LEADING CHANGE
in Public Organizations

A study about the role of leadership in the implementation of organizational change in a public sector context

Joris van der Voet

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A STUDY ABOUT THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN A PUBLIC SECTOR CONTEXT

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Leiding geven aan verandering in publieke organisaties
Een studie naar de rol van leiderschap in de implementatie van organisatieverandering in een publieke sector context

Thesis

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DOCTORAL COMMITTEE:

Promotor: Prof. dr. W.J.M. Kickert

Other members: Prof. dr. A.J. Steijn
                         Prof. dr. S. Van de Walle
                         Prof. dr. M. Higgs

Copromotors: Dr. B.S. Kuipers
                         Dr. S.M. Groeneveld

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PREFACE

Although it is only my name on the cover of this book, a great number of people have made an important contribution to this dissertation. In this section, I would like to thank a number of them.

First of all, I thank my promoter and supervisors. As the promoter of the dissertation, I thank prof. dr. Walter Kickert for his direct and honest style of communicating and discussing my research. As my promoter, Walter has given me the freedom to shape the Ph.D. project according to my own research interests. In the first year, this was a mixed blessing, because it's easy to get distracted when you have a lot of freedom. Now that the dissertation is finished, I am convinced that this freedom greatly contributed to the quality of the work and my development as an independent researcher. I also thank Walter for taking an interest in and contributing to my future academic career, beyond the completion of the Ph.D. dissertation.

During the project, I had the luxury of not having one, but two excellent daily supervisors. As one of the daily supervisors, dr. Ben Kuipers has been involved in the project from day one. I thank Ben for the numerous invaluable contributions he has made to the dissertation. I admire Ben for his ability to mix high quality, in-depth comments and creative solutions with cheerful, often funny comments in his feedback on my work. Ben is a pleasant person to work with and he is always in for a joke. I also thank Ben for providing me with opportunities to present my work at academic conferences, writing joint publications, allowing me to co-supervise master theses and introducing me in 'the field' to begin my empirical research.

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Andres Dijkshoorn was a fellow Ph.D. student at the department (before he left the university to get a 'real' job) and it was great to have a colleague with whom I really connected on a personal level. Andres and I spent numerous hours drinking coffee and discussing worldly affairs. You may not believe it, but we even talked about issues related to our research! I have learned a lot from Andres' experience and street smarts, and I consider him to be one of my closest personal friends.

Next, I thank the other Ph.D. students at the Department of Public Administration of Erasmus University Rotterdam for making it such a nice place to work. I especially thank Stefan Verweij, Wouter Spekkink, Ruth Post and Ingmar van Meerkerk, whom I have known since the first year of the Public Administration bachelor program back in 2004. I am proud to be a part of this self-proclaimed 'Golden Generation', and I am glad to see that you are all in the final stages of your Ph.D. projects!

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Finally, I want to thank my family, friends and the people I love. I thank my parents, for always encouraging their children to learn and enabling us to study. It is easy to take these things for granted, but I admire you for raising us the way that you did. I thank Jasper, Pim and Patrick for not taking me very seriously and reminding me that writing a

Ph.D. dissertation consists mostly of watching YouTube videos during office hours, working at home, drinking coffee and 'thinking'. You are absolutely right, of course!

Finally, I thank Marlies for supporting me in the final stages of the dissertation. You do an excellent job of making me forget about work when we're together, and I am sure you will keep doing so in the future! I am very happy that you have decided to come with me to Barcelona, even though it will most likely be a bigger and more uncertain adventure for you than for me. Even though we will be away from home, with you I feel like am taking the most important part of home with me.

Chapter 1

Introduction and research objectives
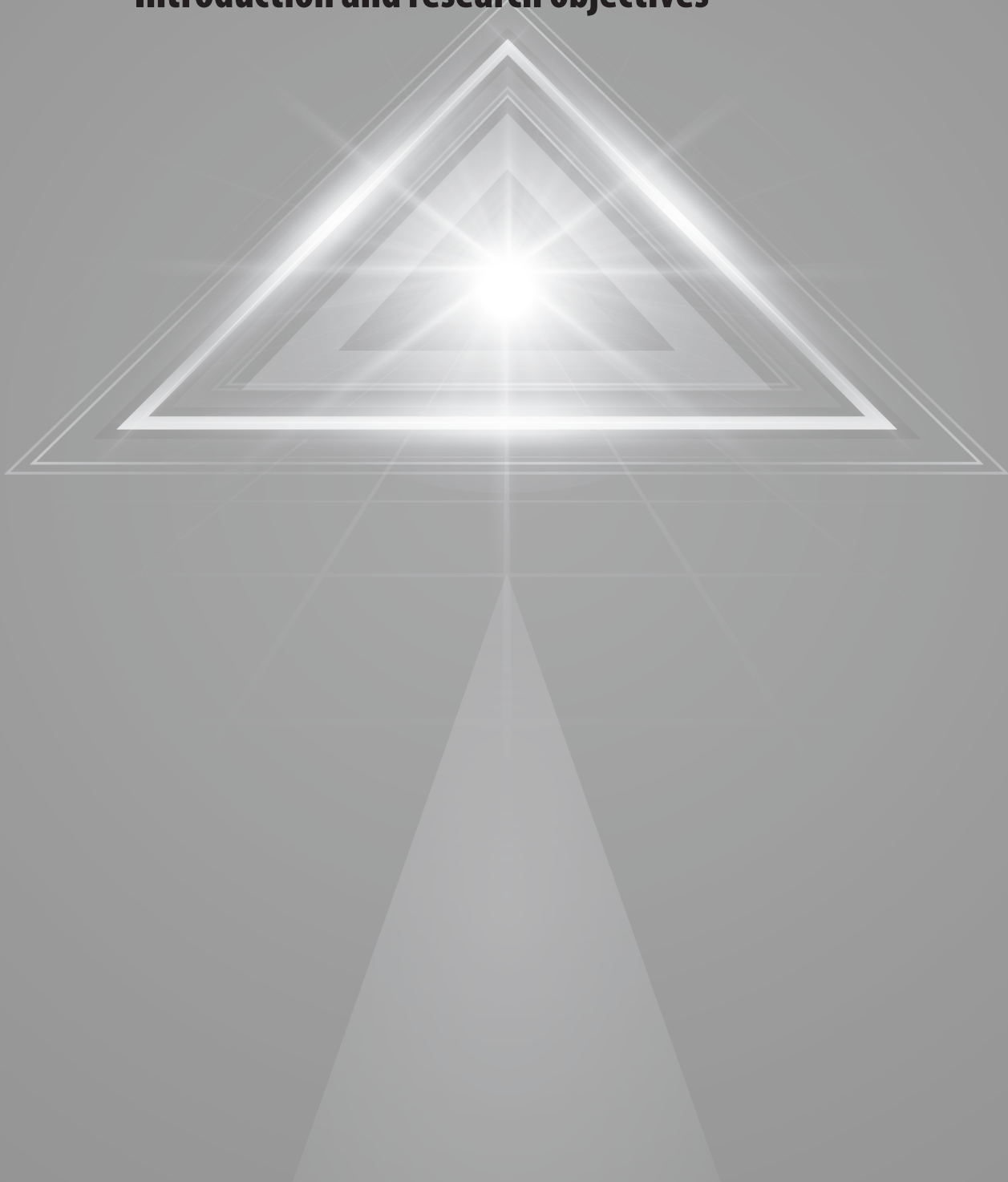
1.1 STUDYING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

Much of the public management literature is somehow concerned with change. Policy research addresses how new policies bring about desirable societal outcomes (Sabatier, 1984; O'Toole, 2000). Studies on governance highlight how societal problems are no longer approached by individual governmental organizations, but increasingly by partnerships between government and private organizations, or networks consisting of government, businesses and civil society (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004; Kickert, Klijn & Koppenjan, 1997; Klijn, Steijn & Edelenbos, 2010). Research on innovation emphasizes new products and new ways of delivering public services (Damanpour & Schneider, 2009; Osborne & Brown, 2011; Bekkers, 2011). The extensive literature on administrative reform underlines the ongoing modernization, minimization and marketization of the public sector in recent decades, and the infusion of private sector management techniques in public organizations (Hood, 1991; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004; Kickert, 2007; Bekkers, Edelenbos & Steijn, 2011). All these developments ultimately imply changes in public organizations and the behavior of employees. Despite the prevalence of change in public management research, there is relatively little attention for the way organizational change in public organizations is implemented (Stewart & Kringas, 2003; Kickert, 2010).

The most prominent line of research that focuses on organizational change in the public sector is the public management or administrative reform perspective (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004; Boyne, Farrell, Law, Powell & Walker, 2003; Kickert, 2007; Ongaro, 2010). A large portion of the reform perspective portrays organizational change as rational, deliberate and purposeful (Olsen, 1991). Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004: 8) define public management reform as: "deliberate changes to the structures and processes of public sector organizations with the objective of getting them (in some sense) to run better." The content of many reforms is influenced by the new public management (NPM) paradigm (Wise, 2002), which places a great emphasis on performance and the application of private sector management techniques (Hood, 1991; Dunleavy & Hood, 1994; Hood & Peters, 2004). Public management research on reform has extensively focused on the content of public management reforms in different countries and settings. For example, many studies have examined to what extent administrative reforms have been implemented in different countries (Pollitt, Van Thiel & Homburg, 2007; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004; Kickert, 2007; Ongaro, 2010). As such, the reform perspective is mostly focused on change on the national or sectoral level, rather than on the organizational level. Moreover, because public management reforms are intended to improve the operations of public sector organizations, many academic studies have studied to what degree the implementation of new public management reforms has resulted in improved performance, effectiveness and cost-efficiency (e.g. Pollitt, 2000; Heinrich, 2002; Ackroyd, Kirkpatrick & Walker, 2007).

Next to a focus on the content and effects of administrative reform, the reform perspective is also focused on the reasons for the implementation of reform. As is evident from the above definition by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004), the reason for the implementation of reform is often based on rationality. Many of the elements of NPM reforms have been selected and implemented because they were expected to improve the efficiency or effectiveness of public services (Pollitt, 2001). However, Kuipers et al. (2013) find that, next to this rational perspective on the reasons for public management reform, other studies in the reform perspective highlight different reasons for the implementation of reform (e.g. Frumkin & Galaskiewicz, 2004; Goldfinch, 2006; Ashworth, Boyne & Delbridge, 2009; Goldfinch & Wallis, 2010). Such studies are based on an institutional perspective, which argues that the reasons for reform are not based on a logic of consequence, but on a logic of appropriateness (March & Olsen, 1989; March, 1994). According to the institutional perspective, the widespread implementation of administrative reform is not based on adaptation of public organizations in order to increase organizational effectiveness (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Rather, public organizations adopt reforms because legislators instruct them to, because they mimic other organizations due to uncertainty, or because of the influence of professional norms and standards (Pollitt, 2001; Goldfinch & Wallis, 2010). As such, the prevalence of public management reform is explained more by symbolism than actual improved performance, and more by legitimacy than effectiveness.

Although the administrative reform perspective offers distinct, possibly complementary, explanations for organizational change in the public sector, it offers relatively little insight in *how* change is implemented in individual public organizations. First, the reform perspective focuses on groups or systems of organizations, rather than individual organizations. Second, the reform perspective mainly highlights the content – the *what* - and reasons – the *why* – for organizational changes, rather than the processes through which organizational changes are implemented. As such, it cannot account for *how* organizational change comes about in public organizations, and by what factors this process is influenced. As a consequence, the public management literature often overlooks the difficulties of bringing about organizational change.

A perspective that does highlight the challenge of implementing organizational change is the change management perspective (Burke 2010; Senior, 2002; Beer & Nohria, 2000). While change is a taken-for-granted concept in public management research, the change management literature acknowledges that the implementation of organizational change often fails (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Burnes, 2011). In contrast with the reform perspective, the empirical focus in change management research is the organizational or intra-organizational level. Moreover, the change management perspective is not primarily focused on the content of organizational change, but accounts for the processes through which (deliberate) organizational change is implemented, as

well as its outcomes (Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; Kickert, 2013). The reform perspective may thus be applied to highlight the content and reasons for organizational change, but the change management perspective is better suited for the purpose of studying how the implementation of organizational change in public organizations takes place.

In recent years, a growing number of studies have adopted a change management perspective in order to study organizational change in public organizations (e.g. Coram & Burnes, 2001; Sminia & Van Nistelrooij, 2006; Klarner, Probst & Soparnot, 2008; Karp & Helgø, 2008). However, much of what is known about the implementation of organizational change remains based on private sector research, cases and examples (Thomas, 1996; Stewart & Kringas, 2003). Moreover, the dominant view in public management is that there are considerable differences between public and private organizations (e.g. Rainey, 2003; Boyne, 2002), and that private sector insights therefore may not be appropriate in a public sector context (Boyne, 2006). For instance, public organizations operate in an environment characterized by checks and balances, shared power, divergent interests and the political primate. Accordingly, they are typically organized according to the bureaucracy ideal type, which favors routines, stability and continuity over flexibility, adaptability and change (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Mintzberg, 1979). Several authors have argued that the specific characteristics of public organizations make the implementation of organizational change in public organizations distinct or even more difficult (Kickert, 2013; Isett, Glied, Sparer & Brown, 2012). Veenswijk (2005, 2006) refers to this as the so-called 'innovation paradox'. Public organizations are required to continuously change and innovate, but this is contradictory to their traditional role of providing reliable and stable services (Veenswijk, 2005, 2006). However, this issue has received little empirical investigation in both public management and change management research. The dominant view in public administration research is that insights form the private sector may not necessarily translate to a public sector setting (Boyne, 2006). In the second chapter of this research, it will be argued that there is thus considerable theoretical relevance in examining to what extent change management theory from the private sector is applicable in the public sector, and how such theoretical statements may be influenced by the specific features of public organizations.

Studying organizational change in public organizations with a change management perspective is also of considerable practical relevance. Some authors state that public organizations have proven to be quite capable of implementing change over the past decades (Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; Borins, 2002). However, other authors are more skeptical about the capability of organizations to implement change in general, and the capability of public organizations to do so in particular (Isett et al., 2012; Karp & Helgø, 2008; McNulty & Ferlie, 2004). The literature on managing organizational change provides extensive evidence for the difficulties of change implementation. Prominent authors point at the notorious 70 percent in change management: of all intended orga-

nizational changes, the implementation of 70 percent ultimately fails (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Beer and Nohria, 2000). Although such general claims are also contested (Hughes, 2011; Burnes, 2011), there is consensus that the implementation of change is considerably more complex and unpredictable than the designing and planning of organizational change (Brunsson, 2009). Hence, although it is often taken for granted in public management research, the implementation of organizational change is a considerable challenge. The application of change management theory in public management research, as well as the examination of its validity given the specific public sector context, may thus result in practical value for public managers.

In this first section, it has been argued that the implementation processes through which organizational change in public organizations comes about are often overlooked in public management research. As a consequence, there are no public sector specific theories about organizational change, and there is little evidence concerning the extent to which existing change management theory is applicable in public organizations. In the rest of this chapter, a further introduction of change management in public organizations is given. In section 1.2, change management theory and its emphasis on leadership are discussed. In section 1.3, an overview of existing research on change management in the public sector, as well as its shortcomings, is given. Research objectives and the overall research question are then formulated in section 1.4. In section 1.5, the outline of the rest of the dissertation is presented.

1.2 INTRODUCING CHANGE MANAGEMENT THEORY AND THE LEADERSHIP OF CHANGE

Despite their claim that change is today's only constant, the introduction to books on organizational change management has remained surprisingly stable over time. Authors either stress that our current time demands great adaptability and change (Kotter, 1996; Beer & Nohria, 2000; Paton & McCalman, 2008) or that most organizational changes fail (Boonstra, Steensma & Demenint, 2008; Burke, 2010). The combination of these observations makes the effective implementation of deliberate change in an organizational setting a prominent challenge for both public and private sector organizations.

The importance of organizational change and the difficulties of achieving it have resulted in both a large scientific research literature and a more practice oriented literature. The core assumption of the change management literature is that the successful implementation of organizational change is not only dependent on what changes – the content of change – but also on the process of change through which organizational change comes about (Self, Armenakis & Schraeder, 2007; Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999). The change management literature is thus focused on the different approaches, strate-

gies, interventions and actions through which change can be implemented. In this research, the implementation of change refers to the *process* through which organizational change is implemented.

The change management literature typically links the process of change to the results or outcomes of change. Authors often use the term 'success' to address the outcomes of change in both the practitioner literature (Kotter, 1996; Beer & Nohria, 2000; Miller, 2001; Paton & McCalman, 2008), as well as academic research (Self & Schraeder, 2009; Burnes & Jackson, 2011). Success can be seen as the degree in which stated change goals have been achieved. However, 'success' is a subjective, intangible concept that is difficult to evaluate and may consist of many different notions (Pettigrew, Woodman & Cameron, 2001). A central assumption in change management theory is that little will change without the support of employees (Bartunek, Rousseau, Rudolph, & DePalma, 2006; Herold, Fedor & Caldwell, 2007). Studies therefore often assess the outcomes of change by focusing on the extent to which employees support the change (e.g. Herold, Fedor, Caldwell & Liu, 2008; Self et al., 2007; Walker, Armenakis & Berneth, 2007), which is ultimately expected to improve the likelihood of success (Self & Schraeder, 2009). Examples of such attitudinal constructs that are used to measure the outcomes of change implementation are commitment to change (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002) and willingness to change (Metselaar, 1997).

Leadership is generally highlighted as one of the key drivers of the implementation of organizational change (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010, 2011; Herold & Fedor, 2006; Herold et al., 2008; Liu, 2010). A great deal of the change management literature is therefore concerned with change leadership. Change leadership is generally seen as the behaviors and activities of individuals, usually a limited number of individuals with a formal managerial mandate located in the apex of the organization, aimed at advancing the implementation of organizational change (e.g. Burke, 2010; Kotter, 1996; Gill, 2002). Such activities include gathering information about the external environment, providing vision and direction, establishing the need for change, communicating the change, creating and maintaining momentum and institutionalizing the change (Kotter, 1996; Burke, 2010; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006).

Leadership and management are related terms, but important conceptual differences exist (Kotter, 1990; Jackson & Parry, 2008; Burke, 2010). Management is usually associated with instructing, control and stability while leadership is associated with growth, vision, inspiration and change (Burke, 2010). In organizational change, change management refers to the approach to change: the planning, coordinating, organizing and directing of the processes through which change is implemented (Gill, 2002). Leadership is concerned with inspiring and motivating employees in order to create support for change. In the perspective of many popular authors on change, change management can thus

be seen as a sine qua non, but the successful organizational change ultimately requires leadership to be enacted (Eisenbach, Watson & Pillai, 1999).

The change management literature has been subject to substantial critique. First, the literature was traditionally criticized for being a-contextual, a-historical and a-processual (Pettigrew, 1985; Pettigrew et al., 2001). More recent studies have incorporated a broader range of dimensions such as the content, context and process of change (Herold et al., 2007; Holt, Armenakis, Feild, Harris, 2007; Van Dam, Oreg & Schyns, 2008). Second, the validity of change management theory and prescriptions has been contested. The practice-oriented literature on change management consists of many prescriptive 'cook-books' that offer advice on how to successfully implement organizational change (e.g. Kotter, 1996). However, such recipes or action plans are seldom based on a systematic comparison of successful and unsuccessful changes. Because such prescriptive theories may have been followed in both successful and unsuccessful organizational changes, it is impossible to determine the validity of such theories (Boyne, 2006; Brunsson, 2000). The validity of these theories is questionable at the least, given the notion that most organizational changes fail despite the abundance of cookbooks on successful change. Pettigrew (2000) and Pettigrew et al. (2001) have argued that change management research should take outcome variables into account in order to assess the actual effects of change implementation. In more recent years, empirical studies by Higgs and Rowland (2005, 2010) and Herold et al. (2008) have focused on the effects of change implementation by relating the process and leadership of change to outcome variables.

The literature on organizational change management has thus made considerable advances in the past decade. However, change management theory traditionally stems from private sector research (Thomas, 1996; Stewart & Kringas, 2003), which does not emphasize the distinct characteristics of the public sector (e.g. Rainey, 2003; Boyne, 2002). As such, there is little evidence about the extent to which change management theory is applicable in a public sector context. In the next section, research on change management in the public sector, as well as its shortcomings, is examined.

1.3 SHORTCOMINGS OF CHANGE MANAGEMENT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

Some authors are optimistic about the potential of public organizations to implement organizational change. For example, Fernandez and Rainey (2006) argue that the ability of public sector organizations to implement organizational change is evident from the great number of reforms, innovations and changes that have been implemented over the last decades. Based on a meta-analysis of the literature, Robertson and Seneviratne (1995) conclude that public sector organizations are no less capable of implementing

planned organizational changes than private sector organizations. At the same time, other authors are more skeptical about public organizations' potential for organizational change. For example, Isett et al. (2012) and Rusaw (2007) state that organizational change is more difficult to implement in the public sector because of the bureaucratic structural characteristics of public organizations. Similarly, McNulty and Ferlie (2004) argue that the specific nature of public sector organizations poses a limit on the implementation of change. Karp and Helgø (2008) state that organizational change is considerably more complex and chaotic in the public sector.

Although many studies have examined organizational change in public organizations, prior research has considerable shortcomings. Because of these shortcomings, research has resulted in relatively little theory about the implementation of change in public organizations. First, *research concerning change in the public sector is often focused on reforms on the national or sector level, rather than change on the organizational level*. For example, prior research has addressed changes in the Dutch national civil service (Kickert, 2010), the Norwegian health care sector (Askim, Christensen, Fimreit & Lægreid, 2009), local government in the United Kingdom (Ashworth et al., 2009) and the higher education system in The Netherlands (De Boer, Enders & Lysete, 2007). A second shortcoming of the public sector change management literature is that *authors focus their attention on the content of changes rather than on the process through which organizational change comes about* (e.g. By, Diefenbach & Klarner, 2008; Wise, 2002). As a consequence, many studies overlook the difficulties that are inherent to the implementation of organizational change (Kotter, 1996; Burnes, 2011).

There is a growing body of research that is conducted in the public sector and is focused on the implementation of organizational change (e.g. Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; Fernandez & Pitts, 2007; Kuipers et al., 2013). However, a third shortcoming is that *these studies mostly do not theorize how the specific characteristics of public sector organizations affect the process of change or its outcomes.* Examples of studies that do not explicitly account for such characteristics are Chustz and Larson (2006), Sminia and Van Nistelrooij (2006), Stewart and O'Donnell (2007) and Isett et al. (2012). While these studies are focused on organizational change in a public organization, the organization's specific public nature is not accounted for the in the study's variables and the authors do not formulate conclusions about what may make change specific in a public organization. A fourth shortcoming of research on change in public organizations is, similar to the general literature on change management, that *research designs often lack an outcome variable that allows the formulation of conclusions about the effectiveness of change implementation* (Kuipers et al., 2013). In this research, the outcomes of change implementation are addressed by incorporating the support of employees for the organizational change.

This research addresses the above shortcomings by studying processes of organizational change in public organizations, and explicitly relating the implementation of change to the specific characteristics of public organizations. The central focus of this research is on the leadership of change in public organizations. Attention is focused on the so-called *administrative* leadership of public managers, rather than the *political* leadership of elected officials (cf. Van Wart, 2003). A focus on change leadership is relevant for a number of reasons. First, many studies have highlighted the crucial role of leadership during organizational change. Higgs and Rowland found that leadership behaviors accounted for around 50% of the variance of change success. However, there is very little empirical evidence for the effect of leadership on the outcomes of organizational change in the public sector (Fernandez & Pitts, 2007). Although authors often argue that the complex nature of the environment of public organizations may place even greater importance on the role of leadership than in private organizations, most academic work that emphasizes the importance of change leadership is not based on empirical evidence (e.g. Karp & Helgø, 2008; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006). Other publications that emphasize the importance of change leadership are based on the anecdotal accounts of experts (e.g. Corbett, 2013; Miller, 2001). Finally, many studies on the implementation of organizational change in the public sector are single case studies using qualitative methods (Kuipers et al., 2013). Such studies often highlight the importance of leadership during change (e.g. Klarner et al., 2008; Ryan, Williams, Charles & Waterhouse, 2008), but their design does not allow them to formulate conclusions concerning the effects of leadership. An exception is Hennessey (1998), who studied the influence of managers' leadership competencies on the outcomes of the reinventing government program in the United States.

A second reason for emphasizing the role of change leadership in public organizations is that current studies are not very theoretical. Based on a review of the public sector change management literature between 2000 and 2010, Kuipers et al. (2013) conclude that leadership theory is often absent, or that theoretical leadership concepts are used superficially (e.g. Klarner et al., 2008). Moreover, change leadership is almost exclusively attributed to the senior management (e.g. Hennessey, 1998; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; Chustz & Larson, 2006; Ridder, Bruns & Spier, 2005), while the general change leadership literature also emphasizes the role of lower level change leaders (Van Dam et al., 2008; DeVos, Buelens & Bouckenooghe, 2007). In this research, change leadership is therefore examined at multiple hierarchical levels. Finally, studies do not emphasize the distinctive characteristics of leading change in a public organization. Multiple authors argue how these characteristics may influence the implementation of organizational change and its leadership (Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; Karp & Helgø, 2008). More generally, leadership research has indicated that leadership behavior is contingent on contextual factors, such as the organizational structure, the organizational environment, the organizational life-

cycle stage and the type of technology and tasks of the organization (Shamir & Howell, 1999; Pawar & Eastman, 1997). This research therefore incorporates the specific features of public organizations in order to examine their influence on change leadership.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

Following the previously discussed shortcomings of change management research in public organizations, the objectives of this research are threefold. The first research objective is *to explore the role of leadership in the implementation of organizational change in public organizations*. The second research objective is *to contextualize change leadership in public organizations* by examining how change leadership and the implementation of change are influenced by the specific characteristics of public organizations. The third research objective is *to test to what extent and how leadership affects the outcomes of organizational change in public organizations* by examining the relationship between change leadership and employee support for change. The main research question is:

To what extent and how does leadership affect the implementation of organizational change and its outcomes, given the specific context of public organizations?

To answer the research question, four empirical studies will be carried out. The central focus of each study is on the role of leadership in the implementation of organizational change. Because leadership takes place in the context of the change process, all four studies account for the interrelations between leadership in different processes of change. Moreover, the research question includes attention for the public sector context by emphasizing the specific characteristics of public organizations. Rather than simply studying the implementation of change in a public sector context, the studies presented in chapter 5, 6 and 7 explicitly account for the influence of specific public sector contextual variables on the implementation of organizational change and its leadership. In the studies presented in chapter 6 and 7, the effects of change leadership on the outcomes of change are examined by studying the relationship between leadership and employee support for change.

1.5 OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation consists of 8 chapters. In this chapter, the research objectives and main research questions have been introduced. In chapter 2, the theoretical framework of the research is outlined. The methodology concerning the overall research and the four

studies are discussed in chapter 3. In chapter 4 through 7, the four empirical studies are presented. Each of these chapters contains a more detailed introduction of the research question, a more specified theoretical overview and a more elaborate overview of the methodological issues underlying the study. Each empirical chapter can thus be read separately, and as a part of the overall research. In chapter 8, the findings of all studies are combined in order to answer the main research question. Moreover, the research results are reflected on and limitations as well as recommendations for future research are discussed.

Chapter 1

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework
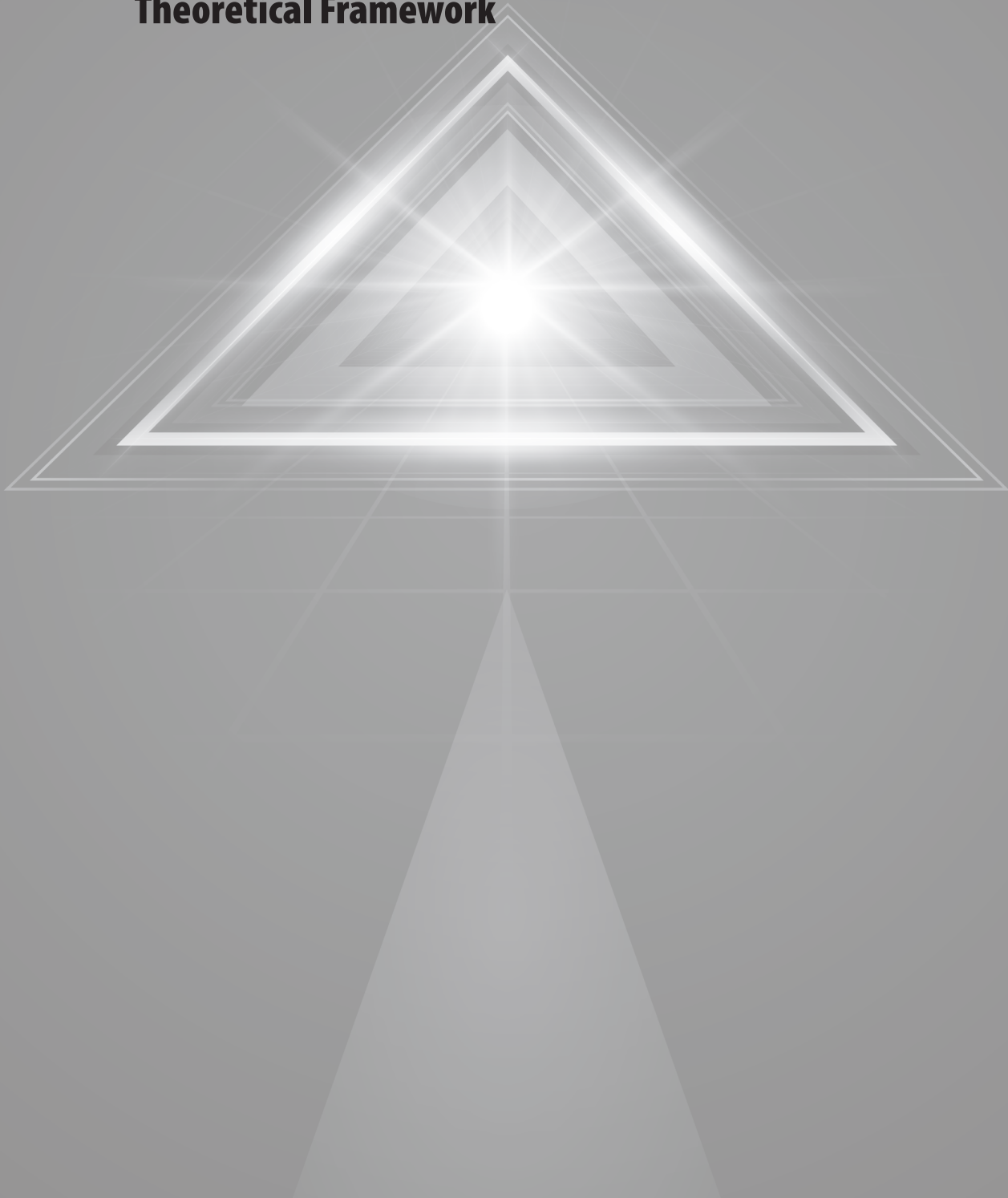
2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, a theoretical framework about the role of leadership in the implementation of organizational change in public organizations is presented. Before discussing the central concepts of this research, section 2.2 consists of a discussion of the ontological and epistemological assumptions that underpin organizations and change. Moreover, the differences between leadership and management are discussed in this section. In section 2.3, the literature on the leadership of organizational change is reviewed. Change leadership takes place within the context of organizational change processes. In section 2.4, leadership is therefore connected to wider literature on change management in order to account for the role of leadership in different approaches to organizational change. In this section, different processes of change and the outcomes of organizational change are discussed. In section 2.5, the public management literature is reviewed to explore how the specific characteristics of public organizations may influence change leadership and the implementation of organizational change. The concepts that are introduced in this section are used to formulate more detailed research questions in section 2.6.

2.2 CORE ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT ORGANIZATIONS, CHANGE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Core assumptions about organizations and change

In the past decades, a great number of perspectives, theories and concepts about organizational change have been formulated and applied (Van de Ven & Poole, 1995). However, scholars in the organization sciences have different views on what an organization is. Some theorists adopt the point of view that organizations are 'things': organizations are entities that are in a fixed state. Other theorists depart from the view that organizations are 'processes': Organizations are reifications of processes and are continuously in flux (Tsoukas, 2005). "One's ontological view of 'things organizational' shapes one's views of each and every organizational thing" (Whetten, 2005, in: Van de Ven & Poole, 2005: 1379). These ontological assumptions concerning the nature of organizations are thus at the core of any theory or study about organizational change (Van de Ven & Poole, 2005; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002; Weick & Quinn, 1999).

If one adopts the view that organizations are reifications of processes, changes are continuous, ongoing and cumulative (Weick & Quinn, 1999; Boonstra, 2004). Organizational change is not something that is initiated or directed by managers, but it is something that befalls the organization. Research on organizational change that adopts this social constructivist perspective is aimed at making sense of or better *understand-*

ing the challenges of organizational change, and how managers perceive and react to change (Garcia & Cluesing, 2013). For example, Azzone and Palermo's study (2011) is aimed at better understanding why and how managers enact performance appraisal in six Italian central government institutions. The social-constructivist perspective on change management often emphasizes the role of context in order to provide a better understanding of the dynamics of organizational change in a particular situation (Johnson & Macy, 2001). Moreover, this type of research is often critical in the sense that dominant theories are examined in particular contextual circumstances or with other, competing theoretical frameworks (Blatter & Haverland, 2012). For instance, Mantere, Silince and Hämäläinen (2007) have argued how music can be used as a metaphor to challenge popular change management models. Empirical research on change in the social-constructivist tradition is founded on case study designs and qualitative research methods. These studies may therefore result in unique insights about organizational change in a particular context, with no intention to apply or generalize this understanding to a different type of case.

In contrast, the positivist perspective perceives organizations as stable entities. Organizations are 'things' that exist in objective reality. Organizational change is seen as an episode of interruption of a phase of stability, which is followed by a next, yet different, phase of stability. Research can be used to measure the characteristics of organizations and episodes of organizational change, in order to provide researchers with information that corresponds with objective reality (Blatter & Haverland, 2012; Van de Ven & Poole, 2005). The positivistic research tradition is aimed at *explanation* rather than understanding. Studies aim to measure characteristics of the organizational change that is studied, often using quantitative research methods, and identify relationships between these variables. Some studies focus on the content of organizational change: in what aspects is the organization 'different' after the implementation of change (Greenwood & Hinings, 1993; 1996; Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Other studies have emphasized how the characteristics of the context, content or process of organizational change influence the attitudes of organizational members toward the change (Self et al., 2007; Holt et al., 2007; Self & Schraeder, 2009) The objective of the positivist research tradition is the generation and testing of theoretical statements that may apply to a larger part of the world than the cases that were studied.

The dominant perspective in the organization sciences is the view that organizations are fixed, stable entities (Van de Ven & Poole, 2005; Tsoukas, 2005). Because organizational change is generally seen as a necessity for organizational performance, legitimacy and even survival (e.g. Kotter, 1996), there has been much academic effort to create theoretical insights about to what extent and how such stable entities are capable of change. Brunsson (2000) distinguishes between adaptive change and imposed change. Adaptive changes come about automatically as a result of environmental pressures and

demands (e.g. Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Hannan & Freeman, 1984) or organizational learning (e.g. March, 1991; Dekker & Hansen, 2004; Askim, Johnson & Christophersen, 2007). Imposed changes are intentional changes that require to be implemented through the actions of individuals. Many studies have emphasized the factors influencing an organization's general readiness to change (Armenakis, Harris & Mossholder, 1993; Holt et al., 2007) or the management of a specific organizational change (Kotter, 1996; Greenwood & Hinings, 1996).

This research is based on the positivist approach of studying organizations and change. Change is seen as a temporary phase of organizational instability, of which characteristics regarding its process, content, context and outcomes can be measured. This research is focused on the way leadership influences the implementation and outcomes of intended organizational change. Although the research is intended to contribute to and test theoretical propositions generated in other positivistic studies, the social-constructivist research tradition on organizational change is occasionally consulted in order to propose theoretical relationships or interpret results.

Change management and change leadership

The change management literature is a broad literature about the implementation of change. The change management literature takes into account a great number of concepts in order to account for the way in which organizational change is implemented. Overviews of the literature by Senior (2002) and By (2005) take into account three dimensions in order to characterize the literature on change management: 1) change by the rate of occurrence, 2) the scale of change and 3) the way change comes about. Pettigrew (1985), Pettigrew et al. (2001), Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) and Kuipers et al. (2013) distinguish between the context, content, process and outcomes of change. The core of change management theory is that the process of change – the way change comes about – influences the outcomes of organizational change. The outcomes of organizational change are not predetermined by the content of change and contextual factors, but can be influenced – managed – through the way change is implemented.

Confusingly, a great deal of the change management literature is concerned with change *leadership*: it is focused on how leaders affect the implementation of change. A shared characteristic of the many change management theories and approaches is that leadership is highlighted as a necessary condition for successful change. For example, Beer and Nohria (2000) incorporate leadership as a central component of their theory E and theory O. Miller (2001) states that the successful change requires both the right implementation framework and strong change leadership. Gill (2002) argues that change must be well managed – it must be coordinated, organized and directed – but that it is leadership that makes the difference.

In line with the above views on the differences between change management and change leadership, change management is conceptualized in this research as the design, coordination and execution of the process through which change is implemented. Change leadership is seen as the behaviors of specific individuals during the process of change. Together, the process of change and change leadership influence the outcomes of organizational change (Miller, 2001; Gill, 2002).

In the next section, the literature on change leadership is reviewed and the conceptualization of change leadership in this research is presented. In section 2.4, the literature on change management is reviewed by discussing different approaches to organizational change and the outcomes of change.

2.3 THE LEADERSHIP OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Introducing change leadership

Leadership is generally assumed to be a crucial condition for organizational change (Burke, 2010; Borins, 2002). Publications that highlight leadership as the central factor in organizational change are plentiful in both the academic literature (Burke, 2010, Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010, 2011; Herold & Fedor, 2006; Herold et al., 2008; Liu, 2010; Boonstra, 2013) as well as the popular practice-oriented literature (Kotter, 1996, 2000; Nadler & Nadler, 1998). Many change leadership theories and approaches are based on personal experience and face validity (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Miller, 2001; Corbett, 2013). Only a few recent studies have moved beyond such descriptive models by providing empirical evidence of the effects of leadership during organizational change (e.g. Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010, 2011; Herold et al., 2008; Liu, 2010). Although the importance of leadership is highlighted in most scholarly work on organizational change, there is relatively little scientific evidence that accounts for the effects of change leadership (Burke, 2010; Eisenbach et al., 1999; Pettigrew et al., 2001). In this section, the literature on leadership in organizational change is reviewed in order to describe and further specify the nature and effectiveness of change leadership.

Research on change leadership departs from the view that leadership is concentrated in individuals. The change leadership literature is mostly aimed at the role of senior managers or the so-called guiding coalitions of organizational change (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Gill, 2002; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006). Moreover, the importance of top management support for a change initiative is often highlighted (e.g. Holt et al., 2007). Burke (2010) argues that higher-level leadership may be especially important during the beginning or initiation of organizational change, but that middle and lower level managers are more important during the implementation of change. Recent studies have accounted for the role that direct supervisors play during the implementation of change (e.g. Allen,

Jimmieson, Bordia & Irmer, 2007; Van Dam et al., 2008; DeVos et al., 2007). For example, Allen et al. (2007) conclude that employees may prefer to receive sensitive job-related information about change from their direct supervisors. Van Dam et al. (2008) find that the exchange relationship between employees and their direct supervisors is an important antecedent of the way they evaluate change related communication and the degree in which they participate in the implementation of change. Despite such findings, the change leadership literature remains mostly oriented on the role of leaders with a senior managerial position (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Gill, 2002; Yukl, 2002), rather than lower level managers or organizational members without a formal management position.

The term 'leadership' is often connected to organizational change without expanding too much on the exact definition of the concept (Spicker, 2012). Most studies on leadership and change have in common that attention is focused on the roles, activities and behaviors of individuals, rather than an orientation that highlights the personality, character or traits of the leader (Burke, 2010). Characteristics of leaders are important (Damanpour & Schneider, 2009), but what matters most is what leaders do (Miller, 2001). This focus implies that leadership is not something that is reserved for great individuals such as Gandhi, Roosevelt or Churchill. Rather, leadership is seen as a behavior that everyone can engage in. Without reflecting too much on the meaning of the term 'leadership', most work on change leadership literature emphasizes leadership as motivating and influencing others (Spicker, 2012).

Despite the common notion that leadership behavior is crucial for organizational change, the evidence concerning the relationship between leadership behavior and organizational change stems from two different lines of research. A distinction can be made between the change leadership approach and the leadership styles approach. These lines of research are discussed in the following subsection.

The change leadership approach and the leadership styles approach

The first line of research on leadership and change is concentrated on the activities of change agents aimed at promoting a certain change initiative (e.g. Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010; Herold & Fedor, 2006). The central assumption of this *change leadership approach* (Liu, 2010) is that appropriate change-related behaviors can be prescribed and applied in order to achieve positive results (Herold et al., 2008). A large number of change leadership models exist, which often prescribe similar leadership behaviors. Miller (2001) argues that successful change leaders focus on what is important, make sure that the need for change is emphasized, and personally lead the implementation. Gill (2002) lists behaviors such as providing a vision, role modeling, promoting shared values, thinking of an implementation strategy, and empowering, motivating and inspiring employees. According to Burke (2010), change leadership behaviors should include scanning the environment and collecting information, establishing the need for change,

providing clarity of vision and direction, communicating the need for change, captur-ing the attention of employees and dealing with resistance. As is evident from these examples, change leadership models are often very similar in their content (Liu, 2010). Most models contain attention for envisioning a future state, communicating the vision, providing a plan for action and consolidating changes.

In the past decade, several studies have contributed to the literature on change lead-ership by assessing the effectiveness of change leadership models. Based on a study of change stories in multiple organizations, Higgs and Rowland (2005, 2010) studied to what extent different change leadership activities contributed to perceived change success. They distinguish between shaping behavior (i.e. the actions of change lead-ers related directly to the change), framing behavior (i.e. establishing starting points and guidelines for change) and creating capacity behavior (i.e. creating individual and organizational capabilities to implement the change). They conclude that shaping behaviors, which are most stressed in change leadership models, are negatively related to change success in all contexts that were studied. In contrast, framing and creating capacity behaviors were positively related to success (Higgs & Rowland, 2005; 2010). Other relevant studies are Herold and Fedor (2006), Herold et al. (2008) and Liu (2010). These studies have contributed to the literature by developing a quantitative measure for change leadership and empirically testing its contribution to employee support for change. While these studies conclude that change leadership may indeed contribute to successful organizational change, the research indicates that the outcomes of organiza-tional change are also influenced by organizational factors and the content of change (Herold et al., 2008). The studies by Higgs and Rowland and Herold, Fedor, Caldwell and Liu thus contribute to existing critiques concerning the overstated generalizability and the a-contextual character of the change leadership literature (e.g. Brunsson, 2000; Boyne, 2006; Pettigrew et al., 2001) by identifying situations and organizational factors that influence change leadership and its effectiveness.

The second line of research on leadership and change has identified leadership styles that are more generally seen as relevant and effective during organizational change (e.g. Bass, 1985; Shamir & Howell, 1999; Conger, 1999). This *leadership styles approach* is not aimed at the implementation of a specific organizational change, but presumes that certain types of leadership styles are better equipped to handle situations of change (Herold et al., 2008). The main leadership theory that emphasizes organizational change is the theory of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985). The core of the transforma-tional leadership theory is that "by articulating a vision, fostering the acceptance of group goals, and providing individualized support, effective leaders change the basic values, beliefs, and attitudes of followers so that they are willing to perform beyond the minimum levels specified by the organization" (Podsakoff, MacKenzie & Bommer, 1996, p. 260). Unlike the change leadership approach, transformational leadership is thus not

aimed at the implementation of a certain change initiative. Research has related the concept to a wide range of organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior and performance (e.g. Nguni, Sleegers & Tenessen, 2006). Research on transformational leadership has also indicated that transformational leadership behavior is more present and effective during situations of change (e.g. Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Shamir & Howell, 1999; Conger, 1999). In addition, Herold et al. (2008) positively relate the concept to the employee support for specific organizational changes.

Conclusion: Change leadership in this research

In the previous subsection, it was argued that the evidence concerning the importance of leadership in organizational change stems from two distinct lines of research. The change leadership approach is aimed at identifying behaviors that leaders may use in order to successfully implement change. The leadership styles approach has identified which styles of leadership may lead to desirable organizational outcomes in times of organizational change and development. Although the distinctive characteristics of both approaches are noted, this distinction is not strictly followed in this research. In this research, the term change leadership is used as a more general term in order to refer to the leadership behaviors that are present in organizational change. Because of this, the concept of change leadership is broadened in two ways.

