggestions for an amalgamation. However, this group also argued that the faculty’s leadership failed to communicate these efforts to the staff. This is a strong argument since several senior staff (academics and administrative staff) stated that the faculties’ problems had been around for some time and that there had been rumors of an amalgamation, but the problems that form the basis of the amalgamation had not been clearly enunciated to faculty members who operated on “innuendo”.

Many channels were used to communicate the amalgamation process and to invite staff feedback but background rationale information was absent. Document analysis findings highlighted the use of multiple communication channels including formal and informal meetings, consultation sessions, emails, letters, newsletters and notices. A senior academic recalled the various meetings held:
And there were many meetings. Whole of faculty meetings. Meetings for small groups. Meetings for general staff. Meetings for academics. There were also regular newsletters that came out – about how to communicate the change to the existing staff and if there is to be a change in the job or the organizational units – how do we go about managing that change for them and then engaging people into the new structure – which positions would be required – which positions will no longer be required, etc [Matt: Academic6, p.8, 2011].

Hazlyn, a member of the amalgamation committee, echoed the above response:

I think the communication in terms of the constituency of the faculty was as good as it could be. I think you’ll always have people who would say it was never good enough. Saying that doesn’t mean that people would suggest an alternative. So, there were emails coming out. There were meetings. For some people when there were announced meetings, they would want to meet once a day but what for if there was nothing new to report [Hazlyn: Admin11, p.9, 2011].

As the above interview responses suggest, managers and leaders felt that the quality and level of communication was good during the amalgamation. As stated by Matt, a senior academic manager, “I think there was as much communication as could possibly happen” [Matt: Academic6, p.9, 2011]. However, many faculty members felt that while information on process was forthcoming, neither information about the rationale nor intended outcomes of the amalgamation were forthcoming.

Many staff therefore, felt that the quality of the communication was poor throughout the amalgamation. Although they agreed that there were various information channels used to relay information about the process and the stages of the amalgamation, this information was deemed insufficient. Payne, an academic, stated, “There were certainly information sessions although there was a bit of a small, very tight period of consultation about how it was going to take effect” [Payne: Academic5,
Even when it seemed that the frequency and timing of communication was adequate, the information itself was regarded as lacking in “quality” resulting in “Nobody (referring to faculty members) knew what was going on” [Payne: Academic5, p.7, 2011].

Another senior academic felt that although information was available, it was not persuasive and sufficient enough for the staff: “I think that maybe there was the lack of information or the lack of persuasion-persuasive argument about the ‘why’, the rationale for this could have been in a lot more detail” [Harry: Academic8, p.3, 2011].

In the following excerpt, Ellen, a senior administrator, felt that information communicated to administrative general staff members during the amalgamation was indeed lacking. S/he felt that, by comparison, the faculty academics were better informed:

> I think communication channels were not very good from above and general staff were not always kept well informed on what was happening. And I think there was greater divide between the general staff and the academic staff then there should have been. It varies from academic staff to general staff [Ellen: Admin3, p.1, 2011].

In addition to general perceptions about the quality of amalgamation communications, many staff felt that the meeting sessions were ineffective. They felt that the meetings were merely briefing sessions, as there was limited time available for discussion and staff feedback. As such, many participants reported that they felt robbed of the opportunity to air their concerns and ideas and felt they were not being listened to, or taken seriously. Furthermore, many felt that the Vice Chancellor and the AIC Chair were adamant about the types of changes they wanted to see implemented.

An administrator recalled the tone of the meeting held by the AIC Chair to announce the amalgamation as such: “Not very good because I think the representative from the Vice Chancellor just came to do a deal and they were going to do it” [Ellen: Admin3, p.9, 2011].
To the faculty staff, communications appeared one-way. At a meeting called to communicate the intention that there would be an amalgamation, Sam, an academic, recalled: “And then there were various meetings. And people weren’t sure what it involved. They don’t know, they call it an amalgamation but then a lot of people had a cynical attitude about it” [Mark: Admin1, p.2, 2011]. Many felt they were left ‘in the dark’.

From what participants had to say above, the majority of staff maintained that that there was a lack of information that resulted in rumors, feelings of uncertainty, frustration and the loss of staff members. When queried about how many staff had left the faculty, a senior administrator related:

It was at least 30. Yeah! It was a large number. I think it was probably more than 30. When we knew that university were not giving redundancy packages, we knew that they would keep us on, but perhaps not in the job we were doing. There was uncertainty as well [Halle: Admin4, p.8, 2011].

Halle, a senior administrator, recalled:

It was extremely painful because at that time none of us quite knew what was really coming. We knew there was a committee set up which had representation from the two faculties. Not much. It was a small committee that was supposedly for advising the Head of AIC [Halle: Admin4, p.1, 2011].

Will, an administrator, stated: “It was very unsettling because none of us knew whether we had a future with the university or not” [Will: Admin8, p.8, 2011]. Another administrator, Reena, stated: “There was lots of conflicting information whether people are going to have a job at the end of the process and things like that” [Reena: Admin7, p.2, 2011]. This uncertainty was unsettling and created anxiety for many.
The uncertainties mostly concerned job status. As discussed in the previous chapter, the process of staff transition to their new positions was communicated through emails that included draft faculty organizational structures along with faculty member names allocated to particular positions. The draft organizational structures were announced to staff in stages. As such, for many, the feeling of uncertainty about whether or not they would retain their old position, or have to take up a new one, was acute – especially if their name did not appear on the lists. From one administrator’s perspective: “It was a bit stressful because of uncertainties like not knowing you have a job or not. I think everyone felt frustrated. We all felt frustrated at the procedure – not being clear of the procedure at the time” [Joan: Admin2, p.3, 2011].

Halle, a senior administrator, described the anxiousness surrounding the uncertain status of staff positions:

So, we spent quite a long time waiting for a new draft of the organizational hierarchy. Really until you see that, you see your job or your name up, you are not very sure that you really have a job. Often the difficulty is because you are in this environment that no one really knows, and you try to reassure yourself of the situation but what is there to say? Nobody really knew [Halle: Admin4, p.6, 2011].

Another senior administrator saw the distress caused by the uncertainty:

The main impact seemed to be within the administration, the administrative staff. And that was a very painful process. People in both faculties, who basically underwent long periods of uncertainty were asked to apply for their own job or something similar and some had twenty, twenty five years of experience. And I think probably it felt to me that that was an unnecessary way of doing things – probably quite a harsh way doing things [Payne: Academic5, p.4, 2011].
This was agreed by Ince, a senior academic, who stated that the void of proper information was apparent even after the amalgamation, particularly in relation to a lack of information about job descriptions:

The uncertainty lingered for a few weeks … Position description or just knowing who to go to. I think it took a while. Like I said, timeframe, I don’t know. But I think it took a while before we were actually clear about the right places to go for things [Ince: Academic3, p.15, 2011].

In other words, even after the amalgamation, faculty members were unclear about who was doing what or where to go to for information. The new structure was confusing.

This pervasive sense of uncertainty was acknowledged by a member of the AIC. She stated that as an amalgamation was a continual process, there were times when it was difficult to provide responses to people’s queries, since the amalgamation was ongoing:

And I think on occasions – it was difficult to give people the responses they wanted. And often there would be meetings and you wouldn’t have the responses. And it’s that kind of timing issue I think. You can’t anticipate what kinds of questions are going to be asked. You should have the responses. At the time you start inviting questions, you should have the responses [Hazlyn: Admin11, AIC2, p.10, 2011].

Another administrator recalled that the faculty was in disarray even after the amalgamation process had concluded. S/he recalled coming to the office not knowing what to do, who to report to, or where his/her office was:

When we went back to start our new job, it was like a ghost town. It was a disaster … Yes, terrible. Because the place was in such disarray. They didn’t know where my office would be. I came in in the New
Year. Back in Building ‘X’ where I had been, everybody had moved to their new roles, so, I was around there by myself in this big office with nothing to do. One day, I was so cheesed off, with no one to report to, no office, no work; I just didn’t come in just one day. The uncertainty happened for a few weeks. Then, what happened was I was moved to this office on this floor on the other side. Then I got kicked out of there quite quickly and back to level 3. I was there for a while and got kicked out of there. I went to building X and got a small office there. I was there for a bit and I got chucked out of there. I moved to my office opposite to where I was in the first place, and then I got kicked out of there a couple of months ago and I came here [Jean: Admin9, p.7, 2011].

As can be seen above, the administrator’s experience related above illustrates something of the consequences of there being a lack of information and organization within the new faculty which proved very unsettling and unsatisfactory for affected staff.

Due to the lack of adequate relevant information too, rumors were rife among staff. A senior administrator was queried as to how s/he obtained needed information and stated: “Oh well! That is a good question. Really, there were no very official sources. Yes! People talked and started making assumptions, trying to associate the reasons definitely” [Payne: Academic5, p.4, 2011].

Joan, a senior administrator, shared his/her views about what s/he thought leaders should have done concerning communication during the amalgamation:

I think if I want to say... how would you do it properly, I think that talking to people and reassuring, ... no, not reassuring because when you merge you cannot guarantee that they’ll still get their job, but having information, if you know what you are dealing with, it actually allows you to have a better picture of it. Whereas if you are secretive and pretending... then at least people will have different view. I think
having opportunities where people can voice their concerns regardless of how ugly that might be is important. The Acting Dean used to make himself available one day a week. It was informal. No notes. No nothing. He said, “I am going to be in the lunch room, if you want to sit down and discuss it.” Even if they are going to talk about something different, then it was just going to be an opportunity to actually have that discussion. I really admire him for that because that gave people comfort – which he really cared about. I think people needed to talk to someone who wanted to listen [Joan: Admin2, p.12, 2011].

