

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

SYSTEMIC LEADERSHIP: ENHANCING LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE THEORY WITH  
BOUNDARY CRITIQUE

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research reported in this thesis was to determine if Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory can be further developed using insights from the theory of marginalization processes contained within the systems literature on Boundary Critique.

LMX is a leadership theory that conceptualizes leadership as a process that is centered on the interactions between leaders and followers. It describes how leaders develop higher-quality relationships with some followers (in-group members) than others (out-group members). In contrast, Boundary Critique is a theory and a set of methodological ideas from the literature on Critical Systems Thinking, which is useful for understanding and exploring the inclusion, exclusion and marginalization of both people and issues. It helps identify the boundaries of a system and the stakeholders with perspectives on it; and it supports reflection on the issues that should be included in, or excluded from, the boundary. Of most relevance within Boundary Critique is a systems theory of marginalization processes that is useful for both understanding marginalization dynamics and intervening to change them.

It might be assumed that these two theories are incommensurable, since they come from different paradigms. However, some concepts and terms look alike, and others are potentially complementary. LMX identifies in-groups and out-groups, while Boundary Critique talks about primary and secondary boundaries diagrammed concentrically, and the people (and the issues that concern them) that lie between these boundaries are the ones who are marginalized. Also, LMX focuses on justice in organizations and differential treatment, while Boundary Critique talks in terms of the values and ethics associated with marginalization.

To explore the potential added value to LMX of the theory of marginalization from Boundary Critique, three questions were addressed by the research:

- How can LMX be conceptually enhanced by drawing on the theory of marginalization from Boundary Critique?



- Can empirical evidence be provided for the validity of the enhanced LMX?
- If an enhanced LMX is supported with empirical evidence, how can Boundary Critique add value to the normative guidance for good leadership practice already offered by LMX?

To answer the first question, the Boundary Critique theory of marginalization was mapped onto concepts from LMX in a piece of desk-based research. It was found that LMX, as currently constituted, can identify the existence of differentiation, but merely assumes this is the result of favoritism by the leader – there is no examination of the issues that matter to in-group and out-group participants, which might explain, in a deeper manner, why the leader treats these groups differently. It is proposed that the additional concepts in the theory of marginalization (boundaries, values, conflict and social rituals) are useful for developing explanations for why in-groups and out-groups exist within an organization – particularly what values and boundary judgments differentiate in-group from out-group members.

Answering question 2, about empirical evidence provided for the validity of the enhanced LMX, required a comparative case study approach. The research looked at two departments in a Mexican university: one with high LMX differentiation (a clear in-group and out-group) and one with low differentiation. Semi-structured interviews of departmental members were undertaken to identify relevant values, boundary judgments, conflicts and rituals reinforcing or challenging marginalization. It was discovered that there were clear differences between the two departments, and the additional concepts made available through the Boundary Critique theory of marginalization added new detail and value in understanding what was happening in the high differentiation department. The theory of marginalization helped to identify both the roots of the differentiation (the issue or issues that underpinned it, causing the in-groups and out-groups to emerge) and the ways in which it came to be systemically entrenched through stigmatization and ritual.

Another important finding, which was not anticipated by the researcher, came from analyzing the data from the low-differentiation department (without an in-group and out-group).

A relatively mild form of marginalization was found, even though there was virtually no LMX differentiation. This generated a new question: how can marginalization exist without causing more significant and entrenched differentiation? It would appear that, in this low differentiation department, there was a counter-system of 'integration rituals', and these worked to minimize the impact of the marginalization. Instead of splitting the department into an in-group and out-group, these rituals reinforced the whole-group identity. Thus it was apparent that, even when issues existed that could divide people, the division could be avoided.

Finally, to answer the third question concerning what normative guidance for management practice can be derived from the enhanced LMX, two pieces of research were undertaken. First, lessons were drawn out from what was happening in the low differentiation department, where there was clearly an issue of marginalization, but it had not developed into full LMX differentiation and stigma. Second, desk-based research was undertaken to look for normative guidance from the Boundary Critique literature on marginalization that went beyond what is offered in the LMX literature. It was found that it is indeed possible to offer new normative guidance to managers seeking to address LMX differentiation.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

According to Smith and Hughey (2006), leadership constitutes one of the most critical determinants of organizational success or failure, and it is the difference between excellence and mediocrity, or even the survival and extinction of organizations. Even though leadership is widely discussed in the management literature, there has been no consensus in the research community about its definition. Bass and Bass (2008) identify three main categories into which definitions can be grouped:

1. *Leader-centric*: the focus is on the leader and his/her personality, traits, attributions, behavior, etc., with little consideration of the wider context;
2. *Leadership as an effect*: the focus is again on the leader, but on what he or she achieves in the context of fulfilling the organization's goals; and
3. *Interaction between the leader and the led*: leadership is defined as a process, or power relationship, or as a combination of these things.

This last form of definition is becoming increasingly popular since it is concerned with the cognitions, interpersonal behaviors and attributions of both leaders *and followers*. For Yukl (2006) and Northouse (2010), leadership is a process in which an individual influences others, and those others in turn influence the leader. That is, it is a two-way process between the leader and followers. Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) and Scandura (1999), among others, define leadership as a process where an exchange or transaction between a leader and a follower is produced. Because this is a more systemic (inclusive) understanding of leadership than the other two, and is consistent with my own experience in organizations that the actions of leaders *and followers* need to be accounted for in understanding organizational behavior, it is the focus for my own research.

### **1.1 Leader-Member Exchange Theory**

This understanding of leadership has been given the label, 'Leader-Member Exchange Theory' (LMX) (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). LMX is centered on the interactions between an individual (leader) and a group of individuals (followers). It asserts that leaders form unique exchange relationships of different quality with each of these followers (Gils et al, 2010). The quality of the member's exchange relationship with the leader depends on the results of role expectations, and evaluations of whether these expectations have been fulfilled, informally negotiated over time between followers and their leader (Gils et al, 2010). There are two basic categories of relationship: the *in-group*, which the leader has high quality exchanges with; and the *out-group*, which has low quality exchanges with the leader. The in-group, with good quality exchange relationships between a leader and followers, is characterized by high trust, interaction and support, and formal/informal rewards; and the out-group, with low quality exchange, is characterized by low trust, interaction and support, and no or few formal/informal rewards. The out-group is treated primarily in accordance with the written rules and contracts in the organization; the in-group receives more than what is officially required (Dienesch and Liden, 1986; Bass and Bass, 2008).

Who comes to be 'in' and who is left 'out' is said to be shaped by three components of reciprocal behavior: the time lapse between exchanges (leaders generally require their expectations for a timely exchange to be met if they are going to include followers in the in-group); the relative value of what is exchanged and returned (leaders must perceive high returns from followers to include them in the in-group); and motive for the exchange (e.g., if the leader perceives the actions of the follower as merely the result of self-interest, they may be less likely to include that follower in the in-group compared with a perceived motive of mutual interest or deep concern for others) (Uhl-Bien and Maslyn, 2000).

The degree of variation that exists regarding the quality of relationships that a leader forms with different members is called 'LMX differentiation' (Erdogan and Bauer, 2010).

Employees recognize differentiation and have a fairly good sense of who is 'in' and who is 'out' in the eyes of their supervisors (Bolino, 2007) because leaders can have both types of exchanges with people in the same work group (i.e., the work group can be viewed as the 'container system' in which an in-group and out-group come to be formed). Thus, followers can compare how different people are treated by the leader.

## **1.2 Boundary Critique**

While LMX theory has been published in the management literature on leadership, a comparable theory called 'Boundary Critique' has been proposed in the systems literature (e.g., Midgley et al, 1998). Boundary Critique "is concerned with issues and the boundaries that differentiate their elements" (Yolles, 2001, p.35).

Boundary Critique is a theory and set of methodological ideas for exploring the inclusion, exclusion and marginalization of both people and issues in an analysis or intervention (Foote et al, 2007). "The boundaries indicate what information is considered relevant and what is considered superfluous, and are the result of value judgments" (Midgley and Pinzón, 2011, p.1544). Boundaries are created through the values, ethics and knowledge of stakeholders, and debating boundaries can be seen as an ethical process (Ulrich, 1983; Midgley, 2000; Yolles, 2001; Córdoba and Midgley, 2003, 2006).

One aspect of Boundary Critique is a theory of marginalization processes in social situations (Midgley, 1992a, 2000; Midgley et al, 1998; Boyd et al, 2004; Midgley and Pinzón, 2011), and this would appear to map onto LMX in the sense that the latter theory also claims that there are some participants who are relatively privileged and others who are treated less well. However, there is more to the theory of Boundary Critique, because it suggests that there are issues of value judgment, framing, ritual and wider social discourse involved in determining in-group and out-group status.

These things have either not been considered, or have only been considered in a relatively superficial manner, by LMX writers (see Chapter 2 for a more detailed

argument). This suggests the possibility that the theory of Boundary Critique could be used to further develop LMX.

The theory of Boundary Critique has both descriptive and normative dimensions: i.e., it can be used to explain what is happening in a given situation of marginalization (descriptive) and it can be used to inform intervention to stimulate change (normative). It is the descriptive dimension that maps onto LMX. However, the normative dimension offers a way to address problematic boundary issues so, if LMX can indeed be developed through reflection on the descriptive element of Boundary Critique, it may also be possible that the normative dimension of the theory could offer something of value to those wanting to know the implications of LMX for good leadership practice.

### ***1.3 Research Purpose and Questions***

The purpose of this research is to determine if Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory can indeed be developed using insights from the theory of marginalization processes contained within the literature on Boundary Critique. On the way to fulfilling this purpose, some key questions can be asked:

1. How can LMX be conceptually enhanced by drawing on the theory of marginalization from Boundary Critique?
2. Can empirical evidence be provided for the validity of the enhanced LMX?
3. If an enhanced LMX is supported with empirical evidence, how can Boundary Critique add value to the normative guidance for good leadership practice already offered by LMX?

The first research question clearly asks for a theoretical integration of ideas from the two sources into a new theory, so desk-based theoretical reflection is appropriate to address it. This is provided in Chapters 2 to 4. Chapter 2 gives more details of Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX); Chapter 3 does the same with Boundary Critique, especially focusing on the theory of marginalization processes. Chapter 4 is dedicated



to comparing both theories and proposing how the theory of marginalization can enhance LMX, answering question 1 (above).

Question 2, about empirical evidence provided for the validity of the enhanced LMX, requires a qualitative, empirical approach focused on a case study organization. Why this approach was taken rather than some other is explained in Chapter 5. The case study was focused on two departments in a Mexican university. In order to choose these departments, the LMX-7 questionnaire (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995) was applied to all the academic departments to locate those whose in-groups and out-groups were the most and the least clearly evident. One highly differentiated department (in terms of the LMX-7 analysis) was chosen, and one department with low differentiation was researched. The reason for this was to control for the possibility that marginalization is independent of LMX differentiation. It would only be reasonable to claim that the theory of marginalization could enhance LMX if significant features of marginalization can only be found in highly differentiated Departments and not in those with low differentiation (in the latter, the expectation was to find either no marginalization or only mild forms of it). Once the Departments were chosen, semi-structured interviews were undertaken with the Heads of Department and all the Departmental members (except a small number who chose to opt out of the research). The methodology, methods and process of data analysis are explained more fully in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 then provides evidence that the theory of marginalization processes associated with Boundary Critique can indeed enhance LMX, and this allows an answer to be provided to question 2 (concerning the provision of empirical evidence).

Question 3 asks about the added value that Boundary Critique might provide to LMX in terms of normative recommendations for good leadership practice. A mixture of reflections on the Mexican university case study and desk-based, theoretical research is used to answer this question, and the results are provided in Chapter 7.

## CHAPTER 2

### LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE THEORY

#### ***2.1 LMX Background***

Since “nothing gets accomplished without it” (Yammarino, 2013, p.149), and “leadership is such a natural and basic element of social groups” (Knippenberg, 2011, p.1078), the concept of leadership has been studied for more than 100 years. Different authors from different perspectives have developed thousands of views, ideas and approaches:

“Leadership is about changes” (Yukl, 2006, p.1). “Leadership is a process enacted in the context of a shared group membership” (Knippenberg, 2011, p.1078). “Leadership is a highly sought-after and highly valued commodity” (Northouse, 2010, p.1). “Leadership depends on the situation” (Vroom and Jago, 2007, p.17). “Leadership is a multi-faceted construct involving aspects of the leader, the follower and the dyadic relationship between the two” (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995, p.224). “Leadership is something that all organizations care about” (Day et al, 2013, p.79).

Bass and Bass (2008) declare that different definitions and concepts of leadership have been presented in a multitude of essays and discussions, but the most common definitions tend to concentrate on the leader as a person, on his/her behavior, his/her impact and (more recently) on the interaction process between the leader and the follower. Kezar et al (2006) believe that, in the past twenty years, there has been a revolution in the way that leadership is conceptualized, where the concept has moved away from being leader-centered to process-centered, requiring individual commitment, empowerment and collective action.

Vroom and Jago (2007) conclude that virtually all definitions of leadership share the view that leadership involves the process of influence.

Yukl (2006) defines leadership as a “process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives” (p.8). Knippenberg (2011) also states that leadership is a process “that is enacted in the context of a group membership shared by leader and followers” (p.1078). Northouse (2013) shares Yukl and Knippenberg’s vision when he states that “leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p.3). In an attempt to reconcile definitions from the past and present, Yammarino defines leadership as:

“a multilevel (person, dyad, group, collective) leader-follower interaction process that occurs in a particular situation (context) where a leader (e.g., superior, supervisor) and followers (e.g., subordinates, direct reports) share a purpose (vision, mission) and jointly accomplish things (e.g., goals, objectives, tasks) willingly (e.g., without coercion)” (Yammarino, 2013, p.150).

Viewing leadership as a process suggests that leaders affect and are affected by their followers, either positively or negatively (Guerrero and Rowe, 2011). This concept of a two-way-interactive relationship between a leader and his/her followers is the foundation of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory, which is the focus of my thesis.

## **2.2 Defining LMX**

LMX theory conceptualizes leadership as a process that is centered on the *interactions* (relationship-based social exchanges) between leaders and followers (Scandura, 1999; Northouse, 2010; Winkler 2010). It is the theory of a “one-to-one social exchange between a formal leader and a follower” (Zhang et al, 2012, p.52). It’s an approach that examines the quality of relationships between that leader and follower (Bernerth et al, 2007c; Schyns and Day, 2010; Gooty et al, 2012; Dansereau et al, 2013; Martin et al, 2015).

Scandura et al (1986) define LMX as:

“(a) a system of components and their relationships (b) involving both members of a dyad (c) involving interdependent patterns of behavior and (d) sharing mutual outcome instrumentalities and (e) producing conceptions of environments cause maps and value” (p.580).

Along with this definition, Gils et al (2010) and Volmer et al (2012) establish that leaders form *unique* exchange relationships with each of their followers; that is, every relationship a leader establishes with a follower is different from other relationships the leader has with everyone else (Allinson et al, 2001; Zhou and Schriesheim, 2010; Schriesheim et al, 2011; Dulebohn et al, 2012). The relationships are developed over time, and may vary in quality: some relationships are friendly and multi-faceted while others are restricted to little more than what is stated in an employment contract. Once the relationship is relatively stable or reaches an equilibrium, it remains steady over time (Allinson et al, 2001; Gils et al, 2010; Zhou and Schriesheim, 2010). Such relationships have important consequences for outcomes, such as job satisfaction, turnover, performance and commitment (Schriesheim et al, 1999; Winkler, 2010). Although one focus is on the reciprocal exchange between a leader and a follower, LMX theory also acknowledges that *both parties contribute to the development and maintenance of the ongoing relationship quality* (Schyns and Day, 2010).

So, how does the relationship start? According to Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), the relationship follows three stages from the initial contact until the stability of the relationship is established:

- a) The first stage starts with an initial offering by the leader, influenced by his/her personal characteristics and those of the followers, which is reciprocated by the follower. They interact based on formal role obligations and rules of economic exchange. Also known as the ‘role taking phase’, the leader evaluates the behavior and motivation of the follower and decides the amount of time and energy to invest in him/her (Graen and Scandura, 1987; Bauer and Green, 1996; Chang and Johnson, 2010; Zhang et al, 2012). Attributes like affect, loyalty,

contribution and professional respect help describe the quality of the exchange (Dienesch and Liden, 1986; Liden and Maslyn, 1998; Jha and Jha, 2013).

- b) The second stage involves an iterative interaction where the follower proves him/herself to the leader and receives feedback from him/her. The 'role-making phase' continues until either party perceives that they have reached a stable point (Graen and Scandura, 1987; Bauer and Green, 1996; Chang and Johnson, 2010; Gils et al, 2010; Zhang et al, 2012).
  
- c) The final stage, known as the 'role routinization phase', is reached when the relationship is either reinforced or weakened based on each dyadic partner's evaluation of the exchange (Gils et al, 2010).

Once this process is complete and the relationship can be considered stable, a status of high/low quality can be set and, across a whole organization, in- and out-groups are defined. Researchers such as Dulebohn et al (2012), Choi (2013), and Chen et al (2015) identify the influence of role theory (Katz and Kahn, 1978) and social exchange theory (Erdogan and Liden, 2002) in the definition of LMX relationships.

LMX theory, focusing on in-groups and out-groups, would appear, at first sight, to contradict the assertion made earlier that every relationship a leader establishes with followers is different. However, while differences might be observed when comparing two or more dyadic leader-follower relationships, similarities are also observable across such relationships, sufficient to talk about a whole group of followers being regarded as an in-group or an out-group – and this is not only the case from an 'externally observing' researcher perspective; employees within organizations are often very aware of their own status (Dansereau et al., 1975; Vecchio, 1985; Dienesch and Liden, 1986; Bauer and Green, 1996; Scandura, 1999; Cogliser and Schriesheim, 2000).

According to Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), effective leadership occurs when leaders and followers develop mature relationships, harvesting the benefits of a high quality relationship. This is the reason that LMX theory appeals to me, because effectiveness is not solely understood in terms of the leader's or followers' performance or perspective, but in terms of the quality of the interactions between them.

Dulebohn et al (2012), in their meta-analysis, suggest three categories of factors that determine LMX: follower characteristics (ability, skills, task performance, and extra-role contributions), leader characteristics (personality and behavioral styles), and the perceived similarity between the leader and the member.

### **2.3 Quality of Exchanges**

Because of the varied interaction experiences involved, some dyads will be willing to continue investing in each other, and will finally develop mature and reciprocal partnerships, whereas other dyads will remain within formally prescribed roles and behave according to employment contracts. Some factors that affect the quality of exchanges include demographic characteristics of both parts (leader/follower), the leader's perception of subordinate competence and the subordinate's deliberate efforts to win the respect of the leader (Allinson et al, 2001). Bauer and Green (1996) include time and resources as factors that influence the quality of the exchanges.

Dienesch and Liden (1986), Liden and Maslyn (1998) and Jha and Jha (2013) declare that affect, loyalty, contribution (quality and quantity of work-related activities) and professional respect are good descriptors of the quality of a relationship between leader and follower. Some researchers (e.g., Jenkins, 1994; Rockstuhl et al, 2012; and Jha and Jha, 2013) point out that the quality of the relationship tends to be influenced by variables connected with personality types, such as locus of control, need for power and self-esteem (Steiner, 1997; Barbuto Jr. et al, 2010; Dulebohn et al, 2012).

Nahrgang and Seo (2015) also state that at least five personality characteristics; aspects of interpersonal relationships (power, affective bonds, communication styles, etc.); actions and behaviors of both leader and follower; and context influence LMX relationships. In summary, it can be concluded that there are multiple factors at play while a relationship is forming, and these can affect the quality of such a relationship.

Dulebohn et al (2012) state that the *quality of the relationship* is the key for the outcomes (behavior, attitudes, satisfaction, commitment, etc.), not the leader's or

followers' behaviors and perceptions per se. The outcomes of the role-making process are differentiated relationship types and qualities, with the in-group having high quality relationships and the out-group low quality ones:

a) High-quality LMX relationships:

This is said to be the desirable state of a relationship between a leader and his/her subordinates, and some LMX theorists (Northouse, 2010; Farr-Wharton et al, 2011; Rockstuhl et al, 2012; Harris et al, 2014; Bernerth and Hirschfeld, 2016; Allison, 2016) make a normative assertion that ideally all subordinates should be treated well, without an out-group emerging. High quality relationships are characterized by mutual support, social engagement/liking, trust and respect (Sparrowe and Liden, 1997; Gils et al, 2010; Othman et al, 2010; Farr-Wharton et al, 2011). Subordinates who establish this type of relationship with the leader come to belong to the 'inner circle' and have privileges and access to special resources and additional opportunities for taking more tasks delegated by the leader (Gils et al, 2010; Zhang et al, 2012). This inner circle or 'in-group' receives attention, empathy and support from their leader in exchanges characterized by a high level of interaction (Dienesch and Liden, 1986; Allinson et al, 2001). In return, members invest more time and energy in the job, and they have a more positive attitude. "The higher the willingness to contribute to the aim of the group beyond the formal role determined by the work contract and the hierarchy, the more a subordinate becomes part of the in-group" (Winkler, 2010, p.47).

b) Low-quality LMX relationships:

These are defined only by the employment contract, with little or no social engagement. Exchanges are instrumental and transactional (Zhang et al, 2012). Subordinates who establish this type of relationship with the leader come to belong to the 'out-group', whose members are more likely to be given routine assignments, receive less supervisory support, feel more negatively about their jobs, have less advancement opportunities and stronger turnover intentions (Bolino, 2007; Pelletier, 2012). They tend to be excluded from some important activities and don't engage in the same level of communication with their leaders

(Pelletier, 2012). “If a follower is not interested in assuming such enlarged responsibilities, he/she will become a member of the “out-group”” (Winkler, 2010, p.48).

Descriptively, LMX theory suggests that it is important to recognize the existence of in-groups and out-groups within an organization (or within a sub-system of that organization). Prescriptively, it has been argued that leaders should create a special relationship with all their subordinates, similar to the relationships described as in-group (Northouse, 2010). It is said that the consequences of not doing so are increased turnover (Morrow et al, 2005; Schyns et al, 2007), absenteeism (Van Dierendonck et al, 2002), low job satisfaction (Schyns et al, 2009), less positive affect (Bernerth and Hirschfeld, 2016), more job stress among leaders (Bernerth and Hirschfeld, 2016) and poor performance (Bolino, 2007; Matta and Van Dyne, 2015). Research has shown that differences in the quality of exchanges have significant implications for both the individual and the organization (Allinson et al, 2001). Not only followers are negatively affected by the existence of out-groups: leaders that have good relationships with some followers and less-than-good relationships with others may find this detrimental to their own well-being (Bernerth and Hirschfeld, 2016).

## **2.4 Differentiation**

Considered the core concern of LMX theory (Henderson et al, 2009; Le Blanc and González-Romá, 2012; Gooty et al, 2012; Bernerth and Hirschfeld, 2016), the concept of differentiation refers to the diversity of exchanges a leader can develop with their followers. When a group of followers develop a high-quality relationship with their leader, this is called the ‘in-group’; and when exchanges result in a low-quality relationship, followers join the ‘out-group’. This *differentiation* between followers has attracted the attention of many researchers. Schyns and Day (2010) define differentiation as the “the variability across followers in a given workgroup with regard to their respective ratings of their relationship with the same leader” (p.10). Henderson et al (2009) define it as “a process by which a leader, through engaging in differing types



of exchange patterns with subordinates, forms different quality exchange relationships, from low to high, with them” (p.519). It represents the distribution of LMX quality within work groups (Ma and Qu, 2010). According to Harris et al (2014), it is the degree of variation in leader-member quality within a group. It can be said that there is a high LMX differentiation when there are followers in the in-group and followers in the out-group (that is, there is a greater difference in the quality of LMX relationships between the leader and two sets of followers); and low LMX differentiation when the leader maintains a similar quality relationship with all followers (Tse, 2014; Lam et al, 2015), either high or low.

LMX differentiation can be seen as a double-edged sword, since it creates the appearance of violating equity on the one hand, but on the other it can benefit group commitment and performance if the followers are actually satisfied with their status (Chen et al, 2015). The latter point assumes that some people do not aspire to in-group status and are content with simply fulfilling their employment contracts. Differentiation can lead to high group performance when leaders select the right followers for the right tasks according to their capabilities; but it can lead to low group performance when some followers start to withhold effort as they begin to feel that they are being treated unfairly (Schyns and Day, 2010). It can be suggested, then, that *if employee differentiation is perceived as unfair*, it may disrupt harmony within the larger group and harm cooperation among in-group and out-group employees (Bolino, 2007).

Anand et al (2015) confirm that followers usually have knowledge of it when their leader creates high differentiation, so their evaluation of this as fair or unfair is crucial. Ma and Qu (2010) state that “focus on differentiation resonates with calls to pay greater attention to the out-groups in leader–member relationships” (p.741).

According to Henderson et al (2009), Harris et al (2014) and Anand et al (2015), differentiation can be found at different levels or scales in the organization:

*a) The individual scale:* the leadership style and characteristics of the leader and the information and resources available to him/her can influence the level of differentiation. Highly transformational leaders are prone to develop high-

quality exchanges with a wide range of followers; ergo there is less differentiation (Krishnan, 2005). Leaders with little organizational resources or support won't be able to develop high-quality exchanges with all their followers, causing high levels of differentiation (Henderson et al, 2009).

b) *The work group scale*: group size, group culture and task interdependence can affect the exchange quality of the leaders with his/her followers. As group size becomes larger, the time and resources required for the leader to dedicate to his/her followers diminishes, affecting the quality of exchanges. When the group norms and values are characterized by a respect for people, collectivism and team orientation, there is likely to be little differentiation. When the development of a task requires a great deal of interaction between followers, differentiated roles are needed for the sake of efficiency, so higher levels of differentiation are likely to emerge (Henderson et al, 2009).

c) *The organizational scale*: Organizational culture, organizational design and structure, and human resource policies and practices can influence LMX differentiation. Organizational culture reflects the values and norms shared by a group; it indicates to members how to relate to others 'correctly'. If the culture emphasizes the development of relationships, individuals feel motivated to form high-quality leader member exchanges (Erdogan et al, 2006).

According to Henderson et al (2009), if an organization is structured mechanistically (that is, with well-established roles, standardized procedures and rules promoting equality and reducing favoritism), it is likely to have less differentiation in leader-member relationships than an organization that does not have such clearly defined roles, procedures and rules. Human resource policies and practices perceived as fair (covering employee relations and compensation, procedures and training) can positively influence the quality of the leader-member exchange (Mui Hung et al, 2004).

The LMX model recognizes that differentiated relationships may be influenced at one, two or multiple scales simultaneously (Henderson et al, 2009) since the leader-member exchanges are embedded in a larger workgroup (Harris et al, 2014). In addition to this,

LMX considers multiple dimensions or factors when the quality of a relationship is being assessed (Kang and Stewart, 2007).

In summary, it would appear that LMX differentiation is not good or bad per se: its positive or negative outcomes depend on individual and situational factors (Henderson et al, 2009; Epitropaki et al, 2016) – especially perceptions of unfairness (Bolino, 2007).

## ***2.5 Criticisms***

LMX has been widely discussed in the leadership literature, and is not without its critics. Northouse (2013) summarizes the four main criticisms: (i) LMX encourages unfairness in organizations; (ii) the theory is not yet fully developed or mature; (iii) there is not yet an adequate explanation of the contextual factors that may have an impact on LMX relationships; and (iv) there are issues concerning the measurement of LMX relationships that have not yet been adequately addressed. Winkler (2010) mentions two more criticisms of LMX theory: the not-so-clear division between high and low quality relationships, and the not-yet-fully elaborated prescriptive aspects of the theory.

I have a seventh criticism to add: that LMX does not pay sufficient attention to the history of the organization before the ‘initial offering’ of the leader. Each of these criticisms is discussed in more detail below.

### ***2.5.1. The Issue of Fairness***

“On the surface, [LMX] runs counter to the basic human value of fairness” (Northouse, 2010, p.156). Because LMX theory views the work unit as divided into two groups, and one of them receives special attention, it has been claimed that it can create a sense of deprivation on the part of low LMX members (Bolino and Turnley, 2009).

It is certainly the case that employees who have a high quality relationship with their immediate supervisor view the workplace as being fairer than those with low quality

relationships with him or her (Scandura, 1999). Maslyn and Uhl-Bien (2001) argue in their research that low LMX followers actually want the relationship to be better, and they believe they try to make it so, but say their efforts are not rewarded. Han and Bai (2012) confirm that, if a leader treats different employees differently, without a reason that is accepted as equitable, the employees perceive this as unfair. Pichler et al (2015) state in their research that “The point here is that individuals’ perceptions of the fairness by which authorities treat the group as a whole can potentially have a profound impact on individuals’ reactions to how they themselves have been treated and, ultimately, on their more general attitudes and behaviors” (p.9).

In my view, the criticism that LMX theory creates unfairness is mistaken. LMX theory does not actually *create* the differences it points to. As indicated by Henderson et al (2009), LMX theory was conceived to account for the pre-existing observation that leaders may treat different subordinates in different ways. Additionally, LMX has a normative dimension: its advocates suggest that it is important for leaders to develop high-quality relationships with all their followers (Pichler et al, 2015; Breukelen et al, 2006).

Essentially, the above criticism reflects a misunderstanding of the normative dimension of the theory, because Bolino and Turnley (2009) erroneously assume that describing the phenomenon of differentiation means that this is regarded by LMX proponents as a social good.

As I see it, the accusation of unfairness only has grounds in a very specific situation: when a leader slips from recognizing that differentiation is common to claiming that it is inevitable. However, this is not a problem with LMX theory itself, but with its illegitimate use: the fact that something exists does not mean that it can automatically be justified as right and fair (Habermas, 1984).

Chen et al (2015) present empirical evidence to show that LMX inequality doesn’t automatically represent inequity or injustice because “procedural injustice is less likely to occur when there is more task performance-based LMX differentiation” (p.20). That is, LMX differentiation can be justified if it is related to a higher task performance.

Masterson and Lenses (2015) propose a supervisor-employee-feedback model to integrate the concept of justice and LMX. The model includes past and present research findings in an attempt to move the research further and deal with the issue of fairness.

### *2.5.2. A Lack of Maturity*

Northouse (2013) comments that “the basic ideas of the theory are not fully developed” (p.171). LMX theory describes the relationship between a leader and his/her followers; the characteristics of this relationship; the fact that a work group can become differentiated into in-groups and out-groups depending on the quality of leader-member relationships; and how differentiation relates to commitment, performance, effectiveness, empowerment, turnover, absenteeism, organizational and distributive justice, etc.

According to Northouse (2013), what LMX theory fails to describe is:

- How high-quality leader–member exchanges are created (Anand et al, 2011). Researchers have pointed to the importance of the creation of these types of exchanges, but have failed to clearly explain how they are brought about. LMX describes the factors considered as important in exchange-building, like trust, respect, influence, reciprocity, etc., but doesn’t describe how these factors can be developed.
- How high- and low-quality relationships develop in leader–member exchange within a single organizational unit. Even though there are many studies of LMX, there is a lack of clear and refined definitions, concepts and propositions (Uhl-Bien et al, 2014).

As I see it, LMX theory offers a normative ideal (equal, high-quality treatment of followers by the leader), but I agree that little normative guidance is provided for leaders and followers wanting to change their relationships. This is a criticism of LMX that I will

address through this thesis, by importing/adapting some of the guidance offered by the proponents of the theory of Boundary Critique (e.g., Ulrich, 1994; Midgley, 2000).

### *2.5.3 Contextual Factors*

Anand et al (2011) state that research hasn't fully explained how contextual factors (i.e., norms and culture) impact LMX relationships. The main focus of LMX is the interaction between a leader and his or her followers, without taking into consideration the workplace context. There have been efforts by LMX researchers to include contextual variables in their studies, but more research is needed, since 'context' is such a wide and varied construct.

Vidyarthi et al (2014) consider LMX differentiation as an important part of the relational context surrounding each leader-member exchange; and, building on this premise, they show that the relational context also includes LMX relationships between an employee and other leaders besides the one being studied. Hu and Liden (2013) examine the context of an individual's leader-member exchange (LMX) relative to the LMXs of coworkers within the team (relative LMX, or RLMX). Nahrgang and Seo (2015) conclude that "all LMX relationships exist with the organizational context, and thus, various contextual variables also influence the development of the relationship" (p.114).

### *2.5.4. Issues of Measurement*

The measuring instruments used by LMX researchers have been criticized too. It would appear that there is a great deal of variation in reported scales used to measure LMX: Schriesheim et al (1999) discuss various LMX scales that embody between 2 and 25 variables.

These authors also point out that the literature is unclear about why different scales have been used; which ones are modifications of which other ones; and how the

modifications were undertaken. Northouse (2010) says that “the measurement scales lack content validity” (p.157).

Also, it is apparently unclear what the LMX research instruments are actually measuring. Breukelen et al (2006) argue that the various instruments do not clearly distinguish relationship quality (high and low) from organizational processes and the exchange of commodities (e.g., trust, support, contributions, etc.). Zhou and Schriesheim (2010) discuss the low congruence that is often found between the leader’s and the members’ views about the quality and reciprocity of their relationships. That is, the perceptions and rankings of the LMX relationships by the followers may be different from the perceptions and rankings of the leader. Leaders tend to evaluate the LMX relationship through a task-oriented lens, but followers focus more on the social aspects of the working relationship (Zhou and Schriesheim, 2010).

Breukelen et al (2006) suggest that there is a need to develop a consensually accepted instrument designed to measure the quality of the working relationship between leaders and members.

