UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCE OF TIME AT WORK:
AN IPA STUDY IN A HIGHER EDUCATION SETTING

A doctoral thesis presented

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Abstract

Individuals employed in traditional institutions of higher learning may encounter "time" in different ways due in part to increased collaborative project work undertaken to foster organizational change in the face of disruption in the higher education sector. Resulting temporal issues may impact wellbeing at the individual and system level, which may be costly for both an employee and the organization. Though general temporal theories abound, the contemporary organizational literature lacks a temporal focus, and minimal research attention has been directed specifically towards the impact of time on higher education work teams. Using an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), this study investigated the following research question: *How do professional administrators working on change projects in a higher education setting understand the experience of time as a resource?* The participants expressed that time norms played significant roles in their lived experience and acknowledged that the phenomenon of time influenced how they critique their work. Significant findings which emerged during data analysis consisted of four superordinate themes: encountering change and complexity, navigating new resource scarcity, employing best practices, and personal coping and resilience. These findings suggest that “temporal awareness” (TA) and understanding a “temporally complex setting” (TCS) may contribute positively to project leadership. Additional research is needed to explore time-related factors that might augment change project work processes and personal resilience. This research provides a greater understanding of work time; the findings are relevant for human resources professionals responsible for change initiatives and project management, as well as health professionals in addressing stress, and leaders in general.

*Keywords*: organizational behavior, higher education administration, psychology, time, project management, human resources
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Dedication

For Mom and for Dad.

Thank you for believing in me all the time.
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Understanding the Experience of Time at Work: An IPA Study in a Higher Education Setting

Chapter One: Introduction to the Study

The purpose of this study using the interpretive phenomenological (IPA) approach was to investigate the individual experiences of professional administrators to understand their perceptions of time as a resource while engaged in new and special collaborative projects in a higher education setting. Such projects fall outside the regular scope of an individual’s everyday work assignments. This study particularly addressed projects undertaken to foster organizational change which commences in response to a disruption in the higher education sector. Such disruption may be caused by factors such as globalization, market competition, student debt, dwindling research funding, regulatory issues, and the virtualization of learning (Capelli, 2017; Lake, 2017; Unterman, 2018; Wildavsky, 2012). Recent examples of disruption include the mergers of colleges and universities like Wheelock College and Boston University (Fernandes, 2017), or the sale of campus real estate like Mt. Ida College to the University of Massachusetts (Creamer & Thys, 2018). Change projects may include the creation of new systems or services or changes to existing ones in response to regulations, student needs, budget cuts, or some form of environmental, socio-economic, political, or reputational crisis (Christensen, Raynor, & McDonald, 2015). Given the strain on resources in higher education, the knowledge regarding time-related experience generated from this inquiry was expected to inform human resources and leadership aspects of higher education practice. Specific groups who may benefit include those HR professionals and leaders responsible for change initiatives and related project management, as well as those concerned with employee health. This inquiry employed the IPA methodology to illuminate the temporal phenomenon under study.
This research focused on the role of time and temporality in the experience of contemporary work in higher education. The distinction between the subjective experience of time and the actual progression to accomplish tasks on the change project may cause conflict at the personal and organizational level. Issues of temporal resources and constraints, stress, pacing, scheduling, and planning, particularly within and across temporary work project teams were considered. Inquiries into the areas of organizational culture, change, leadership, and development have not yet fully addressed the experience of time, including its place as an objective and subjective resource for individuals and groups (Dawson, 2014; Schneider, Ehrhart, & Macey, 2013; Tierney, 1985; Zaheer, Albert, & Zaheer, 1999). Some existing studies of workplace temporality are quantitative in nature (Espinosa, Nan, & Carmel, 2015; Olson & Olson, 2012; Swigger, Hoyt, Serce, Lopez, & Alpaslan, 2012), while others utilize a qualitative approach to explore subjects like links between time and technology (O'Carroll, 2015) or the impact of cultural time-related values (Chen & Nadkarni, 2017; Gauche, De Beer, & Brink, 2017; Rimestad, 2015; Tam, 2015). However, there is a dearth of research in the realm of college and university venues (Bossaller, Burns, & VanScoy, 2017). Moreover, minimal research attention has been directed specifically towards the impact of temporality on higher education work teams (Granqvist & Gustafsson, 2016; Tierney, 1985).

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the research related to organizational change in higher education to provide context and background for the study. The rationale and significance of the study are discussed next, drawing connections to potential beneficiaries of the work. The problem statement, purpose statement, and research questions are presented to focus and ground the study. Finally, the theoretical framework that served as a lens for the study is introduced and explained.
Statement of the Problem

This study examined how professional administrators in an academic setting perceived and understood time as a resource while engaged in new and special collaborative change projects. The conservation of subjective and objective resources including time and the degree of consensus needed may become a problematic topic as change projects launch, progress, and perhaps stall. Resulting temporal issues may impact wellbeing, engagement, and productivity. This section elaborates on this problem by providing its context and background along with a brief discussion of response to change and the role of time.

Context and Background

The higher education sector continues to undergo rapid change and disruption for a range of reasons (Christensen, et al., 2015). For instance, sources of socioeconomic pressure include globalization trends such as the establishment of international satellite campuses and increased market competition (Jascik, 2017). Such upheaval is exacerbated by factors such as the ongoing evolution of immigration regulations. A confusing mix of threat and opportunity results for the higher education sector. Together, the ongoing loss of governmental research support and other funding reductions, paired with rapidly escalating risk management issues intensify the pressure to collaborate through public-private partnerships (Craig, 2017; Lake, 2017; Manning, 2015). For example, the push to merge or acquire campuses or to leverage underutilized facilities to generate revenue is on the rise (Capelli, 2017; Spinelli Jr., 2018, June 22). Moreover, while outsourcing consortia and shared service models bring constrained budgets into line, those savings must, in turn, be re-allocated in support of technology’s move to the cloud and to the enhancement of distance learning delivery channels for today’s eager student consumers (Driscoll & Gregg, 2008; Horwitz & Santillan, 2012). Beyond the evolution of technology’s role
in pedagogy, there are shifts in the production of academic research due to digitalization (Lapping, 2016; Noonan, 2015; Vostal, 2015). Additional mandates include increased regulation regarding tax and pay practices, the cost of health care, campus safety, and great attention to communication and transparency. According to Lake (2017), the specter of student debt, advocacy and consumer culture, and the call for experiential education also weigh heavily on campuses, altering the very definition of what it means to be an institution of higher learning. Also, in the philanthropic domain, fundraising methodology must be tailored to address the nuanced values evident in today’s multi-generational alumni groups, the youngest of whom are participatory consumers who demand a return on their investment in a higher education course of study (Unterman, 2108).

Weick and Quinn (1999) explicated change to include its structural and process aspects with related emotional and social relationships as part of a social dynamic along with temporality. According to them, change lacks a clear beginning and ending because it is continuous in nature; it, therefore, may better be described as a state of changing (1999). The rampant change in higher education today clearly typifies their assertion.

The Response to Change

Change is ever present in higher education today for the reasons outlined. Human resources and other leaders in higher education scramble to simultaneously steward existing programs and to address the described transformational demands with new initiatives (Deema, Mokb, & Lucasa, 2008; Lederman & Seltzer, 2017; Mohrman, Ma, & Baker, 2008; Schramm, 2016). College and university representatives may enthusiastically announce new large-scale plans to be completed within aggressively short time frames. Implementations commence, which may entail cross-functional work groups tasked with prudently expending increasingly
constrained resources including time and finances (Capelli, 2017). Human resources and other leadership initiatives often involve cross-functional committees and work teams tasked with addressing such challenges (E. Barca, personal communication, July 19, 2018). As in industry, special project teams are often comprised of staff from different areas of higher education institutions who may or may not know one another but who may volunteer or be selected for their expertise. Perhaps different from most of the private sector, however, decision making in a higher education setting is often collegial and consensus-driven (E. Barca, personal communication, 2018; Chaffey, 1983). For example, faculty councils, boards of trustees, visiting committees, and alumni councils that vote on strategic decisions are integral to college and university operations. Consensus may permeate campus decision-making, and discussion and the resolution process may require larger investments in time and energy. Differing stances on norms of pacing and deadlines related to those decisions may contribute to diverging approaches to work. Overlapping and intersecting project timelines are often altered due to unforeseen circumstances; confusion blossoms and conflicting priorities may result. Uncertainty, ambiguity, and anxiety have become common features of the present and predicted future higher education administrative landscape (Alvesson, 2001; Lake, 2017). In short, continuous adaptation is a necessary competency for successful higher education administration (Weick & Quinn, 1999).

The Role of Time

Time plays a role in such ventures in many ways at both the individual and systems level. First and foremost, time, like money, is a measurable resource that must be carefully managed by an institution of higher learning and its people (Tierney, 1985). Beyond being a precious institutional and personal commodity, time may hold additional meaning. For instance, there is an overarching character or timescape (Adam, 1998, 2004) that is comprised of cultural norms
embedded in any workplace culture that may influence how projects are planned in an organization (Blount & Janicik, 2001; Schein, 2010). Adam argued that this cultural phenomenon is imbued with power dynamics and unseen norms that may impact an individual’s experience in a system (1999, 2004). Contemporary organizational leadership experts have asserted that pace is one of the key factors for leaders to manage in today’s change initiatives (Esson, Prince, & Tobin, 2018).

Today’s higher education culture is complex and multifaceted with many different time patterns and norms in play. For instance, there are external societal norms like holidays and internal time rules like those for exams or budget cycles or ingrained regularly scheduled traditions like commencement. When a project timeline intersects with these norms, a degree of unwanted conflict may result (Wu, Ngugi, & Moody, 2016). Hence, campus culture is an example of temporal complexity, which occurs when "multiple interrelated aspects of time in a situation or event" challenge understanding (Blount & Sanchez - Burks, 2004, p. 256).

Furthermore, technology impacts time at work by replacing traditional definitions of past, present, and future with the capacity for both synchronous and asynchronous work, recognized by Nowotny (1994). The new feature of timelessness offered by technology contributes to both temporal ease and intricacy through transparency and simultaneity (Driscoll & Gregg, 2008; Moran, 2013; Treem, Dailey, Pierce, & Leonardi, 2015). Paradoxically, the time saved by automation and other time-saving devices is quickly filled with evermore data (Eriksen, 2001), which leaves many with a feeling of ever-present and oft-decried hurriedness or time “famine” (Blount & Janicik, 2001, p. 580; Perlow, 1999; Robinson & Godbey, 1999). Thus, technology may be viewed as both a resource and a stressor. In addition, as campus communication norms evolve due to advances in technology (Horwitz & Santillan, 2012; Olson & Olson, 2012; Taylor,
differing ways of connecting in groups may not mesh well with individual preferences (Ballard & McVey, 2014; Espinosa et al., 2015; Kalish, Luria, Toker, & Westman, 2015; Neves & Eisenberger, 2012; Swigger et al., 2012).

Within the temporally complex campus culture, individuals possess unique time preferences. These preferences include perceptions of it as a resource (Hobfoll, 1989) and how best to expend and save time. Today's workforce demographics encompass greater diversity (Burns, Barton, & Kerby, 2012) and learning styles (Škerlavaj, Su, & Huang, 2013), along with culturally associated time preferences (Schultz, 2015; Vaner & Beamer, 2005), adding to organizational complexity. The perception of temporality within an organization’s culture may influence how employees approach their work, and when expanded to groups, differing conceptions of temporality may complicate project activity (Blount & Sanchez – Burks, 2004; Perlow, 1999). An individual’s view of the organization’s timescape and that person’s capacity to operate within it may differ (Bennett & Burke, 2017), leaving campus culture awash with even greater complexity.

The Significance of the Research Question

The rationale for this study was the researcher’s interest in workplace experience and the ways that the human resources profession may support wellbeing and productivity. Of all the strategic challenges facing the human resources profession today, change management is perhaps the most salient and therefore necessary to address (Geissler & Krys, 2013; “Rewriting the rules”, 2017). The primary audience for this research study is the human resources community charged with supporting both change project work (e.g., onboarding, coaching, project facilitation, resource management) and the professional development of employees, managers, and leaders (engagement and wellbeing). This research may also contribute to general higher
education-based efforts to culturally train future global workers (Mendenhall, Arnardottir, Oddou, & Burke-Smalley, 2013). Greater awareness of individual and group time perception and experience may help leaders and project managers to better steer strategic transformation efforts in present and future higher education settings. Specific benefits may include increased awareness of the temporal impact on the work culture and possible new approaches to managing change project time and related communications.

Furthermore, concerns regarding time resources may increase employee stress amidst the endless change in higher education settings (Lane, 2007). Such distress, in turn, may lower engagement and productivity per Higginbottom (2014), and damage employee health. In tandem, U.S. health care costs continue to pinch college and university budgets (The Change Leader, 2017). Thus, those charged with health benefits plan design and cost containment including the administration of wellness programs (e.g., mindfulness programs) may benefit from the research findings. Behavioral health professionals who may support those facing specific challenges (e.g., stress) or conditions (e.g., ADHD) may also find interest in this research work. If workplace wellbeing may be defined partly by a sense of productive awareness, then temporal understanding represents a critical facet of that competency worthy of investigation. Finally, employees who seek to enhance their understanding of individual and workplace culture and project participation may gain new ideas, too.

In summary, the study of time at work is warranted to potentially improve how time is managed on special change projects in higher education. Such improvement may reduce stress and thereby foster employee engagement, and in turn enhance health. Thus, awareness of time at the individual, group, workplace culture, and leadership levels may contribute to positive change efforts and possibly even offer a way to trim healthcare costs. As noted, ever-present change
efforts in service to transformation in higher education abound (Collins, 2014). Temporal understanding and application of findings may mitigate the impact of that constant change.

**Research Problem and Research Question**

Time spent on special change projects in response to new and universal challenges (Lake, 2017) may impact the resources of higher educational institutions, as well as personal and group wellbeing. This phenomenon represents a human resources challenge. Differing perceptions of the constraints posed by timing, timescapes, and temporal norms may generate problems for both leaders and employees (E. Barca, personal communication, 2018; Capelli, 2017; Wu et al., 2016). Leaders may wish to present an initiative to address a problem to be completed with speed to address a problem and aim to accomplish the underlying collaborative work quickly and well. Furthermore, leaders may not be fully aware of workloads or other factors that could slow a project. In contrast, employees at the individual and group level (based on personality and past experience) may hold differing timing preferences and expectations regarding what is realistic in terms of process and workload demand placed on them as they engage in change projects. Thus, the definition of “time available” may differ starkly between leaders and change project participants. Moreover, at the organizational level, the private sector and higher education may share time norms regarding regular events like financial year-end closes. A campus change project timeline may, however, intersect with temporal norms unique to education like annual commencement and reunion activities (Wu, et al., 2016). The resulting need to interrupt change projects to attend to publicly visible key priorities like commencement may cause further delay. In addition to resource constraints related to budgets or staffing, the cultural drive for consensus may also slow project progress. Any or all these factors may impinge on the timing of a change project and the experience of those engaged in undertaking the project work. As one seasoned
higher education faculty member and administrator explained, today’s landscape suggests a faulty version of the mythological character of the uroborus who bites its own tail to evoke a cyclical sense of wholeness but instead falls short, chasing its tail endlessly (B. D’Alotto, personal communication, 2018).

The purpose of this proposed qualitative research study was to understand the lived experience of time as a resource and as an implicit element of organizational culture in a higher education setting. The study used conservation of resources COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001) and the researcher interviewed professional administrators in an institution of higher education engaged in special change project work in a traditional venue for higher education.

**Research Question**

The concentration on time, the deep attention to lived experience and its associated meaning to an individual, and the acknowledgment of temporal resources and constraints along with stress together serve to inform the core qualitative research question for this study; namely, How do administrative professionals working on change projects in a higher education culture understand the experience of time as a resource?

**Definition of Key Terminology**

In this study, the word "time" refers to existence in the past, present, and future and to the flow of time from one to the other. The experience of “time” for purposes of this inquiry is generally defined as perceptions of, and actions related to, personal and workplace time, including time pacing, pressure, urgency, and usage. These facets of time are most closely aligned with the workplace and the notion of time as a subjective and objective resource. Definitions of core terms in this study follow here.
**Change project** – For the purposes of this research, a change project is a special initiative undertaken to promote change in response to an identified strategic need. An employee who engages in such work does so in addition to regular work assignments and does so due to expertise related to the problem at hand. Participation may be voluntary or arise as a result of a request to participate.

**Chronotype** – Refers to one’s preference for sleep and wake time (Wittman, 2016).

**Store** – This term represents the bank of collected material and non-material resources one holds in reserve for current and future use to apply to work.

**Temporal complexity** – This occurs when different facets of time inherent in an event lead to confusion (Blount & Sanchez - Burks, 2004).

**Temporality** - In contrast to time, the term "temporality" denotes the relationship one may hold with time indicating "a limited duration rather than eternal" (Kirton, Okhuysen, & Waller, in Blount & Sanchez - Burks, 2004). Temporality is the condition of being bound by time.

**Time horizon** - Individuals may prefer to situate themselves close to prior experience (a past perspective) or a more short-term approach (present perspective) versus those who anticipate future events (future perspective) per Thoms (2004).

**Time pacing** - Time may be described in terms of speed. The pace or tempo of life is comprised of events at both the individual and contextual level that pertain to “the number of events and situations that take place in a unit of time” (Zherebin, Vershinskaia, & Makhrova, 2015, p. 197).
An example would be that one person prefers to work quickly as a project commences, while another likes to work with speed to finish a project.

**Time perception** - Awareness and comprehension of time-related phenomena (Blount & Janicik, 2001).

**Time pressure** - The term “pressure” denotes the degree of discomfort one has based on one’s experience of deadlines (Blount & Sanchez-Burks, 2004).

**Timescape** – the overarching temporal character of an organization comprised of cultural norms, i.e., including time norms embedded in workplace culture that may influence how projects are planned within that organization (Adam, 1999).

**Time urgency** - This concept is defined as an action that requires immediate attention (Blount & Sanchez-Burks, 2004).

**Time usage** - Time may be described in terms of usage. For instance, monochronic time refers to doing one task at a time while whereas polychromic refers to multi-tasking (Bluedorn, Felker Kaufman, & Lane, 1992).

The following section of this chapter describes and discusses conservation of resources (COR) theory, which served as the theoretical lens for this study.

**Theoretical Framework**

This qualitative inquiry sought to understand the lived experience of time when engaging in a change project. It was situated within the constructivist/interpretivist paradigm because that conceptual approach allows the exploration of lived experience through qualitative investigation
focused on the granular linguistic expression of that experience. The theory that guided this research is conservation of resources (COR), an integrated theoretical framework introduced by Stevan E. Hobfoll (1989). In this study, COR theory helped to elucidate how those engaged in change projects view and value their time; it also helped to explain what drives a person to steward or to seek new resources like time (1989, 2001). The theory will be discussed here including its historical trajectory, related seminal authors, and applications of the theory by contemporary scholars. Critique of COR theory follows, and discussion of the application of the theory to the inquiry will conclude this section.

Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

The origins of Hobfoll’s work. Essentially, COR theory proposes that an individual is driven to protect current resources and acquire new ones. Hobfoll’s theory (1989) roots itself in concepts of stress, motivation, and resource management. Though there is a plethora of theory (Lazarus & Monat, 1985; Schuler, 1980) pertaining to stress and its causes, Seyle (1950) is widely considered the founder of stress theory. He borrowed the term “stress” from the field of physics and posited that humans exhibit a biological reaction to strain that results in the release of hormones that respond to that tension to help mitigate its effects. Seyle argued that strain may arise from non-specific sources, objective or subjective (1950). He later described that repeated exposure to such pressure would involve (a) an alarm reaction, (b) resistance through coping with that alarm, and (c) finally exhaustion if escape from the stimulus was impossible (1950). Cannon (1932), a predecessor of Seyle’s, described the concept of resiliency, or the capacity to weather stress, which became a core element in subsequent stress-related research. Cannon demonstrated that the physiological stress response (fight or flight) protects humans and contributes to a reserve of resiliency (1932), and Seyle called upon Cannon’s construct in his
own work (1950). While other theorists described stress as a stimulus only (Elliott & Eisdorfer, 1982), McGrath (1970) addressed resource management as an aspect of stress. He described the discrepancy between an environmental demand and a person’s response capability as the core source of stress. Thus, when a new change project is added to an employee’s agenda, and that individual lacks the capacity to take it on or to sustain it, stress may result. According to McGrath, homeostasis, or the balance between a person’s capacity for stress and the surrounding stressors in the environment, is key to good health (1970). Maslow declared that individuals are compelled to seek resources for survival and beyond (as cited in Hobfoll, 1989), and Hobfoll applied Maslow’s theory to explain the motivation to pursue and protect resources and thereby avoid stress.

Hobfoll also drew upon Bandura’s theory of social learning. Social learning theory as developed by Bandura claims that individuals interact in the world to gain positive reinforcement from others (1977). COR theory rests upon the idea that the use of personal attributes (e.g., self-esteem) and social circumstance (e.g., living in a community) can serve to shore one up to avoid the potential loss of resources (Wicklund & Gollwitzer, 1982).

**Elements of COR theory.** Hobfoll’s work built upon that of those past theorists who explicated the sources of and responses to human stress. Hobfoll extended McGrath’s notion of homeostasis to form the conceptual foundation of his theory designed to explain stress. The resulting theory is dynamic and addresses the gain and loss of resources in a person’s system and the impact of such fluctuation on a person’s stability. Hobfoll characterized the term “resource” as anything one highly values and aims to “obtain, retain, foster and protect” (2011a, p. 117). Hobfoll and Lily developed a lengthy list of valued assets that range from *objects* or necessities like shelter to *personal characteristics* like a sense of control and autonomy, and *conditions* like
social support, self-esteem, and energies (1993). Hobfoll (2011b) identified time as one of those energies that may be invested to gain other resources (Hall, Rattigan, Walter, & Hobfoll, 2006; Hobfoll, 1989). According to Hobfoll’s theory, conditions like self-esteem can be a resource used to mitigate stress experienced because of imbalance. He considered resources to hold an objective and measurable value in a context, with subjective regard as a secondary facet of resource definition (Hall et al., 2006). The elements of conservation of resources (COR) theory include two core principles, the second of which has four corollaries.

**Principle 1. The primacy of resource loss.** According to Hobfoll, a person’s reason to protect resources from being lost entails this principle, which asserts that a loss of assets is more harmful than a gain. Specifically, Hobfoll (1989, 2001, 2011a, 2011b) argued that a loss of personally valued holdings such as time, self-esteem, or other social or material resources could result in feelings of stress, anxiety, and job dissatisfaction. Stress may result from an actual loss or the threat of loss. This principle of the importance of loss, or loss salience (Halbesleben, Paustian-Underdal, & Westman, 2014) could apply to change projects in which timelines may be unclear or resource allocations change, resulting in the experience of loss or perceived loss. Extending this concept of loss importance, one might consider clarity as a possible resource in the higher education sphere for those engaged in change projects. Specifically, the loss of clarity regarding the span and/or direction of work during a change project could represent a lost resource at the individual level. That loss of clear information could in turn cause stress to those working in the project.

**Principle 2. The process of resource investment.** This aspect of COR theory suggests that a person will spare resources to build them up to repair past losses, or for current use, or to save for the future (Halbesleben et al., 2014). Specifically, Hobfoll suggested that one can
replace a diminished resource or substitute one resource for another (Hall et al., 2006; Hobfoll, 2001). As an example, if one loses time to a new change project one may borrow it from everyday work or substitute exercise to offset stress. Of importance to this research study is Hobfoll’s notion that a person with greater resources is more agile in problem-solving, viewing a problem more like a puzzle and therefore prone to less stress (2002). The idea of a portfolio of resources is echoed by Hobfoll’s idea of “caravans” or patterns of resources often seen in connection, such as self-efficacy and optimism (Hobfoll, 2001). Likewise, the type of strategy utilized by a person to offset the drain on personal resources due to the high job demand inherent in an activity like a change project may impact one’s overall balance of resources. Specifically, Parker, Zacher, De Bloom, Verton, and Lentink (2017) found that energy management strategies (e.g., prosocial, organizing, and meaning-related) were effective in stewarding resources. Thus, the way one allocates one’s store of assets may be more critical than the number of assets that the store holds (Hobfoll, 1988, 1989).

Nestled within the second principle, Hobfoll further proposed four key corollaries (Halbesleben et al., 2014) that may facilitate teasing out possible links between time and stress.

*Corollary 1. Those with more resources (time) will gain more; those with less will lose more.* Parker et al. (2017) examined the ways that employees strategize to steward resources in the face of this supposition. They studied 54 people using a quantitative journal over the course of a week. Of note is that those with high job demands (like a person asked to sign on to a change project) were less exhausted emotionally if they reached out to others socially. The findings demonstrate that both the strategy used to balance one’s pool of resources and the type of job demand will impact the success of the resource investment. These findings lend credence to the notion of gain leading to more gain and loss-incurring further loss at both the individual or
organizational level. This corollary may be important on a change project where resources may be rich at the start and more limited down the line. If a greater loss occurs, there could be a greater impact on an individual, team, and change project outcome.

**Corollary 2. Resource loss will lead to more of the same.** Individuals who lose a resource may find it more difficult as time passes to invest in a store of resources for the future. Hobfoll portrayed the trend of losing (and gaining) as a “spiral” (Hobfoll, 2001). For instance, if one begins work on a change project and loses time usually spent on regular work, that regular work may be delayed, impacting others depending upon the completion of that regular work. Also, the individual tasked with the change project may experience ever-increasing pressure to deliver on both the special project and the regular work. Over time, the individual may lose traction on both areas of work. The degree of disruption present in higher education generates a great need for objective time with which to conduct change projects. That time demand may reduce the available time for an individual resulting in a sense of ongoing personal loss. Further, consensus decision typical to the higher education territory may require a greater investment of objective time, further diminishing the stores of time. One could imagine a loss spiral occurring during a change project.

**Corollary 3. Resource gain will lead to more of the same.** Hobfoll also asserted that the opposite of Corollary 2 is true: just as one loss may beget further loss, as one gains assets, it is easier to invest them and gain more. Since the perception of time varies, this tenet is of interest. Might those who possess strong resilience attempt a change project to acquire new resources to enhance their current store? How might a leader position a change project as an opportunity rather than a threat? Why might certain employees seek to acquire more time, and spend it differently, while others may not?
Corollary 4. Loss leads to a protective stance. Hobfoll claimed that psychological stress occurs whenever a threat of loss, an actual loss, or an overall gain of resources following loss occurs. Thus, the result of loss is the drive to protect one’s pool of resources to ward off a future loss. Occupational demands may generate a slow decline in personal reserves, while trauma (like disaster or illness) may incur a rapid forfeiture of resources per Hobfoll and Shirom (1993). If resource depletion occurs, it can undermine one’s resilience to stress. Resilience is a source of strength which depends upon preserving one’s stores of assets such as time, self-esteem, or any other valued entity (Hobfoll, 2011a). When applied to project work, Hobfoll’s approach speaks to the coping mechanisms employed by those engaged in change project work and the need for temporal leadership of change projects. If leaders are able to hold awareness and communicate with those engaged in change projects regarding project goals and objectives and timing, such action may enhance individual capacity to adapt to pacing and other changes on that project team.

The role of context in COR theory. From its core principles to its corollaries, COR theory elucidates the role of context. For instance, Hobfoll acknowledged the role of both a perceived and an actual context in the coping process and the fit between the resources and that surrounding context (2001). Hobfoll contended that any sort of behavioral intervention to improve a situation must consider resources since those are needed for success within a context (2001). Thus, one’s drive to acquire and protect resources in one setting could differ greatly if the person moved to another context, based upon the dominant values in that new environment (Halbesleben et al., 2014). Similarly, at a systems level, the decisions regarding the best fit for a range of resources are critical to an organization’s success (Wernerfelt, 2011). In the case of current higher education, the intersections between contextual resources (e.g., financial, staffing),
organizational dynamics (e.g., leadership, communications, power), and individual experience (e.g., time perception, resiliency) may hold meaning that can inform practice. To begin to investigate the application of COR theory to change project time in the case of higher education change initiatives, those relationships among resources and their impact on motivation must be explored (Camel, 2014).

