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Understanding the Trajectory of Employee Volunteerism: An Exploratory Case Study in the Omani Public Sector

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Hull

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Abstract

The study explored volunteerism in the context of the public sector in Oman where it took the Library for Community Initiative (L4CI) as a primary case unit of study. This study employs single case study strategies that facilitate the exploration of this EV project which presents a unique situation where it is officially located within a public institution (government-owned university) but funded by a private sector company. Applying a systemic lense, the voluntary project in this study found to act as an independent system that succeeded to bring together both sectors in a long-term partnership.

The literature review conducted showed that employee volunteerism (EV) in the context of the corporate struggles to keep the core principles of volunteerism valid. Interventions from employers have been criticised in many studies for steering and capitalising the EV programs to satisfy the best interest of the enterprises. Previous studies failed to explore the systemic factors contributing to the construction of the EV programs and their impact on the existing structure and agency. To examine this notion further, this study was created to explore "volunteerism" within employee volunteering programs and the factors that contribute to the development of the EV system's practices and functions that support the basic principles of volunteerism. It explored how participants perceived the L4CI project from the perspective of 'volunteerism' principles and benefits sought. The application of systemic thinking's concepts and tools provided a holistic view of the EV as an interconnected system and enabled the exploration of its components to establish relationships between them. Systemic

thinking provided a lens proved influential in developing a holistic view of the EV system by acknowledging its independent and explore factors that allowed participants to pursue a certain level of the agency when constructing its organisational and operational structures.

Chapter one overviewed the problem and the significance of the selected unit of the case study. The significance of the case study stands on its uniqueness for being a long-term EV program, initiated by employee (bottom-up) and situated in a public organisation. The chapter introduced the volunteerism movement in Oman before it offered a factual brief of the L4CI. Moving to chapter two, the discussion focused on focused on specifying main gaps within the literature of employee volunteerism and how the study is using systems thinking concepts and tools to explore them.

Within the theoretical realm, the study adopts an interpretive soft systems lens on outlining the basis for choosing *interpretive* paradigms from a *subjective* view. In chapter three, justifications that support a qualitative inquiry through semi-structured interviews and the rationale behind adopting content and thematic analyses to achieve the aim of this study are discussed and explained. Fieldwork was detailed to describe the data collection process and elaborate on the data analysis procedures applied throughout the study. Chapter five was dedicated to demonstrating the process and results of the data analysis using various tools and software.

The finding of the study suggests that volunteerism in the context of corporates can be achieved when employers and employees agree to keep its principles untouched. The L4CI found to exemplify a way-out when its examined system structured proved to respect volunteerism' criteria including free-will, unpaid, personal and offering benefit

to other parties. Factors influencing the formation of the EV project in this case study found to be temporal and event-based. The holistic view revealed various factors arising from multiple levels of investigations. These levels included external, institutional and EV group level.

The conclusion of this study discussed how these findings contribute to our understanding of the EV systems by answering the main questions and satisfying objectives listed. The findings suggest the need to understand the spiritual principles of volunteerism before companies can design their EV programs. The findings also suggest that the formation of the EV project in this case study was influenced by temporal and event-base factors. By developing a holistic picture, multiple factors from external, institutional, and EV group levels were pronounced to play a varied role in the formation of the identity, operational structure, and organisational structure of the EV system. The study concluded with recommendations and specified further areas for studies.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to Allah for rewarding my long struggle over the last five years. I promise to put all the knowledge in the service of our next generations for a better tomorrow.

To the soul of my father Mohammed who kept visiting me with a warm smile to tell me that I can do it.

To my mother Rahma who pushed me so hard to keep progressing and learning.

I would like to give high five to my family; Ahmed, Al-Jouri, Al Kathi and the baby who will arrive soon for sharing me the journey, believing on me and offering unlimited support during ups and downs.

If someone is holding the honour of inspiration, then she should be my grandmother Sheikha who taught me that a woman could do anything once she believes in her selves. From her, I inherited independence, self-confidence, and patience.

To all those who offered me a precious place in their hearts; Ellan, Margret, Delia, Sheikha, Rayya, Huda, Al-Fadhal, and Raul. Thank you all for being always there when I needed you.

To me, Mouza Al-hadhrami, it is never late for anything. This is just a small step in the way of wisdom. Keep on!

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I think the main outcome of any PhD is to be able to look at the world around you differently. This is what happened to me. My eyes have acquired different lens, my way of thinking has changed, and my judgment is taking a wiser approach. The main contributor to my PhD experience is my little family. Although the last five years were full of toughness and long separations, every member stayed calm and showed patience. I admit that the hardest part was sending my one-year-old daughter Al-Kathi to Oman as the living expenses were far more than I can pay. Without my considerate husband, I would not be able to make it through.

Just next to my kitchen door, I found a real-time friend. Louise with her charming smile and warm feelings contained my little daughters and me. I want to thank her for all the happy times we shared together. I would like to acknowledge her contribution to my social life in the last five years where she showed me how beautiful the City of Hull is and how much fun to be able to talk 'ull.

They say that the PhD is intellectual cooperation between the researcher and his supervisor. I would like to give my acknowledgement to my supervisor Dr Maria Kapsali who took the mission of supervising my research since 2014. I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude for the patient guidance and mentorship she provided all the way through to completion of this degree. Her encouragement to critically analyse my findings and contribution to knowledge was fruitful and source of enrichment. Dr Kapsali academic heft is matched only by her sincerely virtuous nature

and down-to-earth humility. I am truly fortunate to have had the opportunity to work under her guidance.

The University of Hull offered me a platform to exercise trial and error, experience new knowledge sets, and share thoughts and ideas. It was my first breakthrough to Systems Thinking Sciences, which I believe is a "must" science for all students. I here acknowledge its extensive contribution to my personal development and my work. I believe systems thinking armed researchers with powerful concepts and tools that leverage their comprehension about how things are connected to form systems. It introduced me to the noble group of systems thinking scientist whom I would always hold deep gratitude and appreciation. I feel very honoured being able to sit in one room with Professor Gerald Midgley, Professor Yasmin Merali, Dr Amanda Gregory, Dr Michal Jackson, and Dr Angela Espinosa. Their dedication and hard-work are evidently contributing are creating a significant change in our understanding of today's' complex issues.

This platform also offered a space for a passionate group of Omani student who was enabled to establish Omani Student Meet-Ups (OSMU). My involvement in the management of the OSMU taught me the importance of knowledge exchange. As one of the planners, I was responsible for booking discussion rooms, the arrangement of trips, and sending invitations. We were able to invite various PhD speakers to share their research areas and discuss their concerns openly. We were also able to organise developed workshops such as Nvivo and Endnote. The OSMU stands as a remarkable experience in my study life at the University of Hull.

Andrea, David, and Hillary are the backbone of the HUBS' graduate office. Those great people were the refugee-camp for PhD students, always ready to give valuable directions and advise on major issues. I would like to acknowledge their added-value to my PhD journey. I will stay grateful to them all my life.

My work on employee volunteerism has introduced me to a new world where "giving pricelessly has a noble return". Surrounded by texts and stories gathered from a group of fantastic volunteering employees offered me a pleasant experience which confirmed to me that life is too short to waste it in searching for best market deals. Happiness starts with giving what you love for those who need it. My sincere gratitude to all these great people out there who volunteer their effort, knowledge, experience to make better tomorrow.

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Abbreviations and Pseudonym

Glossary	
Abbreviations	Description
HRM	Human Resource Management
CSR	Company Social Responsibility
CV	Corporate Volunteerism
EV	Employee Volunteerism
ESV	Employer-supported volunteerism

Glossary	
Pseudonym	Description
L4CI	Library for Community Initiative: main case in this study; it refers to a voluntary project aiming to create awareness among young generations about libraries and encourage reading; initiated by a group of volunteering librarians
IC	Information Centre that host the L4CI
CCST	The Centre for Community Services and Training that direct and offer required support to the L4CI
XYZ College	the Educational Organisation that hosts all the above organisations (L4CI, IC, CCST) within the ABC University
VOL	Volunteering Employee
COR	Coordinating Employees

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1   Introduction

This chapter introduces employee volunteerism (EV) in the context of the Omani public sector. The importance of corporate volunteering programs is highlighted, along with the factors that contribute to the development of new EV programs. Here, the research aims and objectives are defined. Key gaps in the literature are identified before the main case study – the Library-for-Community Initiative (L4CI) – is introduced. The significance of EV projects is demonstrated through the L4CI case study, which demonstrates the importance of EV types, duration, hosting organisations and geographical locations. This chapter concludes with an overview of the thesis structure and scope.