Bernerth et al (2007c) and Joseph et al (2011) have developed their own different approaches to tackle the measurement problem. Bernerth et al (2007c) have designed an assessment tool that provides evidence of content validity, as well as convergent, discriminant and predictive validity. This tool assesses the social exchange between the supervisor and his/her subordinate. Joseph et al (2011) have compared the most used measurement tools since 1999 (LMX-7 and LMX-MDM), and argue that there is a high correlation between them (also see Liden and Maslyn [1998], and Dulebohn et al [2012], who reach the same conclusion). It would therefore appear that Breukelen et al’s (2006) call for a consensually accepted measurement tool has been at least partially addressed, and it is now possible to replicate LMX research and accumulate data across multiple studies.

### 2.5.5. An Inadequate View of Organizational History

As mentioned earlier, Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) define the stages of a developing LMX relationship. The first stage, the initial offering by the leader, is presented as if the work environment was not in existence prior to the offering, or would not have any influence on the development of the relationship. I suggest that there are different scenarios where LMX relationships can be present, such as:

- When a new employee is hired and integrated into a well-established group,
- When an existing employee moves to another department,
- When a new boss is hired,
- When an employee is promoted to a leadership position, and
- When a new department is formed and the leader and all employees are new.

The literature does not consider these different scenarios, and tends to treat both leaders and followers as newcomers, without there being any prior organizational history. Zhou and Wang (2015) conclude that LMX development should therefore be seen as part of the newcomer adjustment process. However, they also state that the research undertaken so far is focused almost exclusively on adjustment *outcomes*, like commitment and turnover, and very little has looked at the adjustment *process*, including the role of LMX in this.

Cogliser and Schriesheim (2000) and Yukl (2009) also agree that there is no acknowledgment of the system of other relationships in which each leader-member relationship is embedded. “The impact of the group and organization on newcomer-supervisor LMX development has not been fully investigated” (Zhou and Wang, 2015, p.237).

As I see it, an adequate consideration of the previous history of relationships and the wider system is a significant lacuna in LMX theory, as this history will surely influence the trajectory and outcome of LMX relationships. Most organizations are not ‘virgin fields’.



## **2.6. Boundaries in LMX**

Some LMX researchers (e.g., Ma and Qu, 2010) talk in terms of the 'distinction' between an in-group and an out-group. A distinction can be understood as a boundary. Cabrera (2006) declares that "a distinction is not, as we often are prone to misunderstand, the object itself but is instead a *boundary* between the object and what it is not" (p.12, my emphasis). Cabrera was writing in the context of applied systems thinking, but I argue that this definition is also relevant to LMX theory.

According to Kang and Stewart (2007), there are two boundaries used in LMX theory:

- The first boundary surrounding the in-group, leaving out the out-group;
- The second boundary surrounding the work group, leaving out the rest of the organization.

Ma and Qu (2010) state that the boundary between the in-group and the out-group is easily identifiable when differentiation is high. DeRue and Ashford (2010) determine that "boundaries between leader and follower identities are permeable" (p.635). Dansereau et al (2013), on the other hand, explains that, when context is taken into account, it is difficult to be specific about boundaries since context varies over time.

Henderson et al (2009) also mention boundaries while discussing differentiation and performance. In any LMX situation, there will be:

- An individual level boundary, where each subordinate perceives the treatment he/she has received as congruent with, or different to, group-level norms, causing him/her to make a boundary judgment about whether he or she has in-group or out-group membership (these precise words might not be used by subordinates, but they will have some locally developed terminology that reflects the distinction being made).
- A work-group level boundary around all members of the group, regardless of whether they have a high or low quality relationship with the leader (i.e., the work-group is inclusive of both the in-group and out-group).

- An organization level boundary, where multiple work groups can be included.

Schyns and Day (2010) identify the 'span of leadership' as a boundary, since leaders of large groups find it difficult to establish high-quality relationships with all of their group members. Rockstuhl et al (2012) discuss organizational culture as a possible factor in boundary creation and maintenance between in-groups and out-groups. Gooty et al (2012) define time as "a potentially critical boundary condition that might impact the existence, or lack thereof, of LMX relationships" (p.1083), given that leader-follower dynamics can evolve over time.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

It is my contention that the understanding of 'boundary' used in LMX can be substantially enriched by reflection on systems theory, given that the boundary concept is one that has received a great deal of attention by writers in the systems research community (e.g., Churchman, 1970; Ulrich, 1983; Midgley, 2000; Cabrera et al, 2008). I intend to show through my research that the more sophisticated understanding of boundaries to be found in the systems literature, and especially the literature on the theory of Boundary Critique (which has been applied to a variety of systems and operational research projects), can help us further develop LMX theory and provide insights into how people might intervene to improve relationships between leaders and subordinates. Boundary Critique will be the focus of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 3

### BOUNDARY CRITIQUE

In this chapter, the theory of Boundary Critique is introduced and its elements described so we may understand and reflect on their value. This will help me to answer the first research question, “How can LMX be conceptually enhanced by drawing on the theory of marginalization from Boundary Critique?”

#### ***3.1 The background of Boundary Critique in Systems Science and Systems Thinking***

The term ‘Boundary Critique’ has been evolving along with the wider field of systems thinking, so to understand its meaning, it is important to know where the concept originally came from.

##### *3.1.1 Systems Thinking*

A system is, according to Jackson (2003), a “complex whole the functioning of which depends on its parts and the interactions between those parts” (p.3). Indeed, it’s not only the parts and their relationships that matter, but also the function or purpose of the system as a whole (Arnold and Wade, 2015). *Systems thinking*, therefore, is a “system of thinking about systems” (Arnold and Wade, 2015, p.670); and, as a system, it contains elements, interactions, and an overall purpose.

Midgley (2000, 2003, 2007) defines the way systems thinking has evolved over the years in terms of ‘waves’, where each new wave takes the knowledge previously defined and reconstructs it with new theoretical foundations as well as fresh methodologies and methods. Building on a classification of successive systems paradigms developed by Jackson (1991b), Reynolds and Holwell (2010) present the evolution of systems thinking

through the lens of three 'traditions': hard, soft and critical. Generally speaking, all these authors are talking about the same things, whether they frame them as paradigms, traditions or waves.

For the purpose of this chapter, Midgley's wave metaphor will be used, partly because it has been widely adopted in the literature, and partly because thinking in terms of paradigms and traditions raises the issue of incommensurability (i.e., are the three paradigms based on irreconcilable foundations, or is it legitimate to combine traditions?). One of the benefits of saying that each new wave of systems thinking reconstructs the knowledge left behind by previous waves is that a degree of commensurability is implied by the metaphor: it is the reconstruction process that enables commensurability between methods and theories originally developed with different philosophical underpinnings.

The first wave laid the foundations of systems thinking through three fields of inquiry: general system theory (e.g., Boulding, 1956; Bertalanffy, 1956), cybernetics (e.g., Wiener, 1948; Ashby, 1956) and complexity science (e.g., Weaver, 1948). General system theory is considered the science of 'wholeness', in contrast to 'reductionism', which involves dividing a complex system into small pieces to understand how they work (Bertalanffy, 1968). Reductionists assume that a 'whole system' is a simple aggregate of its parts, while general system theorists talk about the *interactions between* parts that give rise to emergent properties, and these emergent properties stem from the functioning of the system as a whole and not any one part in isolation. General system theory says that there is a need to go beyond the boundaries of "narrow, specialized disciplines by looking at things as open systems" (Midgley, 2007, p.13). An open system is one that interacts with its external environment in order to survive and thrive (Jackson, 2003). According to Morlidge and Player (2010), general system theory "is an attempt to formulate scientific laws that can be applied to systems of all types" (p.276). In contrast, cybernetics, as described by Wiener (1948), is the study of communications and control in living organisms and machines. Then there is complexity science, which deals with the properties of complex adaptive systems and complex problems – especially massive interconnectedness, which makes problems multidimensional,

unpredictable and constantly changing (e.g., Cilliers, 1998). From these three fields, concepts like 'control', 'communication', 'holism', 'open system' and 'boundary' came to be included in the systems lexicon.

Since the first wave conceived of systems as physical in nature, the concept of 'boundary' referred, in the early days of systems thinking, to the 'skin', the edge of a real-world system, or the separator of a system from its environment. Bertalanffy (1968) describes boundaries as dynamic, since they interact with the environment, they take time to evolve and develop, and they are never completely fixed.

After an initial period of rapid development and success from the 1950s to the 1970s, the first wave of systems thinking started to be criticized by a newly emerging second wave systems thinking community (e.g., Churchman, 1970; Ackoff, 1981; Checkland, 1981; Ulrich, 1981; Espejo and Harnden, 1989; de Geus 1994). Some of the critiques were as follows:

- Systems thinking is most useful when it explicitly models *human understandings* of reality and potential changes rather than reality itself. The first wave assumed that models unproblematically reflect the real world (e.g., Checkland, 1981).
- The first wave thought of people as mere parts of larger systems, who can legitimately be 'engineered', instead of recognizing that individuals have their own objectives that may or may not coincide with the purposes of the systems they live and work within (Lilienfeld, 1978).
- The first wave approaches assume that a person or organization's goals are unproblematic, when it is very common that goals are unclear (Ackoff, 1981) or there are a number of viewpoints to consider (Checkland, 1981).
- The first wave emphasizes open systems that adapt to survive in complex environments (Ulrich, 1981), instead of transformation to deliver "socially-valued ends" (Midgley, 2007, p.20).

All these criticisms and more led to major changes in systems thinking, moving it forward into the second wave. Researchers like Churchman (1970), Ackoff (1981) and Checkland (1981) were the architects of this revolution. They believed that systems are not

representations of reality, but constructs to help understanding, and they can be useful in support of dialogue and mutual appreciation (Midgley, 2007).

For instance, Checkland (1981) developed Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) to analyze complex situations where there are divergent views on the problem situation, and mutual appreciation of different viewpoints is central to moving from understanding problems to proposing actions to address them. SSM “enables intervention in ill-structured problem situations where relationship maintaining is at least as important as goal-seeking and answering questions about ‘what’ we should do is as significant as determining ‘how’ to do it” (Jackson, 2003, p.182). Ackoff (1981) proposed Interactive Planning, and the main principle of this is creating an organization’s “future by continuously closing the gap between where it is at any moment of time and where it would most like to be” (Ackoff, 1981, p.3).

Churchman provided many contributions to the field, but I believe the most significant is his redefinition of the concept of ‘boundaries’, which has major implications for systems thinking. First wave thinkers considered the boundary as a given; something that comes along with the system as a physical manifestation of the system’s differentiation from its environment. Churchman thought of systems “both as a process of unfolding, by which he meant heroically ‘sweeping-in’ as many factors as possible to our systems of concern, and as a process of looking at things from different viewpoints” (Reynolds and Holwell, 2010, p.8). This means system boundaries are viewed as conceptual in nature, and boundaries define “the limits of the knowledge that is to be taken as pertinent in an analysis” (Midgley, 2006a, p.21). Foote et al (2007) summarize Churchman’s view of boundaries as follows:

“Churchman (1970) notes that where the boundaries of analysis are placed in OR projects has important consequences, given that these boundaries determine how improvement is defined and problems are managed. Boundaries indicate what information is considered relevant and what is considered superfluous, and are the result of value judgments. Churchman (1970) recommends that the boundaries of an analysis should be pushed out to ‘sweep in’ as much

information as possible to test the adequacy of the intended improvement in the light of alternative perspectives” (p.646).

Second wave systems thinking rose to prominence during the 1980s in the UK, although it had more limited success in the USA, where many first wave practitioners studiously ignored the new ideas (Mingers, 2011). Nevertheless, as the 1980s progressed into the 1990s, a third wave was initiated. This involved criticizing the second wave; trying to end the paradigm war that had broken out between first and second wave researchers; and launching a new set of ideas about power relations.

Many of the criticisms of the second wave were related to power relationships within interventions and/or conflicts built into the structure of society. Researchers like Mingers (1980, 1984) and Jackson (1982) argued that power relationships were poorly attended to in both the first and second waves. In particular, they pointed out that the second wave tended to assume that collective participation by stakeholders is unproblematic. Contradicting this assumption, they observed that stakeholders were sometimes afraid to speak their minds for fear of the consequences when, for example, there are power imbalances in the room. Because of this problem, second wave approaches tend to strengthen the points of view of holders of authority and do not always consider other stakeholders’ opinions (Mingers, 1980, 1984; Jackson, 1982). These authors also said that second wave approaches often create superficial rather than transformative social change because of their tendency to allow domination by those with vested interests in maintaining the status quo. Participants are motivated to adapt their organizations to the environment instead of challenging whether the environment really has to be that way (Midgley, 2006b).

As a consequence of these criticisms, two major strands of third wave systems research were developed: one focusing on the theory and practice of methodological pluralism (e.g., Flood and Jackson, 1991; Jackson, 1991a), and the other on Critical Systems Heuristics (e.g., Ulrich, 1983). Boundary Critique and the theory of marginalization came from the second of these strands.

Methodological pluralism (see Jackson and Keys [1984] for the most seminal paper) was about creating theories and frameworks that could contextualize first and second wave ideas, allowing the researchers of them to see each other as allies instead of competitors. It involves finding value in different methodological sources and saying that no one research approach is better than all others – different methodologies are useful in different contexts (Jackson and Keys, 1984; Jackson, 1987a, 1987b, 1991a; Flood, 1989, 1990; Midgley, 1989, 1990, 1992b; Midgley and Floyd, 1990; Flood and Jackson, 1991).

In contrast, Critical Systems Heuristics (CSH) (Ulrich, 1983, 1987) is a social theory and methodology for generating critical awareness and dialogue within and between stakeholder groups (also see Jackson, 1991a, and Midgley, 1997, for some influential reviews of CSH). The term 'Boundary Critique' was first coined by Ulrich (1996), who built on Churchman's perspective by adding 'critique' to the concept of boundary, meaning "to explore and justify boundaries through debate between stakeholders" (Midgley 2006a, p.25).

"The basic idea of CSH is to support Boundary Critique – a systematic effort of handling boundary judgments critically. Boundary Critique may take two main forms: it can aim at handling boundary judgments self-critically (reflective practice), or it can use boundary judgments for critical purposes against those who may not handle them so self-critically (emancipatory practice)" (Ulrich, 2005, p.3)

Foot et al (2007) say that, in this context, 'critique' is the practice of explicitly considering different perspectives on the boundaries that could be established. Critical thinking can transcend narrowly placed boundaries, but of course "boundaries always have to be established within which critique can be conducted" (Midgley, 1997, p.41).

Midgley (1992a) built upon Churchman's and Ulrich's concept of boundary by asking: what if something or somebody is neither fully included nor excluded, but kept marginal between two boundaries (a narrower and a wider one) defined by different stakeholders? This is the core idea in Midgley's theory of processes of marginalization.



In the next section, Boundary Critique and the theory of marginalization will be explained more fully, as this is central to my research.

### **3.2 Boundary Critique**

#### *3.2.1 Boundaries*

As mentioned earlier, the concept of 'boundary' has evolved over the years. First wave thinkers characterized most boundaries as 'permeable', since a real-world system and its environment exchange energy and information (Bertalanffy, 1956). Second wave thinkers declared that boundaries are not actually given by the real world, but are constructed by human beings to "define the limits of the knowledge that is to be taken as pertinent" (Midgley, 2000, p.35). Third wave researchers have built on the second wave understanding, and have added concepts like 'values' and 'ethics' to the theory of boundaries: values are highly influential in directing the setting of boundaries, so being critical of boundary judgments is essentially an ethical process (Ulrich, 1983).

While a great deal of theory has been constructed around the boundary idea over the years, at its core, the concept can still be explained relatively simply. According to the Cambridge dictionary, a boundary is "a real or imagined line that marks the edge or limit of something" (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary and Thesaurus, 2018). For Rosenblatt (1994), all boundaries are sociocultural constructions. Boundaries separate what is inside from what is outside, what is to be included from what is to be excluded. Midgley (2000) and Vélez-Castiblanco (2013), when explaining the boundary concept, start very simply, from a single line that separates one side and its contents from another. Both draw on the notion of 'distinction' offered by Spencer-Brown (1972): Midgley (2000) says that boundaries can only be identified because they represent distinctions made by sentient beings embedded in knowledge generating systems. For Cilliers (2001), a boundary is part of the conceptual system that it bounds. Boundaries

constitute the 'reference system' of any situation because they circumscribe values, power structures, knowledge and the moral basis for action (Ulrich and Reynolds, 2010).

The reason for a boundary depends on the person or people drawing it and the situation they are in (Velez-Castiblanco, 2013). Setting boundaries defines "both the knowledge to be considered pertinent and the people who generate that knowledge" (Midgley and Pinzón, 2011, p.1544). In other words, boundaries define what issues are to be included in or excluded from analysis, and who is concerned with those issues (Midgley, 2000; Achterkamp and Vos, 2007; Boyd et al, 2004; Midgley et al, 2018; Ufua et al, 2018).

Changing the boundary that defines an actual or potential system is equivalent to changing the nature or meaning of it (Yolles, 1999). A different system boundary may result in a different problem analysis and, accordingly, different solutions or changes (Raza and Standing, 2011).

### 3.2.2 Critique

The Oxford Dictionary defines critique as "a detailed analysis and assessment of something, especially a literary, philosophical, or political theory" (Oxford University Press, 2018). Its origin dates from the Mid-17th century (as a noun) from French, based on the Greek *kritikē tekhnē*, or 'critical art'.

Being critical, or critique, applied to systems thinking, refers to the analysis of, or reflection on, positions or approaches (Flood and Ulrich, 1990). Critique, according to Foote et al (2007), implies explicitly consider different perspectives on the boundaries *being* used or the boundaries that *should* be used. Fuenmayor (1990) considers critique as the 'look of the look'; that is, "the progressive process of gaining awareness about our own "state of mind" (scene) which is necessarily hidden in our judging (and acting in general)" (p.530). Ulrich's (1983) concept of critique comes in the form of questioning the values considered in systems design, especially highlighting the concerns of those who are affected and not involved.

Churchman (1974) emphasizes the importance of critique because it helps people become more aware of boundaries. He argues that the way to make taken-for-granted boundaries explicit is to expose a plan, service or whatever to a credible alternative. Only by seeing something you are evaluating in relation to a credible alternative can boundaries/assumptions be revealed. "Critique in everyday situations involves listening to and responding to the viewpoints of one's worst enemies in reason" (Flood, 1999, p.255).

### 3.2.3 Boundary Critique

Putting together the concepts of 'boundary' and 'critique' produces the concept of *Boundary Critique*: analyzing how a boundary judgment has come about, what issues are on each side of the boundary, who cares about it and the rationale behind it. Since setting boundaries is directed by stakeholders' values and judgments, there can be multiple understandings of boundaries and where they could be placed (Midgley and Pinzón, 2013; Rajagopalan and Midgley, 2015).

Essentially, the concept of 'boundary' in the theory of Boundary Critique has been abstracted away from the original concept of 'system', and is now used even if there is not an actual system present. It indicates inclusion, and there may be diverse elements included. Also, a boundary can define what might be or ought to be addressed in the future, meaning that the concept does much more now than define an existing system (Midgley, 2016).

According to Ulrich (2005, 2012), Boundary Critique is all about disclosing the partiality of people's perspectives on issues. Boundaries are explored and justified through debate between stakeholders in order to clarify, not only what aspects of a situation are to be considered relevant and what others are to be left out, but also who ought to have the authority to make decisions on inclusion. Valentinov (2012) defines Boundary Critique as a "systematic employment of boundary judgments with a view to emancipating stakeholders who are 'affected but not involved' (cf. Ulrich and Reynolds 2010)" (p. 357).

Boundary Critique is also concerned with the nature of conflict between stakeholders and how this can be handled or prevented (Midgley and Pinzón, 2011).

Ulrich (2006, 2012) believes that Boundary Critique offers a practical way to define problems. As such, he proposes some actions to be taken in relation to boundaries in order to get critical awareness and insights:

- *Boundary expansion*: expand the reference system to see 'the bigger picture'.
- *Boundary shifting*: change the frame of reference to see other points of view.
- *Boundary crossing (or boundary transgression)*: work with alternative frames of reference at one and the same time to avoid get attached to any single perspective.

Vélez-Castiblanco et al (2016) suggest that boundaries are shaped by the way judgments about them are communicated. These authors develop generic models representing how stakeholders communicate and how this communication affects the boundary defining the 'cognitive environments' of stakeholders (a cognitive environment is a bounded understanding of a phenomenon of interest). These generic models or 'boundary games' are expressed as actions to 'critique' a boundary:

- *Setting*: establishing a boundary or conceptual space as a reference point.
- *Following*: once a boundary is set, participants may reinforce it through affirmation and repetition.
- *Enhancing*: new information can be brought into the boundary to make it more inclusive and compelling.
- *Wandering outside*: new information can be explored, but in the form of a digression that reinforces the boundary by establishing what is outside it.
- *Challenging*: weakening or breaking the boundary using information from either inside or outside that shows it to be problematic (information from inside takes the form of internal contradictions, while information from outside comes as new evidence of the need to rethink).
- *Probing*: when the boundary is not solid enough to give confidence to stakeholders, they may test their assumptions.

To systematically critique a boundary, Ulrich (2005) defines the following tasks:

- “1. To *identify* the sources of selectivity that condition a claim, by surfacing the underpinning boundary judgments.
2. To *examine* these boundary judgments regarding their practical and ethical implications; what difference do they make to the way we see the situation in question?
3. To *find options* for determining the reference system that conditions a claim, by giving alternative answers to some of the boundary questions; for only in the light of alternative reference systems can we fully appreciate the selectivity of the present one.
4. To *seek some mutual understanding* with all the stakeholders concerned regarding their different reference systems. If in the process a shared notion of the relevant reference system can be achieved, so much the better; but even if no agreement can be reached, understanding the way reference systems differ still represents an important gain in communicative rationality. Misunderstandings can be avoided in this way, and mutual tolerance can grow.
5. To *challenge* their claims through the emancipatory use of Boundary Critique, when some of the parties handle their own boundary judgments uncritically, either because they take them for granted or try to impose them on others” (Ulrich, 2005, p.4).

In summary, Boundary Critique is a process that challenges taken-for-granted assumptions regarding issues, values relating to judgments on these issues, and people included in, marginalized by, or excluded from a social design (Barros-Castro et al, 2015). The identities and roles of agents drawing boundaries are also relevant and open to reflection (Midgley et al, 2007).

### 3.2.4 Conflict

During boundary setting, interaction between stakeholders can generate tension among them since their values and judgments are made explicit and can come to be questioned (Yolles, 2001). Midgley (2000) argues that conflict arises between stakeholders groups when they share some common foci or concerns, but approach these with different purposes, values and boundaries in mind. In such a situation, their boundary judgments can be represented as overlapping circles (Figure 3.1). The common area in the overlapping circles is framed differently by the stakeholders, and can become a focus for collaboration, conflict or a mixture of both (Midgley, 2000, 2016; Yolles, 2001; Midgley and Pinzón, 2011, 2013).

This situation can also result in the marginalization of stakeholders and/or issues if, instead of having overlapping concerns, “one group makes a narrow boundary judgment and another makes a wider one” (Midgley, 2000, p.143) that fully includes the narrower boundary of the first group. The Boundary Critique theory of marginalization processes is central to my research, so is discussed more fully below.

### 3.2.5 Marginalization

As we have seen, boundaries are created through the values, ethics and knowledge of stakeholders, and debating the boundaries can therefore be seen as an ethical process (Ulrich, 1983, 2003; Midgley, 2000; Yolles, 2001).

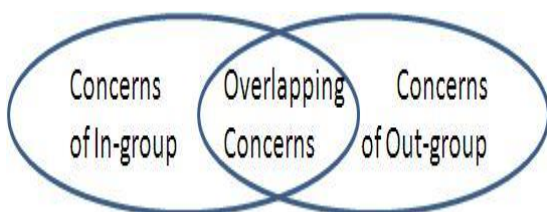


Figure 3.1. Overlapping concerns of two stakeholders groups (Midgley, 2000)

Midgley takes Ulrich's work a step further by establishing that it is not only about who is in and who is out of particular boundaries, but who is *marginalized*: neither fully included nor excluded from the system in question (Midgley, 1992a). Midgley (2000) defines two types of system boundary: primary and secondary, with the latter being wider than the former. Between the two boundaries there is a *marginal* area containing people and/or issues that are important to the group using the secondary boundary but not the users of the primary or narrower boundary (see Figure 3.2).

Since the boundaries are used by two different groups with different values or ethics, conflict may arise. This can become be stabilized, instead of solved, often without any intentional action of the participants to bring about this situation (Midgley and Pinzón, 2011, 2013). In order to stabilize a conflict, a sacred or profane status is imposed on the marginal area (see Figure 3.3). If a profane status is imposed, this means that "the primary boundary and its associated ethic are reinforced as the main reference for decision making" (Midgley, 2000, p.143), so the secondary boundary and its elements can legitimately be derogated or ignored. On the other hand, if a sacred status is imposed, "the secondary boundary and its associated ethic is focused upon and reinforced (Midgley, 2000, p.143). Note that the terms 'sacred' and 'profane' are not used in a religious sense: they are given a broader meaning in this context, as 'valued' and 'devalued' respectively.

Midgley (2000) also argues that these processes of marginalization operate at every level in society, from small groups to international relations. Many different stakeholders and issues can be marginalized for all sorts of different reasons (Midgley and Pinzón, 2011).

An element that helps to 'solidify' marginalization and make it difficult to shift is ritual, since social rituals institutionalize value judgments (Midgley and Pinzón, 2013). Ritual is an "act or series of acts regularly repeated in a set precise manner" (Merriam-Webster, 2018).

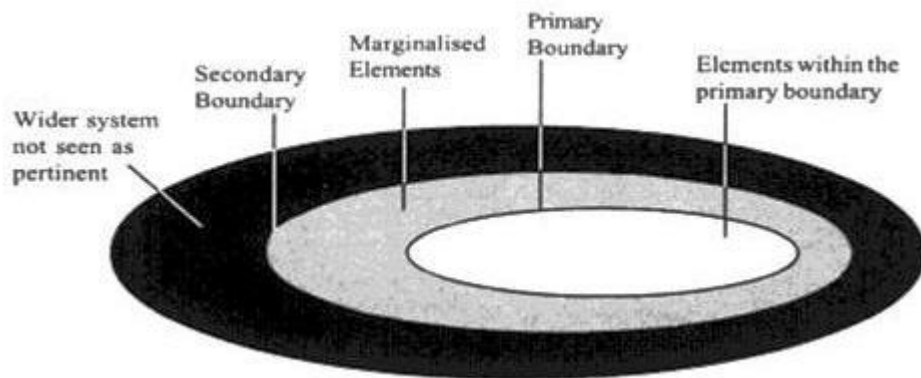


Figure 3.2. Marginalization (Midgley, 2000)

Rituals of marginality in social relations are “especially rich where ... relationships are established between sectors in which resources are in the hands of some but not in the hands of others” (Vélez-Ibañez, 1983, p.23). Rajagopalan and Midgley (2015) talk about social rituals being necessary to maintain social structures. Midgley (2000) suggests that, wherever a ritual is located, sacredness and profanity might be present and, as a consequence, ethical conflicts related to marginalization might be found.

Prescriptively, Boundary Critique enables the identification of new opportunities for participation, taking into account wider concerns of individuals, groups and organizations (Córdoba and Midgley, 2003, 2006, 2008). Modeling the marginalization process describes the boundaries that already exist in an organization or in stakeholder relationships, and marginalization can potentially be addressed through *systemic intervention* (Midgley, 2000; Córdoba and Midgley, 2006; Richardson and Midgley, 2007; Midgley and Pinzón, 2013).

Midgley’s (2000) methodology of systemic intervention will be used in my PhD research as the basis for looking at how people can change LMX relationships when they have become problematic in an organization (see Chapter 7).



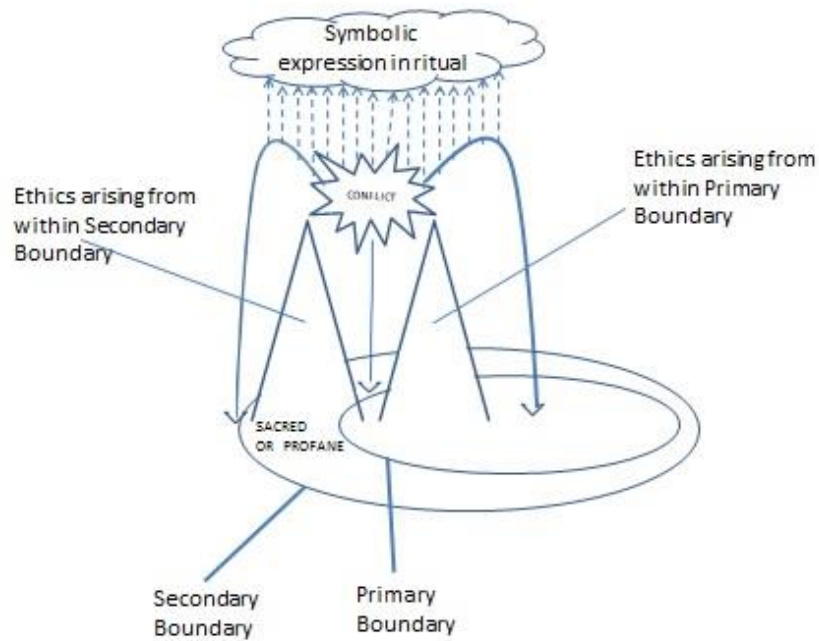


Figure 3.3 Process of Marginalization (Midgley, 2000)

### 3.3 Conclusions

Boundary Critique offers a way to both understand and handle conflict and marginalization created by differences between boundary judgments and associated value judgments. The tendency in many situations for people to just accept given boundaries without reflection needs to be challenged to make sure different possibilities and viewpoints are considered (Ulrich, 1983; Midgley, 2000; Jackson, 2003).

In the next chapter, I will undertake a comparison between Leader-Member Exchange and Boundary Critique in order to identify similarities and differences. An answer to the first research question, 'How can LMX be conceptually enhanced by drawing on the theory of marginalization from Boundary Critique?' will be offered.

## CHAPTER 4

### COMPARISON BETWEEN LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE AND BOUNDARY CRITIQUE

#### *4.1 Similar concepts, words and meanings*

Even though Leader-Member exchange and Boundary Critique belong to different knowledge arenas (leadership and systems thinking), they seem to share similar concepts and even visually they are represented alike (Figure 4.1). Words like 'distinction', 'differentiation', 'boundaries', 'quality', 'ethics' and 'marginalization' appear in both literatures, with similar meanings.

##### *4.1.1 Distinction/Differentiation/Boundaries/Marginalization*

Cabrera et al (2015) define *distinction* as a division "between and among things and ideas" (p.535). They establish that, in order to make a distinction, "one must establish an identity and exclude the other" (Cabrera et al, 2008, p.304). *Distinction* making involves a *boundary* that *differentiates* between who/what is in and who/what is outside, so for Cabrera (2006), distinction making and Boundary Critique are identical. Vélez-Castiblanco (2013) agrees with this definition, stating that, when Systems Thinking refers to a *distinction* or a *boundary*, it is to distinguish the system from the rest of the universe. "Symbolic *boundaries* are conceptual *distinctions* made by social actors to categorize objects" (Vila-Henninger, 2015, p.1027).

LMX deals with the in- and out-group *distinction* that comes when leaders *differentiate* the quality of their relationships with different subordinates (Ma and Qu, 2010; Winkler, 2010; Zhichao and Cui, 2012); when leaders have a closer relationship with some of their followers (in-group) and a more formal one with others (out-group).

Lunenburg (2010) argues that a *distinction* between the in-group and the out-group may not be desirable, because “subordinates in the out-group might resent their relatively inferior status and *differential* treatment” (p.2).

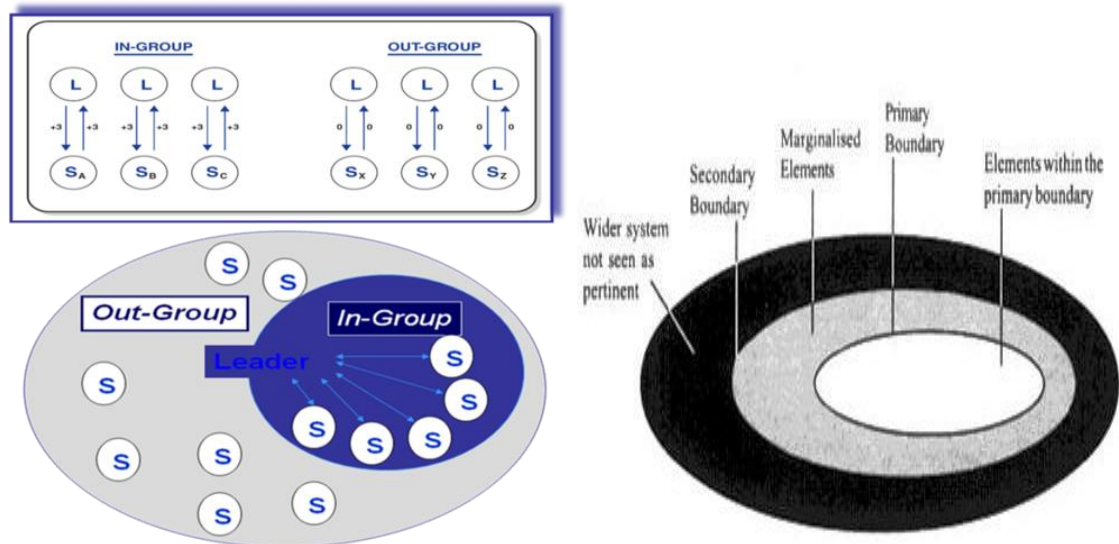


Figure 4.1 Left side: LMX adapted from Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) by quizlet.com. Right side: Marginalization process from Midgley (1992).