**Applications of COR theory to workplace research.** The main assumptions of COR theory contend that a potential or actual loss of resources, such as time, is psychologically threatening and that one strives to acquire and defend those things (or states) that one values. The way one values resources may differ cross-culturally (Hobfoll, 2001). Thus, COR theory is a useful lens through which to examine workplace experiences. Historically, research has been published utilizing COR theory as a framework to study the impact of resource loss, the coping process, stress, and wellbeing in conjunction with job demands, job control, burnout, and work/family issues (Halbesleben, 2006; Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Park, Baiden, Jacob, & Wagner 2009). For instance, Park, et al. (2009) employed COR theory constructs involved in job control and burnout such as autonomy, authority, and discretion. Study results indicated that the level of control one holds over one’s work relates to personal accomplishment. Furthermore, COR theory-based research predictions showed that a drain in one’s store of resources can impact that store with greater effect juxtaposed with any gains that may enhance resilience (Hobfoll, Vinokur, Pierce, & Lewandowski-Romps, 2012). Likewise, Goldfarb and Ben-Zur (2017) examined the phenomenon of resource loss and gain following military reserve duty in Israel and found that the dominant feelings of loss correlated with distress and dissatisfaction and could decrease motivation. The work assumed by the reservists like that of those working on change projects is predominantly voluntary and falls outside of regular duties. To tackle a change project
is to enhance the institution’s standing like serving in the military supports national security. In both cases, it is critical to foster the wellbeing of those engaged the work.

Previous workplace research supports the use of COR theory as a frame for this study, in concert with phenomenology. For instance, Abugre's study of time management in relation to productivity took a meaning-based view of local and expatriate workers from sub-Saharan Africa (2017). Results indicated that in this setting measurable time was considered flexible in the realms of both work and personal life and that structured and delineated timelines contributed to a sense of productivity. The idea of timelines at the individual and group level and the ways in which those are devised as an adaptive resource for change project work could be explored in the higher education project sphere. Moreover, Gauche et al. posited that both job and personal resources may influence employee wellbeing (2017). These researchers utilized a phenomenological approach to investigate South African employees’ experience. In addition, the authors discovered that “burnout” was a result of the demands of work, life and health issues. Attention to the multi-faceted nature of resource management may empower organizations to create a healthy and engaging environment. This study represented a useful example of how COR theory might be applied to the study of higher educational workplace time as a resource and its relation to health. Finally, Bono, Glomb, Shen, Kim, and Koch (2013) provided evidence through their research study that reflection on a day’s activities can reduce stress. COR theory’s representation of the ties between motivation, assets, and productivity is a useful way to explore how reflection and sensemaking as an activity may bolster one’s store of resources.

Based on these research findings, the conservation of resources theory provides a solid foundation for understanding workplace time and temporality. COR theory can serve as an underlying framework for studying roles played in change project work and the fluctuation of
experience within a project episode. The theory allows exploration of relationships between context and individual experience and may extend the transferability of this study’s research findings.

**Critics of COR Theory**

As the research studies described indicate, COR theory represents an organizational theory that is pertinent to the realm of stress and health and forms a robust frame with which to consider the lived experience of workplace time. However, Hobfoll's theory has been criticized in the following ways. Hobfoll’s construct of “resources” entails identifying resources based on the value a person places on that category. So, in the case of time, even if a professional holds vast amounts of time, negative outcomes may result if that time is not managed well. Thus, the definition of a resource may require further attention to better link to Hobfoll’s frame, particularly to motivational theory. Halbesleben et al. (2014) introduced a useful updated definition for “resource”; namely, “anything perceived by the individual to help attain his or her goals” (2014, p. 1338). Implicit in the construct of a resource is the idea that individuals differ in their values based on experience and personality (Halbesleben et al., 2014). This nuance embraces lived experience; the updated definition does not assume that the person’s resource helped to achieve a goal, but rather that the person felt it could help. Applying that notion to the problem of practice has resulted in the expression of multiple views on how time may be valued when working on a change project. Furthermore, the value placed on a particular resource may vary cross-culturally per the authors, which supports the need to explore time as a resource with culture in mind, at both the individual and organizational level. The addition of goal to the definition is fitting given that this research inquiry addressed change projects that encompass specific goals. Furthermore, COR theory suggests that loss is more salient than gain and that
perpetual loss spirals may lead to chronic stress. The theory does not address how best to end such a losing streak, however (Hall et al., 2014). Thus, research to address how best to prevent or at least curtail loss-related stress, specifically in the domain of time could benefit the workplace.

**The role of time.** Halbesleben et al. also stated that there is a need to address more closely how the concept of time fits into the meaning attributed to resources and how the value of a resource might change over time (2014). The authors also indicated COR theory does not sufficiently explain the process by which time is managed as a resource (2014). In the case of change project management, the time horizons associated with a project and their impact on a person’s stewardship of time warrants attention. Hobfoll had theorized that a deficiency of resources such as time would result in stress and fixed more on the notion of time more as a limited commodity and less on the subjective nature of temporal experience (1989). In turn, Eldor et al. contended that past theories and research considered only objective time as a stress driver (2017). Instead, the researchers suggested that loss may result from either an objective or subjective experience of time (Eldor et al., 2017). Individual perceptions of subjective time along with cultural norms and organizational factors may all affect both the experience of time and thereby the experience of stress (Eldor et al., 2017). Consequently, if one does not feel a loss of time while working on a task, then one’s experience may be considered positive. In contrast, if one subjectively concludes that one lacks enough time to complete that task and is averse to losing more time to do so, pressure and stress may result. Self-regulation to steward one’s resources such as time may be worth further investigation (Baumeister & Vohs, 2004).

**Measurement of dynamics.** COR theory addresses cycles of resource gain and loss at the individual and system levels. Measuring the dynamics of resources can be challenging. To
better understand the time frame in which a resource process fluctuates and unfolds, the idea of viewing resource processes within a time-bounded episode may be useful in the case of this research study (Beal, Weiss, Barros, & MacDermid, 2005). Understanding the bounds of time from a participant’s perspective could be quite useful in exploring the lived experience of working on a change project.

**Theory Selection Rationale**

COR theory is both individually and societally focused and may provide a more nuanced view of contemporary work contexts which are complex in nature. First, at the systems level, COR theory highlights time as an allocated and dynamic resource that can be studied to understand an organization. Decisions regarding the best fit for a range of resources are critical to an organization’s success (Wernerfelt, 2011). As a workplace resource, it is also important for understanding organizational culture (Schein, 2010). The use of COR theory to explore temporal norms will ultimately enhance cultural understanding in a higher education setting. Second, the selection of COR framework contributed to the study of time–related experience at the individual level. Understanding how and why professionals value their time both objectively and subjectively can inform change project management practice. It is also important to understand what drives professional administrators to keep or spend stores of time, as that knowledge can also inform resource allocation practices. Third, coping responses to stressful situations may be categorized as problem or emotion-focused per COR theory, which allows consideration of contextual and organizational dynamics and the impact of same on an individual’s sensemaking.

In sum, a robust theory per Anfara and Mertz (2006) proffers a straightforward understanding of experience that is consistent with other similar events or situations. Time is a
complicated topic, and COR theory exemplifies a robust simplicity that was well applied to the problem of practice in this case.

**Theoretical Application to the Research Study**

Theoretical lenses with which to study time vary widely. Some approaches align with a frame that may be more distant from individual experience. For instance, Kleiner (2012) employed a sociological stance in concert with the social psychology of time to produce a broad study of cross-country trends in the work/life experience of time at the individual and group level. Temporal resources could also be studied from a systems approach like that espoused by Bronfenbrenner (1979). The ecological systems approach elucidates the role of context in human development, and the fit between the resources and that surrounding context at the individual (micro-), contextual (meso-), or broader (macro-) level. While Bronfenbrenner put forward the notion of the “chronosystem” or temporal rules to explain the impact of time on human development (1979), Hobfoll’s theory allows time to hold multiple meanings in such development. Specifically, time can be considered both a resource (buckets of and plans for time) and a stressor (urgency and pressure) producing a condition that impacts wellbeing, time presents complexity (1998). Resulting behaviors stemming from time issues within the wider context may impact one’s calibration of resources.

An experientially-based framework matches the aim of this study designed to understand the lived experience of time in the workplace while working on change projects. COR theory allowed the researcher to explore the kinds of adaptive responses that occur as a project unfolded and to ask how the loss of temporal resource loss may have influenced job satisfaction and in turn wellbeing. The theory was integral to the chosen methodological approach of the present study, interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA), including the design of the interview
questions. Application of COR theory to time spent on change projects allowed the researcher to address each participant’s experience at the individual level. The theory also speaks to that person’s experience within the organizational context surrounding the change project (Hobfoll, 1998). Specifically, the framework also allowed a cohesive way to approach group dynamics and nested systemic contextual factors impacting that experience. This conceptual framework facilitated the researcher’s view of nuanced aspects of the wider experience of time as a resource in a higher education setting since COR allows an in-depth view of how one derives meaning from an experienced phenomenon. Researchers such as Huda, Hossin, Ashik-E-Elahi, and Mahbub (2016) applied COR theory to elucidate how farming communities cope and adapt to climate change. Their application of COR theory demonstrated that it can provide a structured way to explore perceptions, dynamics, and the surrounding context in the case of change projects. Like the work of Huda et al. (2016), an adaptation of COR theory proved useful to this research endeavor. The system of factors in play in COR theory as it applies to change project work includes material resources like one’s subjective assessment of objective time and material resources like time and goals. The resources were valuable in relation to understanding the impact of how job demands on an individual, as well as the system in which the person is employed. The adaptive strategies that can be used to cope with various job demands may promote emotional or stress factors that may require some adjustments in project timelines to reduce pressure.

How individuals and groups perceive time available for work on a change project may vary, resulting in differing levels of stress or balance. What factors impact a person’s determination of time as valued and therefore a resource? How might each person define that resource? What triggers loss or gain of temporal resources on a change project team? What is the difference
between perception and reality? COR theory effectively shapes the problem of practice to one of lived experience in a context and allows inquiry of individual perceptions, experience, motivation, and meaning-making within that context, along with the organizational dynamics that may impact experience.

**Conclusion**

Contemporary workplace temporal experience is changing at the individual and group level due to disruption in the higher education sector and the resulting demands on those who aim to meet such challenges (Capelli, 2017; Lake, 2017; Unterman, 2018). The concept of time represents a rich source of values, concepts, and norms that can be used to negotiate the complexity of the contemporary workplace. An organization may hold universal values concerning time that differ in other cultures and contexts and diverge from preferences at the individual level (Halbesleben et al., 2014). An individual in a higher education setting holds time as a personal and professional resource and must work together with others on change projects. Change project work creates new and increased job demands and pressures. Those joining teams to tackle change projects experience time in different ways but must find ways to adapt to the organizational dynamics that surround the work. The complex relationships between resources like time and the surrounding workplace context impact motivations, behaviors, and consequently, wellbeing. The exploration of lived experience and how each person can make sense of their own experience can inform how projects may be managed despite nebulous conditions. The purpose of this qualitative research study was to understand the experience of time as a resource and as an implicit element of organizational culture in a higher education setting. The study drew upon conservation of resources COR theory (Hobfoll, 2001) and
interviewed professional administrators in an institution of higher education engaged in special change project work in a traditional venue for higher education.

The literature review in Chapter Two describes the extant scholarship on time, culture, and change in higher education, workplace time experience (with attention to individual and team experience on projects), and stress and leadership. The three strands are aligned with the key elements of the COR theoretical framework. Chapter Three describes the research design.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

This literature review provided a foundation for this study. The purpose of this review was to discover what is known regarding time at work, particularly in relation to individual and team experiences when engaged in change projects. Change projects are undertaken in higher education settings by professional administrators to address disruption in the sector. This disruption may be caused by a range of socio-economic factors that necessitate changes to existing systems and services or the creation of new ones (Capelli, 2017; Lake, 2017; Untermann, 2018). The conservation of subjective and objective resources including time and the degree of consensus needed in a higher education setting may become problematic as change projects commence and progress. The outcome may generate conflicting priorities and work overload. Given the increased use of projects to accomplish necessary change in higher education (Capelli, 2017), a greater awareness of individual and group time perception and experience may help leaders and project managers to steer strategic transformation efforts. The understanding of cultural nuances and individual and group time experience gained from this study may inform future project and leadership practice in the higher education environment.

Several bodies of literature pertaining to different aspects of time at work, change, leadership, and higher education were investigated for this project. The search for relevant source materials was performed using EBSCO (Academic Search Premiere, Business Source Complete, PsycINFO, ERIC), and HOLLIS+ (a search engine for library resources, books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and open access content). The literature was queried for research pertaining to the individual perception of time and the collective experience of time at work. In addition, the literature was polled for both qualitative and quantitative studies and for studies
involving interpretive phenomenological analysis. Implications pertaining to the problem of practice are summarized followed by limitations and the conclusion.

The concept of time provides an important context for understanding the lived experience of those engaged in change initiatives in higher education. This chapter emphasized time as a resource that is perceived and experienced in different ways in the workplace. This literature review has three major components. The first section introduces time as a concept and explicates both the individual and collective experience of time at work. The second section explores time as an element of change. The section also notes gaps in the literature and introduces the role of time in projects and leadership. Section three describes how the concepts of time, change, and leadership are expressed in the higher education setting. The gaps in the literature pertaining to the higher education workplace are highlighted. The chapter concludes with a brief section illustrating how this study contributes to and enhances the current body of research and literature.

**Time in the Workplace**

This section explicates time as a concept and then explores the individual experience of time. A general overview of the collective time experience at work follows. Communication about time is introduced. A discussion of temporal symbols, norms, and values as they relate to culture and communication follows. The section ends with a focus on workplace culture and time.

**Understandings of Time**

Most (Adam, 1998, 2004; Buonomano, 2017; Turetsky, 1998) collectively agreed that time is a broad concept, and its aspects derive from fields of study including physics, psychology, biology, and the humanities. Conceptually, time is replete with definitions ranging
from infinite to discrete and from biological to physical and emotional. The word “time” is the most frequently used noun in the English language (Kean, 2017), and there exists a considerable body of literature on the subject. To understand time in today’s higher education workplace, it is important to reflect and briefly understand the history of this concept both in general and cross-culturally. The history of time encompasses ways of measuring, artifacts, and norms across the globe and throughout the ages (A walk through time, n.d.). Historically, time was primarily thought of as linear, irreversible, cyclical, measurable, and objective. For instance, in ancient Greek culture, there were Kairos and Chronos to distinguish between the sense of time and the measure of it, with Chronos leading the empirical way. That clear and dichotomous view has expanded and grown nuanced as the world has evolved. What was once purely empirically measurable through the mechanics of the clock (Eldor et al., 2017) is now also felt, experienced, and sensed as more fully articulated and nuanced subjective time. Time now possesses an “extended present”, rather than a distinct future (Nowotny, 1994, p. 7). This point was echoed by Stohl when she argued that one impact of globalization is a conflation of time with space (2013). Specifically, when time is chunked into tiny pieces it ceases to hold a duration (Eriksen, 2001). While the ancient Greeks considered time as motion, the discipline of modern physics approaches time as another dimension (Castelluccio, 2014). With advancements in physics and biology, time has come to be thought of more fluidly and digitally. Rather than simply measuring and sensing, time now is thought to be better described as a sinuous dynamic that affects human development in teams and groups (Eriksen, 2001; Navarro, Roe, & Artiles, 2015).

In today’s workplace, the boundaries between work and nonwork time are dissolving. For example, research has provided evidence for the notion that the junction between private time and public time has become distorted and ambiguous in contemporary life; non-work time as an
entity is no longer bounded and private; instead, if there is a need to work, the time is rethought of as “emergency time” (O’Carroll, 2015, p. 135). This provides an example of contemporary temporal fluidity. The change may be due to culture (O’Carroll, 2015; Schulz, 2015) or technology (Evenstad, 2018; Nowotny, 1994). Namely, communication technologies allow boundlessness; such technologies also make clear the almost infinite range of activities one might pursue with one’s time (Nowotny, 1994). Thus, temporality has become unpredictable and also social in nature. Weick (1993) avowed that one makes meaning retrospectively, but how does one do so when work is endless?

The workplace may perceive time at work as a measurable commodity distinct from non-work time in accordance with the COR model which asserts that valued resources can be measured and allocated (Hobfoll, 1989). However, an employee may reject that objective view of work time and instead subjectively consider that time as continuous (O’Carroll, 2015). A view of time as purely quantifiable also overlooks the fact that the perception of it may be socially constructed and that a variety of norms may co-exist (Perlow, 2001). These norms may include work schedule and flexibility preferences as Rose found through her research (2016). Personal preferences and the fight to achieve them may differ from organizational allowances and the collective norm to be constantly available to work (Rose, 2016). Time may become a political bargaining chip in such cases; those who stretch the boundaries may receive accolades, while those adhering to standard work hours may lag. A dramatic shift in the definition of time in contemporary life across the globe has occurred; daily time-based zoning norms can be impacted by an organization and the wider culture that surrounds an employee at work (Butts, Becker, & Boswell, 2015; Schulz; 2015). In summary, contemporary time consists of measurable and immeasurable features, and the relationship between them may be enacted in the workplace.
**Individual Experience**

This section discusses individual time perception and that same experience when it occurs at work.

**Individual time perception.** The notion of temporality, including a sense of duration, begins at birth and develops over the course of life (Muñetón Ayala & Rodrigo López, 2014; Rattat & Tartas, 2017; Vasile, 2015; Aschoff, 1998). The internal neuroscientific features such as circadian rhythms and resulting time preferences or chronotypes that guide humans through life are only one aspect of temporal life (Roenneberg & Merrow, 2005; Wittman, 2016; Wittman et al., 2015). How individuals perceive time can affect personal experience like that of pain (Pomares, Creac’h, Faillenot, Convers, & Peyron, 2011) and contribute on a broader scale to culture (Schein, 2010). Time perception entails gaining awareness and comprehension of temporal phenomena (Blount & Janicik, 2001). Individuals perceive the world differently based on their backgrounds and perspectives (Schein, 2010). There may be commonalities such as wondering what time it is, but differences abound. Time sensitivities vary; one person may prefer life at a slow pace, while another at a faster rate (Droit-Volet & Zélanti, 2013). In addition, all see time as a resource differently (Hobfoll, 1989). One can understand time as a resource composed of discrete chunks (Blount & Janicik, 2001; Tierney, 1985). One may have, in the past, viewed time as either a subjective aspect of consciousness or as an external and objectively measurable commodity (Hobfoll, 1989). In contemporary life, however, sharp delineation has blurred as measurement has become atomic, communications instant, and the awareness of immeasurable features of subjective time perception more prevalent.

Gabrian, Dutt, and Wahl’s research demonstrated that subjective time may encompass both the perception and evaluation of an individual view of one’s lifetime, including both
direction and attitudes (2017). Assumptions about one’s sense of time that may be plausible for one person may not mesh with the values that influence another person’s experience (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2005). For instance, past-oriented time perspectives have been found to impact well-being in a negative way, while future-oriented stances predict both health and well-being (Gabrian et al., 2017). One’s time personality may be tied to well-being within one’s culture (Güell, Orchard, Yopo, & Jiménez-Molina, 2015). The authors posited and demonstrated that a balanced time perspective (BTP) is culturally derived, so the notion of balance asserted by COR theory may rely in part upon the cultural context surrounding the individual.

**Individual time perception at work.** When a person enters the workplace, the opportunities to perceive and experience the notion of time will increase. Blount and Janicik (2001) proposed three modes of time that may be applied to work as follows: explicit schedules, implicit rhythms, and time-based norms extant in a culture (applying such constructs to experience may yield varying influences on the production of one's work). What many now know instinctively about subjective time was formally expressed in 1954 as Parkinson's Law: "Work expands to fill the time available for its completion" (in Eriksen, 2001, p. 121). Subjective time was found to play a key role in explaining positive or negative work experience in one study (Rastegary & Landy, 1993). If an individual can access and understand what is implicit and explicit in workplace culture, it seems that such knowledge could benefit that person’s lived work experience (Blount & Janicik, 2001). For example, imagine being a Slowpoke assigned to a Speedy team, or the opposite, but knowing the preferences of oneself and one’s colleagues. Furthermore, concepts of time duration allow for a particular task and future expectations and have been shown to be influenced by the degree of control one holds (Carver, Scheier, & Segerstrom, 2010) and exemplify how time perception may impact
workplace decision-making in a task-driven situation such as that faced in a project assignment. Moreover, research indicates that there are correlations between future time perception, engagement, and longer-term job satisfaction (Korff, Biemann, & Voelpel, 2017). If one holds an unconstrained future time perspective, then the degree of engagement at work is stronger. In contrast, those who do not view the future as broadly are not impacted or are negatively impacted in terms of the degree of commitment they feel at work (Kooij, de Lange, Jansen, & Dikkers, 2013).

Likewise, the collection of activities enacted by individuals serves to create a workplace culture and meaning. For instance, different professions may entail a variety of relationships to time according to Bailey and Madden’s qualitative study (2017). The researchers linked time preferences to the capacity to independently make meaning and found a range of behavior from refuse collectors (less meaning), stone masons (craftwork as meaningful) and academics (greatest meaning). These study results support that assertion that there may be a variety of time-based associations present in a workplace and may be useful in understanding how work roles and individual preferences may clash or complement one another on a team. The results of these investigations emphasize that there is a range of temporal personality possible at the individual level and that this manifests in the workplace; time preference is not a button to be pushed on and off at work.

From Individual to Collective Experience

Time is a source of values, concepts, and norms that can be used to negotiate the complexity of the contemporary workplace (Schein, 2010). Time perception is enacted through the individual experience of work activities and social networks and thereby shapes culture (Schein, 2010). That activity is a process of interpretation and coordination that is socially
constructed (Weick, 1993). A person aims to make sense of their own individual temporality and then blend that into a larger context, be it family, work, or community. The process of doing so may present a challenge due to cross-cultural conflict as Zherebin et al. discovered in their research (2015).

Time has recently been found to play a role in the business relationships formed and maintained at work. Corsaro and Snehota (2012) asserted that though spatial facets of networks had been closely studied in the past, the complexity of temporal perception and relation had not been. Their qualitative research explored professionals’ perceptions of business relationships and the role that time plays in such networks. They determined that two actors in a professional network might perceive the sequence of events in a relationship differently and that over time, such perceptions might not converge. Greater team diversity that yields increased temporal information to embrace and digest may fracture an individual’s perception of time (Blount & Janicik, 2001). Awareness of that phenomenon represents a key element in successful collaboration.

In the workplace, groups of people may find themselves in conflict based on pace, or feelings of time pressure or time horizons. Time shapes processes, and events impact the perception of time (Weick, 1993). Recent research supports the theory that events may trigger a variety of time-based responses that may impede or encourage change, leading to inertia followed by change or continuous change with a focus on external factors and context (Alioua & Simon, 2017). Furthermore, individual perceptions of the play and flow of time within that context can influence the collective generation of new ideas (Alioua & Simon, 2017). Project work requires the creation of new knowledge and coordination across teams within a temporal context (Alioua & Simon, 2017). An organization is composed of people; individuals perceive
things in many ways, and those differences contribute to an organization’s collective culture as Hopkins, Mallette, and Hopkins identified in their study (2013). Therefore, confusion may arise when a group of individuals comes together and must meld individual preferences to form a group, develop shared time-related practices, all while performing project work.

**Communication about Time**

Making sense of organizational life is fostered through communication (Weick, 1993, 1995, 2005). For instance, sharing one’s temporal preferences could enhance the experience of job satisfaction as Ancona, Goodman, Lawrence, and Tushman discovered (2001). Communication regarding time-based issues during pivotal phases of project work can enhance productivity and satisfaction, as Swigger et al. found in their study (2012). Similarly, Turner’s study supported the idea that if a leader invests time to discuss temporal issues before a team begins a project, overall team performance may benefit (2013). Dickeson (2010) emphasized that it is helpful for leadership to communicate about values and time in relation to goals, which might also reduce overall uncertainty and any accompanying anxiety. Likewise, Endacott, Hartwig, and Yu (2017) studied the communication practice of church leaders and team performance and found significant positive relationships between higher team performance and 1) the percentage of time a team spent making critical decisions, and 2) the percentage of time team members adopted a church-wide perspective (vs. a more self-interested stance) during meetings.

Temporality also plays a role in virtual communication. For example, Olson and Olson (2012) conducted a study of face-to-face and synchronous digital conferencing to assess the impact of task interdependence, communication methods and sequencing on virtual team experience. They found that communication patterns may vary through the lifecycle of a project.
Similar results were reported by (Swigger et al., 2012) who found that communication in the early stages may be low and increase as group work progressed; timing and pacing of communication impacted performance. In addition, during the middle phase of work, team commitment increased and was tied to problem-solving, while at the end phase, communication included greater concentration on reflection (Swigger et al., 2012). High performing teams exhibited greater communication frequency at project inception with attention to goal planning and ended the project with less social interaction than did the lower performing teams (Swigger et al., 2012). Synchronous work includes verbal and nonverbal communications. In contrast, asynchronous teams (virtual and/or global) must work without the usual time norms implicit in synchronous work that can help to mitigate conflict (Montoya - Weiss, Massey, & Song, 2001).

In sum, communication about time at work is beneficial. In contrast, time norms not brought to the surface could give rise to confusion and dissatisfaction in diverse employee groups.

**Temporal symbols, norms, and values.** Human interaction occurs in a timescape and crafts temporal culture (Schein, 2010). Nowotny (1994) introduced culture into the definition of time when he defined “proper time” as the constellation of beliefs an individual or group holds regarding the past, present, and future and contended that such definition is produced by societal culture. Moreover, Hobfoll asserted that context matters as it is the backdrop for resource exchange (2010). The role of context and culture in an organization are entwined. Such relationships may impact the person and the system, and as culture changes, further effects can occur, including those in regard to time (Schein, 2010). Time manifests from culture as expressed through symbols, norms that govern experience, and underlying values that encompass the beliefs of those working together in community (Schein, 2010).
**Symbolic time.** Schein (2010; personal communication, 2017) argued as did Weick (1993, 2005) that symbols help people to understand the world around them. Those symbols are born of consensus and express assumptions about power, boundaries, and temporality that all allow an organization to nurture internal relationships to meet external challenges. Thus, a language may reflect the values present in a culture (Schein, 2010; Vaner & Beamer, 2005), including those of temporality. Furthermore, today's technology, replete with a myriad of applications, may be thought of as a language, and a temporally impacted language at that (Driscoll & Gregg, 2008). Extending the symbolic value of language to metaphor, the old adage that time is money was seen as organizationally symbolic by Essl and Jaussi (2017). They expressed that the phrase denotes that deadlines are an integral challenge in the general business work environment. Arguably, this supposition reflects an Indo-European capitalist stance and may not translate cross-culturally or universally. In terms of the workplace, the symbolic aspect of time also signifies money, status, power, and importance as Brislin and Kim demonstrated in their 2003 research investigation. This same idea has now become implicit in academic culture, as well (Noonan, 2015).

**Temporal norms.** To maintain reference points in a chaotic world, people rely on norms and markers of time. Individuals possess unique temporal preferences and expectations (Blount & Sanchez – Burks, 2004; Brislin & Kim, 2003) that are brought into the wider world and the world of work, overlapping with social rules. Rules pertaining to time are negotiated and developed as norms in workplace culture (Schein, 2010). For instance, Schein (2010) described the pace and rhythm in organizations as an organizational attribute. Research has demonstrated that temporal norms may guide behavior and impact one’s experience of work (Alioua & Simon, 2017; Corsaro & Snehota, 2012). These norms or “zeitgebers” (literally “time givers”) assist the
pacing process as Gevers, Rutte, and Van Erde found (2006) or may help to allay employee anxiety (Gevers, Mohammed, & Baytalskaya, 2015). Norms may also influence collaboration (Gaw, 2017), which in turn can help facilitate employee learning. A temporal preference may be a point in time or a range of time depending on the activity involved.