First, change leadership consists not only of leadership that fits the change leadership approach in this research. Leadership behavior that fits the leadership styles approach is also considered as change leadership in this research. Several authors have noted a convergence between the change leadership and leadership styles approach. Most notably, Eisenbach et al. (1999) argue that many of the prescribed behaviors to implement change are also present in conceptualizations of transformational leadership. For example, behaviors such as formulating an appealing vision and inspiring and motivating employees are present both lines of research (Higgs & Rowland, 2011). Authors regularly emphasize the importance of transformational leadership in situations of change (e.g. Burke, 2010; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Bass, 1999; Boonstra, 2013). Den Hartog, Van Muijen and Koopman (1997: 20) explicitly state how transformational leadership can ultimately transform the organization "by defining the need for change, creating new visions, [and] mobilizing commitment to these visions." Both the leadership styles and change leadership literature thus indicate how certain transformational leadership qualities are uniquely appropriate for leading change (Eisenbach et al., 1999).

Second, change leadership is generally, although implicitly, conceptualized as the leadership of planned processes of change (e.g. Herold et al., 2008; Liu, 2010; Gill, 2002). Eisenbach et al. (1999) have noted a conceptual overlap between planned organizational change and change leadership. Both concepts generally emphasize formulating a vision

of change, providing a plan, communicating the change and institutionalizing change. The change leadership literature is thus especially appropriate during planned organizational change. However, organizational change can also be implemented through a more devolved, emergent process (Burnes, 2004; By, 2005). Such a change approach may ask for different leadership behaviors than those outlined in the change leadership literature (Weick & Quinn, 1999; Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010). In this research, the strict (but implicit) conceptualization of change leadership as the leadership of planned change is not followed. Instead, a more general conceptualization is used which may also include other perspectives on leadership (Higgs & Rowland, 2010; Denis, Langley & Rouleau, 2005; Spicker, 2012). Moreover, while most theories of change leadership emphasize the leadership behavior of formal managers on the senior level (Kotter, 1996; Gill, 2002; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006), change leadership can take place on different hierarchical levels in the organization, and is not necessarily reserved to individuals with a formal management position. Most importantly, by departing from the strict definition of change leadership as the leadership of planned organizational change, the conceptualization of change leadership in this research is more conducive toward leadership behavior that may be present in other approaches to the implementation of change. In the next section, the planned and emergent approach to implement organizational change, as well as their relationships with change leadership are discussed in more detail.

2.4 PROCESSES OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND THE OUTCOMES OF CHANGE

Different approaches to change: planned and emergent change

The literature on organizational change offers many different theories and approaches about how the implementation of organizational comes about (cf. Boonstra, 2013). Like many theories in the organization sciences, these approaches are often presented as a dichotomy. For example, Greenwood and Hinings (1996) refer to incremental and radical change, Russ (2008) discusses differences between programmatic and participatory change, Beer and Nohria (2000) propose theory E and O, Boonstra, Steensma and Demenint (2008) talk about design and development approaches, Burke (2010) uses revolutionary versus evolutionary change, and Sminia and Van Nistelrooij (2006) refer to strategic management and organizational development. The dominant way to refer to these anti-typical change approaches is the distinction between planned and emergent change (Pettigrew, 2000; Bamford & Forrester, 2003; By, 2005; Burnes, 1996, 2004, 2009; Kickert, 2010; Kuipers et al., 2013).

The planned approach to organizational change is likely the most applied approach to implement organizational change (By, 2005). Planned processes of change rely heavily on the role of management. The implementation of planned change is top-down and programmatic in the sense that the objectives of change are formulated at the beginning of the change process. Subsequently, managers aim to implement the organizational change by convincing employees that the proposed change is desirable. Through a process of 'telling and selling', managers communicate the content of change and why employees should be committed to implementing it (Russ, 2008). Popular change management approaches often fit the planned change perspective (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Kanter, Stein & Jick, 1992; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006). In planned processes of change, the role of leadership is that of a prime mover who creates change (Weick & Quinn, 1999). Leaders come up with the vision of change and try to build commitment among employees (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Boonstra, 2004). Such activities fit the typical change leadership perspective. Similarly, the transformational leadership model's emphasis on envisioning a future state and directing energy to realize this state resonates with planned processes of organizational change (Eisenbach et al., 1999; Rowland & Higgs, 2011).

The emergent approach to change implementation came about as a reaction to the planned approach to change (Bamford & Forrester, 2003; By, 2005). In research based on a view of organizations as processes, the term emergent change is often used to refer to ongoing, sporadic and unpredictable changes (e.g. Weick, 2000; Plowman et al., 2007). In this research, the emergent approach to change is seen as a more devolved and bottom-up way to implement change. In this sense, the use of the term emergent change is thus comparable to what other authors refer to as organizational development (e.g. Beer & Nohria, 2000; Boonstra, 2004). The content of change is not the starting point as in the planned approach to change, but rather the outcome of an emergent change process. The content of emergent change processes comes about through the participation of employees. Employees are thus not seen as passive recipients of the organizational change, but as active participants in the change process (Russ, 2008). Managers may facilitate emergent change, but they do not formulate detailed objectives of change for the organization to implement. Leadership is not absent or obsolete during emergent change. Rather, a different role of leadership may be required during emergent change. For example, research by Rowland and Higgs (2005, 2010) indicates that different forms of leadership are present in different types of processes of organizational change. However, little research has focused on exploring the role of leadership in different types of organizational change processes.

In table 2.1, the differences between planned and emergent processes of change are summarized.

Table 2.1: Planned and emergent processes of change

	Planned change	**Emergent change**
Direction of change process	Top-down	Bottom-up
Objectives of change	Objectives are formulated in detail at the beginning of the change process	Objectives of change are open ended, although a general direction is known
Emphasis on	Content of change	Process of change
Role of management	Driver of change	Facilitator of change
Role of employees	Passive recipients	Active participants
Scope	Change is programmatic and organization-wide	Local differentiation between departments may exist

Both the planned and emergent approaches are subject to critique (e.g. By, 2005; Burnes, 2004; Bamford & Forrester, 2003), but both approaches are generally seen as effective ways to implement organizational change. Some authors apply a contingency perspective that identifies which approach to change is most effective under which circumstances (Dunphy & Stace, 1993; Burnes, 2004). Although the approaches are often discussed as dichotomous and anti-typical, other authors have argued that successful implementation of change requires a combination of the two approaches (e.g. Burnes, 2004; Pettigrew, 2000; Beer & Nohria, 2000; Boonstra, 2004; Kuipers, De Witte & Van der Voet, 2013). Planned and emergent change should be seen as a duality: they have properties that may seem contradictory or paradoxical but which in fact are complementary (Pettigrew, 2000: p. 245). However, combining planned and emergent change is difficult to accomplish (Sminia & Van Nistelrooij, 2006). Alternating between both change approaches too frequently may result in confusion among employees. Moreover, a planned change approach may override the results of an emergent change approach and damage employee morale and trust in management (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Sminia & Van Nistelrooij, 2006). The preferred way of combining planned and emergent change is to have managers provide direction from the top, and have employees create the content and meaning of organizational change from below. In such a way, a combination of planned and emergent change may lead to desirable outcomes of change. In the next subsection, the outcomes of organizational change are addressed.

The outcomes of organizational change

Intentional organizational changes are aimed at making a difference in the organization. In order to estimate the degree in which an organizational change has made a difference, researchers are often interested in the outcomes of organizational change (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Kuipers et al., 2013). In the literature on change management, the term 'success' is often used to account for the effects of organizational change (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; Miller, 2001). However, success is a subjective term.

Different stakeholders may have different perceptions of the success of a certain change initiative. Especially in the case of an emergent approach to change, in which the objectives of change are not formulated a-priori, it may be difficult to assess the degree in which the organizational change was 'successful' (Kuipers et al., 2013). Moreover, studies that refer to the success of change are often not based on empirical evidence (Gill, 2002; Miller, 2001). Pettigrew (2000) and Pettigrew et al. (2001) therefore state that studies should aim to incorporate outcome variables such as organizational performance.

Alternatively, studies on organizational change often assess the outcomes of change with affective or behavioural criteria. Because successful change is argued to be dependent on the support of employees, researchers often focus on the attitudes of employees regarding change (Herold et al., 2008; Self et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2007). Examples of such attitudes are resistance to change (Van Dam et al., 2008), cynicism about organizational change (Wanous, Reichers & Austin, 2000; Bommer, Rich & Rubin, 2005), willingness to change (Metselaar, 1997; Tummers, 2011; Tummers, Steijn & Bekkers, 2012) and commitment to change (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002; Herold et al., 2008). Such employee attitudes are shown to be an important antecedent of the behavioral intentions of employees to support organizational change. In this research, employee attitudes are therefore used to assess the outcomes of change leadership and different processes of change.

2.5 BRINGING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR CONTEXT: THE SPECIFICITY OF PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

Organizational change in a public sector context

Pettigrew (1985) and Pettigrew et al. (2001) have underlined the importance of taking into account the context in which organizational change takes place. Similarly, By (2005) and Burnes (1996, 2004) have argued that the selection and effectiveness of emergent and planned approaches to change may be contingent on contextual factors. Literature reviews by Damanpour (1991), Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) and Kuipers et al. (2013) have incorporated attention for contextual factors in studies about organizational change and innovation. Many studies have thus emphasized the importance of the context of change. Recent studies have incorporated contextual factors such as organizational culture (Holt et al., 2007), the degree of trust in executive management and the direct supervisor (DeVos et al., 2007), perceived organizational support and the relationship between employees and their immediate manager (Self et al., 2007), and employee perceptions of their individual change history (Rafferty & Restubog, 2010). However, little research has incorporated attention for contextual variables that are specific for public sector organizations (e.g. Chustz & Larson, 2006; Sminia & Van Nistelrooij, 2006;

Stewart & O'Donnell, 2007; Liguori, 2012; Isett et al., 2012). Although several authors have argued that the specific nature of public organizations may have consequences for the way change is implemented (e.g. Rusaw, 2007; Klarner et al., 2008; Karp & Helgø, 2008), there is little empirical evidence regarding this issue.

In public management research, the public sector context is often highlighted. The general view in public management research is that the specific context of public organizations has consequences for the organizational behavior and management of public organizations. For example, Boyne (2002, 118): states that "Management techniques cannot be exported successfully from one sector to another because of differences in organizational environments, goals, structures and managerial values. These variables represent a set of contingencies that require different approaches to management in public agencies and private firms."

Several authors point to the core differences between public and private organizations (Boyne, 2002; Rainey, 2003; By & MacLeod, 2009). In contrast with private organizations, public organizations are owned collectively by members of political communities and are controlled by the political system rather than the economic system. Moreover, they provide both individual and collective benefits to people in society and cannot enter or exit particular markets but can only choose *how* they operate within the market. Public goods and services are funded by taxation rather than direct payment and are distinguished by their non-exclusivity (Boyne, 2002; Rainey, 2003; By & Macleod, 2009).

However, the core differences approach is not theoretical. A core approach based on the comparison of public and private organizations may identify public-private differences, but does not account for the reasons of these differences (cf. Robertson and Seneviratne, 1995). As such, a core approach cannot explain how the implementation of organizational change is different in public organizations. In addition, it is not always possible to clearly demarcate between public and private organizations, since the distinction between public and private organizations has become increasingly blurred in the past decades (Rainey, 2003). Bozeman (1987) has argued that both public and private organizations have a certain degree of 'publicness'. The publicness continuum is based on three dimensions: ownership, funding and political control (Bozeman, 1987). Organizations that are to a greater extent owned by the public, funded through government grants rather than the payments of costumers and controlled by political rather than market forces, are considered to have a higher degree of publicness.

Numerous authors state that, all else being equal, certain specific public sector characteristics can be defined (Rainey, 2003; Rainey & Bozeman, 2000; Boyne, 2002; By and Macleod, 2009). For example, Boyne (2002) argues that the specific nature of public organizations can be understood in terms of their organizational environment, goals, organizational structures and employee and managerial values. Considering that the distinction between public and private organizations should be seen as a continuum

(Bozeman, 1987), Andrews, Boyne and Walker (2011) argue that an organization's degree of publicness thus determines to what extent these specific characteristics apply. The specific characteristics of public organizations are thus contingent on an organizations' degree of publicness. The higher an organization's degree of publicness, the more the organization can be expected to have certain specific characteristics that are outlined in the classic literature on public-private differences. Some of these specific characteristics may also apply to organizations that are formally privately owned or funded, but the assumption is that these specific characteristics are associated with a high degree of publicness (Andrews et al., 2011).

This research applies a dimensional perspective by examining two specific characteristics that are associated with a high degree of publicness. Theoretical propositions and statements about the specificity of public organizations are thus not attributed directly to an organization's publicness in terms of ownership, funding and political control, but are attributed by the organization's characteristics that are contingent on its degree of publicness (cf. Andrews et al., 2011). Although a dimensional approach to publicness is applied, organizations with a high degree of publicness are referred to as 'public organizations' in order to preserve the readability of the research. The literature on public-private differences has highlighted a great number of specific characteristics that can be attributed to public organizations (e.g. Allison, 1979; Perry & Rainey, 1988; Farnham & Horton, 1996; Boyne, 2002; Rainey, 2003). In this research, the specific characteristics of the *organizational environment* and the *organizational structure* are accounted for.

A first reason for this selection is that the organizational environment and the organizational structure are the central focus in the classic studies on organizational change (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Mintzberg, 1979). These classic studies have highlighted the organizational environment as initiating or demanding change in the organizational structure in order to ensure organizational effectiveness. Mechanistic organizational structures are generally seen as appropriate in stable, predictable environments, while a more complex and uncertain organizational environment calls for a less centralized or 'organic' organizational structure (Mintzberg, 1979). Organic organizational structures are seen as more capable of innovation and change than mechanistic organizational structures (Burns & Stalker, 1961).

A second reason is that several recent studies have suggested that the specific environment and structural characteristics of public organizations may influence the implementation of organizational change. For example, Fernandez and Rainey (2006) and Burnes (2009) argue that the pluralistic, political environment of public organizations comes into play during processes of organizational change. Coram and Burnes (2001) and Isett et al. (2012) argue that the bureaucratic organizational structures that typically characterize public organizations may have a bearing on the implementation of organizational change. Subsequently, the specific characteristics of the organizational

environment and the organizational structure of public organizations, and their relation to organizational change, are reviewed in the next subsection.

The organizational environment of public organizations

The organizational environment can be defined as all the relevant physical and social factors that influence decision-making (Duncan, 1972). In line with other authors (e.g. Mintzberg, 1979), the concept organizational environment refers to the external environment of the organization. The external organizational environment is limited to factors that are located outside of the boundaries of the organization. The degree of complexity is one of the dimensions that can be used to characterize the organizational environment. The degree of complexity is determined by the amount of factors or components in the environment that the organization is dependent on (Duncan, 1972). The environment of public organizations is often assumed to be relatively complex. Public organizations deal with a multitude of stakeholders. Like private organizations, the environment of many public organizations consists of stakeholders such as clients, partners, suppliers and even competitors. In addition, public organizations also deal with their political superiors. Public organizations are often confronted with a great diversity and intensity of external political influences on decision-making processes (Rainey & Chun, 2005). As a result of this, public managers have multiple, possibly conflicting, goals imposed on them by numerous stakeholders (Boyne, 2002). Pleasing one part of these stakeholders can directly cause dissatisfaction with other stakeholders (By & Macleod, 2009).

Because of their ambiguous goals and difficulties to objectively assess organizational performance, public organizations often have complex and contested performance indicators and complex implementation processes to navigate (By & Macleod, 2009). In addition to ambiguous objectives, public organizations also deal with distributed power and authority. The degree of complexity in the environment of public organizations is further increased through mechanisms of public accountability. Public organizations are often subject to great scrutiny by their political superiors, the media and citizens. Rainey (2003) states that the general public opinion influences the management of public organizations more than much of the management literature acknowledges.

Some authors have related the specific environment of public organizations to organizational change. It is scientifically and practically relevant to systematically and empirically examine these relationships, because the specific environment may affect the validity, and thereby the effectiveness, of change management theory. Robertson and Seneviratne (1995) argue that the many dependencies in the environment of public organizations may make it more difficult to find support for a change initiative. Therefore, leaders must devote more effort to lobbying. Despite this assumption, Robertson and Seneviratne do not find differences in the capabilities of public and private

organizations to implement planned organizational change. Similarly, Fernandez and Rainey (2006) argue that change in public organizations greatly relies on the support of political superiors. Burnes (2009) relates the pluralistic nature of the public sector to different approaches to change. He argues that a planned approach to change should be preferred, because of its emphasis on consensus and bringing together conflicting points of view. Finally, Karp and Helgø (2008) theorize that change leadership is more important than change management, because of the complex nature of change in the public sector. Karp and Helgø argue that because of the complex nature of change in public organizations, organizational change cannot be designed or controlled, but that leadership can be used to influence the way employees talk and think about organizational change. Despite the arguments by these authors, academic research has yielded limited empirical evidence for these relationships.

The organizational structure of public organizations

The organizational structure can be defined as the sum total of the ways in which labor is divided into distinct tasks and coordination is achieved among them (Mintzberg, 1979). The organizational structure of public organizations is often said to be relatively bureaucratic (Farnham & Horton, 1996). Conceptually, a bureaucracy can be defined as an organizational form that emphasizes "precision, speed, clarity, regularity, reliability and efficiency achieved through the creation of a fixed division of tasks, hierarchical supervision and detailed rules and regulations" (Morgan, 1997: pp. 17). Similarly, Mintzberg (1979: 86) states that an organization is called bureaucratic when organizational behavior is to a large extent predetermined and predictable. This can be achieved through the formalization of organizational behavior. Formalization is the degree to which organizational activities are manifested in written documents regarding procedures, job descriptions, regulations and policy manuals (Hall, 1996; Mintzberg, 1979). Public organizations operate under a strict legal framework and are confronted with high demands for accountability (Farnham & Horton, 1996; Rainey, 2003). Moreover, public organizations operate based on values such as equality and accountability. Because of this, public organizations tend to avoid risks by means of many formal procedures for decision-making (Boyne, 2002). Because of these high demands for accountability, public organizations are inclined to not only formalize, but also centralize decision-making in the organization (Mintzberg, 1979). Centralization refers to the degree to which members participate in decision-making (Aiken & Hage, 1968).

Several authors have related the bureaucratic organizational structures to organizational change. Robertson and Seneviratne (1995) state that the great emphasis on rules, regulations and procedures may make it more difficult to implement successful change in public organizations. Weick and Quinn (1999) and Coram and Burnes (2001) argue that planned approaches to change are more appropriate, because of their reliance on

rules and managerial hierarchy. However, Isett et al. (2012) argue that, even in public organizations that are characterized by bureaucratic features, bottom-up approaches to change may lead to successful organizational change. Many authors have thus related the particular organizational structure of public organizations to organizational change, but there is little empirical evidence. It is important to systematically examine these relationships, as the particular organizational structures of public organizations may influence the validity of existing theory about change leadership and organizational change management.

2.6 TOWARD A RESEARCH AGENDA OF CHANGE LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

The concepts that were introduced in the theoretical framework allow the formulation of a research agenda that contains more detailed research questions. These research questions build on the three research objectives formulated in the introduction of the research and together, they cover the main research question. Three research questions are formulated below, and are related to the four empirical studies of this research.

In this theoretical chapter, it was argued that organizational change may be implemented through planned and emergent processes of change. While leadership is generally seen as crucial for change, the change leadership literature does not take into account whether organizational change comes about through a planned or emergent process (e.g. Herold et al., 2008; Gill, 2002). The first research objective is to investigate the role of leadership in different processes of organizational change. The first research question is: *What is the role of leadership in planned and emergent processes of change?* Although all four studies focus on the interrelations between leadership and the process of change, the study presented in chapter 4 explicitly compares the nature of change leadership in planned and emergent processes of change.

Many recent studies have focused on the implementation of change in public organizations, but these studies have not explicitly accounted for the way the implementation of change is influenced by the specific characteristics of public organizations. In this chapter, it was argued that public organizations are often characterized by a distinct organizational environment and organizational structure. The second research objective is to investigate how and to what extent these characteristics influence the implementation of change and its leadership. The second research question is: *To what extent and how do the specific characteristics of the organizational environment and organizational structure of public organizations influence the implementation of change and its leadership?* The specific characteristics of public organizations are accounted for in the three studies presented in chapter 5, 6 and 7. Chapter 5 investigates how the

complex environment of public organizations influences the process and leadership of change. Chapter 6 is focused on how a bureaucratic organizational structure affects the influence of change leadership and different processes of change on the outcomes of change. In chapter 7, a framework for the leadership of change in public organizations is proposed and tested. This framework accounts for both the organizational environment and the organizational structure of public organizations.

Leadership is generally seen as a crucial condition for successful organizational change. However, there is relatively little empirical evidence for the influence of leadership on the outcomes of organizational change (Burke, 2010; Herold et al., 2008), especially in the public sector (Fernandez & Pitts, 2007). The third research objective is to investigate how leadership affects the processes and outcomes of change. Because leadership takes place in the context of the change process (Rowland & Higgs, 2005, 2010; Gill, 2002), the influence of leadership on the outcomes of change in planned and emergent processes of change is examined. The third research question is: *To what extent and how does leadership influence the outcomes of planned and emergent processes of change?* Chapter 6 addresses this question by examining the influence of leadership on employee willingness to change in planned and emergent processes of change. Chapter 7 tests how leadership influences affective commitment to change in planned and emergent processes of change.

In figure 2.1, the theoretical framework is given that accounts for the relationships that are central in the three research questions.
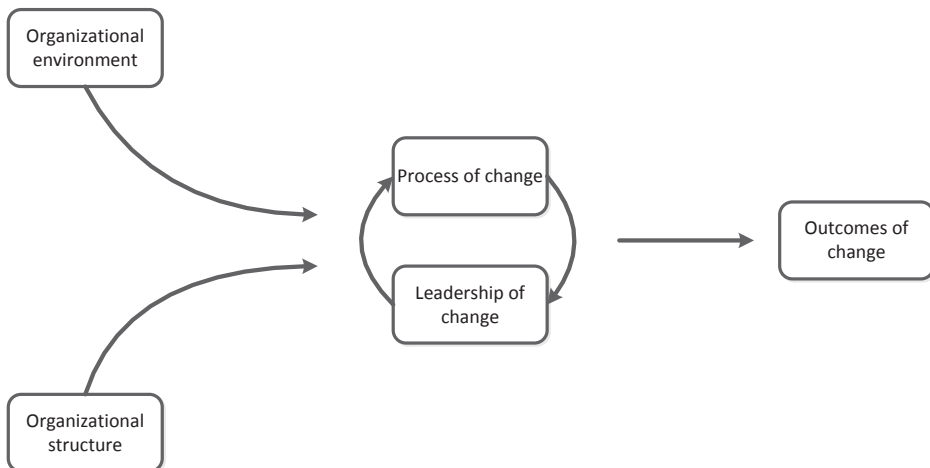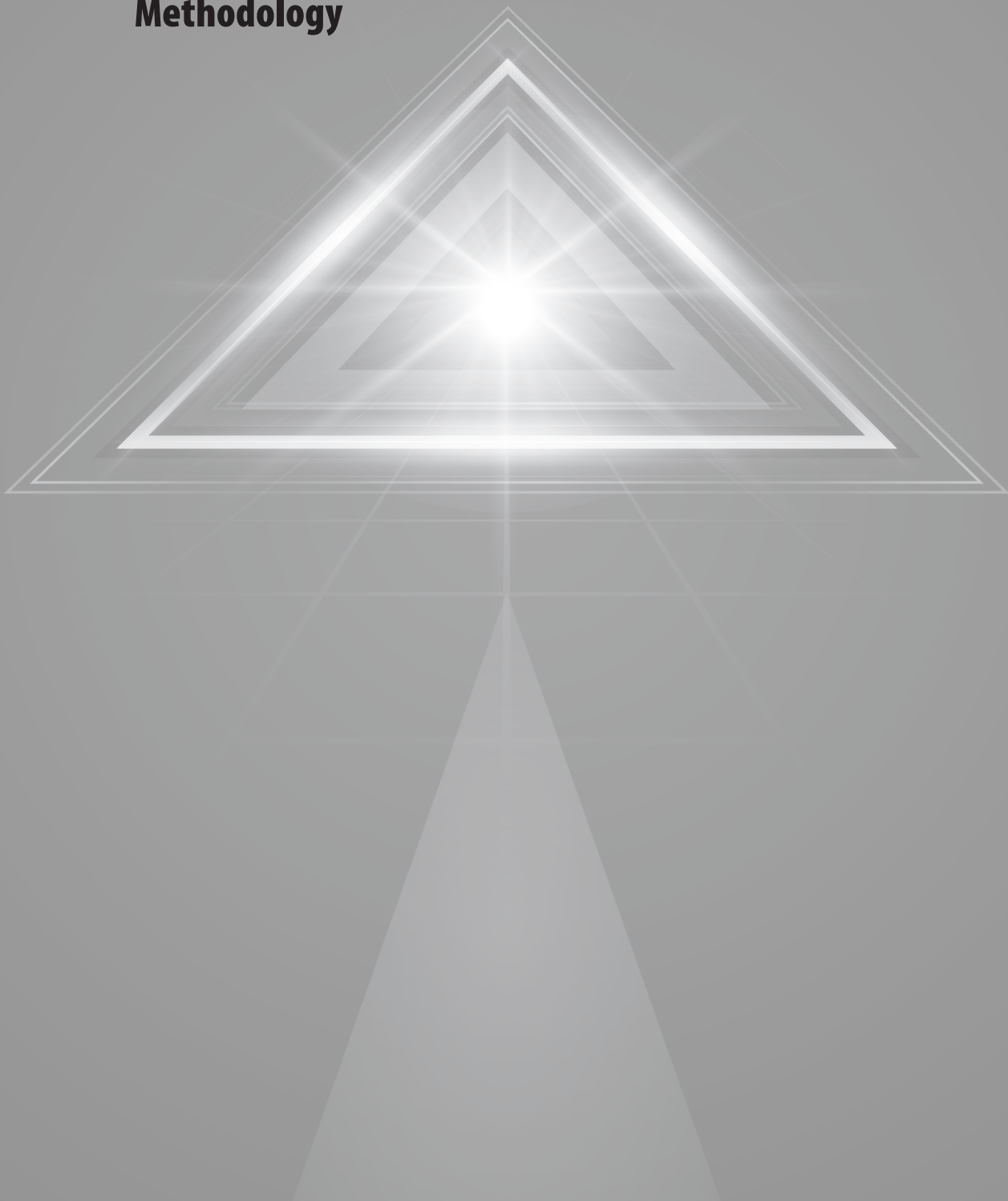

Figure 2.1: Theoretical framework: Leading change in public organizations

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The first two chapters of this research covered the 'what' of the research: in the first chapter, the research objectives and the main research question were introduced. Chapter 2 concluded with a specified research agenda. This section covers the 'how' of the research: the design, methods and techniques that are used to address the research objectives and questions. In section 3.2, the research design of existing research concerning change leadership and organizational change in public organizations is reviewed. In section 3.3, this review is used as a point of departure for the design of this research. In section 3.4, the reasons for and implications of applying and combining qualitative and quantitative methods and techniques are discussed. In section 3.5, the design, case selection, research methods and analysis techniques of the four studies are discussed in more detail. In the final section, a summary of the methodology of the four studies is given, as well as an overview of the theoretical concepts that are central in the four studies.

3.2 REVIEWING THE RESEARCH DESIGNS OF EXISTING RESEARCH

A central choice in the research of social reality, of which the leadership of organizational change is a small yet important aspect, is the number of social phenomena on which the research is focused (Gerring, 2007). Research aimed at a single or a few instances of a social phenomenon is usually referred to as a case study. Studying many instances at the same time is called a large-n design. There are certain trade-offs between both types of research design. An in-depth case study may offer a better understanding of how something works, while studying many cases may lead to greater generalizability of results (Gerring, 2007; Yin, 2009). The choice of a research design is thus dependent on the objectives of the research (Babbie, 2004).

The choice for a research design is not only dependent on the objectives of the research, but also on the characteristics of the empirical phenomenon on which the research is aimed (Gerring, 2007). One of the factors that affects the appropriateness of the research design is the degree in which the population of cases is heterogeneous. If existing cases of the phenomenon on which a research is focused are different in many aspects, a comparison of many cases may involve many differences for which the research cannot account. This may lead to a situation of comparing apples and oranges. If there is a great heterogeneity between cases, a case study research design is therefore deemed more appropriate (Gerring, 2007). The choice between studying few or many cases should thus be seen as a trade-off between internal and external validity.

Research on the leadership of organizational change

Existing research on the implementation of organizational change is based on different research designs. In this research, a case is an organizational change in a public organization. The number of cases and their characteristics on which the practice-oriented literature on organizational change is based is not always clear (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Miller, 2001; Corbett, 2013). Such publications are often based on the extensive personal experience of its author as a manager or consultant. A first critique on these 'studies' is that they are based on a relatively small number of selective cases, but their prescribed change leadership models claim unlimited generalizability (Brunsson, 2000; Boyne, 2006). Even if the personal experience of these authors would encompass a large number of cases, a second critique is that their models contain no systematic control for heterogeneity between their cases. As is argued by Pettigrew (1985) and Pettigrew et al. (2001), organizational changes may differ in their content, context and process. However, the practice-oriented literature does not account for how such differences affect the generalizability of their change leadership models.

The same criticism also applies to more recent academic research that has connected change leadership to perceptions of success or attitudinal outcomes of change (e.g. Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010, 2011; Herold et al., 2008; Liu, 2010). In their examination of the role of leadership in stories about organizational change, Higgs and Rowland (2005, 2010) account for different aspects of the change process. However, they do not connect their reported leadership behaviors to differences in the content of the organizational changes they study, or differences between the organizations in which these changes took place. Similarly, Herold et al. (2008) and Liu (2010) analyze a sample that consists of different organizational changes in 30 organizations over a wide variety of industry sectors. While these authors control for the impact and significance of the organizational changes, as well as some general organizational factors such as organizational commitment, they do not account for other differences between their cases. For example, the selected organizations may differ in terms of their organizational environments, organizational structure, the organization's change history or the type of primary process. Moreover, the organizational changes in question may also differ. Some organizational changes may affect the structure of the organization, while others may be aimed at the organizational strategy or culture. The implementation of some changes may be nearly finished, while other implementation processes have only just begun. Because of such differences, it is thus unclear to what extent the results of the above studies are internally and externally valid and not caused by differences for which the study does not account.

Research on organizational change in the public sector

Over the last decades, a considerable number of empirical studies have focused on the implementation of organizational change in public organizations. Some studies have

focused on organizational changes in a large number of organizations in many different government sectors (Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2003; Charlesworth, Cook & Crozier, 2003). Robertson and Seneviratne (1995) examined the implementation of planned organizational changes in public and private organizations and Boyne (2006) reviewed the success of turnaround strategies in public and private organizations. Despite these examples, Kuipers et al. (2013) report that a large number of studies between 2000 and 2010 are focused on a single or a small number of cases. Indeed, there are many examples of empirical research that is focused on a small number of cases, such as organizational change in a health care organization (Isett et al., 2012; McNulty & Ferlie, 2004; Chustz & Larson, 2006; Klarner et al., 2008), single or multiple local government departments (Zorn, Page & Cheney 2000; Liguori, 2012; Seijts & Roberts, 2011) and single or multiple central government organizations (Sminia & Van Nistelrooij, 2006; Stewart & O'Donnell, 2007; Stewart & Kringas, 2003; Coram & Burnes, 2001; Ryan et al., 2008). Furthermore, Fernandez and Pitts (2007) analyzed a survey among the superintendents of a Texas school district.

There is thus a considerable body of research aimed at organizational change in public organizations. However, a first shortcoming of the existing research is that the possibility for *statistical* generalization is limited: the literature consists predominantly of case studies that are not representative for the public sector. As was explained in the theoretical chapter, many differences may exist between (different types of) public organizations. Because of these differences, the results of existing research may have little external validity beyond the type of organization in which the research was conducted. This makes it difficult to generalize findings and formulate conclusions about organizational change in the public sector. A second shortcoming concerns the *analytical* generalizability of existing research (Yin, 2009): studies do not theoretically account for the specific characteristics of public organizations that may influence the implementation of organizational change. As such, research has resulted in little theoretical implications concerning organizational change in public organizations.

Conclusion

In the above sections, both the general literature on change leadership and the literature on organizational change in public organizations were reviewed. In this review, the scope of the research, studying a single or many organizational changes, was connected to its generalizability. A conclusion is that research on change leadership is often based on large-n designs, and tends to overestimate the generalizability of results. Research on organizational change in the public sector is predominantly based on a case study design, and the generalization of results is generally overlooked. The practitioner literature on change management is based on a biased sample of supposed 'successful' changes. Because of this, theoretical implications may not necessarily be valid in

other organizations. The number of cases on which a research is based may also have consequences for the internal validity of research. Because of the heterogeneous nature of cases of organizational change, large-n studies can typically not control for variance caused by omitted variables. As such, this spuriousness is a threat to the internal validity of such research. Case studies are generally seen as more valid than large-n studies, because they are more flexible to correct errors related to omitted variables (Blatter & Haverland, 2012; Robson, 2002).

The main conclusion from this review is that some studies have used a large-n design, while others were based on a case study design. The choice between these research designs should be dependent on the degree in which cases are heterogeneous, and implies a trade-off between external and internal validity. In the next section, it will be argued that due to the high level of heterogeneity between cases of organizational change, a case study design is more appropriate in this research. Because a case study design favors internal over external validity, strategies for generalization of results are discussed subsequently.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Studying one organizational change or many?

The empirical phenomenon that is central in this research is 'organizational change within public organizations'. As is argued by multiple authors, organizational changes come in all types of sizes, shapes and forms (By, 2005; Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Burke, 2010). For example, some organizational changes are radical, frame-breaking transformations, while other organizational changes are incremental improvements (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Van de Ven & Poole, 1995). Organizational change can also target different aspects of the organization, such as the organizational structure, culture, the organization's processes or the skills and qualifications of employees (Kuipers, De Witte & Van der Voet, 2013). Moreover, organizational changes can come about in different ways (By, 2005; Beer & Nohria, 2000; Burnes, 2004). There may also be differences in the context in which organizational changes take place (Pettigrew et al., 2001; Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999). For example, the organization in which changes are implemented may differ in terms of tasks, history or culture. Even in research focused only on public organizations, extensive differences may exist between organizations (Antonsen & Jørgensen, 1997).

Cases of organizational change in public organizations are thus characterized by a high degree of heterogeneity. A research design based on a large-n comparison of many cases of organizational change in public organizations would therefore involve many varying factors for which such a research design cannot control. A first requirement for a research design about organizational change is therefore to exclude as much hetero-

geneity between cases as possible and to control for the influence of factors that are included in the design. In order to ensure the internal validity of the research, this means that the most appropriate design for this research is a case study. A case study can be defined as the "intensive study of a single case where the purpose of that study is – at least in part – to shed light on a larger class of cases (Gerring, 2007: 20).

Because of the many differences between cases of organizational change in public organizations, a case is never fully representative of the population. However, a second requirement of the research is to be able to generalize findings in a meaningful way. If a selected case is not representative, findings may not be generalized to a group or the population (Gerring, 2007; Yin, 2009). This research will therefore be aimed at analytical generalization (Yin, 2009). Analytical generalization means to generalize findings to theoretical propositions instead of populations (Yin, 2009). In this research, generalization is thus not achieved by simply studying the leadership of change in a public sector context, but by identifying how the specific characteristics of public organizations influence organizational change and its leadership. These findings are then used to formulate, specify or challenge theory.

Criteria for case selection

In this research, a case encompasses an organizational change taking place in a public organization. A case is thus comprised of an event – the organizational change – taking place in a particular context, namely a public organization. For each of the four empirical studies, an individual case is selected and analyzed. Two sets of criteria for case selection were used to select cases for this research. The first set of criteria for case selection relates to the degree in which the selected case is representative. The second set of criteria for case selection is concerned with how the selected case relates to the research objective of each of the four studies.

Concerning the first set of criteria, all selected cases are *typical* in the sense that they are representative for the wider population (Gerring, 2007; Yin, 2009). This implies 1) that the selected public organization is representative for the diverse array of organizations in the public sector and 2) that the organizational change that is studied is relevant for other public organizations. Given the many differences that may exist between public organizations (Antonsen & Jorgensen, 1997; Bozeman, 1987; Rainey, 2003), these criteria are not easily met. In this research, local government organizations in the Dutch city Rotterdam are studied. Such organizations have a similar degree of publicness in terms of ownership, funding and the degree of political control as other government agencies in central and regional government. Because of their similar degree of publicness, these organizations are likely to have comparable environmental and structural characteristics. However, local government organizations may be less representative for other types of public organizations such as health care organizations, the police and

educational organizations. The organizational changes that were studied can also be seen as typical for contemporary public organizations. All organizational changes that were studied are a part of larger public management reform in the city, in response to societal and economic changes. The studied organizational changes include strategic reorientations toward a more business-like way of delivering services, as well as the merger and dissolving of organizations as part of a wider reform program in the city. As the effects of the economic crisis have triggered reforms in a wide variety of sectors (Peters, Pierre, Randma-Liiv, 2011), these organizational changes can be seen relevant for a wide array of public organizations.

The second set of criteria for case selection is related to the research objectives of the four studies. Cases are also selected based on the degree in which they are relevant for the research objectives of the four studies. This implies that in each study, the central variables are present in such a way that they allow the research objective to be reached. For example, the study presented in chapter 4 is aimed at the role of leadership in different processes of change. In order to formulate conclusions, leadership as well as different change processes must be observable phenomena in the selected case. Because the four studies have different research objectives, different criteria for case selection apply for each of the studies. The selected cases, as well as the reasons for selecting them, are discussed in the overview of the four empirical studies in section 3.5.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODS

Qualitative versus quantitative research methods

Organizational change and its leadership have been studied using qualitative and quantitative methods (cf. Kuipers et al., 2013; Van de Ven & Poole, 2005). Qualitative research can be defined as "the nonnumerical examination and interpretation of observations, for the purpose of discovering the underlying meanings and patterns of relationships" (Babbie, 2004: G7). Quantitative research is "the numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect" (Babbie, 2004: G7). The use of qualitative methods is often seen as a defining characteristic of case studies (e.g. Babbie, 2004; Gerring, 2007), but they can also build on quantitative methods (Blatter & Haverland, 2012).

The use of qualitative versus quantitative research methodology is often seen as determined by the ontological and epistemological worldviews of the researcher (Tashakkori & Tedlie, 1998). Social constructivists will rely on qualitative methods, while (post-) positivists use quantitative methods. Qualitative research is thus said to be aimed at understanding and exploration, while quantitative research is aimed at description and explanation (Babbie, 2004; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). A more pragmatic view is that

both qualitative and quantitative methods may be used appropriately with any research paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The purpose of the research and the nature of its research question are more important than either the method researchers are familiar with, or the worldview that is supposed to underlie the method (Tashakkori &Teddlie, 1998; Robson, 2002). Gerring (2007) and Blatter and Haverland (2012) state that qualitative methods can also be used for causal inference and explanation. Moreover, qualitative and quantitative research methods are not necessarily opposites, but they should be seen as compatible (Robson, 2002). The use of qualitative and quantitative methods in a study is usually referred to as a mixed methods design (Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989; Caracelli & Green, 1993; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Robson, 2002; Bryman, 2006). Below, the application of mixed methodology in this research is discussed, as well as an overview of its inherent benefits in this research.

Mixed methods

In this research, both qualitative and quantitative methods are used. Chapter 4 and 5 build on qualitative methods. In chapter 6 and 7, quantitative methods are applied. The individual studies are thus based on a single method, but the overall research can be classified as a mixed methods design.

A mixed methods design may have considerable advantages over the use of a single research method (Greene et al., 1989; Tashakkori &Teddlie, 1998; Robson, 2002; Bryman, 2006). First, qualitative and quantitative methods are used *sequentially* in this research (Greene et al., 1989). The first two studies use qualitative methods in order to explore the role of leadership in different processes of organizational change, and explore how these are influenced by the specific characteristics of public organizations. In the latter two studies, quantitative methods are used to test these relationships and connect leadership and change processes to the outcomes of organizational change. The research thus first draws on qualitative methods in order to explore the interrelationships between variables and propose theory. These findings are then used as input for the explanatory quantitative studies in a later stage of the research (Greene et al., 1989; Robson, 2002).

Second, qualitative and quantitative methods are used in a *complementary* way to study different aspects of the leadership of organizational change in a public sector context. Research can be focused on different aspects of organizational change (Van de Ven & Poole, 2005). Research can be aimed at examining and identifying the relationships between variables, or at uncovering the mechanisms through which those variables are related. As is evident from the main research question, this research is aimed at both identifying to *what extent* leadership and the implementation of change are related, but also at examining *how* leadership and the implementation of change are related. Moreover, the research is aimed at both exploring and testing the influence of the specific characteristics of public organizations. To achieve these research objectives, qualitative

and quantitative methods are combined. Quantitative methods are appropriate to study relationships between variables, but are less useful for establishing the reasons for these relationships (Babbie, 2004; Greene et al., 1989). Qualitative methods, on the other hand, are better equipped to uncover the mechanisms underlying these relationships (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Flyvberg, 2006). A mixed methods design can thus be used to offset the weaknesses of two different methods (Jick, 1979; Bryman, 2006). Qualitative methods can be used to illustrate (Bryman, 2006) or interpret (Robson, 2002) the results of quantitative methods, and quantitative methods can be used to verify or test the results of qualitative research. In this research, the quantitative studies (chapter 6 and 7) build on the qualitative studies (chapter 4 and 5) by deriving hypotheses and by drawing on qualitative data in order to interpret results.

Third, qualitative and quantitative methods are combined to allow *methodological triangulation* of results (Greene et al., 1989; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Babbie, 2004). Methodological triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods to investigate a relationship between variables (Robson, 2002). Triangulation increases the validity of the research by independently establishing a relationship with multiple methods. As such, inherent biases related to the inquirers' preference for a certain method, the context in which data was collected or a bias inherent to the method itself may be identified. The assumption of triangulation is that when multiple methods with offsetting strengths and weaknesses are used, discrepancies between results may be identified which increase the validity of the research (Greene et al., 1989). A consequence of triangulation may be that a single research question must be answered in multiple, possibly conflicting, ways.

In this research, the three questions of the research agenda formulated at the end of chapter 2 are each answered using multiple methods. The role of leadership during processes of organizational change is studied using qualitative methods in chapter 4 and 5, and is studied with quantitative methods in chapter 6 and 7. The relationship between the specific characteristics of public organizations and the leadership and process of change is explored using qualitative methods in chapter 5, and tested with quantitative methods in chapter 6 and 7. Finally, the relationships between leadership, processes of change and the outcomes of change are only studied using quantitative methods in chapter 6 and 7. However, chapter 4 and 5 do contain notions of change success that may be attributed to the relationship studied in chapter 6 and 7. For example, interview respondents regularly comment on the perceived effects of their own or other people's behaviors. Moreover, respondents often reflect on organizational changes by talking about the success of change implementation.

Chapter 3

3.5 OVERVIEW OF THE FOUR EMPIRICAL STUDIES

In this section, the design, case selection, research methods and techniques of the four studies are discussed in more detail.

Chapter 4: Exploring the role of leadership in organizational change

The objective of this study is to explore the role of leadership in planned and emergent processes of organizational change. To do so, the change process and leadership activities in two units of a single public organization are compared. The main research question of this study is: *What is the role of leadership during planned and emergent processes of organizational change?* The design of this study is an embedded comparative case study and is based on qualitative methods. A strategic reorientation within the City Works Department *(Gemeentewerken Rotterdam)* in the Dutch city Rotterdam is selected as a case. This case is relevant from the perspective of change management, because both units used anti-typical approaches to implement the same organizational change. The selected case thus *most-similar* in the sense that both units, as well as the organizational change in both units, have identical characteristics, except for the approach to change that was adopted (Gerring, 2007). In total, 23 interviews were conducted with senior and middle managers, as well as direct supervisors, in the organization. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and coded according to the study's central concepts using Atlas.ti software. The analysis is based on a co-variational approach (Blatter & Haverland, 2012), in which the leadership behaviors of managers in a planned process of change are compared with those in an emergent process of change.