Another faculty member felt that change leaders must be able to provide relevant information in any restructuring process whether the information is sufficient or not. A senior academic talking about the issue of hearsay and gossip, observed:

But the thing with the university’s lack of information– maybe it is known at the senior level but the way that (information) trickles down is not necessarily very organized. And it does mean that there is a bit of a vacuum and people will fill it up that with their own gossip, stories, anecdotes, hearsay because a lot of things come through committees then sometimes there are minutes, some things got filtered out. I am not sure it was tremendously well handled with this process [Payne: Academic5, p.5, 2011].

Commenting on the amalgamation process, a former administrator of the faculty stated that there was a need to engage staff from all levels for discussion on the amalgamation as this major organizational change would have particular consequences for their professional and private lives. Significantly, responsibility for the success or otherwise of this strategic change, fell to the faculty-level. Reflecting on his/her observations of the amalgamation process, the former faculty administrator noted:
There were changed planning processes from within the Human Resource Services Division. I was not sure whether they were necessarily helpful. A process is fine but processes impact people, and people have emotions. It’s the anonymity to the framework that cannot provide for people. So when you change planning processes, obviously there needed to be involvement and engagement by the union because we were essentially talking about people losing their jobs [Hazlyn: Admin11, AIC2, p.3, 2011].

Payne, an academic, shared his hypothesis on the problem of communication in a university suggesting that there are often two worlds in a university: “the world of the executives and the reality.” From this academic’s standpoint:

I don’t think it’s an original theory but there is a theory about the university and I think it is true of this university. There are two worlds that were going on – that is, the ‘people’ world which is the sort of the executive level where a lot of discussion is done between senior and middle managers about things that are going on, and this ‘real’ world which is what is really happening. And the two don’t connect. The ‘people’ world can’t understand why the message can’t get through to the other world. ‘We’ve got this new policy; we can’t understand why it is not happening,’ and one of the real difficulties that the university has – and I haven’t got experiences about this university although I do with another university – I think it is a continually difficult problem in universities is that joining those two between the theory and the reality. And somehow the university finds it very hard to translate that. One of the ways, I think, of getting change through is by ‘crashing through’ [crash to crash]. It is quite brutal but I can see it actually effecting change, it would not necessarily be my chosen way, but I have to acknowledge it was effective [Payne: Academic5, p.9, 2011].
As stated by Payne, above, the executives’ established discourse on matters relating to the university’s direction, mission and policies may not recognise or acknowledge the multiple realities experienced at all organizational levels. As such, the information that staff members understand to be critically relevant to their everyday work and career development may be scant, or difficult to access. As such, staff may not be aware of or understand the planned change projects and processes and this leads to various dilemmas. Furthermore, Payne accedes that, while the amalgamation process was brutal in its ‘crash through’ approach, it did achieve its aim – an amalgamation of two previously sovereign facilities in two distinctly different disciplines.

6.6 Budgets and Finance

The issue of budget and financial management came up frequently in the study. Participants’ interview responses indicate they were cognizant of financial factors that played into day-to-day faculty operations and that shaped the nature and success (or otherwise) of strategic change interventions.

Many administrative staff and academics from the Faculty of Arts and the former Faculty of Education identified the long standing issue of the Education faculty’s precarious financial situation as a major factor behind the amalgamation. Jean, an administrator, pointed out: “They [Faculty X] had debt which was why the whole thing was done” [Jean: Admin9, p.3, 2011]. Another administrator, Reena, recalled:

We all knew it was about debt. The feeling at the time was Education had so much debt. The conception was Education has to come to Arts and that debt would have to be negated by staff lost at the general staff level and this is what happened” [Reena: Admin7, p.4, 2011].

Staff members who were interviewed also indicated that the Vice Chancellor expected the Chair of the AIC to make savings through the amalgamation process. This expectation was quoted many times by faculty academics and administrative staff. Hazlyn, a former senior administrator and a member of the AIC, stated that savings
would be made by creating a smaller combined faculty administrative staff. Joan, an administrator, recalled how his/her office had to go through the slashing of administrators. S/he stated:

And so savings had to be made. Jobs had to be slashed. And so she (referring to the Chair of the AIC) started slashing. Slashing the student support office. She wanted to slash our office. She said, “You should be able to do this work with a small amount, two people or whatever. All you need to do is to restructure, reengineer the work” [Joan: Admin2, p.4, 2011].

The intention that the faculty amalgamation would save money placed a key constraint on the AIC committee, especially in the effort to produce a better organizational structure and lessening adverse effects for involved staff such as those having to be made redundant. Committee members felt that “a better organizational structure” should not only refer to a structure that contributed to the efficiency of faculty services but most importantly, refer to a new organizational structure that also accounted for amalgamation outcomes and consequences for the administrative staff of both faculties. Avis, a member of the AIC, stated that there were times when decision-making was difficult because of the financial constraints. Avis remarked:

The main problem was that the driving force was money. So we got the structure together, and then, when it was going to be costed then they’d be saying, “Well, we can’t do that because it’s going to cost too much”. So, it really should have been, “This is ideal structure and we’ll do that” rather than change things like it’s going to cost too much. But, I believe she (the Chair of the AIC) had a target of how much needed to be saved [Avis: Admin6, p.5, 2011].

Avis further recalled the working committee’s efforts to consult and communicate the amalgamation process to involved staff and to canvas feedback.
However, s/he felt that this feedback was not taken seriously as “The driving force was money.” S/he recalled the Chair of the AIC Committee was adamant that the amalgamation intervention would be instrumental in making savings:

I think that we needed to get staff views but because of the financial constraint and the manner of the person who was leading us. No matter how much you could consult with people, she had the view [that money needed to be saved] and she was very forceful. It was something that was not really up for discussion, when it should have been. She (VC) had a view that it was going to cost too much [Avis: Admin6, AIC5, p.11, 2011].

Another former committee member recalled the effort of making savings out of the amalgamation exercise and the resulting constraint placed on the committee:

There were a series of meetings which seemed to spend a lot of time trying to put the two faculty administrative structures together – and then the questions came and in doing this (the amalgamation), who would lose their jobs and in losing jobs how much that was going to cost the university. You could save a lot of money not employing someone. So, in the meeting the committee seemed to focus a lot on considering different schemes for structural aspects and the roles. That was where I supposed Dr Ivy (referring to the Chair of the AIC Committee) was trying hard to accommodate the expectations that were coming from the Vice Chancellor – that is, to save money. To save money! It’s all in that context. We had to save all this money although we did not achieve the necessary outcome [Sam: Academic10, AIC3, p.7, 2011].

The interview excerpt above implies that the intention to make financial savings out of the amalgamation resulted in some constraints to AIC members. This
involved taking into account not only aspects of efficient and high quality service delivery of the new faculty organizational structure but most importantly the amalgamation outcomes for, and impacts on, all faculty members, specifically the administrative staff and general staff.

At the conclusion of the amalgamation process, it was evident that significant savings had been made. The Chair of the AIC illuminates the nature of these savings:

For every job that we save, we looked at whether there was operational money. We looked at the budget and understood that we were not to touch the academic budget. We looked at the expenditure on salaries and looked at how much could we save from other things—what were the consequences of cutting back from that and that leaves a million dollars. And then there was a question of how much we can save from staffing. And then we just tallied it up. There’s a HEW 8 saved there and a HEW 9 saved there. And some of it (calculating the savings) was easy because there were two Deans before, there’s now only one and there’s the Dean’s salary saved. Two Faculty General Managers and now there’s only one. And then how many other roles do we need to cut? And then in the end it tallied [Ivy: AIC1, p.6, 2011].

Nevertheless, the Chair of the AIC stated that although efforts were made to make financial savings from each redundant administrative position, this could not be applied to all positions: “We tried to make the savings from the vacancies. But we couldn’t do this in all cases” [Ivy: AIC1, p.6, 2011]. Hence some people lost their jobs without concomitant savings being made. Interestingly too, after the amalgamation, the new faculty’s staff was depleted in comparison to the former faculties’ staffing base. In addition, despite high cost cutting, the new faculty was not able to employ staff because the staffing budget was tight.

According to several former senior academics, the budget problems were not the fault of the former faculty but were caused by a lack of funding for practicum
students, unsupportive university authorities and flawed federal higher education policies. Carr, a former senior academic, noted that the former Faculty of Education had always been accused of “… spending more than it was earning. There were certainly financial constraints on the Faculty of Education and that it couldn’t be self-sustaining” [Carr: Academic11, AIC4, p.4, 2011]. On the financial indebtedness of the former Education faculty, Carr further argued that, “This massive debt and all this money (overspending) occurred for (many) years. It’s a device that is used as an excuse rather than for any particular reason. The faculty was engineered into a position (of debt)” [Carr: Academic11, AIC4, p.4, 2011].