Temporal balance, meaning that past, present, and future foci are all considered as one manages time (Bluedorn, 2002), echoes the idea of homeostatic balance being critical to health (Hobfoll, 2010; McGrath, 1970). Other norms such as speed, pacing, or polychronicity (multi-tasking) may facilitate such balance. For instance, Bluedorn speculated that flexibility and moderation are two ways to achieve balance in handling multiple temporal modes (2002); this may contribute to the balance and resilience that COR theory speaks to (Hobfoll, 1989).

Standard patterns of time, interaction, and even space in meetings, including greetings and milestones embedded in the project schedule, offer structure, as Stephens and Lewis found in their research (2017).

Research has provided evidence that other behavioral norms like punctuality are important features of any workplace temporal landscape as Brislin and Kim discovered (2003). References and orientation to time, including duration, are critical factors in the conduct of regular work meetings and such events are necessary to the conduct of project work (Rimestad, 2015). Rimestad’s narrative study of journalists revealed that the interactions among them (both verbal and nonverbal) signified the organizational norms regarding the need to efficiently progress on objectives with speed. This also exemplifies Weick’s 1993 point regarding the need for structure in complex arenas. Rimestad also described temporal props including the watch, pen and notepad, phones, computers, papers, newspapers, whiteboards, and board markers (2015). He postulated that temporality represented a distinct constraint in this environment, tied
to the time pressure of the daily news cycle. The study also represents an example of Weick’s 1999 point that each work culture maintains its own time-based norms. Such a study can serve as a robust model with which to examine any workplace. The identified behavioral pointers raise the notion that norms and work rhythms of one group may not mesh with those of others, either within an organization or across types of work. Similarly, Sehrish and Zubairkistan conducted a survey study with a sample of employees in the banking industry in 2013 and found that polychronicity was significantly negatively correlated with time management and work-related quality of life. In short, multi-tasking adversely impacts one’s wellbeing and work productivity. The researchers found that conversely, time management and work-related productivity and quality were significantly positively correlated with each other. The authors demonstrated that multitasking and time management both may impact one’s sense of satisfaction (2013). This study provides an example of control over resources per COR theory.

Time-based norms maintained at the organizational level may also impact the experience of the ability to work together. If guidelines allow time for connection, collaboration is easier to achieve as Forte and Flores discovered through their study of teachers (2014). The claim that temporal changes in collaboration have a direct impact on employee experience was further supported by Gaw’s research (2017). He described the current team-based delivery of health care in a hospital setting as fraught with a constant rotation of team members with less time to share and establish temporal and communicative preferences. This brought about decreased stability, uncertainty, distrust, isolation, and employee dissatisfaction, not to mention the potential negative impact on patient care due to decreased knowledge sharing. Newly imposed caps on the number of hours that medical residents may work, coupled with shorter clinical rotations, both implemented in service of enhanced patient care, have caused a deleterious shift
from the traditional team model which allowed for longer rotations and stable team membership that fostered relationship building over greater time spans (Gaw, 2017). Thus, whether the context is an education setting described by Forte and Flores (2014) or a hospital workplace (Gaw, 2017), time for collaboration fosters learning and the generation of collective knowledge and ongoing social support.

**Temporal values.** Values are the beliefs that an organization's members hold. If time serves as one symbolic totem for an organization’s identity, then shared values and the understanding of temporal practices may provide insight into both individual and group values. Research conducted by Gevers et al. in 2006 demonstrated that the perception of time and the importance attributed to it differs individually, and shared understandings may benefit a collective effort. Recall that COR theory presents the value of time as a resource. Furthering the exploration of values, Mattson’s 2009 study of nurses in healthcare highlighted that different values may be placed on workplace scheduling. Struggles occurred when those values conflicted, which in turn impeded productivity. Exploration of values as a path to cross-cultural competency was also studied by Mendenhall et al. in 2013 who suggested the use of cognitive behavioral therapy to aid cross-cultural education for graduate students. Perhaps a values-based model could be extended to encompass issues of temporality. The more abstract the nature of work, the less certainty exists regarding clear timeframes for completion and measurement of that work. Nowotny called for acknowledgment of the tension between individual subjective time and measured time (1994) and the need to reconcile those. In contrast, timelessness, immersion in a task, or “flow” (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014) is possible at work, as are gaps between timed tasks and work interaction; those punctuations may be vital to the creative process, allowing for reflection set against action.
**Workplace Culture and Time**

Understanding time may provide the key to unlock the mysteries of work culture (Geertz, 1973b; Hofstede, 1991; Schein, 2010). Based on his anthropological research, Geertz suggested that one’s sense of time and behavior are intertwined culturally (1973a). Subsequently, Hofstede (1991) described a long-term or future focus set beside a short-term focus that aims for the present or the past as time-based orientations that may manifest individually and in culture. Schein (2010) contrasted monochromic (western, linear, efficiency-driven) time with polychronic (European/Middle Eastern, multifaceted, relationship-driven) and introduced questions that a researcher may pose to understand a subculture's and a whole organization’s temporal vibe. Additionally, time in the cultural sense per Tierney (1985) represents the broader context in which the management of one's personal time operates. When considering the cultural aspects of time in the general context of work, several perspectives arise based upon the range of possible theories available.

For instance, the temporal lens described by Ancona et al. (2001) addressed many facets of time in relation to planned change and work, from pacing to the very meaning of time. Blount and Sanchez-Burks defined temporal duration preference as the personal ideal for time to spend on an activity (2004). When a change occurs, a delay may also occur. Conflict can occur when personal and organizational approaches to time are not synchronized (Tierney, 1985), which is a potential factor that impacts workplace satisfaction and wellbeing. Furthermore, ignorance of temporal cultural practices can impact productivity. Tam's 2015 work with the development of marine policy in Indonesia demonstrated a cautionary tale in that when policy developers ignored the local rhythm of fisherman's work time, the fishermen did not attend meetings and those voices were unheard. This loss resulted in a weak overall policy that was not embraced by
local communities (Tam, 2015). To conclude, the experience of time may be expressed through language, which in turn shapes culture, be it in the world, or in the workplace.

**Conclusion**

Based on this strand of the literature, conceptual time has evolved to embrace subjectivity and fluidity. There are many ways to describe the universal phenomenon of time, and the concept plays a role in the culture of communities and workplaces, both locally and globally. Time is experienced differently by individuals and is socially constructed (Perlow, 2001; Rose, 2016) and conceptualized differently across cultures and in the workplace. In short, the literature pertaining to time strongly suggests that time is a language that communicates norms and values held by an individual and an organization. Culture plays a salient role in the act of connection at the group and organizational level. Furthermore, the cultural aspects of time play an important role in the workplace and may shape work processes. Although studies have been conducted by many authors, the problem of time as part of workplace culture is still insufficiently explored.

**Change and Time in the Workplace**

Organizational theory addresses problems in the workplace. This section explicates the temporal aspects of change and gaps in the extant literature. A discussion of change and time follows. A view of project work and time is presented, and a discussion of time and leadership concludes the section.

**Time’s Place in Change Theory**

Multiple pressures on contemporary higher education have sparked initiatives meant to create the type of transformative change that Weick and Quinn described in 1999. Change may be thought of as “performances enacted in context and in time” (Dillon, 2000, p 145). Thus, time is an integral aspect of change, which has been defined as a process characterized by
temporal milestones (Schein, 2010). Though general temporal theories abound (Blount & Sanchez – Burks, 2004; McGrath & Kelly, 1986; Nowotny, 1994), certain researchers have decried the lack of a time-based focus in contemporary organizational theory and design (Alipour, Mohammed, & Martinez, 2017; Ancona et al., 2001; Dawson, 2014; Schein, 2010).

For instance, Tsoukas (2017) lamented that though it is a core feature of work, time is overlooked in crafting theories to explain contemporary complexity. Inquiries into the areas of organizational change, leadership, and development have not yet fully addressed the lived experience of time, including issues of stress, pacing, scheduling, and planning, particularly within and across temporary work project teams (Gauche et al., 2017).

A closer look at the literature pertaining to time in the higher education workplace reveals several gaps and shortcomings. Minimal research attention has been directed toward the impact of temporality on higher education work teams (Granqvist & Gustafsson, 2016; Tierney, 1985). Existing studies of workplace temporality may be quantitative in nature (Espinosa et al., 2015; Olson & Olson, 2012; Swigger et al., 2012), or utilize a qualitative approach to explore topics like time and technology (O'Carroll, 2015) or the impact of cultural values of time (Chen & Nadkarni, 2017; Rimestad, 2015; Tam, 2015), but there is a dearth of research on time in the realm of higher education venues (Bossaller et al., 2017).

There are exceptions to the scarcity of research, however. Weick and Quinn (1999) acknowledged time and described change to include the structural and process aspects of time, as well as emotional and social relationships. Temporality is part of that social dynamic. According to the authors, change lacks a clear beginning and ending since it is continuous in nature, and may be described as a state of changing rather than the more traditional and more static form of change. The process may be thought of as a "spiral" (p. 383) and regardless of a
distinct or subtle change, time-based boundaries are similarly undefined (Weick & Quinn, 1999). Weick and Quinn also suggested that change triggers may include temporal milestones as Gersick also found (1989, 1994).

Dawson (2014) carried the torch for temporality from Weick and Quinn (1999). His critique of the theory that preceded Tsoukas’s 2017 concerns proposed that though time is a critical aspect of change, it has been overlooked. Awareness of time plays a part in change which may involve multiple actions and temporalities (Dawson, 2014; Gray, 2012). Moreover, both the multiple changes that may occur in an organization (Dawson, 2014) and the experience of faster pace due to globalization warrant attention (Dawson, 2014; Smith, W.K., 2011). Two of Dawson’s propositions echoed Weick and Quinn’s 1999 findings regarding the tempo of change: first, that incremental change is perceived as inevitable, and second, that transformative change is perceived as impossible (2014). The change agent described by Weick and Quinn in 1999 must rise to the occasion and either shepherd the process or step up and draw a line in the sand for a radical change. More recently, Gray (2012) argued that context sways change processes depending upon power dynamics, language, time, space, and competition. Gray’s work depended heavily on the model of time proposed by Lewis and Weigart (1981) to explain how employees make meaning and adjust to temporal events through personal, interactive, and institutional temporal engagement. Referencing Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991), Gray also built on Weick and Quinn’s concept of temporality (1999) and delved into the way that employees generate time-based insight during a change, based on a reflection on the time-based characteristics of an experienced event (2012).

Huy’s theory of emotions and change (1999) also extended from Weick and Quinn’s 1999 framework and encompassed gradations from individual to the whole organization. Like
Avey, Wernsing, and Luthans (2008), Huy posited that individual emotions of sympathy, empathy, hope, love, and authenticity all influence acceptance of and engagement in change (1999). He argued that though it may be challenging to study feelings, behaviors can be measured. Specifically, he observed that the time that is taken to grieve change represents emotional reconciliation with the change, and the time spent by employees to engage in a change is a proxy for the degree of receptivity that they feel (1999). Such an approach could be applied to a higher education workplace. And, though dramatic and revolutionary change may occur, the everyday time-based rhythm of change is worth attention from leadership to ensure continuity (Huy & Mintzberg, 2003).

Furthermore, recently a group of researchers studied change management and inter-organizational teams and found that urgency and temporality influenced the type of ambiguity present in an event (Merkus et al., 2017). They found that collective sensemaking occurs as a shared or a negotiated process that depends on contextual and time-based factors that influence which kind of ambiguity is dominant in an event. And, ambiguity may be reduced, or the context made more flexible to ambiguity depending on how people react to the situation at hand. Hence, though perhaps long overlooked, there is some attention to time as a theoretical building block when constructing a view of an organization and its inner workings. Parsing time taken for change into more palatable segments and measuring feelings regarding time and change may be applicable tools to assist those encountering and participating in contemporary change efforts.

**Time and strategy.** Time also plays a critical role in a strategy designed to promote change, as one begins an effort at a specific moment in time followed by a process which hopefully ends successfully. The strategy vital to the successful completion of change projects entails a goal and a plan to achieve the goal. However, often in the higher education
environment linear completion of work is not the case; endeavors like change projects may bog down and experience “strategic inertia” defined as an overall delay in moving ahead on stated goals (Hopkins et al., 2013, p. 77). Many higher educational institutions appear to approach change as evolutionary, but the wider context demands and encompasses more revolutionary change; a temporal conflict may arise from such tension.

Why is that? According to Weick and Quinn (1999), one root cause may be that change occurs in more evolutionary than revolutionary ways in academic institutions that may be slow to change due to risk aversion and cultures characterized by a preference for perfection (Manning, 2013; Toma, 2010). The episodic change described by Weick and Quinn in 1999 is like the process described by Lewin (1951) in that it consists of a mode of unfurling existing rules, making changes, and then stabilizing (Weick & Quinn, 1999). Such change is purposeful and rare and occurs when environmental pressure causes a need for the organization to shift (Weick & Quinn, 1999). The disruptions in higher education provide a robust example of this definition. Different time-based processes from development to struggling (Mintzberg & Westley, 1992) build up to a revolutionary distinct moment of change (Weick & Quinn, 1999). Change triggers in this scenario include goals, context, and leadership (Huber, Sutcliffe, Miller, & Glick, 1993). This definition evokes the idea that a higher education institution’s strategic plan may be based on metrics and inputs with a long view of meeting organizational objectives in service of a mission. Examples might include the deadline-driven implementation of regulatory measures such as laboratory safety imperatives, FLSA changes, or the protection of minors and Title IX decrees.

When viewing an organizational system, Meyer and Stensaker argued that traditional theories of change depicted the process as distinct in a world where change was
rampant (2007). They established that change events are not distinct but can be multiple in nature, echoing the status of the higher education environment (Lake, 2017). This echoes the continuous change that consists of a process of stopping to balance and then continuing a process that generates a collection of tiny motions over time (Weick & Quinn, 1999). Scale is important because adjustments may be quite small over months and years, in contrast to the large, visible, and sudden radical shifts described by an episodic change. Also, continuous change may encompass a greater concentration on beliefs and social relationships. Change can occur at multiple levels, which complicates timing issues. Strategic, political, and cultural leadership lenses are useful, and as Ancona et al. argued, leaders must hold a timeless vision in service of goal-based organizational pacing (2001). Concurrently, it is advantageous to realize the influence of change on employees given differential individual time perception.

**Time impacts meaning during change.** There are several facets of meaning-making regarding change imbued with temporality that appeared in the reviewed research and other references. Silva and Wetzel (2007) delved into sensemaking and its relationship to time in industry and government, differentiating between time spent with oneself, with others at work and institutional time. Their insights furthered Weick and Quinn’s (1999) concept that change is time-based and inferred that adaptation to change involves loss of personal time when more pressure is imposed to participate in the implementation of change and partake of institutional time-related commitments; interactive time with others is decreased due to the laser focus on goals. Micro-experience at the individual level (such as time perception) may impact work relationships and processes, so it is worthy of attention as a part of strategic human resources practice. Daft and Weick (1984) claimed that participant preferences stem from interpretation and cognitive sensemaking during a change. The dichotomy of objective and subjective
accompany that tension between measuring and feeling in the realm of meaning-making (Block, 2014).

Project Work and Time

Projects are undertaken in service of change. A project is a time-limited engagement meant to achieve a specific aim and the management of a change project is explicitly concerned with time given the inclusion of the task of scheduling goals (Crawford & Nahmias, 2010). Time was defined as a core component of project management per Zwikael's 2009 review of the professional standards for the field, in which he analyzed the relative importance of each of the nine knowledge areas delineated in the project management professional standard Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK Guide). In addition to time, the core competencies include integration, scope, cost, quality, human resources, and communications. Thus, time is one factor that is both impacted and may impact the other factors as project work is enacted. In addition to a blurring of time-based boundaries, the structure of work has changed. A temporary organization (TO) is “a temporally bounded group of interdependent organizational actors, formed to complete a complex task” (Burke & Morley, 2016, p. 1237).

Pacing issues. Today, such temporary teams must gather quickly to begin work, and lack a surfeit of time to more informally absorb the inherent rhythms of new peers, as highlighted by Gaw’s research (2017). And more and more, work that was performed in a silo-like fashion is now done with diverse teaming and an increased pace (Esson et al., 2018). Research has shown that teams experience changes in the time available to complete work projects and changes in workload; the timing of such changes may have a negative bearing on a worker’s experience (Koseoglu, Shalley, & Herndon, 2016; Mohammed & Harrison, 2013). This hypothesis was also supported by Blount and Sanchez - Burks (2004), as well as Pich, Loch, and De Meyer (2002).
Self-managing work groups in today’s work environment face intense pressure to complete work given often uncertain or shifting timeframes per Waller, Zellmer-Bruhn, and Giambatista (2002). Their research studied how those working in small groups adjust their work pacing to accommodate dynamic deadlines; groups adjusted their tasks near or at the midpoint of a project’s duration, regardless of a stable or shifting deadline (Waller et al., 2002). Deadlines and schedules are normative ways to help pace the process per Gevers, Rutte, and Van Erde (2004). Such structuring may thereby reduce uncertainty and related employee anxiety. The researchers conducted a quantitative longitudinal study to investigate temporal cognition (how time is allocated) through time-based reminders (urging each other) and pacing (the speed at which individual work is performed) to learn if agreements could augment group work towards meeting an established deadline. Gevers et al. (2015) also studied project work and linked pace and effort: the early pacer will complete a task prior to a scheduled deadline, steady pacers will distribute work over the duration of the time assigned, while those motivated by the prospect of an immediate deadline favor waiting for the deadline to approach before commencing work (Alipour et al., 2017; Gevers et al., 2015). Furthermore, deadline driven work was associated with higher risk tolerance per Dulebohn (2002), versus steady work or a u-shaped work approach (fast start, steady, fast end).

**Temporality is relational and negotiated by may not be overt.** Behavioral rules are not only imposed by the organization through norms, but those norms are an ongoing construction that may be influenced by those who participate in the work of that institution (Granqvist & Gustafsson, 2016). To learn how temporality is shaped, the authors studied a radical change initiative project designed to create a new university in a northern European country. Those involved with this change project formed collective time-based understandings that emerged as
key drivers of successful change. The norms included urgency and momentum per the authors. Also, schedule delays have been studied more than hastenings, but there is evidence that increased anxiety ensues from time compression (Hockey, 1986).

According to Gevers et al. (2006), shared time-based cognitions regarding deadline, timings, and pacing represent the degree to which there is an agreement between two or more individuals. They found that pacing boosts shared temporal cognition initially and ongoing temporal reminders may enhance it when a second collaborative project is undertaken. Interestingly, such shared understanding does not require explicit discussion (Thompson & Fine, 1999), similar to the findings reported by Gevers et al. (2015). Use of one pacing style over another due to a manager’s or a team’s demands may give rise to employee dissatisfaction (Gevers et al., 2015). The authors also highlighted that individual time preferences are rarely shared (Gevers et al., 2015). Individual non-work cultural norms were found to impact time orientation and punctuality by Arman and Adair (2012). The authors reasoned that agreements about standards such as punctuality would increase effectiveness on multinational teams. They asserted that successful organizational planning involves temporal flexibility, which may contribute to resilience.

This evidence suggests that although time-based norms can be helpful to productivity, overt discussion of them is rare. Should individual temporal personality differences be considered when forming teams? Mohammed, Alipour, Martinez, Livert, and Fitzgerald (2017) answered that question with their study of a chef team and the experience of team conflict therein. They found that the dispositions of those on a team ranged from “time patient” to “time-urgent” and from monochronic and polychromic (2017, p. 1). Both dispositional aspects can impact the degree of conflict experienced when allocating team resources (Mohammed, et al.,
2017). Though a small study in one discipline, it holds the kernel for future exploration regarding teams and temporary organizations.

**Technology, teams, and projects.** Temporal distance influences team interaction and the communication method in both pattern and content can mitigate the impact of temporal dispersion due to global boundaries or time delays as Espinosa et al. found (2015). Other research has demonstrated that knowledge sharing in virtual team spaces can also be challenging given factors such as time constraints and time differences (Horwitz & Santillan, 2012), or multicultural “time visions” (Saunders, Van Slyke, & Vogel, 2004, p. 19). Regardless of the problematic nature of technology, the field of higher education increasingly uses it (Katz & Benkler, 2008). Technology as a part of the change processes considered by Weick and Quinn (1999) may embrace both positive and negative potential influences of that technology. For instance, Ballard and Seibold conducted a qualitative study in five service areas in a higher education setting to explore the impact of communication (feedback cycles, coordination of work, and technology) on time experience (2004). Those with greater time and more task variety held a greater degree of future orientation in comparison to those who worked within shorter feedback cycles and who were assigned more consistent tasks (Ballard & Seibold, 2004). Such findings could be important to the planning and execution of projects across areas in an institution of higher learning. Garousi, Eskandar, and Herkiloğlu examined partnerships between academia and industry through an extensive literature review and highlighted the importance of proactively communicating about challenges early on in a partnership with regard to the different time horizons between industry and academia (2017).

This selection of research studies concerning time and work highlights that attention to the timing of projects, pacing of work, and attention to deadlines will positively influence a
group's work outcomes. The findings support the belief that temporality affects performance and represents a fundamental ingredient in preparing a team for a project and employees for workplace changes.

**Time and Leadership**

Traditional theories of leadership focus on traits or style and power of the leader to make decisions and other attributes such as critical and strategic thinking (Lord, De Vader, & Alliger, 1986). Akrivou and Bradbury-Huang (2011) applied constructivist and complexity theories to the leader and the organization, respectively, and crafted a conceptual model to explain why certain leaders may act as catalysts for change while others may not. Mintzberg (1990) described ten roles that managers play, and two are temporally pertinent to leaders. As a disturbance handler, one must handle roadblocks, and as a resource allocator, one must prioritize the use of scarce commodities, such as one’s own time. Leaders can leverage an understanding of time and time perception to effectively promote change strategy enacted through projects. Namely, if time preferences may be considered as brackets (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2005), the initial assessment and communication regarding time-based issues might prove to be a more efficacious way of achieving Weick’s 1993 notion of securing communal connection through choice-making. Temporal clarity could inform choice-making and enhance that sense of community. Sensitivity at individual, project, and leadership levels can influence change by making the unconscious conscious and providing understanding of human dynamics (Binci & Cerruti, 2012).

**Guiding meaning-making.** Coaching is an important aspect of leadership that can entail time. As a way of constructing meaning, there is sensemaking, which per Weick and Quinn explains how one understands experience (1999). Given the different flavors of change, a
A continuous change agent is one who acts as a facilitator to make sense of things (Weick, 1995) and employs language, listening, and learning over long periods of time, seeking patterns, variations, and adaptations that will serve the organizations’ processes. For instance, Wheatley (1992) explained that the role of a change agent includes the capacity to be fully present and aware of the other. Ideal intervention entails intentional planned actions at the macro level, and the change agent drives others to generate movement (Weick & Quinn, 1999) involved with concrete elements like work processes. Such guidance involves redirection, rather than the episodic focus on planned intervention (Weick & Quinn, 1999). Leaders must attend to individual meaning-making, group concerns, and overall strategic vision. When implementing planned change, it is key to recognize temporal assumptions from abrupt/rapid to gradual/long term and discrete quantitative time to qualitative/inner time (Huy, 2001). According to Huy, leaders must demonstrate time-related competency, in order to successfully marshal such change and be aware of timing, pace, and sequencing of change, as since the culture of the organization encompasses the “clock time, inner time, and social time of the people involved” (2001, p. 618). Similarly, Kim, Hornung, and Rousseau (2011) exhorted leaders to include employees in the change process to foster meaning-making. Geiger and Schröder (2014) elaborated on such leadership guidance when they referred to organizational routines as “collective performance patterns” (p. 179) enacted based upon rules. Interpreting those rules is a form of the sensemaking described by Weick in 1995 and may stretch individual meaning-making to group design and interpretation of norms. Time-related leadership actions can provide norms that may guide individuals and groups through change efforts (Mohammed & Alipour, 2014; Mohammed & Nadkarni, 2011; Myer, Thoroughgood, & Mohammed, 2016). As Weick and Quinn avowed in
1999, the ability to both embrace and question past practice is a part of meaning-making in the present.

The sharing of that meaning could help others handle the stress of change. Kumar and Malhotra’s work on medical treatment provided evidence in support of this hypothesis. They conducted a prospective observational study of operating rooms in a teaching hospital located in India and delays in turnover between surgeries (Kumar & Malhotra, 2017). By analyzing the time and work data, they found that many delays were unavoidable (equipment failures, patient issues) but that cohesive teamwork could reduce delays. One recommendation encompassed the idea that all team roles could be clearly defined along with possible actions that could be taken simultaneously without harming patients but increasing efficiency. From this, role clarification emerges as a key ingredient in team success. Leaders can share their own meaning-making by “sensegiving” (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991, p. 433). An example of this may be found in the case of trusted advisors that family-owned business leaders call upon to make sense of events and decisions by managing time-based issues (Strike & Rerup, 2016). The researchers identified specific skills and competencies such as social influence, listening, asking questions to test assumptions, flagging issues, and fostering pauses for reflection that the advisors use to slow normally speedy processes (2016). No matter the venue, such skills appear to be useful to leaders.

**Success depends on time.** The point that temporal leadership is central to success was further underscored by Janicik and Bartel (2003) who speculated and confirmed through their survey study of 48 self-managing project groups that discussion about time and project planning initially contributed to the creation of collective time-related norms. Those temporal guidelines subsequently enhanced the coordination and performance of tasks. The authors termed this
activity "temporal planning", which including at least the timing and duration of actions (2003, p.122). Thus, the stress that could result from hastened or delayed workflows, or from shifting deadlines was mitigated when groups had the chance to discuss their individual approaches to time management and resource allocation, thanks to leadership's upfront temporal investment. These research findings support the notion that increased time discernment can help individuals or groups cope with uncertainty. Culture destines the success of one decision over another on campus, according to Tierney (1985). Greater emphasis on the intricacies of time and change is warranted (Smollan, Sayers, & Matheny, 2010).

Implicit time-based expectations held by both leaders and followers may impact one’s lived experience at work and the related inconsistency in behaviors may impact the success of work processes (Alipour et al., 2017). Mohammed and Nadkarni (2011) applied this concept to their conduct of a quantitative survey study of 71 work teams comprised of over 500 staff in India tasked with outsourced work. They described “temporal diversity” implicit in one’s individual time orientation which includes time urgency, future perspective, and pacing style (Mohammed & Nadkarni, 2011, p. 489). If leadership was strong, then such diversity was positive. Leaders must attend to the realistic timing and scope of actions (Hopkins et al., 2013). If leaders initiate multiple projects quickly, the consequence may be uncertainty and a phenomenon called “change fatigue” (Bernerth, Walker, & Harris, 2011; Kotter & Cohen, 2012) that may cause exhaustion and decrease in engagement. Delay may cause the depletion of resources including precious time, as well as employee engagement. Further, if leaders were more cognizant of time, overall team performance was thereby improved (Mohammed & Nadkarni, 2011). Pacing style may also impact leadership (Chen & Nadkarni, 2017) which identified a positive relationship between urgency and productive leadership and that upfront or
steady attention by leaders yielded the most positive outcomes, versus applying deep attention towards the end of a project (Chen & Nadkarni, 2017). This research addressed two elements of temporality and excluded synchronization and entrainment. The researchers focused on a homogenous population so results could differ in another culture or in a different sized business, such as a start-up environment like a new project in a higher education setting. However, the findings highlight the need for attention to pacing issues. Similarly, successful leaders employ a range of time horizons to accomplish work goals per Judge and Speitzfaden (1995). Their qualitative inquiry showed that leaders who engaged in holding multiple time horizons for different projects underway were more able to juggle the strategic actions needed to achieve them. In a like manner, Bluedorn commented that “all times should not be the same” (2002, p. 246) and also argued that if diverse time rules are passed along, new time horizons may evolve with an element of familiarity from the past along with new opportunities to adapt to the needs of a culture. Three approaches that may help a leader to address temporal diversity: scheduling of activities, synchronization of activities, and allocation of temporal resources (McGrath & Kelly, 1986; McGrath & Rotchford, 1983).