Chapter 5: Leading change in a complex organizational environment

The objective of the study presented in chapter 5 is to explicitly connect the leadership and process of organizational change to the specific public sector context. The study focuses on the way the complex public environment influenced a process of organizational change and its leadership in a public organization. The main research question of this study is: *How do public managers lead organizational change in environmental complexity?* The study is based on a single case study design. The merger that resulted in the formation of the Dutch public organization Urban Development Rotterdam (*Stadsontwikkeling Rotterdam*) was selected as a case. This merger was characterized by an external environment that became increasingly complex over the course of the implementation of change. In this study, three different phases of the change process are compared, which are characterized by varying degrees of environmental complexity. Because of the changing degree of environmental complexity, the case can be seen as a *diverse case* (Gerring, 2007). Whereas chapter 4 is based on a most-similar comparison of two embedded cases, chapter 5 is based on the analysis of a single case in which

the degree of environmental complexity increases of time. Because diverse degrees of environmental complexity can be observed, this case makes it possible to generate theory concerning its influence on the leadership and process of change. Interviews were conducted with 23 senior and middle managers. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and coded using Atlas.ti software. The analysis is based on a co-variational approach (Blatter & Haverland, 2012), in which the leadership behaviors of managers and the characteristics of the change process are compared in situations with differing degrees of environmental complexity.

Chapter 6: Leading change in a bureaucratic organizational structure

The objective of the study presented in chapter 6 is to empirically test the effectiveness of transformational leadership behavior during organizational change by examining its influence on employee willingness to change. The study accounts for the change process in which leadership takes place by incorporating the moderating effects of planned and emergent processes of change. Moreover, the bureaucratic organizational structure that is typical for many public organizations is included in order to account for the specific public sector context. The main research question of the study is: *How is the effectiveness of transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors in planned and emergent change affected by a bureaucratic organizational structure?* The study is based on a case study design using quantitative methods. Employees of the organization Urban Development Rotterdam (*Stadsontwikkeling Rotterdam*) were asked to fill out a survey concerning the organizational changes being implemented in the organization and their perceptions about the organizational structure, the process of change and the leadership style of their direct supervisor. Because of differences in tasks between the different units in the organization, considerable variation on the study's central variables can be expected. The selected case can thus be qualified as a *diverse case* (Gerring, 2007). In a diverse case, the full range of variation on the central variables is present. The survey's response rate was 42,8%. The sample size of the study was 284 employees. Multivariate linear regression analyses using interaction effects were done using SPSS 18 software.

Chapter 7: A framework of change leadership in a public organization

The objective of the study presented in chapter 7 is to propose and empirically test a theoretical framework about the role of leadership in the implementation of change in public organizations. The framework accounts for the relationship between the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors and the affective commitment to change of employees. The model incorporates the specific context of the public sector by highlighting how transformational leadership is shaped by characteristics of the organizational environment and the organizational structure. Furthermore, the framework explains how the relationship between leadership and the outcomes of change is medi-

ated by planned and emergent processes of change. The central question of this study is: *How does leadership influence affective commitment to change in a public organization?* The design of the study is a case study using quantitative methods and techniques. The implementation of a change in the City Works Department *(Gemeentewerken Rotterdam)* in the Dutch city Rotterdam was selected as a case. Based on the broad range of tasks performed by this organization, considerable variation on the variables concerning the organizational environment, structure and leadership could be expected. Moreover, the different organizational units of the organization used distinct approaches to implement the organizational change. Similar to the study presented in chapter 6, the selected case can be qualified as a *diverse case* (Gerring, 2007). A diverse case is well suited for the testing of theory (Gerring, 2007). Employees were asked to fill out a survey concerning the study's main concepts. The response rate of the survey was 35,5%. The sample of this study consists of 515 employees. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using AMOS 18 software was used to test the fit of the conceptual model to the data.

3.6 SUMMARY

Because of the great heterogeneity between cases of organizational change in public organizations, a case study design is adopted. Uncontrollable heterogeneity is excluded by studying a small number of cases in order to ensure internal validity. Because all cases are embedded in a single reform in the Dutch city Rotterdam, heterogeneity between the cases, for example related to the context, the organizational culture and the content of change, are reduced. Although the objective of the research is not to compare the selected cases, their similarity does contribute to the degree in which research results can be compared over the different studies. The adoption of a case study design thus limits the external validity for the sake of internal validity. However, by means of analytical rather than statistical generalization, findings are generalized by formulating, testing and specifying theory concerning the leadership of change in public organizations.

The research consists of four studies. Each study is focused on a different case. However, the four cases are interconnected because they are all part of a single reform in the Dutch city Rotterdam. In its essence, this reform is about a new strategy in which public tasks are to a smaller extent executed by the administration itself, and more in cooperation with societal partners, other governments and citizens. As a result of the economic crisis, this reform was accelerated and greater emphasis was placed on centralization in order to reduce organizational size and slack. The four organizational changes that are studied in this research are all part of this reform, but have taken place at different points in time and in two different municipal organizations. The organizational changes that are studied in chapter 4 and 5 preceded the organizational changes that are studied in chapter 6 and 7.

While the four studies have been discussed as separate studies in this chapter, they are thus connected in time, the organizations they take place in and the reform they are a part of.

The objectives of the overall research are addressed with mixed methods. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods has considerable benefits because they are used sequentially, are complementary and allow methodological triangulation. Moreover, the research objectives are addressed with multiple data sources, and are analyzed with different techniques. The qualitative studies are based on interviews on the managerial level, while the quantitative studies are based on surveys on the employee level. On the one hand, this allows to examine the research objectives using different data sources and on differing organizational levels. On the other hand, the different organizational levels may limit the possibility for exact crosschecking of results using different research methods. For example, the effects of the organizational environment are examined with qualitative and quantitative methods, but on different organizational levels. The extent to which methodological triangulation has been applied in this research is further reflected on in the final chapter of this research.

Another shortcoming of the analyses is their cross-sectional nature. The studies are concerned with relationships that take place over time, while all observations are done at a single point in time (Babbie, 2002). This is a threat to the internal validity of the research, because any causal relationships in the research are merely based on theoretical expectation and interpretation, rather than direct empirical observation. Ideally, quantitative research should be longitudinal in the sense that independent and dependent variables are measured at multiple points in time. The qualitative studies would have benefitted from direct observation of the role of leadership while the implementation of change was ongoing. In this research, interview respondents may have forgotten or rationalized information about their behaviors during the process.

In table 3.1, the case selection, methods and techniques of the four empirical studies are summarized.

Table 3.1: Overview of the four empirical studies

Chapter	Type of selected case	Selected case	Method	Techniques
4	Typical / Most similar	Strategic reorientation of the City Works Department	Qualitative: Interviews with managers	Co-variational analysis using coding in Atlas.ti
5	Typical / Diverse	Merger process of Urban Development Rotterdam	Qualitative: Interviews with managers	Co-variational analysis using coding in Atlas.ti
6	Typical / Diverse	Organizational changes in Urban Development Rotterdam	Quantitative: Survey among employees	Multivariate linear regression analysis in SPSS
7	Typical / Diverse	Dissolving of City Works Department	Quantitative: Survey among employees	Structural Equation Modeling in AMOS

There are also differences concerning the conceptual range of the four studies presented in chapter 4 through 7. The theoretical framework underlying the studies expands from chapter 4 to chapter 7. The role of leadership in processes of organizational change is central in each of the studies. The study presented in chapter 4 is aimed at exploring the role of leadership during different types of change processes. The studies presented in chapter 5 and 6 expand the conceptual scope of the study by incorporating the specific characteristics of the public sector. The study in chapter 5 focuses on the influence of the organizational environment on processes of change and its leadership. The study in chapter 6 focuses on leadership and different change processes under varying orga- nizational structures. The studies presented in chapter 6 and 7 enlarge the conceptual scope of the research by accounting for the effects of leadership and change processes by incorporating the outcomes of change. One of the main differences between these chapters is that the in chapter 6 focuses on how a bureaucratic organizational struc- ture moderates the influence of change processes and leadership on the outcomes of change, while chapter 7 provides a model which is based on mediation. The study in chapter 7 accounts for the both the organizational environment and the organizational structure, whereas chapter 6 only accounts for the organizational structure. An overview of the theoretical focus of the studies that are presented in chapter 4 through 7 is given in figure 3.1.
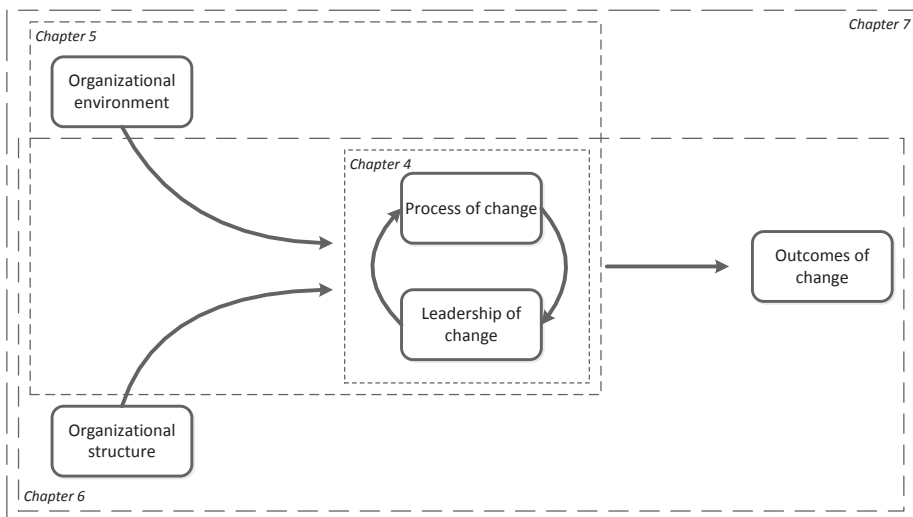
Figure 3.1: Overview of the theoretical focus of the four studies

Chapter 4

Exploring the role of leadership in organizational change[1]

ABSTRACT

The implementation of public management reform may entail radical change for public sector organizations, as it implies changes in the values of the organization. Although such organizational changes are widespread and prevalent in the public sector, the processes through which such changes take place are largely overlooked in the public management literature. By means of an embedded, comparative case study, we analyze both a planned and an emergent process of change. Our analysis indicates that changes come about through careful reinterpretation and reframing of organizational commitments, rather than replacement of the old by the new values. Moreover, there are important differences in the leadership activities in planned and emergent processes of organizational change. We highlight the need for an increased understanding of the role of leadership in emergent processes of change. In order to successfully change public organizations, we find that the approach to change and corresponding leadership activities should be congruent with the content of the desired organizational change. Managers must dare to go beyond talking the talk and start walking the walk.

4.1 INTRODUCTION: PUBLIC MANAGEMENT REFORM AS A CHANGE IN VALUES

Many government organizations are occupied with the implementation of public management reform. Underlying these reforms is a managerial logic which implies that government organizations should be more based on business-like values, rather than Weberian, bureaucratic principals (Wise, 2002). These reforms are aimed at making government organizations more efficient, cost-effective and client oriented (Kickert, 2000). With the widespread occurrence of public management reform, many government organizations are confronted with competing interpretative schemes (Brunsson & Olsen, 1993). For example, the studies of Skalen (2004), Reay and Hinings (2009) and Liguori (2012) focus on how the introduction of managerial principles conflicts with more traditional, administrative values in public service organizations. Meyer and Hammerschmid (2006a) have argued that public management reform does not only result in the implementation of new organizational forms or managerial practices. Such strategic reorientations may also imply a change in the central values or organizational identity of public organizations.

Although public management reform is a widespread and prevalent phenomenon in the public sector, the processes through which such organizational changes take place are largely overlooked in the public management literature (Kickert, 2010; Kuipers et al., 2013). Apart from some notable exceptions (for example Sminia and Van Nistelrooij, 2006; Karp and Helgø, 2008), the literature on public management reform is disconnected from the literature on change management. Theory on change management mostly stems from private sector research (Stewart & Kringas, 2003). This is unfortunate, as the specific characteristics of public organizations may put distinct demands on the management of change (Boyne, 2006; McNulty & Ferlie, 2004).

Following the strong emphasis on leadership in the literature on change management (Kotter, 1996; Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010), we concentrate our analysis on the role of leadership during a process of organizational change. Leadership is indispensable for initiating and driving change (Burke, 2010; Borins, 2002), but it remains an elusive concept. It is not an isolated phenomenon, but leadership activities take place within the context of organizational change processes. Organizational change can come about in a planned or an emergent manner (By, 2005). Although prior research indicates that different types of organizational change require different leadership activities (Higgs & Rowland, 2005), the literature on change leadership does not differentiate between leading change in a planned or emergent process. This study aims to contribute to change leadership theory by examining how planned and emergent processes of organizational change unfold, with a special focus on the changes in organizational values, and by identifying the leadership activities in both planned and emergent processes of

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change. The main research question of this study is: *What is the role of leadership during planned and emergent processes of organizational change?*

In the next section, we elaborate on the theoretical background of this study. In section 4.3, we discuss the criteria for case selection and other methodological considerations. The selected cases are also introduced in this section. Section 4.4 is focused on the process of change. In section 4.5, we analyze the role of leadership during processes of change. We present a discussion of our results and recommendations for future research in section 4.6 and formulate our conclusions in section 4.7.

4.2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Many public organizations are implementing reforms. Some of these changes concern small-scale improvements, while other changes may entail radical transformation. Contemporary reform in the public sector is often based on the idea that the operations of government organizations should be more based on business-like principles (Wise, 2002). Some reforms, such as privatization or contracting out, have affected the organization of public services, while reforms such as performance management and decentralization of management authority target the way public organizations operate (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004). Despite opposing views concerning the distinction between public and private organizations (for an overview see Rainey, 2003), public organizations can be said to highlight rigid structures, hierarchy and control to ensure ideal values such as accountability, legality, incorruptibility, expertise, reliability, effectiveness, impartiality and equity. Private sector values, on the other hand, include for example client service, competition, cost effectiveness, profitability, efficiency and innovativeness (Van der Wal, De Graaf & Lasthuizen, 2008; Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007).

The values underlying public management reform are often secondary or even alien to public organizations. Such values are not necessarily the opposite of public sector values. Rather, they represent a set of counter-ideal values that define what public organizations are not (Van Quaquebeke, Kerschreiter, Buxton & Van Dick, 2010). Such counter-values are disconnected from public values and may therefore be perceived as inappropriate or undesirable in the public sector. Through the application of private sector management techniques, private sector values thus challenge the traditional values that lie at the basis of the nature of public organizations (Antonsen & Jørgensen, 1997; Boyne, 2002). Meyer and Hammerschmid (2006b, p. 99) have argued that this makes public management reform an "identity project". The public management literature contains much evidence of such reforms, for example in health care (Reay & Hinings, 2009; Skalen, 2004), the national civil service (Meyer & Hammerschmid 2006a, 2006b), academia (Gioia & Thomas, 1996; Diefenbach, 2007) and local government (Lig-

uori, 2012). Rather than merely improving the operations of public organizations, public management reform may thus entail the radical transformation of public organizations (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996).

The planned and emergent approach to change are the two dominant approaches for bringing about organizational change (Bamford & Forrester, 2003). The planned approach to change is based on the assumption that organizations are stable entities. In order to bring about change, an organization can be moved from the unsatisfactory current state to a desired future state (By, 2005). This implies that the objectives of change are formulated in advance. Central to the planned approach to change is the idea that organizations must evolve through a series of necessary phases in order to reach the desired future state (Bamford & Forrester, 2003). In contrast with the planned approach to change, the emergent approach sees organizations as entities that are continuously adapting to their ever-changing environment (Burnes, 1996). Instead of changing in a direction that is determined a priori, an emergent change process is an open-ended, often bottom-up, process of adaptation (By, 2005). While the planned approach is primarily aimed at achieving a predetermined outcome, the outcome of an emergent change process is not defined, although a general direction is known. Although the emergent approach explains change through bottom-up initiatives and learning, emergent changes can accumulate and result and in large scale change over time (e.g. Plowman et al., 2007). In this study, we see planned and emergent change as opposite approaches to implement organizational change. The issue for managers and others involved in change is to ensure that the approach adopted matches the circumstances (Burnes, 1996, p. 17).

The view that leadership contributes greatly to the success of the implementation of change is central to the literature on change management (Borins, 2002; Higgs & Rowland, 2010). In this study, we therefore focus our attention on the activities of individuals, with or without a formal management position, through which they attempt to influence the implementation of organizational change. Theories of leadership often focus on how leaders exercise their capacity to influence their followers (Burke, 2010). Apart from this traditional perspective, more recent studies have emphasized a more relational conceptualization in which leadership is distributed over a larger group of individuals (Martin, Currie and Finn, 2009; Oborn, Barrett & Dawson, 2013). The main leadership theory that emphasizes organizational change is the theory of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Eisenbach et al., 1999). While the transformational leadership style did not come about as primarily intended for leading change, it is often positively related to the implementation of change (Burke, 2010; Herold et al., 2008). The core of the transformational leadership theory is that "by articulating a vision, fostering the acceptance of group goals, and providing individualized support, effective leaders change the basic values, beliefs, and attitudes of followers" (Podsakoff et al., 1996, p. 260). Gill (2002) and

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Karp and Helgø (2008) state that leadership activities during organizational change should consist of role modeling and empowering and motivating employees.

Change leadership is not an isolated phenomenon. Leadership activities take place in the context of the organizational change process. While the literature on organizational change suggests a contingency model by offering multiple approaches to change (Dunphy and Stace, 1993; Burnes, 1996; Burnes & Jackson, 2011), it is striking that successful leadership activities are presented as a one-best way method. The contemporary change leadership literature does not take into account whether organizational change comes about through a planned or emergent process. Planned change is initiated and directed by change leaders. The role of change leadership is thus most prominent in the planned approach to change. But change leadership is also needed during emergent processes of change. Rather, than acting as 'hero' (Stewart & Kringas, 2003; Higgs & Rowland, 2010) or 'prime mover', emergent processes of change ask for a sense maker who redirects change (Weick & Quinn, 1999). However, the literature on leading change corresponds mostly, if not exclusively, with the planned perspective on change (compare Eisenbach et al., 1999). Despite some exceptions (for example Higgs and Rowland, 2005) there is a need to further differentiate between (effective) leadership activities in both planned and emergent processes of change.

Changes in the values of organizations may have consequences for the identification of employees with the organization. In recent years, several studies have focused on the interrelationships between change, leadership and identity. Social identity theory states that resistance to change can be understood as an attempt by employees to maintain their identity (Van Dijk & Van Dick, 2009). Employees that identify strongly with the values of the organization are likely to resist change with negative consequences (Drzensky, Egold & Van Dick, 2012). It is therefore important for change leaders to provide employees with a projected sense of continuity that indicates "where are we going and what can we do to make it happen?" (Ullrich, Wieseke & Van Dick, 2005, p. 1562).

4.3 CASE SELECTION AND METHODOLOGY

An embedded comparative case study design is used to meet the objectives of this study and answer the main research question. The case study design fits our research objective of developing theory. Moreover, the embedded comparative design allows us to study two distinct processes of change within an identical context (Yin, 2009). Two organizational units within the City Works Department in the Dutch city Rotterdam were selected as a case. The City Works Department is concerned with the urban planning and the spatial upkeep of the city. In terms of the organization's former slogan: *The City Works Department gives shape to the city, and keeps the city in shape.* The organization's slogan is

twofold in order to account for its two underlying organizational units. The Engineering Bureau is concerned with shaping the city: directing the realization of infrastructural, spatial planning. The Public Works sector is concerned with keeping the city in shape: the maintenance and upkeep of the city's public grounds. Due to managerial reforms, the organization has been dissolved as of June 2012. Its two organizational units are to be separated and merged in two administrative clusters.

This organization was selected as a case for this study because the City Works Department is considered a 'rich' case concerning the content of the organizational change taking place. The desired organizational change closely fits the shift from bureaucratic to managerial archetype in the public management literature (for example Meyer and Hammerschmid, 2006a; Liguori, 2012). Moreover, the case is especially interesting from the perspective of change management because the two organizational units have adopted antitypical approaches to change. The Engineering Bureau has adopted a planned approach to change, while the Public Works sector has used an emergent approach. Qualitative methods were used for data collection. Interviews were conducted with managers and employees in both organizational units. In total, 23 interviews were conducted, spanning over six hierarchical levels. The interviews were recorded and fully transcribed. The transcripts were then coded according to the central concepts of the study: the content of the organizational change, the process of change and leadership activities.

4.4 PROCESS OF CHANGE

In this section we discuss the processes of change in both organizational units. We first provide some background to the study by elaborating on the consequences of the strategic reorientation for the central values in the City Works Department. We then describe the change process of both its organizational units: the Engineering Bureau and the Public Works sector. We conclude this section by comparing both cases on relevant aspects of the change process.

A strategic reorientation as a shift in values

According to respondents, the City Works Department mainly consists of highly skilled professionals, many of them engineers, who are intrinsically motivated to work in the projects the spatial planning and upkeep of the city. Respondents characterize the organization as an organization that was traditionally very hierarchic and bureaucratic with a directive, top-down management style. In more recent years, societal, political and economic developments caused the organization to change its strategic orientation. The new strategy was based on a more collaborative orientation on the environment

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and being more responsive to the demands of stakeholders, rather than initiating and executing projects without the interference of external actors. The strategic reorientation also affected the organization's dominant management style, which relies more on participative management and increased delegation of responsibilities.

The strategic reorientation had considerable consequences for the central values of the organization. The former executive manager of the City Works Department can be seen as a proponent of the traditional values of the organization. In the following quotation, he responds to the increased demands for increased responsiveness and transparency concerning the operations of the Engineering Bureau. His statement makes apparent that, in his view, these values conflict with the organization's professional autonomy:

> *"The organization was criticized for being a closed system, an ivory tower. In my view, this was not the case. You see, building bridges is just a very complex thing, some people simply lack the expertise to understand it."*

His successor, who was responsible for initiating the strategic turnaround at the organization, disagrees with this view. He reflects on the need for the Engineering Bureau to become more oriented on their environment:

> *"The Engineering Bureau is really inside a bubble. They sit inside their office tower and they rarely come outside. This has been the case for a long time. They don't see what is happening in the outside world!"*

Respondents indicate that the professionals of the organizations typically focused on pursuing the highest quality in their projects. As a result of the strategic reorientation, efficiency became a more dominant value in the operations of the organization. The former executive manager of the City Works Department reflects on this change:

> *"To me, this is still incomprehensible. In 20 years' time, the public will have forgotten about the implementation costs of any project. All that matters at that point is the quality of what we delivered."*

Interviews with current managers reveal that managerial values such as time and cost efficiency are already more accepted in the organization. When discussing the performance of the organization, managers focus on time and costs. For example, the current executive manager of the Public Works sector says:

> *"In terms of time, quality and costs we score an unsatisfactory grade. (...) There is a real urgency to change!"*

Table 4.1: A strategic reorientation as a shift in values

	Current organization	**Desired organization**
Sense of self	Civil servant	Public manager / public professional
Central values	- Quality - Task oriented - Professional autonomy - (Being in) control, security	- Time and cost efficiency - Environment oriented - Transparency and consultation - Participation and decentralization
Attitude towards environment	Paternalistic: *"we know what's best for citizens", "the city is ours"*	Responsive: *"we are here for the city"*
Dominant management style	Directive, top-down	Delegating responsibilities, participative

Table 4.1 is based on the interviews with respondents from both the Engineering Bureau and the Public Works Sector and summarizes the characteristics of the current and desired organization.

The Engineering Bureau: Planned change

The Engineering Bureau is obligated to review its business positioning every four years. As a result of this, the board of directors concluded that a strategic reorientation would be necessary. Assisted by an external management consultancy bureau, the board of directors formulated the content of the envisioned organizational change. One of the members of the board of directors elaborates on his motivation for the way the content of change came about:

> *"It is my deepest conviction that it is necessary to make choices about what we want to be. It is the foundation of the trajectory we are in right now."*

The content of the desired change originated almost entirely from the board of directors. One of the major challenges of the change process was to effectively communicate the change to the rest of the organization. An important aspect of the communication program was the use of slogans or catchphrases. Over the course of several years, multiple slogans were used, such as '*New Engineering'*, '*Owners Engineer'* and *'From Engineering to Advisory'*. Members of the board of directors express that it was difficult to formulate a slogan that encompasses all aspects of the organizational change and, more importantly, make the desired change more concrete and tangible to organizational members:

> *"To be honest: New Engineering sounds like a laundry detergent brand to me. What does it mean? (...) The philosophy behind it was very good and it has something for employees to relate to, but how do you explain that?"*

Underlying the desired organizational change are values such as transparency and responsiveness. Because of the diversity in tasks performed in the Engineering Bureau, such values mean something different for every employee in terms of actual behavior. The content of the desired organizational change is thus characterized by a high degree of ambiguity. This is not only perceived as a problematic situation by members of the board of directors, as illustrated by the previous quotation, but also at lower levels in the organizational hierarchy. A middle manager reflects on this issue:

> *"Everybody in the organization says that we have to go 'From Engineering to Advisory',*
> *but everybody has a different view on what that means in daily practice. (…) We have*
> *to make clear what it means for the behavior of employees!"*

As is evident from this comment, managers in the organization perceive the high degree of ambiguity as undesirable. Because managers find it difficult to make the organizational change more concrete to employees, they have been hesitant to communicate openly. In the words of a middle manager:

> *"It is absolutely pointless to start informing people when things are still in the idea*
> *stage. It will cause people to become insecure and start asking questions I don't have*
> *an answer to. (…) We made sure that the information we passed on was filtered so*
> *that it was comprehensible for employees and that we would have answers to their*
> *questions. However, what becomes apparent now, at least in my department, is that*
> *too little has been communicated in the past years."*

Respondents feel that an incomplete message would trigger more uncertainty among organizational members. Similar to the top-down way in which the content of the proposed change came about, the management attempted to reduce uncertainty with the implementation of a top-down communication program. A member of the board of directors elaborates:

> *"We are making presentations for supervisors so they can explain to their team what*
> *we are going to do and why it is good. We've compiled a whole communication pro-*
> *gram in order to reduce cold feet among employees."*

Because the content of change was ambiguous for lower level organizational members, the board of directors mandated a so-called strategy team, consisting of organizational members at the employee level, to participate in the organizational change process. The role of this strategy team is to elaborate on and fill in the objectives that were already defined by the board of directors. The effective influence of employees on the change

process is thus somewhat limited. Another limiting factor is the fact that the strategy team has no actual decision making authority in the change process. A member of the strategy team explains this advisory role:

> *"At the very least we present them with a different point of view. But the product of the strategy team is not something that will certainly be implemented. (…) It is more an advice than that it is binding."*

The degree of employee participation in the change process of the Engineering Bureau was rather limited. Several reasons can be identified for this. First, only the few employees who were part of the strategy team were able to participate. Second, they were only allowed to elaborate on the content of change that was already formulated by the board of directors. Third, participation only came about at a late point in time. According to a middle manager, this severely limited the effectiveness of the sudden participatory approach:

> *"Effectively, the direction of the change is determined in the boardroom. (…) The management of change is very top-down and detailed. By doing so, they have created a culture in which employees are not encouraged to think along, because well, it would be of no use. And now this is suddenly expected in order to make real changes, and then it becomes apparent that a lot of employees have real difficulties in doing so."*

The Public Works sector: Emergent change

Similar to the Engineering Bureau, the desired change of the Public Works sector was also initiated by the board of directors. However, the responsibility for the process of change was delegated from the board of directors to a small project team consisting of lower level supervisors and employees. For an organization that was traditionally characterized by hierarchy and a directive management style, this was an unconventional approach. One of the members of the project team comments:

> *"It is also different because, someone like me is a member of this group instead of senior managers. This group was deliberately composed of people who know what goes on at the employee level, who are closer to that."*

Not just the delegation of authority to this project team was unconventional for the organization. The first step of the project team in the change process was to conduct a series of interviews with important environmental stakeholders in order to discover the opinion of these stakeholders concerning the Public Works sector. The results of these interviews were subsequently used as input for the content of the desired change. A

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member of the board of directors explains why these interviews were an a-typical approach for the organization:

> "I cannot reflect infinitely on the history of this organization, but for as far as I know we had never asked our environment for their opinion about us. And that's what we did do. We went to the city's boroughs, to contractors, to other municipalities. A reasonably sized external survey in order to find out how we were perceived by our environment."

Based on the interviews with environmental stakeholders, the project team formulated four themes that together comprised the desired change, which was labeled *Topshape*. The four dimensions were briefly introduced on a single sheet of A4 paper. Because of this, the four themes, such as 'Expertise in Topshape' and 'Connection in Topshape' maintained a high degree of abstraction. Rather than trying to eliminate this ambiguity, as in the case of the Engineering Bureau, this abstraction was carefully preserved during the change process. As one of the members of the project team explains, the ambiguity inherent in these themes allows individual employees to relate to the change in his or her own way:

> "That is the underlying idea. We could have written an elaborate plan, complete with many examples of what 'Connection in Topshape' means. But it means something different for everyone. So we shortly described what it means in abstract terms, but not what kind of actions or behaviors are attached to it. We decided to leave that open. It is something different for every department and every employee. It allows them to discuss it with each other."

The participation of employees in the change process was not limited to the installment of the project team. Employees were invited to contribute to and discuss the four themes in working groups and other sessions. At one point, over 140 employees were actively participating in the realization of the change. Despite the emphasis on employee participation, top-down change communication was still present in the change process. Communication was mainly focused on establishing a sense of urgency. A middle manager reflects on a meeting where the need for a change was communicated to employees:

> "There we addressed the need for change, and we asked them to think along about the process that we are entering right now. We did not yet have a fixed plan, but we did state that we wanted to accomplish this by July next year. That is the perspective we outlined at that time."

A final important aspect of the approach to change of the Public Works sector concerns the way the organizational change was framed. In contrast with the Engineering Bureau, the content of change was deliberately presented as an elaboration on the organization's current values, rather than a radical breakaway from the past. The change process was labeled *Topshape*, which builds on the old slogan of the organization: *'we keep the city in shape'*. A member of the project team explains the motivation for this frame:

> *"The idea there is to appreciate what was before. It is a form of respect, so to say. I've seen organizational changes where a new leader barges in out of nowhere saying: "everything you've been doing is wrong!" I don't think that is much of a motivation for most people."*

Comparison

While the Engineering Bureau and the Public Works sector attempted to bring about a similar change in their strategic orientation and central values, they used very distinct approaches to organizational change. The approach to change of the Engineering Bureau can for a large part be characterized as a planned process in which higher-level managers determined the content of the change. In the change process at the Public Works sector, a small team of employees was allowed to drive the change process. Detailed objectives of the organizational change were not formulated at the beginning of the change process, but came about during the process. Managers at the Engineering Bureau attempted to eliminate ambiguity by an elaborate top-down communication program. At the Public Works sector, communication was mainly focused on establishing a sense of urgency. Here, ambiguity served an opportunity for individual employees

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Table 4.2: Planned and emergent processes of organizational change

	Engineering Bureau	**Public Works sector**
Development of the content of change	- Top-down: Devised by board of directors - A priori formulated objectives of change	- Bottom-up: Devised by project team and environmental stakeholders - Emergent objectives of change
Communication	- Focused on sense of urgency - Focused on content of change - Aimed at decreasing ambiguity	- Focused on the sense of urgency - Aimed at stimulating interpretation
Participation	- Relatively late in the change process - Participation of project team - Outcome is advisory	- Delegation to project team from the start - Participation of project team and over 140 employees - Outcome is binding
Role of ambiguity	- Ambiguity as a threat - Eliminate it!	- Ambiguity as an opportunity - Preserve it!
Type of change	- Replacement / frame breaking: Content of change is disconnected from former slogans and values	- Modification / frame bending: Former slogans and values as foundation for the objectives of change

to connect with the change. The participation of employees was much more extensive in the change process of the Public Works sector. A final difference is that the content of change was framed as improvement rather than replacement at the Public Works sector. The differences between the two change processes are summed up in table 4.2.

4.5 LEADERSHIP OF CHANGE

In this section, we elaborate on the role of leadership during the two processes of change. Because change leaders are embedded in processes of organizational change, we make a distinction between the leadership activities in the planned and emergent process of change discussed in the previous section. We first reflect on the model of leadership in both processes of change. After that we outline the most important leadership activities in both processes of change.

Leadership in the planned process of change

The role of leadership in the planned process of change fits a traditional leadership perspective in which the leadership role is concentrated in a select number of individuals. These are mainly the members of the executive management team. Three types of leadership activities can be identified in the data concerning the planned process of change. These activities are: communicating the change, being a role model and the appointment and dismissal of 'culture champions'.

Communicating the change. Especially in the planned change process of the Engineering Bureau, communication of change is an important aspect of the change process. Because the overall vision of change has been communicated through official announcements, documents and the organization's intranet, managers devote a lot of their time to communicating the need for change in a more personal way. When asked about his views on the role of leadership in organizational change, a member of the board of directors responds:

> *"I think by recognizing the moments when it is necessary to emphasize the need for change. Not by standing on a platform, but also in general meetings. Day to day things. (…) It has to become a regular thing, not just at speeches. But you must ensure that the entire management team speaks with one voice, so that you don't contradict each other."*

In response to the high level of abstraction of the desired change, managers attempt to play a part in translating the change objectives into more operational behaviors for their

individual employees. This is especially the case for lower level managers and direct supervisors. They try to raise awareness for the organizational change, make clear what is expected of employees and attempt to identify and take away resistance to change.

Being a role model. In the literature on the leadership of organizational change, the importance of role models is often outlined (Karp & Helgø, 2008). Within the planned change process of the Engineering Bureau, managers indicate that they often strive to provide their employees with examples of what the organizational change encompasses. These leadership activities are aimed at making the content of change more concrete to employees. Lower level managers often refer to the board of directors when talking about role models. As the initiators of the organizational change, their behavior is believed to have the largest impact on employees. A middle manager states:

> *"Right now we are busy with having the director portray examples of good behavior, in the sense of "this is what we mean with it" and "this is also what we have in mind." "*

The board of directors plays an important role in being visible during the process of change. Often, it is difficult to function as a role model in concrete behavior. Respondents state that being a role model is also about the showcasing of prioritizations in order to remind employees of need for change. A member of the board of directors explains:

> *"I try to attend meetings that encompass 'the new', so to say. But that is something I expect of all managers in the organization."*

Appointments and dismissal of employees. A direct way of influencing the dominant values in the organization that is executed on the strategic leadership level is the dismissal of key figures in the organization and the appointment of new 'culture champions' on important positions in the organization. These are individuals that are obvious representatives of the envisioned organizational change. However, the dismissal of personnel is often difficult because their position is protected by extensive legislation. Leaders that use strategic appointments as a way of inserting the new values in the organization are often skeptical about the organizational capability for change without such interventions. A senior manager elaborates on his motivation for applying this leadership activity:

> *"I believe that it has to go extinct, it has to go literally extinct. Such a feeling [a value traditionally embodied in the organization] disappears when the champions of the culture of the last decades leave the organization."*

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Related to the appointment of culture champions, another method to bring about change in the values of the organization is to formalize and professionalize the procedures through which new managers are selected. Through assessments and management development programs, future managers will be more fit to operate according to a more managerial logic.

Leadership in the emergent process of change

The role of leadership in the emergent process of change can be seen as distributed over a larger number of individuals. Woods, Bennet, Harvey and Wise (2004) state that distributed leadership is characterized by leadership activities that are performed by a wider range of individuals, whose combined range of capabilities and expertise causes outcomes to be greater than the sum of their individual efforts. A member of the project team reflects on how the members of the project team collectively took up a leadership role in the project:

> *"I did pay attention to the combination of the members. They have to enjoy doing this together. And when you take into account their competences, that you include people who are skilled in, for example, communication. (…) And through the dynamics in our group something emerges that you did not think of yourself. There is a lot of energy in that group."*

In comparison with the Engineering Bureau, the leadership role in the change process of the Public Works sector was thus distributed over more individuals and hierarchical levels. Once again, three types of leadership activities can be identified. These activities are: communicating the change, highlighting role models and institutionalizing the new leadership model.

Communicating change. The change process of the Public Works sector contained more participation of employees than the planned change process of the Engineering Bureau. Despite this difference, communication of change still is an important aspect of a more emergent change process. Similar to the Engineering Bureau, managers at the Public Works sector have been very active in communicating the need for change. However, there are also important differences when it comes to the communication of change. Rather than actively translating the desired organizational change to the situation of individual employees, the communication activities at the Public Works sector are more aimed at having employees discuss the content of change and its consequences among themselves. In this sense, interpretations of the desired change are not derived from the management but from employees themselves.

Highlighting role models. The necessity of role models is also stressed in the emergent change process. Role models portray examples of desired behavior and help employees understand what the objectives of change mean in daily practice. However, rather than highlighting the board of directors or the lower level managers as role models, employees function as role models in the *Topshape* program of the Public Works sector. A member of the program's project team explains:

> "We came up with a ball as a symbol for Topshape: 'The ball is in your court, not the court of the management or the board of directors'. (...) A golden ball circulated in the organization among people who distinguished themselves in one of the themes of the Topshape program."

A member of the board of directors adds:

> "Employees with good ideas about the themes could be nominated for the golden ball by their co-workers. I handed out the first one, and after that it circulated in the organization. The board of directors was not allowed to intervene. It was up to the employees."

The circulation of a golden ball within the organizational unit did not only provide a sense of competition between departments and individual employees. More importantly, it also enabled organizational members to learn from each other. The showcasing of how individual employees operationalize the themes of the *Topshape* program is much more concrete and relevant than the examples provided by the organization's management.

Institutionalizing the new leadership model. Underlying the change process of the Public Works sector is a leadership model that is not located at the apex of the organization, but rather is distributed throughout the organization. Implicit in the leadership activities aimed at communicating the change and role modeling is the participation of employees. In this sense, the scope of this distributed leadership model goes beyond a traditional, hierarchical perspective on leadership. However, the adoption of this new leadership model cannot be taken for granted. Respondents are aware that the institutionalization of this leadership model requires their attention and effort. The institutionalization of this leadership model consists of two elements. First, managers attempt to apply the organizational change on their own behavior and, second, they focus their attention on activating organizational members. Many respondents realize that in order for the values and behaviors of employees to change, they must first change themselves. These managers were convinced that in order to break away from

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the organization's traditional values, managers must apply the principles of the desired change on themselves. A supervisor explains:

> *"I must also apply the change on myself. I am very inclined to a high degree of control. I enjoy the new way of working, but I have to learn to let the old go. I've been working in this organization for a very long time; I was brought up in this organization. The way you act is very dependent on the organization's culture."*

However, letting go of the traditional leadership model is not enough. Respondents indicate that the delegation of authority to employees and more emphasis on participation does not automatically lead to the anticipated results. Paradoxically, the emergence a distributed leadership model is dependent on the role of formal managers. A member of the project team reflects on this trade-off between traditional and distributed forms of leadership:

> *"Partly based on our history, my view on leadership is that people still tend to focus on the leader. People derive from the leader what is desired and undesired behavior in the organization. But what we wanted was that people would take more personal responsibility. So the management has to provide a framework for behavior in the organization, but not too much."*

The institutionalization of a more distributed leadership model thus requires the careful combining of devolving responsibilities and taking a step back, while simultaneously preserving a more traditional leadership model by providing direction for employees. Balancing between providing direction and letting go is a constant challenge for managers. A member of the board of directors reflects on how this is both uneasy and necessary at the same time:

> *"Very often people feel you should take the lead. I am sure people think I should be more directive at times, slamming my fist on the table. And sometimes you have to, but you have to be careful with that. It is a very fragile process."*

4.6 DISCUSSION

In order to implement changes concerning the strategic orientation and central values of the organization, the Engineering Bureau adopted a planned approach to change. At the Public Works sector, an emergent approach was adopted. Their *Topshape* approach was framed as an improvement of the organization's former slogan. By balancing between

stability and innovation, they were able to conserve parts of the organization's former bureaucratic character, while simultaneously adding more managerial values. While the literature on organizational change suggests that radical organizational change typically takes place through replacement (for example Greenwood and Hinings, 1996) our analysis suggests an opposite approach may be similarly effective. "Revolutionary rhetoric is likely to produce counter-revolutionary responses. (...) In contrast, even extreme changes may be more readily accepted when they are framed in a way that allows people to conserve their own sense of personal and organizational identity" (Kraatz & Block, 2008, p. 834). Our analysis thus supports the view that radical organizational change takes place through careful reinterpretation and reframing of organizational commitments, instead of a perspective that portrays change as a replacement of the old by the new (compare Pratt & Foreman, 2000). This is coherent with research that suggests that organizational identities are not replaced by a new paradigm, but that the two conflicting views are merged into a new identity (Skalen, 2004). During radical organizational change, prior research indicates that it is crucial to provide employees with a sense of continuity (Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg, Monden & De Lima, 2002; Ullrich et al., 2005; Giessner, 2011). Because of its focus on improvement rather than replacement, an emergent approach to implementing organizational change may therefore be more beneficial than planned approach. Our analysis, however, does not enable us to formulate statements about the effectiveness of planned and emergent approaches to organizational change. A first recommendation for future research is therefore to empirically test the effectiveness of planned and emergent approaches concerning organizational change in public organizations.

A central standpoint in the literature on change management is that both planned and emergent approaches can be used to implement organizational change. Burnes (1996) has argued there is no one best way to managing change. Other authors call for a contingency model, in which contextual factors determine whether a planned or emergent approach to change is adopted (Dunphy and Stace, 1993; Burnes & Jackson, 2011). Some authors claim that the both approaches can be used to strengthen each other (Burnes, 2004; Sminia & van Nistelrooij, 2006). In contrast, the change management literature offers only a single model on (successful) leadership activities concerning organizational change. Successful change leadership activities include explaining the vision of change, communicating, motivating and inspiring subordinates, role modeling and empowering employees (Gill, 2002; Karp & Helgø, 2008; Herold et al., 2008). Similar activities are also prescribed in planned approaches to change, such as Kotter (1996) and Fernandez and Rainey (2006). There is thus a conceptual overlap between the concepts of change leadership and planned change (compare Eisenbach et al., 1999). Because of this, the literature on organizational change currently lacks a coherent model of change leadership that fits the emergent perspective on change. Our study underlines the

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importance of attention for the role of leadership during emergent change, because important differences can be seen between the leadership activities in the planned and emergent process of change. These differences are summarized in table 4.3.

In the planned process of change, the leadership role is concentrated in senior management of the organization. Their leadership activities closely fit the literature on the leadership of organizational change, such as communicating the vision and content of change and functioning as a role model. However, in the emergent process of change, change leadership takes on a different form. Rather than being concentrated in a limited number of individuals, the leadership role is distributed over a large group of individuals, spanning several hierarchical levels in the organization. Leadership activities aimed at communication and role modeling are also present in the emergent process of change, but they are much more aimed at the participation of organizational members. In this respect, it could be argued that the participation of employees is as much part of leadership as the activities of managers.

The third, and perhaps most fundamental, type of leadership activity in the emergent change process is aimed at the institutionalization of distributed leadership in the organization. What is striking here is the paradoxical relationship between traditional, managerial forms of leadership and more distributed, participative forms of leadership. On the one hand, the institutionalization of a model of distributed leadership is dependent on the yielding of authority by managers. On the other hand, managerial authority remains necessary in order to provide direction and stimulate employees to take on a leadership role. As Van Wart (2005: p. 372-373) states: "shared leadership ultimately

Table 4.3: Leadership during planned and emergent change

Planned change	Emergent change
Traditional leadership model:	**Distributed leadership model:**
- Leadership role is concentrated in senior management	- Leadership role is divided over large number of individuals and hierarchical levels
Leadership activities:	**Leadership activities:**
Communication - Stressing the need for change - Making the content of change personal - Reducing ambiguity - Identifying and taking away resistance to change	*Communication* - Stressing the need for change - Stimulating discussion about change among employees
Being a role model - (Senior) management functions as the main role model during change	*Highlighting role models* - Highlighting employees as role models
Appointments and dismissal of employees - Dismissal of former culture champions - Formalizing selection procedures	*Institutionalizing the new leadership model* - Applying the change on yourself - Activation of organizational members

requires both a willingness to cede leadership to others on the part of organizational heads and the capacity of other actors to take it on." Our analysis thus indicates that while emergent processes of change rely on a more distributed model of leadership, traditional hierarchical leadership is and should not be completely absent.

Private sector research on change leadership often highlights a traditional, transformational leadership perspective (Stewart & Kringas, 2003; Thomas, 1996). However, a perspective on leadership as a distributed phenomenon is already more prevalent in public sector research, due to its ambiguous and political nature (for example Martin et al., 2009). At the same time, other characteristics of public sector organization argue against the adoption of a distributed leadership model, such as elaborate organizational structures and hierarchy, limited autonomy and an emphasis on top-down management (Woods et al., 2004).