A distinction, from a Boundary Critique perspective, is a frontier or boundary that demarcates that which appears relevant given a certain purpose or value set from the ‘irrelevant’ and ‘invisible’ environment (Valentinov, 2012). The relationship between the in-group and the out-group can be diagrammed using the conventions of Boundary Critique (Figure 4.1), given that both exist within the work-group or organizational boundary, and the out-group is clearly *marginalized* (not excluded, otherwise there would be no contractual relationship with the organization).

According to Midgley (2000), *marginalization* appears when one group has a narrower boundary than the other, so the marginalized elements are included in one and not the other. This distinction is used to provide operational meaning to the differentiation

between the primary and secondary boundaries of any studied system (see Fig. 4.2) (Valentinov, 2012).

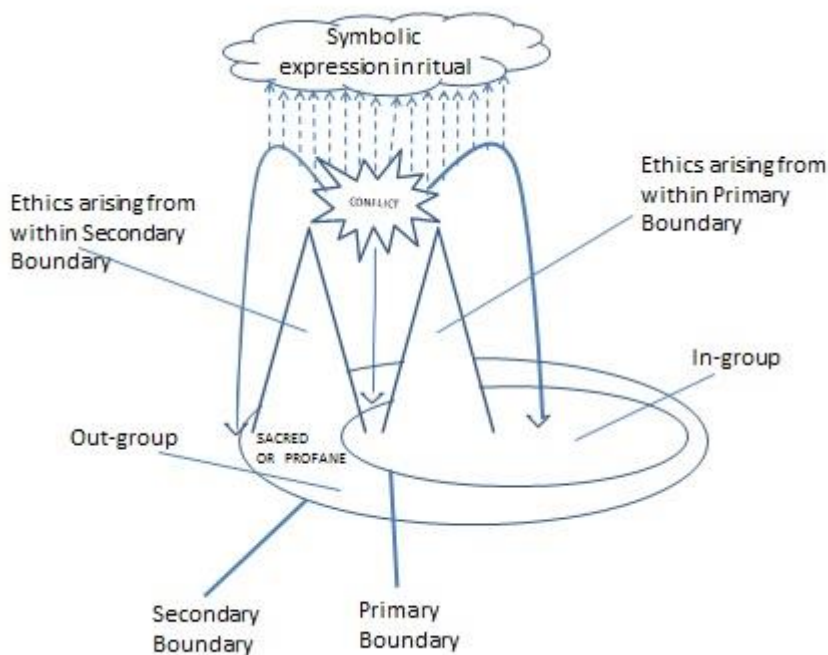


Figure 4.2. LMX seen in terms of Boundary Critique's Process of Marginalization

Elements in the marginal area are generally subject to strong labeling and ritual treatment (Córdoba, 2009). Differentiation between boundaries poses an ethical choice between retaining the primary boundary or disbanding it (Midgley, 2000).

The LMX literature also recognizes marginalization. Othman et al (2010) conclude that those followers not included in the leader's in-group are marginalized and may react to this perception of unfairness by reducing their commitment and contribution to the group (also see Jha and Jha, 2013). Some additional authors also identify differentiation in LMX as unfair (Sparrowe and Liden, 1997; Erdogan et al, 2006; Bolino and Turnley, 2009; Chen et al, 2014).

It is specifically the focus on marginalization in the theory of Boundary Critique (e.g., Midgley, 1992a, 2000; Midgley et al, 1998; Córdoba and Midgley, 2006; Midgley and Pinzón, 2011) that will be used to augment LMX theory.

#### 4.1.2 Ethics/Fairness

The words 'ethics' and 'ethical' are repeated very frequently in the literature on Boundary Critique. Churchman considers drawing boundaries an "*ethical business*" (Achterkamp and Vos, 2007, p.5), since setting boundaries is intimately related to the practice of making value judgments (Córdoba and Midgley, 2008). Ulrich (1983) identifies being aware of social distinctions as an '*ethical skill*', since it is a pivotal step to understanding the marginalization of others. Midgley (1992a) defines '*ethical conflict*' when two sets of values with different implications are used to establish boundaries, and people or issues are excluded from the narrower boundary but included in the wider one.

On the other hand, in LMX, the word 'ethics' is not frequently found in the literature. Instead, 'fairness' and 'justice' are concepts linked to the concept of differentiation. "When a leader differentiates subordinates, a subordinate may feel unfair and may decrease desirable work behaviors and increase harmful work behaviors" (Kwak et al, 2013, p.38).

Bolino (2007) states that employees often make judgments about fairness when differentiation exists. When the level of differentiation is minimal, perceptions of unfairness are unlikely to develop, but with greater LMX differentiation, group members with low-quality LMX perceive high-quality relationships as preferential and unfair (Bernerth and Hirschfeld, 2016). Members with high-quality LMX tend to view leaders fairer, and out-group members may see their leaders as treating them unfairly (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Choi, 2013), since leaders may provide different levels of resources and support across members of their work group (Liden et al, 2006; Jha and Jha, 2013). The perception of fairness is an important determinant of subordinates' behavior, since

they inevitably compare their treatment by the leader to the treatment of others in the work group (Liden et al, 2006; Henderson et al, 2009; Martin et al, 2015). Differentiation among in-groups and out-groups leads to an uneven distribution of rewards (seen as unfair), but it also represents limitations on the *opportunities* to access future rewards – both the differentiated rewards and the differentiated process by which rewards are accessed are viewed as unfair (Bhal and Ansari, 2007; Chen et al, 2015).

#### 4.1.3 Normative and Prescriptive Theories

Even though LMX theory can be considered as a *descriptive* theory, since it describes the relationship between a leader and followers, it can also be seen as a *normative* theory, since it differentiates employees according to the quality of the relationship, and this differentiation can be perceived as fair and functional or as unfair and dysfunctional (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Sparrowe & Liden, 1997; Howell and Hall-Merenda, 1999; Winkler, 2010). As explained earlier, differentiation can affect productivity, generate stress and provoke turnover among out-group employees, so most authors view it as problematic.

Likewise, Boundary Critique makes the normative assumption that the marginalization of stakeholders and issues can be problematic and needs to be addressed. As a *prescription*, Ulrich (2005) talks about the need for inclusive dialogue between those involved in setting boundaries and those affected by them. However, there are issues of value judgment, framing, ritual and wider social discourse from the theory of Boundary Critique involved in determining and entrenching marginalization (Midgley, 2000). These things can make attempts at establishing inclusive dialogue difficult, which is why Midgley (2000) gives a number of practical examples of how successful intervention can proceed in the face of marginalization.

LMX theory can also be perceived as a *prescriptive* theory, since research suggests that it is important for leaders to develop high-quality relationships with all, or most, of their subordinates (Scandura, 1999; Harris et al, 2014; Martin et al, 2015) in order to improve

performance (Tordera and González-Romá, 2013), job satisfaction, perceptions of justice (Othman et al, 2010), etc. Training is prescribed in the literature as a tool to help leaders acknowledge the quality of their relationships (Steiner 1997; Zhang et al, 2012), as is mentoring newcomers (Sparrowe and Liden, 1997; Zhou and Wang, 2015), providing support to employees (Jawahar and Carr, 2007), enhancing a fairness climate to offset varying levels of LMX quality (Harris et al, 2014) and even providing justification for differentiation among employees (Harris et al, 2014; Chen et al, 2015).

Even though the above scholars recognize the importance of practical managerial approaches to minimizing LMX differentiation, Northouse (2010, 2013) points out that there is not enough guidance on these in the literature. The theory of Boundary Critique, and Midgley's systemic intervention approach, offer some promise here, as they are situated in the systems thinking literature, which is strongly focused on the development of systemic action research methodologies to facilitate change (Burns, 2007).

#### ***4.2 Conclusion***

The purpose of this chapter has been to identify similarities and differences between LMX and Boundary Critique to determine if LMX can be conceptually enhanced by drawing on the theory of marginalization (research question 1). Based upon the arguments presented above, I believe there is a case for mapping the theory of marginalization onto the LMX idea of how in-groups and out-groups are related. Then we will be able to see whether there are additional concepts in the Boundary Critique theory of marginalization that can complement LMX.

## CHAPTER 5

### METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

We have seen that the purpose of this research is to determine if Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory can be further developed with insights about marginalization processes from the theory of Boundary Critique. In this section, my proposed methodology and research design will be presented in order to answer the research question: Can empirical evidence be provided for the validity of the enhanced LMX?

#### **5.1 Methodology**

Like many other writers before them, Amaratunga and Baldry (2001) argue that research is rooted in philosophical assumptions. In 1979, Burrell and Morgan (1979) developed a framework for the social and organizational sciences by “identifying fundamentally different assumptions concerning the nature of social science and the nature of society” (Goles and Hirschheim, 2000, p.253). The framework suggests that there are four paradigms:

- Radical Humanist: focuses on barriers to emancipation of the mind and seeks ways to overcome them.
- Radical Structuralist: focuses primarily on social structures and the analysis of economic power relationships with a view to changing them.
- Regulative-Interpretivist: seeks explanation within the realm of individual consciousness, subjectivity and inter-subjectivity, to support regulation of the status quo.
- Regulative-Functionalist: seeks to explain how the individual elements of a social system interact together to form an integrated whole, to support regulation of the status quo.



While there have been strong criticisms of this framework (e.g., Willmott, 1993), and the categorization of some management theories with these four labels has been contested, the basic idea that philosophical assumptions matter in the construction of methodology is still well accepted (e.g., Jackson, 2000).

In terms of the assumptions made by leadership researchers, Alvesson and Deetz (2000) claim that, “like many other fields in management, research on leadership has been strongly dominated by neo-positivist/normative assumptions, together with an emphasis on rules and procedures for the securing of objectivity in practice and results” (p.50). This phrase can be read as contradictory, since neo-positivism aims for objectivity and value-freedom (hence the word ‘normative’ seems misplaced), but what it really means is that making sure objectivity is being pursued in research is a normative practice.

Parry (1998) argues that, since leadership research has been dominated by the discipline of psychology, which has embraced neo-positivism<sup>1</sup> in its quest to establish its credibility as an equal to the biophysical sciences, the analysis of data and the data itself have been quantitative. Antonakis et al (2004) agree with Parry and confirm the dominant view that leadership “theory can be tested appropriately only with quantitative methods” (p.55).

Even though there is no *absolute* correspondence between a philosophical position and a research technique, because the creative re-thinking of philosophical assumptions and methodological implications is always possible (Midgley, 2000; Bryman, 2004; Midgley et al, 2017), LMX theory can at least be positioned as neo-positivist provisionally, since “the neo-positivist is eager to establish a context free truth about reality ‘out there’

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<sup>1</sup> Positivism (a research philosophy that maintains we can accurately know reality) has been discredited for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, since Popper (1959) wrote *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, arguing that what is accepted as true is simply a matter of consensus between scientists. Any truth can one day be overturned if scientists agree that new evidence merits this. However, there are still similarities between Popper’s view and the positivist one, given that Popper argues that science must still pursue the *ideal* of truth, even though certainty about truth is unattainable. The term ‘neo-positivist’ is appropriate for this latter position.

through following a research protocol and getting responses relevant to it, minimizing researcher influence and other sources of bias” (Alvesson, 2003, p.16). Neo-positivists conduct quantitative research, characterized by the concepts of objectivity and neutrality as they relate to data production, analysis, and writing; and the majority of the LMX literature uses quantitative methods to answer research questions.

However, there are some researchers who include qualitative methods in their research on leadership theory. Stentz et al (2012) state that researchers have been using mixed method designs (drawing methods from both quantitative and qualitative methodologies) in leadership for the past decade. Norvapalo (2014) uses mixed methods to provide “a broader view to understanding the development of LMX compared to a situation where for example only interviews would have been carried out” (p.220). Even Parry et al (2014) now agree that there have been some useful studies employing mixed methods in leadership research, and “because the quantitative component usually drives the research, this practice reflects a post-positivist stance<sup>2</sup>” (p.133).

In contrast to LMX, research on Boundary Critique is rooted in Critical Systems Thinking (CST). CST authors argue that there are a wide variety of systems approaches, ranging from the neo-positivist through the interpretive to the emancipatory, and all have strengths and weaknesses (Jackson, 2000). It is therefore possible and legitimate to mix methods from these approaches to develop an appropriate response to the characteristics of the problem context (Jackson, 1991a). This is essentially a *pluralist* approach, and Flyvbjerg (2006) claims that pluralism is necessary for ‘good’ social science: “Good social science is problem driven and not methodology driven in the sense that it employs those methods that, for a given problematic, best help answer the

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<sup>2</sup> Postpositivism is neither antipositivism nor a continuation of positivism by other means. Its essence is an attempt to transcend and upgrade positivism, and does not involve the rejection of all positivist ideas and postulates of the scientific method. It has incorporated the ideas of falsificationism (Popper, 1959), critical fallibilism (Popper, 1972) and Feyerabend’s methodological pluralism (Hetherington, 2000). Postpositivism also does not reject quantitative methodology, but it does attempt to harness it within a more complex research design. It is more cautious concerning strong and one-sided interpretations and restrained regarding the too extensive (or obsessive) use of (quantitative) data and methods (Adam, 2014).

research questions at hand” (p.242). Nevertheless, while most social science is concerned with the observation and interpretation of social reality and/or people’s perspectives, CST also advocates *intervention* in complex social problems (Midgley, 2000; Jackson, 2001). An intervention is “a purposeful action by an agent to create change” (Midgley, 2003, p.79). Boundary Critique can inform the initial exploration of a problem context, taking account of power relations, before an appropriate intervention is designed (Midgley, 2000).

Since Boundary Critique is consistent with theoretical and methodological pluralism (Midgley, 2011), and LMX can handle mixed methods, the answer to the question “where shall I locate myself?” is relatively straight forward. I believe that CST provides a good grounding for my research, since the purpose is to enhance LMX, and there has been research on leadership and LMX that is grounded in methodological pluralism (Avolio et al, 2009; Farr-Wharton et al, 2011; Day et al, 2013; Norvapalo, 2014).

CST is said to embrace a set of five fundamental ‘commitments’ (Jackson, 1991b), and Midgley (1996) summarizes them in the form of three ‘themes’ that are debated in the CST research community:

- “Critical awareness: examining and reexamining taken-for-granted assumptions, along with the conditions that give rise to them
- Emancipation: ensuring that research is focused on ‘improvement’, defined temporally and locally, taking issues of power into account
- Methodological pluralism: using a variety of research methods in a theoretically coherent manner, becoming aware of their strengths and weakness, to address a corresponding variety of issues” (p.11).

While CST advocates intervention to bring about an ‘improvement’ or a desired consequence (Córdoba and Midgley, 2006), and intervention is *usually* pursued through the use of multiple methods, allowing stakeholders to redesign, revision or reinvent their relationships within, between and outside their organizations (Midgley and Ochoa-Arias, 2001), not all interventions involve action with decision makers and stakeholders.

Midgley and Ochoa-Arias (2001) say that some interventions may take the form of knowledge development and dissemination. Here, the intervention is into the knowledge that people may *later* use to inform their actions. My proposal to develop an enhanced LMX theory, and look at the implications for good leadership practice, is in line with the latter understanding of intervention.

Although Midgley's (1996) three CST themes include a focus on methodological pluralism, his later work also extends this to *theoretical* pluralism, since "methodology is itself theoretical in nature and defines the legitimacy of particular methods" (Midgley, 2011, p.13). Theoretical pluralism refers to the use of more than one theoretical frame during a research project or intervention (Midgley, 2011). Midgley (2011) makes the important point that there may be contradictions between different theories used to inform an intervention, and whether or not this matters depends on the research questions being addressed. Some questions may require the integration of ideas from two or more theories into a new theory, but other questions might be quite satisfactorily addressed without any resolution of contradictions. For this particular research, it is necessary to harmonize the theories of LMX and marginalization.

In terms of methods, a quantitative method (the LMX-7 questionnaire, from Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995) will be used to identify high-differentiation and low-differentiation Departments in the university where my fieldwork will take place. Then a qualitative comparative case study will provide rich detail that can be analyzed for supportive or disconfirming evidence of whether LMX can be enhanced by the theory of marginalization. More details of these methods are provided in the next section. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) state that mixed method designs attempt to fit together the insights provided by qualitative and quantitative research into a workable solution to the research problem. In my own case, this is an example of what Midgley (1990, 2000) calls the "creative design of methods" (Midgley, 2000, p.217), because different sub-purposes within the overall aim of the research are fulfilled using methods from different sources. This is in contrast with 'triangulation' (another mixed methods approach), where one single purpose is pursued (or the same phenomenon is looked at) using different methods to give a wider range of insights (Brewer and Hunter, 1989).

According to Polkinghorne (2005), qualitative research “is inquiry aimed at describing and clarifying experience as it appears in people’s lives” (p.137). “Qualitative inquiry deals with human lived experience. It is the *life-world* as it is lived, felt, undergone, made sense of, and accomplished by human beings that is the object of study” (Schwandt, 2001, p.84).

By using qualitative methods to explore an organizational case study, I can provide a detailed contextual analysis of a number of exchanges between a leader and his/her employees, since qualitative methods are specifically constructed to facilitate the investigation of experience by taking account of its particular characteristics from the perspectives of the participants (Polkinghorne, 2005).

## ***5.2. Research Design: A Mixed-Methods Case Study***

The purpose of this research is to determine if Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory can be developed using insights from the Boundary Critique theory of marginalization processes. To fulfill this purpose, the following questions were defined, and are reproduced here for ease of reference in the subsequent text:

- How can LMX be conceptually enhanced by drawing on the theory of marginalization from Boundary Critique?
- Can empirical evidence be provided for the validity of the enhanced LMX?
- If an enhanced LMX is supported with empirical evidence, how can Boundary Critique add value to the normative guidance for good leadership practice already offered by LMX?

As mentioned in Chapter 1, questions 1 and 3 require a desk-based theoretical integration of ideas, but question 2 has to be answered using a different strategy, since it requires a tool to measure LMX, plus a method to assess marginalization among Departments from a Boundary Critique viewpoint.

From an LMX theory perspective, in order to identify low and high quality relationships among leaders and followers, a quantitative tool is suggested by researchers (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Schriesheim et al, 1999; Graen et al, 2006; Joseph et al, 2011). According to Joseph et al (2011), 85% of LMX studies used either LMX-7 or LMX-MDM as an instrument to measure LMX, and since they are correlated (corrected  $r=0.9$ ), they can be considered “alternate forms of the same instrument” (Joseph et al, 2011, p.90). LMX-7 is a seven-item questionnaire, designed by Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), that reflects “a unidimension of LMX based on the observation that the LMX dimensions are so highly correlated that they tap into a single measure” (Martin et al, 2015, p.9). LMX-MDM, developed by Liden and Maslyn (1998), is a 12-item questionnaire that looks into four dimensions of leader-member relationship (contribution, loyalty, affect, and professional respect). Since answering my second research question (“can empirical evidence be provided for the validity of the enhanced LMX?”) requires me to be able to identify highly differentiated and less well differentiated organizational units (to enable a comparison), a single dimension of LMX is sufficient. Therefore, the LMX-7 questionnaire (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995) was used to identify units with and without differentiation into in-groups and out-groups.

From the perspective of the theory of marginalization, in order to identify boundaries distinguishing stakeholders and issues that concern them (as well as rituals holding the marginalization in place), a qualitative approach is suggested by researchers (e.g., Midgley et al, 1998; Córdoba and Midgley, 2006; Foote et al, 2007; Ufua et al, 2018). For this purpose, a semi-structured interview was designed to identify values, issues and rituals, to determine if marginalization was present. The reason for using qualitative interviews was “to collect data about phenomena that cannot be obtained using quantitative measures” (Hove and Anda, 2005, p.23). Interviews are a good instrument for researchers to get an insight into the opinions, thoughts and feelings of the participants, especially when we are looking for evidence of values, rituals, and marginalization, as I was. These things can really only be understood by accessing the perspectives of the people involved.

The strategy that can bring together this mix of quantitative and qualitative methods is a case study. According to Yin (2009), a case study is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p.18).

Data was collected in a Mexican university, where academics from all the Departments in one undergraduate School had answered the LMX-7 questionnaire. Just two Departments were then selected for the semi-structured interview study.

The reason for choosing two was to facilitate the comparison of high and low LMX Departments (the highest and lowest two were chosen) to see if marginalization was stronger in the former than the latter, which one would expect to see if the Boundary Critique theory of marginalization can indeed legitimately be used to enhance LMX.

According to Amaratunga and Baldry (2001), the case study approach is a research strategy that focuses on understanding the dynamics present within a single setting. Ragin and Becker (1992) define cases in terms of boundaries around places and time periods.

Method	Form of Research Question	Requires Control of Behavioural Events?	Focus on Contemporary Events?
Experiment	How, Why	Yes	Yes
Survey	Who, What, Where, How Many, How Much?	No	Yes
Archival Analysis	Who, What, Where, How Many, How Much?	No	Yes/No
History	How, Why	No	No
Case Study	How, Why	No	Yes

Table 5.1. Relevant situations for different research methods (Yin, 2009, p. 8).

There are other approaches for qualitative research, like the ones shown in table 5.1, but, in my view, only a case study is useful for the present study. Some reasons for this, following Riege (2003) and Yin (2009), are:

- a) Case study research is about theory building, which is essential for addressing my research questions.
- b) The case study approach is based on the need to understand real-life phenomena, and in this research I will be looking at marginalization in two Departmental groups in a Mexican university.
- c) A case study can be used when the boundaries between the phenomena of concern and the context are not clearly evident; for example, at what moment in time and for what reasons a leader and an employee start to develop a high or low quality relationship.
- d) Multiple sources of evidence can be used to produce a richly detailed picture, which is in line with my earlier discussion of methodological pluralism.

Yin (2009) defines a series of steps to conduct a case study, which I followed:

- Plan
- Design
- Prepare
- Collect
- Analyze
- Conclude

More details are provided below, taking each of these steps in turn.

### *5.2.1 Plan*

Planning a case study requires the researcher to identify research questions, to determine a reason to use the case study method and to understand the strengths and limitations of case studies. Even though my research questions might conceivably be



answered in a 'yes/no' manner, the issue of 'how' the case study data might support or undermine my enhanced LMX theory is critical. This is all about providing sufficient supporting evidence, and this evidence may cause a rethink of the original theoretical proposition, going beyond a simple 'yes' or 'no'. A 'how' or 'why' question is generally asked when there is a contemporary set of events, like the actual status of leader-member relationships, over which the researcher has little or no control.

To answer 'how' and 'why' questions, Yin (2009) suggests the use of an *explanatory case*, because 'how' questions deal with operational links needing to be traced over time (leader-member exchanges for example) rather than frequencies of incidence.

### 5.2.2 Design

There are five elements that need to be addressed in this step, according to Yin (2009):

"1. A study's questions; 2. Its propositions, if any; 3. Its units of analysis; 4. The logical linking of the data to be gathered to the propositions; and 5. The criteria for interpreting the findings" (p.27). Overall, the research design involves using an LMX questionnaire applied to all Departments in the relevant School (within the University); and, from this point, identifying one Department with low LMX differentiation and one with high differentiation willing to participate in the case study. Semi-structured interviews can then be performed in both Departments (speaking with all the followers and the two leaders) to identify the elements of marginalization in each of the Departments (particularly boundary judgments made by the participants, their values, and the rituals that reinforce or undermine the status of marginalized people or issues).

Following Yin's (2009) design steps, the first one, defining the case study's questions, has already been tackled earlier in the thesis: this was my formulation of research questions, and particularly research question two, which asked whether empirical evidence can be provided for an LMX theory enhanced by the Boundary Critique understanding of marginalization.

The second design step is to offer propositions. A study's propositions are statements that direct attention to something that should be examined within the scope of the study. For the purposes of this research, some of the propositions are as follows:

- a) It will be possible to find a highly differentiated Department (with a clear in-group and out-group) and a low differentiation Department (with little or no out-group formation), as diagnosed by LMX-7 questionnaire results.
- b) A recognizable boundary distinguishing the in-group from the out-group will be apparent in the high LMX Department.
- c) This boundary will be associated with value judgments over issues that are the subject of some degree of conflict in the high LMX Department.
- d) Rituals associated with the boundaries and values will be discernible in the high LMX Department, and these rituals will be seen to reinforce the differences between the in-group and the out-group.
- e) Summarizing b-d, features of marginalization will be found in the highly differentiated Department.
- f) In contrast, features of marginalization will either be absent or less problematic in the low differentiation Department than in the highly differentiated one.

The third design step is to specify the unit(s) of analysis. This is what the case study is actually about: e.g., a single individual, an event or entity, decisions, programs, an implementation process, or organizational change. For the purpose of this research, high and low LMX Departments are the units of analysis, since I will be looking for evidence of marginalization within these. The two final design steps (logic linking the data to the propositions and criteria for interpreting the findings) are related to data analysis, and these will be defined later in this chapter.

### *5.2.3 Prepare*

In order to move towards data gathering and analysis, it is necessary to develop a protocol, to conduct a pilot case, and to gain ethical approval for the protection of

human participants. Since there were two sources of data, from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, various protocols were defined, as shown in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 shows the consent form signed by the participants, as required by the Hull University Business School Research Ethics Committee. This committee granted approval for the empirical research.

A pilot interview with a university lecturer outside the two participating Departments was recorded to allow me to evaluate the performance of my questions, the interview protocol and the quality of data produced.

The interview questionnaire was changed and improved through this pilot exercise (Appendix 3). Steps 4, 5 and 6 (from Yin, 2009, discussed above) are covered in the following sections.

### ***5.3 Target population and Sampling Strategy***

Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) establish that a sampling strategy depends on the objective of the study. If the purpose is to “generalize the quantitative and/or qualitative findings to the population from which the sample was drawn” (p.285), then the researcher should use random (probabilistic) sampling schemes (Table 5.2). However, if the objective is to “obtain insights into a phenomenon, individuals, or events” (p.287) then the use of purposeful sampling is in order (Table 5.3).

The sampling for this research involves both stages (i.e., a stage of looking for high and low LMX Departments followed by a stage of comparing them) and stratification (the distinction of high and low), so it can be said to be ‘mixed purposeful’. The case study is also theory-based and critical, since the purpose of this research is to enhance LMX using the Boundary Critique theory of marginalization. It is also stratified purposeful, since the Departments were selected after they completed the LMX-7 questionnaire and their relationships were stratified into low and high LMX.

Random Sampling Scheme	Description
Simple	Every individual in the sampling frame (i.e., desired population) has an equal and independent chance of being chosen for the study.
Stratified	Sampling frame is divided into sub-sections comprising groups that are relatively homogeneous with respect to one or more characteristics and a random sample from each stratum is selected.
Cluster	Selecting intact groups representing clusters of individuals rather than choosing individuals one at a time.
Systematic	Choosing individuals from a list by selecting every kth sampling frame member, where k typifies the population divided by the preferred sample size.
Multi-stage random	Choosing a sample from the random sampling schemes in multiple stages.

Table 5.2. Random Sampling Scheme (Onwuegbuzie and Collins, 2007, p. 285).

Another issue about samples is their size. According to Marshall (1996), “an appropriate sample size for a qualitative study is one that adequately answers the research question” (p.523). The theoretical basis of LMX is that a leader and a follower develop a relationship through a series of interactions or exchanges, and the quality of these exchanges determine if a follower is part of the ‘in-group’ or ‘out-group’ (Bauer and Green, 1996). These exchanges are developed within a contained group (including all in-group and out-group members), where there is a leader or supervisor or boss, and a group of followers or subordinates or employees who report to him or her. For this research, an appropriate sample size is at least two groups with a leader and enough followers to be able to distinguish an in-group and out-group, where both these groups contain more than one person, in order to compare results. Bauer and Green (1996) talk about a container group of ten being sufficient to explore in-group and out-group distinctions, so this was taken as a guideline for the selection of my case study Departments.

The case study organization for this research was a Northern Mexican University<sup>3</sup>. There are five Schools within it, and each School has from 2 to 10 academic Departments. Each Department has from 5 to 15 full- and part-time academic staff, with one of them appointed as Department head (only full-time academic staff are considered for this position).

Every four years, academics select a new head from within the Department, or in some cases they decide to continue with the former head. Following this policy, in some cases a new leader could be appointed every four years, fracturing the relationships formed by the previous leader and enabling new ones to be developed. The fact that this particular policy existed was very useful for my research because every four years new in-groups and out-groups would potentially be formed. Therefore, the formation and growth of LMX relationships were likely to be in the memories of most if not all the Departmental employees, which might not have been the case if the LMX relationships had had a longer history. The LMX questionnaire was applied to all the academic Departments from one of the undergraduate Schools to locate those Departments whose in-groups and out-groups were most clearly evident.

The selection of this particular School followed a protocol designed by the chosen University (Appendix 1) for use by researchers wanting to gain access to information about academic staff. Since the participation of academic staff and Department heads was going to be voluntary, the request to participate had to have the support of the University, starting with the President and extending down to the School's Dean. Support and interest from the School Dean and their Department heads was a critical factor for choosing a particular School.

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<sup>3</sup> 'Northern Mexican University' is a pseudonym being used to preserve confidentiality.

<b>Purposeful Sampling Scheme</b>	<b>Description</b>
Maximum variation	Choosing settings, groups, and/or individuals to maximize the range of perspectives investigated in the study.
Homogeneous	Choosing settings, groups, and/or individuals based on similar or specific characteristics.
Critical Case	Choosing settings, groups, and/or individuals based on specific characteristic(s) because their inclusion provides the researcher with compelling insight about a phenomenon of interest.
Theory-based	Choosing settings, groups, and/or individuals because their inclusion helps the researcher to develop a theory.
Confirming/ Disconfirming	After beginning data collection, the researcher conducts subsequent analyses to verify or contradict initial results.
Snowball/ Chain	Participants are asked to recruit individuals to join the study.
Extreme Case	Selecting outlying cases and conducting comparative analyses.
Typical Case	Selecting and analyzing average or normal cases.
Intensity	Choosing settings, groups, and/or individuals because their experiences relative to the phenomena of interest are viewed as intense but not extreme.
Politically Important Case	Choosing settings, groups, and/or individuals to be included or excluded based on their political connections to the phenomena of interest.
Random purposeful	Selecting random cases from the sampling frame and randomly choosing a desired number of individuals to participate in the study.
Stratified purposeful	Sampling frame is divided into strata to obtain relatively homogeneous sub-groups and a purposeful sample is selected from each stratum.
Criterion	Choosing settings, groups, and/or individuals because they represent one or more criteria.
Opportunistic	Researcher selects a case based on specific characteristics (i.e., typical, negative, or extreme) to capitalize on developing events occurring during data collection.
Mixed purposeful	Choosing more than one sampling strategy and comparing the results emerging from both samples.
Convenience	Choosing settings, groups, and/or individuals that are conveniently available and willing to participate in the study.
Quota	Researcher identifies desired characteristics and quotas of sample members to be included in the study.
Multi-Stage Purposeful Random	Choosing settings, groups, and/or individuals representing a sample in two or more stages. The first stage is random selection and the following stages are purposive selection of participants.
Multi-Stage Purposeful	Choosing settings, groups, and/or individuals representing a sample in two or more stages in which all stages reflect purposive sampling of participants.

Table 5.3. Purposeful Sampling Scheme (Onwuegbuzie and Collins, 2007, p. 285).

Once the School was selected, I continued to adhere to the University's protocol by asking the School Dean and Department heads for space in their meetings to inform them about the research and ask all staff to fill out an LMX-7 questionnaire.

As mentioned earlier, since the LMX-7 is the most widely used tool in LMX research, it can be viewed as the standard measuring instrument, and was employed for the selection of my case study Departments. To facilitate the application and data collection from the LMX questionnaire, an internet survey tool (Survey Monkey) was used.

Following the School and Departmental meetings, an invitation to participate in the research was sent by email to full-time academic staff and Department heads. Because of the nature of their contract, and the types of relationship that they could therefore develop with their leader, only full-time academic staff members were invited to participate. Part-time staff were excluded on the grounds that they are often contracted in an instrumental manner on a course-by-course basis, so do not have the same opportunities to develop stable, on-going relationships with the Departmental leaders.

There were 127 full-time academic staff in the chosen School, divided among 10 Departments. The response rate was 63%, with 80 academic staff answering the LMX-7 questionnaire through Survey Monkey (table 5.4) in a 3-month time window. During this three months, weekly reminders were sent by email to every academic staff member who hadn't yet replied.

Two Departments were selected to continue with the semi-structured interviews. Criteria for choosing these two Departments (out of the ten possible ones) were:

- The LMX-7 results (shown in table 5.5): Departments with high and low out-group percentages were chosen.
- Response rate: to ensure the reliability of the results, Departments with the highest response rate were chosen. The concern was that, since I was looking for Departments with high and low differentiation, the ratio of in-group to out-group members could be affected by low response rates (for instance, people in an out-group might be either more or less likely to respond than their

colleagues). It was important to find Departments where all, or nearly all, the academics were willing to participate.

- Cronbach's Alpha coefficient: "When using Likert-type scales it is imperative to calculate and report Cronbach's alpha coefficient (CAC) for internal consistency and reliability for any scales or subscales one may be using" (Gliem and Gliem, 2003, p.88). The higher the coefficient, the greater the data consistency.
- When the above factors are combined: one Department needed to present a high participation rate AND high differentiation AND a high Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The other required a high participation rate AND low differentiation AND a high Cronbach's Alpha.

All Departments were reviewed using these criteria. In the first selection round, academic Departments with the highest participation rates were chosen: Departments 2 (80%), 6 (90%), 8 (100%), and 9 (92%).

In the second selection round, academic Departments with high and low out-group figures (figure 5.4) were chosen: 2 and 6 had large outgroups, and 8 and 9 had small ones.