To summarize, time-based customs play an important role in the life of a workgroup in pursuit of change and merit attention. And, research has demonstrated that if a leader is aware of temporal differences and applies that knowledge to both change strategy and operational matters, successful work can occur that is meaningful to those engaged in it. The greater the cultural diversity, the more tensions as both Dickeson (2010) and Toma (2010) contended. If communication is central to the way in which leadership is socially constructed (Mumby, 2013), then temporal communication can nuance and scaffold aspects of that leadership. Simply put,
Fullan and Scott expressed that discussion of time and its influence of personal views change is beneficial (2009).

Conclusion

The previous research presented can be considered as the first step towards a more profound understanding of the complexity of today’s workplace, complex and replete with change. Time is a cultural key and is enacted at the individual and group levels at work, including work on projects. Based on this strand of the reviewed literature individual perception of time may vary and those perceptions and temporal preferences left undiscussed can decrease trust and foster conflict when employees engage in teamwork in pursuit of projects (Corsaro & Snehota, 2012). The reviewed literature pertaining to time and leadership suggests that leaders who hold an appreciation for time issues can mitigate stress and generate productivity. Temporal leadership is a critical ingredient in transformative change making. In sum, temporal diversity, team processes, and leadership should be dynamic aspects of any organizational framework.

Time, Change, and Higher Education

This section introduces the contemporary higher education workplace and the challenges it faces. Organizational theory pertaining to time and change in higher education is introduced, and gaps in the literature are highlighted. An exploration of the cultural aspects of time and an overview of higher education workplace culture and leadership ends this section.

Today’s Higher Education Workplace

The contemporary higher education domain aligns its strategy to the generation of knowledge and human development (Mäkinen, 2016; Mumby, 2013). The products of today’s higher education workplaces are immaterial in nature, and work now requires the capacity to anticipate potential needs along with the flexibility to move nimbly between problems (Mäkinen,
Furthermore, the educational environment may be more consensus-driven in comparison to the corporate landscape (E. Barca, personal communication, 2018). For example, higher educational institutions are often structured with a board of trustees, faculty and academic councils. Alumni organizations may also contribute their voice to decision-making.

Moreover, in today’s realm of higher education, an ever-increasing number of transformative initiatives coupled with dwindling resources are set beside the benefits of technological applications that may simultaneously ease the burden of innovation while also possibly inducing stress for those working on the change efforts. The organizational structure of work has shifted from stable job roles to more temporary assignments (Heller & Ortiz, 2017; Katz & Krueger, 2016). This is exemplified in the landscape of higher education where a task force, special committee, or project group are oft seen in action with the introduction of targeted initiatives. Membership depends upon role, skill, interpersonal skills, competencies, relationships, or the task at hand; the tasks involved may hold uncertainty and ambiguity, but goals are clear, and deadlines exist (Burke & Morley, 2016). Burke and Morley’s review of the literature revealed that TO’s include role-based interaction that may quickly engender trust and are accomplished in their own special time zones (2016).

Higher education institutions hire and develop employees and must address the opportunities and challenges of diversity, evolving technology, and factors such as globalization. Today’s workplace hosts ethnic, racial, and gender diversity and up to five generations working together with culture ever-evolving (Walsh, 2018). This diversity includes expressed temporalities (Vaner & Beamer, 2005; Schulz, 2015). Such multiplicity may enhance innovation but may also create conflict (Mattson, 2009). Furthermore, college and university communities
encompass students and alumni who assume active roles in decision-making (e.g., student councils, demonstrations in support or protest of policy, alumni events).

At the granular level, individual time preferences represent a powerful force in the workplace and may serve to differentiate that culture (Güell et al., 2015; Rimestad, 2015; Schein, 2010; Schulz, 2015; Tam, 2015). Halbesleben, Novicevic, Harvey, and Buckley (2003) put forth the idea that postmodern work is more complex; an organization may hold multiple layers of time and that organizational time may encompass individual perspectives or personalities. So, the definition of time as a resource (Hobfoll, 1989) may vary from individuals to groups. And, the temporal deference (Kirton et al., in Blount & Sanchez-Burks, 2004) that may be expected in the traditional workplace of the past may lead to conflict if not expressed in today's boundless work spheres.

**Culture and Time in Higher Education**

Schein (2010) and Tierney (1985) conjectured that institutions of higher learning like other organizations are social constructions and that time is a cultural construct that can differ at the employee level from the organizational level. Tierney expressed that time can be a beneficial tool to understand those experiential differences (1985). As Hobfoll asserted, time is a resource similar to money (1989). As such, it must be carefully managed according to Wu et al. (2016). And time is gobbled up easily, due in part to the not-so-new phenomenon of information overload (Evenstad, 2018; Simmel, 1950). Time may manifest in the form of ingrained traditions such as course schedules and commencement ceremonies. Specifically, there may be informal norms concerning when meetings begin or end and formal structures such as registration deadlines (Tierney, 1985; Wu et al., 2016). Higher education has evolved in terms of the challenges in the cadence of work, but also in terms of *how* work is accomplished. Wu et al.
(2016) contended that the coordination of time given such factors is a meaningful way to heighten efficiency, based upon their quantitative study of 40 semi-structured interviews conducted at a public university. They learned that clock-based issues included many time-based conflicts and scheduling difficulties due to the inability to monitor all related events. Time management tools fell short because they could not accommodate flexible time frames; often the research participants maintained multiple calendars for personal and professional aspects of their lives. Additionally, managers tracked the implicit timeframes in mind rather than expressed due to the system limitations posed by technology. These outcomes well describe temporal complexity. Such conflict was also described by Massy (2011) who bemoaned that academics were burdened by administrative tasks and lacked time to explore not what to teach, but how to teach it. Correspondingly, Massy advocated that higher educational institutions build in time for process improvement (in Wildavsky, Kelley, & Carey, 2011).

Wu et al. also raised a point pertinent to human resources practice when they postulated that given temporal complexity, to understand social rules like punctuality, one must have lived experience within the community (2016). Their research revealed suboptimal outcomes due to a lack of cultural orientation in the coordination of time-related events. Likewise, the perception of different relationships with time or temporality within an organization’s culture may impact how employees approach their work (Schein, 2010), and when expanded to groups, differing conceptions of temporality may complicate project activity (Blount, S. & Sanchez – Burks, 2004; Perlow, 1999, 2001). One may learn from others, choose to adopt a different time personality (Francis-Smythe & Robertson, 1999), or modify one’s approach to fit the organizational setting, or hold fast to one’s preferred approach. Adjustments to time coordination systems to effectively steward time, such as the creation of standards for online time management so that the
synchronization of events could be easier were recommended by Wu et al. (2016). There were no substantive findings regarding the implicitly practiced time-based structures that require university faculty and administrators to cope with time management (Wu et al., 2016). However, the researchers did propose the design of a smart tool that could suggest possible time items to a newcomer to ease assimilation into group culture.

Bossaller et al. (2017) studied the experience of academic librarians who provided reference and information services in a higher educational setting. Three themes emerged from this secondary review: time may be felt as discrete or continuous, time as a commodity, how time contributes to the construction of narrative and identity. The interviewees did not experience flow as the authors had expected. Rather, they expressed time famine, pressure, poverty, and fatigue, purportedly due to interruptions at work. Like Hobfoll’s (1989) belief, time was a highly valued commodity in this case. The authors compared librarians with those in other professionals such as physicians and highlighted the idea of a holistic approach to time and the stories shared about one's experience.

In sum, higher educational institutions encompass a variety of cultures and within those nestle time cultures chock-full of multiple timeframes. As cultures overlap, time and tension may be found in tandem at work. Temporal subcultures may collide as new cross-institutional collaborations are expected, in order to innovate. Differences in timing may represent the power of culture as the context that may impact individual and group perception of time as a resource. This tension is a challenge and an opportunity.

**Change Drivers in Higher Education**

Individuals employed at traditional institutions of higher learning may encounter "time" in different ways, due in part to increased collaborative change project work. Such work is
undertaken to foster organizational transformation in the face of disruption in the higher education sector in many developed economies (Capelli, 2017; Deema et al., 2008; Four Recent Changes, 2017; Jaschik, 2017a, 2017b; Mohrman et al., 2008; Unterman, 2018). This disruption may be caused by factors such as globalization, escalating market competition, student debt, dwindling research funding, and regulatory issues such as the call for greater accountability, (Capelli, 2017; Lake, 2017; Unterman, 2018). Growing enrollments, increasingly diverse faculty appointments, and the continuous expansion of new technologies and the virtualization of learning are transforming the careers of faculty as well as administrators (Gappa, Austin, & Trice 2007). To accomplish transformative work, projects may be undertaken within a higher educational setting or externally, as across institutional collaborations (Durbin, 2013). Specific examples of disruption and response include the mergers of colleges and universities like Wheelock College and Boston University in 2017 (Fernandes, 2017), or the sale of campus real estate like Mt. Ida College and the University of Massachusetts in 2018 (Creamer & Thys, 2018). Other examples include the elimination of current programs or systems within institutions. For instance, leaders may decide to eliminate programs following an academic prioritization process. Colleges like Goucher have suspended majors and minors from music to physics to religion (Flaherty, 2018a). President José Antonio Bowen stated that the college will do "everything we can to keep disruption to a minimum, but it is imperative that resources are allocated in ways that best support as many students as possible" (Flaherty, 2018a). Following a similar review process, the University of Akron cut eighty degree-track programs including master’s degrees in history, physics, sociology, and Spanish in favor of increased investment and expansion in the areas of strength identified such as polymers, dance, cybersecurity and nursing (Flaherty, 2018b). Moreover, California’s introduction of performance funding that ties state community college
funding to measures of student success represents a radical change in the foundational financial support system that may be replicated elsewhere (Seltzer, 2018). Concurrently, the cost of health care continues to rise, and the demand to continuously update technology to remain current exists at a time when research money is on the decline, and money must be spent to maintain compliance with ever-evolving regulation meant to protect students, workers, and the public (Lake, 2017).

A project may entail the creation of new systems or services or changes to existing ones in response to regulations, student needs, budget cuts, or some form of environmental, socio-economic, political, or reputational crisis (Christensen et al., 2015). Although there are many studies of change the research regarding time and change in the realm of higher education remains limited. The many contemporary transformative efforts underway are worth understanding per Capelli who noted that the number of projects in higher education today abounds (2017).

The work completed to meet these emerging challenges is accomplished by committees, groups, and teams working on projects (Capelli, 2017). The individuals in the groups may know each other but often not; they are chosen for their skills and/or the power to make decisions that will encourage and foster change. Many employees have expressed frustration at this new way of doing work given increasingly complex systems, the intersections of systems, and timelines that are confusing and unrealistic (Capelli, 2017). Consequently, these employees feel a certain level of stress (Blount & Sanchez - Burks, 2004; Koseoglu et al., 2016). In short, good work may be impeded by the experienced temporal dissonance. As a responsible professional, it can be difficult to modify one’s existing priorities and to determine how to tackle the often-ambiguous work demanded by current higher educational contexts as Lake asserted (2017). Resulting time
issues may impact well-being at the individual and system level (Ballard & McVey, 2014; Levitin, 2014; Pinto, Dawood, & Pinto, 2013; Rose, 2017), which may be costly for both an employee and the organization.

Higher Education Leadership

Higher education leaders are faced with the need to make really big changes fast to survive the new pressures that face the higher education industry and to take advantage of amazing opportunities to create new knowledge. If today's higher education campuses are territories of temporal complexity (intractable time-tested traditions in juxtaposition with the challenge of revolutionary change), then tailored time-based cultural understandings (e.g., onboarding overviews of time protocols, schedules, and exploration of time preferences) are needed to support making meaning of time amidst uncertainty (Battilana, Gilmartin, Sengul, Pache, & Alexander, 2010). Time norms play an important role in the life of a workgroup, be it pacing, sequencing, or deadlines (Schein, 2010). The concept of "temporal zones" (Blount & Sanchez - Burks, 2004, p. 262) defined as a situation bounded by its characteristics of time could be applied to change projects.

Higher education leaders (particularly in human resources) can leverage the knowledge of time, culture, and the perception of time and change to increase organizational performance. Strategy requires vision, creativity, and planning (Nuntamanop, Kauranen, & Igel, 2013), and leaders can mitigate risk and uncertainty. They can also help to manage the torrents of information overload that wash over current higher education workplaces (Hemp, 2009; Schramm, 2016). Leaders in higher education positions have the capacity to analyze what makes humans change as a simple causal phenomenon, but instead, as Fullan and Scott wrote, to learn how employees participate in change (2009, p. 2). Such fine-tuned
understanding is the differentiator that human resources can bring to the table of strategic sustenance. Likewise, given rising health care costs, higher education leaders who address the reality of time-related stress and opportunity at work will surely impact the financial health of their organizations in a positive way. As trusted advisors, human resources leaders in the higher education sector can foster such mindfulness through the presentations of evidenced-based research to inform action planning. Specifically, human resources professionals who recognize differences in time related language and temporality’s impact on culture and work may intervene with greater agility to ameliorate the possible negative consequences of group work, through enhancement of onboarding, coaching leaders and providing learning and development opportunities, notably in the case of temporary organizational work undertaken in change projects in contemporary higher education settings.

Two concepts emerge for consideration; namely, the idea of a “temporally complex setting” (TCS) that aligns time with spatial orientation, and the postmodern competency of “temporal awareness” (TA) or awareness of time-based norms in action in a context. The evidence presented in this literature review validates that time-based aspects of higher education culture is unique and can impact intentional change efforts. If individuals make sense of things continuously to perform at work, as Weick contended (1993), then leadership is critical in what could be thought of as a TCS. Projects could arguably be placed in this category. From an institutional perspective, planning and attention to pacing may aid the accomplishment of initiatives like those that are underway in higher education today. And, as Halbesleben et al. (2003) exhorted, an awareness of time allows a leader to better leverage the competencies needed to guide staff through the ambiguity inherent in innovation. Change processes vary, and the temporal past, present, and future play pivotal roles in transformation (Bluedorn & Jaussi,
2008; Boschetti, Walker, & Price, 2016). Similar to the competency of emotional intelligence that entails self-awareness and regulation along with empathy (Goleman, 2014), it would seem that a competency centered upon what could be named TA could be a beneficial leadership quality. Such a competency would encompass cultural awareness, the capacity to assess another's time preferences and to join a group of diverse perceptions, as well as the ability to communicate over the course of a project to set and adjust scheduling and pacing. Leaders who can spark a reaction in others by sharing their own sense-making and thereby provide “sense giving” (Akrivou & Bradbury-Huang, 2011, p. 1007) about temporal issues may fare well in today’s complex environments characterized by non-linearity and ambiguity (Dawson, 2014). Such awareness enhances a leader’s ability to construct a self in a reflective fashion with an awareness of interdependence with others. The emergence of leadership occurs over time and may benefit from ongoing reflection on the past, as well as the ability to vision the future and share that with others.

Finally, the ability to be fully present may be beneficial, as well (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Language helps to express the meaning that one derives from lived experience and includes labeling to describe definitions of normalcy and may be used by leaders implementing change to explain rather than coerce as in past mechanistic modes (Czarniawska-Joerges & Joerges, 1988). The use of a temporally inscribed language may extend Weick's sensemaking at the individual level (1993, 2005) out further, to inform the sharing of meaning-making with others. Hence, time awareness is a valuable tool for any leader today.

**Conclusion**

Based on this strand of literature, higher educational institutions boast temporally complex cultures characterized by a combination of transitional and immediate postmodern
timing requirements, which may produce conflicting demands on those operating within the bounds of academia. Institutions of higher learning are temporally complex. The adaptive experience of change efforts involves the passage of time. One may observe transformation and temporality from the point of view of the individual, group, and organization. Higher education has evolved in terms of the challenges in the pacing or work, but also in terms of how work is accomplished.

Given growing resource constraint (Lake, 2017), workgroups will become a prevalent feature in the higher education landscape (Capelli, 2017), and the discussed research findings demonstrate that time-based attention to workgroups and the organizational design that supports them is essential (Aubry & Lavoie-Tremblay, 2017). Such work occurs within a larger context in which new time norms are adding to complexity by erasing traditional guardrails that prescribed how one approaches work and time. Weick (1976) pointed out that intention and action are loosely coupled, and time may play a pivotal role in that coupling, a view that could shed light on the often-murky progress of higher education initiatives. Clear communication about temporality can positively impact the lived experience of work and its complexity. It holds promise for the evermore complex realm of higher education. Given the new and different types of communication (social media, virtual teaming, and remote work), leadership attention to temporal terrain with time awareness may benefit individuals, groups, and the organization itself. Shared temporal models as implicit or explicit socially derived agreements regarding the value of time are worth understanding (Blount & Sanchez – Burks, 2004). All of those engaged in a change project, from the team leaders and project team members (Sharma & Bhatnagar, 2017), project stakeholders to the recipients of a project’s deliverables all possess time preferences. If all of those groups are aware of time-based preferences and can articulate any possible impacts
(positive or negative) in the road mapping or implementation of a project, a stronger outcome may result.

**Conclusion**

After reviewing a significant amount of scholarly literature on time, change, project work, and the higher education workplace, the research speaks to the many factors that affect individual and group lived experience. According to the literature, there are three key themes. First, time is important as a cultural key and is enacted at the individual and group level at work for example, on change projects. Secondly, temporality influences work experience for individuals and groups in today’s complex workplace. So, understanding general relationships related to time may inform the comprehension of the experience of work and its complexity. And finally, temporally aware leadership is a critical ingredient in transformative change processes underway in the higher education sector.

Based on this review, time is a major resource and contextual factor in the workplace that warrants further inquiry. Namely, the factor of time may impact health and a healthy workforce is productive (Fullan & Scott, 2009). The tension between vision and resource constraints portends increased stress on workers, resources, and organizational reputation. While the literature (both qualitative and quantitative) on time is vast and by no means exhaustive, research regarding the lived experiences and perceptions of those engaged in change project work is minimal and limited, particularly in the realm of higher education. This study will contribute to the current body of literature pertaining to time at work and will generate ideas specific to the higher education practice at a critical moment in the sector’s evolution. The next chapter will explain the research design for the study.
Chapter Three - Research Design

This study explored how professional administrators engaged in change projects make meaning of the lived experience of time as a resource in a higher education setting. The resulting understanding will help change project leadership and management practices and thereby enhance productivity and the wellbeing of the professional administrators involved in those projects. The reviewed research supports the assertion that project work in higher education is prevalent. As the literature review demonstrated, time is important as a cultural key and is experienced at the individual and group level in today’s complex higher education workplace.

The following chapter begins with a description of the qualitative research approach and provides support for the researcher’s methodological choices. The next section introduces the parameters for study participants followed by the explication of the study procedures. The final section presents the criteria for quality qualitative research including ethical considerations, trustworthiness, the researcher’s positionality, and possible limitations.

The Qualitative Research Approach

Qualitative research requires distinct practices to describe and understand lived experience. The qualitative researcher is a co-participant who invites the other(s) to engage as the researcher actively and reflexively listens to the told and untold stories shared from the perspective of that person (Creswell, 2014; Sparrowe & Mayer, 2011). As a result, qualitative exploration may provide experientially based information (Creswell, 2014; Sparrowe & Mayer, 2011). Moreover, the qualitative approach entails focussing on the context in which a participant experiences the phenomenon. Quality in a qualitative study can be assured by credibly demonstrating that a true and unbiased view of the lived experience is presented and by providing enough detail so that the reader can decide if the findings are relevant and transferable.
to some degree to other situations (Shenton, 2004). This study aimed to understand the feelings and subjective perception of the lived experience of change projects rather than the objective reality of the same. Thus, for the purposes of this study, qualitative methods were most compatible with the research goals.

**The Constructivist-Interpretivist Paradigm**

Each research paradigm differs in its assumptions regarding reality, the path to knowledge, and its assessment of the merits or faults, and the implications of each conceptual frame differ, too (Butin, 2010). Within the qualitative realm, the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm posits that truth is impacted by context and furthermore, that knowledge is subjective (Ponterotto, 2005). In contrast to a post-positivist paradigm pursued one true and objective reality, the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm holds a core assumption that multiple and subjective realities exist (Ponterotto, 2005). In keeping with this paradigm, a core objective of the inquiry was to create and construct knowledge with the research participants by fostering a safe environment and by employing a flexible approach that allows for exploration of the facets of the time-based events under study (Smith, Larkin, & Flowers, 2009).

**Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)**

The specific strategy of inquiry used in this study was interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). The IPA method is qualitative, inductive, and generates broad questions that help the researcher discover unexpected findings (Smith, 2004). The IPA method aims to grasp the meaning that an individual derives from lived experiences (Shaw, Burton, Xuereb, Gibson, & Lane, 2014, p. 178). Philosophically, this approach asserts that reality is knowable, exists beyond the mind, and that perception plays a role in recognizing that reality (Shaw, 2010). The IPA method incorporates phenomenology (focus on experience) and hermeneutics (the interpretative process)
and follows an idiographic process (Smith, 2004). These traditions provide a theoretical foundation for the IPA method and are described here in greater detail.

**Phenomenology.** Phenomenology is the notion that reality consists of objects, relationships, and events that are inherent in human consciousness as they are perceived or understood in it (Moran, 2000). The word “phenomenon” is derived from the Greek and denotes the act of appearing (Moustakas, 1994); phenomenology aims to explain the enactment of experience (Smith et al., 2009). The descriptive phenomenological approach is called upon to explicate poorly understood aspects of lived experience and identify the essence of a phenomenon (England, 2012). The process of such descriptive discovery stems from Husserl’s thinking that preconceptions can be contained or “bracketed” and entails setting aside one’s biases to mitigate their influence on interpretation so that one may grasp the essence of a naturally occurring phenomenon (England, 2012). Husserl (1998/1913) valued the act of reflection as critical to both researcher and participant. And, the descriptive method entails the study of a small group of participants with a minimum of three (England, 2012).

Interpretation of how another makes meaning of experiences that occur in the world lies at the core of phenomenology (Marton, 1986; Smith et al., 2009). Following and in contrast to Husserl who was his teacher, Heidegger developed the basis for interpretive phenomenology. His concept of lived experience acknowledges bias as part of meaning-making and asserts that it is impossible to know and eliminate preconceptions because each experience differs (England, 2012; Smith, et al., 2009). Through close review of a narrative account which is the unit of analysis (Shaw et al., 2014), today’s IPA approach builds on Heidegger’s notion of Dasein or “being in the world” and explores the influence of features such as culture and gender in relation to a person (or group’s)
individual and social experience and how that person reflects on and makes sense of that experience within a specific setting and context (Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2003).

**Hermeneutics.** Hermeneutics or “the theory of interpretation” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 21) also plays a critical role in IPA research. Seminal thinkers like Heidegger in the phenomenological tradition addressed interpretation when he sought to expose the hidden through the analysis of what is perceived (Smith et al., 2009). Others like Schleiermacher proposed that any written text is shaped by the culture and context in which it is produced, as well as how the writer works with the produced words (Smith et al., 2009). Specifically, interpretation entails an intersubjective relationship between the author or research subject and the interpreter or researcher (Smith et al., 2009). The IPA researcher actively listens to the research subject’s first order biographical reflections on experience and then strives to make sense of those situated experiential understandings through self-conscious and systematic analysis (Shaw et al., 2014). So, the person’s process of sensemaking is first order while the researcher’s process is second order (Smith et al., 2009). Thus, the researcher engages in two rounds of sensemaking or a double hermeneutic (Warnock, 1987).

This ongoing interpretative process does not occur in a vacuum. Both the researcher and the participant bring subjectivity, bias, experience, and assumptive conceptions to the process. The comprehension of new experience requires a dynamic and cyclically reflective working from that new encounter back to pre-conditions (Shaw et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2009). The hermeneutic circle is not a stepwise process but is instead an interpretive ongoing process that holds multiple levels of meaning that can inform one another (Smith et al., 2009). In short, interpretation is a critical feature of IPA, entwined with phenomenology.
Idiography. To grasp the full meaning of a person’s lived experience, the IPA method is also idiographic, centering on granular details of each experience and its meaning (Shaw et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2009). The method calls for a homogenous sample to ensure that rich details are collected and that a phenomenon is deeply considered (Shaw et al., 2014). The method also requires a small sample size, which assures a clear and detailed interpretative account of the cases that will provide a robust baseline for the subsequent analysis (Smith et al., 2009). To capture that close detail, IPA requires an empathetic stance, careful questioning, close listening, and clear concentration on experiential details and reflections on that experience in an environmental context (Smith et al., 2009, pp. 29, 36).

In sum, the result of an IPA inquiry is an experiential account that is at once specific and unique and set in relation to the world (Shaw, 2010). The method offers a glimpse of familiarity at the individual level and generates implications through the lens of the research participant (Smith et al., 2009; Warnock, 1987). The resulting IPA account gives voice to the person’s authentic experience rather than a quantitative summary that might result from a positivist inquiry based upon the notion that there is an objective and knowable reality (Englander, 2012).

IPA is Appropriate for this Inquiry

The purpose of the proposed qualitative study was to understand how a group of professional administrators at a higher learning institution experienced time while each worked on a change project and made meaning of that experience. The participants’ lived experiences of time spent on change projects may impact their work lives (Shaw et al., 2014). IPA represents an effective strategy for investigating their lived experience and perception of time, including beliefs and attitudes (Shaw et al., 2014). Since the study addressed individual experience, IPA was a better
fit than the case study method for this inquiry, as the latter would take a broader stance in relation to the research setting.

A constructivist paradigm and phenomenologically based inquiry resulted in qualitative findings presenting as descriptors of experience and meaning-making (Butin, 2010) which matched well with the stated research purpose. Specifically, through the discourse feature in the IPA method, the researcher learned about the expectations and needs of each research participant, as well as the cultural norms groups with which that person was affiliated (Sparrowe & Mayer, 2011). The IPA method afforded a deeper understanding of time-related phenomena, so that higher education leaders in the research setting may derive knowledge that can be applied to improve project management (Matua & Van Der Wal, 2015). Thus, the theoretical foundations and methodology aligned with the experiential problem of practice and research question.

**How IPA Influenced the Study**

While the COR theory drove the content of the specific interview sub-questions about time to understand it as a resource, phenomenological hermeneutic theory and IPA shaped the *types* of questions developed for the study participants (Shaw et al., 2004; Smith et al., 2009). For instance, the use of open-ended questions facilitated the necessarily reflective stance to this type of research per Creswell (2014, p. 100). The aim of these core questions was to collect evidence regarding lived experience, to analyze it while attending systematically to the researcher’s subjectivity, and allowing new questions to emanate (Roberts, 2010). A semi-structured interview approach allowed an iterative dialogue essential to the collection of experience (Smith et al., 2009). And in accordance with the IPA method, this inquiry delved into the granular experience with the aim to explore and capture the meaning that each participant ascribes to an experience (Smith et al., 2009).
Participants

A guide to how this study was conducted follows and describes how the data was collected based on the questions of interest and in accordance with standard IPA research guidelines.

The IPA method recommends a small and uniform sample to allow a deep exploration of similarities and differences present within the study group that related to the problem of practice (Smith et al., 2009). The IPA approach suggests that between four and ten participants be selected (Smith et al., 2009). This inquiry included in-person interviews with six individuals who have or were engaged in change projects in the research setting. This sample size was commensurate with recent workplace time-related studies which have used IPA, such as that conducted by Halpin, Terry, and Curzio in the U.K. in 2017 who explored time-related stress experiences of 14 nurses new to the profession. Another example is the research led by Merkus et al. in the Netherlands (2017) who studied the influence of time on 50 participants who were preparing for emergencies. And finally, Ugwu, Orjiakor, Enwereuzor, Onyedibe, and Ugwu in Nigeria (2016) investigated issues of workplace temporality in women’s lived experience in trading markets and interviewed 20 participants.

Sample Characteristics. Commonalities between the participants, in this case, included their status as professional administrators at the site selected for this research and their work on a change project; this enhanced the credibility of the research (Creswell, 2013). The researcher collected demographic data from each participant including age, gender, and race, but such characteristics were not exercised as criteria in the selection process for the sample (Smith et al., 2009).
**Sampling procedures.** Study participants were recruited using purposeful sampling, or the method of selecting participants that can consider and speak to the research question (Creswell, 2013). Purposeful sampling represents a common IPA practice that is necessary to identify a cohort of participants that have all experienced a phenomenon (Smith et al., 2009). The recruitment of research participants followed these steps:

1. Initial recruitment entailed email outreach (Appendix A). This communication briefly described the study. Professional administrators interested in learning about the study were asked to respond to the researcher directly.