1.2   Problem Identification

Employee Volunteering (EV) though has caught wide attention, the usage of the "volunteering" terminology in some the EV programs seems manipulating and confusing when putting the EV programmes' practised and functions under examination. That is EV appears to ignore some if all of the basic principles of volunteerism. This thesis adopted a systemic thinking paradigm to explore the case of an employee volunteering project. The development of L4CI provided a unique opportunity to explore "volunteerism" within employee volunteering programs and the factors that contribute to the development of the system's practices and functions that support the basic

principles of volunteerism. Researchers have investigated organisational support for employee engagement in voluntary work since the early 1990s (Dreesbach-Bundy, 2017). However, the in-depth literature review conducted herein suggested an incomplete understanding of volunteerism in EV programs in the context of both the public and private sectors.

The primary knowledge gap arises from neglecting the importance of examining the embeddedness volunteerism in the context of employee volunteering (EV) programs, how it is perceived and put into practice. Considering the checklist provided by Van Schie et al., (2011) for volunteerism principles, the study argued that volunteerism in an employee volunteering context lacked some of the 'spiritual principles' that define volunteerism. According to Van Schie et al., (2011) these core principles constitute that volunteering must be unpaid, a personal decision, which is organised and beneficial to other parties and unsurprisingly requires an investment of time. For example, studies of volunteerism in EV programs suggest employees lack a truthful desire to volunteer when participating in EV programs. Instead, the main motivation for participating in EV programs was hypocrisy and a perceived need to meet employer expectations (Basil et al., 2011; Bart et al., 2009). In most corporate volunteering programs, employees are encouraged to volunteer during paid working hours and for pre-determined causes commonly selected to fit the social goals of the corporation (Basil et al. 2011; Van Schie et al., 2011, Bart et al., 2009). The growing capitalisation as it is discussed in the literature review of EV has resulted in the manipulation of benefits to serve employers. This leads to the question of whether "volunteerism" label in most of these programs is valid.

In that sense, this case study's main interest is to explore the volunteering aspect of an employee volunteering project. To examine this notion further, this study was created to qualitatively to explore EV programs adherence to core principles of volunteerism and identify the systemic factors that contribute to the formation of the practices of the EV structure that enable and support volunteering core principles. It examines how participants perceived the L4CI project from the perspective of 'volunteerism's principles defined by Van Schie et al., (2011) and the external and internal factors that enable them to establish their EV system with respect to these principles.

The exploration task in the study adopted a systemic thinking lens to enable the researcher to look at the EV project as an independent unity within an existing whole. A common theme of previous studies was the examination of EV without acknowledging the independent systems that allow participants to pursue a certain level of agency, including organisational and operational structures. The application of systemic thinking principles provides a holistic view of these interconnected systems and enabled the exploration of its components to establish relationships between them (Ison, 2008). In this study, the L4CI program was developed through the bottom-up efforts of a group of employees in one of the academic libraries owned by the Omani government. The formation of L4CI was tracked back to 2011 and provided insight into an independent EV system where boundaries of responsibilities were established, and agency played a leading role in the formation of operational and organisational structures. The use of semi-structured interviews and the subsequent analysis of texts explored the organisational institutionalisation of volunteerism and identified important factors that are arising from internal and external sources.

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1.3 The Context of the Case Study

Employee volunteering is a vital and dynamic social movement. In fact, EV has arisen to address serious issues within the workplace environment, including employee disengagement, burnout and increasing work pressures. A general overview of volunteerism in a contemporary Omani context is provided, before summarising in detail the vision, mission, progress and challenges of L4CI. This includes insight into Oman's libraries system, which is considered essential for the proper understanding of the primary motives supporting the formation of a voluntary social group in a government-owned academic library.

1.3.1. Volunteerism in Oman

International Volunteer Day occurs annually in Oman on December 5th. On this day, winners of the Sultan Qaboos Prize for Voluntary Work are honoured across three categories: individuals, charitable organisations, and public and private corporations and institutions (Oman Ministry Of Social Development, 2016). The prize honours voluntary community movements in Oman that have recently witnessed a growth in the number of registered non-profit social communities, covering multiple disciplines across various sectors. In a quarterly report published by the Ministry of Social Affairs in 2014, the number of charitable, community-based societies increased by almost 100%, from 20 in 2005 to 39 in 2011. In total, there were 6,700 registered members and volunteers. In addition, there were 60 government-sponsored Omani Women's Associations, comprising 7,547 members who volunteer to develop social programs and offer family-related services (Ministry of Social Development in Oman, 2016). A 2015

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poll conducted and published by the National Centre for Statistics and Information, which focused on Omani citizens' conditions, revealed interesting data about social participation in community projects. The poll found that 37% of randomly selected individuals with the following characteristics actively engaged in voluntary activities [Table 1-1]:

Table 1-1: Common characteristics of volunteers in Oman

Common characteristics	Proportion of total	Gender contribution	
		Male	Female
Age between 18-29	52%	51%	53%
Married	60%	62%	57%
Holding higher secondary school diploma	51%	51%	50%
Unemployed	52%	40%	49%

Source: Oman Citizen Condition Poll 2014 (National Centre for Statistics and Information, 2015)

In Oman, the number of people engaging in volunteerism is continuing to rise. This increased engagement is parallelled by changes to the volunteering process, both in the quality of services and organisational structures. A trend has been established from the work of Taawon in 2010, who won the Sultan Qaboos Prize for voluntary work in 2012, and who have a network of established volunteers dedicated to training new volunteers, providing courses in skills development and networking that enable participants to receive specialised qualifications. The overarching aim of this training is to improve the attitude toward the voluntary program and to enhance the quality of community work through civic organisations. In addition, the training aims to boost the establishment of new voluntary programs by training Omani youth, directing their energy, creativity and innovation into developing credible and transferable life skills.

One current example is the 'Volunteer Passport', a project that aims to develop the first accreditation and licensing scheme for volunteers in Oman. The Taawon network of volunteers has chambered more than 1800 voluntary groups across the country and succeeded in the training of 8900 volunteers.

Private sector companies have also set up volunteering activities, for example, Ooredoo's 'Goodwill Journey' (Ooreedo Telecommunication Company, 2015) and Orpic, Sohar Aluminium and Vale's non-profit organisation 'Jusoor' (Jusoor, 2013). In addition, the innovative corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy of Bank Muscat (Oman's leading financial services provider) guarantees all employees a minimum of five hours of voluntary social work each year along with additional financial contributions (Bank Muscat, 2013). However, as most of these voluntary projects contribute to CSR programs of the public sector, they remain under-reported in official Omani records. The education sector (both public and private) have also established various community engagement activities that frequently evade monitoring by conventional statistics on volunteering.

Overall, there is a noticeable social movement toward institutionalising volunteerism worldwide and locally in Oman. Within a corporate context, studies are continuing to demonstrate the extended positive outcomes of EV on corporations, employees and communities. This is further discussed in Chapter 2.

1.3.2. An overview of L4CI

The case study developed in this thesis centres around the Library for Community Initiative (L4CI) [a pseudonym, refer to Abbreviations and Pseudonym, p:

XXII]. L4CI is an employee volunteering initiative established at ABC University (pseudonym) in 2013. Despite the vast range of social activities run by student societies and clubs in Oman, employees at ABC University lack the appropriate policies to facilitate the formation of any type of society, club or EV activity. The Centre for Community Services and Continuing Education of ABC University is the main centre that maximised the provision of educational and community services to the community. Although the Centre for Community Services and Continuing Education's mission is to provide excellent educational services, research opportunities, and information technology training to the largest proportion of the Omani community, their efforts to support community development goals are limited. By June 2013, the University agreed to decentralise some of the Centre's functions by establishing the Centres for Community Services and Training (CCST) at each of the University's six colleges. The main goal of these centres is focused on the development, planning, execution and evaluation of community services and student internships.