From the two Departments with large out-groups, the one selected was Department 6 because:

- It showed a response rate of 90%, higher than Department 2;
- It had a CAC of 0.94 (which indicates internal consistency) compared to 0.92 from Department 2;
- Its LMX mean was 23.67 which, according to Graen and Uhl-Bien's interpretation, indicates a moderately differentiated relationship between (1995) leader and followers. Department 2's LMX mean was 27.08. However, a standard deviation of 6.83 for Department 6 indicated a greater variability among team members' results (44% in-group and 33% out-group), compared to the 5.16 from Department 2. According to Le Blanc and González-Romá (2012) and Ma and Qu (2010), the standard deviation of LMX within groups is used to



operationalize LMX differentiation: the higher the measure the higher the differentiation.

Department	Academic Staff	Responses	Response Percentage
1	17	10	59%
2	15	12	80%
3	11	5	45%
4	8	1	13%
5	10	6	60%
6	10	9	90%
7	20	10	50%
8	12	12	100%
9	13	12	92%
10	11	3	27%
Total	127	80	63%

Table 5.4. Survey Monkey LMX-7 response rate.

From the two Departments with a small out-group, the one selected was number 8:

- While it had a CAC of 0.89 (not as high as it could have been, but still acceptable) compared with the 0.94 from Department 9, it had a response rate of 100%.

Department	Demographics		Teaching Experience				Managerial Experience	LMX Results			Response Rate	LMX Mean	Differentiation (Standard Deviation)	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
	Male	Female	1-5	6-10	11-15	>16		IN	Moderate	OUT				
ALL	43%	58%	5%	4%	16%	75%	40%	64%	20%	16%	63%	25.74	5.66	0.9155
1	40%	60%	10%	0%	20%	70%	40%	50%	30%	20%	59%	24.30	4.38	0.85
2	42%	58%	8%	0%	0%	92%	50%	83%	0%	17%	80%	27.08	5.16	0.92
5	67%	33%	17%	0%	0%	83%	33%	83%	17%	0%	60%	28.33	3.50	0.78
6	22%	78%	0%	33%	22%	44%	11%	44%	22%	33%	90%	23.67	6.83	0.94
7	10%	90%	0%	0%	0%	100%	10%	60%	40%	0%	50%	25.40	3.01	0.67
8	50%	50%	9%	0%	27%	64%	33%	83%	8%	8%	100%	29.42	4.54	0.89
9	50%	50%	0%	0%	8%	92%	58%	50%	42%	8%	92%	24	5.43	0.94

Table 5.5 Academics' LMX-7 results.

- Additionally, its LMX mean was 29.42 compared with 24 from Department 9, indicating that the centre value of the relationships among the leader and followers was high.
- Its standard deviation was smaller than Department 9 because its in-group was larger. According to Tordera and González-Romá (2013), organizations with a high LMX mean and a low differentiation (shown by the standard deviation) have high-quality relationships between leaders and all team members.

With the selection of Departments 6 and 8, the next action was to perform semi-structured interviews with each of their members, including the Department heads. At this point, two academic staff members from Department 8 were lost to the study. The first one resigned his/her position and moved to another university before an interview could be scheduled. The second one was performing a managerial role at the time and therefore had two leaders (the head of Department 8 and the School Dean). To prevent any possible confusion between these two relationships corrupting the interview data, I chose to drop him from the set of interviewees. Both of these 'lost' staff members were part of Department 8's in-group, according to their LMX-7 results. It could be argued that I should have revisited the selection of this Department as one of the two comparators, but I judged that its high response rate still made it the most appropriate choice.

#### ***5.4 Measurement and Data Collection Strategies***

Yin (2009) defines four steps to collect evidence (data) for a case study, which were followed for this research:

- To follow the defined case study protocol (Appendix 1),
- To use multiple sources of evidence (LMX-7 questionnaire and a semi-structured interview for each participant in the selected Departments).

- To create a case study database (Excel worksheet with the LMX-7 answers and an Excel matrix with the semi-structured questionnaire and a summary of each answer),
- To maintain the chain of evidence (Appendix 4).

For semi-structured interviews, Rabionet (2011) defines six stages to follow:

- Select the type of interview (Hove and Anda, 2005): structured (specific questions with highly quantified answers), semi-structured (research directs the interviewee to the topic of concern, but allows a narrative answer and the possibility of impromptu follow-up questions) or unstructured (no direction provided by the researcher other than an initial introduction of the topic, and this approach can yield unexpected information). In order to obtain relevant, qualitative information, my interviews were semi-structured. This is because I needed to direct the attention of interviewees to issues of marginalization, but wanted to provide space for them to answer as they saw fit given that the precise nature of the marginalization was not predictable (e.g., if it existed, it might have been constructed around roles, paradigms, gender, political views, willingness to work overtime, etc.). Structured interviewing would require a greater level of prediction of the issues than was possible in this research, and unstructured interviewing could have resulted in interviewees straying too far off topic.
- Establish guidelines in order to ensure the ethical treatment of participants. I followed the guidelines provided by the Hull University Business School Research Ethics Committee, such as making sure that my participants' names and questionnaire results were identified by code numbers and not their personal details. I undertook to ensure that their information would not be made public in any form that could reveal their identity, and informed them that the results could be reported in academic journals as well as my thesis. They were also told that they were free to withdraw themselves and their information from the research at any time prior to finalization of the thesis.

- Design the interview protocol: how the researcher will introduce him/herself and what initial questions should be asked (follow-up questions can be added in an impromptu manner during the interviews). The protocol is included as Appendix 1, and the semi-structured interview questionnaire is included as Appendix 3. The semi-structured interview questionnaire was constructed to qualitatively verify the quantitative results of the LMX-7, and identify the marginalization issues (if present) that in/out-groups were cohering around.
- Conduct and record the interview, using notes and audio recording. All interviews were done by myself and recorded using different electronic devices and identified by a code name to secure the identity of the interviewee. Prior to each interview, interviewees were asked to read and sign a consent form (adapted from one designed by the Hull University Business School Research Ethics Committee). Every interview meeting was set up by email, fitting in with the academic's availability, and they followed the same protocol (Appendix 1).
- Analyze and summarize the interview. Once all the interviews were finished, they were transcribed following the same code used to record them. In order to have all information condensed in one document, summaries were made by questions and by Department.
- Report the findings: prepare the information and report it in such a way that the research questions can be answered in an evidence-informed manner. My findings will be presented in the next chapter.

### ***5.5 Method of Data Analysis***

Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007) compare the use of different qualitative analysis tools (Classical Content Analysis, Word Count, Keywords in Context, Constant Comparison, Domain Analysis, Taxonomic Analysis, and Componential Analysis) to answer generic research questions, as shown in table 5.6.

General research question format	Dimensions of contrast						
	Data analysis techniques						
	CCA	WC	KWIC	CC	DA	TA	CA
Does X cause Y?					X	X	
Does X cause more of Y than Z causes of Y?	X			X			X
What is X?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Is X located where Y is lowest?			X		X	X	X
What does "Y" mean?			X	X	X	X	
Why does S support X?		X	X	X	X	X	X
What makes W good?	X		X	X	X	X	X
Does T value X?	X			X	X	X	X
Is X more cost-effective than Z?	X	X	X				X
How are U maximized and V minimized simultaneously?				X			X

*Note.* CCA = Classical Content Analysis; WC = Word Count; KWIC = Keywords in Context; CC = Constant Comparison; DA = Domain Analysis; TA = Taxonomic Analysis; CA = Componential Analysis.

Table 5.6 Types of research questions (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2007, p. 577)

Looking at my second research question (“can empirical evidence be provided for the validity of the enhanced LMX?”), there is not a question on the list that matches it. Since this research is building upon an explanatory case study, the method of analysis should be explanation-building (Yin, 2009). This method ‘explains’ a phenomenon using a series of iterations, where information is compared with a statement or proposition (e.g., my enhanced LMX theory) over and over again. This fits with ‘constant comparison’ from table 5.6.

As a starting point, Yin (2009) suggests, among other things, to put information into different arrays and/or to make a matrix of categories and place the evidence within such categories. Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007) recommend the following activities in order to perform constant comparison analysis:

- read the entire set of data,
- reorganize data into smaller relevant parts,
- label each part with a descriptive title or code,
- compare each code to find similarities, and
- group them in a theme.

The first iteration of my analysis involved the construction of a matrix, by Department, with the thirteen questions asked in the semi-structured interviews as columns, and the list of the code-named academics as rows (Appendix 5). The content of each cell is the highlighted answer, the main idea or summary of the answer. From there, every idea was analyzed and reviewed to identify marginalized academic staff, marginalization issues and rituals (codes). The second iteration was a summary of all interviews from each Department highlighting boundary judgments, values, rituals, etc. (Appendix 6). The third iteration was grouping the data into four themes: relationship with the leader, groups among members of the Department, group decision making, and rituals. The results of this iteration process can be seen in the next chapter.

Another issue to consider while analyzing data is the use of Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS). According to Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2011), Zamawe (2015) and Dollah et al (2017) among others, qualitative research generates a lot of data, and the use of CAQDAS can help the researcher with processing it. It can enhance the accuracy and speed of the analysis process. These authors also all agree that the analysis needs to remain in the researcher's control, and CAQDAS is just an aid. Even though these types of software bring a lot of advantages, I was also very aware of the disadvantages, such as the fact that it "can't interpret data, expensive for individual, time consuming in learning" (Dollah et al, 2017, p.62). For these reasons, I decided to analyze the data manually, without the assistant of any CAQDAS.

### ***5.6 Criticisms of case study research, plus reliability and validity issues***

Some criticisms of case study research identified by Yin (2009) are lack of rigor, little basis for scientific generalization, large time investment and massive document generation. I have considered the relevance of these issues to my research:

- I suggest the accusation of lack of rigor stems from a neo-positivist paradigm that seeks to exclude subjective and inter-subjective viewpoints from what is

considered 'scientific' (Midgley, 2000). However, the only possible evidence that could be gathered to answer my research questions is subjectively-expressed meanings in context (concerning whether people experience or observe marginalization). No amount of observation of behaviors could get to how the participants interpret those behaviors. Therefore, I argue that rigor has to be understood from the perspective of how to conduct a strong, qualitative case study (as discussed in this chapter).

- Regarding the basis for scientific generalization, this is *exploratory* research to find out, in principle, whether LMX can indeed be enhanced by the theory of marginalization processes. This requires one in-depth case study to provide evidence for or refute the value of the enhancement. Of course, future research looking at further organizational contexts could discover limits to the enhanced LMX theory, but that is the case for all research: as Popper (1959) persuasively argues, disconfirming evidence might be one more investigation away, so all claims to knowledge should be treated as provisional. Pragmatically, only one case study could be conducted within the time limits of a PhD, so this is what I focused on.
- The above logic also addresses the criticism that case studies are time consuming. While this might be the case in comparison with some other approaches, one case study was achievable in the five years part-time study that a PhD involves.
- Regarding the scale of document generation, I would suggest that this is no more problematic than for any other qualitative research involving interviews. To exclude interviewing as a possible method on the grounds of the volume of the data would essentially make the individual perspectives of participants inaccessible to inquiry. This would be unacceptable from a Critical Systems Thinking standpoint, where truth, rightness and understanding subjective perspectives are all important ideals for inquiry (Midgley, 1992b).

According to Yin (2009), there are four tests commonly used to evaluate the quality of empirical social research: construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability. Construct validity refers to the correct establishment of operational measures

for the concepts being studied. Internal validity refers to the correct establishment of cause-effect relationships in the case. External validity refers to the establishment of the domain to which the study's findings can be generalized. Reliability refers to the possibility of getting the same results if the study were to be repeated. For a case study, there is a tactic for each test, as shown in Table 5.7.

For construct and internal validity, semi-structured interviews were used to triangulate with the quantitative results of the LMX-7, in order to determine what issues the in- and out-groups were cohering around, and therefore what was potentially relevant for marginalization. Also, for internal validity, pattern matching and explanation building were used (see the next chapter).

One of the weaknesses of case study research is that a case is time limited and usually cannot be repeated to check for reliability. To mitigate this weakness, Amaratunga and Baldry (2001) and Riege (2003) advocate conducting several pilots to test the way of questioning, in order to develop and refine the case study protocol. The refined protocol for my research is discussed in Appendix 1. Amaratunga and Baldry (2001) also propose the development of a case study data base to organize and document the collected data.

The following chapter presents the findings of my case study, and it seeks to answer the 2<sup>nd</sup> research question of my thesis, "Can empirical evidence be provided for the validity of the enhanced LMX?"



Test	Tactic	Phase of research in which the tactic is used	Results
Construct validity	Use of multiple sources of evidence	Data collection	Application of LMX-7 questionnaire and a Semi-structured interview questionnaire to the same sample.
	Establish chain of evidence	Data collection	Appendix 4
	Have key informants review draft	Composition	There are no key informants in this research.
Internal validity	Do pattern matching	Data analysis	These would be explained in the next chapter.
	Do explanation building	Data analysis	
	Do triangulation	Data analysis	
Reliability	Use case study protocol	Data collection	See Annex 1.
	Develop case study data base	Data collection	

Table 5.7: Adapted from Validity and Reliability in case study research (Amaratunga and Baldry, 2001)

## CHAPTER 6

### RESEARCH FINDINGS

In the previous chapters, I presented Leader-Member exchange theory, a theory that “conceptualizes leadership as a process that is centered on the interactions between leaders and followers” (Northouse, 2013, p.161). I also introduced the theory of Boundary Critique, which highlights the link between values and setting boundaries (Midgley, 2000) to explore the inclusion, exclusion and marginalization of different issues (Barros-Castro et al, 2015). In chapter 4, I discussed the possibility of enhancing LMX theory using the concepts of Boundary Critique, since both theories include the notion of treating some people better than others - marginalization in Boundary Critique; differentiation in the case of LMX.

Chapter 5 presented the research design and methodology used to answer research question number 2 (“can empirical evidence be provided for the validity of the enhanced LMX?”), and in this chapter my findings are discussed. As mentioned in chapter 5, the objects of study were two academic Departments from a Northern Mexican University.

#### ***6.1 Demographics***

Table 6.1 shows the demographics of the chosen Departments. The first column, ‘Population’, presents the number of full-time academic staff attached to each Department. ‘Participants’ represents the number of academic staff who answered the LMX-7 test. The rest of the information is about the participants’ gender, how many of the participants had any managerial experience, and mean amount of academic experience for each Department.

	Population	Participants	Female Participants	Male Participants	Managerial Experience	Years of academic experience
D6	10	9	7	2	1	>6
D8	12	12	6	6	3	>11

Table 6.1 Demographic information on the academics who participated in the study.

## 6.2 LMX-7 Questionnaire Results

Table 6.2 shows the LMX-7 results from the participating Departments. To explain, the left side of the Table (under the heading 'Academic Staff') presents the results from the participants in Departments 6 and 8 who decided to take the LMX-7 test; and the right side, labeled 'Department Head', provides the results of each LMX-7 taken by each Department's head.

The number of 'Participants' and 'Followers' are different in the case of Department 6, and even from Table 6.1, 'Population'. The numbers from 'Population' were provided by the Human Resources Directorate in the selected School. For Department 6, there were originally 11 before the study started, but one academic retired from the institution, so the number officially went down to 10. Then, one academic member of staff decided not to participate, so the number reduced to 9. The Department's head, on the other hand, considered all academic staff when filling out the LMX-7.

In order to compare results from the LMX-7, percentages will be used, as seen in table 6.3, which is an extract from Table 5.5 from the last chapter.

	Academic Staff			Department Head				
	Participants	In	Middle	Out	Followers	In	Middle	Out
D6	9	4	2	3	10	8	2	0
D8	12	10	1	1	12	7	5	0

Table 6.2 LMX-7 results from participant academic staff and Department heads.

	Academic Staff			Department Head				
	Participants	In	Middle	Out	Followers	In	Middle	Out
D6	9	44%	22%	33%	10	80%	20%	0
D8	12	83%	8%	8%	12	58%	42%	0

Table 6.3 LMX-7 results from table 6.2 shown as percentages.

One interesting aspect of the results is the number of groups as seen from each perspective. Academic staff members' LMX-7 results show three types of relationship or groups (in, middle and out); but from the Department head's perspectives, there are only two: in and middle. Northouse (2013) suggests an interpretation of LMX-7 numeric results according to this guideline: very high = 30–35, high = 25–29, moderate = 20–24, low = 15–19, and very low = 7-14. People with scores in the very high/high range are considered to be in-group members, while people with low/very low scores are considered to be in the out-group. Moderate scores are considered to be middle-group members.

In the case of the Department head's results, their scores range between very high and moderate. This is the reason for saying that they identify in-groups and middle-groups, even though it is rather counter-intuitive to talk about a 'middle group' when there is no out-group. Graen and Cashman (1975) were the first researchers to recognize the middle group, but the vast majority of the LMX literature has focused only on in and out groups, leaving the middle-group aside (e.g., Dienesch and Liden, 1986; Schriesheim et al, 1999; Breukelen et al, 2006; Graen et al, 2006; Henderson et al, 2009). Cashman and Graen (1977) define the middle group as a group that "shares some of both of these methods of influence [i.e., high and low quality relationships]. For this group, the influence of members involves partial reliance upon interpersonal exchange and partial reliance upon contractual obligations" (p.455).

As part of the evolution of the LMX relationship between leaders and followers, Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) define a middle stage ('acquaintance') in the evolution of the relationship, leaving the 'strangers' stage behind without yet reaching the 'partnership' stage. They state that this middle stage is critical "since those dyads who do not develop

to the mature stage eventually fall back to the first stage” (Graen and Uhl Bien, 1995, p.232). Liden and Graen (1980), researching LMX’s three different groups, discovered that the in-group and middle-group are very similar when comparing involvement in work activities and contributions to results. Nelson (2013) supports this idea, since the outcomes of a middle-group, such as performance, job satisfaction, communication, etc., can be as positive as the in-group’s.

From this perspective, followers who have a middle-quality relationship with their boss are on their way to constructing a high-quality relationship rather than going back to a low-quality one. Nelson (2013) proposes the concept of ‘LMX fluidity’, implying that relationship between leader and follower evolves progressively, with ups and downs, from group to group, and it can range differently within any LMX quality group. Since the natural evolution of a middle-quality relationship is a high-quality relationship, for the purposes of this research, the middle-group will be included in the in-group. This change is presented in table 6.4.

What about the middle groups from the Department head’s perspectives? Sin et al (2009) suggest that, because of the way the LMX-7 is worded, “leaders are likely to view these items as a personal evaluation of themselves rather than an evaluation of the dyadic relationship. This would suggest that supervisors’ LMX ratings may be a form of self-rating” (p.1049). Following this argument, it could be that the Department head’s LMX-7 results are biased towards leniency, with academic staff who they really consider to be in the out-group being rated more benignly.

On the other hand, the concept of LMX fluidity described previously can explain the difference among perspectives. Nelson (2013) suggests that, from the follower’s perspective, the quality of the relationship evolves when the leader fulfills the subordinate’s expectations and recognizes their need to belong. From the leader’s perspective, the relationship evolves when the follower fulfills the leader’s expectations of performance. If leader and followers have the same LMX-quality status, it means both parties fulfill each other’s expectations. On the contrary, if there is a mismatch in status, it means that someone has not fulfilled the other’s expectations.

Following the same logic as was used to re-categorize the followers' middle-group as an in-group, and to be consistent with it, the middle-group from the Department head will be included in the in-group too. This change is also shown in Table 6.4.

	Academic Staff			Department Head				
	Participants	In	Middle	Out	Followers	In	Middle	Out
D6	9	67%	0	33%	10	100%	0	0%
D8	12	92%	0	8%	12	100%	0	0%

Table 6.4 LMX-7 results percentages without middle-groups.

This gives rise to an interesting picture (Figure 6.1) where neither of the Departmental heads sees any differentiation, but there is a clear difference between how the academic staff members see things, with Department 6 having strong perceived differentiation (with a fairly large out-group) and Department 8 having very little (an out-group of just one person). Because of the possibility (following Sin et al, 2009) that the leaders in either or both Departments are saying there is no differentiation on the basis that they merely *want to be seen* as inclusive, I believe it is reasonable to conclude that the these two Departments are indeed contrasting in terms of differentiation, and are therefore useful comparators for my research – although more evidence will be provided shortly in the form of qualitative data.

Before proceeding to the qualitative data, however, it is worth reflecting a little more on what has been said in the literature about differences between leader and member perceptions of differentiation, as these views may be relevant to my data analysis later on.

Sin et al (2009) argue that that the extent of time and intensity of communication invested in the relationships between leaders and followers will eventually lead to a convergence between points of view.

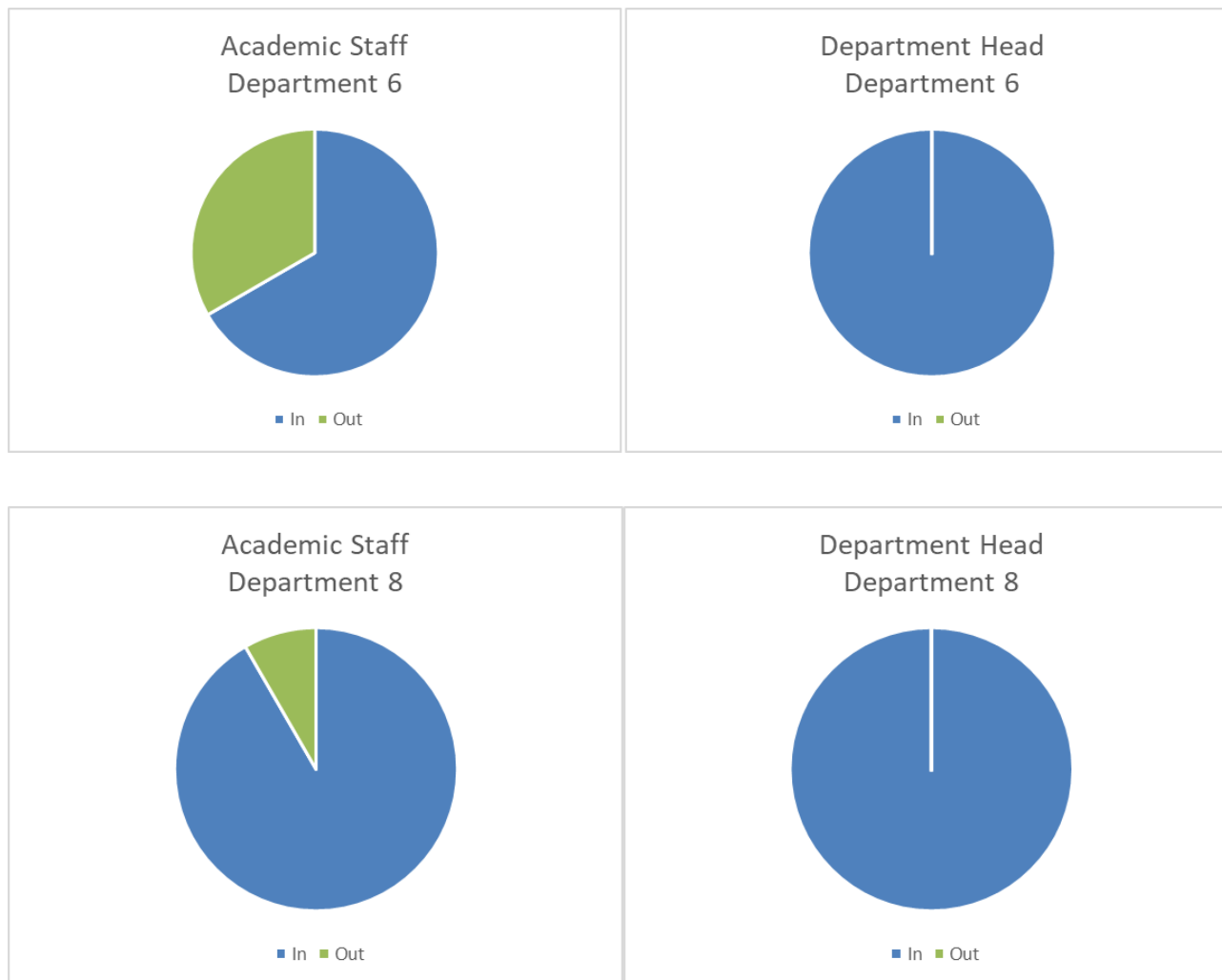


Figure 6.1: Differentiation in Department 6 and 8 from the Perspectives of the Academics (Left) and the Department Head (Right).

The more interactions there are between the leader and follower, allowing them to test mutual trust, respect and obligation, the more likely they are to agree that the follower is part of the in-group. The same is true with reference to the intensity of communication. However, I suggest that it requires more than time and intensity to establish high-quality relationships: all the people in both Department 6 and 8 had worked together for 6 years with a stable membership (nobody joining or leaving), both leaders had been in place for at least 3 years, and there was nothing in the qualitative data (to be presented shortly) to suggest a difference in the intensity of communications within Departments 6 and 8. Nevertheless, the staff members of Department 6 still see

43% of their number as belonging to an out-group. Something appears to be missing from the picture.

According to Cogliser et al (2009), there are four types of leader-subordinate relationship. Two are considered *balanced* relationships, where both leaders and followers share similar perspectives about the quality of the relationship (either high or low). The other two types of relationship are considered *unbalanced*, where the leaders and followers do not share the same perspective, either because the leader considers the quality of their relationships to be low while the followers perceive it as high, or vice versa. When followers perceive the relationship as being of low quality and the leader considers it high (the situation in Department 6), there is said to be an 'underestimation' of the relationship by the followers. On the other hand, the followers 'overestimate' when the quality of the relationship is considered high by the followers but low by the leader. According to Cogliser et al (2009), an underestimated relationship could be because of unseen signals sent by the leader or the leader's miscommunication of positive feedback, and/or an overly optimistic (or self-congratulatory) assessment of the relationship by the leader. For an overestimated relationship, where the followers think the relationship is good but the leader disagrees, causes could be the followers' positive predisposition toward authority figures, miscommunication by the followers, or simple misperception.

Speaking personally, I am a little critical of the use of the terms 'underestimated' and 'overestimated', because they assume the leader's perspective is correct, and the followers should be aligning with it. I prefer to say that the difference between the leader and the followers says something about their *relationship*, rather than about any one party in isolation. The leader-follower relationship is essentially systemic, with communication being two-way.

Zhou and Schriesheim (2009) consider several explanations for the differences between leaders and subordinates' perspectives on the quality of the relationship:



- *Measurement inequivalence*: difference in interpretation. The same survey questionnaire items may be interpreted differently by supervisors and subordinates.
- *Misalignment in scale referents*: inconsistent item wording. Small changes in the wording of items can have different meanings for the leader and followers (however, in my own research, I used exactly the same questionnaire, and the only words that were changed were “leader/follower”, depending on who was filling it in).
- *Perceptual differences in the LMX construct*: supervisors tend to bring into consideration a greater number of dimensions of the leader-member exchange relationship than do their subordinates.
- *Differential foci on task and social LMX dimensions*: Leaders tend to prioritize task-related exchange factors to judge LMX relationships, while followers tend to consider socially-related exchange factors as more relevant.
- *Potential shift in the differential foci over time*: Since the relationship between a leader and a follower is an evolving process, the only times the leader and follower share the same status is when the relationship is starting and when the relationship reaches a maturity stage. The perception of the status of the relationship may vary along the way.

All these explanations are plausible, but I will be in a better position to draw conclusions after my analysis of the interview data.

### **6.3 Interview Findings**

The purposes of the interviews were to, first, validate the results from the LMX-7 questionnaire; and second, identify rituals, values and issues that support the construction of boundaries and identify elements of marginalization. These elements are anticipated to be present in the highly differentiated Department, and to be absent or of little significance in the low differentiated Department.

The interview questions and answers (which have been translated from the original Spanish into English for this thesis) highlight four topics: relationship with the leader, groups among members of the Department, group decision making, and rituals - the latter being an important element of the marginalization process. The factors I am looking to find in this analysis (in the high-differentiation Department but not so much in the low differentiation one), if the theory of Boundary Critique can indeed enhance LMX theory, include statements about the values that determine who is 'in' or 'out'; marginalization; the imposition of 'sacred' or 'profane' attributions on marginalized people and issues; and rituals symbolically expressing the marginalization.

### **6.3.1 Department 6 (the High Differentiation Department)**

#### *6.3.1.1 Relationship with the leader*

Concerning their relationship with their leader, the academics said:

“Although I am sure it is good leadership, perhaps it is not a form of leadership that I am accustomed to or that I would wish for” (Out-group academic staff member).

“Friendly, a lot of control, but that's OK” (In-group academic staff member).

“A very humane relationship, always giving you the freedom to make decisions and to act according to the trust and respect you have as her subordinate” (In-group academic staff member).

“It is a confident, open relationship. It is easy to talk to her. She is a human, sensitive person” (In-group academic staff member).

“She recognizes my talent and also recognizes that her attitude is good and that [our] mutual recognition is reflected in communication and good work” (In-group academic staff member).

“From a personal perspective [the relationship] is very good. We are a team with a very good personal relationship. From a professional perspective though, things are not as direct as at the personal level” (Out-group academic staff member).

“Personally, excellent relationship, unbeatable. Professionally, we have two different perspectives” (Out-group academic staff member).

In-group academic staff members share the notion that they have a good relationship with their leader. Out-group academic staff members share the same concerns within their group: they have professional differences with the leader, even though they get along very well at a personal level. Considering the issue of the difference between the leader’s ratings and the followers’ ratings, the interview results give a new perspective on them:

- Perhaps the leader was focusing on the personal side of the relationship while the followers were focusing on the professional side, as they filled in their questionnaires (as also noted by Zhou and Schriesheim, 2009).

- Reflecting Cogliser et al's (2009) analysis, it seems that the leader is overestimating the relationship due to the time they have spent together as colleagues.
- Apparently, there has been enough time and intensity of communication to develop an agreement about the quality of the relationship (using Sin et al's 2009 variables), but this has not yet been accomplished.

In summary, we can say that the academics' view on their relationships with their leader tend to match their LMX-7 results. From the Department head's perspective, she considers the relationship with her followers to be "cordial, respectful, very confident because we have known each other for a long time", which matches with her LMX-7 results too. The qualitative data therefore validates the quantitative, but in my view it's also fair to say that the followers' perception of high differentiation is more accurate than the leader's perception of low differentiation because the latter seems to be basing this judgment purely on the length of time that people have known each other. All the followers in the out-group agree that their *personal* relationships with the leader are good (perhaps because of the length of time they have had to get to know one another), but do not say the same about their *professional* relationships, which they say are characterized by pronounced differences of opinion.

#### 6.3.1.2 Boundaries

When asked about sub-groups within the Department, 71% of academics stated that there are many different types of informal groups that people identify with, related to specialization, research interests, gender and last degree earned (PhD versus Master's degree). However, the division that stands out most strongly, and was mentioned by everyone, concerned people's approaches to teaching. The Department head phrased this very clearly: "There are two visions of how to teach the discipline, [one from] the philosophers and [the other from] the pragmatists".

This understanding was shared by all the Academics:

“Our boss has identified who can help her depending on the nature of the request or discipline: when it comes to **philosophical issues**, or relationships with companies, or when it is a matter of gender” (In-group academic staff member, emphasis added).

“There are some informal groups, women-men, PhD-masters-others, **philosophers-of-science/technology**” (Out-group academic staff member, emphasis added).

“There are groups by academic affinities, gender, by common interest, etc. There is the group of **career philosophers and those who are not**” (In-group academic staff member, emphasis added).

“When there is an external activity that requires participation from someone from the Department, they [the philosophers] recommend each other for the activity” (Out-group academic staff member).

“If the leader considers that a certain person has more knowledge on a subject, certain credentials on a topic, or in his/her personal judgment has more experience, of course, the leader is entitled to this opinion. But there may be a bit of disgust [from the rest]” (Out-group academic staff member).

“[The leader] gives more value to those who **studied philosophy** than to those who have **not studied philosophy** but who have some other specialty. You can tell by the feedback on some comments, or when [the leader] speaks of other

projects or other professional trajectories” (In-group academic staff member, emphasis added).

“There are very clear skills among those who have **more solid training in philosophy than those who do not**, but that does not mean that we have two groups and that somehow someone feels excluded, because we are not integrated among us, so we do not make a group. There is no way to exclude someone because we are not integrated in the first place” (In-group academic staff member, emphasis added).

What is noticeable about this last quotation is that the interviewee does not even recognize that there is a common identity among the staff, even though they are all in the same Department and teaching the same programmes. This suggests a very high level of differentiation indeed, where boundaries are set between the academic staff who are philosophy experts (in-group) and the rest.

#### *6.3.1.3 Values*

From the point of view of the theory of Boundary Critique, values are about what is important to people in the context of action. They are not general principles like ‘modesty’ or ‘kindness’ (Midgley, 2000). I asked about group decision making that typically happens during Departmental meetings, focusing on who participates and who does not, how they are perceived, and what is important to them. Some of the answers reinforce the importance of the philosopher/pragmatist distinction, and value judgments around what expertise is most important:

“There are those who always have an opinion about something, and then there are those who participate when the subject is something they are against, or it

interests them. Then there are those who mostly listen throughout the meeting and only sometimes give specific opinions” (In-group academic staff member).

“Those who participate are more from the philosophy area. The feeling [on the part of those who are not in the philosophy area] is, what is the point of participating if we will not accomplish anything?” (Out-group academic staff member).

“The leadership is always focused on just some [academics]: those with the same academic degree, or experience, or even having a type of administrative role” (Out-group academic staff member).

“The philosophers want the answer [to any question or matter of discussion] to go according to what they propose.... That's how they want it” (Out-group academic staff member).