2. The researcher sent a personalized email within 24 hours to all professional administrators that expressed interest in participating to share details about the study and to arrange the interview meeting. Details included a standard introduction to ensure that possible participants fully understood that the purpose of the research was to study the lived experience of time while working on change projects, that participation was voluntary, and that one could opt out of the study at any time. In accordance with Institutional Review Board (IRB) standards, each participant also received a research consent approval form for review with that communication prior to the interview (Appendix B).

3. The researcher also offered to answer any additional questions that potential participants might have had before agreeing to participate.

**Research setting.** In accordance with the IPA approach, the scope of this study was set in one institution. The study site for this research was a large private university located in New England.
The research plan. The study was conducted following the guidelines and approval of Northeastern University’s IRB by a researcher who completed the National Institutes of Health (NIH) online certification training for human subjects’ research. The application for IRB approval was submitted to NEU and following study approval by the Northeastern University IRB and approval from the research site, recruitment for participants and data collection commenced.

Data collection method. In accordance with the IPA approach, data for this qualitative study included in-person semi-structured individual interviews (Smith et al., 2009). While the Smith et al. (2009) IPA model suggests a protocol whereby participants be interviewed on three separate occasions, this study involved a single interview per participant with follow-up as necessary due to the limited availability of the participants. Interviews were a robust source of data because they allowed the collection of data in the moment, and the resulting narrative allowed qualitative analysis that included both the surface and underlying latent meaning (Cho & Lee, 2014). However, it is important to note that analysis may entail researcher bias, which may impact both the expression of what is noticed and the interpretation thereof (Banks, 2006).

Each interview was conducted in a location that each participant deemed to be safe, confidential, convenient, and comfortable. Only the researcher and participant were in the room during all interviews. The meeting began with an overview of the study purpose to ensure that the purpose of the study was clearly understood by the participant, to once again gain consent, and to remind the subject that participation was voluntary and confidential. All participants signed an Informed Consent document (Appendix B) and received a copy for themselves. The participants were offered and provided with a $20 gift card as a token honorarium for their participation in the interview and the study. To ensure confidentiality, each study participant was
asked to select a pseudonym. Additionally, the individual’s job function was masked and a pseudonym for the site was used. This aspect of the methodology was shared with each participant. The researcher exercised care to protect each research subject’s privacy, as they may have worked together.

With permission from the research participant, the interview was recorded using two password protected digital recorders (one served as a backup in case the primary device failed). The recording was downloaded by the researcher and then transcribed by a professional transcription service. The researcher began to establish rapport with each participant during the initial portion of the meeting. It was critical to foster psychosocial safety for each participant so that they felt comfortable expressing themselves honestly (Edmundson, 1999). Then, the researcher conducted a 60-minute in-depth interview with each participant. The interview was conducted based on a standard pre-defined protocol (Appendix C). The process entailed close listening and allowed for flexibility so that the interviewee’s concerns and interests could be shared in an iterative fashion (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Shaw et al., 2014). Questions were neutral in nature to support the collection of unbiased evidence (Shaw, 2014). At the close of each interview, the researcher’s contact information was provided so that the participant could follow-up with questions. Also, the interviewee was asked if the researcher might follow up by phone and/or email if clarification was needed concerning a particular response and if the participant wanted to receive a copy of the study results.

**Participant Profiles.** A total of 6 professionals took part in this study. Table 1 presents a visual representation of key participant demographics. The following section contains participant information and is arranged in the order in which the interviews were conducted.
Table 1.

**Participant Demographics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Khaleesi</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>School-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>School-based and University-wide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>School-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>School-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastie</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>School-based and University-wide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryellen</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>School-based</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participant 1: Khaleesi**

Khaleesi self-identified as Caucasian, female and in her fifties. She has been at the university for over five years and is a faculty member and senior leader with broad leadership experience and a wide span of control. Khaleesi led a project over the course of two years to conduct a staff reorganization which she described as a failure due to faulty and slow decision-making.

**Participant 2: Carol**

Carol self-identified as Caucasian, female and in her fifties. She has been a senior leader with cross-university responsibilities for many years; she also teaches. Recently, Carol collaborated with other leaders on a project. It was somewhat successful, but her strand is on hold, as it was part of a larger project which is currently delayed with no set completion timeline.

**Participant 3: Al**

Al self-identified as Caucasian, male and in his fifties. He has been a senior leader in a variety of roles at the university related to both undergraduate and graduate students. A few years
ago, Al led a project, which he explained was well-received and formed the foundation for subsequent services in use at the university.

**Participant 4: Summer**

Summer self-identified as Caucasian, female an in her thirties. She has held a variety of roles at the university where she has been for over ten years. As the project leader, Summer implemented a new student service. In the case of this project, there were stretches of waiting followed by a burst of activity. Though she characterized the outcome as successful, Summer lamented insufficient time to develop it further due to a recent change in her organization.

**Participant 5: Eastie**

Eastie self-identified as Caucasian, male and aged over sixty. He has held multiple roles for over ten years as a faculty member, senior leader, and university-wide committee member. Years back, Eastie led a school-based project; he viewed the implementation process as positive, and recently he led an update that proceeded at a faster pace due to that past groundwork.

**Participant 6: Maryellen**

Maryellen self-identified as Caucasian, female and in her late thirties. She has been a senior administrator in the school for a number of years, following a range of roles in other higher education institutions. After a short while following her hire, Maryellen was asked to manage a change project with a very brief timeframe, which was a challenging experience.

The volunteers who participated in this inquiry each provided rich, detailed accounts of their individual lived experiences, as well as detailed accounts as to the meaning those experiences have had to them.
Procedures

Specific procedures that the researcher adhered to analyze the gathered data follows, based on Smith et al.’s (2009) multi-step process (Jeong & Othman, 2016).

The Data Analysis Process

The process of analysis of the qualitative data collected entailed the following steps, which included 1) reading and re-reading the interview narrative, 2) initial noting, 3) developing emergent themes, 4) seeking connections across identified themes, 5) moving to the next case, and 6) identifying patterns across cases (Smith et al., 2009).

Step 1 – reading and re-reading the interview narrative. The analysis process began by reading the data several times throughout the data collection process. Each interview was reviewed by the researcher to ensure accurate capture of data. This phase allowed the researcher to correct errors, bracket assumptions, and to generate reflective remarks and marginal comments, which aided decision-making (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). When reviewing each transcript, the researcher actively considered the data in the participants’ accounts at four levels: 1) the narrative expression of the interviewee’s story and that person’s relationships with others, 2) the person’s use of metaphor, 3) the application of COR theory to that expression of experience, and 4) broader theoretical connections between the different interviews (Smith, 2004). Noting linguistic usage such as metaphor was an element in the process, as well (Smith, 2004; Smith et al., 2009). Finally, the researcher reviewed and interpreted the interview narrative with attention to the implications for that participant (Smith et al., 2009). Deconstructing the narrative was helpful to the process. For instance, one can read the text backward as well as underlining and free writing (Smith et al., 2009).
Step 2 - initial noting. The data analysis process involved different methods for the data collected in what Saldaña describes as the “bounded context” of the study site in this case (2012). Line by line analysis began with one case using initial noting of descriptive elements like emotions and assumptions conveyed by the interviewee (Smith et al., 2009). The coding was developed based on the themes identified by reviewing and reflecting on the interview transcripts (Smith, 2009). A draft list of coding categories was developed during the review of the first case to assist in categorizing the data during the first round of analysis. Once developed, data coding was based on a standard practice to ensure consistency upon subsequent cycles of review.

Coding entailed descriptive codes, explanatory codes (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2013), and thematic codes (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Descriptive codes pertained to the climate, time-based norms, and pace of both external and internal landscape of the site. Explanatory codes centered on emotional affects and values, as well as organizational dynamics and included critical events, pace, implementation issues, and influences on processes, decision making, and project direction (Saldaña, 2012). Each code was defined, and rules articulated for use in hand coding.

Refinement of the proposed coding followed with new codes added as needed (Saldaña, 2012; Smith et al., 2009).

Step 3 – developing emergent themes. Identification of what stands out to the researcher and why that may be important was pursued in the review of each case. Once each case was fully reviewed, patterns were identified and discussed in that case (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Shaw, 2010; Shaw et al., 2014). Then, the researcher sought connections across themes by rearranging those identified in a cohesive summary (Smith et al., 2009). When seeking patterns and connections, one can use the abstraction of like with like (Smith et al., 2009). Another approach is “subsumption” or placing one theme within another, while another
option entails the seeking of opposites (Smith et al., 2009, p. 97). One can also explore the function that a comment has in the narrative, such as bridging from one emotion to another during the dialogue (Smith et al., 2009). Discovering local meaning may be particularly useful in this case, as temporality is contextual (Smith et al., 2009). And finally, the frequency of comments can be a useful metric to consider when composing clusters of themes (Smith et al., 2009). Use of a word cloud application was helpful in this process, generated by copy/pasting each interviewee’s responses into an on-line cost-free software program. Review of the resulting frequency data was considered to verify emerging themes.

**Step 4 - seeking connections across identified themes.** During this round of analysis, the researcher engaged in data reduction, data display, and a search for patterns by clustering data based on conceptual guidance and by seeking logical chains of evidence for any themes discovered, particularly based on roles in the project and views of each participant regarding time as a resource (Smith et al., 2009). During this phase, data was verified by seeking negative evidence (Saldaña, 2012) and by gained feedback from informants as needed.

**Step 5 – moving to the next case.** Following the completion of the review of the first case with reading and re-reading the interview transcript, initial noting, identification of patterns and possible themes, the researcher moved on to the next case. The researcher sought new and different perspectives and noted evidence in support of any themes found in the first case (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Each case was systematically considered; only when the preliminary analysis was complete for the first case via the steps outlined was the next case considered (Shaw et al., 2014).

**Step 6 – identifying patterns across cases.** Following individual analysis, the researcher identified themes and patterns of meaning appearing in all the cases in the study
(Smith et al., 2009). Review of COR theory in relation to the findings was explored as an introduction to future thematics. The aim was to consider the meaning of each participant's lived experience and articulate common and divergent themes present in the studied group (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006). A table of themes can be useful with notations regarding the presence of those themes throughout the overall sample (Smith, et al., 2009). A final summary of findings was composed based on results generated in this phase of analysis.

**Criteria for Quality Qualitative Research**

This section explicates ethical considerations, credibility, transferability, self-reflexivity and transparency, and the internal audit. The section concludes with study limitations.

**Ethical Considerations**

Ethics touch the planning, conduct, reporting of research inquiry, and acting (Creswell, 2013) in tandem with issues of positionality and will be explored in this section.

**Protection of human subjects.** There were no at-risk individuals or minors involved; all of the potential participants in the study are professionals. The inquiry involved interviews with the participants and, as such, did not inflict any harm on the individuals. The study interviews were conducted in a worksite other than the researcher’s place of employment, to mitigate influences or biases. Participation was voluntary, and the participants received only a small gift card ($20) for their assistance. A standard interview protocol was utilized (Appendix C). All received a copy of the final report when completed. The nature of the interviews concern day to day activities while working on a project. As such, subjects that may cause trauma to the individuals were not covered. The participants benefited from receiving a copy of the final report evaluating time and temporal customs that may inform future project planning, operations, and leadership approaches.
**Informed consent.** Each participant was provided with the standard Informed Consent Document utilized by Northeastern University to apprise them of their rights and the voluntary nature of their participation Appendix B. This included their right to terminate their participation in the study at any time. Everyone signed this document and received a copy. All participants were autonomous individuals, capable of understanding and giving consent.

**Confidentiality.** If the data, results, and findings are not properly confidential, someone could identify one or more of the research participants, which might impact them negatively at work in terms of performance reviews, compensation, and career advancement (Roberts, 2010). Confidentiality was maintained through the omission of location names and specific names throughout the study. To limit identification, pseudonyms were utilized, and a key was maintained separately from the interview transcripts by the researcher. Collection of unnecessary demographics and data was eliminated.

**Data storage.** The interview recordings were saved on a password-protected Android phone/digital recorder and were destroyed once transcribed as soon as was feasible. Electronic files (word documents) were stored on a password-protected laptop computer accessible only to the researcher. Any files printed during analysis were safeguarded in a locked file cabinet at the researcher’s home. Materials were returned at the request of the participant and otherwise destroyed following completion of the study.

**Credibility**

The researcher employed a variety of measures designed to maintain the integrity of the research. Specifically, potential threats to internal validity, in this case, include subject characteristics and attitudes, interview location, and researcher bias and familiarity. Steps were taken to mitigate such threats beginning with IRB approval for the study. Subsequently, careful
recruitment and selection of research subjects with whom the researcher does not work reduced bias. Encouraging the subject to choose the interview site increased the participant’s control. An interview protocol was utilized to mitigate any bias relating to the researcher’s experience. The researcher maintained sustained engagement with the participants over the course of the inquiry. Evidence collected to substantiate identified themes was maintained under lock and key.

**Transferability**

To grasp the full meaning of a person’s lived experience, the IPA method employs an individual case study approach (Shaw et al., 2014). Attention to the detailed language and contextual elements in the interviews can reveal facets and nuances of behavior, beliefs, and meaning by the researcher who is embedded with the participant, and a “thick description” results (Geertz, 1973b). The fact that the sample size was small could impact the applicability of the findings, but the depth of the IPA methodology allows the collection of extensive granular detail about each case which enhanced understanding of each person’s experience, as well as patterns inherent in the culture under review (Creswell, 2013). Such collaborative inquiry allows the invisible to become visible and allows others to access that experience and apply it to other situations (Sparrowe & Mayer, 2011). Briscoe (2005) delved into the goal of creating equitable access through collaboration rather than exclusion. If discourse is an element of ethical inclusion as the author asserted, the researcher must also reach out to and engage others in an ongoing conversation based on the findings from this research study. Such a conversation could occur in the researcher’s workplace (if there is interest) and/or elsewhere. In that way, as a human resources leader, the researcher can apply and extend the research conclusions to influence business practice and thereby improve the experience for those engaged in change project work.
in higher education environments. As a scholar-practitioner, this researcher strives to seek ways to transparently share the results of the research inquiry to achieve the goal of inclusion in the service of social justice in the workplace. This aim may entail activities such as presenting at workshops or conferences, participating in communities of practice, and publishing articles.

**Self-reflexivity and Transparency**

The researcher’s interest in this topic is grounded in her role as a higher education human resources practitioner and counseling psychologist who has engaged in change project work. As a woman with a past socioeconomic status as working-class, the researcher has experienced microaggressions and overt discrimination during her lifetime. But while her gender may exclude her from privileged groups, her race has allowed her the freedom to navigate such territory. According to Rotter (1990), one holds a belief about the degree of power one has in life, which can help to explain one’s behavior. At least a portion of the researcher’s sense of power derives from her place in dominant groups (White, educated, and now middle-class) and the attending derived benefits. Takacs (2002) explained that the deficit stance to researcher positionality entails the power a dominant group may hold over others with the potential to influence voice and approach. Those in the non-dominant position may not hold the power to fully express their truth (Briscoe, 2005). The researcher focused on overcoming personal demographic positioning to avoid the act of misinterpreting or dismissing the views of a participant whose identity aligns with non-dominant groups (Day, 2012). The act of reflection confronts that deficit stance and its biases and is a key ingredient for action research to achieve and maintain neutrality per Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009). It is crucial to engage in assumption testing, seek imbalance and balance as evidence is gathered, considered and validated (Freire,
Thus, the researcher solicited and considered the feedback from peers, professors, and colleagues as this research evolved.

**The Internal Audit**

An internal audit was maintained to provide a paper trail of evidence so that an independent auditor could review the conducted research activities. This audit trail included the research questions, research field notes/research journal/memo audio recordings, annotated transcripts, tables of themes, draft reports, other devices, as well as the final report. As Shaw (2010) described, the audit trail indicates the relationship between identified excerpts, to emerging themes, to super-ordinate themes.

**Limitations**

The demographics of the respondent population were homogenous in race, as the six participants were white. The data for this study were collected by self-report, and there was no secondary data source to validate the collected data. The researcher assumes that participants responded to the interview questions honestly and accurately; the rigor of this inquiry was bounded by the ability of each participant to have fully expressed her/his unique views of reality (Smith et al., 2009). Moreover, the researcher's capacity to reflect upon those narratives and derive thematic meaning from them, in this case, is an additional limitation (Smith et al., 2009). This study may be limited in generalizability as the sampling was not representative of a larger population. The IPA method was used to emphasize the importance of an idiographic focus, and this research was intended to reflect some of the lived experiences of the participants who experienced the time-based phenomenon under study (Smith et al., 2009). Given that small slice of experience, it may be difficult to apply the findings to a wider population perhaps even within the domain of higher education. Moreover, the research study was located in a large private
higher education setting so may not be generalized to smaller private or any sized public higher education settings.

In conclusion, even given the articulated limitations, this study remains viable. There is robust evidence in support of the approach taken in relation to the study of time and work such as the examples of successful studies by scholars mentioned earlier in this chapter. Furthermore, although an intense focus on individual experience and patterns amongst a small group may reduce the extent that IPA research is transferable or universally generalizable, the encountered detail and meaning of lived experience may serve to inform a reader's understanding of lived experience (Smith & Osborn, 2003; Wagstaff et al., 2014).

Conclusion

This chapter began with an explication of qualitative research and the IPA method. An outline of the study processes and procedures and data analysis methods followed. The steps taken by the researcher to mitigate bias and address ethical considerations were identified. The limitations of this research were also acknowledged. The next chapter will explore the research findings that emerged from the interview data, organized into superordinate and subthemes.
Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis

The purpose of this study was to investigate how professional administrators in a higher education setting made sense of their lived experiences when engaged in change projects. Professional administrators engaged in such work often experience challenges with business processes and resource constraints and the ways in which they can succeed both professionally and personally. This chapter provides a synthesis of the four super-ordinate themes and eleven subthemes identified from the research data using the IPA method. Reading, reviewing and commenting as a means of making sense of the six participants’ own sense-making (the double hermeneutic) informed the thematic discovery and a robust audit trail. The focus throughout this analysis remains on each participant’s endeavor to make sense and meaning of temporal experience (Fade, 2004). Specifically, the identified super-ordinate themes are comprised of the emerging subthemes found in the interviews clustered together by their relevance to one another. The super-ordinate themes and their subthemes were: Encountering Change (Embracing complexity, Understanding leadership styles, Meeting younger people's expectations), Navigating Scarcity (Acknowledging how pace impacts time, Battling frustration with bureaucracy, Grappling with resource constraints), Employing Best Practices (Performing due diligence, Documenting agreements), and Coping with New Realities (Seeking workarounds, Using one’s voice, Fostering perspective and acceptance).

Table 1 displays the super-ordinate and subthemes that manifested through the analysis process, as well as the recurrence of each theme across the group of participants. The analysis revealed common super-ordinate themes between the six participants, but there were also differences identified based on project culture and individual experience. Subthemes were identified as those recurring in at least four of the participants’ interview data.
Table 2

Identification of Recurring Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Super-ordinate Themes</th>
<th>AI</th>
<th>Carol</th>
<th>Eastie</th>
<th>Khaleesi</th>
<th>Maryellen</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encountering Change</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embracing complexity</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding leadership styles</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting younger people’s expectations</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigating New Resource Scarcity</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The influence of pace on time</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battling frustration with bureaucracy</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grappling with resource constraints</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employing Best Practices</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing due diligence</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documenting agreements</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coping with New Realities</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking workarounds</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using one’s voice</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering perspective and acceptance</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Encountering Change

The first super-ordinate theme that emerged in this study captures the participants’ descriptions as they encountered change and new organizational realities in their workplace contexts. Though the participants were employed by the same higher education institution, they worked and conducted their change projects either at one of the schools, or university-wide, or a combination of the two. The researcher discovered three specific areas of convergence across the participants’ related accounts. First, an emphasis on complexity emerged; secondly, a subtheme concerning changing leadership styles arose, and finally, the influence of certain generational differences on lived experience became clear, as explicated in the following sections.
Embracing Complexity

AI, Carol, Maryellen, and Summer shared their thoughts about the university context in which they worked, contrasting multi-faceted work within a school with university-wide complexity. Recently, Carol who operated at the university-wide level collaborated with other leaders on a project to introduce a management system to serve multiple university areas. It was somewhat successful, but her project strand was placed on hold, as it was part of a broader university-wide project which is currently delayed with no set completion timeline. She described the overlapping systems of policies, practices, and information that resulted from “different schools and college cultures and ways of doing things” and utilized the word “complicated” repeatedly during the interview. She described interlacing systems and the daunting impediments against implementing projects across cultures and stated that “part of what makes us so complicated is ... customizing...over the years we've been customizing ... then people leave ... there's nobody supported anymore”. She also observed that staff perceptions differed in “the way they view how difficult change is, especially in a university”. As someone with experience in both school and university-wide settings, Carol placed herself at the nexus of the diverse tangle of systems and disclosed her journey of discovery about those systems. Calling upon her prior experience in the private sector that included a failed project that she depicted, Carol chose to peer beneath the surface in this situation in a way she explained that she might not have in the past. Carol likened complexity to a “time sink” and a feature of her ongoing work world with which she must grapple, in order to achieve her professional goals.

Like Carol’s expression, according to AI, university policies and practices could be extremely complex and hard to translate into the automated systems popping up on campus.
Linguistically dissimilar from Carol's repeated use of the word “complicated”, Al employed the term “tricky” to conjure up the complexity around him, “managing exceptions was tricky.” A few years ago, Al led a project designed to track student data, which he explained formed the foundation for subsequent services in use at the university. Specifically, Al recognized the ways in which the prevailing convolutedness could have ramifications for those working within and across systems, from the extra time needed to complete work to unintended impacts on staff. Upon reflection, he declared that business needs must drive any project's course since, “at the end of the day, the system is going to have to accommodate reality; reality isn't going to mold itself to the system.” Al made sense of his lived experience of complexity on campus by accepting and confronting it in a pragmatic fashion, which appeared to be congruent with his preference to be perceived as a “hard worker” who got the job done. Maryellen described her experience as one of “putting out fires” as from her perspective complex structures and systems emerged in her workplace. Her comments echoed Al’s characterization that complexity was an integral feature of the surroundings in which they operated.

Complexity took a different form for Summer. As a designated project leader, Summer implemented a new communication tool for students. In the case of her project, there were stretches of waiting followed by bursts of activity, which differed from her lived experience in her previous higher education institution in which she had commenced with projects and proceeded without delay. This was one example of how Summer expressed her awareness of the temporal norms permeating the human culture surrounding her. She then explained that full understanding the complex rhythm of the academic year was critical to her success on campus, “I found with the higher education cycle, you need a full calendar year”. Upon joining the school, she had “missed [student] orientation in August” and suffered a disconnect from her new
students that bothered her even in retrospect. There were many overlapping schedule norms that lent complexity to the school’s evolving calendar per Summer. This experience presented an unexpected challenge to her as she settled into her new role. Summer appeared to be driven by excellence, so missing the initial connection to her first cohort of students because she began her role after student orientation caused her to assess her performance as less than top notch. Her lived experience provides evidence of the link between temporality, job satisfaction, and professional identity.

These participants viewed time differently as each confronted the intricacies of their lived experience in this higher education setting. Specifically, for Carol and Maryellen complexity required an investment of time, for Al that complexity required a straightforward attitude towards time as a resource, and for Summer, grasping the complexity of a culture’s temporal norms as soon as possible was key to her success. All four participants felt the need to comprehend and manage that campus complexity to successfully steward their time and energy. Furthermore, the process of managing such complexity may have influenced how they considered their professional identities.

Understanding Leadership Styles

In discussing the projects that they had pursued as well as their current work, four participants voiced a variety of emotions regarding changes in leadership. They focused their comments specifically on the impact of different leadership style. The respondents contrasted the style of the former leader with the new leader and the impact of that style on their experiences with project work. Individual stances ranged from optimistic expressions regarding the style of the new leader voiced by Summer and Maryellen to dissatisfied and/or concerned about the future, as expressed by Khaleesi and Al.
A short while following her hire, Maryellen was asked to project manage a merging of offices and functions within a very brief timeframe. Maryellen reflected that she “loved our previous [leader whose] … overall persona was just likable, and…always made you feel...you are super important”. In contrast, her new leader displayed a distant style, was less visible to the staff and concentrated on “advancing the school” forward academically. Though she wholeheartedly supported that goal, Maryellen made clear that her staff group was in the thick of adjusting to the new style, too. She noted that the prior leader “knew their names and cared about what they thought” in contrast to the new leader who had “just a different style.” Maryellen’s articulation reflected concern about her own feelings and those of her staff. Summer, too found that “I think it might be too soon … it's an entirely different leadership style... [we are] kind of figuring out how … priorities affect our day to day.” Both commentaries reflect the respondents’ thinking through the leadership change and what it meant for them in terms of human connection, if not professional engagement.

Providing greater nuance to a description of the change in leadership style on campus, both Al and Khaleesi pointed to the difference between faculty and those with roots from industry, in terms of decision-making. Regarding the faculty, Khaleesi stated, “they like to discuss for the sake of discussing”, were “deliberative” and led without “urgency”. Echoing Khaleesi’s perspective, Al remarked that faculty “get wrapped up in the abstract and forget about what it takes to put ideas into practice”. Since their new leader hailed from the faculty side, their concern was that such abstraction might slow day to day progress at the school. Al also commented that current leadership was also “much more data-focused”, which meant he must generate a greater number of analyses, a time-consuming activity. However, Al was circumspect when he concluded, “but again, whenever there's a changing of the guard…people want to
change things”. The data revealed that both participants utilized the leadership style comparison as a means of individual sensemaking.

Change can be painful on a personal level as demonstrated by a few of the respondents. The research shows that participants including Khaleesi, Summer, and Maryellen seemed visibly distraught that they were unable to act in the autonomous ways that they had in the past. For instance, Khaleesi led a project to conduct a staff reorganization which she perceived as a failure. She shared that while the past was “sweet, perfect” and included “trust”, the present was “glacial”, made her “miserable”, and produced “failure”. Her former leader collaborated with her, and they shared a mutual trust. She held a high degree of personal control and could take independent action. In contrast, Khaleesi said that recently, “I've missed more deadlines in the last six months that I have missed in my entire 30-year career.” Those who hold greater power than she determined the pace of work. New power dynamics had thwarted her project. Now they were in the throes of “undoing it epically”; all her prior project work was reversed because the new leadership which introduced new priorities could not support the change that she had begun to implement.

Khaleesi expressed sentiments of deep frustration through her comments; she did not find her new leadership effective in managing the current challenges and was sorely disappointed as a result. Though Khaleesi expressed with bravado, the power dynamic had shifted in her world, and she appeared to grieve the loss of agency, trust, and alignment. This loss of strong support and trust which represented an intangible resource with which to conduct projects was discouraging to her and a blow to her identity as a leader. Furthermore, the current lack of leadership support appeared to foster a sense of disengagement from the wider school and perpetuated in Khaleesi a feeling of resignation about and reduction of hope for her future there.
Like Khaleesi's statements regarding the feelings of loss that transformation may carry, when asked about her perception of the change in her work, Summer lamented:

There was a lot of proactive work that I could do... be like on top of things and know the cycles better... I used to be able to do so many things...more of those smaller, crazy things that we used to have time to do ...different event planning.

To Summer, she was now limited in time for the future due to current demands from students and other work-related goals. She had to spend her time to address the day to day with less time on the strategic. So, the leadership style change resulted in added workload in one area and reduced her chance to engage in other emotionally fulfilling job activities, which thereby decreased her attachment to the overall work at hand.