Other authors have outlined the importance of congruence in the implementation of organizational change. Selznick (1957), Brunsson and Olsen (1993) and Greenwood and Hinings (1996) stress the importance of congruence between the content of a change initiative and the values in the organization. Similarly, Burnes and Jackson (2011) highlight a fit between the central values in the organization and the approach to change. Along with other researchers (for example Weick and Quinn, 1999; Higgs and Rowland, 2005, 2011) we have argued for corresponding change leadership, depending on the type of or approach to organizational change. The analysis shows that managers in the emergent process consciously attempt to apply the organizational change on themselves. Rather than just communicating the change to organizational members, these managers attempt to break away from their old routines of directive management. At the Engineering Bureau, the management used top-down communication to clarify the organizational change. By doing so, the desired change was limited to rhetoric. At the Public Works sector, the approach to change and the corresponding leadership activities were an embodiment of the desired organizational change. This indicates a fit between the change objectives, the approach to change and the leadership activities in the change process. When the approach to change and the leadership activities are incongruent with the content of a change initiative, the outcome of a change process may be counter-effective. As Higgs and Rowland (2010, p. 123) argue: "It is important that leaders have a good level of self-awareness that enables them to see that their own mindsets and behaviors may indeed contribute to reinforcing rather than challenging existing systems."

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4.7 CONCLUSION

The implementation of public management reform may entail radical change for public sector organizations, as it implies changes in the values of the organization. Our study supports the view that changes in the values of public organizations come about through careful adaptation and reinterpretation of existing values. This would imply that an emergent approach to change is more appropriate than the planned approach to change. Moreover, the emphasis on participation rather than top-down communication of the emergent perspective is beneficial for making the desired changes concrete and relevant for employees. Paradoxically, the emphasis on decreasing ambiguity of the planned perspective results in the introduction of change objectives that are of little relevance for individual employees. Our analysis further reveals differences in the type and execution of leadership activities between the planned and emergent approach to change. While the role of leadership in planned processes is well accounted for in change management literature, the role of leadership in emergent processes of change is in our view overlooked. Finally, our analysis suggests that, in order to successfully change the values of public sector organizations, the approach to change and corresponding leadership activities should be congruent with the content of organizational change. The planned approach to change, with characteristics such as top-down communication and an emphasis on the role of senior management, may reinforce rather than challenge the current bureaucratic nature of public organizations. In an emergent process of change, the leadership of change is distributed over a larger group of individuals and hierarchical levels. We therefore argue that the leadership of a change in values in the public sector goes beyond the top-down communication of the desired change. The leadership of change itself should also be subject to the change in values. By shaping a participatory approach to change and delegating leadership responsibilities, effective change leadership consists of walking the walk instead of merely talking the talk.

Chapter 5

Leading change in a complex organizational environment[2]

ABSTRACT

Public organizations often attempt to implement changes in the governance, design and delivery of public services. However, only a limited amount of studies have focused on what makes change management in public organizations specific as compared to private organizations. This study explicitly links change management and public management theory, in order to explore how public managers lead organizational change in a complex environment. In order to address this issue, a case study of a merger of administrative departments in a Dutch city was done. This merger was characterized by an organizational environment that became increasingly complex over time. The results indicate that a high degree of environmental complexity forces public organizations to adopt a planned, top-down approach to change, while the effectiveness of such an approach to change is simultaneously limited by a complex environment. Moreover, typical change leadership activities, such as defining the need for change, role modeling and motivating employees to implement the change, are necessary for the implementation of change in a complex environment, but not sufficient. A complex public environment calls for additional change leadership activities aimed at overcoming external dependencies.

5.1 INTRODUCING CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS

Public organizations often attempt to implement changes in the governance, design and delivery of public services (Ferlie, Hartley & Martin, 2003). These organizational changes typically stress improving efficiency, the quality of service delivery and cutting cost expenditure (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004). In recent years, many academic studies have focused on change management in public organizations (Isett et al., 2012; Kickert, 2010; Stewart & O'Donnell, 2007; Chustz & Larson, 2006; Stewart & Kringas, 2003; Coram & Burnes, 2001). Several authors, such as Sminia and Van Nistelrooij (2006), Rusaw (2007), Klarner, Probst & Soparnot (2008) and Karp and Helgø (2008), have argued that the particular characteristics of public organizations may put specific demands on the management of change. Change management theory, which is traditionally mainly based on private sector research (Thomas, 1996; Stewart & Kringas, 2003), may not necessarily be appropriate in a public sector context (Boyne, 2006).   However, only a limited amount of studies have focused on what makes change management in public organizations specific as compared to private organizations (e.g. Robertson & Seneviratne, 1995; Kickert, 2013). Fernandez and Rainey (2006) have reviewed the literature in order to identify factors that contribute to the successful implementation of change in public organizations, but their model is almost identical to well-known private sector models such as Kotter (1996) and Kanter et al. (1992). In both the public management literature and the change management literature, there is thus little empirical evidence about how change management is influenced by the specific characteristics of public organizations (Kuipers et al., 2013).

There is a large literature about the specific characteristics of public organizations (Allison, 1979; Boyne, 2002; Rainey, 2003). In this study, attention is focused on the organizational environment of public organizations. Public organizations typically operate in an environment characterized by checks and balances, shared power, divergent interests and the political primate. Because of this, the environment of public organizations is believed to be relatively complex (Rainey, 2003; By & Macleod, 2009). This study intends to contribute to insights about change management in public organizations by explicitly linking insights about change management in (public) organizations (Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; Robertson & Seneviratne, 1995) to the literature on the specific features of public organizations (Rainey, 2003; Boyne, 2002; Rainey & Chun, 2005). We examine how the complex environment of public organizations influences the implementation of change. Following the strong emphasis on leadership in the literature on change management (Kotter, 1996; Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Herold et al., 2008), we focus our analysis on the leadership activities within the process of organizational change. A case study approach is used to explore how public managers lead organizational change in a

complex environment. A merger of three departments in a Dutch city that took place in an environment that became increasingly complex is selected as a case.

The objectives of this study are threefold. The main focus of this study is to formulate theoretical propositions about how public managers lead organizational change in a complex environment. To do so, it is necessary to first address complexity in the environment of public organizations, and how it manifests itself in times of organizational change. Therefore, the first research objective is to explore how environmental complexity manifests itself in processes of organizational change. The second objective of this study is to examine how environmental complexity affects the implementation process of organizational change. The third and primary research objective is to examine the leadership activities of public managers in processes of organizational change, and to analyze how public managers deal with their complex environment in times of organizational change. The main research question of this study is: *How do public managers lead organizational change in a complex environment?*

In the next section, a theoretical background of environmental complexity, processes of change and change leadership is discussed. In section 5.3, the study's methodology and the selected case are discussed. The perceptions of public managers concerning their complex environment are presented in section 5.4 (research objective 1). In section 5.5, the relationship between the environment and the process of organizational change is analyzed (research objective 2). Section 5.6 focuses on the role of leadership in organizational change (research objective 3). In section 5.7, the conclusions of this study are outlined and discussed. Building on our conclusions, theoretical propositions concerning the role of change leadership in a complex public environment are formulated and recommendations for future research are presented.

5.2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The complex environment of public organizations

The external environment of an organization consists of the relevant physical and social factors that are located outside of the boundaries of the organization and have a bearing on the decision-making processes and organizational behavior of actors within the organization (Duncan, 1972). Well-known theories on organizational change have drawn on the organizational environment in order to explain why organizational change occurs. For example, contingency theory (e.g. Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Mintzberg, 1979) argues that certain aspects of the environment may necessitate changes in the organizational structure in order to maximize organizational effectiveness. New institutional theory (e.g. Meyer & Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) explains organizational changes as being imposed by the organization's environment in order to

increase the organization's legitimacy. This study is focused on how the environment complexity affects the implementation processes and leadership of change in a public organization. According to Duncan (1972) the degree of complexity in an organizational environment is determined by the amount of factors or components in the environment that the organization is dependent on.

The environment of public organizations is often assumed to be relatively complex. Public organizations deal with a multitude of stakeholders (Rainey, 2003). Like private organizations, the environment of many public organizations consists of stakeholders such as clients, partners, suppliers and even competitors. In addition, public organizations also deal with their political superiors. As a result of this, public managers have multiple, possibly conflicting, goals imposed on them by numerous stakeholders (Boyne, 2002). Public organizations therefore often have complex and contested performance indicators and complex implementation processes to navigate (By & Macleod, 2009). In addition to ambiguous objectives, public organizations also deal with distributed power and authority. Public organizations are often confronted with a great diversity and intensity of external political influences on decision-making processes (Rainey & Chun, 2005). The degree of complexity in the environment of public organizations is further increased through mechanisms of public accountability. Public organizations are often subject to great scrutiny by their political superiors, the media and citizens (Rainey, 2003).

The process of organizational change

Scholars of organizational change often make a distinction between the content and process of organizational change (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Van de Ven & Poole, 2005; Kuipers et al., 2013). The content of change refers to *what* changes in an organization, while the process of change refers to *how* organizational changes come about. The distinction between planned and emergent change is the dominant way of distinguishing between different approaches to change (Bamford & Forrester, 2003). Planned processes of change are programmatic changes that are implemented in a top-down fashion. Planned changes are management-driven, and are characterized by detailed objectives of change that are formulated in advance of the implementation process (By, 2005). Change can also be implemented though a more devolved process (cf. Beer & Nohria, 2000; Sminia & Van Nistelrooij, 2006). In this study, we refer to such change processes as emergent change (Kickert, 2010; Kuipers, De Witte & Van der Voet, 2013). Emergent changes rely more on the participation of employees and come about bottom-up. The change process, rather than the content of change, is central in the sense that detailed change objectives are not formulated at the beginning of the change process (By, 2005).

A number of studies have suggested how the complex environment of public organizations may affect the implementation process of organizational change. In a

meta-analysis of the implementation of planned change in public and private organizations, Robertson and Seneviratne (1995) argue that the absence of straightforward and consensually supported goals and the divergence of stakeholder and institutional cultures may limit the success of planned change. However, Robertson and Seneviratne do not find evidence for these expectations. Karp and Helgø (2008) argue that because of the complex character of change in the public sector, it is difficult to plan, coordinate and direct organizational change. In contrast, Burnes (2009) has argued that a planned approach to change may be better equipped to resolve conflict among the many stakeholders in the public sector during change. Similarly, Rusaw (2007) argues that in the pluralistic nature of their organizational environment, a compelling future state and change objectives are needed to bring about organizational change. Some authors thus argue in favor of the planned approach to implement change in the public sector, while others argue against it. Because most available studies on this topic are conceptual, there is a lack of empirical evidence about the way change implementation is influenced by the complex environment of public organizations.

Leadership of change

Leadership is generally seen as an important, if not the most important, condition for (successful) organizational change (Kotter, 1996; Burke, 2010). The literature on change leadership highlights the activities of a single or select number of top managers aimed at turning the organization around (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010; Stewart & Kringas, 2003; Herold et al., 2008; Liu, 2010). The activities of change leaders typically consist of developing a plan, communicating the vision of change, being a good role model and motivating employees to contribute to the change (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; Gill, 2002). Eisenbach et al. (1999) and Higgs and Rowland (2011) have argued that the change leadership literature shows parallels with the theory of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985, 1999). Both theories highlight leadership behaviors such as envisioning a future state for the organization, inspiring and motivating employees to contribute to the realization of this vision, and paying attention to the personal needs of employees. In this study, we refer to this dominant conceptualization of change leadership as the transformational leadership perspective.

   We do not restrict our conceptualization of change leadership to the transformational change leadership perspective. First, in the change management literature, change leadership is implicitly conceptualized as the leadership of planned organizational change. However, different change processes call for other change leadership behaviors (Higgs & Rowland, 2005). Second, the specific characteristics of public organizations may have a bearing on the leadership behavior of public managers (Van Wart, 2003, 2013). For example, Denis et al. (2005) argue that the pluralistic nature of the sector environment may necessitate leadership that is not aimed at motivation and inspiration,

as is the transformational change leadership perspective, but rather at issues such as power, interests and coalitions. Similarly, By and Macleod (2009) and Crosby and Bryson (2005) articulate leadership perspectives that are more about being in touch being in touch, lobbying and collaboration than about making strategic decisions. Therefore, a more open conceptualization of change leadership is used in this study.

5.3 CASE SELECTION AND RESEARCH METHODS

The selected case for this study is a merger of three organizational departments in the Dutch city Rotterdam. These organizational departments, the Development Agency Rotterdam, the Agency of City Construction and Housing and the City Works Department are active in the spatial-economic development of the city. The process of change began in 2004 by improving collaboration between the organizational departments. On the 1st of May 2011, the organizational departments officially merged into a new organization called Urban Development Rotterdam. The merger of Urban Development Rotterdam was selected as a case because it was expected to be a 'rich' case concerning environmental complexity during the process of change. The new organization, as well as the organizational departments before the merger, is known for the multitude of societal stakeholders and external partners on which the organization is dependent. Moreover, during the organizational change process the organization was confronted with some major dynamics in its environment. Political principals and the media also played an important role in the change process. Because of these environmental factors, the case of Urban Development Rotterdam is a good opportunity to develop insights about leading organizational change in a complex public environment. While a comparative design is often assumed to be more beneficial for the testing theoretical propositions (Yin, 2009), a single case design better fits our more inductive research objective of developing theory (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Qualitative methods were used for data collection. Interviews were conducted with public managers within the organization. In total, 23 interviews were conducted, spanning over three managerial levels in the organization's hierarchy. All 3 (former) executives of the organizational departments were interviewed. In addition, 5 senior managers and 15 middle managers were interviewed. The interviews were transcribed verbatim. Atlas. ti software was used to systematically code and analyze the transcripts. Because the organizational change process in the organization was ongoing when interviews were conducted, it was possible to interview public managers about their current activities in the organizational change process. In our view, this may be beneficial to the validity of this study, because it limits the respondents' ability for ex-post rationalization of their leadership behavior in the change process. In order to meet the first research objective,

exploring how environmental complexity is manifested in organizational change, open interviews were conducted. No fixed conceptualization of environmental complexity was used. Rather, environmental complexity served as a sensitizing concept and as a starting point for the study (Blumer, 1954). In order to meet the second research objective, determining how the complex environment influences the process of change, the narratives of individual respondents concerning the development of the change process were studied. These narratives contain interpretations about the (perceived) influence of the environment on the change process. In order to meet the third research objective, examining the leadership activities of public managers in environmental complexity, an over-respondent comparison of leadership behaviors was done. Leadership activities were systematically coded and related to the manager's perceptions of environmental complexity with the intention of discovering relationships between both concepts.

5.4 PERCEPTIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLEXITY IN TIMES OF CHANGE

In this section, the perceptions of our respondents concerning environmental complexity are presented. We first discuss the environmental stakeholders and dependencies that make up the environment of our respondents. During the interviews, it became apparent that two developments in the organization's environment were important during the process of organizational change. These developments are covered in the second part of this section.

Environmental stakeholders and dependencies

In the interviews, respondents were asked to describe the environment that they operate in. In the literature on the characteristics of public organizations (By & Macleod, 2009; Rainey, 2003), it is stressed that public organizations deal with a multitude of stakeholders. The interviews reveal that many departments within Urban Development Rotterdam indeed have many societal stakeholders, including project developers, contractors, housing corporations, real estate agencies, not-for profit organizations, businesses and entrepreneurs, interest groups and citizens. To quote a middle manager:

> *"If you would ask me to make a list I could easily come up with 50 organizations that I have contact with."*

However, when it comes to the organizational changes taking place in the organization, the multitude of societal stakeholders that constitute the environment of Urban Development Rotterdam are seldom mentioned. Concerning this change process, only hierarchical superiors within the political-administrative system appear to contribute

the perceived complexity of the environment. These superiors are the two principals in the environment of the organizational departments, namely the city's executive board and the central administrative management team. All of the departments' executives were employed in the private sector before their appointment as executive of the organizational departments. One of these department executives reflects on the situation:

> *"Typical for a government organization. I have worked in the private sector before, and things are very different there. I have been through multiple mergers and acquisitions, and it's clear who is in charge there. That's the board of directors, and they decide. And they discuss it once with the supervisory board, and then you just do it. But here you are embedded in a political-administrative environment, which is considerably more complex."*

While societal stakeholders are relevant in the day-to-day activities of our respondents, this appears to be less so in the process of organizational change. A middle manager explains this difference between societal and political-administrative stakeholders:

> *"Every discussion about our core tasks and things like that is relevant, but it only gets really interesting after decision-making by the political principals. That is always the context we depart from."*

Although Boyne (2002) states that a multitude of stakeholders may lead to conflicting demands on the organization, societal stakeholders appear to be indifferent about the organizational change process. Conflict and opposition came mostly from within the political-administrative system. Some members of the central administrative management team, in which the executives of the city's other organizational departments are represented, feared that a merger would have consequences for the future autonomy of their own organizational department. The political principal of Urban Development Rotterdam, the city's executive board, was at several times opposed to the idea of a merger between the individual organizational departments. A middle manager explains that the executive board feared that:

> *"Urban Development would become huge and powerful. How do we stop it from becoming a black box? How do we maintain control over such a giant?"*

Many of the respondents indeed deal with a multitude of societal stakeholders in the their daily work, but a diversity of stakeholders does not necessarily lead to an increased sense of environmental complexity during processes of organizational change. The organization may depend on many stakeholders in its day-to-day activities, when it comes

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to organizational change it is mainly the dependencies on hierarchical superiors that complicate the process of organizational change.

Environmental dynamics and developments

The interviews reveal the importance of environmental developments and incidents. One of the more prominent developments in the environment was the economic crisis that started in 2008. The economic crisis greatly reduced the investments in large-scale spatial projects. Because Urban Development Rotterdam is dependent on initiatives and investments of societal stakeholders, the amount of work for the organization was greatly reduced. Another effect of the economic crisis was that the city itself ended up in financial problems as well.

   In addition, a critical incident occurred, to which we shall refer as the Museum Park affair. This incident concerned the construction of an underground parking at a park in the city centre (the "Museum Park"), for which the Development Agency Rotterdam was (in part) responsible. Because of poor collaboration and communication between the Development Agency Rotterdam and the City Works Department, the completion of this project was delayed by months, costs mounted from 46 million to 103 million Euros and an adjacent children's hospital was damaged. This event is an example of the high level of public scrutiny that public organizations deal with (Rainey, 2003; By & Macleod, 2009). The incident was a headline in the national media, taking the proportions of a sort of 'Museum Parkgate' and was mockingly called the 'crater flater'. This media blow-up severely damaged the reputation of the individual organizational departments, and even the city as a whole. Moreover, it resulted into increased scrutiny of the city's executive board on the organizational departments in the spatial-economic domain.

5.5 THE ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLEXITY DURING THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

Based on the reconstructions of the change process by respondents, three phases can be identified in the organizational change process. These phases are separated by the two major environmental developments identified by the respondents. In each of the three phases, there are differences in perceived environmental complexity and, related to this, the process of change has different characteristics.

Phase 1: Open-ended, local improvement of integration

The process of organizational change can be said to have begun in 2004 in the Agency of City Construction and Housing. Under the mandate of the departments' executive and with the consent of the town clerk, the organization began a process aimed at

improving the integration and collaboration of the departments' internal policy departments. This change initiative was based on the belief that a better integration of policy departments would be beneficial for the quality of public service delivery. At the time, there were three organizational departments concerned with the spatial-economic development of Rotterdam. These were the Development Agency Rotterdam, Agency of City Construction and Housing, and the City Works Department. Because of the close affinity between these departments, the initiative of trying to improve integration naturally spread to the other organizational departments. The organizational change process can be characterized as informal attempts of improving the integration of policies and procedures between the departments. Although the option of further adjustment in terms of organizational structure had been discussed among senior management, there were no plans of a merger. Despite the open-ended character of these changes, it was perceived as a major change of direction. As a department executive recalls:

> *"It was the first time in 15 years that the senior managers of the City Works Department and the Agency of City Construction and Housing discussed how collaboration could be improved. While we were housed in adjacent buildings."*

Respondents characterize the organizational change process in this phase as a natural, logical movement. Because of its incremental character and the absence of a-priori formulated change objectives, the change process closely fits an emergent perspective on organizational change (By, 2005). Respondents recall a lot of commitment for the vision to enhance service delivery through improved integrality. Although the emergent perspective on change is dominant in this phase of the change process, it also has characteristics that fit the planned perspective on organizational change (By, 2005). The organizational change process resembled planned change in the sense that it was clearly initiated by one of the departments' executives and that communication about the vision of change was mainly top-down (Weick & Quinn, 1999; Kotter, 1996).

Phase 2: Structure follows strategy and limited structural integration

In 2006 and 2007, the affair concerning the Museum Park took place. The incident made the fragmentation between the three organizational departments unmistakably clear to the city's political executive board. What had started out as a local organizational change initiative had now evolved into a political problem. A senior manager explains:

> *"The Museum Park affair had such a political impact; it had to have consequences for the organization."*

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In this sense, the Museum Park affair can be seen as an accelerator of a change that was already underway, but it also affected the content of the organizational change process. As many of the respondents indicate, a new phase in the change process began. The Museum Park affair, including the media blow-up, had caused a sense of urgency among the political superiors of the organizational departments. As is often seen in a hostile organizational environment (Mintzberg, 1979), decision-making was centralized to a higher hierarchical level. The political principals expressed the need for more resolute measures than the change initiative that was currently ongoing. A middle manager describes the situation:

> *"The consequences of the 'crater flater' should not be exaggerated, but it had a major effect on the organization, and it was a concrete reason to intensify the collaboration between and professionalization of the organization. And this was picked up very seriously."*

The political principals of the organization expressed a clear desire to resolve the problematic fragmentation between the organizational departments, although they did not make explicit how this was to be done. As a reaction to this, the move towards more synergy between the organizational departments was accelerated. A shared strategic document was written. Not only did the organizational departments work together on this, many societal stakeholders were asked to participate as well. Moreover, structural changes would be implemented at a later point in time in order to institutionalize this integration of processes. A middle manager explains:

> *"Our processes were at the basis of the change process. The idea was to analyze these and see how improvements could be realized. And then a change in the organizational structure would be the final step of the change process."*

The awareness grew that in order to further increase the integration of the organizational departments, an intervention in the structure of the organizational departments would be necessary. For example, efficiency gains could be realized through a merger of the back offices. In January 2009, a joint-management team consisting of the executives of the Rotterdam Development Agency, the Agency for City Construction and Housing and the newly appointed executive of the City Works Department was established. After years of increased collaboration, a merger of the back offices of the three organizational departments was initiated.

The joint management team argued that further improvements to service delivery could be realized by bringing together the policy departments within the organizational departments. However, for this next step in the organizational change process, approval

of the political-administrative principals was needed. As outlined in the previous section, the joint-management team now encountered opposition in its environment. Other departments feared that a full-scale merger would eventually have consequences for their own autonomy as well. Other hesitations concerned the size, budget and power of the new organization. Because of these dependencies, the organizational change process came to a sudden stop. A department executive summarizes:

> *"For a very long time, the change process was stuck in the sense that we really wanted this, but no decision was made by the board."*

In this second phase, the process of change took on more characteristics of the planned perspective on organizational change. The Museum Park affair made the sense of urgency explicit and interventions were aimed at creating a shared sense of purpose and mission. Communication in the process was top-down (compare Kotter, 1996; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006). However, the organizational change process also still showed characteristics of the emergent approach to change, which had been dominant in the first phase. Although the intended direction of the change process was clearly articulated, more integration, there was no definitive end-picture.

Phase 3: Radical change in a complex environment

Starting in 2008 and unfolding in the following years, the economic crisis affected the organizational changes that were taking place. First, investors and developers were affected by the economic crisis, which greatly reduced the amount of work. The second major effect of the economic crisis was that the city itself ended up in financial problems. Over the following years, the city was forced to implement major budget cutbacks. For the Development Agency Rotterdam and the Agency of City Construction and Housing this meant the dismissal of about a third of their 1500 employees. Similar to the Museum Park affair, the economic crisis contributed greatly to a sense of urgency among employees and the political principals of the organization. As one middle manager states:

> *"When the severity of the economic crisis and the following cutbacks in personnel became apparent, the situation turned into what is now: either sink or swim."*

The reduced amount of work and the financial problems of the city had major consequences for the pace and content of the ongoing change. The focus of the change process that had started out as an initiative to improve the quality and effectiveness of the organizational departments, quickly shifted toward a focus on increasing efficiency and cutting costs. In the words of a middle manager:

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> *"We went from quality and effectiveness to efficiency as the dominant driver of change. (…) As a result of this shift the credibility of the joint management team was damaged. For a long time they had told a story about the consequences for service delivery, which was broadly supported by employees because they really believed it, but suddenly this story was completely overshadowed by cutbacks and the need to downsize."*

The economic crisis did not only affect the focus of the organizational change process, a fundamental shift in the process of change could be witnessed as well. Another middle manager reflects on the consequences for the change process:

> *"It was a turning-point in the sense that we moved from an incremental approach, a new dot on the horizon over and over again, to a structured approach, enforced by the financial problems."*

The financial situation resulted in the need to downsize approximately a third of the 1500 employees working for the organizational departments. The joint management team urged their political principals to allow the desired merger, in order to be able to take action and radically downsize the departments. However, their political-administrative superiors were still opposed to the idea of a full-scale merger. This triggered several difficulties in the change process.

First, the financial situation made it necessary to formulate detailed change objectives, for example about where in the organizational departments layoffs were to be realized. However, the opposition in the environment of the organization made it difficult to formulate a vision that was supported by all stakeholders (cf. Robertson and Seneviratne, 1995), let alone to operationalize it in concrete goals. In a change process with more emergent characteristics, it is easier to avoid conflict or resolve it on the go, but in a planned change process, conflict needs to be resolved before changes can be implemented (Burnes, 2009). Therefore, the joint management team found itself severely restricted by its complex environment. Lower level managers had difficulty in formulating operational change objectives for their department. Moreover, this lack of decision-making made it difficult for the organization's work council to timely and adequately advice and monitor the organizational change process.

Second, the non-decision making in the political-administrative arena made the change process lengthy and unstructured. While the back offices were almost done with their reorganization process, other departments had not even begun. Because of this, the joint-management was only partly able to clarify the consequences of budget cutbacks to employees.

Third, the opposition of the hierarchical principals also caused the content of the change initiative to shift. After the establishment of the joint management team and the merger of the back offices in 2009, it was not before the spring of 2011 before the organizational departments were granted permission to proceed with the full-scale merger. This marked the upstart of Urban Development Rotterdam as a single organization. However, although the City Works Department had participated in the joint management team, it was agreed that it would not participate in the newly founded Urban Development Rotterdam. For many managers, this came as a surprise and as a consequence, the merger of the back offices that was already underway had to be partly reversed.

Through these mechanisms, it can be seen that the environmental complexity that the joint management team was confronted with, trickles down to lower levels in the organization. Although lower level managers are seldom directly connected to their environment, they experience the consequences of the complex environment on the change process through the mechanisms described above.

5.6 LEADERSHIP

In this section, we will focus on the leadership activities during the process of organizational change. We will outline the leadership activities separately for each of the phases that were identified in the previous section.

Phase 1: Department executives as the initiators of change

In the first phase of the organizational change process, leadership activities are mainly executed by the departments' executives. As is also stated by Burke (2010), executive-level leadership is essential in the early phases of organization change. The most important leadership in this phase is the initiation of the organizational change process: setting the need for more integration on the agenda of managers and employees within the organization. The leadership activities of the executive managers are mainly aimed at the internal organization. These leadership activities fit the transformational leadership perspective. Leaders referred to the values and perceptions of their employees in order to create commitment for a change and break away from the status quo (Bekkers, et al., 2011). The leadership activities thus closely resonate with behaviors underlying the transformational change leadership perspective, such as Kotter (1996) and Fernandez and Rainey (2006).

Phase 2: Developing a shared vision with societal stakeholders

Because of the increased sense of urgency for the change initiative after the Museum Park affair, the incremental character of the change process shifted to a more planned and radical change process. Similar to phase 1, the leadership activities of the executives were aimed at developing an appealing vision to change and communicating this vision to subordinates. Because the vision of change was developed in collaboration with societal stakeholders, for the first time leadership activities became visible that were aimed at actors outside of the organizational departments. These types of leadership activities more closely fit a network perspective on leadership, as power becomes divided and managers become dependent on a greater number of actors (Martin et al., 2009, Denis et al., 2005; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Executive managers report collecting information at societal stakeholders as a main leadership activity in this phase of the change process. One of the department executives describes his activities during this phase of the change process:

> *"I started focusing on the outside: entrepreneurs, project developers, housing corporations. What could we do with the businesses in the city? (…) I have had dozens of conversations like this."*

With the merger of the back offices of the organizational departments, the middle managers also became involved in the change process. While the executives took more time to connect the organization with its societal stakeholders, the middle managers of these departments followed up on the activities that the executives had done in the first phase of change process. Their activities were mainly concerned translating the overall vision of the change to their own subordinates. Similar to the executive managers in phase 1, the activities of middle managers closely fit the transformational perspective in this phase.

Phase 3: Overcoming political-administrative dependencies

As the environment became more complex, the external leadership activities of the department executives became more concerned with overcoming conflict and managing dependencies. Because of the continued shift toward a more planned approach to change, it was now a necessity to overcome opposition in order to implement organizational change. The organizational executives spent a lot of time lobbying and bargaining for support in the political-administrative arena. The dependencies in the political-administrative arena complicated the implementation of change on all hierarchical levels of the organization, but overcoming these dependencies appeared to be exclusively the domain of executive management. A middle manager reflects:

"Those things happen outside of my sight. (…) Naturally I am not present at those meetings. I don't exactly know what takes place there, as there are about 4 of 5 people there who together shape the process. That is the hierarchical level it takes place on."

The complex environment forced the executive managers of the organization to divide their attention between internal and external constituents. In order to speed up the decision-making processes concerning the formal approval for the merger, executive managers focused on bargaining and lobbying with external actors in the political-administrative arena. At the same time, they attempted to maintain momentum in the organization by finalizing the vision of change and explaining the environmental dependencies and developments to subordinates. However, at times these different leadership activities appeared to be incompatible. Executive managers saw themselves forced to compromise with external stakeholders in order to get approval for the merger. Because of this, communication and implementation of change had to be reversed. An example of such a compromise was the decision to leave the City Works Department out of the merger that led to the upstart of Urban Development Rotterdam. This decision impeded the merger of the back offices that was already ongoing. Although this compromise was necessary to get an approval for a full-scale merger on the political level, internal constituents did not understand the decision. An executive manager explains:

"For some people this was incomprehensible. But I said: "This way we will never get permission from the executive board. (…) Because one of the major hesitations at the political level was the size of the desired merger."

Similar tensions between overcoming dependencies and implementing the change were experienced by middle managers. Middle managers attempted to create support for change in their department by being a role model and communicating the vision of change. However, their dependence on a number of internal constituents such as executive management, the organization's work council and other middle managers impeded the implementation of change. Middle managers therefore also participate in networking leadership activities with these internal constituents in order to speed up the process of change.

5.7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this final section, we present our conclusions by addressing the three research objectives that were outlined in the introductory section of this chapter. Building on our conclusions, we formulate theoretical propositions concerning the role of change

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leadership in a complex, public environment. The first objective of this study was to gain understanding of how environmental complexity manifests itself in processes of organizational change. In the literature on change in public organizations (for example Karp & Helgø, 2008; By & Macleod, 2009) it is often stated that the multitude of actors with multiple interests, positions and strategies adds to the degree of complexity in the environment of public organizations. Our study suggests that the multitude of societal stakeholders that public organizations are confronted with do not necessarily contribute to environmental complexity during processes of change. It is mainly actors from within the political-administrative system that public organizations are dependent on during processes of change. Moreover, these actors are more concerned with the content of organizational change, than with the processes through which change is implemented. Opposition in decision-making arenas by political and administrative principals, as well as incidents and scrutiny by media and political principals, are aspects of environmental complexity that have a bearing on the process of change in a public organization.

   The second objective of this study was to generate theory considering how a complex, public environment affects processes of organizational change. An important finding is that the environment of public organizations is a very present influence on processes of organizational change. Our analysis reveals that ongoing change processes in public organizations are also very susceptible to environmental dynamics, such as the Museum Park affair and the economic crisis. These dynamics accelerate processes of change within public organizations, causing the organizations to take on more planned approaches to organizational change. Simultaneously, as can be seen in our analysis, environmental complexity severely impedes the effectiveness of a planned approach to organizational change, resulting in a stalemate. As Haveri (2006) and Karp and Helgø (2008) argue, complexity in processes of public sector organizational change therefore poses a limit to rational, planned approaches to change. Our findings do not resonate with Burnes (2009). Burnes argues that a planned approach may be most appropriate because it brings together opposing actors in a democratic and participative manner. "An approach to change that offers advice on winning the battle for your side is much less desirable than one that seeks to openly confront and resolve conflict" (Burnes, 2009: pp. 118). However, as argued by Robertson and Seneviratne (1995), our analysis supports the claim that the divergence of stakeholder interests makes it more difficult to achieve the unity of purpose that is required for the planned change approach. Our analysis reveals that a planned approach to change is hindered by environmental complexity. A multitude of stakeholders with divergent interests makes it more difficult to formulate operational, uncontested change objectives that are central to the planned change approach. Furthermore, it causes the implementation process to be lengthy and the content of change to be subject to continuous shifts. We thus formulate proposition 1:

<u>Proposition 1:</u> *A high degree of environmental complexity forces public organizations to adopt a planned, top-down approach to change, while the effectiveness of such an approach to change is simultaneously limited by a complex environment.*

The third research objective was to uncover the leadership activities of public managers in processes of organizational change, and to analyze how these leadership activities are related to managers' perceived environmental complexity. Our analysis shows a change in the type of leadership activities as the organizational change process progressed. Because of the incremental, open-ended character of the change process in its first phase, little conflict and dependencies arose in the environment of the organization. In this phase, leadership activities were mainly focused on the internal organization and fit the transformational leadership perspective that is dominant in much of the literature on change leadership (Kotter, 1996; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006). The leadership activities that are outlined in this perspective, for example developing a vision or ensuring the need for change, closely match the leadership activities that were found in this phase of relatively little environmental complexity.

As the environment became more complex, the leadership activities of managers became more externally focused. In the second phase of the organizational change process, the department executives started to span the boundaries of the organization in order to collect information from societal stakeholders. In the third phase of the change process, top-level leadership activities became more aimed at overcoming dependencies and conflict in the organization's environment. These change leadership activities are more in line with a network perspective on leadership (Denis et al., 2005). As Moore and Hartley (2008) state with regard to decision-making about innovation, change management in government goes beyond organizational boundaries and takes place in networks. Although networking leadership behavior became more prominent, transformational leadership activities remained present throughout the change process. Typical change management activities such as stressing the sense of urgency and communicating the change were being executed by executive as well as middle managers. The complex environment, however, hindered the transformational leadership activities of managers at all hierarchical levels. Executive managers had to compromise and revise the vision of change because of the dependencies in the political-administrative arena. For middle managers, the slow decision-making processes of their superiors made it difficult to anticipate on and communicate the change to their subordinates. These findings thus contribute to the view that the complex environment of public organizations calls for leadership that goes beyond the behavior that is outlined in the literature on transformational change leadership. We therefore formulate proposition 2:

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Proposition 2: Transformational change leadership is necessary for the implementation of change in a complex environment, but not sufficient.

Table 5.1: Leading organizational change in environmental complexity

Phase	Degree of environmental complexity	Leadership challenge	Leadership behavior	Leadership type
Phase 1: Open-ended, local improvement of integration	**Low:** **- Low dependence on external decision making because of incremental nature of change** **- Focus on internal processes**	Initiating change and creating internal support for change	Executive management: - Stressing the need for more change on the agenda of managers and employees within the organization - Creating an appealing vision of change and communicating this vision to the organization Middle management: -	**Transformational perspective** -
Phase 2: Structure follows strategy and limited structural integration	**Medium:** **- Increased scrutiny by political principals** **- Increased participation of societal stakeholders**	Connecting with societal stakeholders and implementing organizational change	Executive management: - Collecting information and input from societal stakeholders - Develop a shared vision and creating a vision document - Communicating the vision of change to subordinate managers and employees Middle management: - Translating the overall vision of the change to their own department	 **Network Perspective** **Transformational perspective** **Transformational perspective**
Phase 3: Radical change in a complex environment	**High:** **- Divergence of external stakeholder interests** **- Dependencies in decision making procedures**	Overcoming external opposition and speeding up the implementation process	Executive management: - Lobbying and bargaining for support in the political-administrative arena. - Finalizing the vision of change - Explaining environmental dependencies and developments to subordinates Middle management: - Creating support for change: being a role model, translating the vision of change to their individual department - Negotiating and bargaining with internal constituents such as the organization's work council, executive management and other middle managers	 **Network Perspective** **Transformational perspective** **Transformational perspective** **Network Perspective**

In table 5.1, the findings are summarized and leadership challenges are presented. Because our analysis reveals differences in leadership activities related to hierarchical level, we differentiate between executive managers and middle managers. Moreover, we distinguish between transformational and networking change leadership activities.

Our study has provided insight into how a public organization's complex environment is related to processes of organizational change. Our findings suggest that the dynamics in the environment of public organizations call for the initiation of organizational change, while the complex nature of the environment limits the ability of public organizations to implement these changes. While environmental dependencies and scrutiny by political superiors enforce a planned approach to change, the high degree of dependence on a multitude of stakeholders simultaneously limits the effectiveness of this approach. However, environmental stakeholders seem less concerned with *how* organizational change is being implemented than with *what* changes are implemented (compare Kuipers et al., 2013). Other authors have already pointed to the importance of leadership in order to overcome this stalemate. For instance, Haveri (2006) states that leadership aimed at political consensus is needed. Karp and Helgø (2008) advocate a switch from change management to change leadership, while Kickert (2010: 490) claims that the problem calls for "complex network management". We share the view that the role of leadership is central to overcome the challenges posed by a complex environment in times of organizational change. In order to effectively lead change in environmental complexity, transformational leadership is a necessary condition, but not a sufficient condition. Our study underlines the importance of leadership activities directed at external stakeholders in order to cope with conflict and divergent interests (Bovaird, 2008). Networking activities aimed at societal stakeholders may progress the implementation of organizational changes. However, public managers should focus their networking activities on actors in the political-administrative arena, as these actors contribute to the environmental complexity that may impede processes of organizational change.

This study was based on the observation that existing research has made little explicit connections between change management theory and the literature on public management (Kickert, 2010; Stewart & Kringas, 2003). This study has shown that the special characteristics of public organizations, in this study the complex environment, are highly relevant for the study of change management in public organizations. However, this study is also subject to limitations. Firstly, our study was based on a single case study design. While we believe this is beneficial for the objective of generating theory and the internal validity of our results, the relationships we identified between our concepts are exploratory and cannot be generalized to other organizational settings. However, we contribute to theory development by summarizing our findings in more theoretical propositions that can be tested in future research. A first recommendation for future

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research is therefore to expand the focus of study to other specific characteristics of public organizations (cf. Rainey, 2003; Boyne, 2002; By & Macleod, 2009). For example, a recent study by Wright, Christensen and Isett (2013) has examined to what extent the specific motivational bases of civil servants affect the implementation of organizational change. In order to advance our theoretical knowledge, we stress the need for research aimed at theory testing, by means of comparative research designs or quantitative research methods.

A second limitation is that we distinguished between environment, change process and leadership activities, whereas the boundaries between the external environment and internal organization are in some sense arbitrary or fluid. Furthermore, the order in which we presented our results may have given the impression that causality between these concepts exists and exclusively in this order. However, we again emphasize that the concepts are interrelated. Behavior of organizational actors is not only influenced by the environment, but continuously shapes this environment as well.

Chapter 6

Leading change in a bureaucratic organizational structure[3]

ABSTRACT

There is an extensive private sector literature on organizational change management. However, recent studies have suggested that the specific context of public organizations may have consequences for the management of organizational change. This study examines to what extent different change approaches and transformational leadership of direct supervisors contribute to the *effective* implementation of organizational change in public organizations, and to what extent the bureaucratic structure of public organizations makes the implementation of organizational change *specific*. The implementation of an organizational change in a Dutch public organization is studied using quantitative methods and techniques. The results indicate that bureaucratic organizations may effectively implement organizational change with both planned and emergent change approaches. The contribution of transformational leadership depends on the type of change approach and organizational structure. Transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors contributes little to planned processes of change, but is crucial in emergent processes of change in a non-bureaucratic context. Although the literature on change management mostly emphasizes the leadership of senior managers, the leadership role of direct supervisors should not be overlooked during organizational change in public organizations.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

There is an extensive private sector literature on organizational change management (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Burke, 2010; Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Self et al., 2007). However, recent studies have questioned to what extent private sector change management techniques are applicable in a public sector context, and have suggested that the differences between the public and private sector could play a role (Boyne, 2006; Rusaw, 2007; Klarner, Probst & Soparnot, 2008; Karp & Helgø, 2008; Kickert, 2013). Several authors have suggested that the specific context of public organizations may have consequences for the management organizational change (Coram & Burnes, 2001; McNulty & Ferlie, 2004; Burnes, 2009; Isett et al., 2012), but there is little empirical evidence concerning this issue. A recent literature review of research on change management in the public sector by Kuipers et al. (2013) found that most studies emphasize the content and context of change, instead of the implementation process. Moreover, Kuipers et al. conclude that many studies did not address the outcomes or success of a change intervention. Although there is substantial evidence that the implementation of organization change often fails (Kotter, 1996; Beer & Nohria, 2000; Burke, 2010; Burnes, 2011), there is relatively little evidence about how organizational change can be effectively managed in the public sector (Kickert, 2010; Fernandez & Pitts, 2007).

This study aims to contribute to research on change management in public organizations by addressing the effectiveness and specificity of change management in public organizations. First, this study aims to identify what factors contribute to the *effective* implementation of organizational change in the public sector. As the implementation of organizational change ultimately depends on the support of employees (Bartunek et al., 2006; Herold, et al., 2007), the concept of employee willingness to change is used to assess the degree to which employees support the implementation of change (Metselaar, 1997). Following the emphasis on the role of leadership in the change management literature (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Gill, 2002; Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010; Karp & Helgø, 2008), this study examines to what extent leadership contributes to employee willingness to change in the public sector. Attention is focused on the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors. In addition, this study accounts for the effects of different change management approaches that are outlined in the literature on change management (Beer & Nohria, 2000; By, 2005). We refer to these approaches as planned and emergent change (cf. Burnes, 1996, 2004; Bamford & Forrester, 2003; Kickert, 2010).

Secondly, this study aims to examine to what extent the specific nature of public organizations makes the implementation of organizational change *specific*. A detailed literature exists about the specific characteristics of the objectives, environment and organizational structure of public sector organizations, and the characteristics of their employees (e.g. Allison, 1979; Farnham & Horton, 1996; Rainey & Bozeman, 2000;

Boyne, 2002; Rainey, 2003). In this study, attention is focused on the organizational structure. Public organizations typically operate under a strict legal framework and are confronted with high demands for accountability (Rainey, 2003). Because of this, public organizations tend to avoid risks by formalizing the operations and centralizing decision-making in the organization (Mintzberg, 1979). The organizational structure of public organizations is therefore generally said to be relatively bureaucratic (Farnham & Horton, 1996; Boyne, 2002). The organizational structure has traditionally been high-lighted as a determinant of how organizations change (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Mintzberg, 1979). Moreover, Coram and Burnes (2001) and Isett et al. (2012) have argued that the bureaucratic organizational structure of public organizations may have a bearing on the management of change, but there is limited empirical evidence regarding this issue.

To summarize, the first objective of this study is to assess to what extent transformational leadership and different change management approaches contribute to willingness to change in a public organization. The second research objective is to examine to how these relationships are affected by a bureaucratic organizational structure. The central research question is: *How is the effectiveness of transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors in planned and emergent change affected by a bureaucratic organizational structure?*

In order to address the research objectives, the implementation of an organizational change in a Dutch public organization is analyzed using quantitative methods. In the next section, the literature concerning organizational change in the public sector is reviewed. Moreover, the relationships between leadership, processes of change and the organizational structure are discussed in order to formulate hypotheses. Section 6.3 provides an overview of the methods, sample and measures of this study. Results are presented in section 6.4, followed by a discussion of the results in section 6.5. In this section, limitations of the study and recommendations for future research are also discussed. The main conclusions are given in section 6.6.