The first explicit attempt to establish L4CI was initiated two months prior to the official establishment of CCST at ABC University's XYZ College (pseudonym). Therefore, at this time L4CI was the first and only community service program run by volunteering employees that were recognised by the newly established CCST. In short, the L4CI is a collection of volunteer librarians and technicians from the Information Centre (IC) at XYZ College. L4CI's declared objectives were:

a) To educate various community groups about the importance of libraries to provide and promote knowledge

b) To encourage self-directed learning by promoting reading and the library's facilities to students

c) To advocate respect for writers' copyrights and the sharing of knowledge

d) To educate on the main principles of library usage and ensure the associated rules and ethical codes are properly understood.

The L4CI has been promoted as a link between the internal community at ABC University and Omani society, with the slogan "Young Readers Grow Leaders". This slogan emphasises the importance of reading in creating a learning environment that facilitates leadership in the broader community. L4CI consists of carefully designed activities and programs to be run inside and outside of the XYZ college library, with a key goal of increasing reading and learning within the community. L4CI has many programs to be implemented annually which, thus far, consist of those listed below in Table [1-2].

Table.1-2: L4CI programs and beneficiaries

Program	Nature	Target group	Place	Frequency	No. of clients	Timing
Library for School Program (internal)	Half-Day workshop	6 grade School Students	Information Centre (Library)	Twice a month	24 students	8:30 am - 12:30 pm
Special Workshop (external)	Full-Day event	Children with disabilities	Various centres in Oman	One a year	Up to 60 Persons	Not specified
Kids at Libraries (internal)	Half-day workshop	Pre-school children [aged 6-5]	Library of CEPS	Twice a year	30 children	5:00pm - 8:30pm

The L4CI is financially sponsored by OMAC Company (pseudonym) and is managed under the direction of the Assistant Dean of Centres for Community Services and Training (CCST) at XYZ College (pseudonym). The Information Centre (IC), which

consists of the library and laboratories, agreed to allocate a hall within its building to serve L4CI programs. As such, the L4CI owes its existence to a successful collaboration between OMAC (funding), CCST (directing), the IC (sponsoring and hosting), and not least the personal efforts of its volunteering employees. Within the first two years, L4CI received high recognition for being the first employee-led volunteering group at ABC University. Its success was highlighted by media coverage and online portals, which stimulated more support from the XYZ College deanship and continued funding from OMAC.

Table 1-3: L4CI's total number of programs, attendees, and funds (2013-2015)

Years ⟍ Programs	2013		2014		2015		2016		Totals
	Int.	Ext.	Int.	Ext.	Int.	Ext.	Int.	Ext.	
Workshops	11	0	14	0	8	1	8	0	34
Special events	0	0	3	1	0	1	1	0	5
Totals	11	0	17	1	8	2	9	0	39
No. of Attendees	264	0	401	90	192	44	220	0	1211
Funds received	$ 6,853		$ 6,000		$ 7,712		$ 8,383		$ 28,948

Adopted from various documents and internal reports. Int.=Internal, Ext.=External.

Table [1-3] displays the total number of workshops and events implemented and fund received between 2013 and 2015. By 2016, the total funds received reached approximately $29 thousands. Over 5 years, the funds witnessed a gradual increase. It started approximately $6,853 in 2013 to reach over $ 8000 by 2016. The sustained funding confirms the ability of the volunteers to capture the trust of the sponsor. It also fueled their enthusiasm to add, develop, and continually enhance the programs overall and the structure of the workshops internally and externally. According to the team

leader, the team was able to finance activities planned and others proposed during the year.

The positive publicity that arose from L4CI's programs and accomplishments paved the way for further activities within the ABC University. For example, the Centre for Community Services and Continuing Education founded the Voluntary Group in 2015, which aimed to harness the capabilities and experience of the University's employees for the benefit of society.

1.4   Research Aim and Objectives

In this case study, the L4CI project is discussed from the perspective of an employee volunteering system that has undergone a development process through the behavioural interactions of multiple systems; the existing 'old whole' and external environment systems. The formation of this EV system was enabled by the merging of multiple systemic factors that, over time, gained influence and caused unforeseen system-wide transformations to the hosting system. The overarching aim of the study is:

To explore "volunteerism" within employee volunteering programs and the factors that contribute to the development of the EV system's practices and functions that support the basic principles of volunteerism.

Questions that will be guiding this study include the following:

- To what extent EV programs portray the core principles of volunteerism?

- Identifying the EV program as a system, what are the systemic factors contributing to the development of the EV system's identity, organisational level, and operational level?

- How do these systemic factors contribute to developing an EV system's practices and functions with respect to the core principles of volunteerism?

In this particular case study, systems thinking's concepts and tools were adopted to conduct the exploratory task. The rationale behind this approach was to enable the research to generate a holistic view of the L4CI system as an independent unity that constitutes different levels and locates it within its old whole. It facilitates examination of the interactions of various agents across the system's level (internally) and between systems environment. In doing so, the L4CI represents a new entity constructed to become a novel independent sub-system—an additional 'new part'—within the old whole of the existing XYZ College system, which previously consisted solely of the Information Centre (IC) and the Centre for Community Services and Training (CCST). Thus, the old whole underwent a transitional systemic transformation that can be said to have created a 'new whole'. This transformational concept is summarised in Figure [1-1].
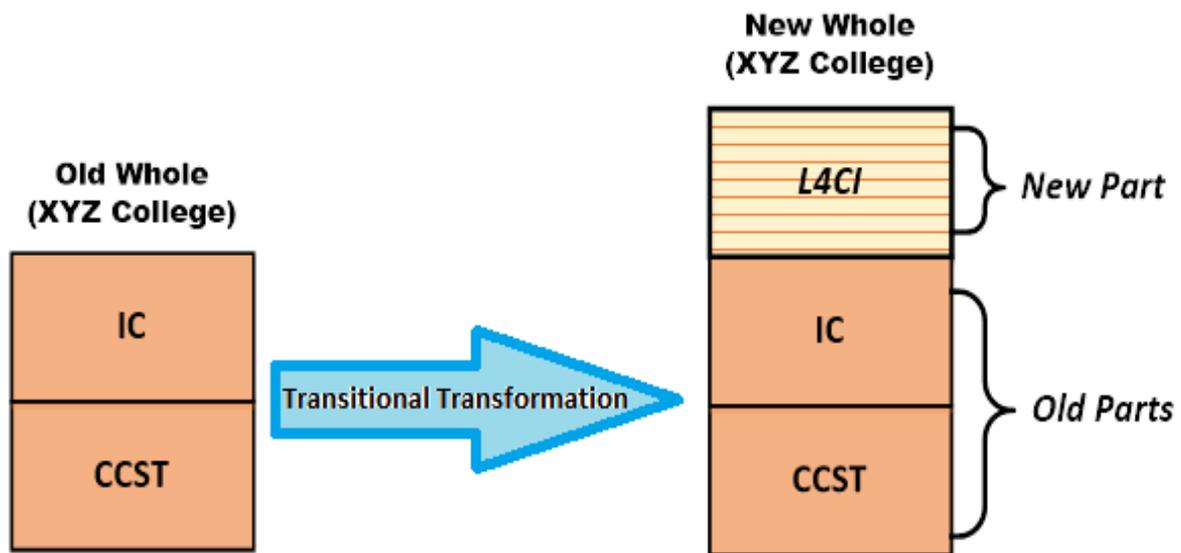
Figure 1-1: L4CI (new parts) within the "new whole" that consists of the Information Centre (IC) and Centre for Community Services and Training (CCST)

The L4CI case study in question placed the interaction of agents at its heart. A qualitative inquiry was implemented to examine the nature of the agents' relationships and interactions across a systems level framework. Here, the primary research questions focused on the personal interpretations, perceptions and actions of what had happened before, during and after the establishment of L4CI. The study continued with two levels of data analysis, which included content and thematic analyses to explore the systemic factors that influenced employee and managerial decisions and resulted in changes to old system structures. Consequently, with respect to basic volunteerism principles; the main objectives of this analysis were to explore:

a) The influence of the principles of 'volunteerism' in the formation process of this EV project and its impact on agents' perceptions and beliefs

b) The formation process of L4CI's internal work design, allocations of role and resources and communication networks and specify contributing factors to the process.

c) The formation process of L4CI's organisational structure; including identity building, formal positioning, the boundary of responsibility, financial and logistical resources. and specify contributing factors to the process.

d) The changes to the agents' levels of interaction within the old system, and externally with environment systems, across time and specify contributing factors to change in network engagement of participating agents

This study required a social constructivist's ontological framework to facilitate the exploration and analysis of an agent's interpretation of meaning throughout the formation of this system. Therefore, the research implements a single intrinsic, explorative case study to enable a qualitative enquiry.