**Meeting Younger People's Expectations**

Four of the participants addressed the style evidenced by those in their school hailing from a younger generation and how that generational manner impacted the respondents' time, energy, and lived experience of work. Maryellen communicated that in her experience staff younger than herself held unrealistic expectations regarding pay, “I've had someone in this office come and sit down and have a real conversation with me about why they should get a raise because they turned 30”. She also provided a few examples of younger staff who were unwilling to work overtime on special projects, which she perceived as problematic in terms of achieving optimal service delivery. This new trend also proved personally puzzling since earlier in her own career, she had taken any and every opportunity to pitch in. Moreover, younger staff did not appear to understand the underlying business side of education; it’s “turn off or a disengaging factor to them per Maryellen. As a result, they focused less on urgency towards managing
resources and more on human connection. She paused and reflected that “…work has a different meaning for me” than for those younger team members. The apparent lesser degree of commitment articulated by younger staff impinged on Maryellen's work time allotment and thereby her personal capacity to achieve work goals. This new reality also phenomenologically crimped her notion of the meaning of work, generating a trifecta of disappointment.

Moreover, younger university staff desired greater transparency in communication regarding all aspects of work pointing to a high need for time spent on communication to foster trustful relationships, according to three of the respondents. Addressing the need for transparency, Al reflected:

As you move up within the organization, you’re in a position to have to explain to folks who report to you. You have to understand that you're not privy to everything … it's impossible to know … you can't be in every meeting … you would like perfect information … it's just not going to happen.

Though time draining, this experience was important to Al since he valued trust, was very loyal to the mission of his school and aimed to inspire the staff with whom he collaborated. Like Al, Eastie also encountered the “fear of my own employees”, and he “had to deal with those type of issues, getting confidence and all that stuff”. For Eastie, this was a process that required time, though he appeared comfortable with the need to do that extra work to ensure all were fully engaged in the work at hand.

Describing another characteristic of the younger workforce, the pace of action posed a challenge for those younger on Khaleesi’s team. She shared that they could find the culture “unsatisfying”, as they preferred a faster pace of action because they were used to “insta-
and insta- that”. She explained that they got “stressed”, “burned out”, “disheartened”, and they left the university. Khaleesi recognized the deep impact of time on the pace of work in this expression, and she also reflected a sense of helplessness regarding how she might remedy the dissatisfaction of her staff members.

Summer utilized the term “student” the most frequently of any of the respondents. In contrast to the other participants who considered younger staff members with whom they interacted, Summer reflected closely on the younger student client population under her purview. She found that current students required a great expenditure of her time and attention, “the millennial generation…and some of the challenges that come with that”. She observed that they required greater attention and “handholding” than her past students had needed. Like Eastie’s acknowledgment of the younger cohort’s call for transparency, Summer remarked that “things just need to be broken down more...explanations of ‘why’ for kind of every step.” She also found that “the answer of 'it's university policy that we can't do this' isn't good enough… [I] have to go into the detail, the deep detail”. The respondent in this instance provided a layered interpretation moving from an empathic account to a critical analysis of the context in which she worked. She cared deeply for her students but could also step back and observe how evolving human needs modified work processes and shrank her time-related resources.

Summer's lived experience echoed that of her colleagues’ articulation of their experiences with the younger staff. The research shows that it was difficult for Summer and the other participants to understand their younger staff particularly when they needed extra help to complete project work. Such experience generated frustration for them. These expressions substantiate a general observation that a generational difference contributed to the current culture, altered the time resources, and ultimately the temporal experience of the participants.
Conclusion

As explored in this super-ordinate theme, human dynamics played a significant role in how administrative professionals made sense of change within the context of their workplace. From the evidence, it seems that there was an ever-increasing complexity within the surrounding higher education landscape, and participants in such contexts held unique views of that intricacy. Another tentative finding is that a change in leadership style reduced the time available to live one’s values and negatively contributed to one’s identity as a proactive professional. At a hermeneutic level, the participants’ responses might also suggest that the resulting feelings of distrust towards new leaders and uncertainty regarding the future could influence these professional administrators’ motivations on future projects and work, as well as their underlying sense of agency and identity.

The implicit power held by younger staff coupled with the explicit power levied by the past and present top leaders at the school/university influenced the lived experience of the respondents working within a changing dynamic. The subthemes portray the contextual environment surrounding the respondents, some of the norms driving activities in that landscape, the values held by populations intersecting within the school and university community, and the various power dynamics present and in play.

Interpretative work tentatively suggests that the need to address complicated situations on campus coupled with the ambiguity stemming from leadership changes and generational differences entailed a possible disengaging impact on how these participants pursued project work. From the evidence shared by these participants, one may conclude that though change may bring opportunity, the changes at this institution carried uncertainty and challenge, as well as strong feelings.
Navigating New Resource Scarcity

The second super-ordinate theme concerned the ways in which evolving norms in this setting manifested a new trend of a scarcity of resources in a few different ways. As explored in the following sections, three subthemes surfaced that centered on the active involvement of the participants in their workplace. The influence of pace on time a resource emerged. A theme of frustration with bureaucracy also emerged for these participants, as it eroded their patience and their time. A third subtheme that describes an overall reduction in resources emerged, as well:

less time, less funding, and less staffing reserves were now available in this setting than had been in the past.

The Influence of Pace on Time

Four participants explained that the changes occurring on this campus in the past few years ranged widely from demographic shifts to program creation to new infrastructure initiatives (to name a few) and resulted in a variety of pace issues that affected project processes, as well as culture. For instance, considering resource constraints and the need to adjust strategy to meet new organizational demands, Maryellen commented on the atmosphere of constant change and the fast pace at the school, “[We have had] changing the team, a change of culture”.

These factors resulted in a “very reactive” atmosphere in which it was “difficult to have a real vision” as she needed to respond immediately to shifting priorities. As another example of a change in pace, she depicted an office move that resulted from the staffing adjustments that required her to move around between different spaces and reduced her available time:

And we also changed physical locations... We were in a completely different space.

Because we couldn't fit everybody...then they moved us here...the other space was
actually, in my opinion, better because it … [had] collaboration points and this is just … a hallway with offices… I came from an open office environment …my first month [here] I didn't sit in my office…. I have to be … where the people are.

As Maryellen reflected on these unforeseen changes that caused her to work rapidly, she identified that the unexpected alterations curtailed her ability to foster engagement with her staff. The new physical surroundings necessitated a further drain on her time as she attempted to remain in touch with her existing and new staff. Yet another time sink contributed to her own growing dissatisfaction with her career at the university.

Likewise, Al found that there is “much more work to do here; it's a good chunk...so there's an urgency”. The pace of work increased as new projects either appeared on his to-do list or newly added projects then grew in dimension and reach. For instance, leaders “want to start this new master’s program”. The original scope was small and then suddenly doubled per leadership direction. Though Al seemed sanguine in response to the unexpected uptick, the increased workload represented a source of work stress that seemed a portent of future strain. Due to lack of time, this assignment was coupled with a loss for him of the student advising he used to enjoy. He captured the possible result linguistically using the metaphor of an engine “starting to smoke”. What was once a smooth-running train might become explosive at the rate they now traveled. Al’s changing conception regarding his ability to keep up was evident in this description.

The academic calendar posed unique temporal boundaries. Like Summer, Eastie noted the schedule norms present in a higher education environment and the ways in which those norms constrained the capacity for project leaders to proceed with new initiatives. He explained that:
In higher ed[ucation], you only have two primary semesters and so you need to use the summer for big projects, and you cannot introduce major change during an academic year...faculty and students are not going to be too thrilled [if a change were to occur during a semester].

So, in order to succeed in the face of changing visions on campus, per Eastie, one must match the project pace to “the environment” even if one “liked it to be quicker”. Waiting could be part of any new change project, as a result. Furthermore, Eastie said that the “scale is different” between a school and the entire university which in his experience influences his resources, pace, and workload. Eastie appeared confident in his ability to navigate the different temporal parameters on campus, crossing from local to universal and back.

Khaleesi described the pace of work with her former leader as fast, but now with new leadership, it was “glacial”. Addressing the impact of decision-making norms on pace, in addition to an increased volume of work that now required a faster work pace was underscored by Khaleesi. She further expressed that change at the school was tantamount to “turning around the Queen Mary”, her frustration evident in this metaphor. She explained how new initiatives and mandates were communicated, “from the Provost and the Deans”. Implicit in Khaleesi’s words was the direction of power and its impact on the pace of work. Calls to action “come down” to those who must implement, and those administrators did not have much say in the shape or timing nested in those required directives.

These participants experienced their change project work and their day to day work as accelerated. Furthermore, it appears that the pace of work on this campus that has inexorably increased over the past several years will not calibrate back a slower speed since the participants indicated that there were new projects on the horizon. That new normal pace bumped up against
the existing traditions of the academic calendar which did not accommodate the new type of project work demanded by environmental pressure. This pressure manifested in the form of increased workload for these participants set against leadership expectations of responsiveness despite slower decision making and resource allocation. A perhaps invisible but clearly felt temporal friction ensued and produced stress for those involved in meeting the new demands.

**Battling Frustration with Bureaucracy**

Four of the six participants emphasized the relationship between central bureaucracy and the pace of change within a school or at the whole university. The respondents discussed the role of the central administration as a core stakeholder in the implementation of change at the local level and evaluated it as a source of delay and a drain on their time resources as they conducted projects. For instance, according to Khaleesi:

> When I have to report in to the central administration, I have to go by their rules and their processes which are, by and large, much more convoluted, much more complicated and take forever…my biggest interface is with human resources of the university, which ‘glacial’ does not even come close…and they have constant turnover. … I've constantly got a new business partner … he or she doesn't know anything because they've just been hired.

Thus, for Khaleesi factors including the “wrong people setting the priorities…, HR bureaucracy, central administration's ...complicated rules”, and slow decision-making abounded and thwarted her ability to achieve her goals, slowing her progress. Those factors coalesced to impinge on her agency and frustrated her. Likewise, obtaining the necessary sign-offs to launch a project could be challenging. Summer described that in the case of the contract for her project, “we figured out
what we wanted, but the contract process took forever” because she needed assistance, review, and approval from central administration. When asked about her perception of possible barriers to successful project implementation, Maryellen also referenced the human resources function at the university, as Khaleesi had done. She remarked that the central human resources office was “by far the worst I’ve ever experienced…disjointed”. She found that the demand for increased services went unaccompanied by increases in staffing, “it's like impossible…. it’s really hard…you don't get new salary lines.” These participants expressed that the factor of a central control function that was uncommunicative or lacked sufficient capacity and expertise to respond diminished their available time. As a result, they had to repeatedly request services or approvals, their time was drained, and project delays ensued.

Additionally, the quality of assistance one could expect from other centralized service providers varied, according to the participants. For instance, Carol concluded that the consultant assigned to her strand of the project that she described “wasn't as good as the other one”. She was unable to secure any additional assistance independently and needed to rely on the central bureaucracy for assistance, which delayed her project’s progress. Despite her concerns, she tested her own assumptions and added that the consultants may have had heavy workloads, too. Ultimately, though, she was not completely satisfied with the expertise provided. She remarked that “you’ve got to get it right”. As she experienced project delays, she shared that all were left “wondering where we were going to fit in all this and was it going to work for us”. On the surface, the project was distressingly behind schedule, and underlying that unease was a concern regarding quality. Given the extensive nature of the project, Carol felt anxiety regarding her own professional reputation over time as she remained at the mercy of others to deliver on her needs.
In sum, respondents provided examples that illustrated certain areas of a central administration that hindered their progress due to the attendant waiting for guidance, answers, and approvals. Those obstacles were both a drain on their time and their patience, which in turn produced stress for them. The excerpts highlight the potential bearing of systemic hurdles on the individual lived experiences of professional administrators and serve to elucidate the connection between temporal pace and bureaucracy – the more of the latter, the slower the former.

**Grappling with Resource Constraints**

Top leadership recently announced several new school or university-wide initiatives to raise tuition revenue and/or decrease operating costs. As a result, five of the six participants needed to stretch their available time. This common theme was voiced in various ways by the respondents. Though mission critical, recently announced university and school projects designed to increase revenue proved time consuming for all involved. Specifically, these new initiatives added to existing time and resource management challenges; per Carol, “they're all short resourced, tasked with increasing numbers, you know, so they have business unit pressures…the margins are tight, you know, so every dollar counts.” In contrast to profit-making entities, Carol illustrated a distinctive characteristic of non-profit higher education when she shared, “…it's different...there's a very different calculus at the University …. you can't keep raising (the price)”. These excerpts illustrate that this unique facet of the higher education sector presented a large constraint and challenge for any leader engaged in driving an agenda forward in the research setting.

Maryellen observed that a new goal at her school was to increase revenue each year for the next … years”. She was not included in the decision-making process, “I was just told”, and during the interview, Maryellen appeared visibly chagrined by this exclusion. The new objective
required the creation of new programs and an increase in the delivery of existing services within very short time frames with no additional budget support. She was asked to achieve the new goals using her existing staff’s time. Similarly, Summer remarked that due to new budget restrictions, staffing was reduced and the projects that she enjoyed planning in the past had been cut back without her input. As a result, she did not get to use her “planning nerdiness” and “now the bandwidth isn't there because I have to do so much more” of the day to day. Her face appeared with eyes downcast to reflect Summer’s disappointment. Summer also referenced “scalability” as an issue. One university-wide office in which she had worked in the past handled a great work volume at “a frenetic pace...all the time”. She categorized her current assignment as less stressful but still a reach, as the volume inexorably increased. Both participants experienced that their areas were understaffed and that this resulted in an escalation of work for them and their teams. Carol also commented on another dimension of resources when she explained that, “we didn't have any savings” from her university-wide project that was meant to both streamline operations and accrue decreased expenses.

In sum, these three participants were concerned about the level of service they would be able to provide to their student constituents as a result of the time drains that yielded limited time banks, leading to increased pressures. They committed to quality, and it is evident in the experiences shared by these participants that as resources were diverted, that quality was at risk. Resources were critical to them as they tackled new demands, but the storehouses on which they relied in the past were now diminishing.

Eastie led a school-based introduction of a new system. He viewed the implementation process as successful, and he recently led a system update that from his point of view proceeded at a fast pace due to that prior groundwork. Eastie’s sense-making about his experiences with
resource management diverged somewhat from that of other participants’ perspectives. In contrast to the others’ lived experiences, if the school leadership supported the rationale for a project, Eastie “had money” and could advocate for and obtain “additional…discretionary funding…which provided extra leverage”. However, he differentiated that local norm with the wider context, “but when you look at the full university, there's a lot more people involved… bureaucracy…funding is different”. Like the other respondents, he found that the process to gain resources at the university level was challenging. This echoed the subtheme of battling frustration with bureaucracy, as even though Eastie possessed a high degree of agency within his school, his degree of power declined when he operated at the university level.

Khaleesi explored the role played by resource reductions on her staff. She conveyed that top leadership often chose not to include staff as projects were designed. However, staff were dedicated and worked very hard on implementation and often “without adequate recognition”. For her, acknowledgment of work was a key component in crafting an engaging work experience and successful change. That sense of connection eroded in tandem with resource reductions.

Overall resource supply and the threat of further loss in that supply weighed heavily on the minds of these participants as they made sense of their lived experiences. Their concerns as leaders ranged from revenue, to cost, to the drive to stretch time to cover a lack of staff, to a short supply of staff recognition. Of note was the care and concern for others shared by the respondents - each participant also strove to relieve current staff from overwork and underappreciation, resulting in yet again another source of time consumption and personal stress.

**Conclusion**
As explored in this super-ordinate theme, the university’s cultural norms regarding time and decision-making played a significant role in how administrative professionals stulted resources within their workplace context. The participants’ responses revealed their concerns about an increased pace and workload at the school or university-wide level. Each respondent aimed to surmount administrative hurdles and a lack of resources such as staffing or adequate time needed, in order to accomplish the new objectives on campus. These respondents led projects and people and presented themselves as committed professionals, but the proverbial pie necessary to either successfully complete workflows underway or to actualize a newly desired vision was quickly shrinking. Phenomenologically, that tightening impeded both progress and a personal sense of accomplishment in service to others.

In summary, the accounts of these participants would lend support to the construction of a convergent theme that cautiously points toward the ways in which felt pressure may manifest itself in the lived experience of stress. Further explication of this theme would necessarily discuss the idiographic accounts as well as interrelated issues concerned with agency, control, and the influence of work pressure on the sense of self.

**Employing Best Practices**

The third super-ordinate theme explores the ways in which these respondents addressed complexity and constraints in their professional roles by applying what they knew to be robust management practices, with a focus on assumption testing and the setting of agreements. Though four of the participants did not share many comments on best practices, two subthemes related to professional practice emerged from the data based on the personal experiences of the respondents as they faced new growing complexity and diminishing resources.
Performing Due Diligence

Four of the participants highlighted that listening closely to others represented a vital part of successful change efforts. Carol claimed that it was critical to test assumptions about requirements and to “ask questions” before commencing with a project. She noted that in one instance a vendor oversold a new system's capacity that resulted in production problems later, which she perceived as a waste of time and financial resources. This occurred per Carol because no one listened to the end users' desired outcomes up front, and all involved simply assumed that the new system would handle those needs. Similarly, when she took the lead in merging two offices, Maryellen encouraged her staff members to test assumptions, “let's question everything”. She held one on one meetings with every person and then hung up paper sheets to collect information anonymously, since “no one would tell me” anything. Maryellen took a creative stance to inclusion when she recognized her staff members’ discomfort with direct communication with her, perhaps since trust had not yet been built up during the early days of her tenure.

Eastie also felt that investing initially with stakeholders to explore their perceptions paid off in the long run, “understanding the tool from the client's point of view...made it much easier 10 years later” when they launched the next project phase. Moreover, Eastie reflected that if he had additional time, he “would visit the offices more”. He felt that “there's (sic) ways in which you can help people be more productive and happier, but you have to kind of see things”. Eastie honored the expertise of others when he commented that “what they bring to the table in many cases we don't have (sic), which is they understand their business expertise and so the two come together, and it kind of works.” Expanding on Eastie's reflections, Carol also explained that it was key to foster stakeholder engagement through active listening when launching a project:
Communication...buy in...at the front end...makes the time issues less of an issue...understanding what the value is and believing in the value of it and thinking that, you know, in the long run, that this time is worth spent. What ended up falling through the cracks...I can deal with that later. I'll fix that later...that makes it easier to sort of justify the time.

This excerpt demonstrates that Carol aligned the investment of active listening and engagement with a means of stewarding time resources. Similarly, Khaleesi asserted that it was critical to include end users on project formulation, “the wrong decision-makers are placed on projects...those managing projects do not listen and include those who actually do the work”.

In conclusion, the due diligence either witnessed elsewhere or successfully employed by these participants centered on including those impacted by a change and listening to them carefully by a variety of means. As these respondents concluded, this approach paid off in terms of engagement and efficiency. To be in tune with others was critical to success, so the practice was well worth the initial investment of their time.

**Documenting Agreements**

The art of active listening extended to the realm of decision-making for four of the participants. For instance, Al commented that the negotiation of agreements on how a project would proceed, as well as the desired end results, was critical. He shared, “I think I used my power as a gatekeeper to be able to say, to kind of have the conversation of what level of tolerance are we willing to live with”, in terms of the degree of quality. Al also noted that a lack of brainstorming and agreement setting before “you had to operationalize” limited his efficiency when stretching resources. Likewise, Eastie reflected that clients might have ambitious timelines,
so it was key to consider an initial target completion date as a “draft” and to explore the needs and project process to fully explore potential time sinks. For him, that process entailed the need to “negotiate and develop” unless it was a “drop dead” deadline based on business need. Eastie stated that it was essential to have a “charter defining roles, responsibilities”. Further, he aimed for “transparency in documentation” that was “formal” to avoid conflict as a project moved forward. He reflected on the span of project delays “...I think it varies on the size of the project, and so if it's small to medium - three to six months, if it's medium and above - six months to a year”. From this narrative, it is apparent that Eastie was aware of the temporal implications of collaborating with others and had a distinct plan for managing those relationships, in order to optimize critical resources, including time. These excerpts describe context-specific and personal strategies to manage the uncertainty associated with complexity. Agreements allowed active learning, negotiation, and voice for both Al and Eastie.

In contrast to Eastie's project experiences, Summer shared her sense of frustration as she noted a dearth of documentation in her sphere of operations. She shared that there is “no framework, no structure” in place for her programs’ policies. In response, Summer decided that one way to reduce her own current workload and associated time pressures would be to “get some policies down on paper... I'd love to be able to create a whole …manual...that's the kind of …being prepared and being the proactive piece that I really loved”. One reading of this interpretation might suggest that time spent on this sort of activity would enhance operations as well as her own lived experience of work and satisfaction with her work role. Again, memorializing agreed upon guidelines could reduce future uncertainty and enhance agency for Summer.
Though others across campus did not do so with the same frequency, Maryellen attempted to keep pace with local changes by documenting them in the university-wide policy manual. Like Summer, Eastie, and Al such a measure seemed to provide a sense of control for Maryellen amidst the swirl of systemic complication. Documentation allowed a touchstone of clarity for Maryellen and enhanced her own sense of professionalism.

To sum up, these participants persevered in the face of the new “normal” on campus and gained some semblance of control of their time through promoting agreement with others to guide future decision-making.

Conclusion

As explored in this super-ordinate theme, surmounting organizational obstacles was a meaningful component of their lived experience as professional administrators in this research cohort. The participants conveyed concern regarding reductions in resources, which jeopardized their capacity for action. However, the data also show that these participants took an active role in managing the chaos around them. Recognizing the expertise of others, listening to others to understand them and their needs, and forging agreements to guide the journey of a project represent ways to ensure success in operations for the participants. One may infer that the participants’ responses reveal a sense of mindfulness employed to counteract resource constraints coupled with the increased workload and related time demands. Such actions and awareness also supported a strong sense of agency for this group of individuals as they embraced and made sense of new actualities on campus.
Coping with New Realities

A super-ordinate general theme of coping emerged from the expressions of four of the participants concerning their lived experience. Though there are fewer data to substantiate the subthemes, they arose in concert with the best practices described by the participants. These participants demonstrated personal resiliency and found ways to contend with the tribulations presented by their environment. For instance, participants spent time with their families or relaxed at home to mitigate the effects of stress. In addition, subthemes concerning engineering workarounds, speaking up, and the capacity to reflect on personal experience to find a sense of acceptance emerged from the interview data as robust coping mechanisms.

Seeking Workarounds

Four of the six interviewees pursued workarounds to accomplish their projects. Each defined the term workaround in a personal way. For instance, Al simply stated that “we made it work”. The extra time that Al periodically spent on nights and weekends to accomplish objectives and to relieve his staff from overwork appeared to be the way he navigated his project’s excess demands. When asked about her preferred coping strategies, Carol indicated that occasionally projects fail and that as a result, she spent some of her time to seek new ideas and to experiment. Citing an example, she concluded that unfortunately, the new system emanating from her project “still doesn't really meet the needs that we have”. In response, Carol began to actively explore other options while waiting for news of when the delayed project might begin again. She took an active stance in finding alternatives rather than waiting to hear from the university-wide project sponsors. This workaround yielded an enhanced sense of empowerment in Carol’s case.
Khaleesi remarked that her new leader held great power and “calls the shots”, and though the leader’s style did not align with her own because it was slower and deliberative in pace “…I'm getting better … I'm adapting”. As a result, Khaleesi had to “workaround”. She continued to experiment with new ideas but did not share all her work with her leader all the time. She explained, “now… I tell … things after the fact.” This approach to communication was somewhat successful for Khaleesi. Summer explained that her new office mantra was to “work smarter, not harder”. As a result, she facilitated webinars and group meetings to share information, rather than working late each night to meet the demands of the unexpected ever-increasing student population. Like her colleagues, Summer gained a greater sense of control by protecting her time.

In summary, the personal workarounds demonstrated by the respondents served to steward time in creative ways, from withholding information, to disseminating information broadly versus one-on-one, to putting in extra time and effort. Each person was cognizant of the choice made to act in a particular manner to achieve a workaround. Such deliberate action served to protect that individual’s time, shoring up a sense of agency in the process.

Using One's Voice

The research revealed that four participants viewed their capacity to speak up as a way to get things done in a timely fashion and to also nurture a sense of personhood. For instance, Al demonstrated his sense of pride when he remarked that “we can be pretty sure that the advice that we give face to face we can hang our hat on”. Likewise, Khaleesi portrayed herself as a “rabble-rouser” who was almost always willing to speak up and question if she was uncomfortable with a particular course of action. Both respondents illuminated the idea that speaking up and out was a meaningful part of their work.
Other examples emerged. Eastie highlighted the need to keep in touch with others at all levels. He asserted that “You've got to manage up across and down, right?” due to a wide range of stakeholders and the need for their support. He valued transparency highly and deemed it as “number one...you don't have to agree…but as long as you develop trust with your staff” one could request their time and effort on projects. Similarly, Maryellen aimed to include all stakeholders to promote change, “I think I just had to create … crusades” for certain programs. She recalled that “I had to …campaign like this is who we are, this is what we do, these are the services we provide”. To strengthen her position as a change agent, she called upon and recruited her manager to “tell this faculty member that this is how this works, you know? And he would be like, oh, okay”. The opportunity to request and receive help from leadership was a key component in Maryellen’s lived experience of empowerment.

In sum, one may speculate that each of the respondents found ways to assert personal agency in service of achieving the work and staying true to personal values such as excellence as Al and Khaleesi did and transparency and trust, as Eastie and Maryellen did.

**Fostering Perspective and Acceptance**

Despite the challenges inherent in managing a change project including time sinks, such a project also provided opportunities for those who sought them. For instance, as Carol reflected on her lived experience with cross-university initiatives, she had a realization of the impact that experience had had on her. Carol identified the positive aspects of her experience and shared:

It was really sort of beneficial in working with people from a lot of different parts of the university I hadn't had an opportunity to work with… and it also gave me an opportunity to work with the units that I support in different ways, which I like.
Likewise, Maryellen felt that with the passage of time she adapted to the new circumstances in her school. At first, she resisted the new work and projects given to her, “...but I eventually was like, okay, this is a great opportunity”. She reflected that “I think I've also worked for a lot of different leaders ... perspective helps ...experience helps.” Both women found the underlying positive in what could be seen as a chaotic change, and they did so by calling upon a storehouse of experience.

Experience fostered perspective and acceptance in Al's case, as well. In particular, he relied on trust to help him navigate change, “if you're being dealt with in good faith that's really all” that matters. While Al focused on trust, Eastie noted the singular features of power in play in his workplace and made sense of the nuances present in those dynamics. He both acknowledged the reality and stuck to his personal values, “regardless of where you work, there's always a hierarchy…and you always treat people with respect”. Akin to Al's depiction, he pronounced that:

We have a good reputation in the building. Do we hit a home run every single time?
We're humans. We couldn't, but if you ask around most of the program areas like work with us, they know we're going to get it done.

Eastie held pride in the reputation of his team and their work, and the stock of reputation in one asset they could call upon when projects hit road bumps. In terms of the power dynamics at the university, Eastie remarked, “we all have equal voice at the table... it's very receptive”, for which he was appreciative. Echoing the theme of power, Khaleesi reflected on her years of experience in various higher education settings; she depended on her experience to provide her with perspective, “you know, I’ve come to grips with that”, referring to the intrinsic alteration of power dynamics that occurs when a new leader arrives.
In summary, the participants’ responses ultimately reveal less a sense of resignation with their current state and more a hard-won peace. Each of these participants acknowledged that their past lived experiences in industry roles, or a range of higher education settings provided a bank of knowledge about workplace dynamics. Thus, when new initiatives and resource pressures arose, each reflected on such challenge and accessed a store of wisdom to offset some of the pressure. They spent their careers in higher education committed to the cause, each in their own ways, but they also knew how to foster a sense of wellbeing through acceptance of circumstance.

**Conclusion**

As explored in this super-ordinate theme, the development and use of personal coping mechanisms provided a sense of resiliency for these professional administrators. The term “balance”, when described as homeostatic, implies an even and almost motionless nature, while the term “allostasis” denotes the fluid shifting process in search of that equilibrium. It seems that these participants struggled valiantly to pursue at the very least, an allostatic path as a facet of their personal experience amidst all the change and complexity in this setting. Engineering workarounds, speaking up, and the capacity to reflect on personal experience to find a sense of acceptance emerged from the interview data. These coping mechanisms served to achieve visible work objectives and contributed to a meaningful sense of self through personal learning. Based on the sense-making shared by the participants, an endless temporal balance was impossible and perhaps not even optimal, but an active and continual re-balancing of time fostered healthy resilience.
Conclusion

This research investigated the lived experiences and views of time of those engaged in change project work in an institution of higher learning. This analysis points toward an understanding that working on change projects may entail ambiguity, stress, and even grief for some individuals as they explore time as a resource for such ventures. The participants viewed their chosen projects with varying degrees of success and situated those evaluations within the related processes and outcomes. Their conclusions regarding project outcomes and the time that they invested in them ranged from a score of failure in Khaleesi’s case to partial success in Carol’s, to somewhat successful per Maryellen and Summer, to successful, according to Eastie and Al.