6.2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

Organizational change in public organizations

Public organizations are often confronted with the need to implement organizational changes. However, the processes through which organizational change in public organizations come about have received relatively little attention in academic research (Kickert, 2010; Kuipers et al., 2013). A prominent line of research that focuses on organizational change in public organizations is the public management reform perspective (e.g. Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004; Boyne et al., 2003; Kickert, 2007; Ongaro, 2010). This perspective focuses on "the deliberate changes to the structures and processes of public sector

organizations with the objective of getting them (in some sense) to run better" (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004: 8). However, the public management reform perspective is focused on the content and effects of organizational changes on the sector or national level (e.g. Pollitt, 2000; Heinrich, 2002; Ackroyd et al., 2007), rather than on the implementation processes in individual organizations. As a consequence, the reform perspective has contributed little to insights about how the implementation of organizational change in the public sector is managed.

Theory on the management of organizational change has traditionally been based on private sector research, cases and examples (Thomas, 1996; Stewart & Kringas, 2003). Change management research has addressed the role of contextual factors during organizational change (Pettigrew, Ferlie & McKee, 1992; Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Pettigrew et al., 2001), but not the specific contextual characteristics of public organizations (Kuipers et al., 2013). In the past decade, the issue of change management in public organizations has received increased attention (Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; Fernandez & Pitts, 2007). Recent studies have focused on organizational changes in different types of public sector organizations, such as health care organizations (Isett et al., 2012; McNulty & Ferlie, 2004; Chustz & Larson, 2006; Klarner et al., 2008), local government organizations (Zorn et al., 2000; Liguori, 2012; Seijts & Roberts, 2011) and central government organizations (Sminia & Van Nistelrooij, 2006; Stewart & O'Donnell, 2007; Stewart & Kringas, 2003; Coram & Burnes, 2001; Ryan, Williams, Charles & Waterhouse, 2008).

Despite the increased attention for organizational change in public organizations, the literature has two considerable shortcomings. Based on a review of the literature on organizational change in public organizations between 2000 and 2010, Kuipers et al. (2013) state that most of the studies were based on case-based design using qualitative methods. Such studies often emphasize the importance of leadership during change in public organizations (Ryan et al., 2008; Klarner et al., 2008; Karp & Helgø, 2008). Other than research conducted in the private sector (e.g. Higgs & Rowland, 2005; 2010; Herold et al., 2008; Liu, 2010), little research has studied the effects of leadership during change in public organizations (Fernandez & Pitts, 2007). A first shortcoming is thus that existing research has little attention for the *effectiveness* of leadership and different approaches to change. An exception is Hennessey (1998), who studied the influence of leadership competencies during the implementation of 'reinventing government' changes in the United States.

A second shortcoming concerns the lack of empirical evidence about the *specificity* of organizational change in the public sector. A central point of view in public management research is that private sector insights may not be applicable in public organizations (Boyne, 2006). There is a large literature on the specific characteristics of public organizations (e.g. Boyne, 2002; Rainey, 2003). In addition, many studies have suggested that the specific public sector context may influence organizational change (McNulty &

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Ferlie, 2004; Klarner et al., 2008; Isett et al., 2012). However, little research has empirically addressed the question what is specific or distinct about change in public organizations (exceptions are Robertson & Seneviratne, 1995; Kickert, 2013). While many recent studies have studied change in public organizations, the distinctive characteristics of public organizations are generally not accounted for in the design or variables of these studies (e.g. Chustz & Larson, 2006; Sminia & Van Nistelrooij, 2006; Klarner et al., 2008; Tummers et al., 2012; Isett et al., 2012) As such, there is little empirical evidence about what makes change management specific in public organizations.

In order to formulate hypotheses about the effectiveness of organizational change in public organizations, change management and leadership theory is reviewed subsequently. Then, the relations between change and a bureaucratic organizational structure are discussed in order to formulate hypotheses concerning the specificity of organizational change in public organizations.

Processes of organizational change and its leadership

The support of employees is crucial for the successful implementation for organizational change (Bartunek et al., 2006; Herold, et al., 2007). One of the central assumptions of the change management literature is that employee support for the implementation of organizational change is not only dependent on what changes – the content of change – but also on the process of change through which organizational change comes about (Self et al., 2007; Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999). Organizational change is thus something that can be managed. In this study, the concept willingness to change is used to account for the support of employees concerning organizational change. Metselaar (1997: 42) defines willingness to change as "a positive behavioral intention towards the implementation of modifications in an organization's structure, or work and administrative processes, resulting in efforts from the organization member's side to support or enhance the change process."

The change management literature consists of many different approaches, strategies, interventions and actions through which change can be implemented (e.g. Burke, 2010). The literature is dominated by the distinction between planned and emergent processes of change (By, 2005; Bamford & Forrester, 2003). Planned change occurs through a process of rational goal-setting in which change objectives are formulated in advance and implemented in a top-down fashion. The central assumption is that the organization must go through a number of phases in order to successfully change to a desired future state (Burnes, 1996; 2004). The emergent approach to change is a more devolved and bottom-up way to implement change (By, 2005). The content of change is not the starting point as in the planned approach to change, but rather the outcome of an emergent change process. Employees are not seen as passive recipients of the

organizational change, but are stimulated to actively contribute to the change process (Russ, 2008).

Leadership is generally highlighted as one of the key drivers of the implementation of organizational change (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010, 2011; Herold et al., 2008; Liu, 2010). A great deal of the change management literature is therefore concerned with change leadership. Change management refers to the process of change: the planning, coordinating, organizing and directing of the processes through which change is implemented, while leadership is aimed at the motivation and influence of employees (Gill, 2002; Spicker, 2012). Change management can thus be seen as a sine qua non, while successful organizational change ultimately requires leadership to be enacted (Eisenbach et al., 1999). Research on change leadership is mostly directed at the role of senior executives or the role of a guiding coalition at the top of the organization (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; Hennesey, 1998). However, Burke (2010) argues that senior managers often initiate organizational change, while the implementation of change relies on lower level leadership. This study is therefore aimed at examining the contribution of leadership enacted by direct supervisors.

The main leadership theory that emphasizes organizational change is the theory of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985, 1999). This theory states that "by articulating a vision, fostering the acceptance of group goals, and providing individualized support, effective leaders change the basic values, beliefs, and attitudes of followers so that they are willing to perform beyond the minimum levels specified by the organization" (Podsakof, MacKenzie & Bommer, 1996, p. 260). Transformational leadership can be expected to be especially effective in times of organizational change (Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Shamir & Howell, 1999; Conger, 1999; Herold et al., 2008; Liu, 2010). Den Hartog et al. (1997: 20) argue how transformational leadership can ultimately transform the organization "by defining the need for change, creating new visions, [and] mobilizing commitment to these visions."

Although studies often highlight the importance of leadership during change (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Gill, 2002), there is little empirical evidence concerning the influence of transformational leadership on employee support for change (Burke, 2010; Herold et al., 2008), especially in the public sector (Fernandez & Pitts, 2007). Rather than seeing change as a contextual factor which may influence the effectiveness of transformational leadership (Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Shamir & Howell, 1999), Eisenbach et al. (1999: 84) have argued how transformational leaders can be expected to execute the phases of change that are highlighted in the literature on planned organizational change (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006). For example, transformational leaders may initiate change by developing an appealing future vision for the organization, which is generally seen as a crucial first step in the implementation of planned change (Kotter, 1996; Kanter et al., 1992). Moreover, transformational leaders can be expected to contribute to the

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implementation of change by providing intellectual stimulation through the formulation of challenging objectives and the stimulation of new ways of thinking (Eisenbach et al., 1999). Similarly, Higgs and Rowland (2011: 329) have noted parallels between the idealized influence and inspirational motivation provided by transformational leaders, and the behaviors of leaders in the implementation of planned change, such as envisioning a future state, role modeling and giving individual attention to employees (Gill, 2002; Higgs & Rowland, 2010).

In planned processes of change, transformational leaders can thus be expected to be uniquely effective change leaders (Higgs & Rowland, 2011; Eisenbach et al., 1999). However, organizational change can also come about through emergent processes of change (By, 2005; Burnes, 2004), and different change processes may call for a different role of leadership (Weick & Quinn, 1999). Rather than initiating and directing the implementation of change, leadership in emergent processes of change may consist of delegating responsibilities and creating capacity among employees to implement the change (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010;=). The following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: A higher degree of transformational leadership will increase the effectiveness of a planned process of change, but it will not increase the effectiveness of an emergent process of change.

Bureaucratic organizational structures and processes of change

In recent years, several studies have investigated the influence of contextual factors on the outcomes of organizational change (e.g. DeVos et al., 2007; Self et al., 2007; Rafferty & Restubog, 2010). Several authors point out the relevance of organizational structure as a relevant contextual factor during organizational change. For example, Weick and Quinn (1999) argue that classic machine bureaucracies will require being unfrozen before organizational changes can take place. Similarly, Coram and Burnes (2001) argue that a planned approach to change is most suitable for rule-based, rigid structures. Burnes (1996) states that a top-down bureaucratic management style is associated with planned change, while a more decentralized, flexible management style corresponds with emergent change. However, little research has focused on how the effectiveness of different change approaches is affected by a bureaucratic organizational structure.

In organization theory, the term bureaucracy refers to an ideal typical organization that stresses a formal hierarchy, rules, specialization, impersonality, routine and merit-based employment (Morgan, 1997). In general, the term bureaucracy is more often used to refer to negative aspects of rule-based, mechanistic organizations than to the ideal type organizational structure. The degree to which an organization is bureaucratic is dependent, among others, on the degree of centralization and formalization (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Aiken & Hage, 1971; Mintzberg, 1979). Rainey (2003) and Rainey and

Bozeman (2000) also list red tape as a characteristic of bureaucracies. In this study, a bureaucratic organizational structure is defined as a high degree of centralization, formalization and red tape (compare Rainey, 2003; Burns & Stalker, 1961). Centralization refers to the degree to which members participate in decision-making (Aiken & Hage, 1968). Formalization is the degree to which organizational activities are manifested in written documents regarding procedures, job descriptions, regulations and policy manuals (Hall, 1996). Red tape concerns the negative effects of these rules, procedures and instructions (Bozeman & Scott, 1996). Red tape is, by this definition, thus necessarily a pathology and formalization can be said to lead to red tape but is not by itself red tape (Pandey & Scott, 2002).

As there is little empirical evidence concerning the direct relationships between organizational structure and processes of change, we base our arguments on the broader literature about organization theory, innovation, entrepreneurship and strategy. A high degree of centralization can be said to diminish the likelihood that organizational members seek new or innovative solutions (Atuahene-Gima 2003, Damanpour, 1991). Similarly, centralization is related to stability, while innovative, prospecting organizations are characterized by decentralized decision-making structures (Andrews, Boyne, Law & Walker, 2009). Moon (1999) argues that centralized organizations are less responsive to environmental demands, because mid-level managers and operators are less autonomous and flexible in their interactions with clients. A high degree of formalization can also be expected to impede processes of adaptation and learning. The amount of required paperwork and written rules tend to cause administrative delay and poor communication with costumers (Hage & Aiken, 1970). Moreover, a high degree of formalization is negatively related to innovation (Walker, 2008), experimentation and ad hoc problem solving efforts (March & Simon, 1958) and managerial entrepreneurship (Moon, 1999). Red tape can also be expected to impede an organization's capability to adapt to its environment, as it may cause unnecessary delays (Bozeman & Scott, 1996). Moon and Bretschneider (2002) find that red tape is negatively related to the implementation of IT innovations.

Most of the above studies delve into the relationship between organizational structure and change. As such, a bureaucratic organizational structure can be expected to lead to the adoption of a planned approach to change, while a non-bureaucratic organizational structure would make the adoption of an emergent approach more likely. However, as the organizational structure forms the context in which changes take place, the organizational structure is seen as a moderating influence on the effectiveness of processes of change in this study (compare Self et al., 2007). Hypotheses are therefore formulated about the moderating influence of a bureaucratic organizational structure on the effectiveness of planned and emergent approaches to change:

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H2: The more bureaucratic the organizational structure, the more employee willingness to change is positively influenced by a planned process of change.

H3: The less bureaucratic the organizational structure, the more employee willingness to change is positively influenced by an emergent process of change.

6.3 METHODS, SAMPLE AND MEASURES

Case selection and methods

An organizational change within the Dutch public organization Urban Development Rotterdam *(Stadsontwikkeling Rotterdam)* was selected as a case for this study. This organization is the result of a recent merger of two former administrative departments: the Development Agency Rotterdam (DAR) and the Agency of City Construction and Housing (ACCH). The organization was selected because of the organization-wide changes in both the organizational structure and culture that were taking place at the moment of data collection. The departments within the organizational units approached the organizational changes in different ways. For some, the organization-wide changes resulted in programmatic, planned change processes. For other departments, the changes took the form of more gradual, emergent changes. A quantitative approach was used to address the study's hypotheses. An online questionnaire was used to measure the perceptions of individual employees regarding the organizational structure, the leadership style of their direct supervisor and the current organizational changes in their organization. The data were collected in May 2012. In all, 580 of 1353 employees filled out the online survey, a response rate of 42,8%.

Procedure

In order to account for the moderating effect of the bureaucratic structure on the relationship between the change process and willingness to change, two groups of respondents are compared that differ significantly on the degree of bureaucratic organizational structure. The measure of the degree of bureaucratic structure is outlined first. Subsequently, the method of distinguishing between high and low level of perceived bureaucratic structure is explained.

The conceptualization of bureaucratic structure in this study is a combination of separate measures for centralization, formalization and red tape (compare Rainey, 2003). Aiken and Hage (1968) propose a measure for centralization that consists of two dimensions: 'participation in decision making' and 'hierarchy of authority.' In an examination, Dewar, Whetten and Boje (1980) confirm the validity and reliability of these scales. In accordance with other research, for example Jaworski and Kohli (1993) and Pandey

and Wright (2006), centralization is measured with the Aiken and Hage (1968) scale for 'hierarchy of authority.' This measure consists of five items that are measured on a four point Likert scale. The Cronbach's alpha for this measure is .864. Aiken and Hage (1968) also propose a measure for formalization. However, Dewar et al. (1980) conclude that the discriminant validity of these scales is unsatisfactory. Another measure is proposed by Deshpande and Zaltman (1982). This study uses a shortened version of this scale that is also used by Jaworski and Kohli (1993). This measure consists of 7 items. The items are measured on a four point Likert scale and the Cronbach's alpha for this measure is .728. In order to assess the level of red tape experienced, the single item measure proposed by Pandey and Scott (2002) is used. According to the authors, this measure is most congruent with conceptual definitions offered by Bozeman (1993) and Bozeman and Scott (1996).

Significant differences exist in the degree in which the organizational structure of the departments within the organization is bureaucratic. Departments within the organization were classified according to the organizational unit they were formerly a part of. However, some departments (mostly staff departments such as personnel, finance and IT) in the merger organization are a mix of both DAR and ACCH employees. These cases were therefore removed from the dataset. The effective sample consists of 284 employees. A t-test indicates that the reported score on perceived bureaucratic structure is significantly higher among respondents in former DAR departments than respondents in former ACCH departments ($F = 4.552$, $p = .044$). Although the concepts concerning the organizational structure are measured at an individual level, the data show that former DAR departments are significantly more bureaucratic than the departments that were part of ACCH. In order to account the moderating effect of organizational structure, a highly bureaucratic model (employees in DAR departments) is compared with a low bureaucratic model (employees in ACCH departments).

Measures

A full list of measures is given in appendix A. Unless stated otherwise, all measures were based on a five point Likert scale.

Planned change and emergent change. Despite the dominance of the planned and emergent approach to change in the literature on change management, the literature offers virtually no quantitative measures for these concepts. The only available measure is proposed by Farrell (2000). This measure consists of six items for planned change and five items for emergent change and is measured on a seven point scale. The Cronbach's alpha for the measure of planned change was unsatisfactory. Similar to the original study by Farrell (2000) and based on a factor and reliability analysis, three items of this scale for planned change scale were not included in the analysis. Despite these modifications,

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the Cronbach's alpha is only .688.[4] The Cronbach's alpha for the measure of emergent change is .739. However, one item was removed as it did not load on both the factor of both planned and emergent change in an exploratory factor analysis. As a result, the internal consistency of the scale was improved to a Cronbach's alpha of .820, which can be considered to be very good (DeVellis, 1991). However, these alterations make it apparent that the current available measures for planned and emergent change proposed by Farrell (2000) are not fully valid and reliable. The results of the factor analysis of planned and emergent change are given in appendix C. This issue is further discussed in the discussion of this chapter.

Transformational leadership. The measure of Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter (1990) for transformational leadership was used. This measure consists of 21 items and contains the dimensions articulating vision, provide appropriate model, foster acceptance goals, high performance expectancy, individual support and intellectual stimulation. Cronbach's alpha for this measure was .944.

Willingness to change. Willingness to change is measured based on the validated scale by Metselaar (1997). The measure consists of 4 items with a Cronbach's alpha of .890. The concept willingness to change was preferred over other psychological constructs such as commitment to change (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002) or cynicism to change (Bommer et al., 2005), because it not only measures employee attitudes about change, but also their behavioral intentions.

Controls. We control for age, education level (ranging from 1: Primary school through 7: Ph.D.) and organizational tenure. Moreover, dummy variables are included to account for the gender of respondents and whether or not respondents have a supervisory position.

6.4 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Descriptive statistics and correlations

The mean scores, standard deviations and correlations of all variables in this study are presented in table 6.1. The mean scores of the variables indicate that the average age of the sample is 45.8 years with an average tenure of 12.7 years. The average score on education level is 5.1 (range 1 – 7), which indicates a relatively highly educated workforce (5 = applied university). The majority of the respondents is male and 13% of the

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4. This value is below 0.70, which is seen as an acceptable degree of internal consistency. However, Kline (1999) states that a Cronbach's alpha below .70 can be acceptable for a psychological construct. DeVellis (1991) states that while a value of over .70 is respectable, a value between .65 and .70 is minimally acceptable.

respondents has a supervisory position. The average scores on planned and emergent change are just below the theoretical mean of 4 on the seven point Likert scale. The score on willingness to change shows a mild favorability toward the organizational changes in the organization. The correlations indicate a relatively strong correlation between planned and emergent change (.358, p < .01). Moreover, all central variables (emergent change, planned change and transformational leadership) are positively and significantly related to employee willingness to change.

Regression analyses

The hypotheses are tested by means of linear regression. Interaction variables were computed in order to account for the interaction effects between transformational leadership, planned change and emergent change (H1). The independent variables were therefore standardized for the analysis. Moreover, a low and high bureaucracy model are compared in order to account for the moderating effects of organizational structure (H2 and H3). The results of the regression analyses are reported in table 6.2.

The general model consists of both the low and high bureaucracy model. Sample size, constant and adjusted R square are reported for all three models.

The regression analysis for the general model indicates that both planned and emergent processes of change are positively related to employee willingness to change. The effect of planned change is statistically significant (p < 0.05), while the effect of emergent change is not. Transformational leadership is also positively and significantly related to willingness to change. Of the control variables, age and supervisory position are positively related to willingness to change, while a negative relationship exists between tenure and employee willingness to change.

Table 6.1: Means, standard deviations and correlations

	Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Age	45.80	10.19	1								
2 Female gender (1 = yes)	0.37	0.24	-.204**	1							
3 Education level	5.10	1.14	-.269**	-.006	1						
4 Tenure	12.74	10.37	.614**	-.211**	-.258**	1					
5 Supervisory position (1 = yes)	0.13	.38	.185**	-.149*	.102	.130*	1				
6 Planned change	3.73	1.19	.129*	-.092	-.092	.025	-.028	1			
7 Emergent change	3.99	1.20	.118	-.063	-.082	.119	.131*	.358**	1		
8 Transform leadership	3.20	0.64	.067	.019	-.029	-.026	.142*	.276**	.269**	1	
9 Willingness to change	3.57	0.73	.037	-.027	.127*	-.099	.206**	.238**	.220**	.254**	1

* = p < .05., ** = p < .01

Table 6.2: Regression analysis

	General model (n=200)	Low bureaucracy model (n=105)	High bureaucracy model (n=95)
Constant	*3.630*	*3.538*	*3.657*
Age	.179*	.043	.259*
Gender	.061	.073	.049
Education level	.086	.111	.129
Tenure	-.226**	.019	-.406***
Supervisor	.172*	.224*	.096
Planned Change	.169*	.113	.251*
Emergent Change	.139+	-.038	.237*
Transformational Leadership	.142*	.199+	.154
Planned*Transformational	-.173*	-.124	-.085
Emergent*Transformational	.046	.222*	-.106
Adjusted R Square	*.192*	*.109*	*.336*

+ = $p < .1$, * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

In the low bureaucracy model, there are considerably less statistically significant explanatory variables for employee willingness to change. Neither the planned approach to change nor the emergent approach to change is positively related to employee willingness to change. The control variables indicate that supervisors are significantly more likely to have a positive attitude toward organizational changes in the organization. In the high bureaucracy model, both planned and emergent change are positively and significantly related to employee willingness to change. Hypothesis 2 is supported by the data because planned change is positively related to employee willingness to change in the high bureaucracy model, but not in the low bureaucracy model. Hypothesis 3 is rejected, since emergent change is also more effective in the high bureaucracy model than in the low bureaucracy. Similar to the general model, the effects of age and tenure are significant in the high bureaucracy model. The positive effect of transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors is no longer significant in the low and high bureaucracy model.

The regression analyses in table 6.2 indicate that there are two significant interaction effects. In the general model, the interaction effect between planned change and transformational leadership is negatively related to employee willingness to change. In figure 6.1, this interaction-effect is plotted to allow interpretation.

The interaction effect plotted in figure 6.1 indicates that the effectiveness of a planned process of change is dependent on the leadership style of the direct supervisor. In processes that have little characteristics of a planned change process, a higher degree of transformational leadership contributes to a higher level of employee willingness
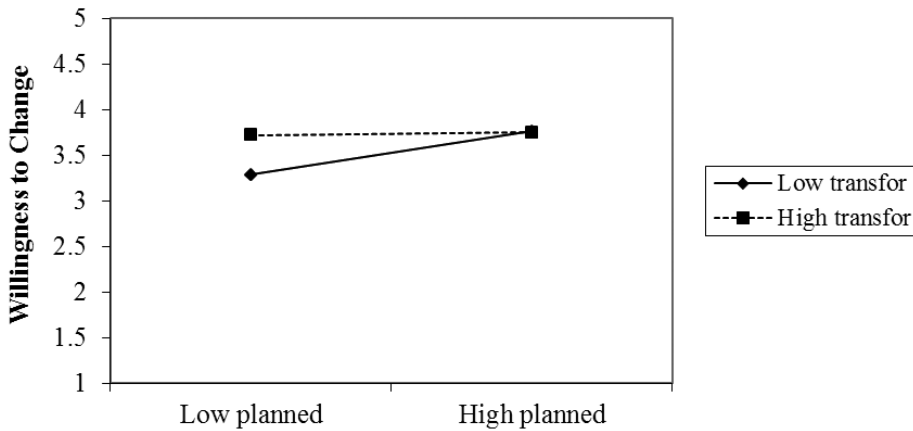
Figure 6.1: Interaction effect planned change and transformational leadership (general model)

to change than a lower degree of transformational leadership. However, in a process that has many characteristics of planned change, this added value of a high degree of transformational leadership is no longer present.

The second interaction effect in hypothesis 1 concerns the combined effectiveness of an emergent change approach and transformational leadership. Hypothesis 1 states that a higher degree of transformational leadership of direct supervisors will not increase the effectiveness of an emergent approach to change. In the general model, the data support the data, as the effect of the computed interaction effect is not significant. However, in the low bureaucracy model, the relationship between emergent change and employee willingness to change is positively and significantly affected by a transformational leadership style. In order to interpret the effect, the interaction effect is plotted in figure 6.2.

The interaction effect in figure 6.2 indicates that the effectiveness of emergent change is dependent on the transformational leadership activities of direct supervisors. In processes with little emergent characteristics, the degree of employee willingness to change is not affected by transformational leadership behavior. However, in highly emergent processes of change, a high degree of transformational leadership behavior significantly increases the effectiveness of an emergent approach to change. Moreover, the absence of transformational leadership in this situation will decrease the effectiveness of an emergent change process.

Summing up the results of both interaction effects, the data contradict hypothesis 1. According to our study, a transformational leadership style is of little added value in planned processes of change. Rather, the effects of a planned change approach and

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the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors seem interchangeable: either a transformational leadership style or a highly planned approach will lead to comparable levels of employee willingness to change but a combination of both does not lead to increased effectiveness. In contrast, and contrary to hypothesis 1, transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors does increase the effectiveness of emergent processes of change, but only in situations with a low degree of bureaucratic organizational structure.
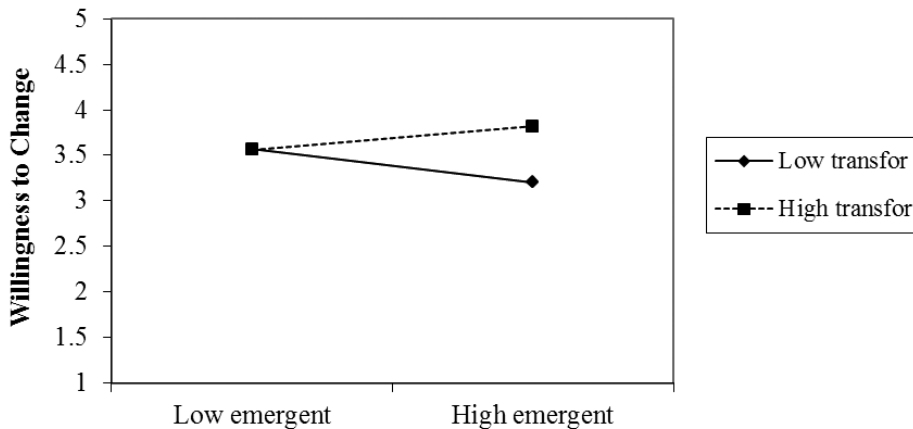

Figure 6.2: Interaction effect emergent change and transformational leadership (low bureaucracy model)

6.5 DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The results of the study are contrary to the theoretical expectations expressed in hypothesis 1. It was assumed that transformational leadership of the direct supervisor would be beneficial in planned processes of change, while it would be redundant in more emergent change. However, the results indicate that in highly planned processes of change, a low and high degree of transformational leadership results in an equal level of employee support. A possible interpretation of this unexpected result is that planned processes of change are already very management driven. The leadership role is mostly filled in by higher level managers or a guiding coalition at the top level of the organization (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006). Because of this, the additional contribution of the leadership of direct supervisors may be very limited.

Moreover, the result concerning the effect of transformational leadership in an emergent process of change is contrary to hypothesis 1. In the general model, there is no significant moderating effect of direct supervisor transformational leadership behavior on the relationship between emergent change and employee willingness to change,

which is according to the theoretical expectations. However, in the low bureaucracy model, a significant interaction effect does exist. When change processes take on more emergent characteristics, the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors becomes a crucial condition for creating employee support. Without a transformational leadership role of direct supervisors, an emergent change approach is negatively related to employee willingness to change. The presence of transformational leadership behavior results in a positive relationship between an emergent change approach and the willingness of employees to implement change. While planned change approaches rely on the leadership of senior managers to be enacted (Kotter, 1996; Kanter et al., 1992), emergent processes of change are more bottom-up and devolved. Such change processes therefore rely more on the leadership behavior of lower level managers (Borins, 2002)

In the literature on organizational change, planned change is assumed to be more appropriate for highly bureaucratic organizations (e.g. Coram & Burnes, 2001; Weick & Quinn, 1999). In their study of organizational change in six Australian federal agencies, Stewart and Kringas (2003) indeed find that top-down approaches are most applied. In this study, the effectiveness of planned and emergent change processes was examined. The results of this study indicate that both planned and emergent processes of change are viable options for bureaucratic organizations. This could indicate that a combination of both planned and emergent change may be an effective approach to organizational change in bureaucratic organizational settings. This result is coherent with Ryan et al. (2008), who have argued that planned change should be supplemented with other change strategies. Several authors (for example Beer & Nohria, 2000; Sminia & Van Nistelrooij, 2006) discuss the simultaneous application of both planned and emergent approaches to change. In a highly bureaucratic organization, an organizational change may require the top-down activation of employees by a top-management intervention, after which a bottom-up process may be initiated in which employees are involved in establishing the exact course of action. The data do not support hypothesis 3. Emergent change in itself was not found to be significantly related to employee willingness to change in the low bureaucracy model. In this situation, emergent change can only be an effective approach to change when combined with a transformational leadership style of direct supervisors.

Most of the research concerning planned and emergent change is qualitative. In this study, planned and emergent change were measured with a quantitative measurement scale. The only available measure in the literature is proposed by Farrell (2000). However, both the reliability and validity of the measurement instrument has proven to be insufficient. First, the internal consistency of the scale for planned change is below the generally accepted Cronbach's alpha of 0.70. Even after dismissing several items, as is also done by the original author, the internal consistency remains below .70. Second,

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one of the items of the scale of emergent is poorly formulated as it does not load on both the factors of planned and emergent change in an exploratory factor analysis. Third, the validity of both scales is questionable, as the items do not encompass the full concepts of planned and emergent change. The scale for planned change includes items that account for the top-down, management-driven and controlled nature of planned change, but misses items that account for the clearly formulated objectives (By, 2005), the desired future state (Burnes, 1996, 2004) and the emphasis on the resolution of conflict (Burnes, 2009). The measure for emergent change is based entirely on aspects of organizational learning and environmental adaptation, and misses aspects of the local, bottom-up, participative nature of emergent change (Bamford & Forrester, 2003) and its emphasis on improving organizational capability (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Weick, 2000). A first recommendation for future research is therefore to improve the available measures for planned and emergent change by elaborating on the conceptual range of the measures and testing the consistency of the measure in a confirmatory factor analysis.

Another limitation of this study concerns the internal validity of the results. Both dependent and independent variables were measured on the employee level. Therefore, the relationships between the variables may be partly due to the method of data collection (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003; Meier & O'Toole, 2012). Causal inferences are based on theory, rather than observed temporal sequence. A second recommendation for future research is therefore to measure concepts on multiple levels in the organizational hierarchy and among different groups of respondents, as well as using a longitudinal research design. Because this study is based on a case-based design, the study's results may not be statistically generalized beyond the case that was studied. Similar to most of the change management literature, generalizing results is difficult because of organizational, historical and contextual differences. Future research concerning change management in public organizations should thus emphasize analytical rather than statistical generalization (Yin, 2009).

Despite these limitations, this study has shown that the specific characteristics of public organizations may have important implications for effectiveness of different change approaches and leadership. Another recommendation for future research is therefore to devote more attention to the research of contextual factors influencing the effectiveness and appropriateness of different approaches to change. A possible direction for future research could be the influence of the complex and political environment of public organizations on the implementation and leadership of organizational change.

6.6 CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to examine the effectiveness and specificity of change management in a public organization. The study assessed to what extent employee willingness to change is explained by transformational leadership and different change approaches. Moreover, the study examined to what extent these relationship were affected by the bureaucratic organizational structures that typically characterize public organizations. The results indicate that both the planned and emergent approach to change are effective ways of bringing about change in a bureaucratic context. The transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors contributes little to willingness to change planned processes of change. However, transformational leadership is crucial in emergent processes of change, but only in a non-bureaucratic context. Although the literature on change management mostly emphasizes the leadership of senior managers, the leadership role of direct supervisors should not be overlooked during organizational change in public organizations.

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Chapter 7

A framework of change leadership
in a public organization[5]

ABSTRACT

Public organizations often need to implement changes in the governance, design and delivery of public services. However, little is known about the implementation of organizational change in a public sector context. Because little will change without the cooperation of employees, the successful implementation of organizational change greatly depends on the acceptance or support of employees. In this study, we propose and test a theoretical framework concerning the relationship between transformational leadership behavior and affective commitment to change in a public sector context. A survey was conducted in an organizational department of the Dutch city Rotterdam. Structural equation modeling was used to analyze the data. While the change leadership literature emphasizes the role of executive managers during change, we conclude that the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors is an important contribution to the successful implementation of change. We draw on change management theory to explain how direct supervisors contribute to processes of organizational change, thereby increasing affective commitment to change among employees. Furthermore, the results show how the specific context of public organizations determines the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Public organizations often need to implement changes in the governance, design and delivery of public services (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006). The implementation of such organizational changes is a considerable challenge for public sector organizations (Kelman, 2005; Isett et al., 2012; Piening, 2013; Karp & Helgø, 2008; McNulty & Ferlie, 2004). Despite the importance of organizational change for public management practice, organizational change is generally not studied as an implementation problem in public management research (Stewart & Kringas, 2003; Olsen, 1991). While many studies have focused on change in the public sector, the public management literature has considerable shortcomings from the perspective of the implementation of organizational change (Kuipers et al., 2013).

Public management research concerning organizational change is often focused at organizational changes on the sector or national level, rather than the organizational level (e.g. Kickert, 2010; Askim et al., 2009; De Boer et al., 2007; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004). Moreover, studies tend to emphasize the content of change (e.g. By et al., 2008; Wise, 2002), rather than the processes through which organizational change is implemented (Kuipers et al., 2013). In addition, while several studies have suggested that the specific characteristics of public organizations make the implementation of change in public sector organizations distinct from the private sector (By & Macleod, 2009; Klarner et al., 2008; Karp & Helgø, 2008; McNulty & Ferlie, 2004), recent studies do not take into account how the implementation of change is influenced by the specific context of public organizations (e.g. Isett et al., 2012; Tummers et al., 2012; Liguori, 2012; Chustz & Larson, 2006; Stewart & O'Donnell, 2007). A final shortcoming is that public management research rarely connects the implementation of organizational change to the actual effects or outcomes of change (Kuipers et al., 2013). Because of this, claims about 'successful' change are often unreliable (Pettigrew, 2000; Boyne, 2006).

For theory about the implementation of organizational change, we must rely predominantly on research in private sector organizations (Stewart & Kringas, 2003; Thomas, 1996). A central position in change management theory is that the successful implementation of organizational change greatly depends on the acceptance or support of employees (Bartunek et al., 2006; Herold et al., 2007). Many authors stress the importance of employee affective commitment to change for the successful implementation of change (Herold et al., 2008; Liu, 2010). The concept has been positively related to change-related behaviors (Meyer, Srinivas, Lal & Topolnytsky, 2007; Jaros, 2010). As such, affective commitment to change is generally seen as an important condition for the successful implementation of change (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002).

A second premise of change management theory is that employee support for change is not only dependent on the content of change, but also on the way organizational

change is implemented (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Pettigrew et al., 2001; Self et al., 2007). Leadership is generally seen as a crucial factor in order to create affective commitment to change among employees in both the private sector (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010; Kotter, 1996; Gill, 2002) and the public sector (Fernandez & Pitts, 2007; Karp & Helgø, 2008). Research on the leadership of change is concentrated on the activities of change agents aimed at promoting a certain change initiative (e.g. Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010). Other research has identified leadership styles that are more generally seen as relevant and effective during organizational change (Bass, 1985; Shamir & Howell, 1999; Conger, 1999). Although the influence of leadership on commitment to change is rarely challenged, little empirical evidence exists (Burke, 2010; Herold et al., 2008).

In this chapter, we propose and test a framework of the relationship between leadership and affective commitment to change during in public sector organizations. Because leadership takes place in the context of the organizational change process (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010), we incorporate the process of change in our framework. Change management theory distinguishes between programmatic and planned change processes versus more developmental and devolved change processes (Sminia & Van Nistelrooij, 2006; By, 2005; Bamford & Forrester, 2003; Burnes, 1996, 2004). These processes are referred to as the planned and emergent approach to change (cf. Burnes, 2004; By, 2005; Weick, 2000, Kuipers et al., 2013). Both types of change process rely on leadership to be enacted (Beer & Nohria, 2000).

Moreover, prior research on leadership has emphasized the importance of contextual factors (Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Shamir & Howell, 1999). Leadership behavior is shaped by the context in which leaders operate (Zaccaro, 2001). Our framework therefore accounts for how leadership may be affected by contextual factors. More specifically, the framework incorporates how the implementation of change and its leadership may be influenced by the specific characteristics of public sector organizations (e.g. Boyne, 2002; Rainey, 2003). By doing so, the study is intended to contribute to a growing line of research about the implementation of organizational change in the public sector (By & Macleod, 2009; Klarner et al., 2008; Karp & Helgø, 2008; McNulty & Ferlie, 2004).

Using structural equation modeling, we propose and test a theoretical framework that accounts for the relationship between leadership and affective commitment to change in public organizations. Next to a direct relationship, the model explains the relationship between leadership and commitment to change through the different change processes to which leadership can be expected to contribute. Moreover, the model explicitly incorporates the public sector context by examining how the specific characteristics of public organizations may influence leadership. Our main research question is: *How does leadership influence affective commitment to change in a public organization?*

In section 7.2, we introduce our theoretical framework for the relationship between leadership and affective commitment to change in public sector organizations. In

section 7.3, we discuss the methodological issues of the study. Section 7.4 covers the analysis and results. Section 7.5 consists of a discussion of the results, as well as the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research. The conclusion is presented in section 7.6.

7.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND COMMITMENT TO CHANGE IN PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

In this section, we propose a theoretical framework that accounts for the relationship between leadership and affective commitment to change in a public sector context. Because the successful implementation of organizational change requires changes in the behaviors and attitudes of employees, we focus our attention on the employee level. We build on change management and leadership theory in order to explain the relationship between leadership and affective commitment to change among employees. Existing theory about change management is mostly appropriate for executive level leaders (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Gill, 2002). However, the role of lower level managers is recognized to be especially important during the implementation of change (Burke, 2010). We focus our attention on how the leadership behavior of direct supervisors contributes to the successful implementation of organizational change (cf. Van Dam et al., 2008; DeVos et al., 2007). The framework accounts for how their transformational leadership behavior influences commitment to change, and stimulates the occurrence of planned and emergent processes of change in the organization. Finally, the framework accounts for the specific external environment and organizational structure that typically characterizes public organizations. We argue that these contextual factors may impact the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors, and as such the processes through which the implementation of change comes about.

In order to account for the outcomes of change implementation, researchers often focus on the attitudes of employees regarding change (Herold et al., 2008; Self et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2007). In this study, we include affective commitment to change as an outcome variable (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002; Herold et al., 2008). Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) and Meyer et al. (2007) conclude that commitment to change is an important antecedent of the behavioral intentions of employees to support organizational change. We focus on affective commitment to change, as it is suggested to be the strongest predictor of employee change behavior (Herold et al., 2008; Rafferty & Restubog, 2010; Herold et al., 2007). Herscovitch and Meyer (2002: 475) define affective commitment to change as "a desire to provide support for the change based on a belief in its inherent benefits".

A central position in the literature on change management is that the way an organizational change initiative is received by employees is dependent on the process of implementation (Burke, 2010; Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999). As such, the way in which organizational change is implemented - the process of change – is an important antecedent of the commitment to change of employees. The literature on change management distinguishes between planned and emergent change processes (cf. Kickert, 2010; By, 2005; Burnes, 2004). Planned processes of change are top-down and programmatic. The objectives of change are formulated in advance. Planned processes of change rely heavily on the role of management (Bamford & Forrester, 2003). Top-down communication is the main mechanism of creating support for change among employees. Through a process of 'telling and selling', managers disseminate information to inform employees about the change and why they should be committed to implementing it (Russ, 2008).

Change can also be implemented through a more devolved and bottom-up process. In this study, we refer to such change processes as emergent change (cf. Kuipers et al., 2013). Emergent changes rely more on the participation of employees. Employees are seen as active participants in the change process (Russ, 2008). The management of the organization may initiate emergent changes, but they do not formulate detailed objectives of change. The mechanisms of creating commitment to change are both communication and participation: instead of only being informed about the change, employees are invited to participate in the implementation of change. A high quality of change information and a high degree of participation are both assumed to be positively related to the acceptance and support of change by employees (Rafferty & Restubog, 2010; Bartunek et al., 2006; DeVos et al., 2007). A planned process of change is expected to result in a high quality of communication. Emergent processes of change are expected to stimulate both the quality of change communication and the degree of participation. In turn, a high quality of change communication and a high degree of participation are both expected to positively influence employee affective commitment to change.

The role of leadership is generally seen as essential during the implementation of organizational change (Burke, 2010; Herold et al., 2008; Kotter, 1996). Attention is often focused on senior management or the guiding coalition of change (Kotter, 1996; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006) Moreover, the importance top management support for a change initiative is often highlighted (e.g. Holt et al., 2007). While the role of senior management is often emphasized during the initiation of change, direct supervisors play an important role during the implementation of change (e.g. Allen et al., 2007; Van Dam et al., 2008; DeVos et al., 2007). We focus our attention on the leadership behavior of direct supervisors, rather than for example the relationship between employees and their supervisor or the supervisor's personal characteristics.

The main leadership theory that emphasizes organizational change is the theory of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Eisenbach et al., 1999). The core of the transfor-

mational leadership theory is that "by articulating a vision, fostering the acceptance of group goals, and providing individualized support, effective leaders change the basic values, beliefs, and attitudes of followers so that they are willing to perform beyond the minimum levels specified by the organization" (Podsakoff et al., 1996: 260). Authors regularly emphasize the importance of transformational leadership during change, but there is little empirical evidence concerning the relationship between transformational leadership and employee responses to change (Burke, 2010). Some studies have reported a direct relationship between transformational leadership and commitment to change (e.g. Oreg & Berson, 2011; Herold et al., 2008). However, Carter, Armenakis, Feild and Mossholder (2012) and Bass, Avolio, Yung and Berson (2003) suggest that more attention is needed for the mediating mechanisms that account for the influence between transformational leaders and employee outcomes. Rather than a direct relationship between leadership and commitment to change, other studies suggest that leaders actively shape the approach to implementing organizational change (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006). The transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors may thus affect the characteristics of the change process through which organizational change is implemented, which will in turn have an effect on employee commitment to change.

Transformational leadership can be expected to stimulate both planned and emergent changes. Transformational leaders contribute to planned change, because they recognize the need for change, create and communicate appealing visions for change and inspire and motivate employees to implement organizational change (Bass, 1999; Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Carter et al., 2012). While transformational leaders may stimulate changes in a directive way, they also seek employee participation by stimulating cooperation and delegating authority to employees (Bass, 1985). Moreover, transformational leaders stimulate their employees to find innovative and creative solutions in their work by thinking outside of the box and by addressing old problems in new ways (Bass et al., 2003; Yukl, 2002). Next to prescribing the vision of change in a top-down manner, transformational leaders may thus also stimulate bottom-up changes in the organization. Transformational leaders can therefore be expected to contribute to change commitment by stimulating both planned and emergent changes within the organization.

In our framework, we account for the specific external environment and organizational structure of public organizations. The organizational environment and the organizational structure are central concepts in the classic studies on organizational change (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Aiken & Hage, 1968; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Mintzberg, 1979). Moreover, several recent studies have suggested that the implementation of organizational change may be affected by the specific environment and structural characteristics of public organizations. For example, Fernandez and Rainey (2006) and Burnes (2009) have focused on how the pluralistic, political environment of public environments comes into play during

processes of organizational change. Coram and Burnes (2001) and Isett et al. (2012) argue that the bureaucratic organizational structures that typically characterize public organizations may have a bearing on the implementation of organizational change. There is much evidence that transformational leadership is contingent on contextual factors (Conger, 1999; Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Shamir & Howell, 1999). We therefore theorize that certain specific characteristics of public sector organizations (cf. Rainey, 2003; Boyne, 2002; By & Macleod, 2009) may influence the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors during processes of change (e.g. Wright & Pandey, 2010).

Public organizations can be said to operate in a relatively complex environment, which is characterized by a multitude of stakeholders, ambiguous and often conflicting objectives, a high level of scrutiny and external political influences on decision-making processes (Rainey, 2003; Boyne, 2002; By & Macleod, 2009; Piening, 2013). This makes complexity a relevant environmental characteristic of public organizations. The degree of environmental complexity refers to the number of factors on which the organization is dependent, and the degree to which these factors are dissimilar (Duncan, 1972). Organizational complexity is not an objective concept, but may depend on the extend to and way in which organizational members are confronted with their environment. Some parts of an organization may perceive their environment to be relatively complex, while others parts may operate in a more simple environment. Environmental complexity is expected to be negatively related to planned processes of change. In their meta-analytic comparison of planned organizational change in public and private organizations, Robertson and Seneviratne (1995) argue that the pluralistic environment of public organizations may make it more difficult to achieve the unity of purpose and consensually supported goals that are central to planned change. In addition, Shamir and Howell (1999) argue that a high degree of complexity stimulates transformational leadership behavior, because it is difficult to routinize organizational operations in these conditions. Employees therefore rely on their supervisor to provide meaning and vision in order to execute their tasks. Similarly, Karp and Helgø (2008) have highlighted the need for leadership during processes of organizational change in the public sector, because of its complex and chaotic character. We therefore expect that a high degree of environmental complexity is positively related to the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors.