“Who participates and who does not? Depending on the topic and, in relation to this, there are two profiles: those who are more intellectual and more academic and are interested in conferences, publications, ideas, etc., and others who are, apparently, more interested, I don't know, in teaching” (In-group academic staff member).

The final quotation above is a slightly different framing of the philosophy/pragmatist distinction, as it was clear from his subsequent comments that those interested in ‘conferences, publications, ideas, etc.’ are the philosophers, and the teachers are the

pragmatists. According to the quotations (mostly from the out-group members), the philosophers are the ones who tend to lead the conversations during meetings. What about their values?

“When the quality of the discourse is diminished during meetings, we [the philosophers] are the ones who improve it [the quality of the conversation]. There are certain things that we can only speak of among ourselves, if we are not to show up our differences with the rest of our colleagues” (In-group academic staff member, Philosopher).

“I do feel informal pressure because you have to share achievements in the meetings; "and what are you doing? Apart from your classes, if you are not writing or advising?" You feel like you are not in the same group as everyone who is writing books or publishing in journals. Their [those with a PhD in Philosophy] priority is that they have to be moving in that direction, and I feel a little isolated because I am not in the same rhythm as them” (Out-group academic staff member, Pragmatist).

““Hey, how about we read it [an academic article] and on Thursday we all meet as a Department and give feedback to the article that has already been published or is being published?’ Something academic, reading a book by chapters. Also invite expert people in our field: ‘good, let's bring someone to this meeting, and I am very interested in hearing this, here’s the previous article’, as do other academic Departments in the world, right?” (In-group academic staff member, Philosopher).

“I come from a hard area, not a philosophical area, so sometimes I wondered why there was so much discussion. Then I understood that it's because of the



profile, the critical analysis and everything” (Out-group academic staff member, Pragmatist).

It can be noticed that the values prevailing for the philosophy academics are related to the importance of philosophical disciplinary expertise, mastery of the discipline, research, and academic life. The values associated with the out-group seem related to the importance of teaching, and pragmatically delivering something of value to industry:

“We all teach the same class [even though we come from different academic backgrounds], we all share the same class, or at some point we have shared it. ‘Hey, what do you advise me, what reading should I assign? What do you recommend?’” (Out-group academic staff member).

“There are courses that belong to us, but as always, they [the philosophers] can take them [away from us]” (Out-group academic staff member).

“[We want] what is proposed to transcend [a single purpose], in that what is proposed may bring a benefit to [our] activity in particular, which is teaching, but also to consulting, and towards [our] image” (Out-group academic staff member).

#### *6.3.1.4 Marginalization Process*

From the interviews, it becomes clearer now that the LMX in-group is formed by the philosophers and the out-group is formed by the rest of the academics; the ones who come from different disciplines, even if they have a PhD. There is actually just one exception: a single pragmatist self-identified as a member of the in-group, and when I

explored his situation in his interview, it became apparent that he viewed the immanent award of his PhD as representing a transition into the in-group. It is therefore legitimate to view him as a philosopher, as he had clearly gained those skills, even though he also still valued teaching and contributions to industry. If we use the complete graphic from Chapter 4 of the *Process of Marginalization*, and include the findings from Department 6, we can map on the philosopher/pragmatist differentiation in Figure 6.2 to demonstrate that it takes the form of a marginalization process, as understood in the theory of Boundary Critique (Midgley, 1992a).

The primary boundary surrounds the group formed by the philosophers (the LMX in-group). It could possibly be said that their PhD students are within the primary boundary too, although in terms of the relationship between Boundary Critique and LMX, the latter is only concerned with employees, so PhD students are not so relevant to this analysis. Nevertheless, it could be interpreted that the philosophers' activities with their PhD students (supervision, discussions in the hall, etc.) are examples of rituals of differentiation that reinforce the profane status of non-philosophers (see Section 6.3.1.5 for more details).

The secondary boundary defines the limits of Department 6, which leaves the pragmatists (the LMX out-group) inside the secondary boundary but outside the primary one, in the marginal zone. The values associated with the primary boundary are related to belief in the importance of philosophical disciplinary expertise, mastery of the discipline, and belief in the value of research, especially with PhD students.

The values associated with the secondary boundary seem related to the importance of teaching, and pragmatically delivering something of value to industry.

One issue with this analysis is that most marginalization dynamics involve those working with the secondary boundary accepting what is in the primary boundary, but recontextualizing it in light of their wider perspective (see the examples in Midgley, 1992a, 1994, 2000; Córdoba and Midgley, 2003, 2006, 2008; and Barros-Castro et al, 2015).

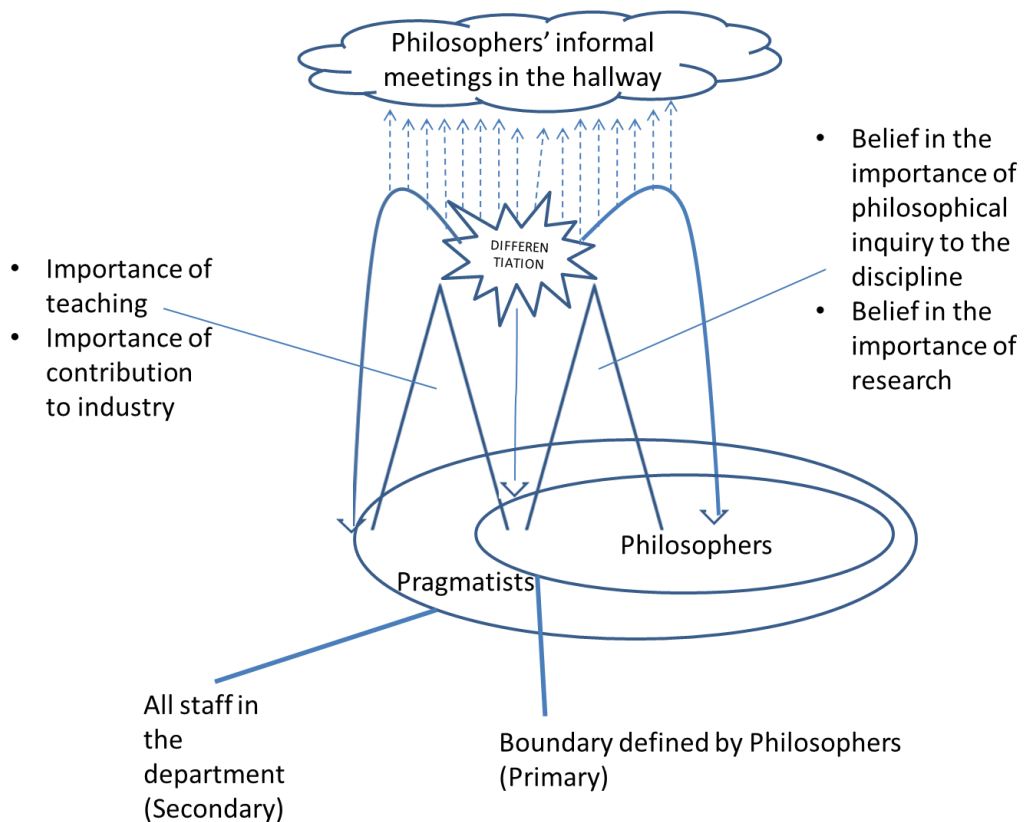


Figure 6.2: Department 6's Marginalization Process.

In this case, however, the pragmatists do not include philosophical research or PhD students in their activities at all. Nevertheless, Midgley (2000) makes it clear that what holds marginalization dynamics in place is wider tensions between institutional and/or societal discourses. In relation to 'the university' as an institution (i.e., universities in general rather than one particular organization), there has long been a tension between the value of research producing knowledge of intrinsic benefit, and the values associated with serving students and wider society. Indeed, it could be said that neither could legitimately be pursued without the other: a sole focus on philosophical research would undermine financial viability, as teaching is necessary for the latter, but a sole focus on delivery of benefits for students and industry would undermine the claim that universities are capable of generating enlightenment for its own sake and critical (rather than merely instrumental) knowledge for society. Because the latter has been an institutionalized ideal for centuries (indeed, before there were even formal degree

programs), the pragmatists really have no choice but to accept the legitimacy of their philosophical colleagues, even though they do not want to participate in philosophical research themselves.

#### *6.3.1.4.1 Sacred and Profane*

Now, when each boundary is associated with different values, tension can arise, and whatever is in the margins becomes its focus; in this case, the out-group pragmatists with their focus on teaching and value to industry.

According to Midgley (1992a), “the imposition of a profane status upon some marginal elements might reinforce or bolster the supposedly objective necessity of the primary boundary, while imposition of a sacred status might protect the secondary boundary from dissolution” (p.10). The terms ‘sacred’ and ‘profane’ are not used in a religious way, but indicate the valued or devalued status of the marginal elements (Córdoba and Midgley, 2008). In this case, who are being labeled sacred or profane? It seems obvious that the philosophers view the pragmatists as profane, not so much because they say so themselves, but because the pragmatists express such strong resentment at their perceived stigmatization. When distinctions are taken for granted, one’s own culture is often invisible to oneself (Midgley et al, 2007). Therefore, the philosophers just see their activities as normal, and are not fully aware that they are marginalizing others. It is by hearing the words of the pragmatists that we understand the depth of feeling about the perceived stigmatization:

“[You ask me] if I felt excluded? Yes, many times, and I do not mind saying this, because it is true. From a professional point of view, they fail to separate their egos from their activities, and they take the position of a diva. There are doctors of power, and the activities or specialties to which those with no power are dedicated cannot convince doctors of power” (Out-group academic staff member).

However, do the pragmatists see themselves as sacred (something one would expect, as Midgley [2015] explains that there is rarely a consensus on whether marginalized elements are sacred or profane, even though one view comes to dominate the other)? I think they do, and some academic staff expressed it aloud:

“We are not philosophers, but... there is a reason why we are here. The name of the Department has both areas in it, and it’s been like that from the very conception of the Department” (Out-group academic staff member).

“It’s been long and difficult to put our topics on the table, but we never said ‘we are worthless’. On the contrary. And now we have more representation, especially when we finish our PhDs. The doctorate manages to put us in a more equal position” (In-group academic staff member, Pragmatist).

“[We are] lesser; but still, the non-philosophy academics have worked very hard to be taken into account as people with knowledge and talent. We are not Class B” (Out-group academic staff member).

Pragmatists see value in their responsibilities and tasks, and are frustrated and demotivated by the fact that their colleagues do not see things their way:

“Because you do not want to go in to claim something that you know in advance you’re not going to win, instead I [think I had] better remain silent, and you remain silent and apathy begins, and you end up doing what everybody else does” (Out group academic staff member).

“Those who participate more are from the philosophy area, but when they open their mouths they say things that are not conclusive. In addition, there is a feeling of “what am I discussing this for if we will not achieve anything?”.... Just like old men who tell you the same story, over and over” (In-group academic staff member).

#### *6.3.1.5 Rituals*

Although I asked the interviewees about rituals, I was aware that people in the West are rarely able to identify them in their own cultures. This is because people in non-indigenous communities tend to see rituals as happening only in indigenous, tribal cultures or in religious settings. They tend to be blind to their own non-religious ritual activity, even though there is a lot of sociological and anthropological research discussing rituals in secular, economically-advanced contexts (see Barthes [1973] for a seminal text). Therefore, I was not expecting positive responses, and was prepared to scan the interview material more widely for evidence of rituals that might not appear as such to the interviewees, but can be interpreted this way nevertheless.

As expected, none of the academic staff could directly identify any rituals. However, the Department head mentioned that “outside office hours, philosophers meet to talk about philosophical issues, and have academic discussions. The pragmatists are prone to task development rather than discussions”. Following this insight, there are some behaviors identified in the interviews that can be interpreted as rituals:

“The informal meetings [of philosophy academics] are in the hallway. Also, those philosophy academics share many doctoral students that we do not have in the business area. We see them here and greet them, but we do not even know where they work. The topics they discuss are usually doctoral subjects” (Out-group academic staff member).

“I think [the leader] meets more with the [academic staff from the] philosophy area, besides talking about subjects here in the hall” (In-group academic staff member, Pragmatist).

“My philosophy mates are not organizing the ‘philosophy day’ or ‘dialogues’, no, they are doing *something else* [said in a sarcastic tone of voice to indicate that these things are elite or exclusive rituals]” (Out-group academic staff member).

These behaviors can be considered as rituals as they are repeated events that signal people’s identity as a group; in this case, the identity of philosophers. From the perspective of the out-group (pragmatists), I could not find any rituals that reassert their value, which is consistent with Midgley’s (1992a, 2000) theory of marginalization. In more equal conflict situations, there can be ‘rituals of reply’, which have the effect of reasserting the sacredness of identities that others are trying to make profane. When marginalization is strong, however, the rituals reinforce only the interpretation of profanity, thus making the primary boundary (in this case defining the philosophers as an in-group) dominant. Because rituals are repeated and become part of culture, it makes it difficult for others to change this marginalization dynamic.

### *6.3.2 Department 8 (the Low Differentiation Department)*

Recall that I included Department 8 in this study because the differentiation in it was relatively low compared with Department 6. I showed that a marginalization dynamic could be mapped very clearly onto the differentiation in Department 6.

If indeed the Boundary Critique theory of marginalization can augment LMX, rather than be about something else, then *where there is little differentiation* (e.g., in Department 8) *there should be little or no marginalization*.

### 6.3.2.1 Relationship with the leader

According to the LMX-7 results produced by the academic staff, shown in figure 6.1 (see earlier in this Chapter), all but one have a high-quality relationship with their leader, and this is supported by their interviews. In-group academics said they had “a very cordial relationship, based on trust and respect”, “very open, very confident”, “full of respect, cordiality, and mutual trust”, “a cordial working relationship”, “cordial, respectful, trustworthy”, “we have the confidence to discuss things openly”, and “good, friendly, sincere and direct”. In contrast, the single out-group academic staff member described their relationship as follows: “she tries very hard to satisfy my needs, without realizing what I *really* need”.

As shown in table 6.4, the LMX-7 results from the leader of Department 8 suggest no differentiation from her perspective, which seems to be corroborated by the qualitative interview data: she said that “there is a fully participatory relationship, a close relationship, a relationship of trust that predominates over the boss-collaborator status” with regard to *all* her staff.

### 6.3.2.2 Boundaries

Both differentiation and marginalization processes can be identified when there are well-defined groups. In this Department, it appeared that there were plenty of groups, and academic staff all tended to belong to more than one. When asked about groups and relationships between them, everyone recognized the existence of different types of informal groups “by affinity, by specialty areas, by long-time friendship, and by gender. Formal groups only by projects” (In-group academic staff member). The Department head also recognized the existence of small groups: “since it’s a large Department, it’s obvious there will be certain affinities in small groups. When establishing objectives or asking people to work collaboratively, it is very easy to identify who will work with whom”. However, critically, even though all members recognized



that there are sub-groups, they agreed this is something that does not affect the Department as a whole by creating major splits:

“Everyone has their ways and styles sometimes, but in general we are a good group. When we are summoned to do teamwork, each one brings their different capacities or abilities, and in the end, it is possible to get the job done. Obviously, with some people you work better than with others” (In-group academic staff member).

“There is a very good interaction between us in a small group, and with others as well, and in social activities we are all very integrated. Everyone comes with a cordial attitude” (Out-group academic staff member).

“The fact that these groups exist does not mean that they are closed or that they are not involved in other activities. I do not perceive that because they exist, the Department is divided into different groups. That kind of division can cause power struggles. No” (In-group academic staff member).

According to the interviews and quotations, there are no identifiable boundaries that indicate splits, and this mirrors the non-differentiated spirit of the Department.

### *6.3.2.3 Values*

According to an in-group academic staff member, decision-making happens as follows:

“One stage is defining the problem; there is a stage of questioning one another, who can do it? And another stage of closure. Maybe there is an argument from

whoever, very solid, very well-founded, and maybe it is long, but most people will take it into account... You listen to the posturing a bit and in the end you decide as a group”.

It appears that there is a strong emphasis on consensus, or at least reaching accommodations:

“When it [a decision] can be achieved in a collegial way, if it is an objective that impacts everybody, then it is done in a democratic way and we all participate. If the decision has to do more with the various different areas, groups are formed with those who are in those areas, and they present a proposal and a decision, and everybody else respects what the group has decided” (In-group academic staff member).

However, the out-group academic staff member thought differently:

“The only Departmental decision we make is ‘where are we going to have the Christmas party?’ [The leader] would have us believe that you do not have any [decision-making power]. This is my very particular perception, because I have been there. They [the higher authorities] tell you what you have to do, but they don’t tell you how to do it. They give you freedom of choice just on the how”.

Concerning the people who do or do not participate in decision-making or meetings, the Department head commented that “there are very proactive people and there are people who just complain, nothing more”. Academic staff tended to agree with their leader on this:

“Participation is different, it is diverse, and not everyone has the same behavior. Some just complain. And it is okay to say no. Others accept situations, and others

are basically neutral. Not everyone has the same attitude” (In-group academic staff member).

“There are some [academics] who always remain silent and there are others who always open their mouths to complain. And then one tries to be supportive: how can we change the ‘it’s not possible’ to the ‘it is possible’? And others give a different opinion, but I feel that everyone is covering their backs. If they [academic staff] see that something is threatening their comfort zone, they jump in and justify why they want to keep the status-quo” (Out-group academic staff member).

“Some [colleagues] participate to compete, to stand out; others to carry out the agenda of the group; others just to say something; and others just so there is no silence” (In-group academic staff member).

Even though there is no visible differentiation, the value of participation is important for everyone in this Department, and not only participation per se, but the *quality* of the participation: whether it is proactive and positive or negative and complaining. And some people, it would seem, are differentiated by the quality of their participation.

#### *6.3.2.4 Marginalization Processes*

For marginalization to happen there should be some elements present that are neither fully included nor fully excluded (Midgley and Pinzón, 2011). Therefore, if the Departmental boundary of all staff is regarded as the widest one I am using, there has to be a primary boundary defining a subset of the Department, automatically marginalizing others (and potentially the issues that concern those others). In the case

of Department 8, even though there are many different types of subgroup, there is a collective identity that apparently doesn't allow any significant schisms or differentiation.

There was one topic, however, that kept cropping up in every interview, and this concerns how people do or do not participate in meetings, and the consequences for their behavior outside these meetings:

“There are colleagues who never speak and there are colleagues who speak often. Among those who speak often, there are some who are always against the idea. [You can call them] negatives. They always find something bad; they only criticize instead of propose things” (Academic who tends to stay silent in meetings).

“When we participate more, it's because we know that somehow it will affect us in our work. Those who don't, maybe are not interested in the project or the discussion because they see it as a dead end, or they don't like to be seen as showoffs” (Academic who speaks up in meetings).

“Participation is different, it is diverse. Not everyone has the same behavior, and some just complain. And it is okay to say 'no'. Others accept situations, and others are basically neutral. Not everyone has the same attitude” (Academic who complains).

“There are three types of academic staff: the ones who just take care of their jobs and prefer not to get involved in controversy; those who accept and reaffirm whatever the leader says; and others, like me, who only talk when we feel that

something is being proposed that will hurt the institution” (In-group academic staff member).

“Some staff use intellectual arguments to block, or stop, or justify at any given time, their non-interest or non-participation. I think it is a teachers’ thing not saying yes or no, but to entertain the process. Other academic staff declare their *intention* to participate... but at the end only some actually get into the matter” (Participative staff member).

“I always have a very positive response from the group, except for two academic staff members; but with the others, very good” (Department head).

If we consider *attitudes to participation* as something that creates boundaries distinguishing one type of academic from another, we can see how this plays out in terms of marginalization. There are clearly values associated with wanting to participate (e.g., valuing the ability to influence decisions). The values associated with those who choose not to participate are arguably less clear, although the comment was made that these people do get on with their jobs, so perhaps doing what is required of them is their primary value, and they feel no need to be part of decision-making, or it’s just a matter of introverted personality (unfortunately people did not talk about this element in enough detail for me to draw a firm conclusion). From those making complaints, there was a clear statement that they see themselves protecting the institution from harm. Assuming that ‘the institution’ they are protecting is wider than just Department 8, there do appear to be clear boundaries of concern (with the narrowly defined decision context versus the interests of the wider institution) that align with the boundaries of participation.

Clearly, the difference between those who do and do not complain is experienced as an irritant:

“You always see the same raised hands [those who are willing to help]. The others [who are not willing to help] complain that they aren’t taken into consideration” (Academic who perceives himself as willing-to-help).

“When a decision is taken and you were not there or did not say anything... you no longer have a chance to say something to change the decision. Sometimes, these people get angry, and then they start suggesting solutions by email, and one of us just has to say that the decision has been made” (Academic who participates in decision making).

“From my point of view the conflict can be very good because everyone has the chance to put their perspectives on the table” (Out-group academic staff member).

Note that the latter quotation explicitly identifies this as a conflict situation, although it is telling that it comes from the single out-group member. While this issue of non-participation and complaining might be irritating for some, the evidence presented earlier in Section 6.3.2.2 was that this does not constitute a fundamental split in the Department.

#### *6.3.2.4.1 Sacred and profane*

Defining who might have a sacred or profane status attributed to them is not as clear as in Department 6, since there is practically no differentiation and the marginalization is

mild. Most notably, there is room for both groups (academics who positively participate and academics who don't participate or who complain) in their decision-making meetings, even if they irritate each other. Although complaints seem to be dismissed most of the time after discussion, people feel able to make them in the first place:

“[During meetings] there are opportunities to ask, there are opportunities to contribute on the issues, but it is handled in a very executive way” (In-group academic staff member).

“There is interaction, the moment someone has something to say on the topic, whatever it is. Whether it's a suggestion or a complaint, he is free to do it or express it” (In-group academic staff member).

If a sacred status comes to be granted to academics with positive attitudes toward participating in decision-making, then the marginalization might grow stronger, since there would most likely be a corresponding stigmatization of academics complaining. On the other hand, if a profane status is imposed on participants with positive attitudes, it is possible that the complaints would become stronger and, because positive engagement is disallowed, this would paralyze decision making. Given the existence of different approaches to decision making, it would appear the Department has an effective balance overall.

Because of the solid whole-group identity that allows people to act as they prefer (refer back to 6.3.2.2. and 6.3.2.3 for quotations), and because of the way the Department head deals with complaining academics (letting them speak), the level of marginalization is relatively low and there is no need for stigmatization.

### 6.3.2.5 Rituals

In response to my questions about rituals, each academic staff member mentioned different things. Some of them clearly could be considered rituals, but with others, it would stretch the definition of ritual too far to accept them as such. The first two quotations below are in the latter category. The rest suggest the existence of rituals, but only one (the final one) could be considered to represent any kind of schism in the Department – the others represent boundary distinctions other than schisms. Even the one quotation that could be interpreted as a ritual expressing a schism is possibly aimed only at the single out-group academic.

“Everyone is in their comfort zone and there is no way to break it” (Out-group academic staff member).

This quotation indicates a comfort boundary, but not a ritual expressing it.

“The narrow-minded are not open to changes or new options” (In-group academic staff member).

While certain repeated behaviors coming with refusals of new options could be considered ritualistic, these were not mentioned.

“We are present in the meeting, but we are doing things that are unrelated to the meeting. We are on our computers, with other things, with other errands” (In-group academic staff member).

There is possibly a ritual element here, but if anything, it is an expression of how busy people are, with academics using computers as a ritual expression of the overflow of



their individual tasks into the collective environment. This does not appear to be related in any way to differentiation or marginalization.

“There are certain phrases; a certain way of saying things that you can tell is from our Department” (In-group academic staff member).

This does suggest some kind of ritual behavior, but relating to a distinction between Department 8 and others.

“We can say that the informal reunions are rituals, after-office reunions, birthday cakes, etc.” (In-group academic staff member).

Again, these are very definitely rituals, but they are about reinforcing the group identity *across the whole of Department 8*. There were no indications at all, when I asked follow up questions, that these social gatherings were used to symbolically exclude or marginalize any individuals or sections of the Department.

“You always see the same raised hands [those who are willing to help]. The others, who are not willing to help, will complain that they weren’t taken into consideration” (In-group academic staff member).

Both the hand-raising and complaints could well be rituals as well as functional, but it is hard to see this reflecting any significant differentiation, except possibly of the one out-group academic, whose quotations (presented earlier) suggest a significant degree of alienation from decision making processes. However, the leader, in her interview, talked about *two* people regularly complaining, and all the other interviewees who mentioned complaining talked about it as being something that more than one person did. Therefore, I conclude that this element of ritual, while significant (see later in this chapter), is not linked to LMX differentiation.

While there clearly was ritual going on, this would be expected in any social group. The critical question is whether the ritual can be tied in with differentiation, and there was insufficient evidence for this.

There is the ritual of hand-raising, which reinforces the primary boundary (ability to influence decisions and consensus); but also the ritual of complaining, which acknowledges the primary boundary but reasserts the secondary one (do what is required, keep the status-quo, prevent harmful decisions). This situation shows that space is being made for both groups. Indeed, there is actually some evidence for rituals in Department 8 that function to *prevent* differentiation, such as inclusive social functions and the use of a 'Departmental language' that others recognize. It may be that these things are indicative of schisms between Department 8 and other parts of the university, but this was beyond the remit of my investigation.

The marginalization dynamics in Department 8, to the extent that they exist, are represented in Figure 6.3. There are some critical differences between Figures 6.2 (about Department 6) and 6.3. One is that the rituals in 6.2 all reinforce the primary boundary concerning the valuing of philosophical research, while those in 6.3 reinforce both the primary and secondary boundaries. Also, in Figure 6.2, the values associated with the primary boundary regarding the importance of philosophical inquiry and research more generally were not shared by the marginalized pragmatists. In contrast, the values associated with the primary boundary in Figure 6.3 (concerning the benefits of consensus and the ability to influence decisions) were, to some extent, shared by those who were complaining (they complained because they wanted to have some influence, but their communications tended to be perceived as negative by others).

What this suggests is that Figure 6.2 shows a strong marginalization dynamic related to LMX differentiation, with cultural rituals reinforcing the primary boundary and the profanity of the pragmatists in Department 6; whereas Figure 6.3 shows that a mild form of marginalization is prevented from descending into strong differentiation by cultural rituals that allow space for those with different communication styles to express themselves while maintaining a cohesive whole-department identity.

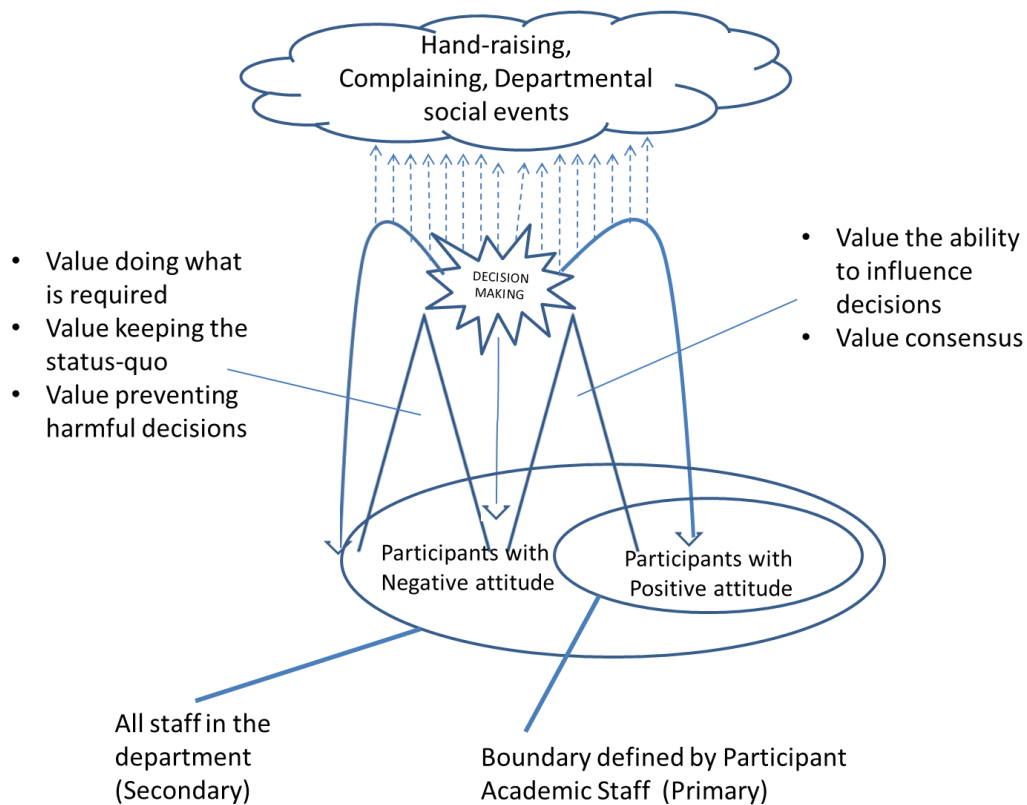


Figure 6.3: Department 8's Process of Marginalization.

#### **6.4 Summary and Reflection on the Research Questions**

Research question number 2 asks “can empirical evidence be provided for the validity of the enhanced LMX?” The Department 6 LMX results show a strongly differentiated situation where the in-group (philosophical academic staff and one pragmatic academic staff member with a PhD) make up 58% of the membership. The out-group, containing academic staff with no philosophy background and no PhD, is formed by the remaining 42%. I was able to undertake a marginalization analysis in addition to the LMX analysis, and showed that the issues can be explained by both theories. In this sense, then, the additional concepts made available through the Boundary Critique theory of marginalization add new detail and value to what LMX already offers. Instead of just discussing in-groups and out-groups, we can additionally consider the boundary judgments the participants make, their values, how they come into conflict, and how this is expressed symbolically in rituals.

I suggest that this is not merely a theoretical enrichment, but has practical significance, because Boundary Critique can help to identify both the roots of the differentiation (the issue or issues that underpin it, causing in-groups and out-groups to emerge) and the ways in which it is systemically entrenched (through marginalization, stigmatization and ritual). We know from the theory of Boundary Critique that some marginalization processes can be extraordinarily difficult to shift (Midgley, 1992a, 1994), but as long as the conflict is only of local organizational significance, rather than reflecting a wider division in society that cannot be easily overcome, it *is* possible to intervene to create meaningful change (Midgley, 2000). Certainly, the issue of philosophers marginalizing others is local. While it has roots in disciplinary differences in academia, there is no wider social reason why philosophers should always marginalize others, and indeed in most universities I would suggest that this doesn't happen.

It would have been convenient for me, in answering research question 2, if there had been no marginalization worthy of note in the relatively undifferentiated (according to LMX) Department 8.

However, I *did* find a form of marginalization relating to people's willingness to participate in decision-making, and their propensity to complain if they do not participate and then the outcomes of the decision-making are not to their liking. What therefore needs explaining is how marginalization can exist without causing more significant and entrenched differentiation.

It would appear that, in Department 8, there is a counter-system of rituals that works to minimize the marginalization of the complaining academics.

Balancing the hand-raising ritual, which has the potential to reinforce the marginalization of silent staff, is a ritual of complaining that is largely accepted, even though the more proactive participants find it irritating. In one way or another, everyone has a say in the process, although (as a couple of interviewees said) active participation is usually more effective in terms of influencing decision making than after-the-event resistance. Also critically important is that the whole-group identity is reinforced

through the use of integration rituals, such as regular social events, so the situation doesn't deteriorate into full differentiation.

Of course, whether or not these integration rituals serve to preserve the Departmental identity in the face of a common enemy elsewhere in the University remains an unanswered question.

In the next chapter, Question 3 will be discussed: the added value that Boundary Critique might provide to LMX in terms of normative recommendations for good leadership practice.

## CHAPTER 7

### GUIDANCE FOR BETTER PRACTICE

According to the findings presented in the previous chapter, there is an excellent opportunity for the explanatory value of LMX to be enhanced by concepts from Boundary Critique. The theory of marginalization processes complements the descriptive nature of LMX by identifying situations where the out-group is marginalized by the values and boundary judgments of the in-group. Also, I have demonstrated how marginalization can be exacerbated by ascriptions of a 'sacred' or 'profane' status on marginalized people or issues, and then this can become entrenched through institutionalization in rituals. I argue that the Boundary Critique model of marginalization processes can be incorporated into LMX as a theory-informed tool to dig deeper into relationships between leaders and subordinates. It can help us understand the reasons why these relationships might have become highly differentiated, or why low differentiation has been maintained. I have provided examples of this 'digging deeper' in my case study of the two Departments in a Northern Mexican University, presented in Chapter 6.

Department 6's LMX-7 results showed highly differentiated relationships with a well-defined in-group and out-group. Through the semi-structured interviews, the out-group (pragmatic academics and non-philosophers) confirmed that they were marginalized and stigmatized by the in-group (philosophers). This marginalization was expressed through the rituals the philosophers developed, which reinforced their values and beliefs. Even though the stigmatization was not purposely created by the philosophers, that doesn't mean the out-group didn't suffer from it. Department 8 had a different story, however. Their LMX-7 results showed a low-differentiated Department, but their interviews still revealed a mild form of marginalization: those who participated in decision-making with a positive attitude had a tendency to find participants with a negative attitude irritating.

Nevertheless, this did not result in damaging stigmatization because the element of marginalization was counteracted by an inclusive approach to decision making and social events that ritually reinforced the whole-department identity.

However, we can go further than this descriptive account. In Chapter 3, I pointed out that Boundary Critique has been developed by systems thinkers *to inform systemic interventions* (e.g., Midgley, 2000). This means, if used in the context of organizational leadership, it has the potential to guide management decision making and action. Thus, this chapter sets out to answer the third research question of this thesis: if an enhanced LMX is supported with empirical evidence, how can Boundary Critique add value to the normative guidance for good leadership practice already offered by LMX?