Amidst this change project work, feelings of distrust towards new leaders and uncertainty regarding the future arose for the participants, as they grappled with time issues. Such work involved a high degree of complexity per their expressions. For some of those interviewed these experiences took on a special significance and meaning when top leadership changed. In response, best practices such as listening and forming agreements with others counteracted the new norms of increased work pace and delayed decision-making. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that leaders charged with project design and implementation engaged in behaviors designed to stretch their time as a personal resource. That action, in turn, held the consequence of leading to intensified work experiences. Despite such challenges, the respondents shared that employing workarounds and using one’s voice fostered personal learning and resilience facilitated at least a lopsided sense of balance at work. The findings also indicate that other respondents found solace and positivity by reflecting on their work experiences. Finally, the findings suggest that overall, an awareness of time, culture, and power dynamics within the
higher education setting demonstrated by these participants contributed positively to their lived experience and sense of agency and identity and thus represented key ingredients for flourishing.

The phenomenological relationships expressed by the six participants that highlight time and lived experience in this inquiry may be summarized as follows (Table 2). This display reflects the conclusion that temporal elements such as cultural norms, the pace of work, time usage, saving, and allocation all played significant roles in the lived experience of project work for these individuals. Interlaced with other factors such as power dynamics and resources (other than time), the phenomenon of time in this setting influenced their critique of project results, as well as their lived experiences.

Table 3 *Relationships of Themes and Time*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Super-ordinate Themes</th>
<th>Relationships of Themes and Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Encountering Change</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embracing complexity</td>
<td>New and conflicting time norms abounded and spawned chaos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding leadership styles</td>
<td>The varying pace of decision-making generated dissatisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting younger people's expectations</td>
<td>Intergenerational differences regarding time caused disengagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Navigating New Resource Scarcity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The influence of pace on time</td>
<td>The power of those at the helm influenced the pace of work to increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battling frustration with bureaucracy</td>
<td>Central control delayed progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grappling with resource constraints</td>
<td>Staffing reductions and new goals drained time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employing Best Practices</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing due diligence</td>
<td>Listening up front saved time later in the project; built in time for experiments and failures was beneficial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documenting agreements</td>
<td>Forging agreements generated time banks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coping with New Realities</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking workarounds</td>
<td>Prioritizing communication stewarded limited time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using one's voice</td>
<td>Speaking up clarified goals and helped to allocate time appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering perspective and acceptance</td>
<td>Reflection and awareness offered solace from temporal stress</td>
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In closing, it seems appropriate to come full circle to the core of the IPA method to further support that the super-ordinate themes and related subthemes are valid and trustworthy. Smith proposes a spectrum of three types of gem to be discovered through the application of IPA: shining, suggestive and secret (Smith, J.A., 2011). The “shining gem” appears at the surface, easily manifest, like the demonstration of complexity rampant in this higher education setting as these participants encountered change (Smith, J.A., 2011). The subtheme of meeting younger people’s expectations typified Smith’s second and deeper “suggestive gem” in that it required a hermeneutic pondering to uncover; it arose from repeated review and reflection at the granular level (Smith, J.A., 2011). The mixed emotions revealed through the participants’ narrative followed by critical considerations of their lived experiences with the younger generation including the investment of time required for success represent facets of an emerging suggestive theme.

Finally, the “secret gem”, elusive, may be discovered only after careful digging (Smith, J.A. 2011). In this inquiry, one such treasure replete with embedded meaning was evidenced by the one-word characterization of each participant’s drive that came to light for the researcher. The iterative review of the participants’ shared stories evokes the process of digging for treasure. The digging, in this case, unearthed a cohesive summary for each person’s core values. Based on the evidence, each respondent bravely carried a torch for one dominant attribute needed to succeed at actualizing change in a time-bound situation. That uniquely personal association might be summarized as follows. Khaleesi highly valued action, while Al honored acceptance. Carol aimed for understanding, and Maryellen concerned herself with engagement. Eastie pursued progress, and Summer strove for quality. Together, the examples of the easily witnessed or shining gem, along with the harder to notice or suggestive gem, and the previously unseen or
hidden gem gather to form a prism that shines a clear light on the lived temporal experiences of these six humans at work.

The following chapter will present findings based on these thematic strands and will focus on connecting those findings with the research literature. The theoretical framework of COR will be revisited in the context of the research findings. Finally, implications for practice and recommendations for future research will be provided.
Chapter Five: Discussion and Implications for Practice

The aim of this study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences and related meaning-making of professional administrators leading change projects in a higher education setting. This study was conducted using the qualitative method of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), a qualitative research approach best suited for the exploration of how a person reacts to, and their perception of a phenomenon which has taken place in life. IPA was an appropriate method for this inquiry, as its use of in-depth semi-structured interviews and subsequent data analysis produced a detailed exploration of how participants taking part in this study made sense of their temporal experiences, how they reacted or responded to those experiences, and the meaning that they ultimately assigned to the encounters (Smith, 2009). Further, the theoretical framework of Conservation of Resources (COR) provided a suitable underpinning to the study given its definition of time as a resource. Finally, the literature review explicated themes such as the importance of time as a cultural key that is enacted at the individual and group level at work. The review also highlighted that temporality influences work experience, so understanding general relationships related to time may inform the comprehension of work’s complexity and enhance leadership practice. Based on this review, time emerges as a major resource and contextual factor that may impact health and productivity (Fullan & Scott, 2009). These themes, in turn, informed the construction of the inquiry’s research questions.

The main research question that guided this study is: How do professional administrators working on change projects in a higher education setting understand the experience of time as a resource? The following areas were explored in relation to the main research question: 1) How the participants currently view/describe their temporal experiences, and 2) How the participants view and experience the time rules in the project and in the setting.
Chapter 4 explicated four super-ordinate themes and eleven related subthemes that were derived during the data analysis segment of this research. The themes were then qualified with verbatim quotes from the participant(s) to support these findings. The super-ordinate themes included the following: Encountering Change, Navigating New Resource Scarcity, Employing Best Practices, and Coping with New Realities. From these themes, four related key findings will be considered in conjunction with the research questions in this final section. In this final chapter, each of the four findings will be discussed and situated within the context of the extant literature and analyzed through the theoretical framework. The significance of the study and the implications of the results follow. Recommendations for practice, suggestions for future research, and reflections on the study conclude this section.

**Encountering Change**

The first finding within this study stems from the super-ordinate theme of encountering change and explores the changing landscape of higher education and the resulting complexity that influences how professional administrators understand time and change. The finding suggests the demand for the leadership competency of temporal awareness (TA) that includes an understanding of time norms.

**Change Generates Complexity**

The experiences shared by the study participants reflected revolutionary changes in their environments, regardless of location in a school or university-wide setting. Similarly, the extant literature portrayed the sector of higher education as one that is undergoing a radical transformation. For instance, as DeCosta-Klipa (2019) asserted, the combination of decreasing
endowments and the rising cost to attend a university gather with other socio-economic factors to form a perfect storm for those leading higher education institutions.

The specific finding that addressed how the participants were tasked with ever-increasing project assignments was clearly demonstrated in the literature review’s conclusion that the structure of work has shifted from a predominance of stable job roles to an increase in temporary assignments, adding to the complexity of work (Heller & Ortiz, 2017; Katz & Krueger, 2016). Furthermore, similar to comments found in the literature (Burke & Morley, 2016), the participants shared that they were chosen for change project work due to their expertise. The projects that they pursued all held varying degrees of uncertainty regarding timing set beside well-defined goals to change, e.g., to increase revenue (Burke & Morley, 2016). In summary, Burke and Morley’s 2016 review resonates with this study’s findings, in that as their research determined, participants described clear goals as well as uncertainty regarding project planning.

Consistent with research concerning attitudes towards time (Gabrian et al., 2017), the participants viewed time and time as a resource differently as each confronted the intricacies of their lived experience of the new complexity at work. Specifically, each participant described various elements present in their environments that contributed to a complicated temporal dynamic, e.g., overlapping technological systems, bureaucracies, and different local cultures due to the number of schools on campus. The participants’ expressions demonstrated that embracing the new complexity proved to be challenging and stressful. Complexity for these participants necessitated greater use of resources including time from time for enhanced cultural understanding, creativity, and experimentation, or the need for a large reserve of patience. The expression of frustration displayed by the participants echoes the thoughts shared by Cappelli (2017) regarding today’s complex higher education environments and also demonstrates the
feelings of stress resulting from time limitations illustrated in the literature (Blount & Sanchez-Burks, 2004; Koseoglu et al., 2016). These findings are useful, as less literature exists pertaining to time in the higher education workplace with only a negligible focus on the impact of temporality on work teams (Granqvist & Gustafsson, 2016; Tierney, 1985).

**Leadership and Time are Related**

Participants distinctly concluded that time played a role in leadership decision-making. For instance, time became conscious, especially when waiting, per Levine (1997), which some of the participants expressed. The study participants also depicted a sense of time duration as much longer and described diminished control and autonomy. Such study findings regarding the participants’ perception of time duration changing based on the personal degree of control confirm what other research studies have demonstrated (Carver et al., 2010; Broberg, Tagesson, Argento, Gyllengahm, & Mårtensson, 2017). The experiences described in this study also demonstrate the need for further study of the complexity of temporal perception and relation, as Corsaro and Snehota (2012) asserted based on their research. Additionally, the participants’ evaluation of project success stemming from subjective conclusions regarding duration and time usage echoed the findings of Rastegary and Landy (1993).

As participants extended their sensemaking to encompass the impact of a change in leadership on their lived experience and their use of and feelings about time, their expressions linked the concepts of change and time. A leadership style change from one that promoted autonomy to one directive in nature resulted in a loss of time for four of the participants. COR theory proposes that an individual defines a “resource” as something of value to that individual (Hobfoll, 1989). In this study, the capacity to act independently emerged as just such a resource, along with time. Both resources could potentially be diminished during project work, causing
dissatisfaction. Moreover, COR’s second principle and second corollary assert that a loss may beget further loss (Hobfoll, 1989). The resulting feelings of regret and distrust expressed by participants were distinctive and demonstrated this concept throughout the interview process. Therefore, it became obvious in the dialogues with participants that the result of their meaning-making could include decreased agency and a sense of resignation. In short, the leadership style change that occurred for some of the participants yielded a dramatic change in temporal experience by increasing workloads and decreasing the participants’ engagement.

These findings are valuable, as they contribute to closing the research gap regarding workplace time issues, as minimal attention has been directed toward the impact of temporality on higher education work teams (Granqvist & Gustafsson, 2016; Tierney, 1985). Moreover, apparently, only a few researchers have addressed the need for leaders to remain temporally aware. Mintzberg (1990) emphasized the call for a leader to address roadblocks and allocate resources, both of which encompass time. Weick and Quinn (1999) acknowledged that change entails structural processes, emotional and social relationships, and is an essential ingredient in the social dynamic of any workplace. This study drew clear connections between leadership behaviors and the potentially negative impact on time perception of their followers. The findings also underscore the concept of leadership awareness in terms of personal style, demonstrating that this type of awareness may ease employees’ adjustment during times of transition.

The call for an enhanced understanding of time by any leader was also a salient feature of the respondents’ experiences with those different in age from themselves. Consistent with the research literature demonstrating multiple generations at work (Walsh, 2018), participants articulated a variance between their perceptions of time and work and those of the younger staff and students with whom they engage. This diversity included expressed temporalities (Vaner &
Beamer, 2005; Schulz, 2015), which were evident when younger staff members refused the opportunity to perform additional tasks in the evenings or weekends for extra compensation. Consistent with Mattson, (2009) such experience produced overt conflict for some of the respondents as they made sense of their experiences. Those present in the research setting expressed multiple temporalities, and their emerging time preferences contributed to differentiating culture as the literature emphasized (Güell et al., 2015; Hopkins et al., 2013; Rimestad, 2015; Schein, 2010; Schulz, 2015; Tam, 2015). Greater team diversity may yield increased temporal information to embrace and digest and may fracture an individual’s perception of time (Blount & Janicik, 2001), and this strand of the study demonstrated such time-related tension.

Based upon the identified themes in concert with the theoretical framework of COR which focuses on resource stewardship, along with the reviewed literature, one may conclude that temporality influences work experience for individuals and groups in today’s complex higher education workplace. From its core principles to its corollaries, COR theory elucidates the role of context (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001). Hobfoll acknowledged the role of both a perceived and an actual resource in the coping process and the fit between that resource and that surrounding context (2001). A rapidly evolving context of disruption within the higher education sector generates new time-related complexities ranging from generational differences to leadership issues, to the many different uses of technological systems that the participants encountered.

This first insight regarding context is significant because it delineates the evolving complexities emerging in higher education due to disruption in the sector. The multiplicities of time perception and preferences expressed by culturally and generationally diverse workplace groups impact project work and engagement, as evidenced in this research study. For example,
the perception of someone from an older generation of a younger person’s refusal to work as a lack of disinterest and engagement may, in fact, be that younger worker’s perhaps unconscious strategy to protect time. Thus, understanding the general relationships and dynamics related to time may inform the comprehension of the experience of work and this new atmosphere of ambiguity. Furthermore, a temporally aware leadership style is an essential ingredient in the transformative change processes underway in the higher education sector. The study participants articulated the impacts of different leadership styles on their change projects’ progress and their meaning-making regarding their work through their lived experiences. These findings clarify existing research and contribute to the overall body of research concerning lived experience in higher educational institutions today. The next section will explore the concept of resource imbalance and its impact on project success and personal experience.

**Navigating New Resource Scarcity**

The second major finding of this study emerged from the super-ordinate theme that explored new resource scarcity on campus. This finding pertains to the influence of resource constraints on the ability of professional administrators to manage transformative projects. In this case, the participants revealed three main areas of concerns: pace, bureaucracy, and a new lack of funding, staffing, and time. Hobfoll considered resources to hold measurable value in a context, with subjective regard as a secondary facet of resource definition (Hobfoll, 2001; Hall et al., 2006). In this context, the concerns raised by the participants may be viewed as resource-related as they navigate a new atmosphere of scarcity on campus and pursue project work necessary to actualize change.

**Socially Situated Resources**
All six of the participants perceived their time-based resources to be in jeopardy due to social dynamics. Consistent with COR theory’s first principle, loss or the possibility of it may cause harm for these participants (Hobfoll, 1989). The threat of loss caused unease for participants as they adjusted to new leadership styles. Though Hobfoll (1989) did not posit the phenomenon of clarity as a resource, it does seem that in this case clarity was something that the study participants perceived as valued but remained in shorter supply for them, similar to autonomy. Thus, this finding both aligns with and extends COR theory.

Time norms may assist the pacing process and thereby impact one’s sense of available resources (Gevers et al., 2006). Norms can also help to allay employee anxiety (Gevers, et al., 2015), or influence collaboration (Gaw, 2017). The opposite is also true, as evidenced in this study. These participants experienced the pace of work within their institutional setting as having increased beyond what was manageable for them. For example, the new norm of quick turnarounds or the juggle of waiting juxtaposed with bursts of activity produced tension and a sense of time lost for each person as Esson et al. explained (2018). The participants’ experiences align with the research that has demonstrated that temporal norms may guide behavior and impact one’s experience of work in a positive or negative fashion (Alioua & Simon, 2017; Blount & Sanchez – Burks, 2004; Corsaro & Snehota, 2012; Koseoglu et al., 2016; Mohammed & Harrison, 2013; Pich et al., 2002). This evidence also aligns with research conducted regarding self-managing work teams that found such groups attempt to adjust schedules and resources to accommodate shifting timelines (Waller et al., 2002). Rapid team formation occurred in some cases in this study. This resulted in a lack of team cohesion, similar to Gaw’s findings (2017). However, in contrast to Gaw’s 2017 study, it was also possible to make outreach to others a priority, thereby increasing the resource of connection to others.
One nuance related to schedule adjustment research that emerged in this study was the reflection that in some cases of project work there seemed to be no norm of schedule planning, or communication regarding project milestones and deadlines, leaving participants wondering about the future and limited stores of resources. Such experience echoes the finding that change projects may bog down and experience “strategic inertia” defined as an overall delay in moving ahead on stated goals (Hopkins et al., 2013, p. 77). Such frustration demonstrated that a change may be evolutionary when revolutionary is what is required by the environment (Weick & Quinn, 1999).

The respondents also discussed the time loss created by central bureaucratic processes coupled with factors including central staffing turnover. The combination of processes and resource curtailment involved a social power dynamic that was challenging to the participants. Participants focused on a range of resources including a sense of control, the capacity for decision-making from leaders, or close relationships with staff as a resource. The range of assets described by the participants strongly supports COR theory’s tenet that the definition of a resource is subjective in nature (Hobfoll, 1989). Further, the resources that the respondents described were negatively impacted by central controls. The relationship described by a few of the participants between a local representative and central office entailed social interaction and an implicit power dynamic. For example, optimally, it would seem that the central administrative offices such as the General Counsel or the Human Resources Office would serve in the role of a trusted advisor. If instead, a participant did hear back on an outstanding request, the resulting lag engendered irritation. Additionally, if an existing relationship with a human resources consultant ended due to turnover as the participants described, that local agent was left without recourse and had to forge a new relationship once again when the role is filled. This evidence directly supports
COR’s first premise that a loss of personally valued holdings such as time or productive collaboration with others may result in stress, anxiety, and job dissatisfaction (Hobfoll, 1989). Moreover, this experience directly confirms research on academic librarians conducted by Bossaller et al. (2017). Like those in this study, the librarians expressed time famine, pressure, poverty, and fatigue, purportedly due to interruptions at work. Like Hobfoll’s (1989) belief, time was a highly valued commodity in this case, as well. Furthermore, as Tierney (1985) asserted, the lack of synchronization between local and central approaches to time norms yielded tension. Lastly, this tension typifies the thoughts of Halbesleben et al. (2003) who articulated today's workplace complexities such as the multiple layers of time potentially present in an organization. Thus, the IPA study results confirm both the tenets of COR and the findings of earlier studies within the literature and address the second research question pertaining to how the participants viewed and experienced the time rules in each change project and in the work setting.

**Material Resources**

Also consistent with COR’s first principle, grappling with tangible resource constraints were found to be stressful by these participants (Hobfoll, 1989). Top leadership’s call to quickly raise revenue represented a new pressure on campus. Financial resources are imperative to actualizing the university’s vision, and in turn, attainment of that objective requires time and other resources. Without necessary staffing and time resources, participants were faced with working late each night or on weekends. Making up for those lost staffing resources by working longer hours and accruing stress represents yet another loss for these participants. This phenomenon is consistent with Hobfoll’s first principle of loss salience or the notion that loss is more harmful than gain (1989). In contrast, other participants demonstrated COR’s second
principle and its third corollary that those with greater resources such as time or funding may
gain more of the same (Hobfoll, 1989). Due to the nature of a project, in certain cases, one may
have had access to greater resources than others might have had.

In sum, both these findings and the literature highlight the importance of socially situated
and tangible material resources in the experience of those engaged in change project work.
Resource imbalance may impede project progress. If those resources are lost or threatened,
distress may ensue. In contrast, if those resources are made available, the project leader may feel
a sense of enhanced agency. This study showed that projects that are new or suddenly expand in
order to stretch limited resources produce pressure on those tasked with the implementation of
change. Thus, this insight regarding newly introduced resource constraints amplifies the impact
of the current radical transformation underway in higher education, which was highlighted by the
first finding of this study.

Furthermore, as COR theory’s second principle and second corollary posits, and this
study confirmed, loss precipitates future loss (Hobfoll, 1989). The respondents demonstrated that
when leaders did not demonstrate change management principles such as clear communication
and inclusion of stakeholders during project design or modification, engagement decreased
starkly. The time loss that ensued could contribute to the construction of a negative professional
identity. Of note and of concern was the feedback presented by the respondents pertaining to
human resources in this institutional setting, as the function appeared to take the form of a barrier
rather than an advocate for change. The next section will explore the concept of best practices to
steward time in during a change initiative project in a higher educational setting.

Employing Best Practices
The third finding explored within this study emanates from the super-ordinate theme of best practices that the study participants have employed to achieve change projects. This finding describes the ways that professional administrators surmounted the complexity explored by the first study finding and the social and material resource constraints discussed in the second finding. Such action is crucial to the realization of transformative work designed to address today’s higher education challenges. Though the related data associated with this finding was smaller in scope than the data accompanying the first two findings, it points to the importance of best practice application, nonetheless. Two approaches emerged, which include active listening to achieve due diligence and the setting of agreements to foster clarity and direction.

**Mindful Listening**

The six projects at this research site were undertaken in service of change. As projects, they were time-limited and temporary in nature (Crawford & Nahmias, 2010; Burke & Morley, 2016). In the process of reflecting on their experiences with project management, four of the participants in this study identified the need for due diligence to ensure success, including a focus on communication and specific communication regarding time-related issues. Their experiences align with the assertion that time and communication represent core project management components (Zwikael, 2009).

Those that addressed the topic of communication as part of due diligence focused their awareness on others. This practice took the form of taking time to actively listen to and communicate with a range of internal and external stakeholders, as others exhort (Perlmutter, 2019). Participants found the approach to be key to managing conflicting priorities and time sinks. The practice includes active listening, multi-channel communication, and the testing of assumptions. These findings support Wieck’s conclusion that making sense of organizational life is fostered through communication (Weick, 1993, 1995, 2005). The participants typified
Weick’s notion of a change agent as one who acts as a facilitator to make sense of things (Weick, 1995) and employs language, listening, and learning over periods of time, seeking patterns, variations, and adaptations that will serve the organizations’ processes. Similar to the respondents’ comments, Wheatley (1992) also exhorted the capacity to be fully present and aware of the other when leading. Finally, research conducted by Endacott et al. (2017) has documented significant positive relationships between higher team performance and communication regarding due diligence and decision-making.

Failure to seek out the opinions of and listen to others with a stake in a change project proved to have a negative impact in this study. When those who perform the work involved in a change initiative were not included in project decision-making, crucial information could be overlooked resulting in lower success and higher employee disengagement as expressed by the participants. These experiences validate Tam's research work on the development of marine policy in Indonesia (2015). He found that when policy developers ignored the local rhythm of fisherman's work time, the fishermen did not attend meetings and their voices were unheard. This loss resulted in the formulation of a weak overall policy that was ultimately not embraced by local communities (Tam, 2015).

Expressions by the participants regarding the importance of testing assumptions when conducting project work confirm research conducted on implicit time-based expectations held by both leaders and followers by both Alipour et al. (2017) and Mohammed and Nadkarni (2011). Both research studies found that assumptions generated inconsistency in behaviors that may impact the success of work processes and overall experience at work. When values were assumed and unexplored, tension resulted. Mattson’s 2009 study of nurses in healthcare highlighted that different values may be placed on workplace scheduling and assumptions made.
Struggles occurred when those values conflicted, which in turn impeded productivity, similar to the experiences expressed by this study’s participants.

To recap, the practice of inclusion through active listening and assumption testing represent a form of asset protection proposed by COR’s second principle and fourth corollary, which proposes that one may act to invest and save time for future endeavors (Hobfoll, 1989). These participants demonstrated that type of protection as they explained that expending time at the beginning of a project can save time later, a robust form of due diligence.

**Setting Agreements**

These participants gained greater control of their time resources by setting agreements with others, thereby demonstrating additional support of COR’s second principle and fourth corollary pertaining to resource protection (Hobfoll, 1989) and echoing the work of Gevers et al. (2015). For instance, participants advocated that a project charter to be developed before any project launch so that all involved were certain of priorities and timelines and also asserted that agreement setting before commencing work was a way to stretch resources. Such approaches also validate the assertions of both Dickeson (2010) and Gevers et al. (2004), which emphasized communication regarding values, deadlines, and schedules. If this type of temporal communication occurs per the authors, it may reduce uncertainty and anxiety by crafting time boundaries. Furthermore, Turner’s 2013 study supported the idea that overall team performance may benefit if a leader invests time to discuss temporal issues before a team begins a project.

The aim by one participant to proactively document policies to disseminate information widely and consistently supports the conclusions of Granqvist & Gustafsson (2016) who studied a large change initiative project in which those involved formulated collectively shared understandings that drove success. Finally, the call by another respondent for distinct project
team roles also validates Kumar and Malhotra’s work on medical treatment, which demonstrated that clear role definition may help to decrease operation delays and increase success rates despite other unavoidable roadblocks, such as equipment failure (2017). Such experience also aligns with the research of Endacott et al. (2017) who studied the link between the communication practice of church leaders and team performance. They found significant positive relationships between higher team performance and the percentage of time spent on critical decisions and agreement setting coupled with a taking a broad view of issues (2017).

The third insight from this study focuses on best practices and includes a salient point regarding active listening and inclusion to (at least in part) counteract the loss of resources explicated by the second study finding that describes resource constraints. This finding demonstrated that active listening may prove to preserve and even shore up whatever banks of time a project leader may possess. In alignment with COR, leaders who attend to their time and communication styles may ameliorate the growing drain on time experienced by those staff participating in change work. The data collected concerning the impacts of not following this thoughtful management practice provide a strong caution to leaders, as well. Use of management techniques like active listening may enhance social interaction and allow a way to both learn about others’ time preferences and to share one’s own (Brown, Creswell, & Ryan, 2015). A mindful listening practice, when pursued, may yield success at the personal and project level as Wasylkiw, Holton, Azar, and Cook demonstrated through their study of mid-level health care managers who practice mindful behaviors, which found increased effectiveness in tandem with decreased work-related stress (2015). Thus, these research findings would also support the notion that in an age of rapid information and idea sharing, a slower pace of work that allows time for thoughtfulness may be an antidote to stress, as well a benefit to resource stewardship.
Based on the cited literature (Dawson, 2014; Schein, 2010; Tierney, 1985; Weick, 1976, 1993, 1995, 2003, 2005) and emerging from these findings, the concept of temporal awareness (TA) as a management practice gains additional traction. This competency can benefit both project results and the wellness of those engaged in transformative work. Extending from the topic of such professional practices that may save time and enhance project progress, the next section will explore the concept of temporal resiliency in the face of resource constraint situated from a personal standpoint.

**Coping with New Realities**

The fourth finding within this study derives from the super-ordinate theme of coping and describes the emotional resilience of the administrators as they face the new realities present in their institution of higher learning. Though the related data was smaller in scope than that of the other themes and findings, it does emphasize resilience as a key ingredient for change project success. As the literature review underscored, time holds values, concepts, and norms that can be used to negotiate a workplace like the research setting (Schein, 2010). These participants discussed the ways in which they managed time pressure including speaking up to advocate for themselves and for others. They also discussed self-reflection as an approach to make sense of the challenges they faced, to gain agency, and to further mitigate time-related stress.

**Creative Workarounds**

Each of the six respondents identified a favored activity to offset work stress, from exercise to simply sitting and relaxing at home. In addition to those mitigating activities, they also employed power and agency when handling information and responsibilities, ranging from withholding of information to dissemination of information broadly versus one-on-one, to expending extra time and effort. For the participants, a “workaround” denoted a method to reach
a primary project objective despite an environmental challenge. Other workarounds included share information widely to lessen time burdens or periodically worked longer hours on weekends to offset weekday stress. These deliberate actions served in some measure to protect the participants’ overall time storehouses, shoring up a sense of agency in the process. The expressions demonstrate COR’s second principle regarding the aim to add to one’s resource banks and fourth corollary regarding protecting time as a resource, particularly when time has been lost (Hobfoll, 1989).