One of the problems facing the former Faculty of Education was the large amount of money needed to pay students’ teaching practicum supervisors. According to the Victorian Institute of Teaching, an independent regulatory body for the teaching profession established by an Act of Parliament in December 2001, a teaching practicum is a required component of all Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs. In order to graduate from an undergraduate program, pre-service teachers must satisfactorily complete a requirement of minimum 80 days of practicum. In addition, supervisory teachers at secondary and primary schools are paid at a fixed rate – between $12 and $23 per day depending on the supervisory level required.

This payment has caused problems for many faculties of education in universities. For example, The Age reported the perspectives of Deans from two universities of established Faculties of Education:

This presents a dilemma. As Shirley Grundy, Dean of Education at Deakin University, said, "In terms of the individual teacher payment, it's actually fairly minuscule.” (Mary Bluett, the Victorian branch president of the Australian Education Union, describes the rates as so low as to be “a bit of an insult”.) But multiply those individual amounts by the number of students and the number of days spent in schools, and they can mean million-dollar outlays for the universities.
The cost, says Dr Ure, is "A major concern to faculties of education.” Nicola Yelland, Head of the Department of School and Early Childhood Education at RMIT University, goes further, saying that it "makes courses with a practicum component unviable and subsidies from other areas are inevitable, but unsustainable" (Russell, 2003).

A senior academic shared the same perspective with the newspaper extracts above. S/he asserted:

We’ve got the practicum. It has always been an issue to us and part of the time when we were under big budget pressures, we were getting no support for the practicum and yet it’s a compulsory part of our program to license teachers [Charles: Academic12, p.4, 2011].

A senior administrator, Ellen, stated:

From 1999 to 2006, I was very well aware that we had to work within a limited budget. And at that time this created problems, particularly if we needed academic staff to visit student teachers. There were not always academic staff that could visit [students on practicum]. If we made a strong enough case to business managers or the Dean, somehow funds would be found to pay for casual staff to go out and visit students who were in danger of failing because if we could not support the schools who take students teachers, they won’t take them. I don’t blame them. We must be ready to support the students in the schools [Ellen: Admin3, p.3, 2011].

Carr, a former senior academic from the former Faculty of Education, further described how the problem of a lack of student practicum funding was worsened by the University’s practicum funding model:
The vast proportion that comes in for the students to teach didn’t go to the faculty but it went to the central (university)\(^5\). That certainly was the case. I had seen the numbers and I had good mates who were Deans and so we would compare figures. The faculty was operating at about half return on a dollar than normal universities were getting. Normal universities were getting around 45-50 percent. We were getting 27 percent. The faculty gets paid like other universities for teacher education students. For every dollar that the faculty earned by teaching a student sponsored by the Commonwealth Government, they (the faculty) will get 27 cents in the dollar. You would well know that if you are running a business, and you have overheads of over 70%, you’ll be out of business in a day [Carr: Academic11, AIC4, p.5, 2011].

Carr further argued that it was inappropriate for the university to give the faculty a smaller amount than what was paid by the government to fund the practicum because of administrative costs incurred by the faculty: “And you can’t divide up the money that way because we (referring to the former Faculty of Education) provide all the staff. Other universities in other places provide all the staff at half the cost that the faculty was paying” [Carr: Academic11, AIC4, p.5, 2011]. S/he further stated, the budget problem is the “consequence of having a low funding base coming out from the university” [Carr: Academic11, AIC4, p.8, 2011]. Carr recalled the decline in funds for teacher practicum and stated, “I first began noticing those figures were going down even when I was the Interim Dean and it has been going on for four to five years” [Carr: Academic11, AIC4, p.8, 2011]. Thus, the senior academic argued that the university is therefore partly to blame for the former Faculty of Education’s financial problems.

\(^5\) This refers to the funding from the Federal Government to the university for the Student Teacher Practicum
An administrator stated that budget constraints affected certain aspects of the student practicum. This is because academics, whose responsibility was to observe practicum students, would have to justify their teaching practicum role due to the expenses incurred in carrying out this key Faculty of Education role. As such, it was difficult to find academic staff who were willing to carry out observations during the students’ teaching practicums. As one administrator noted, “It was a problem when we needed staff to go out and visit students who were struggling at schools. We were always finding it very hard to find staff” [Ellen: Admin3, p.2, 2011].

Another senior academic gave an example of how the situation of budgeting problems was brought to the attention of the university leadership along with suggestions to solve the economic problems. In a lengthy explanation, s/he recalled the event:

The first year was very difficult in terms of resources. What happened was, the VC with the finance people in the university came up with a new budget model which really clobbered Education (The faculty). And so the first year of the amalgamation, the School of Education was getting less money. In fact, we argued so strongly because this was happening. We argued with the Vice Chancellor and said the funding per student here does not pay the bills. And most of them are not good in numerical issues and they don’t add numbers very well. The Acting Dean (of the Faculty of Education) had done a calculation and showed that the more undergraduates we took the more money we lost – the bigger the debt became because of the practicum funding. And she (referring to the Vice Chancellor) said, “Well, the Commonwealth doesn’t fund the practicum component in the new model; therefore you’ve got to live without it.” Other universities were saying, “Well It’s wrong. They should be funding it. The government should be funding it”. So, we argued with her and so she said in the meeting, “So, what do you propose I do about it?” And I said to her, “There are two things that you can do, one is as Vice Chancellor, you
support the Dean of Education to argue with the government that this should be funded. The other option is to close down the undergraduate program.” And she just looked at me and went ….. “What?” I said, “It’s not sustainable to run a program where you have insufficient income. So the more students we get, which money-wise people call ‘success’, we are losing more money. We can’t afford it.” So, I said, “The other thing is if we can’t persuade the government, we should close the program.” [Sam: Academic10, AIC3, p.5, 2011].

Another senior academic recalled that the representative from the Faculty of Education had brought up the issue of practicum funding and economic problems many times to the university leadership but to no avail. S/he stated,

I think certainly there had been many attempts to make that case. There were efforts (to inform the university leadership of the economic problems). I think they (the representative from the Faculty of Education) were battered back. They (the university leadership) refuse to consider. I think they said that’s your problem. That’s your course [Charles: Academic12, p.4, 2011].

Another contributory factor to the financial problems was the former Faculty of Education’s huge staffing base following the amalgamation with several teacher colleges during the late 1980s and early 1990s. A former senior academic stated:

Added to this was all those face-to-face teaching staff that came with the Teachers Colleges with which we merged. To get rid of the staff they were redeployed to other faculties where faculties wanted them. But for most part, they were made redundant and shuffled to other parts. It was a pretty harsh time [Carr: Academic11, AIC4, p.8, 2011].
The abundance of staff that the former Faculty of Education had ‘inherited’ as a result of earlier Teacher’s College amalgamations brought about extra costs especially for payment and salaries. These extra costs had resulted in staff retrenchments, redundancies and re-deployments prior to the amalgamation in focus.

Lack of support from university management was an issue raised by several staff members that had resulted in the financial problems of the former Faculty of Education. Carr, a senior academic who was also a member of the AIC stated:

For the most part, the big reason the university was operating this way was there were some very influential senior administrative staff of the university that stayed there for a very long time. And they adopted a very patronizing view towards the way the university should be run and they largely regarded academics as expendable. In other words, universities are bricks, buildings and roads and things that made a building and academics were sort of people that wander in and out, and that didn’t capture very much [Carr: Academic11, AIC4, p.5, 2011].

Hence, Carr’s comment demonstrates how academic staff were, to some extent, perceived as expendable or at least not central to university operations. Carr further argued that high and unnecessary administrative costs, as well as unreasonable administrative structures, contributed to the university’s economic problems. S/he stated:

There wasn’t a strong Professoriate that was able to stand up and argue what we were up against and the kind of ridiculous administrative costs and administrative structures that had been put in place. If you looked closely at any of those administrative structures, they don’t bear close inspection because they are really difficult to justify. They were there because they had always been there and their growth (referring to the administrative structure) went largely
unchecked, whereas the faculty was subject to all kinds of criteria and accountability measures like publications and teaching outcomes and that kind of stuff [Carr: Academic11, AIC4, p.5, 2011].

Carr’s comment reveals the perception that while faculties were held accountable for their budgets and activities, the university hierarchy was not.

Other members agreed that the university executive leadership demonstrated a patronizing attitude towards the faculty with little sympathy demonstrated about budget problems on particular operating costs that were expensive but unavoidable. Beck, a former senior academic, stated, “The Vice Chancellor in particular, had a very hostile attitude towards the faculty. Very unhelpful!” [Beck: Academic7, p.4, 2011].

In addition to the above, many academics also felt that the university’s economic policy had resulted in constraints on their academic activities and this was not well accepted by the academics. Many felt that the value of academic and intellectual discovery was being ignored. Additionally, the academics felt that raising funds for the faculty was not their core role as teaching and research professionals.

On the faculty budget issue, a senior administrator provided an interesting perspective in stating that many among the staff did not understand the University’s budgeting system especially in relation to how different budget components are used for particular purposes. The perceived lack of understanding was seen to lead to a misinterpretation of what was required to achieve a financially sustainable faculty. S/he explained:

It’s about different components of income that you would bring in. So it’s the income from students’ fees, and then there’s research income, and also commercial income. So, Education (the faculty) has always been very good in the research area and in bringing in substantial amounts of money. (I mean that it is supposed to be used for research but doesn’t support the everyday operation of the faculty). So, in relation to the income that comes in through students’ fees that are not enough to cover all academic courses and all administration costs and
overheads for the faculty to run. Sometimes, that’s not very well understood, at the academic level [Avis: Admin6, AIC5, p.2, 2011].