Public organizations are often described as being relatively bureaucratic (Rainey, 2003; Boyne, 2002). While several recent studies have highlighted centralization as a key characteristic of public organizations (e.g. Andrews et al., 2009; Wright & Pandey, 2010; Moynihan & Pandey, 2005), a high degree of formalization can be seen as the defining characteristic of bureaucracies (Mintzberg, 1979). Formalization can be defined as the degree to which organizational activities are manifested in written documents regarding procedures, job descriptions, regulations and policy manuals (Hall, 1996). A high degree of formalization has been shown to be impede processes of adaptation,

learning and innovation, because employees are less flexible and face more procedural constraints (Moon, 1999; Walker, 2008). Because emergent process of change are based on adaptation and learning (by, 2005; Burnes, 2004), formalization is expected to be negatively related to emergent change. In addition, a high degree of formalization can be expected to reduce the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors. When the operations of public organizations are to a large extent based on rules and procedures, there is little need for transformational leadership behavior aimed at the beliefs, values and attitudes of employees (Conger, 1999; Pawar & Eastman, 1997). Moreover, Mintzberg (1979) states that lower level managers will be more occupied with rule-compliance and control in highly formalized organizations. A high degree of formalization is therefore expected to be negatively related to transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors. By reducing their transformational leadership, direct supervisors in a highly formalized organization are thus less likely to contribute to planned and emergent processes of change.

Summarizing, we argue that the role of leadership is central in the implementation of change in public organizations. Transformational leadership is expected to have a direct effect on affective commitment to change. Furthermore, prior studies suggest that transformational leadership behavior may also stimulate planned and emergent processes of change. Planned change processes aim to create commitment to change through top-down communication, whereas emergent processes of change emphasize both communication and participation. As such, transformational leadership behavior may also indirectly contribute to commitment to change by stimulating planned and emergent processes of change. In order to account for the public sector context of public organizations, we incorporate the degree of environmental complexity and formalization in our model. Environmental complexity is expected to increase transformational leadership behavior, while formalization will diminish transformational leadership. The specific public sector context thus influences the implementation and outcomes of organizational change by simultaneously stimulating and constraining transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors. A visualization of our theoretical model is given in figure 7.1.
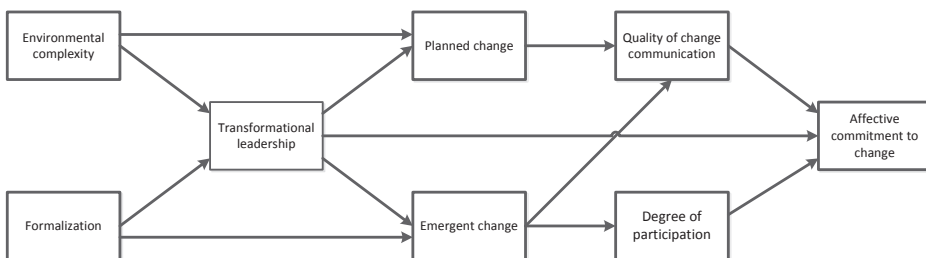

Figure 7.1: The implementation of change in public organizations

7.3 METHODOLOGY

Design and case selection

The study is based on a case study design. A recent organizational change in the City Works Department of the Dutch city Rotterdam is selected as a case. The City Works Department is responsible for directing the realization of infrastructural, spatial planning, as well as the maintenance and upkeep of the city's public grounds. Due to administrative reforms in the city as a result of the economic crisis, the organization is to be split up and merged into different administrative clusters. This separation is referred to as the 'disentanglement' in the organization. In June 2012, the organizational change process was finalized with the dissolving of the City Works Department. Although we study an organizational change in a single organization, we expect variation on our variables concerning transformational leadership, environmental complexity and formalization due to the great range of tasks performed by the organization. Some departments consist of highly educated engineers, while most employees in other departments have had a lower or professional education. Moreover, some departments perform complex tasks in a demanding and pluralistic environment, while others perform routine, executive tasks.

Methods and analysis techniques

Quantitative data concerning the key variables of the study were collected using an online survey. In October 2012, all employees of the organization were asked to participate in an online survey. In all, 515 out of 1450 employees completed the questionnaire (35,5%). However, there were some occasional missings in the data file. The highest missing count on a single item was 9. Per item, an average of 3 out of 515 respondents had failed to provide a valid answer. For the analysis, missings were estimated and imputed based on an EM algorithm using SPSS 18 software.

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is used as a method to account for the inter-relations between our key variables. The reasons for adopting a SEM approach is that it allows to simultaneously assess the influence of multiple independent variables on multiple dependent variables, as opposed to for example multiple linear regression. Our model of change implementation in public organizations consists of a number of relationships. Using SEM, we can test the entire model, rather than all relationships separately. Another advantage of SEM is that the observed, indicator variables can be included in the analysis, as opposed to only constructed variables, which leads to more valid conclusions on the construct level. All variances and co-variances in the model are estimated simultaneously. We emphasize that the model is not aimed at exploring all possible relationships between our concepts. Rather, we use SEM to test to what extent our proposed theoretical framework fits the data, and as such to what extent it may serve as an explanatory framework for the implementation of change in public organizations.

Measures

A full list of measures is given in appendix B. All concepts were measured using a five point Likert scale, except for the measure of formalization which was measured on a four point scale.

Affective commitment to change. The six item scale for affective commitment to change by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) was used to measure affective commitment to change. Example items are "I believe in the value of this change" and "This change serves an important purpose".

    Quality of change communication. This concept was measured using a seven item scale by Bordia, Hunt, Paulsen, Tourish and Difonzo (2004) with a seven point scale. The lead-in of the measure is "The official information provided about the change …". Example items are "Kept you informed throughout the change process, even after the official announcement" and "Communicated the reasons for the change".

    Degree of participation. The degree of participation was measured using a three item scale by Lines, Selart, Espedal and Johansen (2005) with a seven point scale. Example items are "I was allowed to participate in the analyses that were performed prior to the change" and "I was allowed to participate in the development of the change".

    Planned and emergent change. The only available measure for planned and emergent change is proposed by Farell (2000). However, there are shortcomings concerning the internal consistency as well as the conceptual range of both concepts. The scale by Farell (2000) for planned change includes items that account for the top-down, management-driven and controlled nature of planned change. However, items that account for the clearly formulated objectives (By, 2005), the desired future state (Burnes, 1996, 2004) and the emphasis on the resolution of conflict (Burnes, 2009) are not included. The original measure for emergent change includes aspects of organizational learning and environmental adaptation, but misses aspects of the local, bottom-up, participative nature of emergent change (Bamford & Forrester, 2003) and its emphasis on improving organizational capability (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Weick, 2000). Seven additional items were formulated to broaden the conceptual range of these concepts. The lead-in of this measure is "The implementation of the organizational change …". Example items of these scales are "Occured through a systematic process of well-managed events" and "Is part of an ongoing process of adapting to our environment". Based on exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, several items were excluded from the analysis (cf. Farrell, 2000). The original, additional and excluded items are given in Appendix B.

    Transformational leadership. The transformational leadership measure of Podsakoff et al. (1990) was applied. This measure consists of 21 items and contains the dimensions articulating vision, providing appropriate model, fostering acceptance goals, high performance expectancy, individual support and intellectual stimulation. The lead-in of the

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question is "My direct supervisor …". Example items are "gets the group to work together for the same goal" and "is always seeking new opportunities for the organization."

Environmental complexity. A measure for environmental complexity was taken from Volberda and Van Bruggen (1997). The measure consists of four items. In the items, the word "market" was replaced by "environment". Example items are "In our environment, everything is related to everything" and "In making decisions in our environment a lot of variables should be taken into account".

Formalization. Dewar et al. (1980) state that the discriminant validity of the Aiken and Hage (1968) scale for formalization is unsatisfactory. An alternative measure is proposed by Deshpande and Zaltman (1982). We apply a shortened version of this scale that is also used by Jaworski and Kohli (1993). The scale consists of 7 items. Example items are "I feel that I am my own boss in most matters" and "People here are allowed to do almost as they please (reversed item)".

7.4 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The analysis consists of three steps. Because the internal consistency and construct validity of the original measures for planned and emergent change has proven to be unsatisfactory (cf. Farrell, 2000), additional items have been formulated. Therefore, exploratory factor analyses (EFA) are first done to assess the construct validity of these measures. Second, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is done to assess to what extent the entire measurement model fits the data. Third, a structural model is proposed according to the theoretical framework. This model is tested to assess the relationships between the individual variables in the model, as well as the fit of the framework as a whole.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Because all measures were self-reported and collected among a single group of employees, the data may be subject to common method bias (Meier & O'Toole, 2012). Harman's single factor test for common variance was done using exploratory factor analysis in order to test the presence of common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). An exploratory factor analysis in which all items were included results in 10 factors with an eigenvalue greater than 1. The most dominant factor accounts for 27.8% of the total variance. Moreover, as is evident in the next section, the data fit all constructs in the measurement model as intended. The results do not rule out the possibility of common method variance, but the results do indicate that common method variance is not likely to greatly influence the results of the analysis.

In order to assess the construct validity of the measures for planned and emergent change and the additional items, exploratory factors analyses were performed in SPSS 18. The results of the EFA are given in table 7.1 and 7.2. The measure for planned change results in three factors with an eigenvalue greater than 1. Five items load on the first factor, which accounts for 33,65% of the variance. The EFA of the measure for emergent change results in two distinct factors. Six items load on the first factor, which accounts for 33,26% of the variance.

Table 7.1 and 7.2: Exploratory Factor Analysis planned and emergent change

PLANNED CHANGE Pattern Matrix			
	Component		
	1	2	3
PLA1	-.064	-.062	.927
PLA2	.311	.412	.362
PLA3	**.708**	-.339	-.041
PLA4	-.226	.862	-.005
PLA5	**.514**	.415	-.166
PLA6	**.723**	.121	-.131
PLA7	**.778**	-.022	.112
PLA8	**.749**	.101	.047
PLA9	.319	.567	-.038
PLA7	**.778**	-.022	.112
PLA7	**.778**	-.022	.112

EMERGENT CHANGE Pattern Matrix		
	Component	
	1	2
EME1	**.801**	-.036
EME2	**.645**	.042
EME3	**.603**	.097
EME4	.115	.635
EME5	**.754**	-.115
EME6	.088	.710
EME7	-.161	.695
EME8	**.647**	-.017
EME9	**.746**	.007

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Confirmatory Factor Analysis

A CFA was executed in AMOS 18 to assess the fit of the total measurement model to the data. Items for planned and emergent change were included as suggested by the EFA. The CFA made apparent that three items of the scale for formalization were not significantly related to this concept's latent construct (see Appendix B). These items were thus excluded from the analysis. A range of fit indices was used to assess the fit of the total measurement model. The CMIN/DF of the measurement model is 2.024. A score between 1 and 5 is generally seen as an adequate fit. A score lower than 2 indicates a good fit. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) of the measurement model is .91, which can be seen as acceptable (Byrne, 2010; Kline, 2005). The RMSEA of the measurement model is .045, which should ideally be below 0.05. The PCLOSE value is 1.000, which should be greater than .5 (Byrne, 2010). Based on these fit indices, we assume that the measurement model fits the data well.

Before estimating the structural model that accounts for the relationships identified in the theoretical framework, we first look at the descriptive statistics and internal consistency of our concepts, as well as the correlations between these concepts. In table 7.3, the means, standard deviations (S.D.) and the correlations of all variables are given. The Cronbach's alphas (CA) of all variables are given in parentheses.

The mean of the dependent variable in the model, affective commitment to change, is around the theoretical mean of the scale. The average quality of change communication is 2.86, while the average degree of participation is 2.30. Moreover, on average, processes of change have more characteristics of planned change than of emergent change. The mean of supervisor's transformational leadership behavior is 3.21. Respondents report a relatively high level of environmental complexity, with an average score of 3.90.

The CA of all variables, except formalization, is above the minimally accepted level of .70 (Kline, 2005). The CA of formalization is only .65, which is generally seen as unsatisfactory. However, DeVellis (1991) states that a value lower than .65 can be seen as minimally acceptable.

The correlation matrix indicates that affective commitment to change is significantly related to the quality of communication ($r = .430$) and the degree of participation ($r = .391$). Supervisors' transformational leadership behavior is significantly related to affective commitment change ($r = .354$), planned change ($r = .311$) and emergent change ($r = .546$). Moreover, both environmental complexity ($r = .190$) and formalization ($r = -.153$) are correlated with transformational leadership behavior. We conclude from the correlation analysis that all expected relationships between variables in the conceptual framework are statistically significant.

Structural model

A structural model was tested that accounts for the relationships outlined in the theoretical framework. The CMIN/DF is 2.128 and the CFI of the model is .903. These fit indices indicate that the structural model has a reasonable fit with the data. The RMSEA and PCLOSE indicate a good fit with is scores of respectively .047 and .989.

   The standardized regression weights for all direct relationships in the structural model are given in table 7.4. The estimates of the structural model indicate that the degree of participation and quality of communication both have a positive effect on the affective commitment to change of employees. As expected, there is also a direct, positive relationship between the transformational leadership behavior of an employee's supervisor and employee affective commitment to change. The results also shed light on the way planned and emergent change contribute to affective commitment to change. Planned processes of change are positively related to high quality change communication. However, the contribution of emergent processes of change to the quality of change communication is slightly larger. In addition, there is also a strong positive relationship between emergent processes of change and employee participation. Transformational leadership behavior of supervisors is positively related to the occurrence of planned organizational change, but even more to emergent processes of change. The contextual factors in the model, environmental complexity and formalization, have an effect on the transformational leadership behavior of supervisors. According to the expectations in the theoretical framework, environmental complexity is positively related to transformational leadership behavior. Formalization has a negative influence on transformational leadership behavior. The expected positive relationship between environmental complexity and planned change is not statistically significant. The analysis indicates a

Table 7.3: Descriptive statistics, correlations and Cronbach's alphas

	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Affective Commitment to Change	3.04	.78	(.87)							
2 Quality of Communication	2.86	.70	.430***	(.86)						
3 Degree of Participation	2.30	.97	.391***	.538***	(.92)					
4 Planned change process	3.12	.62	.311***	.544***	.240***	(.74)				
5 Emergent change process	2.79	.67	.546***	.568***	.462***	.391***	(.79)			
6 Supervisors' Transformational Leadership Behavior	3.21	.71	.354***	.515***	.364***	.328***	.478***	(.95)		
7 Environmental Complexity	3.90	.55	.199***	.076	.094*	.083	.135**	.190***	(.82)	
8 Formalization	2.59	.47	-.095*	-.159***	-.093*	-.039	-.170***	-.153***	-.127**	(.65)

Cronbach's alphas are given in parentheses. * = p < 0.05, ** = p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.

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statistically significant negative relationship between formalization and emergent pro-
cesses of change. The regression weights of the direct effects are also given in figure 7.2.

In addition to the direct effects, all indirect effects between the variables in the struc-
tural model were estimated using AMOS 18 software. Although the analysis indicates
that all the total indirect effects are significant, only the indirect effects that were out-
lined in the theoretical framework are reported here.

In the theoretical section, it was argued that planned change processes aim to create
commitment to change through top-down communication. The analysis indicates a
statistically significant indirect effect of planned change on affective commitment to
change, via the quality of change communication (ß = .139***, SE = .035). Emergent
change was expected to influence affective commitment to change through the quality
of communication and the degree of participation. Although the total indirect effect
of emergent change on affective commitment to change is statistically significant (ß =
.315***, SE = .047), the analysis in AMOS 18 does not allow to test the effect sizes and
statistical significance of the separate paths. In addition, the specific characteristics of
public organizations were expected to indirectly affect the way change is implemented.
Environmental complexity was expected to stimulate transformational leadership
behavior, thereby indirectly contributing to planned and emergent change in the orga-
nization. The analysis shows indirect effects of environmental complexity on emergent
change (ß = .100**, SE = .037) and planned change (ß = .074**, SE = .026). In addition,
formalization was found to indirectly impede both emergent change (ß = -.119*, SE =
.046) and planned change (ß = -.088*, SE = .037) in the organization. As there is a statisti-

Table 7.4: Direct effects in the structural model

Quality of Communication → Affective Commitment to Change	.296*** (.070)
Degree of Participation → Affective Commitment to Change	.244*** (.058)
Supervisors' Transformational Leadership Behavior → Affective Commitment to Change	.143** (.060)
Planned Change → Quality of Communication	.471*** (.049)
Emergent change → Quality of Communication	.566*** (.049)
Emergent Change → Degree of Participation	.606*** (.043)
Supervisors' Transformational Leadership Behavior → Planned Change	.427*** (.051)
Supervisors' Transformational Leadership Behavior → Emergent Change	.576*** (.047)
Environmental Complexity → Supervisors' Transformational Leadership Behavior	.173*** (.059)
Formalization → Supervisors' Transformational Leadership Behavior	-.207*** (.082)
Environmental complexity → Planned Change	n.s.
Formalization → Emergent change	-.118* (.058)

R^2 square of affective commitment to change =.30. Standardized regression coefficients (ß) are given.
Standard errors (SE) are given in parentheses. * = p < 0.05, ** = p < 0.01, *** = p < 0.001.
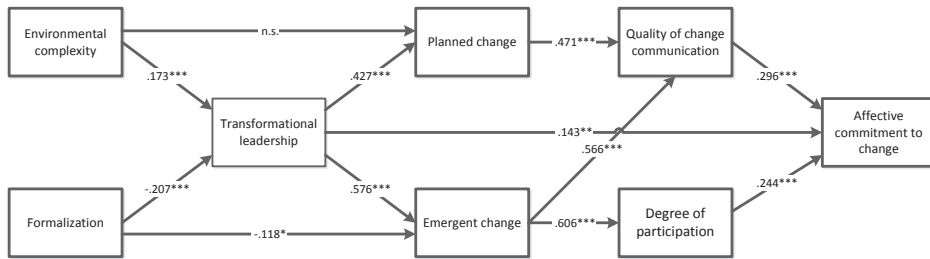
Figure 7.2: Structural model

cally significant direct relationship between formalization and emergent change, the effect of formalization on emergent change is partially mediated by the transformational leadership behavior of the direct supervisors. The absence of statistically significant relationships between environmental complexity and planned change indicates that the indirect effect between these variables is fully mediated by transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors.

7.5 DISCUSSION

In order to contribute to the literature about the implementation of organizational change in public organizations, this study is aimed at the relationship between leadership and affective commitment to change. This relationship is not only seen as a direct relationship. In our theoretical framework, we draw on the change management literature to explain this relationship through planned and emergent change processes. Because of the abundance of literature on change leadership on the executive level (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006), and the importance of lower level managers during the implementation of change (Burke, 2010), we focused our attention on the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors. In order to explicitly account for the specific context of public organizations, we included relevant characteristics of the organizational environment and the organizational structure in our framework.

Our structural model indicates that direct supervisors may play a central role in the implementation of change in public organizations. The transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors directly influences the commitment to change of employees. Transformational leadership also indirectly influences affective commitment to change by increasing the occurrence of planned and emergent change processes. Moreover, the specific contextual characteristics of public organizations influence the implementation processes and commitment to change through the transformational leadership of direct supervisors.

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Literature on leading change often highlights the behaviors of leaders aimed at 'selling' and 'implementing' change (e.g. Gill, 2002; Liu, 2010). Such behaviors are often positively related to change success or change-related behavior by employees (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, 2010; Liu, 2010). While transformational leadership behavior is not directly aimed at the implementation of a certain change initiative (Herold et al., 2008), our analysis indicates that transformational leadership behavior by direct supervisors may influence employee commitment to change (cf. Oreg & Berson, 2011; Herold et al., 2008). More importantly however, their transformational leadership behavior also contributes to the occurrence of planned and emergent processes of change. The structural model indicates that such organizational change processes influence affective commitment to change by providing communication concerning the change and stimulating employee participation. These results indicate that, next to the change-oriented leadership behaviors of executive leaders that are often prescribed in the literature on change (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Hennessey, 1998; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; Fernandez & Pitts, 2007), direct supervisors may play a central role during the implementation of change.

Recent studies have suggested that the context of the public sector may have a bearing on the implementation of change in public organizations (Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; By & Macleod, 2009; McNulty & Ferlie, 2004). We therefore explicitly accounted for the degree of environmental complexity and formalization of the organizational structure in our framework. As theorized in the theoretical framework, these factors mainly influence the implementation of change through the leadership behavior of direct supervisors. Environmental complexity is positively related to transformational leadership behavior, while formalization has a negative influence. The context of public organizations can thus be said to simultaneously stimulate and impede the leadership behaviors that contribute to the successful implementation of change. The analysis also indicates that the relationship between formalization and emergent change is not fully mediated by transformational leadership. Formalization also has a direct, negative influence on the occurrence of emergent changes in the organization. This result thus indicates that the bureaucratic nature of public organizations may make emergent changes processes less likely to occur. Similarly, Coram and Burnes (2001) have argued that a planned process of change is most appropriate given the bureaucratic nature that is typical for many public organizations. In their study of organizational change in six Australian federal agencies, Stewart and Kringas (2003) indeed find that top-down approaches are most applied.

Although planned approaches to change may be regularly applied in a public sector context, there are also indications that a more emergent approach to change may be more successful. For example, Klarner et al. (2008) and Ryan et al. (2008) argue that public organizations should rely on more incremental and participative change approaches. Isett et al. (2012) argue that bottom-up approaches are an effective way to implement change in public organizations. Our results indicate that a planned ap-

proach to change may stimulate affective commitment to change by increasing the quality of change communication. However, an emergent approach to change increases contributes to employee change commitment by increasing both the quality of change communication as well as the degree of participation. Our study thus provides support for the position that a planned change approach may be more *appropriate* in public organizations, while an emergent approach to change may be more *effective* in bringing about affective commitment to change.

Limitations and directions for future research

Our study has attempted to contribute to existing research on change in the public sector by focusing on change implementation on the organizational level, by incorporating the specific characteristics of public organizations, by accounting for the processes and leadership of change and by connecting these to employee support for organizational change. Another contribution is that we have attempted to progress the development of quantitative measurement instruments for central change management concepts. Because there is a need for research that can reliably test the relationships between different approaches to change and the outcomes of change (Pettigrew, 2000; Pettigrew et al., 2001; Kuipers et al., 2013), a first recommendation for future research is to focus more attention on the development and validation of such quantitative measurement instruments.

The design and methods of the study are also subject to several limitations. A first limitation concerns the construct and internal validity of the study's results. A first limitation is that the analysis was only focused on the transformational leadership style of direct supervisors. Although we had theoretical reasons to focus on the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors, we cannot exclude the possibility that other leadership styles may be more present or relevant in the implementation of organizational change. Moreover, because both dependent and independent variables were measured on the employee level, the relationships between the variables may be partly due to the method of data collection rather than the content of our concepts (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Meier & O'Toole, 2012). Harman's single factor test for common method variance indicated that common method variance has not likely influenced the construct validity of our variables. Moreover, the constructs fit the data as intended in the CFA. However, these tests do not assure the internal validity of our results. Causal inferences concerning the relationships in our structural model are based on theory, rather than observed temporal sequence. A second recommendation for future research is therefore to re-assess our reported findings in a multi-level or mixed methods design. Moreover, in order to assure the internal validity of conclusions, future research should build on longitudinal rather than cross-sectional designs.
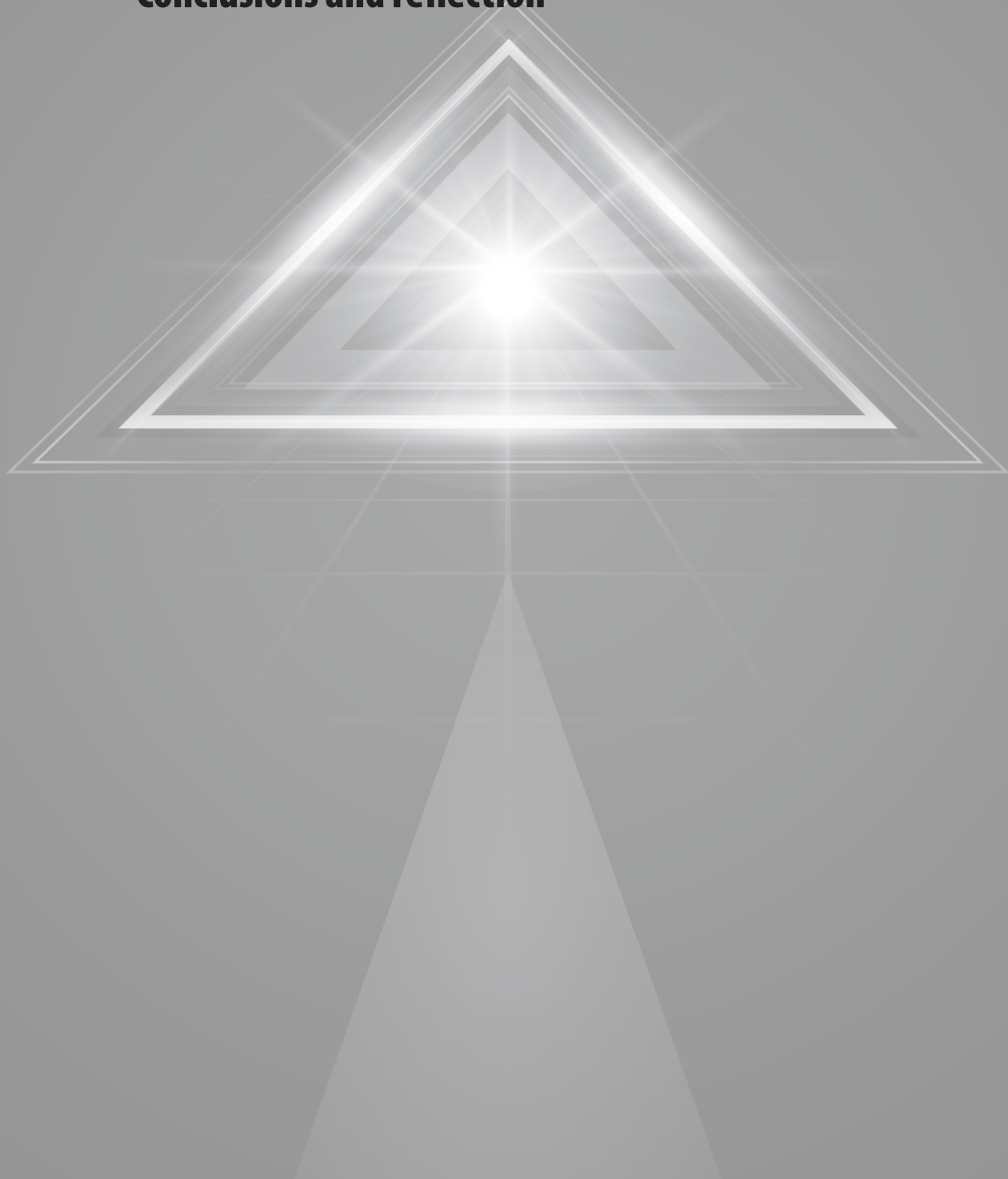
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A second limitation concerns the external validity of our results. Because of our case-based design, we have only studied a single organizational change in a single organization. Statistical generalization is thus limited to our selected case. As a consequence, the results of our study may not apply in different types of organizational change or across different organizational settings. This limitation can be seen as a shortcoming on much of the research on change management; it is often difficult to reproduce or compare results because of organizational, historical and contextual differences. A third recommendation for future research is therefore to increase academic attention for the implementation of organizational change in a public context. More importantly, future research should explicitly focus on the influence of the specific characteristics of public organizations in order to formulate and test theoretical propositions about change in the public sector.

7.6 CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to contribute to the literature on implementing change in public organizations by proposing and testing a theoretical framework concerning the relationship between transformational leadership behavior and affective commitment to change in a public sector context. We conclude that the transformational leadership of direct supervisors is central in the implementation of change. The data indicate a direct, positive relationship between transformational leadership and affective commitment to change. Building on change management theory, we explain how transformational leaders may contribute to the unfolding of planned and emergent changes in the organization, thereby creating affective commitment to change. The complex organizational environment and formalized organizational structure of public organizations impact the leadership behavior of direct supervisors.

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Conclusions and reflection

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This research was aimed at studying change leadership in public organizations. In this final chapter, the main conclusions of the research are presented and discussed. In the next section of this chapter, the three research objectives and research questions are addressed by summarizing the findings of the four empirical studies. In section 8.3, the overall conclusions about the leadership of change in public organizations are presented. Section 8.4 consists of a theoretical, conceptual and methodological reflection on this research and the associated challenges and avenues for future research. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the practical implications of the study in section 8.5.

8.2 ADDRESSING THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this section, conclusions concerning the three research objectives are formulated based on the findings of the four studies.

Research objective 1: The role of leadership in the implementation of change

The first objective of this research was to explore the role of leadership in the implementation of organizational change in public organizations. The first research question was: *What is the role of leadership in planned and emergent processes of change?*

As was discussed in the theoretical chapter of this research, organizational change can be implemented through planned and emergent approaches. In this research, planned and emergent change were seen as two approaches to bring about the implementation of intentional organizational change. Despite the fact that these two approaches can be distinguished, common conceptualizations of change leadership are almost exclusively oriented on the leadership of planned organizational change (e.g. Gill, 2002; Miller, 2001; Herold & Fedor, 2006; Herold et al., 2008; Liu, 2010). In chapter 2, it was argued that such change leadership activities are similar to the behaviors that are outlined in the theory of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Bass, 1999). Moreover, the change leadership literature is mostly focused on the leadership activities of senior managers (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; Hennesey, 1998), rather than the change leadership of individuals on lower hierarchical levels. In order to contribute to the literature on change leadership, this research was focused on the role of leadership in different types of change processes and on different hierarchical levels.

The research results indicate that typical change leadership activities, as defined in the change leadership literature (e.g. Miller, 2001; Gill, 2002; Herold et al., 2008; Liu, 2010) are central in the implementation of change in public organizations. However, depending

on the approach to change, such leadership activities are present to a different extent and in a different way. The research results indicate that, in planned processes of organizational change, the change leadership role is mostly concentrated in individuals on the senior management level. Their change leadership activities include emphasizing the need for change, formulating an appealing vision of change, communicating this vision to employees and motivating, convincing and inspiring employees to implement the change.

However, there is an overlap in the change leadership activities performed by senior and lower level managers in planned change. Lower level managers' change leadership activities include translating the overall vision of change to their department or team and attempting to role model the desired behavior. Similar leadership behaviors are executed on the two hierarchical levels. Because of this, the leadership role of lower level managers in planned processes of change is marginal and not clearly articulated. It is difficult for lower level managers to contribute to the implementation of change when change leadership is carried out by higher-level managers. As a consequence, the change leadership potential on lower level organizational levels is not fully utilized in planned processes of change.

In emergent processes of change, change leadership is to a greater extent shared between different hierarchical levels. Change leadership activities are for a large part devolved to lower level organizational members. Change is initiated and framed by senior managers, but it is filled in and implemented by lower level managers and employees. Leadership behaviors that are central to the change management literature such as envisioning the change, communicating change and role modeling (Gill, 2002; Herold et al., 2008; Higgs & Rowland, 2005), are carried out on lower levels in the organizational hierarchy than in planned processes of change. By devolving leadership responsibilities to lower level managers and employees and stimulating them to participate in the change process, the content of change in emergent processes of change originates from employees, rather than the apex of the organization.

The research results indicate that the implementation of emergent change, with its emphasis on devolving leadership roles and employee participation, may be uneasy for public managers. In effect, it requires senior managers to surrender their traditional leadership role and it calls for lower level managers and informal leaders to step up and take on a leadership role (cf. Van Wart, 2005). In emergent processes of change, the leadership behaviors of senior managers consist of devolving responsibilities and taking a step back. To them, this may be counterintuitive, because of the need to be accountable to their administrative and political superiors. Similarly, the research results indicate that a distributed leadership model may be equally difficult for lower level managers and employees. They are typically unused to assuming a leadership role, because

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of the tendency of public organizations to emphasize hierarchy and rely on a directive management style.

The different change leadership behaviors in planned and emergent processes of change are summarized in table 8.1.

Table 8.1: The leadership of planned and emergent change

	Planned change	**Emergent change**
Senior management	- Initiating change - Envisioning the content of change - Creating a sense of urgency - Communicating change - Role modeling	- Initiating change and providing direction - Devolving responsibilities - Stimulating participation - Taking a step back but showing support
Lower level management and informal leaders	- Communicating pre-defined content of change - Translating the vision of change to department/team - Role modeling - Referring to senior management's leadership behavior	- Communicating the urgency of change - Having employees discuss the urgency and meaning of change - Stimulating employees to envision the content of change - Promoting role modeling by employees

The main conclusion of the first research question is that change leadership in planned and emergent processes of change does not necessarily consist of different activities. Rather, change leadership activities in emergent processes of change are performed in a different way and on different organizational levels. The emergent change approach places greater emphasis on the change leadership of lower level and informal leaders, while change leadership is concentrated in senior management in the planned change approach. In planned change, lower level leadership is less central to the implementation process. In emergent change, the implementation of change revolves around lower level and informal leaders. For planned change, the challenge is to involve lower level managers in a meaningful way, while the emphasis remains on the leadership role of senior management. In emergent change, the challenge is for senior management to balance between delegating responsibilities but showing support, and stimulating lower level organizational members to take on the role of change leader.

Research objective 2: The influence of the specific characteristics of public organizations

The second research objective is to contextualize change leadership in public organizations by examining how change leadership and the implementation of change are influenced by the specific characteristics of public organizations. The second research question was: *To what extent and how do the specific characteristics of the organizational environment and organizational structure of public organizations influence the implementation of change and its leadership?*

Several authors have argued that the organizational environment of public organizations can be characterized as relatively complex (Boyne, 2002; Rainey, 2003). Moreover, research has suggested that public organizations are typically characterized by a relatively bureaucratic organizational structure (Farnham & Horton, 1996; By & Macleod, 2009). The relationship between these specific characteristics of public organizations and change leadership was studied in multiple studies and on different organizational levels.

Several relationships between a complex organizational environment and change processes and change leadership were identified. First, the findings indicate that a complex organizational environment favors the adoption of a planned approach to change. Because of an increased number of administrative and political dependencies, an organization is forced to formulate more detailed change objectives and implementation plans. A high degree of environmental complexity thus causes the change process to take on more characteristics of planned change. Second, a complex organizational environment calls for leadership behavior of senior managers that goes beyond transformational leadership. In situations with a high degree of environmental complexity, senior managers were found to focus more on externally oriented change leadership activities than on behaviors belonging to the transformational perspective. Rather, change leadership at the higher organizational level was aimed at external actors, identifying dependencies, overcoming external opposition and creating support in the complex political-administrative arena in which public organizations are typically embedded. Leading change in the public sector encompasses transformational leadership behaviors, but is also aimed at connecting with external actors, lobbying for support and making strategic trade-offs. On the higher organizational levels, leading change in the public sector is as much about envisioning as it is about negotiating the content of change. Senior leaders should not aim at reaching the ideal future situation, but they should focus on an agreeable and supported one. Transformational change leadership is thus necessary, but it is not sufficient for leading change in public organizations.

On the level of direct supervisors, environmental complexity was found to positively influence transformational leadership behavior. This positive relationship is consistent with research on the influence of contextual factors on transformational leadership behavior. For example, Pawar and Eastman (1997) and Shamir and Howell (1999) argue that environmental complexity makes it more difficult to routinize employee behavior through organizational rules and transaction-based leadership. Managers therefore provide vision and meaning in order to direct employee behavior.

A public organization's specific organizational structure was also found to influence the process of change and its leadership. First, the bureaucratic organizational structure

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of public organizations makes an emergent process of change less likely. Employee perceptions concerning the degree of formalization of the organizational structure are negatively related to emergent change processes. This result indicates that the presence of rules and procedures make organizational change through devolved, open-ended change processes less likely. Similarly, Coram and Burnes (2001) have argued that a planned process of change is most appropriate given the bureaucratic nature that is typical for many public organizations. In their study of organizational change in six Australian federal agencies, Stewart and Kringas (2003) indeed find that top-down approaches are most applied. Second, a bureaucratic organizational structure is negatively related to transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors. This result indicates that transformational leadership behavior is less present in organizations with a high degree of formalization. This result is consistent with other studies that have indicated that managers tend to rely on control and exchange based leadership styles in mechanistic organizations, while managers prefer transformational or charismatic leadership styles in less rule-based organizations (Conger, 1999; Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Shamir & Howell, 1999).

The relationships between the specific organizational environment and organizational structure of public organizations and processes of change and its leadership are summarized in table 8.2.

Table 8.2: Change processes and change leadership in the public sector

	Change process	Change leadership
Complex organizational environment	A complex environment favors the adoption of a planned change process	In a complex environment, the leadership activities of senior managers are aimed at the external environment, rather than the internal organization, while direct supervisors engage in more transformational leadership behaviors
Bureaucratic organizational structure	A bureaucratic structure makes the adoption of an emergent change process less likely	A bureaucratic organizational structure is negatively related to transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors

All in all, in this research, the specific characteristics of public sector organizations were found to impact both the processes of change as well as change leadership. The results contribute to the view that a planned approach to change is more appropriate for public organizations compared to an emergent approach to change. With respect to change leadership, the conclusion is that the specific public sector context calls for leadership behavior other than transformational model of change leadership. On the senior management level, transformational leadership activities are present, as well as additional networking leadership behavior to overcome the complex organizational environment.

On a lower hierarchical level, the bureaucratic organizational structure decreases the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors.

Research objective 3: The relationship between leadership and the outcomes of change

The third research objective was to test to what extent and how leadership affects the outcomes of organizational change in public organizations. The third research question was: *To what extent and how does leadership influence the outcomes of planned and emergent processes of change?*

The outcomes of change were assessed by measuring the support of employees for organizational change, because the support of change is generally seen as a crucial factor for the implementation of change (Bartunek et al., 2006; Herold et al. 2007; Wright et al., 2013). The research has identified three ways in which employee support for change is influenced: leadership, the change process, and the combined of effect of leadership and the process of change.

First, the research results indicate that transformational leadership behavior is positively related to support for change. A direct, positive relationship between direct supervisor's transformational leadership behavior and employee willingness to change was found. Employees who reported more transformational leadership behavior of their direct supervisors, had a higher intention to perform change-related behaviors such as convincing their co-workers of the benefits of the change, reducing resistance among colleagues and putting in time and effort to implement the change. However, in a highly bureaucratic context, the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors does not significantly affect these employee attitudes. This finding is consistent with Shamir and Howell (1999) and Conger (1999) who have argued that transformational leadership is both less present and less effective in a bureaucratic context. In addition, a direct, positive relationship between direct supervisor's transformational leadership and affective commitment to change among employees was found. Transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors was positively related to employee beliefs concerning the inherent benefits of the organizational change. Transformational leadership contributes to beliefs among employees that the organizational change is a good strategy for the organization, that the change is necessary and that it serves an important purpose. Change leadership thus has a direct, positive influence on employee support for organizational change.

Second, the research results indicate that employee support for change is affected by the characteristics of the change process. The research results show that both planned and emergent processes of change are positively related to employee support for change. However, emergent change is a more effective way of implementing change

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than a planned approach to change. Employees may be more willing to accept changes in the organization's key values when these changes are introduced as an elaboration on the current values, rather than a radical break-away. Moreover, because the emergent approach is more devolved and participative, it is easier for organizational members to relate to the objectives of change than in a planned change approach. Emergent processes of change thus allow for a greater sense of continuity and ownership among managers and employees.

Moreover, the results indicate that emergent change is a more comprehensive, and therefore more effective, approach to create employee support for organizational change compared to a planned approach to change. A planned approach to change is related to a high quality of change communication, which in turn has a positive effect on employee support for change. An emergent change approach is not only associated with a higher quality of change communication, it also improves employee participation during change. Both the quality of change communication and the degree of participation are important determinants of employee support for change. As such, emergent change improves employee support for change not only by providing high quality information about the change, but also by stimulating employees to participate in the implementation of change. Similar to this result, Klarner et al. (2008) have argued that public organizations should rely on more incremental and participative change approaches. In addition, Isett et al. (2012) argue that bottom-up approaches are an effective way to implement change in public organizations. This research provides evidence concerning these arguments and as such contributes to the view that devolved, participative approaches are more effective than a planned approach to change in public organizations.

Third, the relationship between change leadership and employee support for change is influenced by the characteristics of the change process. Transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors contributes little to employee support in planned processes of change, but may be crucial in emergent processes of change. The results indicate that in highly planned processes of change, employee support is not affected by a varying degree of transformational leadership. In other words: transformational leadership of direct supervisors contributes little to employee support in planned change. An opposite result was found in emergent processes of change. When change processes take on more emergent characteristics, the transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors becomes a crucial condition for favorable attitudes among employees. The presence of transformational leadership behavior contributes to the effect of an emergent change approach on the support for change of employees. However, bureaucratic organizational structures limit the contribution that direct supervisors can make. The analysis indicates that direct supervisors may only contribute to emergent change processes in an organizational context with a low degree of rules, regulations and procedures.

All in all, the results of the third research objective indicate that transformational leadership behavior, such as articulating a vision for employees, being a role model and providing individual support for employees, is positively related to employee support for change. Moreover, planned and emergent change may result in support for organizational changes, but emergent change is more effective than planned change. Finally, transformational leadership of direct supervisors does not improve employee support in planned processes of change, but transformational leadership is crucial in emergent processes of change.

8.3 CONCLUSION: LEADING CHANGE IN PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

In this section, the main conclusions of the research are formulated by answering the overall research question that was formulated in chapter 1:

To what extent and how does leadership affect the implementation of organizational change and its outcomes, given the specific context of public organizations?

The first conclusion of the research is that *environmental complexity and bureaucracy cause public organizations to favor the adoption of a planned change approach, while an emergent change approach results in more support for change among employees*. The research results indicate that a high degree of environmental complexity forces public organizations to adopt a planned approach to change. High levels of scrutiny necessitate the formulation and approval of detailed change objectives and time plannings, in order to be held accountable by political superiors. Moreover, a high level of dependence on other administrative agencies and political principals requires consensus about the objectives of change. Where it might be expected that a high degree of complexity will lead to decentralization of authority and thus a more devolved change process (cf. Mintzberg, 1979), the open-ended nature of the change process shifts toward more planned and detailed change objectives due to demands for consensus and accountability. In addition, a highly bureaucratic organizational structure, which is characterized by an elaborate reliance on rules and procedures, makes emergent change in public organizations less likely. The research results indicate that emergent change processes, which are based on small-scale adaptations, local initiatives and learning, are less prevalent in a context that is highly formalized.

Despite the tendency of public organizations to adopt a planned approach to change, an emergent approach to change will result in a higher degree of support for change among employees. The research results indicate that both a planned and an emergent change approach can be used to create employee support for change. However, an

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emergent change proved to be more effective to induce change support among employees. The participative nature of emergent change makes it easier for employees to relate to the content of change, and its emphasis on gradual improvement rather than radical replacement may lessen hesitance and resistance among employees. Moreover, an emergent change approach leads to both more participation and a higher quality of change communication, whereas a planned approach to change merely improves employee perceptions about the quality of change communication. As both these factors are positively related to employee change support, emergent change can be seen as a more comprehensive approach to the implementation of organizational change.

The second conclusion of the research is that, *despite the tendency of public organizations to adopt a planned change approach, both senior and lower level managers may contribute to the adoption of an emergent change approach*. The research results indicate that leadership, at different hierarchical levels of the organization, is an important antecedent of the type of change process that is adopted. One of the most important leadership activities is senior management's decision concerning the approach to change. In order to realize beneficial change outcomes, senior managers may choose to depart from common-practice and adopt a less conventional, emergent approach to change. After the initiation of an emergent change process, it is senior management's responsibility to preserve the emergent characteristics of the change process amidst environmental demands for accountability, scrutiny and control. Lower level leadership may also contribute to the implementation of change through an emergent change process. Through transformational leadership behavior, direct supervisors contribute to emergent changes in the organization. Leadership at multiple levels in the organization may thus counteract the inherent tendency of public organizations to adopt a planned approach to change.