The second principle’s element of resource substitution as a means of protection was exemplified by one participant who worked on weekends to protect the staff’s time. This borrowed time exemplifies O’Carroll’s concept of “emergency time” (2015, p. 135), as well as contemporary temporal fluidity (Schulz, 2015). Such substitution also resulted in less time with family, which represents COR’s second principle (and second corollary), namely, that one loss begets another (Hobfoll, 1989). The act of juggling to reach an imperfect equilibrium appeared to be in play in this higher education setting. The expressions of the participants in this area are of note, as the concept of a workaround did not arise in the literature review often, except in the case of time budget pressure in the auditing field, researched by Broberg et al. (2017).

**Speaking Up**

Research has documented that communication regarding time-based issues during pivotal phases of project work can enhance productivity and satisfaction (Swigger et al., 2012). Each of the respondents found ways to assert their identities in service of achieving work while expressing personal values. These values included excellence by practicing caution, or raising issues if others fell silent to ensure all voices were heard equitably or speaking up to preserve transparency and trust with staff members.
It is important to acknowledge that using one’s voice to protect resources requires some measure of psychosocial safety that the participants in this setting appeared to possess (Edmundson, 1999). Additionally, there appeared to be contextual support for voice in this university environment. For instance, four of the respondents found that those younger students and staff spoke up more frequently that they had witnessed in the past. This experience correlates with recent reports that students and alumni are now more active decision–makers on campus across the U.S. than in the past (Lake, 2017).

**Reflection and Acceptance**

Experience fostered a robust perspective and acceptance for each of the six participants. Regardless of age, each person was able to discuss both past and current events and identify what they had learned from their experiences. Projects that initially presented challenges ultimately also provided opportunities for the respondents. The finding that participants were able to reflect upon their experiences of time as they managed projects and make sense of those encounters is consistent with previous findings from Gray who delved into the way that employees build time-based insight during a change, based on a reflection on the time-based characteristics of an experienced event (2012). Consistent with extant research and theoretical discussions (Silva & Wetzel, 2007; Weick & Quinn, 1999), this study demonstrated that time does impact meaning-making during a change. Daft and Weick (1984) claimed that participant preferences stem from the act of interpretation and cognitive sensemaking during a change, and the study findings align with those assertions.

The fourth insight concerns coping in today’s higher education environment, replete with conflicting priorities and resultant stress and demonstrates that project leaders can weather challenge and stress. According to COR, time can be first be considered a resource, for example,
one holding banks of time and protecting time by careful scheduling. However, time can also be a source of loss and stress, e.g., through increased pace or urgency. As such, time represented both a promoter and detractor of wellness for these participants. As a recent industry study found, workers can spend over five hours per week worrying and an additional fifty percent of workers may spend up to five hours per week battling stress (Colonial Life, 2019). Such reporting demonstrates that stress drains time.

Like the cited literature exploring workplace wellbeing (Heckenberg, Eddy, Kent, & Wright, 2018; Hui & Aye, 2018; Torre, 2017; Winefield, Boyd, Saebel, & Pignata, 2008), the study participants pursued healthy stress busters such as exercise and relaxation. What stands out as unique from the data gathered in this study is the deliberate and creative workarounds employed by the respondents to manage and protect their time. Speaking up requires a measure of agency and exemplifies COR theory’s notion of extending one’s resources. Though not extensively explored in the literature or COR theory, it also became evident through this study that the act of reflection on lived experience may serve to add to one’s storehouse of resiliency needed to flourish in today’s higher education workplace. Thus, as defined by COR, the capacity for reflection represents a valued resource for these participants, as they move forward with change projects.

The fourth finding underscores that attention to time issues is worthwhile and deserves a place in both human resource and project management practice. In sum, this finding provides evidence that for any project manager leading transformational change in an institution of higher learning, a changing context including rapidly changing resources requires both new time-related professional practices and personal coping strategies.

**Conclusion**
The aim of this study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences and related meaning-making of professional administrators leading change projects in a higher education setting. This qualitative study answered the research question through the identification of themes pertaining to context, dynamics, and the professional and personal experience of time. These themes exemplified the inferences gleaned from the literature review. Specifically, the literature on change and time shows a positive connection between awareness of time, contextual dynamics, resource allocation, and avenues of resilience, engagement, and success. The findings support the research of Wieck and Quinn who explicated the importance of the temporal issues arising during a change process (1999). Moreover, these findings support the evidence from the literature review that knowledge of time, culture, and the perception of time and change can increase organizational performance. The findings also underscore the role that time plays as a resource, consistent with COR.

Time is important as a cultural key and is enacted at the individual and group level at work for example, on change projects. As described in this study, today’s higher education landscape represents a “temporally complex setting” (TCS). Adapting to a different culture can be disorienting and requires adjustment to a different sense of time per Levine (1997); this geographically based need flows beyond jetlag and into the workplace when one must adjust one’s tempo. And as Levine argued, embracing a "multitemporal" (p. 191) society allows movement between the tempos of nature, event, and clock time, which may promote a healthier life.

Furthermore, temporality influences work experience for individuals and groups in today’s complex higher education workplace. Time holds unique meaning as a resource at the individual level. This evidence shows that time allocation may differ based on one’s preferences
and priorities which simultaneously may be both driven by the surrounding culture and contribute to one’s evolving psychological identity (Levine, 1997). Thus, understanding general relationships related to time may inform the comprehension of the experience of work and its complexity. This IPA study has also specially identified reflection on temporal experience as a source of resilience.

Finally, the leadership competency of temporal awareness (TA) is a key feature in transformative change processes underway in the higher education sector. The diverse perspectives regarding time and change itself held by those charged with change initiatives in today's complex higher education environments are vital to successful innovation through a non-linear and dynamic process (Dawson, 2014). If a leader invests time to discuss temporal issues before a team begins a project, overall team performance may benefit (Turner, 2013).

The following sections explain the significance of this study, as well as recommendations for practice and for future research.

**Significance of the Study**

Few qualitative studies have examined the role of time in contemporary higher education settings, and the goal of the study was to add to the existing knowledge in this specific exploration of the importance of the concept of leadership competencies as it relates to the lived experiences of these professionals examined. These findings represent new information to the database of literature particularly because they uniquely illustrate the experiences of higher education professional administrators, a demographic which has not received significant amounts of research with regards to organizational change and wellbeing. The concepts of 1) the temporally complex setting (TCS) as a way to describe the contemporary higher education
workplace and 2) temporal awareness (TA) as a valuable leadership competency represent two new additions to organizational development literature. This contextual understanding of the lived experience of professional administrators communicates the robust insights that can be acquired by adopting a psycho-social perspective compared to a quantitatively business-based approach toward research and practice.

These findings are both new with respect to understanding the experience of time and yet resonate with other studies of workplace time explored in the literature review. This study provides a greater understanding of the phenomenon of time as it appears to be the first study of this sort to have been conducted (searches of the literature showed there had been no published IPA studies conducted on this problem of practice previously). Moreover, other qualitative studies of time at work have called upon industry-based settings. As evidenced in the literature review, there is a paucity of research into time on projects in higher education generally. Therefore, although this research study included a small sample of six professional administrators, the findings do provide a contribution to an understanding of workplace temporality, as the idiographic nature of IPA allows the voices of individual participants to be heard.

**Recommendations for Practice**

Time rules our lives today. Rosa (2013) argued that the accelerated pace of contemporary life and work encompasses speedier action, a decrease in natural pauses, the rise of multitasking, and faster processes superseding slower versions of same. These laments exemplify the phenomenon of “social jetlag” that occurs when the biological and social elements of time collide (Wittmann, Dichich, Merrow, & Roenneberg, 2006). Stress may ensue. This study explored the experiences of professional administrators. The findings signal that
considering time’s overall influence on work and health, an improved orientation to temporal complexity may benefit those engaged in change projects. The findings of IPA studies, which utilize small samples, should not be generalized without prudence. However, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the findings are consistent with previous theory and research, and therefore provide additional support for the following proposed practices in the areas of leadership, project management, and human resources.

**Leadership.** The capacity of temporal awareness (TA) may allow a leader to better leverage the competencies needed to guide staff through the ambiguity inherent in innovation (Halbesleben et al, 2003). It is advantageous to both lead change processes and to learn how employees participate in change (Fullan & Scott, 2009). Dickeson (2010) emphasized that it is beneficial for leaders to communicate about values and time in relation to goals, which may also reduce overall uncertainty and any accompanying anxiety. Discussion about time preferences and project planning initially contributes to the creation of collective time-related norms per Janicik and Bartel (2003). The authors termed this activity "temporal planning" that includes the timing and duration of actions (2003, p.122), which they found enhanced the coordination and performance of tasks.

Higher education leaders who are mindful of the relationships between change management, time issues (such as norms, duration, scheduling, and pacing) and the well-being of employees will also better steward the financial health of their organizations, as prevention saves resources. For instance, if leaders initiate multiple change projects quickly, the consequence may be uncertainty and a phenomenon called “change fatigue” (Bernerth et al., 2011; Kotter & Cohen, 2012). This may cause exhaustion, decreased engagement, and delays. The study participants’ experience would also warn against a top leader or leadership team announcing a
new vision without close stakeholder involvement and would suggest that an approach of inclusive listening and collaboration would be preferable, e.g. facilitating the input of multiple stakeholders before a project’s launch. This is in concert with the approaches identified by research that may help a leader to address temporal diversity including the scheduling of activities, synchronization of activities, and allocation of temporal resources (McGrath & Kelly, 1986; McGrath & Rotchford, 1983).

This study also produced an instructive note regarding human resources and other centrally positioned administrative functions. The study participants viewed such areas as potential or actual barriers to project success. Thus, leaders regardless of their functional area should be mindful to check assumptions regarding stakeholder perspectives.

As a scholar-practitioner, I plan to bring these findings regarding leadership practice to my organization, specifically to our managers’ mindfulness program. In addition, I will share these findings and recommendations in professional forums such as the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources and the New England Compensation Consortium, through presentations, workshops, and articles in professional journals.

**Project Management.** The study findings also highlight the potentially pivotal role of project management training and support the findings regarding the need for communication, active listening and agreement setting, e.g., project charters, schedules, delays, and milestones. The results have implications for the importance of project pacing. For example, time norms play a vital role in the life of a workgroup, be it pacing, sequencing, or deadlines (Schein, 2010). The concept of "temporal zones” (Blount & Sanchez - Burks, 2004, p. 262) defined as a situation bounded by its characteristics of time could also be applied to change projects. This may include the use of a technology-based scheduling tool (Wu et al., 2016). The findings also indicate that
the development of introductory time assessment exercises and milestone check-ins.

Furthermore, the exploration of time preferences before project launch may diminish potential tension between those of different generations. Finally, setting agreements regarding delays should also be an integral part of project management protocol.

As a scholar-practitioner, I plan to incorporate time for seeking stakeholder inclusion, active listening, and setting agreements in the projects I undertake as an executive and as a volunteer. I also plan to advocate that same practice in our institution and through my affiliations with professional organizations to reach a wider audience in higher education.

**Human Resources.** Human resources practitioners are in the unique position to offer tailored time-based cultural understandings (Battilana et al., 2010), as a part of employee onboarding, learning and development opportunities, and leadership coaching and development. For instance, Wu et al. raised a point pertinent to human resources practice when they postulated that given temporal complexity, to understand social rules like punctuality, one must have lived experience within the community (2016). Their research revealed suboptimal outcomes due to a lack of cultural orientation in the coordination of time-related events (2016). Specifically, onboarding overviews of time protocols and campus schedules could speed the process of cultural integration for those new to the setting. Similar tools provided in support of temporary organizational work undertaken in change projects in contemporary higher education settings could provide additional guidance. In both cases, the chance for staff to discuss their preferences could be useful and also tie to wellbeing within their work culture, as researchers Güell et al. discovered (2015). Finally, given the plethora of project work in higher education today, those human resources professionals leading in institutions of higher learning could benefit from change and project management exposure and training to aid subject matter expertise.
As a scholar-practitioner, I plan to develop assessment tools and training to use with those who engage in project work and as part of onboarding. Since time is a cultural key (Schein, 2010), discussion of time is a way to foster discussion of diversity and to enhance connection and belonging. I have started a Twitter account and added #Time&Change@Work and plan to populate that to encourage dialogue on this topic and to form a touchstone for future research and collaborative work.

To conclude, the recommendations resulting from this inquiry pertaining to leadership, project management, and human resources practice could address many of the issues raised by the participants and by the literature. As a scholar-practitioner, I aim to contribute my new understanding in the service of an inclusive, flourishing and dynamic workplace to the field of higher education and beyond.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

As a scholar-practitioner, the aim of this research is to inform human resources and leadership practice about time and project work. Overall, the study’s findings were consistent with COR theory. However, gaps in the research regarding organizational development and the higher education sector exist. Based on the conclusions and recommendations for practice, several opportunities for future research were identified, which might focus in greater depth on the findings of change, scarcity, best practices, and resilience.

The first group of recommendations relates to research focused on culture and change processes in general. One research approach could be to conduct a similar study with those engaged in a single change project versus several projects as was the case with this research. Such a method could identify if the experiences of the professional administrators are similar or
different from the findings of this study that included multiple projects. Such an inquiry could yield additional findings regarding the experience of time from multiple perspectives while focused on one shared project objective. This research could be strengthened by incorporating an additional element of exploring generational differences since the attribute of age arose as a fundamental factor in this study. It would also be beneficial to conduct research exploring leadership styles to further advance understanding of time issue impacts. Specifically, it could be valuable to learn about any common relationships between personal time preferences and leadership style to improve leadership assessment and development measures, thereby incorporating the notion of temporal awareness (TA). As this study was conducted with a demographically homogenous participant group, it is not possible to know if professionals of color on this campus would have had different lived experience. Therefore, it is recommended that any future research be conducted with a diverse participant cohort to increase understanding of lived experience.

Secondly, another potential focus for future research relates to the impact of resource constraints on time perception. One possible topic to fully address the problem of practice would be to identify which constraints impact time perception, time use, and detrimental time protection to the greatest degree in one or more higher educational settings. If one could assess these factors in one geographic area, results could benefit any local collaborative strategies and efforts to provide unified support for project leaders. Furthermore, the influence of technology on project work was not addressed in detail by this study. Since project work may be conducted remotely and both synchronously and asynchronously thanks to technology, the possible impact of timing warrants additional study. Future research could also explore whether quantitative assessment measures of participant stress throughout the life of a project could provide
additional feedback on issues of time and link those to various factors such as existing and evolving cultural time norms, unforeseen delays, administrative control points, and the resource constraints that were identified as sources of stress through this inquiry.

Thirdly, additional research could explore the impacts of proposed enhancements to management practices. The practice recommendations presented here address leadership listening and temporal awareness, orientation to time issues such as pacing in project management, and the orientation to time norms as part of human resource practices. If any of these recommendations are implemented in one or more settings, it would be useful to test the results of those efforts. For instance, one could conduct pre- and post-project team employee engagement assessments for at least one project to learn if a focus on time issues made any difference in employee job satisfaction during the life of a project. This could aid the evaluation of new approaches to ensure they result in the anticipated positive impact and bolster evidence to justify financial investment in same.

A final group of recommendations for future research relates to findings pertaining to the role of reflection on time issues and resiliency and wellbeing. The chronotype assessment required each study participant to reflect and share a personal preference regarding wakefulness, i.e., “morning bird” or “night owl”. The question generated a rich discussion with each participant as each depicted a preference and then also described time management preferences, mostly using technology (Appendix D). Unfortunately, it was not possible to explore the collected data within this research study. Could such an assessment be a simple key to personal reflection regarding lived temporal experience, as well as a means of connecting with others on a project team? It would be helpful to learn how the chronotype assessment might be used in a project team setting to identify temporal preferences before a project launch and whether such
information could enhance productivity and satisfaction. In turn, such assessment would pair well with the potential leadership temporal assessment efforts mentioned.

In closing, before I began my research interviews at the research study site, I came across the mention of a soon to be launched project at my home institution. Describing the construction and development of a new research and innovation center, Harvard Business School’s Dean Nitin Nohria remarked, “This is a project that will operate on multiple timescales. It’s worth noting that it’s taken Harvard almost 400 years to develop 214 acres in Cambridge. So, we should not be impatient” (Powell, 2018). This communication provided evidence of an encouraging temporal awareness at the leadership level in higher education. Thanks to the pursuit of this research, I find myself attuned to such examples. The important and complex presence of time as a factor in endeavors including change projects will certainly play a role in the future of work. I look forward to contributing to fostering temporal awareness in service of individual and organizational wellbeing as that future unfolds.
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Appendix A

Invitation to Participate in an Individual Interview

Email to [ORGANIZATION] Professional Administrators Who Have Identified Themselves as Working on a Change Project

My name is Susan Riegler, and I am a student in the Doctor of Education program at Northeastern University. I am currently conducting a study for my doctoral thesis and am seeking research participants.

I am researching the views of professional administrators in higher education regarding their experience of time as a resource while working on a change project. My intent is to learn more about those experiences and to share this information with those who work on projects.

If you choose to volunteer for this study, I will be interviewing you about your professional, personal, and institutional experience. The expected time commitment is between one and two hours over the course of up to three interactions (one in person, two either brief conversations in person or via email). You will choose the location of each in-person interview. You will be offered a $20 gift card for participating.

Your participation is strictly voluntary, and your comments will be confidential with no identification to you. If you do not reply to this email, you will not be contacted again regarding this research.

If you are interested in learning more about this study, please email me at [email address]

and include the information listed below or contact me by phone at xxx-xxx-xxxx (Google phone number). I will then provide you with additional details about the study.

Your Name:

Email:

Phone number:

Preferred days and times to meet:

Thank you for considering participation in the study. If you have any questions, please call me.

Sincerely,

Susan Riegler
Northeastern University Doctoral Candidate
Appendix B

Participant Consent Form

Northeastern University, College of Professional Studies

Name of Investigator(s): Principal Investigator, Dr. Jermaine Williams, Student Researcher, Susan G. Riegler

Title of Project: Understanding the Experience of Time at Work: An IPA Study in a Higher Education Setting

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

We are inviting you to take part in a research study. This form will tell you about the study, but the researcher will explain it to you first. You may ask this person any questions that you have. When you are ready to make a decision, you may tell the researcher if you want to participate or not. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you decide to participate, then the researcher will ask you to sign this statement and will give you a copy to keep.

Why am I being asked to take part in this research study?

You are being recruited because you work in higher education and perform work on a change project. These projects fall outside of your regular work assignments and help to promote a change in systems and/or services.

Why is this research study being done?

The purpose of this study seeks to understand the experience of time by professional administrators engaged in that type of project work. Through this study, I hope to gain more insight into the role of time and temporality in the experience of work here. Hopefully, this will allow me to identify ways in which to enhance leadership capacity, employee experience, and workplace culture.

What will I be asked to do?

If you decide to take part in this study, we will ask you to participate in a semi-structured in-person interview. The interview will not disrupt your professional responsibilities. The interview will be audio recorded. During the interview, you will be asked a series of questions designed to allow you to share your experiences with and perceptions of the time while working on a project. The interview will be recorded so that it can subsequently be transcribed and analyzed.

Where will this take place and how much of my time will it take?

You will be interviewed at a time and place that is most convenient for you. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes to complete. There may be one or two follow-up phone calls or emails (15 minutes) to clarify aspects of the interview, only if needed.
**Will there be any risk or discomfort to me?**

There are no known risks with this research and no foreseeable risk or discomfort.

**Will I benefit by being in this research?**

There will be no direct benefit to you for taking part in the study. However, the information learned from this study may help both practice and policy. A better understanding of perceptions and experiences with time at work may help administrators better approach project work to maximize the benefit to employee engagement.

**Who will see the information about me?**

Your part in this study will be confidential, and your confidentiality will be maintained at all times. Only the researchers on this study will see the information about you. No reports or publications will use information that can identify you in any way or any individual as being of this project. Your organization and you will be assigned a pseudonym; in all interview transcripts and documents, you will be referenced only as this pseudonym.

Interview transcripts signed consent forms, and written notes will be kept at the researcher's home in a locked drawer, accessible only by the researcher. Electronic files, such as the pseudonym key, coded transcripts, and writings will be kept at the researcher's home in a password-protected computer. All identifiable materials will be destroyed as soon as is feasible.

Limits to confidentiality. In rare instances, authorized people may request to see research information about you and other people in this study. This is done only to be sure that the research is done properly. We would only permit people who are authorized by organizations such as the Northeastern University Institutional Review Board to see this information.

**What will happen if I suffer any harm from this research?**

No special arrangements will be made for compensation or for payment for treatment solely because of my participation in this research.

**Can I stop my participation in this study?**

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate if you do not want to and you can refuse to answer any question(s). Even if you begin the study, you may quit at any time. If you do not participate or if you decide to quit, you will not lose any rights, benefits, or services that you would otherwise have as an employee. You are free to withdraw from this study at any time for any reason. Following study conclusion, all physical and digital artifacts that have been provided by you, or to which you have contributed, will be destroyed.
**Whom can I contact if I have questions or problems?**

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Susan Riegler, the person mainly responsible for this research at riegler.s@husky.neu.edu or my Google phone number (xxx-xxx-xxxx).

Alternatively, the Principal Investigator, Dr. Jermaine Williams, can be contacted at je.williams@northeastern.edu.

**Whom can I contact about my rights as a participant?**

If you have any questions about your rights in this research, you may contact Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, Mail Stop: 560-177, 360 Huntington Avenue, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115. Tel: 617.373.4588, Email: n.regina@neu.edu. You may call anonymously if you wish.

**Will I be paid for my participation?**

I would like to offer you a $20 gift card as a token of appreciation for your time.

**Will it cost me anything to participate?**

There are no specific costs to be incurred by you as a participant.

**Is there anything else I need to know?**

You must be at least 18 years old to participate unless your parent or guardian gives written permission.

________________________________________  ____________________
Signature of Researcher                  Date

____________________________
Printed name of person above

________________________________________  ____________________
Signature of Participant                  Date

____________________________
Printed name of person above
Appendix C

Interview Protocol Form

Institution: ________________________________

Interviewee (Title and Name): ________________________________

Interviewer: Susan Riegler

RESEARCH QUESTION: How do professional administrators who are engaged in change project work at this higher education institution understand the experience of time as a resource?

I. Interview Protocol – Introduction (5 minutes)

Thanks for talking with me today! Based on the study outreach and our conversation, you are someone who has a great deal to share about collaborative project work undertaken to foster change here. My research project focuses on the experience of time by professional administrators engaged in that type of project work. Whether it is time awareness, time perception, rules about time, or pace, time may play a role at work. Through this study, I hope to gain more insight into the role of time and temporality in the experience of work here. Hopefully, this will allow me to identify ways in which to enhance leadership capacity and employee experience and the workplace culture.

Because your responses are important, and I want to make sure to capture everything you say, I would like to audio record our conversation today. Do I have your permission to record this interview? I may ask the question again as I start recording, and then turn on the recording equipment. I will also be taking written notes. I can assure you that all responses will be confidential and only a pseudonym will be used when quoting from the transcripts. I will be the only one privy to the recording(s) which will be eventually destroyed after they are transcribed.

To meet our human subjects’ requirements at the university, you must sign the form I have with me. Essentially, this document states that: (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) we do not intend to inflict any harm.

Do you have any questions about the interview process or how your data will be used?

This interview should last about 60 minutes. During this time, I have several questions that I would like to cover. If time begins to run short, it may be necessary to interrupt you in order to push ahead and complete this line of questioning. Do you have any questions at this time?
II. Interview Protocol - Interviewee Background (5 minutes)

Let’s start with some background questions.

**Demographics**
1. What is your full name?
2. What is your age?
3. With which gender do you identify?

**Working**
4. What is the name of the department where you currently work?
5. What work do you do?
6. How long have you been working in your current area?

**Experiences with Projects**
7. Please pick one change project that we will explore together in the interview. Tell me a bit about it (goal, people involved).
8. Do you have prior project experience?
9. What sort of training were you provided in order to work on this project?

**Personal Time**
10. Before we start, here is a fun question for you (Show Chronotype Card (morning bird/night owl; below)

Does either of these birds appeal to you?
III. Interview Protocol - Main Interview (45 minutes)

One of the things I am interested in learning about is time-related rules and norms on projects and in workplace culture. I would like to hear about your experience with and perspective on the one project you chose in your own words. To do this, I am going to ask you questions about the key experiences you encountered. If you mention other people, please do not mention names. Also, I will give you a pseudonym.

First, let’s talk about how you experience time during a change project here at work.

1. Please tell me about your experience of time working on the specific change project you chose.
   - Follow up: Describe the project pace and your pace.
   - Follow up: What would you say is the most important influence on how you spend/t your time on this change project?
2. Please tell me about how much time you have on a typical day here at work.
   - Follow up: How would you describe the amount of time you have?
   - Follow up: Tell me how you view your time.
3. Can you describe how you prefer to organize your time at work?
   - Follow up: If you would like, tell me what you do.
   - Follow up: How do you know what time it is throughout the day?
   - Follow up: How would you describe the amount of control you have over your time at work?
4. Please tell me about your preferred pace of work.
   - Follow up: How might your manager describe your pace?
   - Follow up: How might the project manager describe your pace?
   - Follow up: How do you feel at the end of the day in terms of time?
5. How has your experience of time on this change project impacted your feelings about yourself?
   - Follow up: Do you feel the change project is/was a success?
   - Follow up: Do you feel acknowledged for the time you spend/t on it?
6. Last question in this part…What does time at work on this project mean to you?

Secondly, I’d like to hear about your experience of time norms - rules and practices - of this organization.

7. Reflecting on your experiences on this change project, what are/were the time rules that you know?
   - Follow up: What do you feel influences/d those rules?
   - Follow up: Do you feel like your preferences matches/d the time rules on the project?
8. Reflecting on your experiences at the University, what are the time norms?
   - Follow up: What do you feel influences/d the norms?
   - Follow up: Do you feel like your approach to time matches the overall culture here?
IV. Interview Protocol – Conclusion (5 minutes)

Is there anything else you wish to share with me?

- Why did you decide to participate in this study?
- What do you hope to gain as an individual and as a community member from this study?
- May I have your drawing(s) or document(s)?
- Do you want me to return them to you?
- Do you have any questions for me?

I will be reviewing our interview in the coming days and will be in touch if I have any follow-up questions or need clarification. Likewise, if any questions or concerns arise after our meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me. Once I have transcribed this interview, I will provide you with a copy for your review. If you wish to make any amendments or redactions, please let me know within two weeks.

Thank you for your participation today and for being willing to answer my questions.

Follow-up Interview or email

Thank you for agreeing to speak with me one more time. Do I have your permission to record this interview? In this final interview, I would like to ask you some follow-up questions, as well as seek your views on themes that came up with other participants.
Appendix D

Self-Assessment of Chronotype*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Morning Bird</th>
<th>Night Owl</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastie</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khaleesi</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryellen</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Each of the participants shared their chronotype preference after reviewing the images of the morning bird and night owl. Most of the respondents prefer to rise in the morning and use energy reserves early in the day. Summaries of self-descriptions appear below.

Khaleesi is a morning bird who is aware of time due to environmental factors; she uses her computer to manage her schedule and wears a watch, as well. She prefers a speedy pace, “I need to get things done. I need decisions.”

Al is a morning bird who is aware of the time when he hears classes changing outside his office door. He enjoys a free form time style and recently shifted from a paper-based system to a shared tech app. Al likes to be busy, but also expressed that, “You have to avoid the notion that time is this infinite resource”.

Summer is a morning bird who tries to periodically peek outside to note the time of day. She uses Outlook for work to manage many different schedules aligned with her roles. Summer keeps her personal calendar on her phone and syncs it with her family members. She favors a steady pace of work.

Maryellen is a morning bird who likes to keep busy at a steady pace; her day is driven by meetings. She uses Outlook for work time and Google for her personal calendar and sometimes struggles with syncing, which can be frustrating to her.

Carol is a night owl who depends on her phone and PC to manage her calendar. The pace of academia is slower than that of industry, where she was able to move more quickly with decision-making and project implementation.

Eastie is a “definite night owl” who prefers “extremely quickly” as his pace. He uses his watch, phone, and multiple Outlook calendars to manage his various responsibilities. He remarked, “These smart devices are your best friend and also your worst enemy, right? ... you’re always connected”.