Budget lines for specific purposes could not be used to fund other purposes. A senior University Executive agreed, explaining:

The style of budgeting doesn’t allow for one to tap into the budget of another operation. It is the breaking down between different forms of funding: research, teaching, special projects within teaching and operating type revenue (Barny: UniExec1, p.1, 2011).

Another senior administrator further clarified the difference between the research budget and the operational budget:

Our research budget is different from the operational budget. Research income is to be spent on the research projects. But for the real research money, say (for example) the Australian Research Council (ARC), there is no surplus. In fact, they never fund you fully. So, when you look at research budgets in universities, they are highly valued because they are seen as measures of research performance and publication – having a lot of research income is seen as a good thing because a lot of research income comes from government sources, government competitive funding sources. In terms of your operational budget, if I win a research grant, an ARC grant, I’m expected to put at least one day a week into that research project in which university pays my salary. The research project does not pay for that. So, if you look at it in those terms, if you have a lot of staff being successful in the ARC, there are some slight benefits in the long term, but basically research money is almost counterproductive in balancing the books. The more research you do, the more it costs. But, notwithstanding that, research income people – the Vice Chancellor, the Deputy Vice
Chancellor, the Deans, the Associate Deans – all love large amounts of research income. That creates problems on the operational budget because you cannot tap the money for operational purposes [Ted: Academic9, p.9, 2011].

In sum, the research budget is highly valued by the university especially among the academics. Nevertheless, this budget can only be used for research purposes and this budget may be inadequate especially since it does not factor in the cost of academics’ time. As such, some of the operational budget is used to cover the inadequate research budget. The research budget is valued because it reflects the university’s and academics’ active research profile which is used to produce league tables of universities as well as performance evaluations of academics.

Senior academics stated that balancing the faculty’s budget was no easy task. Unlike the Faculty of Business and Law which would normally have a budget surplus due to their consultations, the former Faculty of Education faced challenges in sustaining tight control over its overall financial operations. Ted, a senior academic stated:

We thought we had managed a difficult budget one year and that it would be better next year and then when the budget for next year was set, it was difficult again. We could never know in advance how much money we had. There were one or two years where we were in a bit better shape. We felt balancing the books wasn’t a difficult thing to do but over the last fifteen years or so in particular, the workload for academic staff has just gone up like that in order to balance the books [Ted: Academic9, p.8, 2011].

Ted also stated:

The budgets for the faculty are public documents. They go through the Academic Board and the University Council. They are available to
everybody. There are academic salaries and general staff salaries. And you would be operating 90% of the budget on salaries. So, you’ve got 10% left (of the budget) and that is also for paying the bills, your contribution to the university or to buy equipment or whatever. So, you don’t need to be an accountant to see very clear figures on a spread sheet, on a power point slide, and see my salary is part of that academic salary, I expect to get paid through the year, you can see that all academic staff, unless they resign or leave for a reason, money for that year would be spent on that. That’s a commitment. So, when people wanted money for other things, like travel or whatever they can’t take out of research funds then it was just sometimes very very tight. So I think people knew that [Ted: Academic9, p.9, 2011].

A senior academic stated that part of his/her day-to-day work responsibilities was to make sure that the faculty met the operational target within the budget constraints the faculty was facing. That is, in addition to the constant struggle to keep the faculty running within budget limits prescribed by the upper management as well as the constant struggle to find extra money for other costs incurred:

On a daily basis I do just that (dealing with the budget). For example, we have a budget process where we set the budget for the following year around August or September and make modifications to that. At the center stage on the 31st March we know exactly how many students we have and a budget is made around the fee income from the students. I have to do a revision of the budget. And at the moment I am engaged very heavily in that having discussions with each School of the Faculty about whether or not they have met their enrolment targets and how it has influenced their budgets – and we have to reset the budget [Matt: Academic6, p.6, 2011].
The senior academic also mentioned the hectic job of assisting staff to better understand both the Faculty’s budget constraints and the targets that need to be set to remain within these constraints.

A University Executive provided a similar picture about the nature of budgets in the higher education sector. S/he stated that the income for faculty operations is mostly derived from students’ fees and research revenue allocated solely to research projects:

The problem is perhaps that higher education is not an organization that is out to make money because there are considerations as well as contributions to the society, as a knowledge transferring organization. Thus, there is a need to have strategies to attract as many students as possible and that the university’s business is very much dependent on the money it has and therefore strategies for getting more money are very important. The international students are charged more than the local students because international students are said to cost more to provide campus support. At the same time, international students are very important since the government is funding the local students less. Therefore the reliance on international students is greater [Barny: UniExec1, p.9, 2011].

When queried whether there is a strong link between managing operations and budgeting s/he replied, “ Appropriately strong! I produce the financial plan and major projects or strategies that typically have to be costed and I would have to sign off on those. So there’s a strong link between strategies going forward, the costing of those and the financials involved” [Barny: UniExec1, p.9, 2011]. Furthermore, s/he stated that financial sustainability is important and hence international students help to balance the budget. Barny stated:

The nature of our business is that typically the academic endeavor is to do a lot of research which costs us money and teach as many
students as possible or pay the fees to get the top students. The reason why we have more international students is that they pay a higher fee. So that’s where we find extra funds. Business and Law (The faculty) has a higher proportion of international students and so it just makes them a more profitable area [Barny: UniExec1, p.10, 2011].

The former Faculty of Education’s fragile financial situation had adversely affected everyday faculty operations, particularly in relation to increased stress levels experienced by some staff. Two senior administrative staff pinpointed a key reason why staff may have felt more pressured. Mark stated that, “We were always under pressure to work harder, faster and cheaper” [Mark: Admin1, p.4, 2011]. Another senior administrator, Halle, stated:

The Faculty of Education was often reported that it didn’t seem to perform as some of the other faculties. There was always a sense of ‘we need to work hard’, ‘we need to get more students’ or ‘we need to do more research’. I think in the Faculty of Education that we were always running close to budget and that we had to economize wherever we could [Halle: Admin4, p.2, 2011].

Joy, an administrator, shared his/her experience of the university’s intention to cut the administrative staff’s pay, including his/her own: “We felt we were being punished. Rather than saying we were doing a good job, the HEW salary level of everyone was dropped” [Joy: Admin5, p.10, 2011].

Ellen, an administrator, shared the same experience as Joy. S/he stated that the university management wanted to drop the pay level of the staff members in his/her office from one HEW level to another lower HEW with the purpose of saving money. S/he described the situation for contract staff and shared his/her and other administrative staff’ experiences of the faculty’s economic problems:
So, people who had been employed in the office as casuals for two years when really they should have been employed on an on-going basis as a full time staff. They were employed at a lower pay rate even though they were doing exactly the same work in the years before. There would be small main things that would happen. I remembered I was told off once for buying a bunch of flowers for my boss who organized an extensive professional development day and we’ve always had to pay for our own Christmas celebrations. These are things that reflect an attitude from the administration about the value of the staff. When we were facing the final restructure it was put to us that staff working in the professional experience office had to drop a pay level within general staff work according to HEW level and they were paid HEW 6 and they were proposing we would drop the pay to HEW 5. It makes a difference. It was a reflection of how the top administration perceived our value. They thought we weren’t working hard enough or good enough which was not the truth because our teams were very hard working. That really insulted me. I started to look for other work and I did get another job. They didn’t listen at all [Ellen: Admin3, p.4, 2011].

Summing up his/her feelings about the University’s leadership, the senior administrator reflected:

You are paid according to your value. Somebody says I am going to pay you less than I am paying you now. It’s like they are undervaluing you and criticizing you. It’s the perception that I am not seen to be working hard enough and therefore I am of less value. Care factor is ‘zero’! That’s how I felt at that time. And because it wasn’t the first time, and it wasn’t the second time, but the third time, I had had enough [Ellen: Admin3, p.4, 2011].
Interestingly, following the amalgamation, the Vice Chancellor decided to give the faculty one million dollars per year for the next three consecutive years to assist the new faculty in getting established. This interesting financial decision was recalled by several staff members; one of whom said:

So the school was depleted of resources for staffing and the university provided an additional million dollars to the school over a three year period to allow them to renew, to make new appointments, to rebuild its research, to conduct significant curriculum renewal, the use of consultants during that, to develop new courses on the advice of various consultants that has actually demonstrated clearly that that renewal had occurred – the outcomes of that renewal have been considerable [Jamie: Academic4, p.6, 2011].

This turn of events was well accepted by the members of the new faculty. However, the Chair of the AIC member had a different view:

If you asked me what is one thing about the whole process that annoyed me, it was having gone through all the angst and knowing that some people were stressed and very upset and some people lost their jobs, in the end the Vice Chancellor backed off and said, “You could have another year before we take the millions off you.” That really annoyed me. We made the one million dollar savings and she didn’t take it. She left it in the combined faculty. And that just floored me because I thought if you were going to do that, why did I had to do what I had to do. It was more than frustrating. Why put me through all this if you just going to give the money back? [Ivy: AIC1, p.9, 2011].