1.5 The Rationale of the Study

In this section, the rationale for studying EV generally, or from a systems perspective more specifically is clarified. To do so, three core questions are answered consequently:

1. Why is the topic important?

Employee volunteerism in recent years has been used widely by the corporates in building a sustained healthy relationship with the community organisation on one hand and its employees on the other hand. Chapter two (Part One) presents an in-depth review of EV studies to discuss recent studies and proposed gaps for further research. Studies in EV stem their importance from helping interested practitioners in this field

to carefully understand the pros and cos of EV programs and the best strategies to apply them within companies. However, labelling corporates' employee programs as "volunteering" seem to be confused, if not manipulated. This is because a careful look into most of the EV programs reveals a lack of most core principles of volunteerism. This includes that volunteering must be unpaid, and a personal decision (free-will). The over-exercise of power from employers in deciding about the cause to be served, the frequency, and remuneration policy confuse the EV programs with those labelled under corporate social responsibility (CSR). Therefore, the need to re-explore employee volunteering (EV) from the perspective of the core principles of volunteerism is important to distinguish it from other types of CSR programs. This helps practitioners, systems managers, and decision-makers in human resource management to accurately respect volunteerism principles and design EV programs accordingly.

2. *Why adopt 'a systemic paradigm to explore the case of an employee-led volunteerism project'?*

Adopting the systemic paradigm in this case study stand on the needs for a flexible exploratory lens that allows the researcher to look at the EV project as an independent unity within an existing whole. To look at the big picture first rather than the details and the whole rather than just the parts generate "valid knowledge and meaningful understanding" (Flood 2001, 133). Chapter two (section 2.3) details the main concepts and methodologies of systems thinking and emphasises the rules that make exploring complexity, dynamics and change using its models more logical as explained by Mella (2013). The main advantage of the systemic lens is to excel in establishing the nature of the relationships between things (Ison, 2008). The interpretive paradigm which was

detailed in chapter three (check section 3.2) smoothen the application of systemic lens aiming to understand a social transformation. It has enabled placement of the selected project case (L4CI) into a larger whole and the application of both synthetic and analytic analysis (Bartlett, 2001). Based on its interpretive notion, the researcher was able to apply soft, critical and creative thinking to understand the formation of the EV system of interest.

From systems perspectives, more studies are necessary to expand the application of systems approaches and methodology within this context. The literature review showed a limited number of studies of EV considered systems thinking perspectives. It is felt that EV can contribute a new approach to systems thinking science because of its unique system structure where relationships between its system's elements and components are self-organized and self-regulated.

1.6   The Significance of the Study

The significance of spotting the light on the Library for Community Initiative (L4CI) is discussed in this section. This study employs single case study strategy that facilitates the exploration of the case phenomenon of (L4CI) which represents an employee volunteering project within a public institution (government-owned university) that is funded by a private sector company. The hosting systems that represent the public sector provide the L4CI with the formal position and support it with various logistical and IT requirements. The project was able to convince one of the large private companies to sponsor their programs and internal operations. The significance of the case study in hand resides on the following main points.

Firstly, it explores the unique case of an employee-led volunteering project, where a group of librarians took the initiative to convince their employer of their desire to launch library-community services and subsequently persuaded this employer to implement the project. It is essential to acknowledge that in the corporates'employee volunteering literature, EV is frequently confused with corporate volunteerism that is instead established to reflect the company's social responsibilities and are managed directly by the employer.

Secondly, the L4CI was established as a long-term voluntary project. This contrasts with most corporate voluntary programs that are usually constructed around annual events or other projects with a short-term focus. Therefore, L4CI presents a unique opportunity to explore "volunteerism" within employee volunteering programs and the factors that contribute to the development of the EV system's practices and functions that support the basic principles of volunteerism

Lastly, the project is hosted by a government organisation within the Omani public sector and is sponsored by an external company within the private sector. This two-sector organisation structure provides a novel perspective on how each sector deals with EV programs. The dual-sector nature of this EV program extends the existing body of knowledge, which has so far been limited to employee volunteerism in the context of private sector corporations.

These points highlight an emerging system of EV that offers novel insights into an EV partnership that links the public and private sectors. It also offers a valid case for long-term EV projects that are beneficial to four parties: the public sector, the private sector, employees and wider community organisations. Importantly, studies into

employee volunteering in the context of the Middle East and the Arab Gulf States are rare. The detailed field work described herein provides researchers with a starting point for EV research in this geographical region, highlighting the need to appreciate culture and belief systems when planning the entry of EV programs. Issues such as clothing protocols, gender segregation and interaction are just some of these crucial facets that researchers need to consider when designing the data collection strategy.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis comprises a series of chapters organised by the objectives of each chapter.

Chapter 2 presents a literature review of employees' volunteerism and systems thinking concepts. The literature review chapter is designed to discuss contemporary theories on employee volunteerism (EV) and how a systemic thinking lens can be applied to fill knowledge gaps in the academic literature. The literature review is organised into two main parts. Part one traces the history and characteristics of EV. It includes a contextual review that covers definitions of EV in the workplace, and its impacts on organisations, volunteering employees and the wider community. It also discusses several types of EV and its impact on corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs. Overall, gaps in the existing literature are identified, which suggest that further studies are required to investigate the EV system in its entirety and to understand better how EV systems are formed and function as an independent whole. Additionally, very few studies have sought to investigate the role of volunteerism in the EV system and how such activities are developed, organised and performed according

to the core principles of volunteerism outlined by Van Schie et al., (2011). Studies examining the systemic factors that contribute to the development of EV systems are believed to enrich strategic studies in the development of human resource capabilities and the social responsibilities of corporations. Part two adopts the science of systems thinking principles to illustrate the explorative missions of this study. To explore how EV programs and projects establish and function systemically, this study borrows a systemic lens to examine the EV formation process. As such, part two explores how the study plans to identify the systemic factors that contribute to EV system formation at organisational and operational levels. More specifically, it is determined to identify those factors that informed and supported the formation of the systems according to the core principles of volunteerism identified in the first part of the chapter.

Chapter Three addresses the philosophical underpinnings of four key axioms: ontology, epistemology, the nature of human perspectives and methodology. Within the theoretical realm, specific emphasis is placed on outlining the basis for choosing *interpretive* paradigms from a *subjective* view. Chapter three includes justifications that support a qualitative inquiry through semi-structured interviews, document analysis and field notes. The rationale behind adopting these methods is discussed in the chapter. Furthermore, this chapter explains the approaches to data analysis, providing clear justification for the use of content and thematic analyses to achieve the aim of this study.

Chapter Four moves into a theoretical discussion of the case's methodology and development by recording the applied fieldwork. This chapter is divided into three core sections: research context and unit of analysis, data collection and interviews, and data analysis. The first section provides fact sheets detailing the main case study unit, L4CI,

thus introducing the case unit to be analysed. This is embedded in two analytical sub-units: XYZ College's Centre for Community Services and Training (CCST) and the Information Centre (IC). The chapter details the data collection process, research interviews, informants and sampling methods. Also, it provides factual and demographic information about the case study. The chapter illustrates key findings of the organisation and the EV project under investigation, including background information about each component of the hosting system, its hierarchical order, and the formal position of the EV within its host system. The demographic data of participants are listed, which include sex, level, and years of experience. Chapter four describes the textual analysis process, whereby the framework of Attride-Stirling (2001) was modified to analyse thematic network data, with guidelines from Gioia et al. (2013) adopted for thematic analyses. The final sections of chapter four focus on discussions of research ethics considerations and study limitations, before closing with concluding remarks.