The third conclusion of the research is that, *although favorable for support for change among employees, organizational change in public organizations requires a more elaborated type of change leadership than a mere transformational leadership style*. The research results indicate that a transformational leadership style has a positive effect on employee support for change. Leadership behaviors, such as articulating an appealing vision for the organization, providing individual support and intellectually stimulating employees, contribute to perceptions among employees that the change has inherent benefits, and makes employees more willing to devote time and effort to the implementation of change. However, the research results indicate that change leadership in public organizations must go beyond such leadership behaviors. Transformational change leadership is necessary, but it is not sufficient to implement change in public organizations. First, the complex organizational environment places extra emphasis on leadership directed at the organization's external environment. Rather than creating

internal support for change, senior managers must focus on creating support for change in the political-administrative arena. The leadership challenge for senior managers is to parry the tendency of external actors to enforce a more planned approach to change, and as such safeguard the effective implementation of change by means of an emergent change process.

Second, the implementation of change through an emergent process of change calls for a different role of leadership. Instead of the transformational leadership perspective that is generally outlined in the change management literature, leading emergent change consists of deliberately taking a step back by devolving responsibilities to lower level managers and employees. Rather than individually shaping the content of change and directing the implementation of change, leadership consists of carefully initiating the purpose and direction of change, but leaving the process and content of change up to lower level managers and employees. The leadership challenge here is to overcome bureaucratic organizational structures and traditions, which cause lower level managers and employees to be less inclined to assume a leadership role. The leadership of organizational change in public organizations thus calls for a dual role of leadership: senior managers must focus on stimulating the involvement and participation of lower level managers and employees, while simultaneously focusing on the external environment in order to preserve the emergent characteristics of the change process.

8.4 REFLECTION

In order to address the research objectives and answer the overall research questions, many decisions were taken in the course of conducting this research. This section consists of a theoretical, conceptual and methodological reflection. The reflection is focused on some of the central choices, limitations and dilemmas of this research, and as such identifies directions for future research.

Theoretical reflection

Toward a theory of change in public organizations. The aim of this research was to contribute to theory about change management in public organizations, by explicitly focusing on the role of leadership. In recent years, there has been a lot of academic attention for the management of change in public organizations (Kelman, 2005; Sminia & Van Nistelrooij, 2006; Chustz & Larson, 2006; Stewart & O'Donnell, 2007; Klarner et al., 2008; Karp & Helgø, 2008; Liguori, 2012; Isett et al., 2012). However, this academic attention has not led to the generation of theory about organizational change in the public sector. Relatively little is known about the extent to which private sector change management theories are applicable in a public sector context.

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In order to make a theoretical contribution about the role of the public status of organizations in organizational change, this research has applied a dimensional approach to 'publicness' (cf. Bozeman, 1987; Bozeman & Bretschneider, 1994; Antonsen & Jørgensen, 1997). In this approach, the degree in which an organization is 'public' has consequences for the characteristics of the organization (Andrews et al., 2011). Characteristics such as a complex environment and a bureaucratic organizational structure are assumed to be more characteristic for organizations with a high degree of publicness. Subsequently, by means of analytical generalization (Yin, 2009) or theoretical generalization (Blatter & Haverland, 2012), this research has attempted to formulate or test theoretical propositions and as such contribute to theory about the leadership of organizational change in public organizations. As such, this research has resulted in theoretical statements about how the implementation of change and its leadership is affected by specific public sector characteristics.

As was stated in the introductory chapter of this research, many public management studies emphasize the content, reasons, context and effects of organizational change, rather than the implementation processes (Pollitt, 2000; Heinrich, 2002; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004; Ackroyd et al., 2007; Ongaro, 2010). In addition, many recent studies that have examined the implementation process of organizational change in a public organization do not explicitly account for how their specific characteristics affect the implementation of change (e.g. Coram & Burnes, 2001; Klarner et al., 2008; Isett et al., 2012). This research has gone beyond these studies by relating the process of change and its leadership to the specific organizational that are associated with public organizations.

Other studies approach the public character of organizations with a core approach to publicness. For example, Robertson and Seneviratne (1995) have applied a core approach to publicness by comparing the implementation of planned change in public and private organizations. Even though Robertson and Seneviratne find limited differences, their analysis cannot explain *why* differences exist. In this sense, their distinction between public and private organizations is not a theoretical distinction. This research has gone beyond a core approach by breaking down the concept of publicness into specific organizational characteristics that are associated with a high degree of publicness. As such, whereas a core approach will result in the description of differences between public and private organizations, this research has resulted in theoretical statements that can be used to explain how publicness may influence the (the effectiveness of) implementation of change.

A dimensional approach to publicness also has some disadvantages. A first disadvantage of this approach is that it is, in contrast with the prescriptive literature on organizational change, unlikely to result in a clear, compact theory. Because of the differences *between* public organizations, many specific characteristics will not apply to all public organizations. For example, public organizations are typically characterized by a bu-

reauratic organizational structure (e.g. the army, the police, many central government and executive agencies), but this is not the case for all public organizations (e.g. schools or research institutions). Moreover, some of the specific public sector characteristics may apply to organizations in the private sector as well. For example, the organizational structure of private companies such as banks or insurance companies may be just as bureaucratic as some organizations in the public sector. This approach to address the public character of public organizations will not result in a 'grand theory' of organizational change in the public sector. Rather, academic research will result in the formulation of a 'theory a la carte', consisting of separate, more nuanced, theoretical propositions with a more limited scope. An avenue for future research is to expand the locus of this research by replicating the approach of this research in different subsectors such as education or health care. Such research could examine if the specific organizational environment and organizational structure have a similar bearing on the implementation of change and its leadership.

Another disadvantage of a dimensional approach is that the list of specific characteristics may be unlimited. Authors such as Farnham and Horton (1996), Boyne (2002) and Rainey (2003) list many specific characteristics of public organizations. In this research, only the complex organizational environment and the bureaucratic organizational structure were taken into account as specific characteristics of public organizations. Next to the organizational environment and organizational structure, publicness has also been related to the organizational culture, the use of management techniques and the characteristics of managers and employees (Boyne, 2002; Rainey, 2003). An avenue for future research is therefore to expand the focus of this research by examining how other specific characteristics that can be attributed to publicness influence the process, leadership and outcomes of change. For example, Wright et al. (2013) have examined how public service motivation is related to support for organizational change.

Reflection on the research design. Kuipers et al. (2013) refer to the context, process, content, leadership and outcomes of change in order to distinguish between different aspects of organizational change. This research has incorporated the context, process, leadership and outcomes of change, but has not incorporated the content of change. As different types of organizational change may call for different implementation approaches, this raises the question to what extent the research results are valid without controlling for the content of change.

The content of change was not included in this study as a control variable. Rather, the content of change was controlled for through the research design. The design of this research emphasized internal validity over external validity. By focusing on a small number of cases, differences between cases for which the research cannot account are excluded. As such, findings can be more confidently attributed to the central variables

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of the research. Moreover, all studied cases were part of a single reform in the municipal organization of the Dutch city Rotterdam. In this sense, the research results of the different empirical studies can be compared and connected as the investigated relationships are all about a similar type of organizational change. However, the adopted case study design has disadvantages with respect to external validity. Only a single type of organizational change in a specific organizational context was studied. Therefore, the research results cannot be confidently translated to the implementation of organizational changes that differ with respect to the content of change.

Explaining change as effective or appropriate? This research was about the leadership behavior of public managers in organizational change. As such, this research was aimed at accounting for *how* organizational change comes about, rather than explaining *why* organizational changes take place. However, this research has drawn on contending logics to explain how the main concepts are related.

In the theoretical chapter and the quantitative studies (chapter 6 and 7), public managers were expected to apply transformational change leadership behaviors because they have a preference and an interest to create support for change among employees. Moreover, the relationships between the organizational environment, organizational structure and processes of change were based on contingency theory (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1969; Mintzberg, 1979). Contingency theory highlights how the effectiveness of certain configurations or practices, in this case change processes and leadership, are influenced by certain contingency factors. In contrast, the qualitative studies (chapter 4 and 5) have focused on the leadership behaviors that managers have reported they engaged in during the implementation of change. The qualitative studies show that public managers are not only concerned with the effective implementation of organizational change. They are confronted with multiple demands, which shape behavior in the implementation of organizational change.

For example, this research has indicated that while an emergent approach to change is more effective, senior managers often opt for a planned approach to change. This does not mean that senior managers are irrational or incompetent. Rather, senior managers are not only concerned with creating internal support for change, but are simultaneously confronted with dependency on external actors and accountability toward political superiors. Such external dependencies favor the adoption of a planned approach to change. Their behavior should thus not be explained as a choice for the most effective approach to create internal support for change, but as a course of action that is enforced by the organizational environment.

The conclusion here is that this research has drawn on two distinct, possibly contending, logics in order to explain the implementation of change in public organizations. While the quantitative studies were based on a logic of consequence, which states that

that actions stem from expectations of their consequences and preferences for those consequences (March, 1994), the qualitative studies highlight a logic of appropriateness. In the logic of appropriateness, actions are matched to rules, expectations, demands and identities (March, 1994). It is important to emphasize that while the logic of appropriateness is different from the logic of consequence, "both are logics of reason" (March 1994: 101). Change management theory is mainly concerned with consequences: bringing about effective or successful organizational change. Public management theory may be useful to identify the 'rational limits' of change implementation in public organizations. Certain leadership behaviors and change approaches may be effective in the sense that they will contribute to internal support for change, but this research has shown that the specific characteristics of public organizations may dictate a different, more appropriate, course of action.

Conceptual reflection

Change leadership. Change leadership is generally seen as a crucial factor in the implementation of organizational change (Kotter, 1996; Gill, 2002). However, as was also argued in the theoretical chapter of this research, there is relatively little evidence for the actual effects of leadership in organizational change (Burke, 2010; Herold et al., 2008). Many authors claim the importance of leadership based only on conceptual or anecdotal evidence (Miller, 2001; Kotter, 1996; Karp & Helgø, 2008). In other studies, the effects of leadership may be overestimated because explanatory factors other than leadership are not incorporated in the design (Herold et al., 2008; Liu, 2010). This research has shown that when other explanatory factors are included, such as the process of organizational change, the effect size of leadership is reduced. This means that support for organizational change is not only dependent on leadership behavior, but also on the characteristics of the change process. Although many studies have emphasized the importance of leadership over management during organizational change (Gill, 2002; Karp & Helgø, 2008; Kotter, 1996), the effect of leadership should not be overstated. This research has shown that employee support for change is for a large degree dependent on the approach to change, while the direct effect of leadership is relatively small.

Much of the proclaimed effectiveness of leadership may be inherent to the definition of the concept. Leadership is often defined as the more exciting relative of management: Leadership is generally related to innovation and change, while management emphasizes stability and control (Yukl, 2002; Kotter, 1990; Jackson & Parry, 2008). In this sense, the statement that leadership contributes to organizational change may be a tautology rather than a conceptual relationship (cf. Spicker, 2012). Despite this conceptual difference between leadership and management, the demarcation between the leadership and management of change is very diffuse. Eisenbach et al. (1999) note the conceptual resemblances of change leadership and planned organizational change. In

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the theoretical chapter of this research, it was already argued that change leadership is typically defined as the leadership of planned organizational change. For example, in Kotter's (1996) eight-step model of successful change, it is unclear which steps are concerned with 'leadership' and which steps are 'management'. This makes it difficult to isolate and theorize about the effects or contribution of leadership in planned organizational change. Future research should aim at developing a less inclusive and more theoretical view at change leadership and its effects on organizational change.

The need for more systematic leadership research is especially present in public management research. Based on a review about change management in the public sector, Kuipers et al. (2013) conclude that leadership is often not used in a theoretical way. For example, Klarner et al. (2008) emphasize the importance of leadership in their study of the World Health Organization, without defining or elaborating on the concept. Other authors equate change leadership with transformational leadership (e.g. Ryan et al., 2008), without reflecting on the different mechanisms through which the change leadership and leadership styles approaches may affect the implementation of organizational change. Conceptually, they emphasize similar behaviors, but the mechanisms through which they influence change are different. Change leadership is explicitly aimed at the implementation of an organizational change initiative, while the transformational leadership style is more generally related to the work-related behaviors of employees (Liu, 2010). Research on change leadership in the public sector should more precisely account for the theoretical underpinnings of leadership. A possible avenue for future research is to simultaneously study the interactions of change leadership and transformational leadership. For example, Eisenbach et al. (1999) and Higgs and Rowland (2011) have suggested that transformational leaders may be particularly effective change leaders, while Herold et al. (2008) and Liu (2010) conclude that change leadership and the transformational leadership style may be appropriate in different types of organizational change.

A final consideration about change leadership is that this research has shown that change leadership in emergent processes of change is different from the transformational perspective on change leadership. However, this part of the research was mainly explorative. A challenge here is that the amount of concepts for the leadership in emergent change is rather limited. Future research could focus on furthering the conceptualization of change leadership in emergent processes of change. The work of Higgs and Rowland (2010) on shaping, framing and creating capacity leadership behavior can be used as starting point for this line of research and could be useful for relating new leadership concepts to the existing literature on change leadership.

Planned and emergent change. In the literature on change management, different concepts about organizational change are often presented in pairs. Examples of such

conceptual pairs are incremental and radical change (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996), programmatic and participatory change (Russ, 2008), theory E and theory O (Beer and Nohria, 2000), design and developmental approaches (Boonstra, Steensma & Demenint, 2008), revolutionary and evolutionary change (Burke, 2010) and strategic management versus organizational development (Sminia and Van Nistelrooij, 2006). Such conceptual pairs are often related and similar, but they are not interchangeable. Some of the conceptual pairs, for example strategic management vs. organizational development and programmatic vs. participatory change, refer only to the process through which change comes about. Other concepts refer not only to the process of change, but also account for the content or scale of the organizational change. An example is Beer and Nohria's (2000) theory E and theory O. Theory E is organizational change that is top-down and management driven but also emphasizes changes in the organizational structure and strategy, while Theory O is more devolved and open-ended and is oriented on organizational members and the organizational culture. Similarly, Burke's (2010) concepts of radical and incremental change refer to the pace in which change is implemented, but also to the scale of change. At first sight, the change management literature may thus come across as a very well ordered literature, but the nuanced differences between the many concepts and theories make the literature difficult to oversee. This complex conceptual landscape makes it difficult to theoretically elaborate on and specify existing theory, as well as formulate and test theoretical propositions.

The planned and emergent approach to change are generally seen as the dominant concepts to refer to the way organizational change comes about (Bamford & Forrester, 2003; Burnes, 2004; By, 2005; Kickert, 2010; Kuipers et al., 2013). In this research, the concepts planned and emergent change were used to distinguish between different approaches through which organizational change can be *implemented*. Although planned change is commonly associated with the implementation of organizational change, not all conceptualizations of emergent change are congruent a focus on implementation. 'Emergent change' is a broad, loosely defined concept. Bamford and Forrester (2003: 547) state that the supporters of the emergent change perspective "appear more united in their stance against planned change than their agreement on a specific alternative". In some conceptualizations of emergent change, the concept is defined as being continuous, spontaneous and random (e.g. March, 1991; Weick, 2000). Such aspects may be seen as incompatible with the idea of 'implementation', as well as the assumption that emergent change can be 'lead'.

In this research, emergent change was conceptualized as a devolved, participative and open-ended way of implementing an intentional change. This conceptualization is in line with By (2005), who states that emergent change is open-ended and based on learning and is characterized by devolved authority and bottom-up processes. Moreover, Burnes (1996) argues that emergent change is an approach that can be chosen depend-

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ing on the type of change. In this sense, the conceptualization of planned and emergent change that was used in this research is closely related to the distinction between strategic management and organizational development. At the same time, scholars with a different view on emergent change may find this conceptualization troublesome.

Furthermore, these concepts are applied with different meanings. For example, in the social constructivist perspective, emergent change refers to ongoing, random changes (e.g. Weick, 2000; Weick & Quinn, 1999), while in this research, emergent change refers to the approach in which an episode of organizational change is implemented. As a consequence, one of the main challenges of the contemporary change management literature is grounded in conceptualization and semantics. The advance of any scientific discipline is based on systematic testing and modification of theoretical propositions, which is hampered by the current diffuse and ambiguous conceptual landscape. There is not necessarily a need for better concepts, but the change management literature could benefit from applying concepts more strictly and casting aside those concepts that turn out to be redundant. Rather than summing up typologies and concepts about change management (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; By, 2005; Kuipers et al., 2013), future literature reviews should be more critical about the extent to which current theoretical concepts are mutually exclusive or conceptually conflicting. Authors could more fundamentally analyze comparable change approaches such as planned change and strategic management, by explicitly highlighting and comparing the underlying assumptions. More generally, implicit conceptual inconsistencies could be highlighted by distinguishing concepts according to their underlying ontological and epistemological worldviews. This may result in dismissing some concepts and sending others back to the drawing board, but such a critical assessment of the conceptual landscape may contribute to the conceptual clarity and consistency of the change management literature.

Methodological reflection

Measuring the specific characteristics of public organizations. One of the objectives of this research was to explicitly examine the relationship between the specific characteristics of public organizations and the implementation and leadership of organizational change. In this research, this relationship has been studied with qualitative as well as quantitative research methods. As was argued in the theoretical chapter, qualitative and quantitative research methods are generally seen as appropriate for different research objectives. Qualitative methods are best used in exploratory or descriptive research aimed at the generation of theory, while quantitative methods are better fit for explanatory research and theory testing. However, it will be argued here that the adoption of qualitative or quantitative research methods also influences the degree in which the specific characteristics of public organizations can be validly measured.

A detailed literature exists about the specific characteristics of public sector organizations (e.g. Allison, 1979; Perry & Rainey, 1988; Farnham & Horton, 1996; Rainey & Bozeman, 2000; Boyne, 2002; Rainey, 2003). Authors often classify these specific characteristics in terms of the organizational environment, organizational goals, the organizational structure and characteristics of public managers and employees (Boyne, 2002; Rainey, 2003; By & Macleod, 2009). Despite such clear-cut classifications, the factors that comprise the specificity of public organizations are not easily demarcated. For example, it is difficult to attribute the specific nature of the environment of a public organization to a single factor. The organizational environment is generally seen as relatively complex, but this complexity is comprised of distinct features such as the amount of stakeholders on which the organization is dependent, the close relations with and interference of the political domain, the close scrutiny and calls for accountability of media, interest groups and citizens, and government's function as a role model in society.

Despite these difficulties, an attempt was made in this research to demarcate and isolate two specific characteristics of public organizations. These are the complexity of the organizational environment and the degree of bureaucracy of the organizational structure. In the empirical studies of this research, these factors were measured using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative methods allow for a thick description of the various factors that make a public organization specific. Quantitative methods, on the other hand, are more fit for explanatory research, but they necessarily lead to a reductionist perspective on the specificity of public organizations. For example, the qualitative study in chapter 5 was based on a rich conceptualization of environmental complexity that accounted for many different dimensions such as administrative and political dependencies, financial pressures, media scrutiny and external events and crises. In contrast, the quantitative study in chapter 7 was based on a narrow measurement scale for environmental complexity from the general management sciences.

There is thus a trade-off in the adoption of qualitative versus quantitative methods: qualitative measures allow for a more rich and valid measure of the specific nature of public organizations, while quantitative methods are better equipped to assess the relationships between the specific nature of public organizations and other variables. This trade-off is inherent to the adoption of either research method, but several directions for future research could partly offset this tradeoff. Future qualitative studies could be based on research designs that are better geared toward explanation (e.g. Blatter & Haverland, 2012). By doing so, a rich and valid measure of the specific characteristics could be complemented with more explanatory research objectives. Future quantitative studies could focus on developing better measures to account for the specific characteristics of public organizations. In this research, a measure for environmental complexity was used in which in which the word 'market' had to be replaced by 'environment'. Several measures for specific public sector characteristics have been developed in the

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past decades, such as red tape (Bozeman & Scott, 1996), public service motivation (Perry, 1996; Vandenabeele, 2008) and policy alienation (Tummers, 2012). By developing and applying improved measures, future quantitative research will be better equipped to validly account for the specific characteristics of public organizations, as well as their effects. However, because no quantitative measurement instrument will be as rich as a qualitative measurement, the trade-off between valid measurement and explanation can only partly be overcome.

The quantitative measurement of planned and emergent change. In qualitative research, the terms planned and emergent change are often used to characterize processes of change (Bamford & Forrester, 2003; Burnes, 2004; Kickert, 2010). Several characteristics of the concepts have been formulated in the literature (Burnes, 1996; By, 2005). In contrast, the measure by Farrell (2000) is the only quantitative measure that has been proposed for these concepts. Although these concepts are commonly applied in qualitative research, they are not often applied in quantitative research. Rather than referring to planned and emergent processes of change, quantitative studies apply concepts such as communication (Self et al., 2007; Wright et al., 2013), senior management support (Holt et al., 2007; Lines et al., 2005) and participation (DeVos et al., 2007) in order to account for the process of change.

In this research, the measure by Farrell (2000) was first applied in chapter 6 of the research. However, the measure has some shortcomings. The original study by Farrell already indicates that the measure is problematic. In the data of this research, the internal consistency of the measurement is unsatisfactory. In addition, the item that indicates that the organizational change 'Is a slow process, which emerges over time' did not load on both the factor of planned and emergent change. Because of these shortcomings, several items were not included in the analysis. Another issue with the scale is that it accounts for some, but not all the characteristics of planned and emergent change. A discussion of these missing characteristics is given in chapter 6. After the study in chapter 6, additional items were formulated to broaden the conceptual scope of the measure in chapter 7. However, an exploratory and confirmatory factors analysis indicated that several items had to be excluded. Not all theoretical aspects of the concepts planned and emergent change that are outlined in the change management literature (Bamford & Forrester, 2003; Burnes, 2004; By, 20005), are thus incorporated in the quantitative measures that were used in this research.

A shortcoming of the way the measure was applied in this research has to do with the formulation of the items. The formulation of some of the items is rather difficult. Examples are 'The implementation of change occurs by encouraging employees to understand and adapt to changing circumstances in our environment' and 'The implementation of change is part of an ongoing process of adapting to our environment'. In

the original study by Farrell (2000), the respondents of the original study were CEO's of 2000 Australian companies. However, in this research, respondents were organizational members on the operational level. Several respondents reported that they had difficulty comprehending some of the items. This may have had negative consequences for the study's response rate and validity of the measure as used in this study.

The literature on change management thus currently lacks a valid quantitative measure for the process of organizational change. As a result, the divide between the concepts that are applied in qualitative and quantitative research remains. Especially in a discipline where conclusions about effectiveness and success are not only formulated by academic researchers, but also by practitioners and consultants, it is important that quantitative research can be used to test theory. The improvement of the measurement scale by Farrell (2000) or the formulation of a new measurement scale for planned and emergent change is thus an important avenue for future change management research.

Triangulation. In the methodological chapter, it was argued that the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods would allow for methodological triangulation. Triangulation refers to the cross-checking of results from different sources. In this sense, triangulation increases the internal validity of research by independently establishing a relationship with multiple methods (Greene et al., 1989). Here, the degree in which methodological triangulation was actually achieved for each of the three research objectives is examined.

The first research objective was to study the role of leadership in planned and emergent processes of change. Although leadership and processes of change were central in each of the four studies, this research objective was mainly studied in the qualitative studies in chapter 4 and 5. The transformational perspective, which was found to be the dominant change leadership perspective in the qualitative work, was then selected and related to outcomes variables in the subsequent quantitative studies. The degree to which different research methods are used to cross-check the results of the first research objective is thus limited. Rather, the results of the first research objective were used to inform and focus the research concerning the second and third research objective.

The second research objective was aimed at studying the influence of the specific organizational environment and organizational structure of public organizations on the implementation of change and its leadership. The influence of the complex organizational environment on the process of change and change leadership was examined with qualitative methods in chapter 5 and with quantitative methods in chapter 7. However, the analysis in chapter 7 was not an identical cross-check because the relationships were studied in a different case, and on the employee level instead of among managers. The effects of the organizational structure were only studied with quantitative methods, in chapter 6 and 7. Moreover, the analysis in chapter 6 treated the organizational structure

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as a moderating variable, while it was an independent variable in the analysis of chapter 7. The use of mixed methods was thus more aimed at diversification than exact replication.

The third research objective was to examine the effects of change leadership and the process of change on the outcomes of change. These relationships were only studied using quantitative research methods. In the analysis of both chapter 6 and 7, the effects of transformational leadership and planned and emergent process on the attitudes of employees were examined. Although this relationship was not assessed using methodological triangulation, the relationships were cross-checked in different cases.

The conclusion is that methodological triangulation was applied in this research, but only to a limited degree. Rather than using quantitative methods to test the findings of qualitative research, the qualitative studies served to inform and direct the quantitative studies. Moreover, the findings of the qualitative studies were used to interpret the results of the quantitative studies. The main advantages of applying a mixed methods design in this research are thus its complementarity and sequentiality, rather than methodological triangulation. This research should be seen as the first steps toward a theory of organizational change and its leadership in public organizations. In this sense, this research has been more concerned with the generation of theory than with theory testing. For some aspects of this research, it was possible to cross-check research results with different methods. For other aspects of the research, methodological triangulation was beyond the scope of the research. As the body of research that explicitly accounts for the specific nature of public organizations grows, there will be opportunities for replication and cross-checking of results.

8.5 ROUNDING OFF: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE?

Despite the fact that both change management and public management are practice-oriented disciplines, this research has so far reported little practical implications, suggestions and prescriptions. This research has focused on systematically examining the empirical relationships between concepts, in order to formulate and test theory concerning the relationships between these concepts. Therefore, little effort has been done to translate these theoretical findings into more practical advice. Some readers may be disappointed that, after reading through 8 chapters, they have still not found a list of '10 commandments for public sector change leadership', or '8 steps for successful change in public organizations'. It may be even more disappointing for these readers that this final section of the research will also not contain any step-by-step plans or cookbook-like recipes. Still, this research has substantial practical relevance. The main conclusions given in section 8.3 are no direct prescriptions or steps to implement organizational

change in a public organization. At the same time, they may very well serve as important considerations for the implementation of change in public organizations. In this final section of the research, the research results are reflected on from a practice perspective in order to formulate more practical lessons for different actors. Four different audiences are addressed here, from employees and direct supervisors at the bottom of the organization, up to senior public managers and political leaders at the top.

This research has indicated that *employees* should not be seen as passive recipients of change, but that they should be given the opportunity to participate in the development and implementation of organizational change. Although the management team may consist of the best and the brightest managers in the organization, their bird's eye perspective may not necessarily be the best view of the operations of the organization. The effective implementation of change may benefit from earlier input and participation from lower level managers and employees. Moreover, a more devolved approach and open-ended approach to change implementation may increase the sense of ownership and support of lower level organizational members. The ideas of the management team may not be understood or supported at the employee level. Similar to the IKEA-effect, which entails that people value furniture more if they have put it together themselves (Nolton, Mochon & Ariely, 2011), this research has shown that organizational members are more likely to support an organizational change they've 'constructed' themselves.

The research has also resulted in important implications for the role of *direct supervisors* in organizational change. The leadership role of direct supervisors needs to be more clearly defined and deserves to be emphasized more. In planned processes of change, the leadership role of direct supervisors is not clearly defined. Much of what lower level managers do during change is also done by higher-level managers. Both senior and lower level managers emphasize transformational change leadership behaviors. As a result, direct supervisors contribute little to planned processes of organizational change. A recommendation is therefore that a greater complementarity between higher and lower level leadership is created in planned processes of change. For example, senior managers can focus on formulating the content of change and creating support for change in the external environment, while direct supervisors focus on creating support for change among employees. There is evidence that employees prefer to receive change-related information from their direct supervisor (e.g. Allen et al., 2007). In addition, this research has shown that the leadership of direct supervisors is crucial in emergent processes of change. In such change processes, direction and sense giving is to a lesser extent provided by senior management. Employee support for change therefore greatly depends on the transformational leadership of direct supervisors. A recommendation to increase the capacity of public organizations to implement change in a more emergent way is therefore to invest in the leadership development of lower level managers, and to connect them to a greater extent to strategic issues in the organization.

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Senior public managers may also draw important lessons from this research. One of the main leadership tasks of senior managers is selecting the approach to change. The management of public organizations is often based on hierarchy and centralization of authority. Senior managers often approach organizational change in a similar way by adopting a planned approach to change. Before communicating the organizational change to lower level organizational members, the content and process of change is carefully shaped in the boardroom in order to exclude ambiguity and present organizational members a clear implementation roadmap. This research has resulted in several reasons to reconsider such an implementation approach. However, this does not mean that senior managers can simply delegate organizational change. Like senior managers, lower level organizational members are used to a directive, centralized management style. The participation of organizational members needs to be actively managed. Moreover, the change leadership role of lower level managers must be clearly defined. A change in the organization first and foremost requires a change in leadership. Rather than formulating the vision of change and providing a plan (e.g. Kotter, 1996; Kanter et al., 1992), leading change in the public sector may consist of creating the opportunity for other organizational members to lead the change, and for senior managers to take a step back.

Finally, this research has important implications for the role of *political leaders* in administration, such as aldermen, ministers or councilors. Although this group was not the main focus, this research has made clear that the influence of political leadership is very present in processes of change implementation in public organizations. Especially when there is a real urgency to change, for example in times of crisis, political superiors will demand guaranties that 'real' change is being implemented by stressing accountability, step-by-step implementation plans, a detailed time-planning and detailed change objectives in order to be able to hold public managers accountable. From the perspective of politics and democratic legitimacy, this may be a preferable strategy. However, from the perspective of change management, it is not. This research has indicated that, by centralizing authority and enforcing a planned approach to change, the effective implementation of change in public organizations is impeded. Although political superiors should by no means surrender their role of controlling and monitoring the change process, they must allow change processes a certain degree of emergence in order to ensure ownership, participation and commitment from public managers and employees. Organizational change in public organizations is most effective when implemented from the bottom-up, but being able to do so remains dependent on the top.

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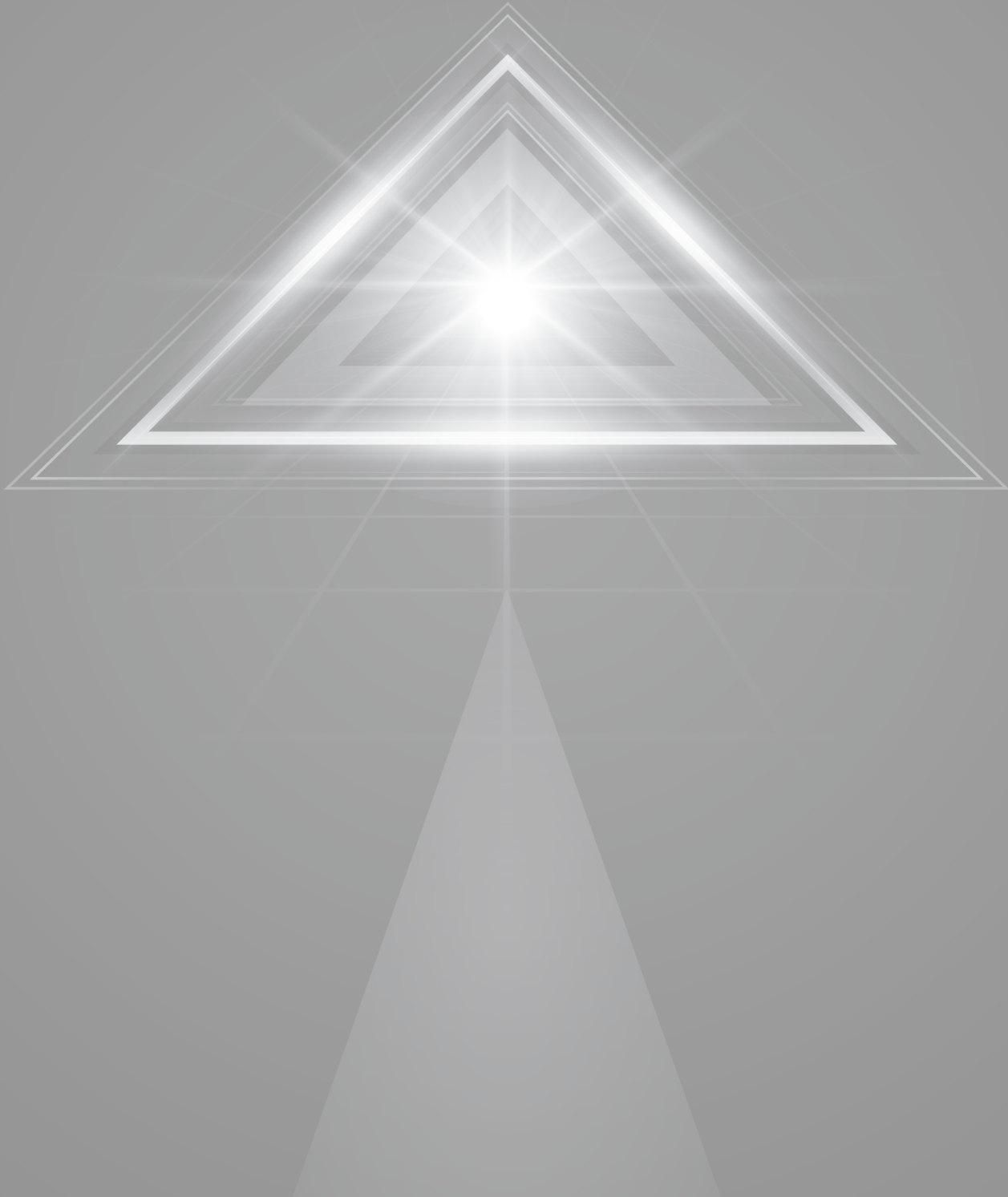
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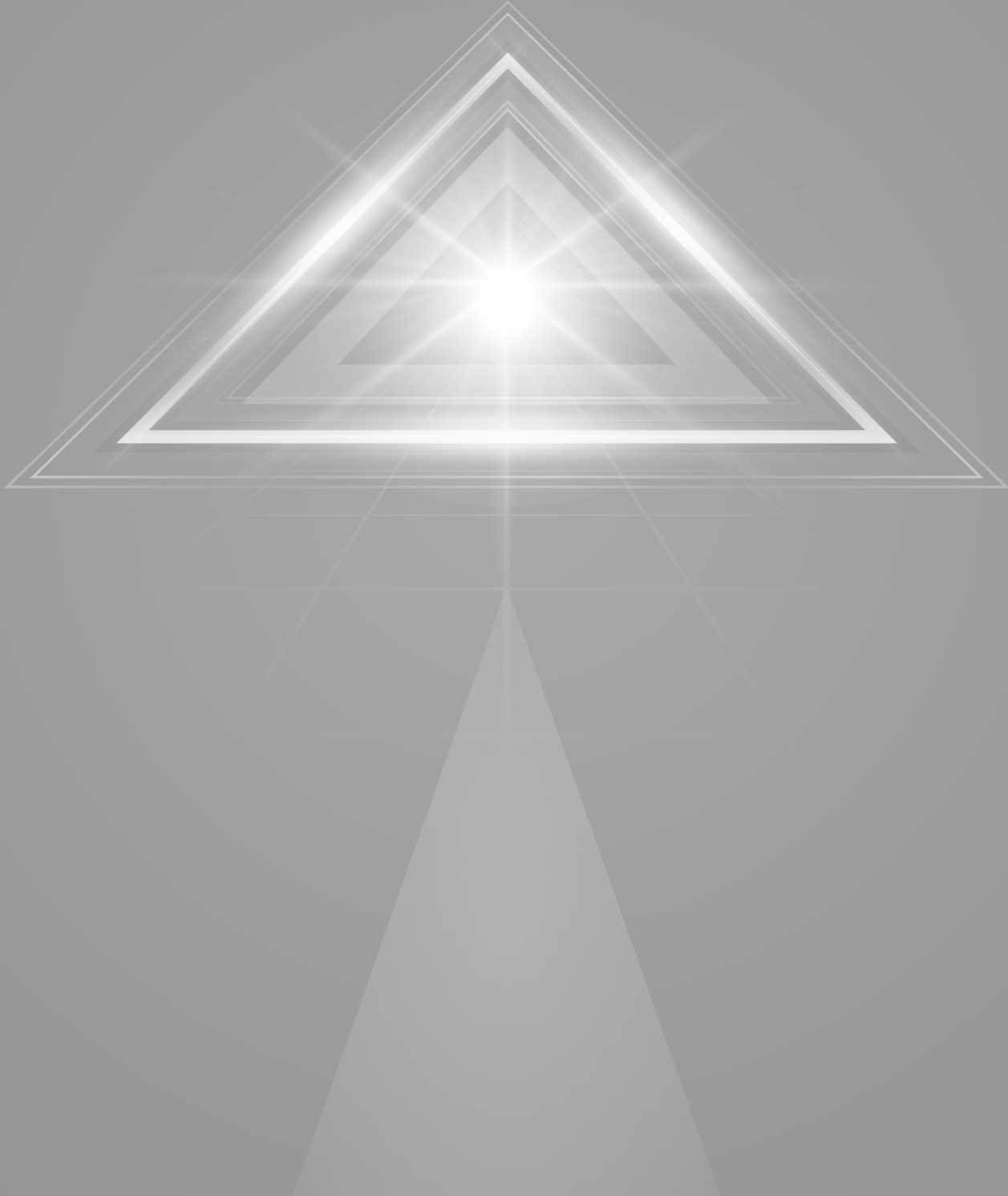
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Summary

RELEVANCE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

Public organizations are often confronted with change. For example, the use of private sector management techniques in public organizations has increased in the past decades. More recently, many government organizations have been forced to implement cutbacks and structural changes as a result of the economic crisis. Public organizations thus often need to implement organizational changes. However, most change management theory is based on private sector research, cases and examples. The dominant view in public management is that there are considerable differences between public and private organizations and that private sector insights may therefore not be appropriate in a public sector context. For instance, public organizations operate in an environment characterized by checks and balances, shared power, divergent interests and the political primate. Accordingly, they are typically organized according to the bureaucracy ideal type, which favors routines, stability and continuity over flexibility, adaptability and change. Several authors have argued that such characteristics make the implementation of organizational change in public organizations distinct or even more difficult. However, this issue has received little empirical investigation in both public management and change management research. Public management research aimed at organizational change can therefore result in important practical implications for public managers.

The central focus of this research is on the leadership of change in public organizations. A focus on change leadership is relevant for two reasons. First, many studies have highlighted the crucial role of leadership during organizational change, but there is very little empirical evidence for the actual effect of leadership on the outcomes of organizational change, especially in the public sector. Second, existing research on change leadership in public organizations is not very theoretical. Public administration research is not very well connected to leadership theory and concepts are applied superficially. The dominant perspective on change leadership, in the change management literature as well as in this research, is the theory of transformational leadership. This theory states that leaders can ultimately transform the organization by defining the need for change, creating new visions, and mobilizing commitment to these visions.

This research is aimed at studying processes of organizational change and its leadership in public organizations, and explicitly relating the implementation of change to the specific characteristics of public organizations. The objectives of this research are threefold. The first research objective is *to explore the role of leadership in the implementation of organizational change in public organizations*. The second research objective is *to contextualize change leadership in public organizations* by examining how change leadership and the implementation of change are influenced by the specific characteristics of public organizations. The third research objective is *to test to what extent and*

how leadership affects the outcomes of organizational change in public organizations by examining the relationship between change leadership and the outcomes of change. The main research question is:

To what extent and how does leadership affect the implementation of organizational change and its outcomes, given the specific context of public organizations?

In the next section, the research design and methods are discussed. Subsequently, the most important research results of the three research objectives are presented. At the end of this summary, the overall conclusion is presented.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

In order to answer the central research question, four empirical studies have been carried out. Four organizational changes in the administrative departments of the Dutch city Rotterdam were selected as cases. Although these organizational changes took place in different time periods and in different organizational departments, all studied cases are connected to an overlying administrative reform that was initiated by the city. Because of this, the studied cases are comparable in terms of the content and objectives of change.

Two empirical studies (chapter 4 and 5) are based on qualitative research methods, mainly interviews with the managers of the organizational departments. These studies were aimed at exploring the role of leadership in processes of organizational change (research objective 1) and exploring how change leadership and the implementation of change were affected by the specific characteristics of public organizations (research objective 2). The other two studies (chapter 6 and 7) are based on quantitative research methods. Using online questionnaires, data concerning the organizational changes was collected among employees of the studied organizational departments. Subsequently, statistical analyses were executed to study the relationships between implementation processes, change leadership and the specific organizational environment and organizational structure of public organizations (research objective 2). Moreover, the quantitative studies were focused on the effects of change leadership on employee support for change (research objective 3).

Summary

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 1: EXPLORING CHANGE LEADERSHIP

The first research objective is to explore the role of change leadership in different processes of change. A distinction between planned and emergent approaches to implement organizational change is made in this research. Planned processes of change are top-down, management driven and are based on a-priori formulated change objectives. In contrast, intentional organizational changes can also be implemented through more emergent processes of change, which are more devolved, participative and open-ended.

The research results indicate that typical change leadership activities, as defined in the change leadership literature, are present in both change approaches. However, depending on the approach to change, such leadership activities are present to a different extent and in a different way. In planned processes of organizational change, the change leadership role is mostly concentrated in individuals on the senior management level. Their change leadership activities include emphasizing the need for change, formulating an appealing vision of change, communicating this vision to employees and motivating, convincing and inspiring employees to implement the change.

In emergent processes of change, change leadership is to a greater extent shared between different hierarchical levels. Change leadership activities are for a large part devolved to lower level organizational members. Change is initiated and framed by senior managers, but it is filled in and implemented by lower level managers and employees. By devolving leadership responsibilities to lower level managers and employees and stimulating them to participate in the change process, the content of change in emergent processes of change originates to a greater extent from employees, rather than the apex of the organization.

The different change leadership behaviors in planned and emergent processes of change are summarized in table 1.

Table 1: The leadership of planned and emergent change

	Planned change	**Emergent change**
Senior management	- Initiating change - Envisioning the content of change - Creating a sense of urgency - Communicating change - Role modeling	- Initiating change and providing direction - Devolving responsibilities - Stimulating participation - Taking a step back but showing support
Lower level management and informal leaders	- Communicating pre-defined content of change - Translating the vision of change to department/team - Role modeling - Referring to senior management's leadership behavior	- Communicating the urgency of change - Having employees discuss the urgency and meaning of change - Stimulating employees to envision the content of change - Promoting role modeling by employees

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 2: CONTEXTUALIZING CHANGE LEADERSHIP

The second research objective is to contextualize change leadership by examining how the implementation of change and its leadership are influenced by the specific organizational environment and organizational structure of public organizations. The research results indicate that a complex organizational environment favors the adoption of a planned approach to change. Because of an increased number of administrative and political dependencies, an organization is forced to formulate more detailed change objectives and implementation plans. A high degree of environmental complexity thus causes the change process to take on more characteristics of planned change. Second, a complex organizational environment calls for leadership behavior of senior managers that goes beyond transformational leadership. In situations with a high degree of environmental complexity, senior managers were found to focus more on additional change leadership activities than on behaviors belonging to the transformational leadership perspective. Rather, change leadership at the higher organizational level was aimed at external actors, identifying dependencies, overcoming external opposition and creating support in the complex political-administrative arena in which public organizations are typically embedded. In addition, the results indicate that direct supervisors engage in more transformational leadership behaviors in a complex organizational environment.

The results indicate that the bureaucratic organizational structure of public organizations makes an emergent process of change less likely. The presence of rules and procedures complicates organizational change through devolved, open-ended change processes. The research results also indicate that direct supervisors behave less as transformational leaders in a bureaucratic organizational structure. A high degree of formalization is negatively related to the perceived transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors. The relationships between the specific organizational environment and organizational structure of public organizations and processes of change and its leadership are summarized in table 2.

Table 2: Change processes and change leadership in the public sector

	Change process	**Change leadership**
Complex organizational environment	A complex environment enforces the adoption of a planned change process by demanding detailed change objectives and implementation plans	In a complex environment, the leadership activities of senior managers are aimed at the external environment, rather than the internal organization, while direct supervisors engage in more transformational leadership behaviors
Bureaucratic organizational structure	Emergent change processes are less prevalent in a bureaucratic organizational structure	Direct supervisors behave less as transformational leaders in a bureaucratic organizational structure

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 3: THE EFFECTS OF CHANGE LEADERSHIP

The third research objective is to test to what extent and how leadership affects the outcomes of organizational change in public organizations by examining the relationship between change leadership and employee support for change. The research results indicate that transformational leadership behavior is positively related to support for change. Employees who reported more transformational leadership behavior of their direct supervisors, had a higher intention to perform change-related behaviors such as convincing their co-workers of the benefits of the change, reducing resistance among colleagues and putting in time and effort to implement the change. Transformational leadership also contributes to beliefs among employees that the organizational change is a good strategy for the organization, that the change is necessary and that it serves an important purpose

In addition, the research results show that both planned and emergent processes of change are positively related to employee support for change. However, emergent change is a more effective way of implementing change than a planned approach to change. An emergent change approach is not only associated with a higher quality of change communication, it also improves employee participation during change. Both the quality of change communication and the degree of participation are important determinants of employee support for change. Finally, the research results indicate that transformational leadership behavior of direct supervisors contributes little to employee support in planned processes of change, but it is crucial in emergent processes of change.