Another AIC member was also puzzled by the Vice Chancellor’s decision. S/he could not understand why the Vice Chancellor returned the money from the amalgamation savings: “Maybe it was all designed by the Vice Chancellor like this
from the beginning,” implying that the Vice Chancellor may have planned the amalgamation the way s/he wanted so that by the end of the day the amalgamation could be achieved with his/her credibility intact.

6.7 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to present major themes extracted from the study. Five major themes were presented namely: an erosion of reputation and respect, adverse effects, leadership, communication and the issue of budget and finance. As can be seen throughout the findings, the amalgamation was messy. Not only was there a financial impetus, there were also many unforeseen effects at the micro level from decisions made at meso and macro level.

The following chapter entitled ‘Discussion of Findings’ presents a discussion of the major findings of the study and relates it to the literature.
CHAPTER SEVEN
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters (Chapter 5 and 6), the findings of the study were presented, namely the amalgamation timeline and emerging themes. This chapter presents a discussion of the major findings of this study and relates it to previous work in restructuring of higher education. This case study provides a snapshot of a higher education institution undergoing restructuring in the form of an amalgamation of two established faculties. Despite the event taking place at the micro level, the study provided insights into key outcomes common in higher education as restructuring takes place (processes, impacts and outcomes), as well as illuminating the nature of higher education in current day Australia.

7.2 Process and phases of the restructuring

First and foremost, this study provides intricate insights towards the processes, impacts and outcomes of a restructuring in higher education from the pre amalgamation, during amalgamation and post amalgamation stage. In this respect, not many previous studies provide a complete picture of the amalgamation in terms of its phases and processes (Arnolds & Boshoff, 2004; Kulati, 2000; Kyvika & Stensaker, 2013; Rafferty, Jimmieson & Armenakis, 2013).

As discussed in Chapter 6, despite the successful amalgamation of the two faculties, the restructuring impacted staff resulting in changes in job positions, resignations, redundancies, deep emotional impacts such as stress and anxiety, scrambling for job positions especially amongst administrative staff, extra work demands, loss of institutional identity and status, and loss of support from the staff. The case study also shows that the restructuring had disrupted academic affairs run by the former Faculty of Education such as the student teaching practicum and this resulted in complaints by the students. Previous research points out that change planning must take into consideration aspects such as impacts of change on the work system and the human factor (the employees and the clients of the organization), issues
of organizational context, the impacts of restructuring on other staff, issues of leadership, of communication and the availability of resources (Battilana & Casciaro, 2012; Elving, 2005; Fullan, 2011, Kotter, 2007). This will be further discussed in the following section under five emerging themes.

7.3 **Economy – The big issue**

Similar to other previous studies on higher education restructurings, this study shows that restructurings are mostly a top down initiative such as from the government or the top management of the universities (Harman, 2003; Sullivan, 2004) and usually as a cost saving exercise. In a time of global economic decline, many higher education institutions restructure for the purpose of economy; the market-based knowledge economy (Altbach, 2013b; Holmwood, 2014) and ensuring institutional survival in a competitive higher education market. The emphases of higher institutions shifts from ‘… quality of a system of higher education serving diverse needs to the placing of individual institutions within a rank order of universities in a global market’ (Holmwood, 2014, p.3). Additionally, research focusing on issues of higher education economy is widely reported at the macro level (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Marginson & Considine, 2000; UNESCO-IESALC, 2010a, 2010b). This literature discusses the effect of globalization on the higher education sector leading to the rising costs of higher education and how universities are trying to manage budget issues. Similar with this case study, avoiding financial distress and aiming for economic stability are the main causes for many higher education restructurings (Altbach, 2013b; Arnolds and Boshoff 2004; Oplatka, & Hemsley-Brown, 2010; UNESCO-IESALC, 2010a). Restructurings caused by budget problems may result in review of budgeting policies, guidelines and practices often aimed at saving money. Additionally, this study also concurs with previous research by Rhoades (2004), Lingenfelter (2006) and Altbach & Teichler (2001) that focused on funding shortfalls and subsequent impacts at the meso and micro levels of higher education.

This study found that the amalgamation was an economic decision of cost savings initiated from the top management. The top management of the university in this case study believed that two faculties that amalgamated to become one would
result in cost savings as non-duplication of administrative positions would lead to cost reduction. As with previous amalgamation studies (Chapman, 1988; Harman, et al., 1985; Harman, 1986, 1989; Harman, 2002), this case study shows how higher education restructuring was used to manage problems around funding, and management efficiencies and effective sharing of human resources. The top management of the university viewed reform as making the new Faculty of Arts and Education economically stronger and more resilient. Although the amalgamation of the former faculties was a success, the process of amalgamation was found to be more complex than expected with resultant increased levels of academic and administrative staff stress, anxiety and turnover. Interestingly, earlier studies have shown that many such restructurings may not necessarily result in cost savings and may be a waste of effort (Altbach, 2013b; Mabokela & Evans, 2009). In this study, the university’s recurrent costs had not been greatly reduced, as almost all staff retained their continuous employment status. Still, this did not stop the amalgamation. In the globalized world, academic stature, academic identity and establishments may not necessarily guarantee survival in the free market economy. In this study, it was revealed that both the faculties were established in their respective disciplines (Arts and Education). Both the former faculties were well known in the academic world for their established academics and programs. Yet, because the faculties were seen as economically weak, especially with reference to the former Faculty of Education, the status as a faculty was reduced.

The findings also reveal that budgetary problems were perceived at the faculty level to be caused largely by funding problems for providing the compulsory teacher practicum. In particular, the amalgamation was aimed at improving the former Faculty of Education’s financial status and its image as being economically weak, despite counter arguments put by former Faculty of Education staff relating to insufficient federal funding as well as lack of supportive university management and policies. As pointed out in the previous chapter, undergraduate education students are required to undertake a number of teaching practicums. Although funding for this professional experience is provided by the Federal Government, the funding allocated is not enough (Russell, 2003). The teaching practicum funding further declined when the university
further cut the allocation to the Faculty of Education. Senior academics discovered that when compared to other universities, the total funding allocated to the former Faculty of Education was lesser.

A study of previous literature found that the teaching practicum funding issue has existed since the 1980s. Weaver and Smith (1998, p. 41) in highlighting the problem faced by schools stated:

Schools of Education budgets have suffered in the university-wide funding reductions in the last decade, registered as a ‘concern’ and a ‘problem’ for universities without a proposal for how these concerns and problems might be addressed in the Report of the National Standards and Guidelines for initial Teacher Education Project.

The Department of Education and Training, New South Wales, submitted a report pertaining to the funding of teacher education to the Federal Government (NSW, 2000). Amongst other issues it stated the need for the Federal Government to provide greater subsidies for this professional experience. It stated: “A strong, well-coordinated practice teaching regime is the *sine qua non* of teacher education. It must be properly funded and this funding has to take into account teacher remuneration for supervising teachers”. The report further stated, “Although the practicum is considered expensive and organizationally difficult, its role should be strengthened not reduced in any recommendations regarding teacher education” (NSW, 2000). The submission also identified the need for the universities and schools to collaborate in establishing, managing and evaluating teaching practicum funding models. Additionally, the report mentioned that the issue of teachers’ apparent reluctance to supervise practicum students revolved around the matter of increased teacher workloads as well as the inadequate financial reimbursement received for supervising students. This report and other submissions expressed dissatisfaction with most current approaches to the practicum and called for change (NSW, 2000; Russell, 2003). In 2007, a report by the House of Representatives Committee entitled, ‘*Top of the Class*’, highlighted the issue of funding mismanagement by many universities (Committees, 2007). The report
found that funding for the teaching practicum was used by some universities to cross-subsidise other areas in the university (Committees, 2007; Hartsuyker, 2007). On the same matter, The Australian Council of Deans of Education (Education, 2008) also submitted a review to the Federal Government urging a review of teacher practicum funding.

In this case study, the issue of the lack of funding for teaching practicum impacted not only the former Faculty of Education but also individuals such as the teachers in schools and teacher educators in the universities involved. In a report by the House of Representatives Committee of New South Wales, this issue was mentioned:

While universities are required to provide practicum placements for their students, there is no obligation on employing authorities or schools to offer places. In the absence of any obligation, universities must rely on the goodwill of schools and individual teachers. As student numbers have increased, so too has the need to find places. Many universities reported that they are having serious difficulties in finding a sufficient number of placements for their students.

Many course providers described an increasing reluctance on the part of teachers to take on the role of supervising practicum students. In part this is attributed to the intensification of teachers’ work in recent years; in part, to a lack of incentive to take on the role. Although teachers receive a payment under the Australian Higher Education Practice Teaching Supervision Award 1905, the amount is very small, attracting suggestions that it is a token incentive. There is little evidence that other incentives, such as time off in lieu or opportunities for professional development, are being used to encourage teachers to take on practicum students. Teachers who supervise practicum students generally do not receive any
form of accreditation or formal recognition for taking on the responsibility (House_of_Representatives, 2007).

This study suggests that higher education should be examined not only at the macro perspective but also at the micro perspective (at the level of faculties, schools and departments). Each different entity may be faced with a unique difficulty that may be the key factor to understanding the problem, as shown in this case study.