   Chapter Five presents the data analysis process and results of the study. A pro-data analysis section illustrates the overall node structure and results of the node tree, text, coding and node to reference analyses. The presentation of the findings employs the thematic analysis procedures of Gioia et al. (2013) along with the thematic network analysis methodologies of Attride-Stirling (2001). The findings are arranged by key themes that arose during the construction of the interview questions along with other themes that emerged during the interviews. The implementation of content and thematic analyses were facilitated by Nvivo Pro software that offered various tools including resource classification, node development and organisation, text frequency, word cloud, treemaps and queries. The thematic analysis follows three main stages of

first-order analysis, second-order analysis and aggregate dimensions. Details regarding the processes implemented at each stage of analysis are explained throughout the chapter.

Chapter Six: is the thesis conclusion chapter. It is designed to discuss the research findings from the case study with reference to the employee volunteerism and systems thinking literature. The chapter is structured to discuss how the findings from the L4CI was directed to respond to the research aim to explore "volunteerism" within employee volunteering programs and the factors that contribute to the development of the EV system's practices and functions that support the basic principles of volunteerism. The findings suggest the need to understand the spiritual principles of volunteerism before companies can design their EV programs. The findings also suggest that the formation of the EV project in this case study was influenced by temporal and event-base factors. By developing a holistic picture, multiple factors from external, institutional, and EV group levels were pronounced to play a varied role in the formation of the identity, operational structure, and organisational structure of the EV system. It must be noted that the case study does not claim the generalizability of its findings and that more studies must take place to approve them. The chapter also concluded with recommendations and specified further areas for studies.

1.8   Conclusion

Chapter one provided an overall view of the thesis. In the beginning, it identified the problem under investigation and gave a brief overview of volunteerism context in Oman before it moved to introduce the unit of the case study. It also identified the

research aim and objectives and elaborated on the significance of the study. At last, the

thesis structure was provided where each chapter was explained in terms of objectives.

Chapter 2: Literature Review on Employee Volunteering

2.1 Introduction

The literature review chapter is designed to define and review the academic literature conducted in the field of employee volunteering (EV) and demonstrates how a systemic thinking lens can be applied to fill knowledge gaps in the literature. The main goals of this chapter are to provide a review of existing knowledge on EV and to then identify knowledge gaps, before introducing the key focus area of this study. With the aim to explore "volunteerism" within employee volunteering programs and the factors that contribute to the development of the EV system's practices and functions that support the basic principles of volunteerism, concepts were borrowed from systems thinking sciences to devise a holistic tool to view the EV system and the nature of the relationships with its environment. This chapter will enrich our understanding of EV by delving into process formation from a systems perspective by tailoring concepts and tools from systems thinking. This chapter is divided into two main parts.

Part one traces the history and characteristics of EV. It includes a contextual review that covers EV in the workplace, its impact on the volunteering employees, the organisation and overall communities, and concludes with an insight into the types of EV. Additionally, it embraces areas for future investigations and discusses the main gaps from a systemic thinking perspective. Part two elaborates on the need to take a holistic approach to explore EV as an EV system while simultaneously investigating the

formation process within existing organisational structures and agencies. Therefore, the literature review highlights the utility that exists in the science of systems thinking to assess the explorative mission of EV systems. To explore how EV programs and projects are established and function systemically, this study adopts a systemic lens to visualise the formation process. A key focus of this case study examines the interactions of various agents across time to reveal contributing factors to the EV systems formation process.

Overall, gaps in the existing academic literature suggest there is a need for studies to investigate the EV system in its entirety and that a holistic view must be taken to understand how EV systems as an independent whole, including how they are formed and function. A primary knowledge gap results from the failure of studies to isolate EV programs from their hosting systems and to recognise their unique independent structure. Many studies examine EV programs as organisation-dependent entities, with no autonomous interactional or communicational structures. Moreover, very few studies have sought to investigate the concept of volunteerism within the EV system, and how these activities are developed, organised and performed in the core spirit of volunteerism. In contrast, this study took the initiative to investigate how volunteerism principles were implemented during the formation process of the L4CI and maintained throughout each of the system's levels (organisational and operational) and the systemic factors that contribute to the development of EV system's practises and functions according to these principles. It is believed that this investigation will enrich strategic planning in organisational human resource development and CSR. This chapter introduces how the case study will explore such contributing systemic factors. It summarises gaps found in part one and defines how this study aims to contribute to these knowledge gaps.

2.2 PART ONE: A Contextual Review of Employee Volunteering

A thorough review of the academic literature suggests that EV or corporate volunteering (CV) have been academically studied concepts since the 1990s, with most information arising from studies in the private sector. Although CV and EV were used exchangeably by many researchers, each carries different meaning and approaches as detailed in the following section [Section 2.2.1]. From the perspective of a corporate organisation, EV is most commonly conceptualised as corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Lukka, 2000; Allen, 2003; MacPhail & Bowles, 2009), corporate volunteering or corporate supported-volunteering (Quirk, 1998; Lee & Higgins, 2001; Allen, 2003; Cavallaro, 2007; Lee, 2010; do Paco & Nave, 2013; Mattila & Hanks, 2013; Sanchez & Gallardo-Vázquez, 2013), and less commonly as corporate community involvement (Tuffrey, 1997), corporate social performance (Turban & Greening, 1997), or organisational philanthropy (Foster et al., 2008; Meinhard et al., 2008). Within these broad concepts are various forms of corporate social involvement that include raising donations, partaking in fundraising activities and engaging with 'good-cause' sponsorships. Nevertheless, academic research in this area remains in its infancy and scholars focused on organisational studies have just begun to pay attention to volunteerism within the corporate context (Grant, 2012).

Within a corporate context, EV appears to be capturing increasing attention for its large and widely-studied impacts on employees' loyalty productivity and performance, and its long-term advantages to boost positive community development. However, review of the current literature revealed the absence of a critical dimension, which could play a major role in enhancing our understanding of the impact, structure

and sustainability of EV. This hitherto absent dimension is approaching EV system from systems thinking perspective to explore "volunteerism" within employee volunteering programs and the factors that contribute to the development of the EV system's practices and functions that support the basic principles of volunteerism. The literature elaborates on what areas are already covered before it discusses both gaps.

2.2.1. EV: Definition

At its core, EV describes a person who is engaged in some form of volunteering while in paid employment in a corporate context (Lukka, 2000:4). Within a corporate context. To Lorenz, Gentile and Wehner (2011) volunteering within the corporate context is defined as "In its capacity as employer, a company invites its employees to engage voluntarily and actively beyond their specific job description in charitable endeavours—often in cooperation with nonprofit-organisations, while possibly investing additional resources" (p. 184). The CV according to their definition may take place during working hours or during free time, together with colleagues or alone, and singularly or repeatedly. In many studies, the EV concept is used interchangeably with the expression of corporate volunteering (CV) (Herzig, 2004; Lorenz, et al., 2011). Recently, Licandro (2017) argued that the major focus of EV is on the employee, while corporate volunteering focuses more on the corporation. Accordingly, the semantic differences between these two expressions are defined by the degree of corporate engagement. For EV, the primary role of the company is to offer support for those volunteer activities its employees want to pursue. In contrast, CV is more associated with programs and activities designed by employers as part of their CSR policies or

other relationships with the community or human capital. In this study, EV is the core focus.

2.2.2. Implications of employee volunteerism

The implications of implementing EV programs in organisations were mainly found to enhance two functional areas: company social responsibility (CSR) and human resource management (HRM). This is because volunteering among employees comes from various disciplines and volunteering policies are regulated and managed by both the organisation's HRM and CSR strategies.

In studies on HRM, EV was considered a source of employee satisfaction and retention (Sanchez & Gallardo-Vázquez, 2013), which can be used to yield personal, managerial and business effectiveness (Tuffrey, 1997). Furthermore, HR managers were provided with guidance on how to calibrate the organisation's use of EV to gain privilege and to enhance the status of the workforce (see Geroy et al., 2000). Because of this opportunity, Booth et al. (2009) recommended that employers direct their efforts to strategically harvest the benefits of employer-supported volunteering (ESV) programs. This could be achieved through: (1) matching employee skill-sets; (2) forming multiple partnerships with various voluntary organisations that provide enriching experiences across diverse groups of employees; and (3) providing the benefits of ESV to grant employers a competitive advantage in hiring new employees and as a tool for retaining strong talent. The emphasis on benefits to the company and employees places the onus on EV to enhance the competencies of employees, which in turn makes the organisation more efficient and productive. Among these organisations, although the focus of HRM

contradicts the underlying premise that EV should be a community-based beneficiary initiative, the benefits of EV are not necessarily undermined.