As the emphasis in the last sentence is on 'adding value' to normative guidance, there are going to be three foci in this chapter: (i) what can be learned from my research on Department 8, where there was clearly an issue of marginalization, but it had not developed into full LMX differentiation and stigma; (ii) what LMX theorists have already said about normative guidance; and (iii) the value that Boundary Critique adds to LMX. The latter can only be defined with reference to what LMX theorists have already said (focus ii).

### ***7.1 Learnings from Department 8***

As mentioned in Chapter 6, Department 8 had characteristics that acted as a counterweight to the marginalization of staff with negative attitudes to decision-making, so it did not turn into a conflict that would initiate stigmatization.

All academic staff but one had a perception of a high-quality relationship with their leader. On the other hand, the leader perceived herself as having a high-quality relationship with *all* of her followers. It is reasonable to conclude that there is practically no differentiation in this Department. However, once we start asking more penetrating questions about the relationships among the members of the group, we encounter a topic that actually divided the Department and created a mild form of marginalization:

as shown in Figure 6.3, from chapter 6, there are two groups: a primary group formed by academic staff who believe they have the ability to influence decisions and want to work for consensus decision-making; and a secondary group who have a more negative attitude toward the ways in which decision-making is conducted, who will do what is required of them but will not go the 'extra mile' to collaborate on decision-making with others, and who maintain the status-quo and prevent harmful decisions.

There were rituals that reinforced each of the boundaries: the 'hand-raising' ritual, which reinforced the boundary defined by the participants with a participative attitude, and the 'complaining' ritual that reinforced the boundary delimiting participants with a non-participative attitude to meetings. According to all the academic staff, both rituals were important since they gave everyone the opportunity to express themselves and belong, even if their modes of engagement were different. The key here is that both groups were included and respected by everyone, even the leader, despite the minor irritations that the differences caused.

The literature on LMX is peppered with references to the need for leaders to adopt an inclusive attitude (e.g., Hollander, 2008; Yin, 2013), and it would appear that it was the leader's inclusivity in Department 8 that prevented an element of marginalization from becoming conflictual differentiation.

However, I think it is important to consider whether inclusivity is always an unalloyed good. It can be argued that, before seeking inclusion, the manager should first examine the importance and implications of the differences in values between the in and out groups. The leader needs to ask some questions and make some value judgments. First, are the marginalized values important for the organization? If so, they should be preserved as relationships are improved. Is the leader unsure about their value? If the answer is 'yes', problem structuring workshops (such as those presented in Rosenhead and Mingers, 2001) could help. Is it possible that the in-group is promoting problematic values (such as philosophy at the expense of relevance to industry, rather than *as well as* relevance)? If so, this has to be tackled. Is the in-group protecting important values that the out-group wants to actively undermine?



In which case, perhaps they should not be sacrificed, and ways to reinforce both the in-group values *and* good relationships (perhaps through staff development) need to be sought. Indeed, if the out group is promoting values that are deeply problematic (for example, racism or sexism in an organization that is trying to promote equal opportunities), then keeping the out group marginalized might be a good thing. Here, it is important to differentiate between people who can usefully be given opportunities for staff development and inclusion, and those advocating for highly problematic values that must remain marginalized. A way to achieve this differentiation is to identify employee behaviors that can result in instant dismissal, and policies of this nature make clear to people that highly problematic values are not acceptable and cannot be translated into behaviors without significant consequences. This all matters for the approach to inclusion – different approaches are needed for different situations.

An element of learning from Department 8's experience, beyond the inclusiveness of the leader, is the establishment of rituals of identity that differentiate this Department from the rest of the School and University. These rituals include social gatherings, where everyone is invited and assists, and the use of Departmental slang developed through daily coexistence. These rituals give the Department cohesion, even enabling friendship between its members, so people think twice before allowing an argument, conflict or dispute to entrench bad feeling.

Before moving from an analysis of the experiences in Department 8 to concluding what added value for the provision of normative guidance can be derived from integrating the theory of Boundary Critique into LMX, it is first necessary to explain what LMX already offers. This is discussed below.

## ***7.2 Normative guidance from LMX***

Some LMX researchers have proposed practices to improve the relationship between the leader and their out-group followers in order to prevent staff turnover and increase productivity. These ideas are discussed below.

### 7.2.1 Training practices

Breukelen, Schyns and Le Blanc (2006) point out the simultaneous descriptive and prescriptive nature of LMX. They agree that training is very important for leaders to help them develop high-quality relationships with all (or more realistically most of) their subordinates, but they don't discuss what that training should involve.

In contrast, Graen, Novak and Sommerkamp (1982) explain what is needed in a leader's training programme to help him or her analyze the positive and negative aspects of his or her relationship with each subordinate. To evaluate their training, they measured LMX before and after it was administered, and found it "effective in producing significant gains in productivity, supervisory ratings of LMX quality, member ratings of dyadic loyalty, LMX quality, motivating potential of the job, role orientation, overall job satisfaction, job problem severity, and measures of job stress as well as dyad agreement" (Graen et al, 1982, p.126). Their leadership training took a seminar approach, and included lectures on principles, discussion of applications (role-playing) and problem solving. The topics they consider important for LMX training are "principles of job design (2 hrs.); analysis of job components (2 hrs.); job enrichment techniques (2 hrs.); and generating, designing, and implementing job changes (6 hrs.)" (Graen et al, 1982, p.112).

Building on the belief that leaders can increase the quality of their relationships with followers, Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) propose a *Leadership Making Model*, which consciously takes leaders through the LMX stages (described in Chapter 2) in order to encourage and train them to offer *all* their subordinates a high-quality relationship. They say it is highly unlikely that this effort will succeed with all followers, but it will be perceived by most as a signal of the equitable treatment of all subordinates, which can result in reduced differentiation, even if some reject the offer of a better relationship.

Harris, Li, and Kirkman (2014) also go for training ("organizational leadership development programs" p.324) as a way to develop better leaders. Additionally, they suggest that, because a leader's time and resources are limited, the training should teach him or her about the need to adequately justify differentiated treatment if the

staff team is just too large for everyone to have a high quality relationship with the leader.

Steiner (1997) believes that attributions have an important role in the development of in-groups and out-groups, so he suggests training for leaders and followers in the matter. Attribution theory states that feelings, beliefs and intentions are attributed to others' behaviors in order to understand them. Leaders and followers should be aware of the process of attribution and how it affects their relationships. Closer monitoring and improved communications should also be part of the training curriculum.

Finally on the subject of training, Zhang et al (2012) have researched how leaders emerge (rather than assuming that leadership is wholly granted by virtue of positional authority in an organization). They state that the existence of in-groups and out-groups can obstruct the emergence of a leader within a team, and it can also disrupt the formation of a shared vision as well as other necessary group processes. They suggest use of training programs that "could involve workshops whereby an entire team, perhaps with the formal leader present, works on the development of shared values and vision" (p.71).

### *7.2.2 Improving relationships through means other than training*

In order to improve relationships between the leader and his/her followers, Schyns and Day (2010) suggest that leader expectations need to be clear and known by the followers, and followers need to ask for feedback on the fulfillment of these expectations in order to reach a mutual understanding and improve the quality of the relationship. This idea comes from the belief that agreement and mutual understanding are important for the development of a high-quality relationship, and that both leader and followers should work on these issues.

Bernerth et al (2007a, 2007b) look at the dispositional factors related to the creation of relationships among leader and followers. They conclude that it is important to consider the leader's and follower's personalities while constructing a relationship, since

exchanges can be seen differently depending on personality. Personality can also be a good predictor of the quality of relationships, and awareness of this can sensitize leaders to interact with their followers more consciously and promote better relationships.

Scandura (1999) talks about perceptions of organizational justice and how these can affect the relationship between leader and followers. She concludes that “leaders should offer in-group relationships to all work group members initially. Also, out-group members should be re-tested periodically by the leader making offers of in-group roles” (p.37). The author works on the assumption that “all members can become in-group members if given the opportunity to contribute to the work group” (p.37).

Hu and Liden (2013) focus on leadership activities, such as “emphasizing the common purpose within teams, fostering a strong team membership, and encouraging a helping and supportive climate” (p.164), as a way to diminish negative effects of differentiated treatment and help build confidence and satisfaction among out-group members. This approach can be seen in action in my case study of Department 8 in the Northern Mexican University. Bernerth and Hirschfeld (2016) agree with Hu and Liden’s proposal: they state that followers need to be given opportunities to interact with the leader, perhaps through group activities or parties, in order to influence individual perceptions as well as group dynamics.

Zhou and Schriesheim (2009) offer a two-way perspective on how to improve leader-member relationships. Since subordinates are more likely to rely on socially-oriented aspects to build and judge LMX relationships, managers should work on these aspects to enhance LMX quality from their subordinates’ perspective. On the other hand, supervisors tend to perceive task-oriented aspects as more important when judging LMX relationships, so subordinates can work on these aspects and improve their supervisors’ perceptions.

Northouse (2013) describes what leaders should expect from LMX:

“LMX theory tells us to be aware of how we relate to our subordinates. It tells us to be sensitive to whether some subordinates receive special attention and some

subordinates do not. In addition, it tells us to be fair to all employees and allow each of them to become as involved in the work of the unit as they want to be. LMX theory tells us to be respectful and to build trusting relationships with all of our subordinates, recognizing that each employee is unique and wants to relate to us in a special way” (p.173).

These suggestions and proposals all look promising. However, apart from Graen et al’s (1982) detailed training program, it has to be said that the rest of the comments and guidance are all very general: they indicate that managers should be more inclusive, but say little more than this – there are no detailed discussions of how to deal with barriers to being more inclusive, and no evaluations of managers attempting implementation of more inclusive approaches following an LMX diagnosis. This could be an important focus for future research, but for now my focus is on the potential added value of the theory of Boundary Critique.

### ***7.3 Practical Implications of Boundary Critique***

Boundary Critique has been used extensively to inform normative action, as the following examples show. From reflections on previous projects using Boundary Critique, its added value for LMX can be drawn out. Not only can it help understand the leader-follower relationship in a deeper way, but it can also help identify *what can be done* to deal with problematic differentiation, and in more detail than many of the general prescriptions for inclusiveness reviewed in the last section.

#### ***7.3.1 Collective thinking about values and connecting across boundaries.***

Foote and colleagues used Boundary Critique to “reframe people’s understanding of a 30-year conflict between... [a] District Council and community” (Foote et al, 2007, p.645) over water conservation. This allowed them to move forward and secure an agreement between stakeholders over actions to be taken. An essential element in the Boundary

Critique was the identification of a marginalization process: the District Council refused to accept that water conservation was linked to house-building. Many people in the community were objecting to water conservation measures because they claimed that, every time they saved water, the Council would approve building more houses, thus worsening the water shortages in the following summer. Not only was the issue of house-building marginalized, but so were the residents objecting to it: they were seen as trouble-makers. In this case, the Boundary Critique helped Foote and colleagues to design a workshop to support people in their reframing and action planning. Key to the design was basing the workshop on the agenda of the Council, so they felt comfortable and in control, but ensuring that the residents objecting to the house-building were able to express their concerns. When these concerns were presented *in the context of the Council's agenda*, so it was clear that house-building was not a separate issue and the Council would not be able to pursue water conservation without addressing it, there was finally the basis for an agreement on a way forward.

The major lesson for addressing LMX differentiation that we can take from Foote et al (2007) is that in-groups and out-groups can be brought together by *connecting their different concerns through a collective and systemic analysis*. Critically, however, Foote et al had to do this in a manner that did not threaten the values of the in-group, so the latter were able to hear the out-group concerns instead of dismissing them. Certainly, using independent facilitators helped in this regard. This is an important insight in the context of LMX because there can be barriers to inclusivity when the leader and in-group (initially) disagree with the values and concerns of the out-group. It takes courage to open a genuine dialogue in this kind of context rather than continue with marginalization, and facilitation can help.

A second project characterized by identifying and dealing with marginalization was by Boyd et al (2004), who supported agencies from the voluntary and statutory sectors in collaborating on the design of services for homeless children living on the streets of Manchester, UK. It was critical to success that the voices of the children themselves were central to the design. However, children on the streets are marginalized in several respects: they are commonly seen as less rational than adults, and when they are living

on the streets they often have to resort to criminality (shop-lifting, prostitution, drug dealing, mugging, etc.) in order to survive. To ensure the centrality of the children, the researchers spent three months on the streets at night interviewing them before they talked with any of the adult agency representatives. They then presented powerful emotional testimony from the children to the adults, and they ran a design workshop in a care home, giving the children space to develop their views outside the hearing of professionals.

Boyd et al (2004) also had to address issues with how some police officers treat homeless children (verbal and sometimes even physical abuse): to prevent these issues from being marginalized, the researchers held a workshop with police representatives and distributed quotations from the children – everything that had been said about the police, good and bad. This was powerfully confronting, and the police acted on it within two weeks of the workshop.

LMX differentiation in work organizations is generally less extreme in its implications for the individuals involved than children being forced to survive on the streets. Nevertheless, an implication for addressing differentiation in the work context can still be derived from reflection on Boyd et al's (2004) work: ensuring that the leader and the in-group consciously listen to those in the out-group, providing a dedicated forum where concerns can be discussed. Listening, and where appropriate acting on those concerns, has the potential to reduce alienation in the workplace and re-motivate employees who do not feel valued, making improved relationships with the leader more likely. While this prescription is similar to the call for inclusiveness that is often repeated in the LMX literature (as discussed earlier), it is a little more specific than some in that it provides a mechanism (listening in a dedicated forum and acting on what is heard) to enable inclusion. The literature on dialogue (e.g., Buber, 1958; Bohm, 1996; Tannen, 1998; Gergen et al, 2001; Anderson et al, 2004; Franco, 2006; Cronin et al, 2014), which is specifically about two-way listening, could be useful in this context.

A third project focused on the marginalization concept from Boundary Critique was undertaken by Raymaker (2016), who conducted community-based participatory research (CBPR) to improve the health services offered to autistic people. She supported

the development of a web-based healthcare toolkit for autistic adults, their supporters and healthcare providers. Boundary Critique played an important role since the stakeholder groups were diverse (autistic individuals, academic researchers, family members, disability support professionals and healthcare providers). Through Boundary Critique, the researchers discovered that people with autism were commonly marginalized because of the communication channels traditionally used (hearing and speaking) during the provision of services. There are members of the autistic community who cannot process verbal instructions, or cannot speak. In order to establish connections between different stakeholders, the researchers introduced new communication channels in addition to the traditional ones, such as “online, text-based interactions, with choices of both synchronous (group chat) and asynchronous (list serve) modes” (Raymaker, 2016, p.414). With alternative communication tools, the stakeholder groups could connect with each other more easily, and this empowered those who found face to face communication difficult.

The implication for tackling LMX differentiation is that typical patterns of communication might need augmenting or disrupting to allow people to connect across boundaries more productively. In Department 6, the usual fora for publicly engaging in philosophy were seminars and corridor discussions that were perceived by the out-group as exclusive. It would appear that regular Departmental meetings were not helping people engage meaningfully across the philosopher-pragmatist boundary. A way to augment these meetings might be to run away days using participative problem structuring methods, as these structure communications in more productive ways than traditional meeting formats (Rosenhead and Mingers, 2001; Mingers and Rosenhead, 2004).

### *7.3.2 Expanding boundaries*

Córdoba and Midgley (2003, 2006, 2008) used Boundary Critique to enhance a process of information systems (IS) planning in a Colombian university by bringing into consideration stakeholders (such as the families of students, business owners,



community leaders, etc.) who were outside the organizational boundaries and had not previously been considered as relevant. There was a marginalization dynamic in the university, with the IS administrators privileging their own values and expertise over those of both the academic staff and students. A key aspect of using Boundary Critique to disrupt this marginalization was to expand the boundaries beyond both the technical IS concerns of administrators *and* the pedagogical concerns of the academics and students. Once it was acknowledged that the purpose of having IS was to enhance education in the university, and the purpose of education was to serve wider society, then it became obvious that external stakeholders were relevant because they represented the communities in which the students would live and work when they graduated.

In order to open up the boundaries, Córdoba and Midgley (2006, 2008) propose a framework with two phases: *Distinction* and *Dialogue for improvement*. In the Distinction phase, stakeholders are interviewed to identify areas of concern and values (about life and/or about the issue or topic in question). In the Dialogue for Improvement phase, stakeholders discuss specific opportunities for action. Both phases include Boundary Critique so the participants continually question purposes, values, ethics and boundaries – and they identify possible marginalizations among stakeholders. The framework is not linear, but iterative, as shown in Figure 7.1, where a starting point is *distinction* about the life concerns of stakeholders; then the process could go on to identify boundaries and question them; and then a *dialogue for improvement* could be initiated; or one could go directly to a *dialogue for improvement* from the initial distinction. Each iteration can bring in more concerns that need to be questioned, or boundaries that need to be reconsidered. This process can go on and on until actions are defined in order to make sure those directly involved and those who could be affected in the wider community are accounted for in those actions.

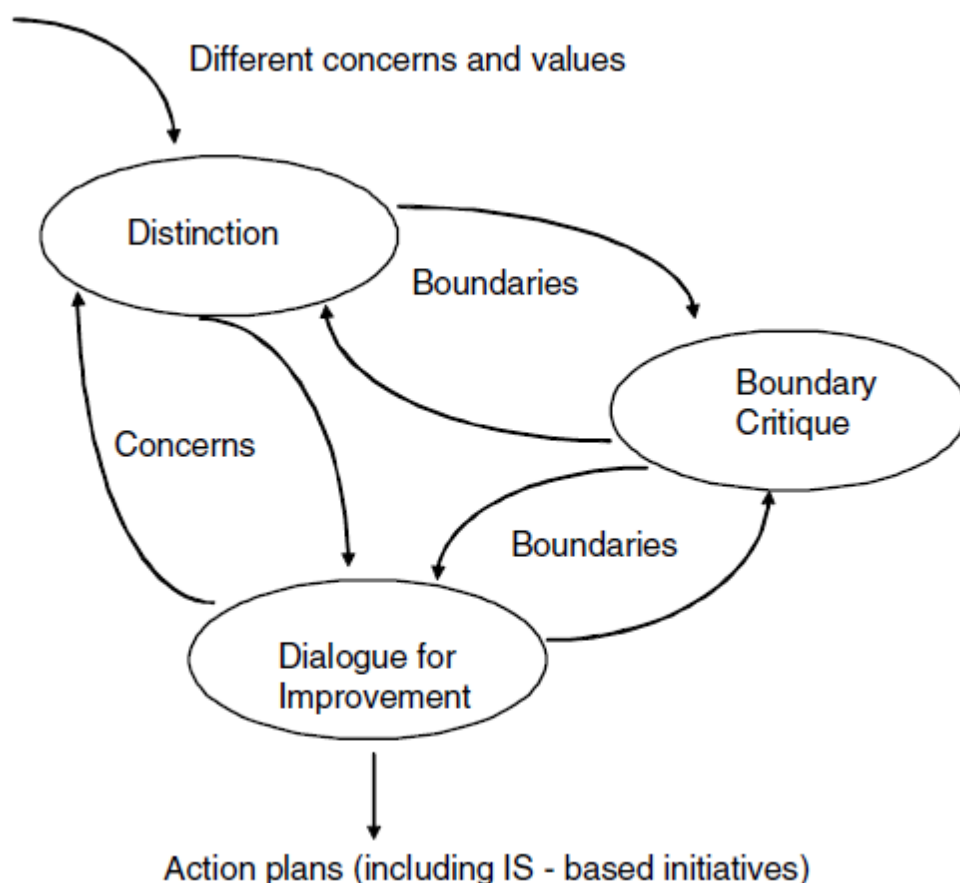


Figure 7.1. Graphical representation of methodology proposed by Córdoba and Midgley (2006).

Looking at the implications for LMX differentiation, there are different possibilities for expanding boundaries:

The most obvious one is to ‘sweep in’ organizational actors who do not report directly to the leader (janitors, interns, human resource managers, other leaders, people from other departments, etc.). This situation can stimulate a resetting of boundaries and a new sense of belonging, but it does not necessitate restructuring the organization, which can lead to insecurity and internal ‘politics’ (including the emergence of new in-groups and out-groups). It might just be a matter of inviting new people to meetings, or arranging informal gatherings at coffee breaks or after work. Indeed, the boundaries can be pushed out more widely to include external stakeholders, as discussed by Córdoba and Midgley (2006).

A second choice is to bring a common 'friend' or 'enemy' into the scenario. Bosson et al (2006) argue that "our friend's friend and our enemy's enemy are well positioned to become our friend" (p.146). They suggest that to have a common goal or threat can help bring people together and promote closeness. This friend or enemy need not be a person; it can be something like a policy, a goal to achieve, a crisis to avert, etc. It could also be something important in the external environment, like a client, changes in the economy, a social or environmental challenge, a competitor to out-perform, or a new technology to take advantage of, etc.

To draw out the implications for addressing LMX differentiation more fully, we can consider how these strategies might have benefitted Department 6 in my case study. As discussed previously, Department 6 was a highly differentiated group where philosophers monopolized the conversation, their values defined the primary boundary, and their rituals made this dominant. Staff with a pragmatist outlook were marginalized and viewed as profane since they were not philosophers but were still part of the academic Department. How could the strategy of broadening the boundaries work in a case like this? Broadening the boundaries for Department 6 would require opening up the discussion about priorities in adult education (there could be compelling arguments for both philosophical and pragmatic approaches, including synergies between them), and looking beyond the boundaries of the university to consider external stakeholders and their representatives (e.g., future generations of students, industry, communities and those trying to enable social and political change). Finding new challenges could undermine the strong philosopher/pragmatist distinction.

#### ***7.4 Conclusions***

As examined previously, Department 6 seems like a textbook case of LMX theory in action: there is an in-group and an out-group. If, in addition, we use the Boundary Critique theory of marginalization to analyze the Department, we find primary and secondary boundaries, with the philosophers and pragmatists having their own sets of values and boundaries of concern, reinforced by rituals. I therefore argued in Chapter 6

that Boundary Critique can enhance our understanding of LMX differentiation, and in this chapter I have explained how the normative prescriptions derived from uses of the theory of marginalization in practice can be adapted to address LMX differentiation. Thus, we can deepen our understanding of what can actually be done to enhance inclusiveness in organizations, moving beyond general statements. The following summary bullet points are derived from both reflections on previous uses of Boundary Critique and the success of the leader of Department 8 in preventing the formation of an in-group and an out-group despite the existence of elements of marginalization. These points represent the added value of Boundary Critique for addressing LMX differentiation:

- Generate a sense of identity for the organization or Department that is solidified by rituals of inclusion, such as social gatherings and bespoke jargon (being careful to preserve good relationships with external stakeholders, as jargon can become exclusive or self-marginalizing if excessively used outside the context of internal identity formation).
- Undertake participative, systemic analyses (possibly in dedicated workshops), connecting people's different concerns, thus bridging across the in-group and out-group boundary. This can be genuinely synergistic, giving people new ideas and joint projects that can be perceived as leading to a 'greater good' than their original preoccupations.
- In doing the above, understand that the in-group often has the authority to set the agenda and continue marginalizing the out-group, so frame the workshop in a way that does not threaten them, but nevertheless puts them in a position where they cannot avoid listening to out-group concerns and connecting them with their own.
- Consider using an independent facilitator when doing the above in a workshop setting.
- Seek to establish genuine dialogue, which involves active, two-way listening. Some of the earlier-cited literature on dialogue contains approaches to support people in listening when they are more comfortable 'telling' than 'hearing'.

- Disrupt or augment traditional meeting (and other communication) formats that are not working to address differentiation. Particularly, use problem structuring methods in workshops to guide dialogue, support people in making connections across boundaries and identify synergistic opportunities for new ideas and actions.
- Arrange for colleagues to get together with internal and external stakeholders on a regular basis, in formal meetings and/or informal social gatherings, to stimulate new identity formations.
- Identify 'friends' (external stakeholders or goals) that can orientate people away from their differences and towards their commonalities. Also identify 'enemies' (major challenges, competitors, etc.) that require people to unite to deal with them.

In different ways, I have suggested that all these strategies could have been useful for Department 6 in overcoming its LMX differentiation.

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSIONS

In order to develop explanations of specific phenomena, management researchers often look for insights from many other disciplines such as sociology, economics, psychology, etc. It is common for researchers to combine theories from within and outside the management discipline. Okhuysen and Bonardi (2011) believe that “the complexity of management as a setting requires explanations that are matched in complexity – explanations that can be built from combinations of perspectives to provide answers that are uniquely suited to management” (p.6). One of the models these authors present for theory building is to integrate theories that share “compatible underlying assumptions” (p.8), even though they do not exactly address “the same phenomenon”. My proposal to enhance LMX theory through Boundary Critique fits with this model, since they both share similar concepts of boundary, even though their philosophical, paradigmatic origins are different (neo-positivism and critical systems thinking respectively).

I have addressed the following questions in this research:

- How can LMX be conceptually enhanced by drawing on the theory of marginalization from Boundary Critique?
- Can empirical evidence be provided for the validity of the enhanced LMX?
- If an enhanced LMX is supported with empirical evidence, how can Boundary Critique add value to the normative guidance for good leadership practice already offered by LMX?

To answer question 1, bibliographic research was performed on both concepts. Chapter 2 presented Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory, and Chapter 3 discussed Boundary Critique. Then both theories were compared (Chapter 4). Similarities were highlighted, like the concept of differentiation in LMX and the concept of marginalization from Boundary Critique.

Both theories describe differentiation/marginalization in terms of 'in' and 'out' groups, separated by conceptual boundaries, and both also offer prescriptions to deal with these things. However, LMX stops at the discussion of in-groups and out-groups, while the theory of marginalization from Boundary Critique adds other concepts, such as the purposes and values of the two groups, which can come into conflict; the imposition of sacred and profane identities on the marginalized group; and the use of institutionalized rituals to make one of these identities dominant. Thus, Boundary Critique can potentially add value to LMX by describing the phenomenon of differentiation in a richer manner (assuming that differentiation is a form of marginalization, of course, and this is a validity issue addressed in my answer to question 2 – see below).

To validate the possibility of using Boundary Critique to enhance LMX, and answer question 2, a piece of comparative case study research was designed (Chapter 5) and implemented in a Northern Mexican University. The findings of the comparison were presented in Chapter 6. One academic Department showed a highly differentiated profile according to LMX; that is, it had an identifiable in-group and out-group. These groups were also identified by interview questions informed by Boundary Critique, and the participants' purposes, values, boundary judgments and rituals were also surfaced, indicating that marginalization was clearly present. In this case, I found that the additional concepts from Boundary Critique could indeed enhance the simple idea in LMX of in-groups and out-groups.

I also compared the above Department to another with low-differentiation according to the LMX questionnaire. However, using Boundary Critique, I was still able to identify two groups, one being mildly marginalized by the other. I also pinpointed actions of the leader and in-group members, and especially rituals, which prevented this from degenerating into full differentiation. While this finding complicates the picture somewhat, suggesting that differentiation and marginalization are not totally interchangeable concepts (Boundary Critique can help detect marginalization even when active steps are being successfully undertaken to prevent differentiation), this does not undermine the utility of the Boundary Critique theory of marginalization for

enhancing LMX. *It seems that Boundary Critique can sensitize leaders to issues that could be the basis for LMX differentiation if not actively managed.*

Having established that LMX can indeed be enhanced by Boundary Critique, it was necessary to discuss how the latter can guide practice for good leadership to answer question 3. Chapter 7 addressed this. Bibliographic research was undertaken, looking at Boundary Critique publications, to identify ways that other authors have addressed marginalization, and I considered how these might be adapted to the situation of leadership to prevent or mitigate LMX differentiation. I also reflected on learnings from the good practice implemented in the low-differentiated academic Department discussed in Chapter 6. Some of the prescriptions that Boundary Critique can offer to enhance the normative guidance in LMX are as follows:

- In-groups and out-groups can be brought together by *connecting their different concerns through a collective and systemic analysis*, and this may usefully involve collective reflection on the values that make those concerns meaningful for the participants;
- Make sure that the leader and the in-group consciously listen to those in the out-group, providing a dedicated forum where concerns can be discussed;
- Augment positive and disrupt negative patterns of communication in order to support both of the above actions;
- Expand the boundaries of whose voices get to be heard, which will force people to question familiar boundaries defining who should be listened to.
- Bring new challenges that require people to redefine their boundaries to tackle them effectively.
- Establish rituals of inclusion, whether these be social events, shared terminologies or patterns of work behavior (even the ‘complaining ritual’ had positive value in the low-differentiation Department, as complaints were listened to).

While the emphasis is strongly on principles and practices of inclusion in the above bullet points, Chapter 7 also contained a caveat: there may be some purposes and values that



are marginalized for good reason, and would be destructive if fully embraced (an extreme example being those associated with corruption), so value judgments by the leadership on the advisability of inclusion is required. Nevertheless I suggest that, in most situations of differentiation, inclusion will be beneficial. This is because it inevitably involves at least a minimal expansion of diversity, which in turn involves taking seriously the views of others who think differently, and this can lead to positive synergies.

### ***8.1 Possible further research***

It has been a very interesting experience to research these two complementary theories and argue that the conceptually richer one (the theory of marginalization from Boundary Critique) can enhance LMX. LMX was an obvious candidate for this research because it discusses the phenomenon of the differentiation of followers into in-groups and out-groups. An open question, that could be a focus for future research, is how the theory of Boundary Critique might relate to other leadership theories. For instance, leadership theories that emphasize idea generation by the leader and the persuasion of followers (Mainemelis et al, 2015) could be rethought in terms of communication about boundaries. So could leadership theories that emphasize the importance of facilitation and collective innovation (Yukl, 2012). Velez-Castiblanco et al (2016) offer a theory of 'boundary games' that are played during dialogue, and these describe the different types of communication about boundaries that are possible. Indeed, they offer a method to annotate transcripts of meetings, and this could be used in future leadership studies to reveal the micro-communications that combine in different leadership scenarios.

It may even be possible to show differences between exercises of leadership that are regarded as effective or ineffective by the participants in meetings, and different leadership styles might well manifest themselves in patterns of communication around boundaries.

Another interesting path could be to broaden the focus of the research to examine the use of systems thinking as an aspect of leadership. Indeed, the concept of 'Systemic Leadership' has become popular in recent years, where "Leadership is the systemic capacity, diffused and nurtured throughout the organization, of finding direction, of fostering the processes which ensure renewal, and of "managing" the systemic and human paradoxes endemic in these organizations" (Collier and Esteban, 2000, p.207). Or alternatively, "Systemic leadership means individual leadership, having a flexible, personal style and being able to always adapt that style to the organization and the people of the current leadership situation rather than working with schematic standard tools" (Pinnow, 2011, p.117). There should also be wider possibilities beyond these particular definitions of Systemic Leadership, since Systems Thinking is, according to Cabrera et al (2015), a "field characterized by a baffling array of methods and approaches" (p.534). Indeed, it is possible that, in the future, my enhanced LMX theory (introduced in this thesis) will be just one systems theory among many that could inform Systemic Leadership practice.

## **8.2 Conclusion**

At the end of this journey, I have argued that LMX researchers can learn from the Boundary Critique theory of marginalization. It is clear that leaders need not settle for a differentiated relationship with their followers, with some marginalized into an out-group, but can look for ways to improve their relationships, and the theory of Boundary Critique offers means for doing so. Boundary Critique encourages leaders to identify what is valuable for each subordinate or group, plus the rituals that support or undermine these values. Thus, it gives leaders the chance to identify emerging differentiation among their followers before it entrenches and becomes difficult to shift or turns into a conflict.

Boundary Critique not only enhances the descriptive side of LMX, it also proposes prescriptive solutions that go beyond those offered by LMX theorists. And in addition to these practical implications, my integration of two theories from different areas of

knowledge opens a great opportunity for future interdisciplinary research, where leadership and systems researchers can gain knowledge and insights from each other. I look forward to contributing to future developments.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1

#### CASE STUDY PROTOCOLS

##### Participant School selection protocol.

1. Presidents' authorization:
  - a. Ask for an authorization signed by the president of the University.
    - i. Email the president of the University with the request of:
      1. Authorization of using the University as an object of a Phd Study;
      2. Ask for an appointment for the signing of the authorization letter.
    - ii. Include in the email the head of the Human Resources department and all the Deans of all the University Schools.
2. School authorization and information:
  - a. Ask for an appointment with each School Dean to explain the purpose of the research and ask for authorization to approach his/her School.
  - b. Once the authorization is granted:
    - i. Ask for a space in their monthly reunion with Department Heads to explain the purpose of the research and ask for their cooperation.
    - ii. Look for academic staff information from the appointed School with the Human Resources department.

## **LMX-7 questionnaire protocol.**

1. Instruments Protocol:
  - a. LMX-7 questionnaire:
    - i. Instrument retrieved from Northouse, 2013, p. 80.
  - b. Online survey service:
    - i. Develop an electronic questionnaire form for the academic staff using LMX-7 questions.
    - ii. Develop an electronic questionnaire for the Department Heads using LMX-7 questions.
  - c. Test the online questionnaire to avoid data inconsistencies.
  - d. Create a link to share the questionnaire following the invitation protocol.
  
2. Invitation protocol:
  - a. Ask for participation consent to the required authorities.
    - i. A signed consent letter from the President of the University
    - ii. A consent letter from the Business School
    - iii. Acknowledgment communication from Human Resources Department.
  - b. Participants invitation:
    - i. Department Heads:
      1. Extend an invitation to participate using formal channels, like School Monthly Meeting with the Dean.
      2. Email a personal invitation to each Department Head.
    - ii. Academic Staff:
      1. Email a personal invitation to each academic staff
      2. Send weekly reminders to answer the questionnaire.
  