This study also highlights how the macroeconomic operating environment facing the higher education sector has posed significant financial management challenges to higher education entities at the micro level. In some universities, the implementation of a change intervention, such as the faculty amalgamation at the center of the case study reported in this thesis, represented a strategic response to the financial threats posed by the broader uncertain economy at the time. For the case study university, the faculty amalgamation ushered in a range of possibly unforeseen and inadvertent consequences. Inevitably, some of these consequences resulted in adverse outcomes for students, academics and administrative staff such as increased stress levels, erosion of staff morale and loss of jobs for some.

7.4 Higher education restructuring: impact at the micro level

This study supports research about the importance of acknowledging and understanding context in the quest for major organizational change (Kezar, 2001; Warren, 2009). Without a well-informed understanding of context (history, work culture and people), change agents run the risk of going against values and issues that are sentimental to organizational members, leading to the erosion of reputation and respect (Clark, 2009; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Kezar, 2001; Warren, 2009). Similar to the study by Warren (2009), the findings of this study reveal that understanding the faculties’ staff perspectives on restructuring is an important element in guiding successful amalgamations and organizational change.

Similar to a study by Clark (2009) who studied students’ perceptions as stakeholders of organizational cultures and identities in a university amalgamation, this study looked at the insights of the staff members as stakeholders of the amalgamation.
Additionally, similar to Clark (2009) this study reveals that there were mixed feelings towards the amalgamation. However, the majority of the staff members interviewed voiced strong objections to the amalgamation as compared to the few who stated that the amalgamation was needed.

This study also shows that there are different concerns between the academics and the administrators. Other studies have highlighted the differences that have existed between the administrative staff and the academics (Sebalj & Holbrook, 2006; Szekeres, 2004). This study further shows that in a time of restructuring, administrators are more concerned with issues such as job security, work load, work system and work environment. On the other hand, academics are more concerned over issues related to institutional image, prestige, status and academic identity. This study further reveals that during a restructuring, issues of academic quality, prestige, excellence and image are important issues for the academics. The restructuring in this case study impacted the academics as many felt that their identities were challenged and that all their hard work and contribution throughout the years for establishing the prestige and excellent stature of the former Faculty of Education was not taken into consideration by the upper management.

Similar to the findings of Lora-Kayambazinthu’s (2006) findings, the amalgamation of two faculties in this study challenged academic identities from the former Faculty of Education (including disciplinary and professional identities) even though reforms were only concerned with program and structural organizational restructurings. The current research therefore strengthens the point made by other researchers (Lora-Kayambazinthu, 2006; Gibbon, Habib, Jansen and Parekh, 2001) that academic identity plays a vital role in the micro politics of any restructuring in an academic institution. In the current research, the educationists are seen to be loyal to their academics and this relates to their understanding of what a higher education should look like. This includes the freedom of academics, the problems with increasing workloads, and that amalgamation of and within higher institutions sometimes are not related to the purpose of the universities - that is to enhance knowledge and the quest of knowledge discovery. Harman (2002) states that as a professional group, university academics are characterized more by divided loyalties, role ambiguities, heterogeneity,
anarchical tendencies, conflict and self-interests, than probably any other professional group such as doctors, lawyers, and engineers.

Additionally, in higher education, academics are known to develop an academic identity, loyal to their discipline and bound together by a disciplinary and professional identity that confers membership of a particular type of knowledge culture, characterised by its use of specific methods, subscription to particular discourses and determination of generally rule-bound standards (Becher & Trowler, 2001; Lora-Kayambazinthu, 2006; Winter, 2009). Where disciplinary identity is challenged in instances of academic restructuring, affiliation to ‘academic tribes’ (Becher and Trowler, 2001) often emerges as a powerful bloc within the university. According to Kogan and Hanney (2000), academic identity within university contexts expresses itself in many different ways. This case study is aligned to other studies which found that changes are resisted by academics for various reasons such as concerns related to erosion of the university’s prestigious academic image (that relates to academic identities, history and tradition) and the de-stabilization of academic activities (Slowey, 1995; Kezar 2013; Kwiek, 2014).

This study reveals that the impact of the restructuring for the academics was different than for the administrative staff. For the academics from the former Faculty of Education, the restructuring resulted in the loss of academic identity and prestige of the former Faculty of Education. They believed that retaining the level of academic prestige of the former education was not an easy task. Academic prestige takes years to build and achieve and is a result of continuous academic excellence and hard work (Tinning, 2011). Thus, the academics maintained that the agenda of academic excellence should have been a priority in any restructuring event (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Blackmore & Sachs, 2000; Tinning, 2011). The impact of restructuring on academics and the issue of academic identity have been cited by many as one of the leading issues in higher education restructuring (DePamphilis, 2009; Bolden, Gosling, O'Brien, Peters, Ryan, Haslam, & Winklemann, 2012). Interestingly, although many academics interviewed in this study do not agree with the restructuring, only one voiced strong objection. Others chose either to be passive and remain dissatisfied while continuing with their academic work or leave the university looking for greener
pastures. This phenomenon is reported widely in the literature (Fitzgerald, Gunter, & White, 2012; Hil, 2012; Hirsch & Weber, 2002). Many felt too bogged down with their workload that left no time to get involved with such matters (Dobele, Rundle-Thiele, Kopanidis & Steel, 2010; Kogan & Teichler, 2007). Academic work has intensified as expectations about teaching, research, student consultation, postgraduate supervision and research activities continue to rise.

This study also highlights findings of previous research (Sebalj & Holbrook, 2006; Szekers, 2004) that administrative staff are important to the efficiency, effective functioning and high performance of higher education institutions. Without administrative staff, higher education would be paralyzed and academics would be handicapped (Szekeres, 2004). Administrative staff, frequently referred to as ‘the invisible faculty members’, the ‘non-academic’ and ‘Others’ (Conway, 1998; Sebalj & Holbrook, 2006; Szekeres, 2004), are an integral part of the organizational context. Szekeres (2004) stated that administrative staff are:

Those people in universities who have a role that is predominantly administrative in nature, i.e. their focus is about either supporting the work of academic staff, dealing with students on non-academic matters or working in an administrative function such as finance, human resources, marketing, public relations, business development, student administration, academic administration, library, information technology, capital or property (Szekeres, 2004, pp. 7 - 8).

This case study therefore supports earlier studies (Amorim, 2013; Delprino, 2013; Evans, 1996; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Kotter, 2007; Starr, 2012) on the importance of the human factor during change process that highlights the complexities and importance of the human element in restructuring efforts. Although the amalgamation was aimed at solving financial issues and only involved the structural amalgamation of the two faculties, the restructuring impacted staff members, both the academics and the administrators. Moreover, changing people's minds or convincing staff that a major change intervention is a ‘good idea’ and that once ‘in place’ will
enhance the organization’s strategic capability, is a fraught task that needs careful consideration prior to any determination of what that intervention should be.

Interestingly too, this study shows the micro-politics of the restructuring: how people start grouping to stop the amalgamation; how alliances among staff members allow them to help each other secure jobs in the new faculty, how staff fight to keep their place, how some members of staff have no confidence in the leadership. In this case-study micro-political activities concerning the use of power, influence and networking by individuals and groups were used to achieve personal goals. The Vice Chancellor of the university used his/her power and authority to pursue the amalgamation despite the resistance. The academics used their networking to influence decisions made during the amalgamation as well as securing positions for some administrative staff. Likewise, some administrative staff used their networks with the upper management to secure their positions. In one case, the use of micro politics resulted in a committee member being asked to leave the university. There were also narrations by the staff that their colleagues used their influences to resist the restructuring either by not giving co-operation or causing difficulties to the AIC members. Additionally, there were reports of bickering, wrangling of positions, gossiping, ‘backstabbing’ and ‘backbiting’ among staff, especially among the administrative staff because they had to fight for their positions in the new faculty which affected their livelihood and future.

The phenomenon of politicking during educational change has been reported numerously by various studies (Bartunek, 2014; Nespor, 2013). Sarason (1990, p. 7) stated:

> Schools and school systems are political organizations in which power is an organizing feature. Ignore [power] relationships, leave unexamined their rationale, and the existing system will defeat efforts at reform. This will happen not because there is a grand conspiracy or because of mulish stubbornness in resisting change or because educators are uniquely unimaginative or uncreative (which they are not) but rather because recognizing and trying to change power
relationships, especially in complicated, traditional institutions, is among the most complex tasks human beings can undertake.

As stated above, change is not an easy task because it changes the socio-relationship and culture of the people and the organization.

7.5 Leadership

The findings also provided insights on the factor of leadership during a restructuring of a faculty in higher education. The first interesting finding about leadership in this study is the ‘new managerialism’ style of leadership in today's higher education institutions. This includes the adoption of management principles that place priority on economic and work performance over the intellectual impacts on the institution and welfare of the staff, the centralising of decision-making which alienates academics from the decision making within the university, the focus on performative measures leading to the increase of workloads among staff members, and the fragmentation of work tasks. Additionally, the Vice Chancellor enjoyed absolute power as reflected in the decision making throughout the amalgamation process such as the appointment of the AIC members. This study shows how the Vice Chancellor as the leader of the university vetoed his/her way in meetings to push for the amalgamation and the economic agenda of the amalgamation. This study also witnessed how the new managerialism leaders put importance on higher institution competitiveness in the global education markets.