Many scholars have studied how EV can enhance an organisation's mission of corporate social responsibility (CSR). In this regard, CSR is widely applied to enable employees to contribute more to their jobs and consequently add value for both the business and society (Mirvis, 2012 quoted in Caligiuri et al., 2013: 828). By implementing various EV projects and programs, CSR can, in fact, exceed its originally intended functions. One example of these unexpected benefits was demonstrated by Coca Cola's Active Playground Project. Here, Barkay (2012) argues that the integration of CSR into the sales, marketing and human resources teams at Coca-Cola provided a more charitable image of the company and enhanced how the public perceived its brand. Moreover, this study claimed that including employees in volunteer work was crucial to fostering the link between the organisation and the community, which subsequently enhanced relationships between employees and upper management, as well as encouraging a sense of solidarity and enhanced morale within the company's workforce.

In today's corporations, EV takes various forms. Table [2-1] categorises the different forms of EV as contributed by Lukka (2000); Peloza and Hassay (2006); and Meinhard et al. (2008). The volunteering of independent employees by Lukka (2000) is equivalent to Peloza and Hassay (2006)'s extra-organisational volunteering; both used to describe individuals who engage in such activities outside their organisational role, which are usually carried out outside of working hours and irrespective of the employer's approval. This employee type is not considered an actual EV participant, as the impact of this external engagement on the organisation is negligible. More

specifically, there are different types of EV used by organisations primarily focuses on the employer or employee-initiated activities that the employer recognises and supports. For instance, Lukka (2000) and Meinhard et al. (2008) provide two forms of under employer-supported volunteering (ESV), which refers to volunteering activities that result from information provided, initiatives designed, and projects developed by the employers with the intention of increasing the participation of the employees in the surrounding community.

ESV can be entirely designed by the employer, or selected and credited by them [see Table 2-1 for comparison]. The comparison between these types specified four different levels of employee participation in any corporate EV program. The first one touches on the personal level where employees decide to join external voluntary programs and organisation. Meinhard et al. (2008) do not agree to include this personal voluntary effort as an EV form as it falls outside the company limit. The employer supported volunteerism for both Lukka (2000) and   Meinhard et al. (2008) can be divided according to the employer's level of engagement; passive or active. In a passive engagement, the ESV includes employees' voluntary efforts that are recognised and credited by employers. Peloza and Hassay (2006) called it 'Inter-organisational volunteerism' to resample volunteer initiatives supported by - but not strategically aligned with the firm's philanthropy. The active engagement consists of a volunteering program that is designed or selected by the employer. Peloza and Hassay (2006) categorised these types of EV programs under intra-organisational volunteerism for describing volunteer efforts made by employees within company-sanctioned programs.

Table 2-1: Employee volunteering forms, Adopted from Lukka (2000), Peloza and Hassay (2006), and Meinhard et al. (2008)

EV Types	Lukka (2000)	Peloza and Hassay (2006)	Meinhard et al. (2008)
An employee engaged in volunteering activities on their own	**A. Independent employee volunteering**: an employee is engaged external to, or independent of, his/her work life and without the knowledge or support of their employer.	**A. Extra-organisational volunteerism:** performed external to one's role as an employee; consequently providing only a minimal or indirect benefit to the firm	
Employees engaged in employer-supported volunteering causes:	**B. Employer-supported volunteerism (ESV):** an activity developed by an employer to (or "intending to") involving members of the workforce who wish to volunteer, or initiated by the employees themselves; with full knowledge and approval on the part of the employer:		**A. Employer-supported volunteerism (ESV):** a range of initiatives provided by employers to encourage and support community volunteerism among employees:
An employee engaged in volunteering activities who strategically receives support from employer	B.1. Employee-led activity: activities performed by employees that are supported and recognised by the employer.	**B. Inter-organisational volunteerism:** volunteer initiatives supported by - but not strategically aligned with the firm - whereby the goals and strategy of the corporation are secondary to the philanthropic interests of employees *(passive employer support).*	A.1. Credit for volunteering: designed to recognise and encourage volunteering efforts of employees by donating a sum of money to non-profit organisations at which the employees volunteered *(e.g. "Dollar for Doers").*
An employee engaged in employer-supported EV programs/ selected causes	B.2. Employer-initiated Involvement: an activity developed by an employer with the view to involving those members of the workforce who wish to volunteer.	**C. Intra-organisational volunteerism:** describing volunteer efforts made by employees within company-sanctioned programs on behalf of causes/organisations selected by their employer *(pro-active support, development of EV opportunities for employees).*	A.2. Institutional projects: volunteering efforts engaged in institutionally, either through the initiative of the employees or as part of the overall philanthropic strategy of the organisation (*often a single event).*

The types identified by these scholars do not, however, discuss the level of volunteerism principles achieved. For instance, what is the nature of volunteerism maintained in employer-supported volunteerism (Lukka, 2000; Meinhard et al, 2008) if the cause for volunteering does not respect the free-will of employees who might participate to gain employers ' appreciation and achieve the company's goals?   Again, to what extent one can conclude that volunteerism's principles are sustained in EV programs that strategically receives support from companies, or in those programs where the cause is selected to fulfil corporate 's philanthropic interests?

Thus, in most ESV programs, a certain power over the design, arrangement and type of volunteering activities is exerted by the organisation, as well as control in the costs and challenges associated with volunteering. Building on this factor of the employer in the inter-organisational and intra-organisational categories of ESV presented by Peloza and Hassay (2006), the only noticeable difference is the degree to which the employer supports and controls these activities. The study argues that extended control over the EV design, practices, function, and duration contradict the basic principles of volunteerism and threaten its validity.

In addition to these forms of EV, further studies into EV are required to shine a light on the often misrepresented form of EV—compulsory or mandatory volunteering (see Warburton & McDonald, 2002). Today, as well as including voluntary participation and although employees technically have the right to decline (unless it is part of their contractual obligations), many companies mandate their staff to engage in volunteering projects in the course of their CSR policy. Similarly, governments are beginning to introduce volunteerism as a semi-compulsory task. Under this category, the former UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, pledged to "give all public sector workers and anyone

working in a company with more than 250 staff, three days of paid leave each year",
which is "expected to introduce 360 million volunteering hours into communities"
(Crush, 2015, posted in www.cipd.co.uk).

In the particular case study of L4CI explored in this research, the focus falls
beyond the aforementioned forms and aims to further the literature describing the
forms of EV. L4CI is an employee-led, bottom-up volunteering initiative that generated
high pressure to gain approval from its hosting public organisation. Three main features
distinguish it from the forms of EV mentioned in Table [2-2]. Firstly, L4CI takes place in
a public organisation, while most EV studies are located in the private sector or in NGOs.
Secondly, its internal operations structure was entirely initiated, designed and
implemented by employees. Thirdly, it was formed in an organisation that lacked any
pre-existing EV policy at the time of its establishment.

2.2.3.   EV: Impact and barriers

It is becoming increasingly common for corporations to introduce EV into their
corporate strategies. In the USA, the proportion of companies that reported the
existence of EV support skyrocketed from 19% to 49% in the seven years to 1999
(Peloza & Hassay, 2006). Some scholars attribute this trend to the growing importance
of CSR during the 1990s, where CSR strategies began viewing EV as an essential
component of corporate citizenship and public relations. However, others argue that EV
emerged more as an autonomous response of individuals rather than a strategic
instrument imposed by organisations (Lukka, 2000; Gratton and Ghoshal (2003). Many
studies have indicated the latter as the most likely cause. For instance, the gradual
increase in corporate recognition and implementation of EV that followed the rapid

increase in the 1990s is due to many reasons. On the one hand, it can be viewed as a healthy reaction to the "advent of the freelance economy and the demand of mixed lifestyles" (Lukka, 2000, p: 20) as modern employees pursue a balance between work, leisure and family. Conversely, Gratton and Ghoshal (2003) attribute this increased engagement in EV to the changing relationship between employees and their workplace environment. Although companies no longer provide lifelong employability, organisations are still expected to be a source of inspiration and talent. Therefore, the primary benefit of EV is its ability to leverage employee skill sets and attract a talented workforce while remaining a cost-effective medium from a corporate perspective as claimed by Tuffrey (1997), Geroy et al. (2000), Wilson and Hicks (2010) and discussed below.