3. Collection Protocol:
  - a. Review the answering advances each week.
  - b. Download the results into excel worksheets:
    - i. A worksheet with the answers of all academics

- ii. A worksheet with the answers of all Department Heads.

### **Semi-structured interview protocol.**

- Invitation protocol:
  - Send personal email invitations for setting up the dates and place for the interview, as well as the purpose of the interview.
  - Same protocol will be used for both Department Heads and Academic Staff.
  
- Interview protocol:
  - Research the participation acknowledgment
  - Remembering the purpose of the meeting: to follow up the LMX-7 survey they previously answered.
  - Consent form signing request.
  - Advice about interview recording.
  - Interview questionnaire application.
  - Same protocol will be used for both Department Heads and Academic Staff.

### **Information management protocol.**

- LMX-7 questionnaire:
  - Downloaded the responses into excel files.
  - Sort responses by department and save them in different excel pages
  - Assign an excel page for each department.
  - Generate a summary page with tables (summary tables were included in chapters 5 and 6).



- Semi-structured interview information:
  - Code-named each conversation according to department and random position in the database.
  - Transcript each conversation following the proper code-name.
  - Create a matrix-type worksheet for each department containing summaries of each interview question for each academic staff.
  - Word file with the same information as the worksheet.

## APPENDIX 2



RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSENT FORM: SURVEYS, QUESTIONNAIRES

I, \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

Hereby agree to participate in this study to be undertaken

By Oralia de la Peña de Torres. I understand that the purpose of this research is to determine if Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory can be developed using insights from the theory of marginalization processes contained within the literature on boundary critique.

I understand that

1. Upon receipt, my questionnaire and interview will be coded and my name and address will be kept separately from it.
2. Any information that I provide will not be made public in any form that could reveal my identity to an outside party, i.e., I will remain fully anonymous.
3. Aggregated results will be used for research purposes and may be reported in scientific and academic journals (including online publications).
4. Individual results will not be released to any person except at my request and with my authorization.
5. I am free to withdraw my consent at any time during the study, in which event my participation in the research study will immediately cease and any information obtained from me will not be used.

Signature:

Date:

The contact details of the researcher are: Oralia de la Peña de Torres, ITESM Campus Monterrey, Ave. Eugenio Garza Sada #2501 sur, col. Tecnológico, Monterrey N.L., Mexico. Email: [opena@itesm.mx](mailto:opena@itesm.mx)

The contact details of the secretary to the HUBS Research Ethics Committee are Amy Cowling, Hull University Business School, University of Hull, Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX. Email: [a.cowling@hull.ac.uk](mailto:a.cowling@hull.ac.uk) tel. 01482-463410.

*In some cases, consent will need to be witnessed e.g., where the subject is blind/ intellectually disabled. A witness must be independent of the project and may only sign a certification to the level of his/her involvement. A suggested format for witness certification is included with the sample consent forms. The form should also record the witnesses' signature, printed name and occupation. For particularly sensitive or exceptional research, further information can be obtained from the HUBS Research Ethics Committee Secretary, e.g., absence of parental consent, use of pseudonyms, etc)*

NOTE:

In the event of a minor's consent, or person under legal liability, please complete the Research Ethics Committee's "Form of Consent on Behalf of a Minor or Dependent Person".

Business School

### APPENDIX 3

#### LMX-7 QUESTIONNAIRE

*Instrucciones:* Este cuestionario contiene preguntas que piden describir la relación con tu líder o con uno de tus subordinados. Para cada pregunta, indica el grado en el que consideres que la cuestión es cierta para ti al seleccionar una de las respuestas que aparecen debajo de la pregunta.

¿Sabes en qué punto te encuentras con tu líder (seguidor) ...[y] ¿sabes usualmente qué tan satisfecho está tu líder (seguidor) con lo que haces?

Rara vez	Ocasionalmente	A veces	A menudo	Frecuentemente
1	2	3	4	5

¿Qué tan bien entiende tu líder (seguidor) los problemas y necesidades de tu trabajo?

Nada	Un poco	Algo	Bastante	Mucho
1	2	3	4	5

¿Qué tan bien reconoce tu líder (seguidor) tu potencial?

Nada	Un poco	Algo	Bastante	Mucho
1	2	3	4	5

Sin importar qué tanta autoridad formal haya formado tu líder (seguidor) en su posición, ¿cuáles son las probabilidades de que tu líder (seguidor) use su poder para ayudarte a resolver problemas en tu trabajo?

Ninguna	Pocas	Moderadas	Altas	Muy altas
1	2	3	4	5

De nuevo, sin importar qué tanta autoridad formal tenga tu líder (seguidor), ¿cuáles son las probabilidades de que te saque de un aprieto a costa suya?

Ninguna	Pocas	Moderadas	Altas	Muy	altas
1	2	3	4	5	

Tengo suficiente confianza en mí líder (seguidor) al grado de que lo defendería y justificaría su decisión en caso de que no estuviera presente.

Muy en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Neutral	De acuerdo	Muy de acuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

¿Cómo describirías tu relación de trabajo con tu líder (seguidor)?

Muy inefectiva	Mala	Regular	Buena	Muy	efectiva
1	2	3	4	5	

#### PREGUNTAS DEMOGRÁFICAS

Sexo:

Tipo de profesor:

Antigüedad como profesor:

¿Has sido director de departamento?:

¿Has sido director de carrera?:

Departamento al que perteneces:

## SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE (SPANISH VERSION)

En primer lugar, gracias por aceptar participar en esta entrevista. Vamos a hablar sobre el cuestionario LMX7 que contestó hace un tiempo:

- 1 . ¿Cómo describiría su relación de trabajo con su líder? ¿Por qué?
- 2 . Describa la relación entre las personas en su departamento.
- 3 . ¿Existen diferentes grupos en el departamento?
- 4 . Si es así, ¿la gente discute estos grupos entre sí?, ¿qué crees que digan del grupo al que perteneces? Sobre los otros?
- 5 . ¿Cómo es la relación con estos grupos y el líder?
- 6 . Piense en una reunión típica de departamento, ¿cómo es la dinámica? ¿Por qué es así? Descríbala.
- 7 . Cuando se toma una decisión sobre algo que afecta a todos, cómo luce la participación, ¿quién participa en el proceso de decisión? ¿Quién no?
- 8 . ¿Cuáles son las características de los que participan y los que no lo hacen?
- 9 . Elija un ejemplo típico de una decisión donde algunas personas están involucradas y otras no.
- 10 . Pensando en las personas que participan en el proceso de decisión, ¿cuáles son los temas que les preocupan? ¿Cómo el líder se relaciona con ellos?
- 11 . Pensando en las personas que no participan en el proceso de decisión, ¿cuáles son los temas que les preocupan? ¿Cómo el líder se relaciona con ellos?

12 . ¿Hay reuniones formales, además de la junta del departamento? ¿Con quién y con qué frecuencia? Además de todas las reuniones, ¿cuál es la frecuencia de contacto con el líder?

13 . ¿Hay rituales o comportamientos repetitivos en las relaciones entre el líder y estos grupos?

Muchas gracias por tu participación...

### **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH VERSION)**

First of all, thank you for accepting to participate in this interview. We are going to talk about the LMX7 questionnaire you answer a while ago:

1. How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader (follower)? Why?

2. Describe the relationship between the people in your department.

3. Are there different groups in the department?

4. If so, do people discuss these groups among themselves? What do you think they say about your group? About others?

5. What is the relationship with these groups and the leader?

6. Think about a typical department meeting, how is the dynamic? why is it like this? Describe it.

7. When taking a decision about something that affects all of you, what participation looks like? who participates in the decision process? Who doesn't?

8. What are the characteristics of those who participate and those who don't?

9. Pick a typical example of a decision where some people are involved and others are not.

10. Thinking about the people who participate in the decision process, what are the issues that concern them? How the leader relates to them?

11. Thinking about the people who don't participate in the decision process, what issues that concern them? How the leader relates to them?

12. Are there any formal meetings besides the department meeting? With whom and how often? Besides all meetings, what is the frequency of contact with the leader?

13. Are there any rituals or repeated behaviors in the relationships among the leader and these groups?

Thank you so much for your participation!



## APPENDIX 4.

### CHAIN OF EVIDENCE

Case Study Report	This thesis document contains all items described here.
Case Study Database	An excel worksheet was created to contain LMX-7 answers and another excel matrix with the semi-structured questionnaire and a summary of each answer.
Citations to Specific Evidentiary Sources in the Case Study Database	Chapter 6 contains specific citations to support the answer of question 2. Citations come from interviews recorded, transcribed and saved with code names to support confidentiality
Case Study Protocol (linking questions to protocol topics)	<p>Question 1 was answered in a piece of desk-based research described in Chapter 2, 3 and 4.</p> <p>Question 2 required a comparative case study approach explained in Chapter 5 and 6.</p> <p>To answer question 3, it was necessary to first, draw out from the results of the case study data; and second, a desk-based research. These are described in chapter 7.</p>
Case Study Questions	Research questions were clearly established in chapter 1 and address in their corresponding chapters.

## APPENDIX 5

### INTERVIEW'S SUMMARY BY INTERVIEW QUESTION

This document shows extracts from conversations with the academic staff during semi-structured interviews. Full conversations are safely guarded to maintain anonymity and summaries or extracts from these conversations are showed below to answer the interview questions. Conversations were held in Spanish and specific quotes were selected and translated to English, for justification purposes.

Department 6.

Q1. How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader (follower)? Why?

E1: Relación de liderazgo transicional, ciertamente profesional, en unas ocasiones distante pero relativo a las circunstancias del caso, estrictamente profesional, pero con un liderazgo femenino de ética y cuidado que pudiera ser valioso en algunos aspectos y excesivo en otros. Lo veo de esa manera porque a pesar de que estoy segura que es una buena dirección, quizás no es una dirección a la que yo estaría acostumbrada o que a la que yo desearía.

E2: La relación de trabajo con mi jefa es de muchos años atrás. Primero fue mi compañera de trabajo. Siento que (leader) ha sido como una especie de mentora para mí. Como jefa, la relación ha sido más de gestión, de cuestiones administrativas.

E3: Muy bien, una relación muy humana, desde el punto de vista humano muy adaptada a las circunstancias de cada uno de los que lo integrábamos el departamento, desde el

punto de vista académico o sea lo que tiene que ver con respecto al trabajo, muy orientadora, muy negociadora.

E5: Personalmente la relación es inmejorable. Desde el punto de vista laboral, la situación es sumamente complicada. Y desde ahí he visto bastantes limitaciones. Debido a las circunstancias, escasa, muy de tarde en tarde.

E6: Pues es una relación con confianza, con apertura de expresar tanto para ella como para ti, la retroalimentación de algún desempeño o yo de estar en mis ideas, verdad, de trabajo.

E7: Es muy práctica, de mucha gestión y también de reflexión

E8: Muy cordial, muy buena

E9: Personalmente, excelente relación, inmejorable. Profesionalmente, dos perspectivas diferentes, ella muy administrativa, institucional, el profesor más bien gestor de recursos y de proyectos

E10: Amigable, amistosa, le falta liderazgo, no tenemos claro hacia dónde vamos. Estás en el día a día, sobrellevando, no hay una visión hacia a dónde vamos.

D1: Cordial, respetuosa, mucha confianza porque nos conocemos de mucho tiempo.

Q2. Describe the relationship between the people in your department.

E1: Excelente, es muy buena, obviamente, hay algunos con los que tienes mejores relaciones con otros, por proyectos en común, por actividades que compartimos, etcétera, y también por gustos y algunas áreas de interés de investigación que también compartimos, pero en general es una relación bastante buena

E2: Hay personalidades fuertes, y hay otros que somos como más llevaderos, más dóciles. Pero sí suele haber conflictos cuando hay discrepancias en el punto de vista. Digamos que es un departamento donde de repente afloran las pasiones.

E3: El trabajo entre nosotros está desequilibrado, es decir la posición de tener un grado profesional influye mucho. Los doctores en muchas ocasiones son muy impositivos, cuestionan muchísimo más que los que no tienen un grado académico de doctorado y en ocasiones eso hace que haya conflictos, resistencia y en muchas ocasiones a veces hasta competencia.

E5: Se ha atomizado muchísimo.

E6: Es muy diverso, ahora sí que aquí se aplica muy bien el concepto de tolerancia porque somos heterogéneos, diferentes carreras, diferentes elecciones y sin embargo somos muy buenos amigos, hay un respeto, hay una oportunidad de apoyarse unos a otros

E7: Somos buenos colegas, trabajamos en diferentes áreas, unos enfocados a la inclusión, otros a la gestión empresarial y un grupo a cuestiones éticas, otros a la parte de dignidad humana, otros a ciencia y filosofía, entonces somos de áreas muy diversas cuando hay un proyecto conjunto, nos comunicamos y nos echamos la mano.

E8: En el plano personal muy bien, ya en plano profesional las cosas no son tan directas como en el plano personal. Cada uno respeta el límite de otro.

E9: Todos nos llevamos bien, existe una relación respetuosa aún y cuando no coincidan las opiniones

E10: Amistosa, vives con buenos vecinos, no tienes mucho en común, no nos leemos unos a otros, no hay muchos proyectos en común, más que cuando implica la posibilidad de ganar dinero extra.

D1: También buena, con diferencias entre ellos por lo que piensan que debe ser la enseñanza de la disciplina.

Q3: Are there different groups in the Department?

E1: No hay grupos marcados, a pesar de que persiste todavía la cuestión en México del estereotipo masculino y femenino, entonces ahí a veces sí se nota que hay más afinidad entre grupos de mujeres que grupos mixtos, sin embargo, no es tampoco muy marcado, en general es una relación muy buena y muy de colegas, y algunas ocasiones ha llegado también más allá de la cuestión de colegas, puede ser relación también de amistad.

E2: Por la disciplina, si tiene identificado esos grupos, pero también por las áreas de interés.

E3: Hay líderes, más que grupos, se segmenta dependiendo de lo que se está discutiendo.

E5: Centro de la mujer, planta y cátedra, ética y filosofía; ética y cultura, que incluye ciencia, tecnología y sociedad.

E6: Grupos formales: Pues están los que ayudan en la cátedra, los que están con la mujer, los que están en el de la dignidad humana, los que están en ciencia y tecnología. Hacemos equipo cuando tenemos planes como departamento. Grupos informales: Esos si hay, mujeres con mujeres y hombres con hombres o doctores, maestros y más; o investigadores, filósofos, que son diferentes; pero así como que nos hagan el feo unos a otros, pues no. Informal también podría ser cuando tenemos nuestra planta, y los profesores de cátedra, eso también.

E7: No, no hay grupitos. Es que todos tenemos áreas diferentes. La maestra es de democracia y filosofía política, el maestro es de..., es la suma de muchas áreas. En junta por discusiones si se hacen grupitos, por cuestión de opinión unos empiezan a apoyar a unos y hay personas que son muy fuertes liderando la opinión.

E8: No hay grupos formales, se han formado por un proyecto, pero no es típico. Si hay grupos informales, se forman cuando hay incertidumbre.

E9: Si los hay, grupos por afinidades académicas, grupos de género, por gustos comunes, etc. Esta el grupo de los filósofos de carrera y de los que no lo son.

E10: Sí hay dos grupos, creo yo, muy claros, hay los que tenemos gusto por las ideas en general y nos sentimos confiados en los fundamentos de la Ética, y los que estudiaron otra carrera y han hecho una carrera en la enseñanza de la Ética. También están los extrovertidos, el grupo de mujeres, etc.

D1: Informales: hay 2 visiones de cómo debe asumirse la tarea de educar la disciplina, los filósofos y los pragmáticos.

Q4: If so, do people discuss these groups among themselves, what do you think they say about your group? About others?

E1: No, no existen.

E2: Sí, pero son cuestiones ideológicas, o también de formas de ser.

E5: Ha habido un trato muy favorable a los profesores de cátedra, y yo sinceramente me he sentido insultado constantemente durante todo este tiempo. Y el resto de mis compañeros exactamente igual. Por eso, ya dudo si cuando hablamos del departamento, hablamos de los que estamos de planta inscritos aquí, o hablamos de todos los que estamos colaborando.

E6: Claro que si, claro que se nota. Quizá nosotros que estamos aquí de planta no lo sentimos tan marcado, pero ellos si sienten ese rechazo de que no pueden estar. Yo pertenezco al grupo que tiene maestría nada más y no nos hacen el feo, al contrario, yo creo que nos alientan a que un día nosotras si podremos obtener el doctorado.

E8: Se tocan temas intrascendentes, cada uno se reserva las opiniones e información sobre cosas que van a pasar

E9: Lo que se discute es cuando uno trae un tema personal y lo quiera hacer tema de departamento.

E10: Respeto, se reconocen diferentes habilidades, hay una interacción cordial. yo no me meto contigo, tú no te metes conmigo.

D1: Subgrupos por simpatía, amistad de manera consciente. Filósofos y pragmáticos.

Q5. What is the relationship between these groups and the leader?

E1: Cuando son grupos de algún comité o de algún proyecto la relación es de mucha independencia, ya formado el grupo, ya formado el proyecto, se tiene autonomía para llevar a cabo cierta tarea y no necesariamente con supervisión, autónomo.

E2: yo creo que la jefa de alguna manera sí tiene identificado de quién puede echar mano para qué cosas o temas.

E3: No separan el ego, la parte de su grado, todos son doctores y los que no estamos en ese posicionamiento intelectual, es que no estas a su altura, y como no estas a su altura lo que tu opines, no importa. Y aunque la jefa lo quiera evitar, entra al juego porque, al fin de cuentas, es humana.

E6: Si se da cuenta, de hecho, pone al inicio de sus correos “está enviado a todos” o “yo sé que no les compete mucho a los que no tienen participación en este congreso, pero vamos a tener esto, así que todos apóyenme”; este tipo de lenguaje ahí está.

E7: Es una relación muy madura, la relación de cada uno, lo que yo percibo, con nuestra jefa, es muy profesional. Y también en un trato personal cuando hemos tratado pérdidas o también gozos, las dos cosas.

E8: Hay gente que tiene más afinidad y también hay gente que es por interés, cosas que para mí son un poco triviales, para otros son súper importantes, o sea, unos están hablando de la estructura académica y otros de lo administrativo.

E9: Buena, ella sabe de la existencia de los grupos

E10: La jefa sabe de estos grupos, las juntas de departamento que son pocas y son administrativas al cien por ciento... Entonces pues es cordial, nos dice... qué hay, qué tenemos que enviar em... de ahí en más pienso yo que lleva una relación amistosa con cada individuo.

D1: Mediadora, conciliar los intereses de ambos grupos.

Q6. Think about a typical department meeting, how is the dynamic? Why is like this? Describe it.

E1: Hay un orden del día, pero que casi nunca se respeta, y las personas que se van incorporando van enterándose de los nuevos asuntos, esto también es probable por la cantidad de clases y diversidad de clases que impartimos. Sí hay con discusión, pero generalmente hay posibilidad de transformación, o sea, se pueden discutir las ideas, se puede debatir, pero generalmente hay una línea marcada.

E3: Pues el proceso es que hay un orden del día que define los puntos a tratar que es lo más importante, y sobre eso se discute o a veces son normas y reglas que llegan desde arriba y que solamente la jefa es el vínculo para poder actuar cuando hay cosas que se requieren porque lo ha solicitado el director de la escuela, que es el jefe directo nuestra jefa, lo trabajamos y lo distribuye de manera, primero invita, quien se ofrece, pero como siempre todos estamos atorados de actividades, entonces lo que trata de hacer siempre la jefa es invitar, es persuasiva y lo logra, o si no a veces imperativo categórico, te toca distribuye funciones, empieza con una invitación pero cuando no hay quorum lo sentimos pero hay que hacerlo.

E5: Hay una agenda, y por supuesto siempre se abre la opción que se pueda comentar alguna otra cosa. Al final de una hora u hora y medio que tiene que ser, se arma todo el... Se hablan de otras cosas, o alguien toma la palabra y se expone. Casi todos participan. Único momento para ver a la líder.



E6: Formales con objetivo, demasiado rollo por su formación profesional. Fecha fija, se recuerda por correo electrónico, incluye agenda. Pocos cambios debido a peticiones organizacionales.

E7: La jefa tiene una agenda, desde antes nos avisa que asuntos vamos a checar y si alguien quiere sumar otro lo puede poner en la agenda y una reunión típica comienza con cuestiones de ejecución, de avisos, y luego sube la discusión porque aquí son muy reflexivos. Eso sí, se empieza y se termina; cuando ya se terminó si te quieres quedar. A veces es todo rápido y terminamos antes, pero a veces si hay discusiones que se tornan profundas o también emociones, entonces ahí hay gente que se engancha y hay gente que no, dependiendo.

E8: Empieza formal, al calor de la junta se informaliza, porque cada uno quiere expresarse y enfocarse en cosas no tan trascendentes. La gente se queda después de junta para tratar temas con ella

E9: Se inicia a tiempo, se informa de las cosas que hay que informar, algunos discuten y hablan de esos puntos y se termina.

E10: Las juntas de departamento que pocas y son administrativas al cien por ciento. Hay una agenda en donde nos dice cuáles son los puntos que vamos a ver, hay una profesora que es muy extrovertida y siempre habla hasta que le tenemos que decir que ya avance a otra cosa, cada uno va a opinando, es informal, hay algunos maestros que siempre usan su dispositivo móvil y están haciendo otra cosa porque hay muchas cosas automáticas que hacer. Hay una profesora que habla siempre, el que explota, el que no habla nada, yo cada vez hablo menos.

D1: Llevar una agenda del día estructurada, y así manejar la agenda. Las discusiones se dejan afuera para completar los puntos.

Q7. When taking a decision about something that affects all of you, what does the participation look like? Who participates in the decision process? Who doesn't?

E1: Generalmente, cuando se tiene que tomar una decisión, que forzosamente tenga que ser consensuada, es por correo electrónico. Es por mayoría, no por argumentación.

E2: Ya debería de haber terminado su gestión. Entonces, de parte de la escuela, nos dicen que se puede hacer una excepción para que la jefa continúe un año más, o bien pasar a una terna y hacer todo el proceso. En este departamento nos solidarizamos y pedimos que nuestra líder siguiera.

E3: Todos queremos hablar... si, es poca gente la que es pasiva, pero son pasivas porque ese es su carácter, ok? son personas que no les gusta entrar en la discusión, yo no sé si porque ven que hay tanto líder que terminan sacándose los ojos, vaya, no de pleito, pero sí de subir el tono o de sentirse que para que entro si finalmente se va a hacer lo que la mayoría diga, volvemos a lo mismo, hay momentos en que también uno decide mejor no decir nada, que hablen los que siempre hablan.

E5: En nuestro departamento no hemos tenido que decidir, que yo sepa nada.

E6: Participación: departamento crítico, diálogo de 2 o 3, se puede interrumpir, apertura al diálogo, se permitía que todos hablaran pero había quienes no participaban. El que habla, el que no habla, el que siempre critica.

E7: No todos participan, están callados. Y yo digo tan buena gente. Y hay otros que siempre participan, empiezan así como indiferentes y luego se enganchan. Pero si hay dos que tres que son más, pues que llevan más la batuta. A veces les sigues la corriente y pocas veces ponen algo, o ellas solas se enganchan.

E8: La participación no es equitativa, hay personas que nunca dicen nada y otro grupo que siempre comenta.

E9: La directora es muy democrática entonces pide la opinión de todos por correo electrónico, pero al final es ella la que toma la decisión y así lo informa.

E10: todos tienen que participar en las votaciones por decisión de la directora.

D1: Asistencia: al inicio del semestre muy bien y va bajando durante el semestre.  
Participación: los filósofos participan más, por personalidad y formación. Se maneja la misma dinámica. Las decisiones son insignificantes.

Q8: What are the characteristics of those who participate and those who don't?

E1: Es de acuerdo a la personalidad, yo creo, porque a veces la participación puede ser muy efusiva, no hay quien lleve de la mano, no se da un orden, no se pide y se da la palabra, es un poco espontánea.

E3: Liderazgo, grado de preparación, experiencia o años de docencia, a fuerza quieren que sea un departamento de filosofía, no es filosofía, punto, se desprende de ahí la ética que es una parte importante, poder.

E7: Es que unos son del área de filosofía y otros somos del área empresarial, y a los de área empresarial nos ha costado mucho trabajo ser tomados en cuenta como personas que conocemos de ética, no somos filósofos, pero nos ha costado mucho trabajo ese reconocimiento de cómo por la parte del estudio y del talento.

E8: Los que no participan, son personas que son más conformistas. Los que participan son de espíritu crítico, hay unos muy críticos y otros tantos normales.

E9: Hay quienes siempre tienen una opinión sobre algo, hay quienes participan cuando el tema les compete o les interesa, hay quienes escuchan durante toda la junta y dan opiniones puntuales

E10: La extrovertida que siempre habla, el que explota, el que habla menos

D1: Cuando los que participan mucho faltan, los que menos participan lo hacen más.

Q9: Pick a typical example of a decision where some people are involved and others are not.

E1: Si el líder considera que cierta persona tiene más conocimiento de un tema, ciertas credenciales sobre un tema, a su juicio personal que tiene más experiencia, que conoce más, por supuesto, se inclina por esta opinión. Entonces sí puede haber un poco de disgusto, pero no entre colegas, porque es muy aliviante que no pueden atacar, si no que más bien hubo diferencias, entonces no es una cosa áspera entre colegas, si no a veces hay un poquito de disgusto.

E2: Hay otros colegas, compañeros de trabajo que quizás no están muy convencidos de la decisión que se toma, pero uno se termina uno adecuando. Por ejemplo, algo que suele ser recurrente, los horarios de los grupos. Al principio ella nos decía: es que deberían de apuntarse en clases en horarios. Ella buscaba darle prioridad a los profesores de cátedra, y a nosotros dejarnos lo que ya los profesores de cátedra no quisieran como horario.

E3: Por decirte algo, a lo mejor estás involucrada en ciertos proyectos, y quieres estar en las tardes enfocado a eso. Por ejemplo, a mí si me dieran clases con muchos huecos, me da en la torre. Porque sentarme a investigar son procesos de tres horas. Si me das una hora y media o una hora. Ese tipo de cosas, nosotros, "no pero espérame."

E5: Lo único que yo recuerda ahora mismo de decisiones departamentales, es cuando hay que elige al director de departamento. Ahí más o menos los mecanismos ya están, pero otras decisiones que hayamos tenido que tomar, la verdad es que no. Sí tendremos una tendencia a hablar, y a opinar todos. Aunque no recuerdo ahora mismo un caso concreto

E6: No es un departamento en el que haya que tomar muchas decisiones. No es mucho de decidir juntos. Una vez que se toma una decisión, todo el departamento apoya

E7: Participar en comités de planes de estudio, se elegía, no se sabía porque y tú no estabas y no sabías porque no estabas elegido. Se elegía por edad, todavía se nota la diferencia entre el área empresarial y la filosofía.

E8: Despidos, inseguridad, no todos participan siempre.

E9: Las decisiones las toma la directora después de conocer la opinión de todos

E10: Se toma decisiones de todo

D1: Cuando hay que tomar decisiones, se promueve la participación de todos. Trataba que todos vieran la visión institucional y personal.

Q10: Thinking about the people who participate in the decision process, what are the issues that concern them? How does the leader relates to them?

E1: La cuestión de los contenidos de una clase, o puede ser, no sé, la planeación de un evento, realmente casi todos son así.

E3: Es la lucha constante en esta justificación, en nuestra razón de ser como departamento. Es un, a veces, la cantidad de cambios en un sistema existe y que, por tocar temas tan importantes, tan trascendentes en el ser humano, llega a influir la toma de decisiones que se hace en otros departamentos

E5: Claro que salen cosas. Por ejemplo, ¿qué es lo que ha hecho mucho ruido? Muchos de los últimos movimientos de los profesores por las dos líneas de profesor: profesor investigador o profesor docente. Digo, es un ejemplo. Y ese es un sálvese quien pueda. Por un lado, por parte de los profesores de planta, a ver de dónde me agarro si esto estalla. Y de los de cátedra, bueno, pues fue bonito mientras duró, pero como no estoy casado con el departamento

E6: Los profesores que pertenecen al Sistema Nacional de Investigadores no participan en actividades institucionales, si en las juntas y aportan. A algunos les interesa publicar, otros terminan sus estudios, y así.

E7: Temas sobre alumnos, temas de conciliación, cambios sobre premios, reconocimientos.

E8: La preocupación sobre que va a pasar con el departamento, se expresa en una junta. Choque con la postura del líder.

E9: Los cursos del ética, la falta de alumnos, el hecho de que no tengamos carrera a la cual dar servicio, la falta de visión de las autoridades actuales

E10: El futuro del departamento

D1: La seguridad laboral y las posibilidades de desarrollo es preocupación para todos

Q11: Thinking about the people who don't participate in the decision process, what issues that concern them? How does the leader relates to them?

E5: El futuro del departamento, porque para empezar han desaparecido 35 grupos. Porque antes, el departamento tenía la perspectiva científico tecnológica, y desapareció de los planes de estudios, y ahí se perdieron 35 grupos. El departamento vive principalmente de los cursos de ética, pero no sabemos qué va a pasar con los cursos de ética, porque ahora hay dos: ética persona y sociedad que se da en los 1os semestres, y ética, profesión y ciudadanía que es en los últimos semestres. Pero muchos de estos grupos están desapareciendo, porque se permite que ese curso sea sustituido por éticas aplicadas. Esos los dan el departamento de cada escuela.

E6: A algunos les preocupa que la ética no sea necesaria y que el departamento se disuelva.

E7: La líder te pide que participes, pero a veces apoya que se extienda el tema. Generalmente la discusión la traen los filósofos. Aunque hay algunos que se inclinan por un lado u otros porque se ponen del lado de la justicia.

E8: Algunos temas les parecen irrelevantes, intrascendentes como para participar. Hay personalidades que no participan en anda porque no quieren retroalimentación.

E10: El futuro del departamento.

D1: Los pragmáticos se llegaron a quejar de los problemas que surgían con los filósofos fuera de junta, los problemas salían en junta.

Q12: Are there any formal meetings besides the department meeting? With whom and how often? Besides all meetings, what is the frequency of contact with the leader?

E1: La reunión de departamento es quincenal y es la única formal. Reuniones informales 2 veces al año, sociales, es tradición, convoca el líder a petición de alguien más, entre todos ponen la fecha.

E3: Departamento, escuela y personales para objetivos.

E5: NO. Sólo la junta de departamento. Hay una junta después de la bienvenida de la escuela. Reuniones informales, un par de maestras hacen esfuerzos, pero no hay quorum.

E6: La junta de inicio del semestre, la del departamento. Reuniones informales, grupo de maestras que se reúnen a comer.

E7: Junta de departamento, la de rectoría, para la semana I. Reuniones de pasillo.

E8: Solo las juntas. Hay reuniones informales en fechas específicas como cumpleaños, sabático, navidad, etc. Todos van, todos conviven.

E9: Reuniones extraordinarias, hay reuniones informales de los grupos de damas.

E10: Hay reuniones informales donde asisten todos.

D1: Solo la junta. Las reuniones de revisión de actividades. Las juntas cada 15 días o cada 3 semanas. Se implementaron las juntas virtuales.

Q13: Are there any rituals or repeated behaviors in the relationships among the leader and these groups?

E1: Plática de pasillo, saliditas espontáneas con gente, muchas personas van a comer a su casa. Se resaltaba el análisis crítico y todo, yo por mi carrera primera soy de área dura, no de área filosófica, entonces a veces sí me extrañaba que hubiera tanta discusión, luego ya entendí que es por el perfil.

E2: No hay, es que la labor del profesor es así como que más individualista en algunos aspectos. No hay mucho sentido de colectividad

E3: Cuando hay ciertas actividades de presencia fuera de la institución, ejemplo, cursos, conferencias, se piden entre si... se invitan los mismos, trabajan los mismos, y entre ellos se quedan los proyectos, no sé si a eso te refieras, si, se protegen en el sentido de

E5: Rituales propios de cada grupo: mujeres vs hombres, profesores de ética vs filosofía de la ciencia

E6: Visitaba cada oficina para saludar, los que se dejaban... las maestras se juntaban a comer una vez a la semana en la sala de juntas

E7: Por comentarios se nota quien es filosofo o del área empresarial. También por el uso del método de casos (los empresariales, no los filósofos). Cuando hay algo que aclarar, la jefa viene a tu puerta, cuida mucho los espacios. Conversaciones de pasillo especialmente con los filósofos. Cuando viene alguien importante, invitan a unos y no a todos. No hay democracia en los espacios, que tengan las ventanas abiertas y que no pongan posters.

E8: No hay. Ella está disponible electrónicamente y en las juntas. Después de la junta algunos se queda siempre a platicar con la líder. Hay algunos que requieren reconocimiento y otros no.

E9: Si hay, recuerdo pocos.

E10: No.



D1: Fuera del horario de oficina, los filósofos se reunían para hablar de temas filosóficos, discusiones académicas. Los pragmáticos son más dados a la tarea que a las discusiones. Roles definidos, el que dice que si y lo hace, el que dice que si y no hace nada.

### **Department 8.**

Q1. How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader (follower)?  
Why?

G1: Buena, aunque yo creo que trata de satisfacer mucho mis necesidades, sin realmente ver qué me hace falta. ella es muy conservadora, muy bajo los lineamientos de la institución y demás, no mover un dedo si no pido permiso.

G2: Muy cordial basada en la confianza y en el respeto. Ella se conduce con transparencia en todas las decisiones y es considerada con las circunstancias de cada persona. La relación se basa en confianza.

G3: Muy abierta, de mucha confianza.

G5: La relación que tengo con mi jefe ahorita es de alta confianza, totalmente transparente, y de mucho respeto, porque nos conocemos de hace muchos años, entonces coincidimos en muchos puntos, y la experiencia nos ha dado, nos respetamos mucho.