The phenomenon of the ‘new managerialism’ leadership is highlighted in previous research (Amaral, Meek & Larsen, 2003; De Boer, Goedegebuure & Meek, 2010; Sharrock, 2010, Whitchurch, 2012). Despite strong concerns about its value, ‘new managerialism’ continues to dominate higher institutions through practices such as performative measures, quality assurance and market requirements (Beckmann, Andrea and Cooper, 2013). Previous studies also mention the rise of the managerialism ideology that has led to university leaders’ increased power resulting in an alienated and demoralized academic work force and a climate of resentment and resistance among academics (De Boer, Goedegebuure & Meek, 2010). Marginson & Considine
(2000) report that Vice Chancellors’ power can be likened to ‘a Napoleonic’ style president who wielded power even among the University Executives to get things done as well as “to advance a view, their view of the future of the university” (Marginson & Considine, 2000, pp. 68 - 69).

Secondly, this study provides insights about the leadership in higher institutions. The insights about leadership in higher institutions revealed in this study demonstrate how leaders holding managerial positions in higher education are faced with challenging issues. Academic leaders may feel pressured by external factors such as government policy to implement major changes and make every effort to do so while attempting to mitigate untoward or unwelcome impacts. From participants’ comments many academics regarded change imposed from a managerialist perspective to be unacceptable. Academic leaders felt that it was their responsibility to ensure that change would not have adverse outcomes for academics and the institution. This resulted in many academic managers facing dilemmas when offered managerial positions. Additionally, many academic managers reported that implementing change involving close colleagues was difficult. This difficulty may take on greater proportions when academic leaders are required to carry out changes such as those involving government initiatives and policies and in doing so may face hostile response from their academic peers. Interestingly too, none of the academic leaders, as well as academics and administrative staff, interviewed mention the impact of the restructuring to the students such as to students’ learning, activities and student-related university facilities. This could indicate that academics and administrative staff appeared very self-interested towards issues pertinent to them such as job security, academic status and prestige, rather than students’ quality learning and welfare. Previous studies mention that higher education reform has impact on students, especially for those students of low socioeconomic status, namely on issues of increased tuition fees and equality in higher education (Wilkins, Shams and Huisman, 2013).

The issue of the dilemma of academic leaders in higher institutions has been reported previously (Middlehurst, 1999; Slowey, 1995). Many such appointments are generally short term, rarely accompanied by a detailed job description and present distinct dilemmas compared to managerial level change agents in other industry sectors
Being an academic manager means doing much more administrative work at the expense of academic activities, in particular, research. Further, the academic manager may feel isolated, and be gripped with self-doubt when faced with the task of implementing unpopular and controversial changes (Slowey, 1995). This dilemma is described in Slowey’s (1995) study which found that most academic leaders prefer to retain their academic identities and “to be left in peace” (Slowey, 1995, p.27). Further, in instances where change is viewed as benefitting the government to a greater extent than the organization and its members, academic peers may view the academic managers as “playing into the politicians’ hands” (Slowey, 1995, p.28).

One other interesting finding of the study on leadership was that since the announcement of the amalgamation, there is a revolving door of leaders. This refers to the position of the Deans of the Faculty of Education and the Head of the School of Education. To date (from 2007 to 2012), there have been more than five persons that have led the education group since the announcement of the amalgamation. This includes Acting Deans of the Faculty and Acting Heads of the School of Education. Some interviewees argued that the frequent transitions of leaders reflected the instability of the education group and led to organizational whitewater. A previous study by Starr (2012) has reported on the phenomenon of the organizational whitewater in the educational setting, referring to the churn effect when new leaders enforce their decisions on the organization and put their stamp on how to do things. This may be hard on the staff since they have to adjust to the new style of management and leadership from above. For example, staff have difficulties knowing what the new leader wants of them and often have to rely on others in the organization.

Lastly, this study is consistent with the literature on leadership in higher education which suggests that besides power, the important essence of effective and strong leadership is gaining the acceptance of those who lead. In this study, although the Vice Chancellor had the power to implement change, the failure to influence and convince faculty members to accept change resulted in a lack of cooperation and some resistance from staff. Previous research literature states that even if an individual has authoritative leadership, this is second to the ability to influence people to work,
cooperate, collaborate, and achieve goals together, as these are most important qualities of good leadership (De Pree, 2004; Dess & Picken, 2000; Starr, 2012). Additionally, leaders must build and maintain trust, before, during and after planned major change interventions such as amalgamation (Ozag, 2006).

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings of the study. It highlights the emerging themes of the case study’s revelations and relates them to the literature of change and higher education restructuring. The following chapter is the final chapter of this study. Chapter Eight aims to situate the study in the literature of higher education research, highlights the contribution of the study and provides implications as well as suggesting directions for future research.
CHAPTER EIGHT
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

8.0 Introduction

This is the final chapter of the study entitled ‘Restructuring in higher education: A case study in an Australian university’. This case study sets out to answer the research questions; How and why does a university undertake restructuring at the faculty level? How are the effects of restructuring experienced and perceived by stakeholders? This case study analyzes the processes, impact and outcomes of a major restructuring in the form of a faculty amalgamation. Despite the events taking place at the micro level, the study provided insights into key outcomes common in higher education as restructuring takes place, as well as the nature of higher education today. This chapter presents the conclusions, implication of findings, implications for future research and the summary of the research.

8.1 Conclusions

Moving on, now the amalgamation has happened. This study reveals that the amalgamation was a fait accompli from the time it was announced and by 1st January 2008, the amalgamation of the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Education into a new Faculty of Arts and Education was completed. It was a decision made by the top management of the university at the outset and the aim was for cost savings. Despite the shortcomings of the amalgamation, the new faculty has been established and continues its operation. The crux of the issue this research illuminates is how restructuring in higher education is impacted at the macro level (i.e. global, national), the meso level (i.e. systemic, bureaucratic) and micro level (i.e. in the university and as experienced by administrators and academics at the corporeal level). This study has also highlighted substantive findings in the area of restructuring in higher education originating from the research questions, ‘How and why does a university undertake restructuring at the faculty level?’ ‘How is restructuring justified, experienced and perceived by stakeholders within affected faculties?’ and ‘What are the outcomes of a higher education restructuring and how does this impact universities?’
Globalization\textsuperscript{6} changes the way universities operate. Nowadays, the activities of a university are underpinned with market values: individualism, choice, competition, innovation, efficiency and measurable performance outcomes, dictating every aspect of higher education activities. Universities become more competitive and set new targets for each of their faculties and departments, aiming for more money through research, consultation, and teaching and learning activities. Centers of excellence, faculties, departments and academic units in universities are impacted by the new liberalist policies and managerialism by the top university management resulting in some not being able to survive. Universities compete for status on global leagues tables in order to attract students and recruit high-performing staff. Cuts in funding mean that the faculties have to make do with minimal expenditure while operating certain programs. Sacrifices are warranted – including resorting to employing a majority of casual (non-permanent and sessional) staff. Although there are consultations when major decisions are made, opinions do not influence decisions taken at the executive level. University top management continue to pressure faculties to take in more students so that they can generate income to retain the university’s competitiveness and viability.

Restructurings impacted staff at the micro level: the academics and administrators. There was a resultant intensification of work during and after the amalgamation (with no repercussions for the university). Both academics and administrators simply worked longer and harder and there were fewer of them to do the work. Additionally, academics were pressured to market their knowledge and expertise, and to network with industry with the aim of getting consultation projects and compete for research grants from Federal Government or industry. Administrators have to adapt to changing work systems, organizational structures and multiple work descriptions and responsibilities. Ironically, when restructuring takes place, administrators are amongst the first to be made redundant if the organization feels the need for redundancy to take place. Job security is not guaranteed in higher education in a neo-liberal policy environment.

\textsuperscript{6} Refer page 2 of Chapter 1
During a higher education restructuring, power is an important issue. The redistribution of power vertically away from staff to the university executive resulted in some people and some ideas being marginalized (see Starr, 2000). Some staff felt ignored and disempowered, while others at the executive level were privileged. Many respondents felt isolated, alienated and excluded from the goings-on of the university – its direction, decision making and its intellectual agenda. The staff compact moved from notions of collectiveness, cooperation and social connectedness to individualised work and a competition to retain jobs within the new School of Education. Hierarchical and asymmetrical power relations became entrenched through technical divisions of labour (job descriptions and involvement in decision-making). Communications to those not involved directly in decision-making occur mostly through ‘consultations’. A center-periphery power structure emerged in place of collective/collaborative arrangements.

Faculty staff members appear to have been perceived by the university as part of the problem that the amalgamation was to address – they were too expensive and not productive enough (the university believed there could be fewer people doing the same job at lower payment rates – see Starr, 2015). Interestingly, although there was evidence of passive resistance amongst members of staff, there was no overt resistance (such as a union action). Academics and administrators did not complain formally and collectively about the minimalist provisions that were to become the ‘new normal’. Staff may have complained, but they were effectively compliant and complicit in the changes. Universities have the flexibility to change workforce arrangements at their will. Alternative views to those held by the university executive were viewed as disruptive and non-compliant. Many staff harboured deep resentments and felt de-valued. Many endured being demoted as the cost savings came into effect. Considerations of the faculty’s previous sacrifices and achievements were minimal.