Beyond the aforementioned corporate advantages, many scholars agree that EV is equally rewarding for all parties: the firm, employees, charities, volunteering organisations and the overall community (Welsh, 1999; Jones, 2010; Caligiuri et al., 2013). EV research has generally been tending to group around four areas of impact as a result of EV activities: the employer, the community, the employees, and charitable organisations (Bart et al., 2009; MacPhail & Bowles, 2009; Muthuri et al., 2009; Jones, 2010; Rogelberg et al., 2010; Bevan et al., 2012; Veleva et al., 2012; do Paco & Nave, 2013; Lysova & Saduikyte, 2015). For employers, EV provides a medium through which its employees can engage with the surrounding community, resulting in positive impacts on the company's image and reputation (Welsh, 1999). Moreover, EV increases employee morale and productivity (Tuffrey, 1997; Geroy et al., 2000). Wilson and Hicks (2010) found that volunteering employees held a more positive attitude towards their employers, colleagues and the organisation as a whole, leading to a practical

improvement in the relationship across functional areas and managerial levels. This likely explains why some employers consider instructing employees to work together in community-oriented activities to be an important team-building exercise and a unique approach to employee training (Geroy et al., 2000). By committing employee time and resources, companies are expanding their contributions to the community beyond simple financial donations to charities. Consequently, these companies are beginning to recognise the potential impact of EV in fostering organisational commitment and employee engagement employees (Grant, 2012). EV can even render the workplace more attractive to future human resource talent and enhance the efficiency of the recruitment process (Turban & Greening, 1997). Beyond the organisation, EV programs create healthy and stronger communities that, in the long term, can better sustain businesses and stabilise economies (Foster et al. 2008).

After engaging in EV activities, employees reported an increased sense of internal satisfaction and pride (Muthuri et al., 2006). EV engagement can also provide employees with the opportunity to gain both interpersonal and professional skills (Peloza & Hassay, 2006), and accelerate their career development toward managerial positions (Pidgeon Jr, 1998). In addition to these benefits, Lukka (2000) noted that EV helps employees overcome job insecurity and combat social exclusion within a community context. EV provides individuals with an opportunity to become engaged in social volunteering activities for which they may otherwise lack the required time due to other organisational commitments. Moreover, employees participating in EV programs demonstrate high organisational citizenship, which can arise from the various unanticipated benefits of EV. Such employees are more prepared to perform beyond what is expected of them. This is reflected in the notion that volunteering is no longer a

'gift of time' but rather a mutual exchange relationship between the volunteer and the organisation (Lukka, 2000:3).

The practice of EV among organisations provides the volunteering and charity sector with a sustained flow of reliable volunteers, equipped with professional skills able to directly enhance the quality of the community services they provide. From a recruitment perspective, charities and volunteering organisations benefit from highly skilled employees with the knowledge and expertise (Wilson & Hicks, 2010). The interaction of volunteering employees with charitable organisations can help increase the source of donations, raise awareness of their cause, and attract additional volunteers (Meinhard et al., 2008). Further to this, such increased exposure is even created for companies who run inter-organisational volunteering policies that recognise EV efforts through financial donations. Therefore, each type of EV program differs in its impact on the individual, the community and the company. According to Peloza and Hassay (2006), the employer has increased control over EV activities, and the benefits increase in-turn check [Table 2-2]. The level of employer control increases as EV programs move from extra-organisational (in which the employees are engaged in volunteering on their own) to intra-organisational (where the employer takes full control of the design and scope of EV participation).

Peloza and Hassay (2006) suggested intra-organisational volunteering provided the greatest benefit to the employee, charity and employer, but the charity might be perceived to have undergone a certain degree of exploitation depending on the type of partnership and voluntary program. Studies on the impact of EV on the overall organisation fully counter the negative arguments suggesting EV can reduce employee

productivity and focus, as well as consume valuable resources (such as the time) that could otherwise be channelled toward increasing the organisation's bottom-line.

Table 2-2: Three forms of employee volunteerism: a comparison of benefits, adapted from Peloza and Hassay (2006: 372)

Extra-organisational	Inter-organisational	Intra-organisational
Employee benefits		
Egoistic benefits; "warm glow."	Possible time off work *in addition to* Extra-organisational benefits	Social benefits; increased opportunity for recognition and rewards *in addition to* Inter-organisational benefits
Community organisation (charity) benefits		
Volunteer support	Possible incremental support (e.g. matching grants) *in addition to* Extra-organisational benefits	Overcoming inertia; new volunteers/ awareness; legitimacy *in addition to* Inter-organisational benefits
Employer benefits		
Possible employee skill development	Marketing/promotion opportunity support *in addition to* Extra-organisational benefits	Increasing morale/ team building; increased efficiencies; focused opportunity for promotion *in addition to* Inter-organisational benefits

However, De Gilder et al. (2005) argued that EV can be considered a source of discomfort to those who do not choose to participate, and to others who believe that volunteering is a private decision that should not be involved in the workplace. They

added that during severe economic and financial times, employees and employers question whether EV programs are a useful source of spending. When EV programs lack united support among employees, companies tend to either de-popularise or significantly increase their promotion. In Forster's research, 28% of respondents reported they were not aware that volunteering was supported in their place of employment, and the most common reason for not getting involved was not being asked (Forster, 1997). Furthermore, if social and economic conditions can lead EV to deteriorate the goodwill of employees, these conditions can negatively reduce the pool of volunteers and result in EV becoming an inefficient company expense (Muthuri et al., 2009). By citing the Gift Exchange Theory, Booth et al. (2009: 232) added that negative employer-employee interactions result in violated trust, an undermining of duty and obligation, and can ultimately mean that the gift exchange rules no longer apply to the organisation's workers.

Moving the discussion to EV barriers, Lukka (2000) listed many obstacles that companies face when implementing EV programs. For instance, companies may find it difficult in scenarios where volunteering employees are granted recognition at the expense of others not involved in EV programs. Moreover, firms unwilling to take on the risk of internal employee objections often prefer to choose monetary donations as an alternative. These are easier and demand fewer resources, even if the majority of the workforce prefers to participate in the volunteering program. By examining the relationship between EV and the size of companies, Basil et al., (2011) claimed that larger corporations are more likely to have formalised EV programs than small firms. Large firms tend to facilitate a more supportive volunteerism environment for

employees that, in a smaller firm, would otherwise fear the risk of being perceived as opportunists seeking special privilege.

In addition to the previous dilemma, one of the biggest barriers to EV that was identified by Foster et al. (2008) was a lack of established philanthropic vision within an organisation's culture. It was shown that companies who have incorporated philanthropy into their operational foundations were relatively distinguished in both attitudes and behaviour from those who do not. While they argue that these enterprises "are likely born, not made" (p. 23), this does not mean that other firms cannot try and succeed. Further, the way they perceive organisational evolution appears rigid, as it ignores the role of political and economic influences as well as the effect of social dynamism and change. These findings support the argument of, Gatignon-Turnau and Mignonac (2014) which implies that employee's decision to participate in corporate volunteering programs is assessed by the intention behind that. They establish that employees generally evaluate whether the organisation's motives are self-serving (e.g. to gain reputation/image) and/or community serving (e.g. help people in need). The study showed that employee participation is higher when they view the organisation as community-serving than that of self-serving.

To some extent, one can conclude that the successful implementation of EV relies mostly on a positive disposition and on the receptiveness of the organisation's culture toward volunteering. These must be reinforced by appropriate policies and formal procedures. While EV should be considered more of an organisational culture than a policy, establishing EV within a corporate environment takes time. Furthermore, comparative studies on the impacts of various EV programs can act as more valuable indicators for managers and decision makers. This study took the initiative to explore

the importance of not to confuse the notion of EV with other CSR programs. It argues to meet basic volunteerism principles and provide an understanding of those factors that can contribute to the development of the EV operational functions and practices according to these principles.