G6: Buena, cordial, sincera y directa. Básica, lo básico de las condiciones de trabajo.

G7: Llena de respeto, cordialidad, de confianza mutua.

G9: Es una relación de trabajo cordial.

G10: Cordial, de respeto, de confianza.

G123: Muy buena, confianza para hablar sin tapujos.

G12: Es de forma adecuada, apropiada, en base a los objetivos que se designan para nuestro trabajo.

D2: Buena, relación participativa, abierta, salvo con 2 profesores que no eran tan responsivos. Relación de confianza sobre el estatus jefe-colaborador.

Q2. Describe the relationship between people in your department.

G1: Bien.

G2: Hay cordialidad y respeto. EL trabajo en equipo no se da mucho, debido a clases y tesis, ella promueve el trabajo colegiado.

G3: Cambió porque han cambiado los colegas últimamente, entonces, pero siempre ha sido muy abierta, de mucha confianza

G5: Transparente, con bastante grado de confianza, respetuosa.

G6: Bien, buena convivencia, respeto. Bromas, relaciones fuera del horario de trabajo, cordial de amistad.

G7: Cordial, siento que es sana.

G9: Pues la situación es natural, lo más común es las juntas de trabajo, en las juntas, donde se mostraban los avances, donde se mostraban los pendientes, donde se le daba seguimiento a las cosas, entonces en las juntas es donde yo veía más a todo el grupo.

G10: Armónica, nos conocemos ya casi todos desde hace mucho tiempo, no coincidimos todos en todo, pero logramos que se trate de una manera conjunta para poderse sacar los objetivos.

G123: Creo que hay bandos, uno muy bien definido, uno por género, y los que no estamos en ninguno de los dos. Se ve un departamento medio desarticulado por los grupos, porque no hay una visión compartida, hay un sentimiento de pertenencia

dormido. Nunca decimos que es el departamento más chingón, porque es el que más genera, el que más trabaja.

G12: En general es buena, cordial. Cada quien tiene a veces sus formas y estilos, pero ya cuando los conoces y los tratas, sabes cómo reaccionan, por qué, cómo y todo lo demás, pero en general sí se hace un buen grupo.

D2: Buena relación en general de compañerismo.

Q3: Are there different groups in the Department?

G1: Subgrupos: profesoras que se juntan mucho, gente de más edad que esperan más lineamientos, gente que se aísla por cuestiones personales. Hay muchos intereses personales y no departamentales. Grupos formales que han trabajado por proyecto que perduran y están compuestos por personas de otros subgrupos.

G2: Grupos formales: por la naturaleza de las materias. Profesores que imparten materias de primeros semestres y que apoyan a los de catedra. No son cerrados y si se involucran en otras actividades del depto. Grupos informales:

G3: No creo que existan, hay gente que por los horarios convive más que otras veces, o por los lados por donde están las oficinas, los que están ubicados en el lado norte conviven más entre ellos y los del lado sur entre ellos. Grupos formales sí, los que se han hecho para proyectos, nunca ha habido una asignación directamente de líder que fuera a fuerza, nunca, entonces esto favorecía a que se armaran grupos donde había más afinidad entre las personas, sobre todo en cuestión de tiempo, de caracteres y de gustos, por ejemplo, o especialidad. Los cuadrados y los flexibles

G4: Es que no podemos decir que haya fronteras, ¿verdad? Yo la verdad, es que gracias a Dios me llevo muy bien con todo mundo, me gustaría jalarlos más, ¿sí me explico? Como de que vente, vamos a aprovechar tu talento para este objetivo común, pero pues no siempre se puede.

G5: Hay cierto grado de subgrupos, no son exclusivos, sino incluyentes.

G6: Yo digo que muy bien, en el departamento hay buena convivencia, hay afecto, hay bromas, hay convivencia totalmente fuera del área del trabajo, hay una relación cordial, de amistad, de respeto. Hay unos que otros que conviven más fuera del trabajo, pero no creo que haya enemistado o pleitos, todos tenemos formas de ser diferentes, nos escuchamos, nos tratamos. No creo que haya grupos o así, no creo que he escuchado. Creo que es bastante homogénea en ese sentido.

G7: Un grupo que es gente que está muy implicada con el departamento, que se involucran mucho en las actividades de participación, o sea un grupo muy activo, hay un grupo pasivo, o sea como que tienes que jalar y uno que están, pero no están. Hay grupos formales por proyecto, se elige un líder y se invita a participar.

G9: Si existen, hay subgrupos por áreas de trabajo, por personalidades, por situaciones que se van dando con el paso del tiempo y se genera más empatía, más cohesión, pero es una situación que sucede en cualquier lugar de trabajo.

G10: Existen grupos formales porque existieron en la informalidad y ya nos quedamos acostumbrados a trabajar de esa forma, por áreas o por intereses que tenemos, o si sale un proyecto y hay interés, tenemos libertad para poder formar ese grupo para cumplir con algún objetivo. Informales para hacer actividades aquí mismo dentro del trabajo, que pueden ser proyectos que duran poco o incluso proyectos que son urgentes y que ella sabía a quién le podía pedir ayuda y que iba a sacar el proyecto, entonces le pedía más ayuda a esas personas, porque te digo, era lo que era urgente, y además informales porque no nada más la relación está de laboral, sino relación de amistad fuera de lo laboral desde hace tiempo y grupos de gente que se junta para ir a comer o por las ubicaciones que tienen de las oficinas que más contacto tienen, que tienen más tiempo de conocerse. Informal también es cercanía de la oficina con la del jefe.

G123: Grupos informales formados por afinidad, por amistad. No hay grupos formales.

G12: Dos o tres grupitos fáciles de identificar: por afinidad, por antigüedad, por área de especialidad.

D2: Si hay afinidad en pequeños grupos y de manera natural en objetivos y actividades. Se formaron grupos formales, pero de manera abierta, quien quiere participar.

Q4: If so, do people discuss these groups among themselves? What do you think they say about your group? About others?

G1: Cordial pero superficial. Hay personas que no pertenecen a ningún grupo y no hay iniciativa ni para integrarlo ni de esa persona en integrarse.

G2: Objetivo de planeación que se debe desarrollar de manera colegiada, eso ha propiciado que miembros de grupos formales diferentes tengamos que interactuar.

G3: No, se habla sobre personas en específico, no de grupos.

G4: Hay unos donde participa directamente porque es parte de ese grupo, hay otros que puede ser parte de un proyecto en concreto, hay otros donde se le van dando seguimiento, y básicamente, es que depende, en unos participa desde dentro y en otros desde fuera, le va dando seguimiento de cómo van las cosas.

G6: No entre ellos, tal vez la falta de liderazgo de la jefa o que no se logren las cosas. Es probable que en los grupos informales se platicuen, ahora sí que no puedo suponer, pero no en las personas a las que me les acerco platico, no, quizás la plática referente al desempeño del liderazgo sí se toca. Y no siempre directo al liderazgo, pero quizás al que está más arriba. A veces le toca ser el colchón. De la evaluación y juicios sobre los grupos, no lo creo. Los grupos informales con los que pueda estar interactuando.

G7: A lo mejor no tanto por grupos, pero sí de persona, de cómo a lo mejor ha de ser difícil trabajar con una persona cuando pertenece a ese grupo, pero no es algo que, no es parte de la agenda, o sea puedes salir casual, no es algo.

G9: Algunos colegas que, por la naturaleza de su trabajo, necesitaba estar fuera. Pero daba la impresión de que nunca está aquí, que nunca venía o que no viene, y eso no es

que fuera favoritismo, sino que no sabemos cómo actuar y eso es lo que genera cierto malestar.

G10: Pues de repente sí, por comentarios o rumores.

G123: Del grupo de genero se habla, se comenta que existe.

G12; Te vamos a vetar, y vamos a probarte. No hay problema.

D2: No hay antagonismo entre ellos.

Q5. What is the relationship between these groups and the leader?

G1: Buena. Si perciben que hay grupos, las reuniones son para eliminar esos grupos. Se han hecho actividades departamentales.

G2: Relación positiva. La líder trata de estar presente en las reuniones de esos grupos (no siempre puede).

G3: Yo la he visto que se relaciona, bueno, en unos ha estado más relacionada que en otros, porque ella misma se incluye voluntariamente, de acuerdo a su tiempo, este, pero lo demás se ha completado en las juntas, en los comentarios, y de que siempre deja las puertas abiertas.

G6: Quizá le falta un poco más de seguimiento en algunas cosas, no toma decisiones y permite que haya debates, pero se pueden extender demasiado, hay que tomar posturas a veces. Intervención esporádica y no permitía el cierre de las cosas, creo que es de las cosas que se pudieran mejorar.

G7: Hay grupos más cercanos y creo que a lo mejor en el grupo que es más activo tiene una relación más cercana con la líder, pero no porque ella ha hecho distinciones, sino porque estás participando más activamente y necesitas comunicar o necesitas información o algo y eso hace que esté más cercana la relación.

G10: LA jefa tenía bien identificado cuáles son las competencias de cada uno y qué le podía pedir a cada quién.

G123: La jefa si está consciente de que existen los grupos, por lo menos del de género. La relación es buena porque ella forma parte de ese grupo desde antes de que fuera jefa.

G12: Nos pone o intercambia en cierto tipo de proyectos, y trata en cierta forma de ser equilibrada en qué darle a quién en su momento, balancear para que puedan participar todos.

D2: Buena, particularmente no hubo conflictos ni con los grupos ni de manera individual. Hay una tendencia de que participen los mismos en los proyectos.

Q6. Think about a typical department meeting, how is the dynamic? Why is like this? Describe it.

G1: Es una reunión informativa de decisiones que se tomaron en la junta de directores del día anterior. No es planeación, donde se cuestione, donde se organice. Ya no se busca el consenso, se da línea. Si hay que apuntarse en algo se apuntan, a veces lo deja abierto.

G2: Típicamente se programan las juntas que la mayoría de los profesores pueda asistir, es de una hora para que puedan cubrirse los temas importantes pero que no se extienda más allá de lo necesario. Ella programa una agenda y la junta se centra en la agenda. La junta inicia a tiempo y se tiene un trato cordial y respetuoso. Ella solicita la atención y participación de todos. Hay oportunidad de preguntar, de aportar sobre los temas, pero se maneja muy ejecutiva. Si no hay asuntos relevantes, no hay junta.

G3: Empieza hablando la líder, saludando, gente procuraba iniciar puntual, siempre se presentaba un orden del día, una agenda, y se seguía. Lo que sí es que no se extendía de más, eso sí, pensando cuando estaba Lily era, iniciábamos puntual, pero en lo que

entraba y no sé qué, ahí la ventaja era que los que tenían pendientes se iban. participábamos levantando la mano. Había veces cuando se iba a hablar de los proyectos en los que estábamos involucrados, ahí sí era la líder la que decía “profesor, cómo van en el proyecto?”, o “a ver profesora qué se ha hecho?”, pero por general era levantar la mano y opinar, es algo que tuviera muy así la discusión hablaba la gente, “no pero es que esto”, “pero lo otro”, ahí sí se salía un poquito del orden típico como se marcaba, pero sí se daba oportunidad que habláramos todos, todos traíamos pendientes, entonces te digo que se extendía.

G4: En la junta se tratan todos los temas, no hay junta todas las semanas. La líder promueve a la participación, pero no todos responden.

G6: La convocatoria más o menos, la junta es informativa. El manejo de la junta, digo, sí hay una agenda, y creo que para algunos temas podríamos haber tenido información previa para tener más un alcance bien. Yo en lo general siempre pienso, faltó tomar decisiones, no todo es el populismo, no siempre se debe decidir lo de la mayoría, porque puede ser lo mejor pero no siempre es lo mejor. Faltó tomar riesgos de decir yo tomo esta postura. Y pues, colaboradores, un aportador. Realmente posturas y encentamiento, creo que en las juntas relevantes donde hay que tomar decisiones, donde hay que llevarlo a otros caminos, hay un poco de ausencia en eso. Había oportunidad de que todos aportaran, discutieran. Quizás el manejo del tiempo faltó, de los tiempos, el manejo del tiempo en cuanto a las juntas es la misma cuestión, cuando sí haya temas en los que se requería un poco más de fondo, o traer o trabajar ahí, no se daba.

G7: Antes de la reunión, romper el hielo entre varios, empezando la reunión, se seguía una agenda, se empezaban a tratar los temas, había interacción, en el momento que alguien tenía algo que decir con este respecto al tópico, lo que sea, tenía la libertad de hacerlo o expresarlo.

G9: Pues es más, la asignación de los lugares, o sea, ibas a ocuparte de una posición física, ya después se toma por ahí la voz cantante, se le daba seguimiento y ya después había dos o tres personas de un grupo que generalmente hacían sus comentarios



generales pero ya era una situación más común que otra cosa, no?, y para continuar los responsables del grupo decían “sabes qué, ya vamos a empezar otra opinión, pasamos al siguiente punto” y al final sí llegaban a algunos acuerdos o quedaban algunos pendientes para la siguiente ronda.

G10: Llegábamos, comentaban lo que íbamos a ver, rara vez estuvimos todos juntos. Como agenda, ella tenía anotado los temas, nunca nos mandaba previo a lo que íbamos a ver, salvo a que fuera algo muy importante, ahí sí nos avisaba, sobre todo para que no fuéramos a faltar. Y llevar minuta, tampoco, ella era la que anotaba todo y tenía su registro, pero no había alguien que tomara minuta.

G123: Juntas informativas para asignar proyectos y tareas definidas arriba. Se permiten, pero no se toman en cuenta los momentos de reflexión. Todos participan, unos bajo protesta. No hay minutas o no se envían las minutas.

D2: Mostraba agenda, iba punto por punto. Algunas juntas eran informativos, otras eran a discusión, otras para levantar información, otras sesiones de trabajo. A veces hay un cuestionamiento sobre las decisiones o puntos que se trataban en la junta.

Q7. When taking a decision about something that affects all of you, what does participation look like? Who participates in the decision process? Who doesn't?

G1: Hay unos que no participan, hay otros que solo hablan para quejarse, unos que dan su opinión, se están cubriendo la espalda, voy a hacer solo lo que me comprometí, no me pidas más. Si algo está tentando mi estado de confort me quejo y quiero que todo siga igual (algunos). Lili no se compromete, se lava las manos, no hay confrontaciones, siempre es una línea de arriba y hay que seguirla y siempre sigue esa postura.

G2: Personas permanecen callados en toda la junta (perfil bajo, escuchar, tomar nota, si les pide opinión, aportan, pero no de manera voluntaria). Personas que opinan mucho y otros opinan cuando generan valor. No hay preferencia por algunos de esos grupos, no busca la aprobación de nadie.

G3: Todos participan, primero que se quedara claro todo lo que se estaba mandando allá arriba, y segundo que había gente que no está de acuerdo, como ha habido veces de “cómo se va a medir esto?”, “es que no están pensando”, en ese tipo de discusiones eran en las que más se iba el tiempo, y a veces si se tenía la agenda programada, no se cortaba esto y se seguía con esa discusión, y luego ya había veces en los que ya no cubría lo otro.

G4: En general el arma de ataque es intelectual, el arma de ataque, no es que no haya ataque, pero no te voy a decir no quiero, pero te voy a decir está demostrado que no sé qué, no sé cuánto, ¿sí me explico? Como que poner argumentos intelectuales para bloquear o para, más que bloquear, como para, manifestar de alguna manera, o justificar en algún momento dado el no interés o no participación por un argumento intelectual, es una percepción. Yo creo que pasa mucho con los profesores, entonces claro, no es decir ni sí ni no, pero entonces es más bien entretener el proceso.

G6: La participación es diferente, es diversa, no todos tienen el mismo comportamiento, algunos son renegones. Y está bien renegar, otros aceptan las situaciones, y otros pues básicamente neutral. Algunos pueden estar renegando, otros dicen sí adelante, y otros neutrales. No todos tenemos la misma postura. Sin embargo, no hay agresión para nadie, no son agresiones.

G7: Junta informativa: compañeros que nunca hablan, compañeros que muchas veces hablan, y de esos que a lo mejor muchas veces hablan, hay dos que están en contra, negativos, que siempre tienen algo malo, dentro de ellos hay algunos que lo malo y hasta ahí, o sea, nomás, crítica, otras son crítica más propuesta. Pues sí, hay una exposición de lo que hay que hacer. Una etapa de aquí está el problema, una etapa de preguntas unas a otros, de quienes pueden hacerlo, y otra etapa de cierre. Quizás había un argumento de quien sea, muy sólido, muy fundamentado, y a lo mejor era una emisión larga, pero la mayoría lo toma en cuenta. Pero bueno, aquí está la problemática, se escucha un poco a las posturas y al final se decide conforme al grupo.

G9: Yo supondría que va a ser una cuestión más consensada, iba a ser la situación manejada de acuerdo al proceso del responsable del grupo, y sí se involucra.

G10: Si era algo que nos afectara a todos, y en tomar la decisión podíamos estar involucrados todos, sí se nos toma en cuenta y lo que la mayoría decida hacer. Si era algo que nos afectara pero que no podíamos participar, ya tomábamos la decisión a su juicio, si había oportunidad de que todos participáramos, más que todo era por consenso, lo que la mayoría dijera, aunque no todos estuviéramos de acuerdo, pero aceptábamos el consenso, eso es, qué se yo, hubo varias situaciones donde tuvimos que tomar las decisiones.

G123: No hay toma de decisiones en el departamento.

D2: Hay gente muy propositiva, gente que solo se queja, otros cuestionaban mucho los puntos. Todos participaban, más menos.

Q8: What are the characteristics of those who participate and those who don't?

G1: Decisiones departamentales, solo las de reuniones informales.

G2: Cuando hay un tema difícil y que genera cuestionamiento o desaprobación de una buena parte del grupo, ella no permite que se genere una discusión, sino simplemente dice que es un lineamiento que viene de autoridades superiores y hay que hacerse.

G3: Había participación en donde hablaba más gente, yo siento que es ahí era donde más les afectaba, lo que venía, lo que traían de allá de más arriba, no recuerdo un ejemplo que te pueda yo citar, pero bueno hay que pensar si la cuestión falta, "bueno ahora lo de las faltas, no va a ser así", hay gente que es muy pegada a las políticas y hay gente que "pues yo no estoy de acuerdo" y luego los que "no, sabes qué, si no pones faltas pues entonces pongan actividades", "no, que si pongo actividades", era muy así, el carácter de la persona es lo que influye como es, cómo va siendo, y hay veces en que pensabas que se estaba molestando, y al cerrar la junta ya se sentía que ya se había cerrado un poco el ánimo de estar molestos.

G5: Digo, lo que pasa es que siempre me parece que hay quien dice, bueno, vamos a darle, vamos a experimentar, vamos a probar, o sea, siempre hay elementos redentores, que entran por ahí al quite, entonces claro, de nuevo, los más cercanos son los que terminan entrándole al asunto. O sea, es más bien dejar que la misma dinámica ocurra, que tampoco necesariamente quede manifiesto, que no le vamos a entrar.

G7: Participativos son activos y los no participativos son pasivos y virtuales.

G9: Algunos tienen una opinión muy competitivamente, para sobresalir, para sacar adelante la agenda del grupo, para hacer comentarios aceptados. Otros hacían comentarios nomás por decir algo, que sería una clasificación, absurdo, sin saber algunas consecuencias, otros nada más para, pues para que no hubiera silencio.

G123: Son pocos los que participan, ya que el mensaje es "pues sí, pero así se tiene que hacer", y participan para cuestionar o para reafirmar lo que se tiene que hacer. Siempre participan y toman la misma postura. Los que callan, los que protestan, y los que dicen que sí.

D2: Hay personas que de manera natural no participaban en nada y la jefa los comprometía a participar.

Q9: Pick a typical example of a decision where some people are involved and others are not.

G1: No hay transparencia en la información que la directora proporciona, siempre hay un filtro

G2: Cuando se toma de manera colegiada, se hace democrática y todos participan y el que calla otorga. Cuando se tocan temas específicos, se forman grupos por área y como grupo se hace una propuesta y se respeta lo que el grupo haya decidido. Si hay opiniones en contra, se respeta, pero se hace lo que la mayoría decide.

G3: Ahí sí es más activo, de hecho, muchos levantaban la mano, y ahí sí notaba yo que cuando nos involucraba a todos, si había alguien que no habíamos participado, la líder preguntaba. “Muy bien, oye, ¿tú qué opinas?” y entonces ahí sí ya te hacía participar.

G7: En ocasiones, la gente se muestra con entusiasmo de que te estén tomando en cuenta. En otras ocasiones es como que, a ver, ya es algo como el pensamiento de la cultura organizacional, o sea me están preguntando porque de verdad me quieren tomar en cuenta o nada más es así como una solución de bolsillo. Cuando es la toma de decisiones en grupo, la gente se muestra muy participativa.

G9: En algunas juntas, unas actividades se quedaban en los mismos grupos de trabajo, se quedaban en las juntas para trabajarse posteriormente, se hacían y a la siguiente junta se mostraban, eso son cuando requieres un poquito más de trabajo colegiado más que de grupo. En otras actividades que no necesitaban mucho análisis, sí se asignaba directamente, “quién me ayuda?” y había de las dos: gente voluntaria que decía “yo te ayudo” o hay gente que se asignaba y se decía “sabes qué, tú me puedes ayudar” o “vamos a asignar a tal persona” y así era.

G10: Roles: incluye el del abogado del diablo que es casi sólo una persona, otro los que ven las cosas negativas en todo, una buena parte del grupo. Alguien que lo ve todo positivo, varios que ven lo positivo, yo creo que, los demás que tratamos de alimentar lo que pensamos y participamos.

G123: Siempre son los mismos roles. Están los mismos roles en todo el tec: el cuidachambas (no externa y lleva la fiesta en paz), los que reafirman (compatibilidad con el líder) y los críticos (no están de acuerdo con las decisiones y lo externan).

D2: Decisiones de temas o materias: sobre todo en planes de estudio.

Q10: Thinking about the people who participate in the decision process, what are the issues that concern them? How does the leader relates to them?

G1: No hay dirección del departamento, no hay objetivos, planes. Todos se cuidan mucho en como dicen las cosas porque su evaluación puede verse afectada

G2: Las que participan, son personas son expertos en su materia, otro grupo son los que han tenido oportunidad de ocupar cargos como dirección de carrera o de depto. Los que no participan son porque no hay tenido oportunidad, o porque es muy difícil llegar a un acuerdo y dejan la decisión en manos de alguien más.

G3: La gente que participa es muy participativa, por lo general agarran el liderazgo en muchos proyectos, es la primera persona en levantar la mano, este, gente que le gusta participar, que le gusta estar metida en muchas cosas, son los caracteres de cada quién, pero eso es lo que yo he visto, que la gente que más participa es gente que le gusta más estar en el cuadro, "quiero salir en las noticias, quiero ser importante".

G6: Creo que a todos nos preocupa lo académico. Nos preocupa que nos escuchen, de repente es un sentir, que escuchen. No se recurre a preguntar, por así decirlo. El dinamismo no creo que sea una preocupación, sino un modus operandi. Laboral... la permanencia laboral, hoy en día es nuevo que los profesores todos en general, uno que otro no, pero están preocupados por la seguridad de trabajo, es un hecho que se activó y va a quedar.

G7: Cuestiones académicas, específicamente planes de estudio, materias, como que es el tópico que a todo mundo le interesa porque finalmente trabajan en el área

G9: Los procesos naturales del trabajo: las evaluaciones, los proyectos fuera del programa o fuera de las actividades normales, las acreditadoras y las evaluaciones, la cuestión de los salarios o de las situaciones relacionadas con los procesos de personal, los cambios tan frecuentes que hay en el sistema o tantos cambios que tenemos en la administración actual académica, la actualización de los procesos de materiales y actualizaciones tecnológicas.

G123: Valores: trabajadores, apoyo a nuestros compañeros cuando lo necesitan, hay quienes se comprometen más, pero todos participan.

D2: Los comprometidos son muy participativos.

Q11: Thinking about the people who don't participate in the decision process, what are issues that concern them? How does the leader relate to them?

G2: Planes de estudio es un tema álgido, se deja en manos de los expertos de la materia. Tema objetivos es difícil (número, fechas), tema resultados. Directivos se toman mucho tiempo en comunicar información y eso genera incertidumbre.

G3: Había gente que no hablaba, porque no estaba involucrada en el proyecto o porque nos habían alargado mucho la discusión sobre algo, hablaban más los que estaban involucrados directamente con eso, o por ejemplo, si a mí no me interesaba el aspecto de faltas porque, es algo que ya está definido, es algo que viene lo de arriba, entonces, pues yo me la pasaba callado, gente como yo, había gente que no hablábamos, sabíamos que era una discusión que no iba a llevar a nada y era nada más extenderlo, sin embargo yo siempre noté que la vida en ese tiempo no era de cortar, era más, era diplomático en ese sentido, de dejar que se desahogan, que digan, que se expresen, en ese tipo de situaciones no había gente que no dijera mucho, que no hablara.

G10: Si asisten a las juntas participan.

D2: Cuando el tema era interesante, la participación subía.

Q12: Are there any formal meetings besides the department meeting? With whom and how often? Besides all meetings, what is the frequency of contact with the leader?

G2: Reuniones extraordinarias cuando se amerite, reuniones de inicio de semestre. Reuniones de seguimiento de proyectos (competencias, proyectos) lo demás por correo

electrónico. Informales: reuniones x cumpleaños, rosca, candelaria, amistad, maestro, brindis navideño.

G3: Solo juntas de departamento y de proyectos. Si hay reuniones informales donde casi todos asisten y se forman grupos por temas y/o afinidad. Hombres, mujeres.

G4: Reuniones formales por proyectos y participa la directora dependiendo del proyecto.

G7: Las de inicio de semestre, por proyectos y también hay informales.

G9: Las juntas iniciales, sí hay juntas al inicio del semestre, a mediados del semestre, a finales del semestre para definir objetivos, para dar retroalimentación, para ver los resultados finales, para decir si hay otros proyectos, inquietudes, sí hay de manera individual con el responsable del departamento.

G10: Las juntas para proyectos que se tengan que lanzar,

G123: Si hay reuniones formales para los proyectos. Participan voluntarios por afinidad con el proyecto. Todos se involucran. Se presentan en la junta de departamento o solo a la jefa. Hay reuniones informales como pasteles, además de las salidas del grupo de género.

D2: Reuniones informales: posada, cumpleaños, día del maestro.

Q13: Are there any rituals or repeated behaviors in the relationships among the leader and these groups?

G1: Todas las juntas son iguales. Ella muestra apoyos de generaron otras instancias, nada generado por ella. Cada quien está en su zona de confort y no hay motivación para salir de ahí. Cuando hay un evento, se organizan por grupitos.



G2: Profesoras, son la mayoría y se llevan muy bien entre ellas. Muchas frases vienen de hace tiempo. Hay cordialidad, respeto, no se critica, no se cuestiona. Grupo de profesores de estudiaron juntos el PhD en Deusto, pero el resto no se sienten excluidos.

G3: Cuadrados: en la forma de caminar, en el carácter, en la formalidad de hablar, cómo puntualizan, cómo te dicen las cosas, te leen mucho las cosas o si de repente se plantean opciones diferentes a los marcados por una política, se estresan más. , los cuadrados no son abiertos en el sentido de las opciones, Flexibles: más abiertos, flexibles en responsabilidades y horarios.

G4: La persistencia de dar la propia opinión. Intención a participar o no participar

G6: estamos en la junta en otras cosas que no son la junta. Estábamos con computadoras, con otras cosas, con otros pendientes.

G7: Estar involucrado en Comunicación informal, O sea chisme. Los que no estaban dispuestos a ayudar, pero luego se quejaban de que no los toman en cuenta o se quejan de, “es que es predilecta”.

G9: Las reuniones informales, de los cumpleaños, donde traen pastel, donde se hace una convivencia, eso es, eso sí hay, postrecitos que se hacen una vez al mes, este, los rituales informales también de la fiesta de las posadas, de la rosca de reyes, pero son las fiestas tradicionales de la cultura mexicana, entonces es parte de, de continuar con la misma tradición.

G10: Los rituales se van definiendo de si participas o no en ciertas actividades porque el tener esa participación te da oportunidad de convivir y tener experiencias y situaciones. Otro ritual son los saludas y palabras que usas para comunicarte con los miembros de tu grupo.

G123: Reuniones en su oficina, se van a comer juntos fuera del campus, fuera de horas de trabajo: las del grupo de género. Le asigna tareas directas al grupo de género.

D2: Profesores varones que se van a comer, profesores que van a desayunar en la mañana a centrales, todos son bienvenidos, pero solo algunos van.

## APPENDIX 6

### INTERVIEWS' SUMMARY

Department 6.

Academics characterize their relationship with the Head of the Department in a personal level as cordial, close, a real humane relationship. In the professional level, the relationship can be complicated, as her perspective differs from theirs; it's a distant relationship, more managerial and procedural.

Relationship among Academics is cordial, like good neighbors: they share the space, help each other when needed and mind their own business.

There are no formal working groups, since they come from different disciplines and the area of expertise is dissimilar. But there are a lot of informal groups, and Academics tend to belong to more than one: PhD-no PhD, full-part time, women-men, theorist-practical. They tend to talk about opposite groups when their groups' position is threatened or mistreated. Academics know the boss is aware of these groups because in her communications she clarifies to what group is directed, by specifying the names of the Academics.

Meetings are determined by the calendar, the agenda is sent previously, and people come and go according to their own agendas. It's informative but some data may generate opinions among Academics, and they tend to share it with the group. There are Academics who don't participate in the discussion and are busy checking their digital devices. Others don't participate at first, but then get hooked by the discussion, and there are the ones who generate the discussion. The Head of the Department mediates among the different opinions and, according to the practical group, she tends to favor the theorist's opinion above the rest. They also specify that theorists tend to centralize the conversation, therefore practical Academics tend to participate less in the discussion.

Decision making is not done during meetings; if there is a decision to be made, the Head of the Department asks the Academics to send her an email with their opinion or decision, and encourages everybody to participate.

There are few topics that Academics are concerned about, but the main topic that all agree on is the future of the department, since it's not a department-linked to an academic program (marketing department and the marketing bachelor program for example), the number of groups has diminished over time, and the way upper management see the teaching of their field.

There are no other formal meetings besides the departmental meeting every two weeks, but there are some informal reunions to celebrate birthdays, Christmas and teachers' day, which they all attend.

Academics couldn't identify rituals among groups since they don't see themselves as part of a group. Academics who aren't theorists say that theorists tend to have their own language and get together in hallways. Men say that some women have lunch together. When an invitation arrives to the department to talk about a specific topic, practicals say that the boss tends to favor the theorists.

The Head of the Department has a more positive view about relationships in the department. She defines her relationship with Academics as respectful, trustful and cordial with everyone. She sees the Academics getting along quite well, even with the differences about how teaching of their academic topic should be. She doesn't recognize formal groups, but she does recognize the informal ones: theorists and practical. Her way to deal with both groups is mediation, conciliating the interest of both. During the formal meetings, she has an agenda and she follows it and leave discussion at the end, so if an Academic wants to leave, he/she can because the meeting is over. Theorists tend to stay after the meeting is over and tend to participate and discuss more during the meeting. Practical Academics complain with her about the lack of space to talk and participate because the over participation of theorists. She identifies labor security and professional growth as the main concerns of the Academics. She

identifies as ritual the fact that philosophers tend to get together after work to talk about philosophical topics and practical tend to be focus on the job, more hands-on.

Department 8.

Academics describe their relationship with the boss as cordial, good, trustworthy and respectful. There are different types of groups, formal and informal, and friendship and academic interest (informal) tend to influence the construction of formal groups. There are various Academics that don't belong to any groups, but they interact with them with no problem from both parts. Academics don't talk about groups, but they do about specific colleagues (behaviors, reactions, decisions, etc.). Other topics of conversation are the natural life of an academic: evaluations, accreditations, courses, etc. and the decision-making from the top management or the lack of department's direction. When asked, Academics named the groups slightly different: participant-no participant, new-old, flexible-rule followers, men-women. Some Academics identify themselves as part of a group, while others don't recognize their attachment to any group in particular.

Meetings are used by the Head of the Department to inform about decisions taken by the upper management. Behavior during meetings are quite the same: Academics who always participate, Academics that participate when the topic is interesting for them, and Academics who don't participate. The Head of the Department promotes everybody's participation and when there is a lot of argumentation the answer to finish discussion is that the decision comes from above.

Generally, Academics' decision making is limited to their own classroom, because everything else comes from the upper management, not their direct boss. When there is a decision to make, there's a democratic process: everybody participates and the decision taken by majority prevails. When there are specific topics or assignments, teams are designed for the task and their decision is law. There are a couple of Academics whose opinions are always negative, some others that talk their way out of department commitments, Academics that don't talk a lot during meetings but

participate actively in the department activities, and Academics who participate actively both in meetings and department's life.

Academics that don't participate in informal groups or belong to certain groups identify certain rituals among Academics who belong to other groups, like the special language or signs used by Academics who lived a specific experience or situation, they eat together or go out together. Another ritual identified by both participants and non-participants are informal communication, a.k.a. gossiping, as a ritual. The gossiping topics are generally about Academics and decisions taken by the boss.

The Head of Department's point of view is not quite different. She says she gets along with everybody, except for 2 Academics. The relationships between Academics are good: there are informal groups formed by similar objectives and activities, and they get along fine. During meetings, there are people who participate a lot, either to complain or to cooperate, and there is a small number of Academics who don't participate but do when they're asked. She identified as a ritual to have lunch with Academics. She recognizes the gossiping as something that happens in the department and she tries to fight it by sharing her decision making.