The ethics and values of the university during the restructuring are paradoxical. Staff considered themselves as ‘collegiate’ with a service culture, but the new arrangements reconfigured this into responsiveness to ‘clients’ in raising the university’s national and international league table rankings (with market competition and choice being valorized – see Starr, 2000). The values implicit in the amalgamation
and held by the university executive were anathema to the values held by staff (suggestive of the ways in which they had worked up to that time – collegially and not in competition with each other). The amalgamation was a technical solution to an economic problem but the moral dimensions that emerged were not taken into account. The emotional ‘fall-out’ created damage to some individuals (it was a technical-rational reform which was inconsistent with the views and values of staff). University amalgamation was about ‘down-sizing’ which eroded the psychological contract between employees and the university; staff loyalty was not acknowledged or rewarded. Staff noticed a cultural change – policy directives were more coercive and controlling, and they subsequently felt a lack of trust as the university sacked or retrenched people and cut funding. There is an obvious paradox in the university trying to exert efficiencies (cost savings) that had a negative impact on productivity (the university wanted both, but efficiency works against productivity – see also Starr, 2015). When one asks who benefited from the change, one can perhaps deduce that the executive staff who met their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were the main beneficiaries.

Staff comments focused on the minutia and the immediate – they did not focus on key issues or foundational causes of the amalgamation (the macro foundations - global higher education policy hegemony). Despite the amalgamation being a university-devised activity, individuals were made to feel personally responsible if they did not retain a position in the new faculty (even though the objective was to reduce the number of jobs). The work of employees was ‘reinvented’, although no acknowledgment of the hard work this entailed was forthcoming from the university. The major effects were on careers, the changed nature of academic and administrative work in the faculty, and on work relationships (less connected). Corporate managerial discourses pervaded university policy – and these prevailed over cultural agendas.

This study outlined that change and restructuring of higher education will continue to happen due to the technological, social, economic and political forces of the globalised world impacting higher education not only at the macro level but also the micro level. Staff of the faculty which represents people at the micro level are facing greater hardships. The university top management continue to deal with the ever
changing macro policies set by the government. The academics are burdened with increasing workloads – more students per class (face to face and online), pressure to acquire research grants that are increasingly competitive, consultations to seek, networking with industries to conduct and various administrative forms to fill; despite less support from the university and top management, and the growing stress of performative measures. Besides the problems of work burdens, administrators are also faced with issues of job security. Additionally, administrators have to constantly manage changes that come along; learning and unlearning new operational systems, new organizational structures, and policies to ensure that the university continues to survive. All these happenings occur with lesser funding from the government, fewer employees and stricter work procedures set by the universities.

All in all, this study contributes significantly to the increasingly louder questioning in the field of reforms in higher education and the need to study the impact of reform efforts on higher education stakeholders.

8.2 Implication of findings

Although the restructuring in context focuses on specific activities of the case study, the general themes extracted from the findings may provide useful insights for policy makers, change agents, leaders and scholars who are interested and involved in higher institution restructurings.

Emerging market-driven higher education restructurings must be assessed and appropriate strategies must be developed incorporating all stakeholders involved, most especially the staff of higher education. Failure to incorporate insights from the staff of higher education might result to failure in restructurings which in turn means wastage of resources, time and money, as well as unnecessary emotional impacts on staff. Engaging and incorporating staff from the beginning when implementing restructurings and crucial decision making should be the way of the future leading to sustainable reform efforts.

Resistance to change may likely to occur and this needs strong change agents to overcome and mediate the resistance. Communication in restructuring must include staff at various levels of a higher institution. Ensuring two way communication during
change process allows staff to express and share their views of the change process. Getting feedback and insights from staff, as well as implementing smooth transitions of staff from one position to another requires adequate time. Agents must be clear of the short and long term impacts of the change to various stakeholders and this must be communicated well.

As restructurings commonly result to huge impact on staff, change agents and policy makers must ensure that people impacted by change are the prime concern during change process. Special considerations must be given to those impacted by the change to ensure that staff do not feel left out, understand and give full support towards the reform efforts. Programs managing change impact need to be put in placed and managed well. Focus must be given to the people involved and impacted by the change because these people are the ones having to enact change, apply for new positions, face extra tasks or even be made redundant. This is vital since restructurings happen rapidly and it is common for most organisations to go through few restructurings.

Adequate investments of time, human resources, facilities and technologies must be made towards making each reform a success. Reform must be planned well taking into consideration all resources needed. Facilities such as comfortable new work spaces, computers, equipments and supplies are needed and must not be sacrificed. Without adequate resources, restructurings may still take place but this would impose constraints on those implementing the restructuring resulting in unnecessary interventions.

Most importantly too, reforms and transformation efforts of higher education must be continued without sacrificing the key values and traditions of the university as an academic institution. Dissemination of knowledge, research and exploration into new frontiers and preserving the ability of universities to serve a broader public purpose must be made a priority. Market forces should not dominate and reshape the higher education enterprise giving negative impact to universities and its work force.

In the context of Malaysia and other countries faced with higher education restructurings, the above discussion may provide useful insights for policy makers and change agents in order to strategise, devise and execute proper change management plans. Incorporating considerations for the stakeholders at various levels addressing
issues of communication and change impacts through strategic planning, training and the provision of important resources such as money and time that will increase chances of change success.

8.3 **Implications for future research**

Restructuring of higher education in the wake of globalization is likely to become an increasingly familiar scenario. Each restructuring provides important insights into aspects of power, culture and tradition, work systems, decision-making, processes, change impacts and post-restructuring issues. These insights provide not only new knowledge but also vital lessons to higher education leaders and policy makers. A comparative study of multiple case studies of higher education restructurings would enable researchers to compare the practices, problems and issues faced by change implementers in the wake of globalization and free market impacts. Information from future research will illuminate issues on organizational culture, systems and environments which are contributing factors to the success of higher education restructurings.

Secondly, future research could look further at the impact of higher education restructurings at the micro level: specifically to a particular group involved and impacted by the restructuring such as the administrators, academics, casual staff and students. Giving these groups a voice through which to share their experiences and insights about higher education restructuring may elucidate change agents on strategic intervening measures that can be taken to ensure that change is a success. In addition, research focusing on the role of the Vice Chancellor, the union or the academics will provide better understandings of the problems and dilemmas faced by these stakeholders when higher education restructuring is taking place. This focus will contribute to useful knowledge to better understand the roles of each group as change processes in higher education take place.

8.4 **Autobiographical reflection**

Undertaking this research has been an exceptionally significant learning experience. Not only have I increased some understanding of the nature of research,
the cyclical, sometimes confusing and messy nature of the research process, I have also
learned that the research process can be disappointing and dreary, yet at different times
massively fulfilling and invigorating. This research has additionally given me some
key thoughts which have helped me look at my own professional values, and guiding
principles for conceivable changes to my own future practice.

I intend to explore further the impact of other reforms in higher education such
as the ones in Malaysia. Interestingly, Malaysia’s higher education is also facing new
innovations in higher education such as the ‘Graduate on time (GOT)’ policy, ‘Mission
Compact Based’ and ‘Exit Policies’. I am now more aware of what is going in
Malaysia’s higher education and am prepared to assist colleagues and the university
management to understand these reforms and prepare strategies in reform efforts.
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Appendix A

**Timeline of university amalgamation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Range</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972 – 1973</td>
<td>G Institute of Technology and G Teachers college merged to form Western University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>G Teachers College amalgamated with Western University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Campuses at Rusden, Burwood, Prahran and Toorak merged to form Queen College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>W Institute amalgamated with Western University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 – 1993</td>
<td>Queen College amalgamated with Western University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994 – 1995</td>
<td>Restructuring of the Faculty of Education from 5 schools to 2 schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Restructure of general staff in the Faculty of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Restructure of the Faculty of Education from 2 schools to 1 school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 – 2008</td>
<td>Amalgamation of the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Arts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

**Translation Procedure**

The following procedure will apply for all administrative roles below that of the Faculty General Manager role and will be implemented in the following sequence:

**Step 1**

Where the duties and skills set of a position/s in the new structure are the same or close to an existing position/s and there is only one person (or the required number of staff) involved then the person/s in the role will be translated (matched) to that role at their current HEW classification and time fraction without a formal selection process. Translation/matching will be done by Human Resources Services in conjunction with the Acting Dean, Faculty of Arts and Interim Dean, Faculty of Education.

**NOTE:** Translated staff will not be eligible to apply for any new or substantially different role in the new Faculty until Step 5 is completed.

**Step 2**

Roles within the new Faculty that are new or substantially different will be filled on a “cascading down” approach based on the HEW level of the role. This process will commence with the management roles within the new administrative structure and will be confined to staff in both faculties in the first instance. Normal University selection processes will apply and the time fraction of the new role in the new structure will be based on operational requirements.

This process will be completed before Step 3 is undertaken.

**Step 3**

Where the duties and skills set of a position/s in the new structure are the same or close to an existing position/s (irrespective of HEW level) and where the number of current staff in the existing structure exceeds the number of positions in the new structure a competitive merit based selection process will apply and be limited to these staff only. If selected to a role at a lower HEW level ongoing salary maintenance will apply. Normal University selection processes will apply.

**Step 4**

Following completion of Steps 1 to 3 those staff without a role in the new Faculty will be transferred to a vacant role within the new Faculty consistent with their qualifications, skills and experience without a formal selection process. If transferred to a role at a lower HEW level ongoing salary maintenance will apply.

**Step 5**

Following Step 4 the University will make all efforts to redeploy those staff still without a role in the new Faculty in an attempt to mitigate or avert the adverse effects of the change.

29/10/2007