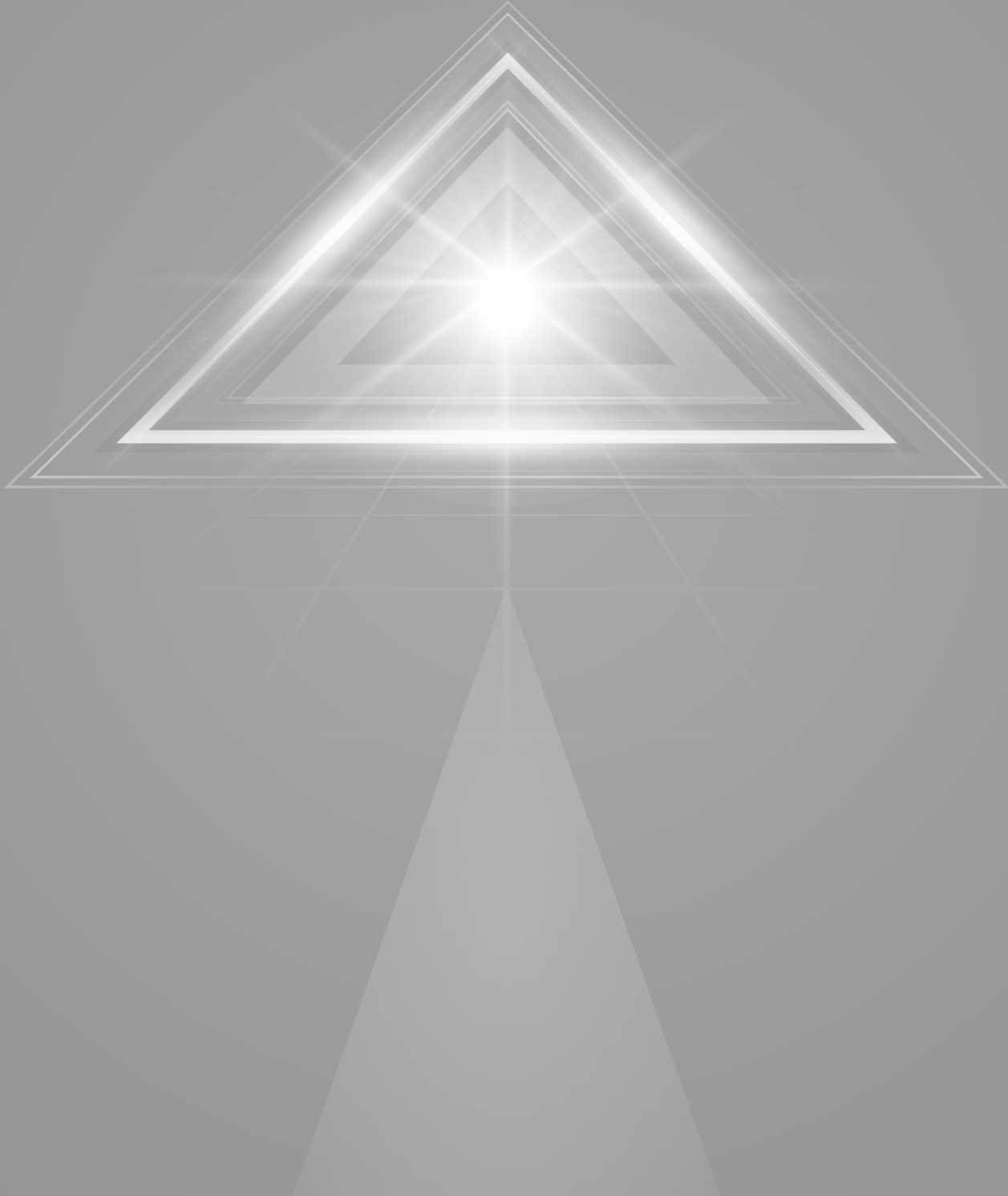**CONCLUSION: LEADING CHANGE IN PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS**

The research results indicate that a high degree of environmental complexity forces public organizations to adopt a planned approach to change. In addition, a highly bureaucratic organizational structure makes emergent change in public organizations less likely. Because of this, public organizations tend to adopt a planned approach to change. However, an emergent approach to change will result in a higher degree of support for change among employees. An emergent change approach leads to both more participation and a higher quality of change communication, whereas a planned approach to change merely improves employee perceptions about the quality of change communication. As both these factors are positively related to employee change support, emergent change can be seen as a more comprehensive approach to the implementation of organizational change. The first conclusion of the research is that *environmental complexity and bureaucracy cause public organizations to favor the adoption of a planned*

change approach, while an emergent change approach results in more support for change among employees.

The second conclusion of the research is that, *despite the tendency of public organizations to adopt a planned change approach, both senior and lower level managers may contribute to the adoption of an emergent change approach*. The research results indicate that leadership, at different hierarchical levels of the organization, is an important antecedent of the type of change process that is adopted. One of the most important leadership activities is senior management's decision concerning the approach to change. In order to realize beneficial change outcomes, senior managers may choose to depart from common-practice and adopt a less conventional, emergent approach to change. Lower level leadership may also contribute to the implementation of change through an emergent change process. Through transformational leadership behavior, direct supervisors contribute to emergent changes in the organization. Leadership at multiple levels in the organization may thus counteract the inherent tendency of public organizations to adopt a planned approach to change.

The third conclusion of the research is that, *although favorable for support for change among employees, organizational change in public organizations requires a more elaborated type of change leadership than a mere transformational leadership style*. The research results indicate that a transformational leadership style has a positive effect on employee support for change. Leadership behaviors, such as articulating an appealing vision for the organization, providing individual support and intellectually stimulating employees, contribute to perceptions among employees that the change has inherent benefits, and makes employees more willing to devote time and effort to the implementation of change. However, the research results indicate that change leadership in public organizations must go beyond such leadership behaviors. Transformational change leadership is necessary, but it is not sufficient to implement change in public organizations. First, the complex organizational environment places extra emphasis on leadership directed at the organization's external environment. Rather than creating internal support for change, senior managers must focus on creating support for change in the political-administrative arena. Second, the implementation of change through an emergent process of change calls for a different role of leadership. Rather than individually shaping the content of change and directing the implementation of change, leadership of emergent change consists of carefully initiating the purpose and direction of change, but leaving the process and content of change up to lower level managers and employees. The leadership of organizational change in public organizations thus calls for a dual role of leadership: senior managers must focus on stimulating the involvement and participation of lower level managers and employees, while simultaneously ensuring support for the emergent approach to change in the organization's external environment.

Summary

Summary in Dutch

AANLEIDING EN DOELSTELLING VAN HET ONDERZOEK

Verandering is in de publieke sector aan de orde van de dag. Zo zijn publieke organisaties in de afgelopen decennia steeds bedrijfsmatiger gaan werken. Nog recenter moeten veel overheidsorganisaties als gevolg van de economische crisis genoodzaakt bezuinigen en veranderingen aanbrengen in de organisatiestructuur. Publieke organisaties zijn dus vaak genoodzaakt om organisatieveranderingen te implementeren. De meeste veranderkundige inzichten zijn echter gebaseerd op onderzoek, cases en voorbeelden uit de private sector. Omdat er aanzienlijke verschillen bestaan tussen publieke en private organisaties zijn deze inzichten niet altijd passend in de publieke sector. Zo opereren publieke organisaties veelal in een omgeving die wordt gekenmerkt door controlemechanismen, gedeelde macht, uiteenlopende belangen en het primaat van de politiek. Ook zijn zij relatief vaak ingericht volgens bureaucratische principes, wat zorgt voor routine, stabiliteit en continuïteit ten koste van flexibiliteit, aanpassingsvermogen en verandering. Er zijn voldoende aanwijzingen dat deze kenmerken de implementatie van organisatieverandering een aanzienlijke uitdaging maken voor publieke organisaties. Toch is er maar weinig empirisch bestuurskundig en veranderkundig onderzoek naar dit onderwerp gedaan. Bestuurskundig onderzoek gericht op organisatieverandering kan daarom belangrijke praktische inzichten opleveren voor managers van publieke organisaties

Dit onderzoek is gericht op leiding geven aan verandering in publieke organisaties. Een focus op leiderschap is om twee redenen relevant. Ten eerste benoemen veel studies de cruciale rol van leiderschap tijdens verandering, maar is er weinig empirisch bewijs voor het daadwerkelijke effect van leiderschap op de uitkomsten van organisatieverandering, met name in de publieke sector. Ten tweede is eerder onderzoek over veranderleiderschap in publieke organisaties niet erg theoretisch. Bestuurskundig onderzoek maakt weinig verbindingen met leiderschapstheorie en concepten worden oppervlakkig toegepast. Het dominante perspectief op veranderleiderschap, in de veranderkundige literatuur alsook in dit onderzoek, is de theorie van transformationeel leiderschap. Deze theorie stelt dat leiders hun organisatie uiteindelijk kunnen transformeren door het benoemen van de noodzaak voor verandering, het creëren van nieuwe visies en het mobiliseren van steun voor deze visies onder medewerkers.

Dit onderzoek bestudeert de rol van leiderschap binnen verschillende soorten veranderprocessen in publieke organisaties, en verbindt de implementatie van verandering expliciet aan de specifieke kenmerken van publieke organisaties. Dit onderzoek heeft daarmee drie doelstellingen. De eerste doelstelling is *het exploreren van de rol van leiderschap in de implementatie van organisatieverandering in publieke organisaties.* De tweede doelstelling is *het contextualiseren van veranderleiderschap in publieke organisaties* door te bestuderen hoe veranderleiderschap en de implementatie van verandering worden

beïnvloed door de specifieke kenmerken van publieke organisaties. De derde doelstelling is *testen in hoeverre en op welke wijze leiderschap de uitkomsten van organisatieverandering in publieke organisaties beïnvloedt* door de relatie tussen veranderleiderschap en de uitkomsten van verandering te bestuderen. De centrale onderzoeksvraag is:

In hoeverre en hoe heeft leiderschap invloed op de implementatie van verandering en de uitkomsten daarvan, gegeven de specifieke context van publieke organisaties?

In de volgende paragraaf worden de onderzoeksopzet en gebruikte methoden besproken. Vervolgens worden per onderzoeksdoelstelling de belangrijkste resultaten gepresenteerd. Deze samenvatting sluit af met een algehele conclusie.

ONDERZOEKSOPZET EN METHODEN

Om de centrale onderzoeksvraag te beantwoorden zijn vier empirische studies uitgevoerd. Als casussen zijn in totaal vier organisatieveranderingen bestudeerd binnen de gemeente Rotterdam. Hoewel deze organisatieveranderingen plaats hebben gevonden in verschillende tijdsperiodes en in verschillende organisatieonderdelen, zijn alle onderzochte organisatieveranderingen verbonden aan een bredere reorganisatie binnen het concern Rotterdam. Hierdoor zijn de verschillende casussen vergelijkbaar in termen van de veranderinhoud en veranderdoelstellingen.

Twee empirische studies (hoofdstuk 4 en 5) zijn gebaseerd op kwalitatieve onderzoeksmethoden, voornamelijk interviews met managers binnen de organisatieonderdelen. Deze studies zijn gericht op het verkennen van de rol van leiderschap gedurende processen van organisatieverandering (onderzoeksdoelstelling 1) en verkennen hoe veranderleiderschap en de implementatie van verandering worden beïnvloed door de specifieke kenmerken van publieke organisaties (onderzoeksdoelstelling 2). De andere twee studies (hoofdstuk 6 en 7) zijn gebaseerd op kwantitatieve onderzoeksmethoden. Onder medewerkers van de bestudeerde organisatieonderdelen is met een online vragenlijst informatie verzameld over de organisatieverandering. Vervolgens is met statistische analyses onderzocht hoe het implementatieproces en veranderleiderschap samenhangen met de specifieke organisatieomgeving en organisatiestructuur van publieke organisaties (onderzoeksdoelstelling 2), en hoe veranderleiderschap de steun van medewerkers voor de organisatieverandering beïnvloedt (onderzoeksdoelstelling 3).

Samenvatting

DOELSTELLING 1: HET VERKENNEN VAN VERANDERLEIDERSCHAP

De eerste doelstelling van het onderzoek is het verkennen van de rol van veranderleiderschap in verschillende typen veranderprocessen. In het onderzoek is een onderscheid gemaakt tussen geplande en emergente veranderprocessen. Geplande veranderprocessen zijn top-down, door het management gestuurde veranderingen die zijn gebaseerd op van tevoren geformuleerde doelstellingen. Intentionele organisatieveranderingen kunnen ook geïmplementeerd worden via een meer emergent proces. Emergente veranderprocessen worden gekenmerkt door decentralisatie, participatie van medewerkers en meer open veranderdoelstellingen.

De onderzoeksresultaten laten zien dat typische leiderschapsactiviteiten, zoals gedefinieerd in de theorie van transformationeel leiderschap, aanwezig zijn in beide veranderaanpakken. Afhankelijk van de veranderaanpak manifesteren leiderschapsactiviteiten zich echter in verschillende mate en op verschillende manieren. In geplande veranderprocessen is veranderleiderschap voor het grootste deel geconcentreerd in individuen op het hogere management niveau. Hun leiderschapsactiviteiten bestaan uit het benadrukken van de noodzaak voor verandering, het formuleren van een aantrekkelijke visie voor de verandering, het communiceren van deze visie naar medewerkers en het motiveren, overtuigen en inspireren van medewerkers om de verandering te implementeren.

In emergente veranderprocessen is veranderleiderschap meer verdeeld over verschillende hiërarchische niveaus. Leiderschapsactiviteiten worden voor een groter deel uitgevoerd door managers van lagere niveaus. Verandering wordt geïnitieerd door hogere managers, maar wordt ingevuld en geïmplementeerd door lagere managers en medewerkers. Door verantwoordelijkheden te decentraliseren naar lagere managers en medewerkers, en hen te stimuleren om te participeren in het veranderproces, is de inhoud van de verandering in hogere mate afkomstig van medewerkers in plaats van de top van de organisatie.

De verschillende leiderschapsgedragingen in geplande en emergente veranderprocessen zijn samengevat in tabel 1.

DOELSTELLING 2: HET CONTEXTUALISEREN VAN VERANDERLEIDERSCHAP

De tweede doelstelling van het onderzoek is om veranderleiderschap te contextualiseren door te onderzoeken hoe de implementatie van verandering en veranderleiderschap worden beïnvloed door de complexe organisatieomgeving en bureaucratische organisatiestructuur die publieke organisaties vaak kenmerkt. De onderzoeksresultaten laten zien dat een complexe organisatieomgeving een geplande veranderaanpak

Tabel 1: Leiding geven aan geplande en emergente verandering

	Geplande verandering	Emergente verandering
Hogere managers	- Initiëren van verandering - De inhoud van verandering vormgeven - Een gevoel van urgentie creëren - Communiceren van verandering	- Verandering initiëren en de gewenste richting aangeven - Decentraliseren van verantwoordelijkheden - Stimuleren van participatie - Een stapje terug doen, maar wel steun geven
Lagere managers en informele leiders	- De vastgestelde inhoud van de verandering communiceren - Het vertalen van de visie van de verandering naar eigen afdeling/team - Voorbeeldgedrag laten zien - Verwijzen naar het leiderschap van hogere managers	- Communiceren van de urgentie van verandering - Medewerkers over de urgentie en betekenis van verandering laten discussiëren - Medewerkers stimuleren om een verandervisie te creëren - Voorbeeldgedrag van medewerkers in de aandacht zetten

afdwingt. Een groot aantal bestuurlijke en politieke afhankelijkheden zorgt ervoor dat een organisatie genoodzaakt is om gedetailleerde veranderdoelen en implementatie-plannen te formuleren. De onderzoeksresultaten laten daarnaast zien dat een complexe organisatieomgeving vraagt om veranderleiderschap dat verder gaat dan transfor-mationeel leiderschap. In plaats daarvan zijn de leiderschapsactiviteiten van hogere managers meer gericht op externe actoren, het identificeren van afhankelijkheden, het overwinnen van externe weerstand en het creëren van steun in de politiek-bestuurlijke arena. De onderzoeksresultaten laten daarnaast zien dat direct leidinggevenden meer transformationeel leiderschap vertonen in een omgeving die gekarakteriseerd wordt door een hoge mate van omgevingscomplexiteit.

De bureaucratische organisatiestructuur van publieke organisaties maakt verander-processen met een emergent karakter daarnaast minder waarschijnlijk. Emergente organisatieveranderingen worden bemoeilijkt door de aanwezigheid van regels en procedures. Ook laten leidinggevenden minder transformationeel leiderschapsgedrag zien in een bureaucratische organisatiestructuur. Een hoge mate van formalisatie hangt negatief samen met transformationeel leiderschapsgedrag van direct leidinggevenden. De relaties tussen de specifieke organisatieomgeving en organisatiestructuur van pu-blieke organisaties, veranderprocessen en leiderschap zijn samengevat in tabel 2.

DOELSTELLING 3: DE EFFECTEN VAN VERANDERLEIDERSCHAP

De derde doelstelling van het onderzoek is testen in hoeverre en hoe leiderschap de uit-komsten van organisatieverandering in publieke organisaties beïnvloedt, door de relatie

Samenvatting

Tabel 2: Veranderprocessen en veranderleiderschap in de publieke sector

	Veranderproces	Veranderleiderschap
Complexe organisatie-omgeving	Een complexe omgeving dwingt een gepland veranderproces af vanwege eisen om gedetailleerde veranderdoelen en implementatieplannen	In een complexe omgeving zijn de leiderschapsactiviteiten van hogere managers gericht op de externe omgeving in plaats van de interne organisatie, terwijl direct leidinggevenden meer transformationeel leiderschap vertonen
Bureaucratische organisatie-structuur	Emergente veranderprocessen komen minder voor in een bureaucratische organisatiestructuur	Direct leidinggevenden gedragingen zich minder als transformationeel leiders in een bureaucratische organisatiestructuur

tussen veranderleiderschap en de steun van medewerkers voor organisatieverandering te bestuderen. De onderzoeksresultaten laten zien dat er een positieve relatie bestaat tussen transformationeel leiderschap en de steun voor organisatieverandering van medewerkers. Medewerkers die meer transformationeel leiderschap van hun direct leidinggevende rapporteren, hebben een sterkere intentie om hun collega's te overtuigen van de voordelen van de verandering, weerstand onder hun collega's te verminderen en tijd te maken en moeite te doen om de verandering te implementeren. Daarnaast draagt transformationeel leiderschap bij aan het geloof onder medewerkers dat de verandering een goede strategie is voor de organisatie, dat de verandering noodzakelijk is, en dat de verandering een belangrijk doel dient.

De resultaten laten verder zien dat zowel geplande als emergente veranderprocessen positief samenhangen met steun voor de organisatieverandering, maar dat emergente verandering een effectievere manier is om verandering te implementeren dan geplande verandering. Een emergente veranderaanpak verbetert niet alleen de communicatie over de verandering, maar bevordert ook de participatie van medewerkers in de implementatie van de verandering. Beide factoren vergroten uiteindelijk de steun van medewerkers voor organisatieverandering. Transformationeel leiderschap van direct leidinggevenden draagt ten slotte weinig bij aan steun onder medewerkers in geplande veranderprocessen, maar is een cruciale voorwaarde voor steun van medewerkers wanneer veranderprocessen meer kenmerken van emergente verandering vertonen.

CONCLUSIE: LEIDING GEVEN AAN VERANDERING IN PUBLIEKE ORGANISATIES

De onderzoeksresultaten laten zien dat een hoge mate van omgevingscomplexiteit publieke organisaties dwingt om een geplande veranderaanpak te kiezen. Daarnaast vermindert een bureaucratische organisatiestructuur de mogelijkheid voor emergente veranderprocessen. Publieke organisaties zullen hierdoor neigen naar een geplande veranderaanpak, maar de onderzoeksresultaten laten zien dat een emergente aanpak

doorgaans tot meer steun van medewerkers leidt. Een emergente aanpak verbetert zowel de participatie van medewerkers als de kwaliteit van communicatie over de verandering, terwijl een geplande veranderaanpak alleen resulteert in goede communicatie over de verandering. Beide factoren hebben uiteindelijk positieve gevolgen voor de steun van medewerkers voor verandering. De eerste conclusie van het onderzoek is daarom dat *omgevingscomplexiteit en bureaucratie ervoor zorgen dat publieke organisaties veranderen volgens een geplande veranderaanpak, terwijl een emergente aanpak resulteert in meer steun voor organisatieverandering onder medewerkers.*

De tweede conclusie van het onderzoek is dat, *ondanks de neiging van publieke organisaties om verandering te implementeren met een geplande aanpak, zowel hogere als lagere managers kunnen bijdragen aan de totstandkoming van een emergent veranderproces.* De onderzoeksresultaten laten zien dat leiderschap, op verschillende hiërarchische niveaus in de organisatie, een belangrijke invloed heeft op de kenmerken van het veranderproces. Zo is de veranderaanpak waarmee een organisatieverandering wordt geïmplementeerd veelal een keuze van het hogere management. Om te zorgen voor wenselijke uitkomsten van de verandering, zouden hogere managers kunnen kiezen voor een minder conventioneel, emergent veranderproces. Lagere managers kunnen ook bijdragen aan emergente veranderprocessen. Met transformationeel leiderschapsgedrag dragen zij bij aan het ontstaan van emergente verandering in de organisatie. Leiderschap op meerdere niveaus in de organisatie kan de voorkeur van publieke organisaties voor geplande veranderprocessen dus tegengaan.

De derde conclusie van het onderzoek is dat, *ook al is heeft het gunstige gevolgen voor de steun voor verandering onder medewerkers, organisatieverandering in publieke organisaties vraagt om verdergaand leiderschap dan enkel een transformationele leiderschapsstijl.* De resultaten laten zien dat transformationeel leiderschap positieve gevolgen heeft voor steun voor verandering onder medewerkers, maar veranderleiderschap in publieke organisaties moet meer omvatten dan dergelijke leiderschapsactiviteiten. Transformationeel leiderschap is noodzakelijk, maar is niet voldoende om veranderingen te implementeren in publieke organisaties. Naast het creëren van interne steun voor de verandering, richten hogere managers zich ook op het creëren van steun in de politiek-bestuurlijke arena. Daarnaast vraagt de implementatie van organisatieverandering met een emergent proces om een andere rol van leiderschap. In plaats van individueel vorm te geven aan de inhoud van verandering en het implementatieproces persoonlijk aan te sturen, bestaat leiderschap in een emergent veranderproces uit het zorgvuldig initiëren van het doel en de richting van de verandering, maar moet het proces en de precieze inhoud van de verandering worden overgelaten aan lagere managers en medewerkers. Leiding geven aan organisatieverandering in publieke organisaties vraagt dus om een dubbele rol van leiderschap: hogere managers moeten zich richten op het stimuleren van betrokkenheid en participatie van lagere managers en medewerkers, terwijl zij er

tegelijkertijd voor dienen te zorgen dat er in de externe omgeving draagvlak en steun is voor een emergente veranderaanpak.

Appendix A:

Full measures used in chapter 6
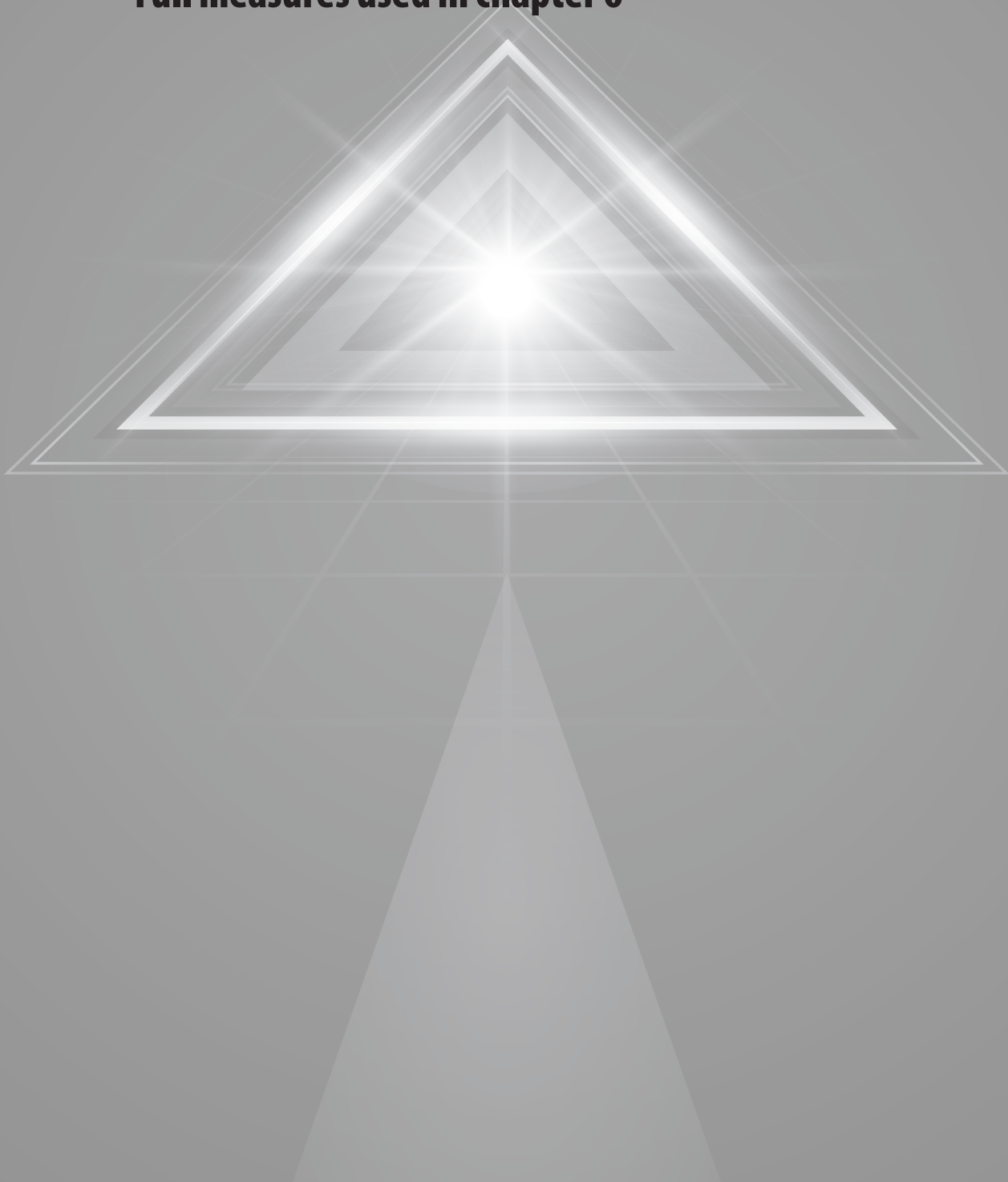
Centralization (Aiken & Hage, 1968; Pandey & Wright, 2006; Jaworski & Kohli, 1993)
1. There can be little action taken here until a supervisor approves a decision.
2. A person who wants to make his own decision would be quickly discouraged here.
3. Even small matters have to be referred to someone higher up for a final answer.
4. I have to ask my boss before I do almost anything.
5. Any decision I make has to have my boss' approval.

Formalization (Deshpande & Zaltman, 1982; Jaworski & Kohli, 1993)
1. I feel that I am my own boss in most matters. (R)
2. A person can make his own decisions without checking with anybody else. (R)
3. How things are done around here is left up to the person doing the work. (R)
4. People here are allowed to do almost as they please. (R)
5. Most people here make their own rules on the job. (R)
6. The employees are constantly being checked on for rule violations.
7. People here feel as though they are constantly being watched to see that they obey all the rules.

Red Tape (Pandey & Scott, 2002)
1. If red tape is defined as burdensome administrative rules and procedures that have negative effects on the organization's effectiveness, how would you assess the level of red tape in your organization?

Planned change (Farell, 2000)
1. Emanates from senior management.+
2. Occurs through company-wide change programs.
3. Occurs through changing individual knowledge and attitudes.+
4. Occurs in an unplanned fashion.+ (R)
5. Occurs through a systematic process of well-managed events.
6. Is monitored through regular progress surveys.

Emergent change (Farell, 2000)
1. Occurs through continually learning about our environment.
2. Occurs by encouraging employees to understand and adapt to changing circumstances in our environment.
3. Is part of an ongoing process of adapting to our environment.
4. Is a slow process, which emerges over time.+
5. Is about matching the organizations' capabilities to the business environment.

Transformational leadership (Podsakoff et al., 1990)

My direct supervisor …

Articulating vision
1. Is always seeking new opportunities for the organization.
2. Inspires others with his/her plans for the future.
3. Is able to get others committed to his/her dream.

Provide Appropriate Model
4. Leads by "doing," rather than simply by "telling."
5. Leads by example.
6. Provides a good model for me to follow.

Foster Acceptance Goals
7. Fosters collaboration among work groups.
8. Encourages employees to be "team players."
9. Gets the group to work together for the same goal.
10. Develops a team attitude and spirit among employees.

High Performance Expectancy
11. Shows us that he/she expects a lot from us.
12. Insists on only the best performance.
13. Will not settle for second best.

Individual Support
14. Acts without considering my feelings. (R)
15. Shows respect for my personal feelings.
16. Behaves in a manner thoughtful of my personal needs.
17. Treats me without considering my personal feelings. (R)

Intellectual Stimulation
18. Challenges me to think about old problems in new ways.
19. Asks questions that prompt me to think.
20. Has stimulated me to rethink the way I do things.
21. Has ideas that have challenged me to reexamine some of the basic assumptions of my work.

**Appendix**

Willingness to change (Metselaar, 1997)
1. I intend to try to convince employees of the benefits the changes and developments within Urban Development Rotterdam will bring.
2. I intend to put effort into achieving the goals of the changes and developments within Urban Development Rotterdam.
3. I intend to reduce resistance among employees regarding the changes and developments within Urban Development Rotterdam.
4. I intend to make time to implement the changes and developments within Urban Development Rotterdam.

+ Indicates item is not included in the analysis
(R) Indicates item is reversed in the analysis

Appendix B:

Full measures used in chapter 7
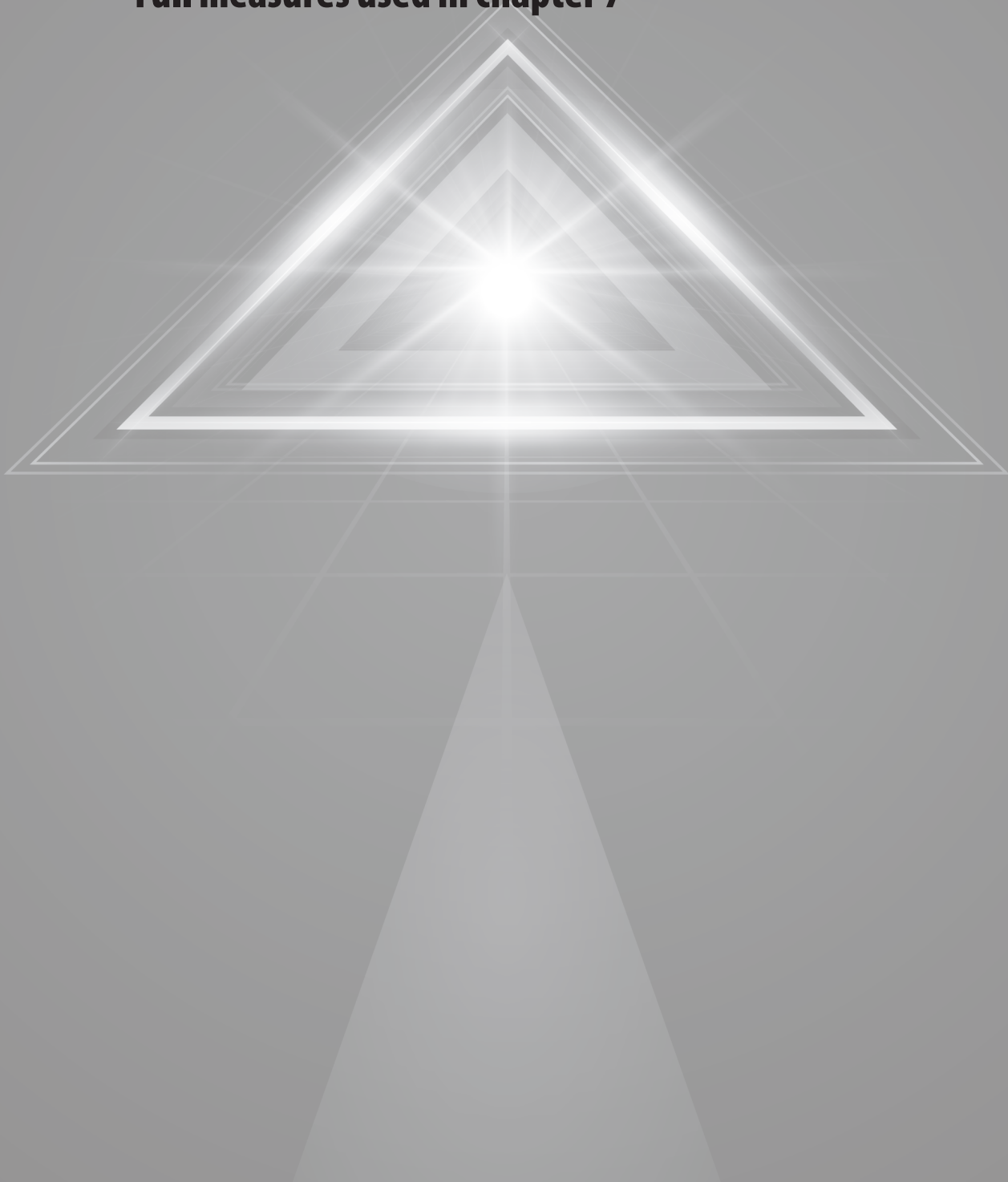
Affective commitment to change (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002)

ACC1   I believe in the value of this change.

ACC2   This change is a good strategy for this organization.

ACC3   I think that management is making a mistake by introducing this change. (R)

ACC4   This change serves an important purpose.

ACC5   Things would be better without this change. (R)

ACC6   This change is not necessary. (R)

Planned Change (Farrell, 2000)

The implementation of the organizational change …

PLA1   Emanated from senior management.*

PLA2   Occured through company-wide change programs. *

PLA3   Occured in an unplanned fashion. (R)

PLA4   Occured through changing individual knowledge and attitudes.*

PLA5   Occured through a systematic process of well-managed events.

PLA6   Was monitored through regular progress surveys.

PLA7   *Was aimed at reaching a pre-determined goal.*

PLA8   *Was based on a pre-determined timeplanning and course of action.*

PLA9   *Was a process in which all attention was focused in one direction with no disagreement.* *

Emergent Change (Farrell, 2000)

The implementation of the organizational change …

EME1   Occurs through continually learning about our environment.

EME2   Occurs by encouraging employees to understand and adapt to changing circumstances in our environment.

EME3   Is part of an ongoing process of adapting to our environment.

EME4   Is a slow process, which emerges over time.*

EME5   Is about matching the organization's capabilities to the environment.

EME6   *Was handled independently by the different departments in the organization.* *

EME7   *Was a process in which the objectives were not fixed at the beginning.* *

EME8   *Mainly came about through the participation of employees.*

EME9   *Was mainly aimed at creating a better understanding of the challenges facing the organization.*

Quality of change communication (Bordia et al., 2004)

The official information provided about the change …

QCC1   Kept you informed throughout the change process, even after the official announcement.

QCC2   Included information about changes to the organization's structure.

QCC3   Addressed your personal concerns regarding the change.

QCC4   Was accurate.

QCC5   Gave as much information as possible.

QCC6   Involved employees in the change process and decisions made.

QCC7   Communicated the reasons for the change.

Participation (Lines et al., 2005)

PAR1   I was allowed to participate in the analyses that were performed prior to the change.

PAR2   I was allowed to participate in the development of the change.

PAR3   I was allowed to participate in the planning of the implementation of the change.

Transformational leadership (Podsakoff et al., 1990)

My direct supervisor …

Articulating vision

TFL1   Is always seeking new opportunities for the organization.

TFL2   Inspires others with his/her plans for the future.

TFL3   Is able to get others committed to his/her dream.

Provide Appropriate Model

TFL4   Leads by "doing," rather than simply by "telling."

TFL5   Leads by example.

TFL6   Provides a good model for me to follow.

Foster Acceptance Goals

TFL7   Fosters collaboration among work groups.

TFL8   Encourages employees to be "team players."

TFL9   Gets the group to work together for the same goal.

TFL10   Develops a team attitude and spirit among employees.

Appendix

High Performance Expectancy

TFL11   Shows us that he/she expects a lot from us.

TFL12   Insists on only the best performance.

TFL13   Will not settle for second best.

Individual Support

TFL14   Acts without considering my feelings. (R)

TFL15   Shows respect for my personal feelings.

TFL16   Behaves in a manner thoughtful of my personal needs.

TFL17   Treats me without considering my personal feelings. (R)

Intellectual Stimulation

TFL18   Challenges me to think about old problems in new ways.

TFL19   Asks questions that prompt me to think.

TFL20   Has stimulated me to rethink the way I do things.

TFL21   Has ideas that have challenged me to reexamine some of the basic assumptions of my work.

Environmental complexity (Volberda & Van Bruggen, 1997)

ENC1   In making decisions in our environment a lot of variables should be taken into account.

ENC2   In our environment, developments are taking place which stem from all kind of directions.

ENC3   In our environment, everything is related to everything.

ENC4   A decision in our environment influences a large number of factors.

Formalization (Deshpande & Zaltman, 1982; Jaworski & Kohli, 1993)

FOR1   I feel that I am my own boss in most matters. (R)

FOR2   A person can make his own decisions without checking with anybody else. (R)

FOR3   How things are done around here is left up to the person doing the work. (R)

FOR4   People here are allowed to do almost as they please. (R)

FOR5   Most people here make their own rules on the job.* (R)

FOR6   The employees are constantly being checked on for rule violations.*

FOR7   People here feel as though they are constantly being watched to see that they obey all the rules.*

(R) Indicates the item was reversed for the analysis

* Indicates the item was excluded for the analysis

Newly formulated items are given in *italics*

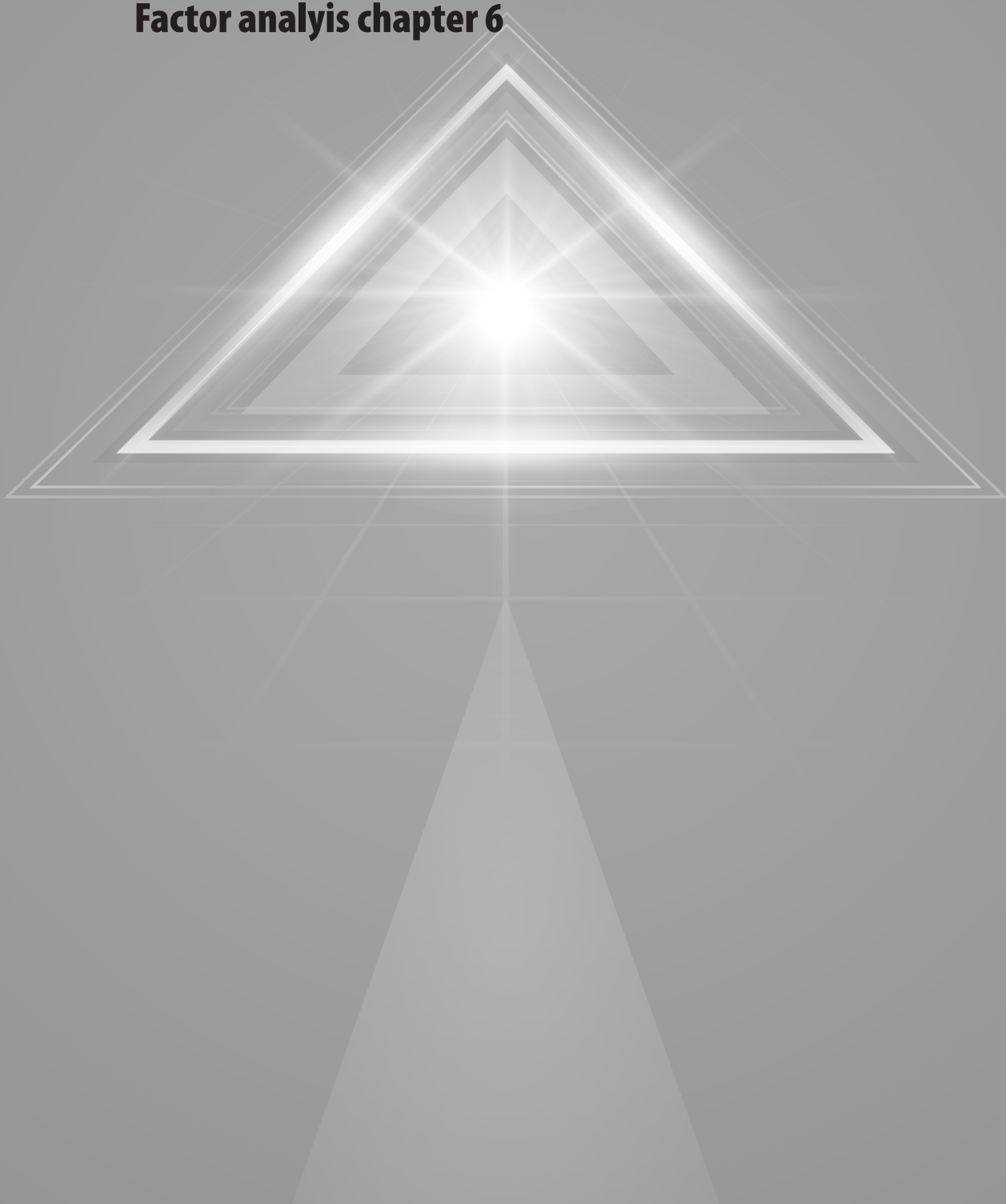# Appendix C:

Factor analyis chapter 6

Table 1: Structure matrix for measure planned and emergent change in chapter 6

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2
Emanates from senior management.	-.222	.095
Occurs through company-wide change programs.	.189	**.464**
Occurs through changing individual knowledge and attitudes.	.155	.081
Occurs in an unplanned fashion.	-.025	-.346
Occurs through a systematic process of well-managed events.	.230	**.804**
Is monitored through regular progress survey.	.300	**.814**
Occurs through continually learning about our environment.	**.726**	.393
Occurs by encouraging employees to understand and adapt to changing circumstances in our environment.	**.723**	.447
Is part of an ongoing process of adapting to our environment.	**.749**	.246
Is a slow process, which emerges over time.	.074	-.108
Is about matching the organizations' capabilities to the business environment.	**.796**	.033

Exploratory factor analysis was performed in SPSS 18, using direct oblimin rotation. All measured items were included in the factor analysis, but only the items for planned and emergent change are depicted here.

Appendix

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joris van der Voet (1986) studied Public Administration at Erasmus University Rotterdam from 2004 – 2008. He obtained a Masters degree in Public Administration, specializing in the management and organization of public organizations. In 2008, Joris joined the Department of Public Administration at Erasmus University Rotterdam as a junior lecturer.

From 2009-2013, he worked at Erasmus University Rotterdam as a Ph.D. candidate. As a Ph.D. candidate, Joris completed the two-year training program of the Netherlands Institute of Government (NIG). From 2011 - 2013, Joris was president of the PhD Platform at the Department of Public Administration of Erasmus University Rotterdam. In 2012 and 2013, he was a member of the NIG Ph.D. council. Joris presented his research at several international academic conferences, such as the International Research Society for Public Management (IRSPM), the European Academy of Management Conference (EURAM) and the Public Management Research Association Conference (PMRA).

After completion of his Ph.D. research, Joris worked as a researcher on the COCOPS FP7 project. On this project, his research activities were focused on studying the effects of cutback implementation on the wellbeing and attitudes of public sector employees. After defending his dissertation, Joris will join the Institute for Public Governance and Management at ESADE Business School in Barcelona (Spain) as a post-doctoral researcher. At ESADE, he will concentrate his research activities on a comparative research project focused at the effects of cutback implementation on processes of innovation in Spanish and Dutch public sector organizations.

Joris van der Voet
vandervoet@fsw.eur.nl
www.jorisvandervoet.com

Author