2.2.4. Motivational factors behind employee volunteerism

A significant volume of studies have investigated the motives supporting volunteerism in general, and the general motives for EV have been examined from both individual and the organisational perspectives. From the standpoint of the individual, motives behind the use of EV tend to be more linked to the organisation's context, whereby employees confuse a selfless motive for helping others with a drive to be better-recognised by upper management. Employing the concept of social capital to understanding *why* to engage in employee volunteering, Muthuri et al. (2009) found that employees are moved by a sense of 'reciprocity', that companies are motivated by the 'CSR agenda', and that voluntary organisations are driven by 'resource dependencies' (p. 81). Additionally, Pajo and Lee (2011) claimed that there are some key determinants of an employee's initial engagement and ongoing motivation with EV. They specified them as the opportunity to express altruistic values, the meaningfulness of the service elements along with relational elements and the chance to diversify roles.

In personal development, do Paco and Nave (2013) considered the most important motivational factors to be work-related values and altruism, followed by understanding and enhancement. Surprisingly, the importance of career and protectiveness were identified as less important among those committed to voluntary work. These same conclusions were reported by Rodell (2013), who asked why there

are more routes to the employee's job through the lens of compensation. Rodell demonstrated a healthy relationship between the meaningfulness of the volunteering work and the meaningfulness of the job that accompanies it. In this scenario, employees tended to compensate for a low level of meaningfulness in their jobs with a desire for a meaningful volunteering experience. Conversely, employees with a positive experience in their primary corporate role tended to translate this into increased volunteering efforts. Overall, the three studies demonstrate the crucial role that emotional perception plays in producing the need for voluntary engagement.

To enhance our knowledge of *who* engages in EV, demographic factors have also been examined in the literature. While failing to identify any significant relationship between volunteering and the qualifications of the employees, active involvement in household chores or child care, Ariza-Montes et al. (2015) found that those most likely to volunteer were senior employees who felt satisfied with their economic remuneration, who executed complex and non-monotonous activities, and who exhibited high levels of emotional engagement. Analysing data from the Centre on Philanthropy Panel Study and the Institute for Social Research's Panel Study on Income Dynamics, Webb and Abzug (2008) provided evidence that volunteering among employees in professional, managerial and military occupations is prevalent. In their study, they claim that these findings support the 'Spill-over Theory', which suggests that the self-direction inherited through these high managerial occupations contribute to the provision of civic skills (see Wilson & Musick, 1997). This also supports the finding by Ariza-Montes et al. (2015) as these categories of occupations include non-monotonous activities and require emotional engagement.

From an organisational perspective, the influence of focus on the regularity of communication messages and reference groups were examined experimentally by Lindenmeier et al. (2010). After conducting this experimental study, the authors revealed that the design of internal communication is crucial and that calls from reference groups directly impacted on the individual's intention to volunteer. Furthermore, the influence of reference groups was also confirmed when Ford's employees expressed their decision to volunteer was due to a desire to meet upper management expectations, to better their own reputation, to assess their own performance and/or to improve other's perception of themselves (Bart et al., 2009:128). The engagement of employees has been shown to be interrelated with factors that include project mindfulness, social support and the availability of resources Caligiuri et al. (2013). Moreover, large organisations are found to take a more formal approach to their EV programs than their small business counterparts (Basil et al., 2011). On a more practical level, the availability of established EV support policies would certainly be followed by an increased probability of employee engagement in voluntary programs. However, Ariza-Montes et al. (2015) found that employees working in the public sector and for small companies were more likely to donate their time for voluntary activities, though their ability to contribute was too constrained to confirm their commitment to participate.

As discussed earlier, many of the aforementioned claims are limited to some extent by not considering aspects of human resource management. As argued by (Wilson, 2012, p. 8), this would present a more holistic view of the resources available to an individual in one place compared to another, which encompasses individual assets, a master status and the empowering conditions (personal, social, cultural, political,

economic, etc.) that are conducive to encouraging volunteering. Furthermore, MacPhail and Bowles (2009) questioned the gender equality of EV programs and revealed that employer support is more often through recognition by female employees, and forms of working breaks and flexible working hours than among those who are male. Consequently, these implicit examples of social constructs and attitudes play influential roles in motivating or discouraging different groups of employees from participating in EV programs.

Employees (and people in general) become involved in volunteering for many reasons. Studies highlight the delivery of a benefit to others and feeling valued are crucial motives. According to Cohen (1994), the sustainability of motives for volunteering resides in enabling volunteers to utilise "time available" in performing voluntary work instead of doing paper-work and filling new organisational procedures. Cohen emphasised that driving away volunteers from spending their "public time" on perusing their motives behind their volunteering is a "magic-destroying" (p. 258). He claimed that "when volunteers have little time to spend in the service of the organisation it is likely that the new procedures will 'fill up' all the time available and 'magic' will be depleted" (p. 258). Studying the factors that contribute to the development of the employee volunteering system's functions and practices that support volunteerism could extend our understanding of the impact of time management and allocation of roles in creating sustainable EV projects.

2.2.5.   Volunteerism as a dynamic concept

This section now presents the literature volunteerism as a constantly evolving and dynamic concept. In general volunteerism literature, evidence suggests a constant

"transformation" and "radical change" in the nature of volunteering worldwide. Overall, this evolving paradigm has seen the social movement of volunteerism move from a 'collectivistic' to an 'individualistic' approach (Eckstein, 2001; Hustinx & Lammertyn, 2003), a 'membership-based' to a 'program-based' approach (Meijs & Hoogstad, 2001), and from an 'institutionalised" to "self-organised' approach (Hustinx, 2010; Yotsumoto, 2010; Lockwood et al., 2016). Studies investigating volunteerism commonly contrast and justify this social shift in terms of the 'what' and 'why', but avoid exploring how these trends emerged. Due to its complex nature, the transformation and development of various types of EV systems have seen little exploration but warrants future attention.

It appears that the constant transformation of volunteerism, in general, has led to a paradigm shift. Lockwood et al. (2016) conducted a set of qualitative interviews and performed a thematic analysis during the Rena oil spill that explored the self-organising efforts of youth volunteers outside the established Operation Beach Clean (OBC). The results suggested that youth volunteers were repelled by the administrative processes of OBC and found themselves self-organising into more flexible structures that could accommodate their free-time and enable volunteers to decide on their desired roles. In resistance to the high level of official control and slow response to remove oil from the damaged ship, a group of these volunteers carved the message "Clean Me" into the sand, established a Facebook account and orchestrated a media event that developed into a global social media phenomenon. Combined, these actions placed high pressure on the officials responsible for the oil spill. This self-organised work featured an unstructured and non-obligatory work environment that was rife with innovation and creativity, as the volunteers were able to think more freely and test their plans pragmatically. As a result of this, they were able to put their learning into practice and invent more efficient

ways to collect oil along long stretches of the coast, were able to obtain cost-effective sieves for collecting small oil globules and important documents, and report oil-contaminated wildlife using a systematic quantitative format. Later, these learning experiences were channelled into case studies from which data was applied in numerous research projects by the participating students. In this context, it seems that the availability of virtual as well as physical spaces enable youth volunteers to assemble their efforts, to communicate their feelings and efforts widely, and to decide how to involve themselves in crisis (Weick, 1993).

Moreover, many studies have investigated virtual volunteering activities and how patterns of self-organisation evolve among their volunteering activities. EV forms appear to be an ever-evolving process. Recent trends in the technologies regulations involved in volunteering may cause lead to new forms of volunteerism arising. For instance, the last few years have seen a growing trend toward 'micro-volunteering' and crowdsourced volunteering. Although these areas are widely discussed within the IT sector (Paylor, 2012; Bernstein et al., 2013), this new trend could represent a new social construct of volunteering that may provide another method of collectively involving large numbers of employees, companies and communities in international volunteering activities. Micro-volunteering is one alternative that can be described as an easy, on-demand action without the commitment that can be completed in less than thirty minutes by any volunteer carrying a mobile device (e.g. mobile, tablet or laptop) (Paylor, 2012; Bernstein et al., 2013).

Interestingly, the perception of volunteering tends to be more capitalistic once these benefits are perceived as being manipulated to serve employers rather than voluntary organisations and/or community welfare (Basil et al. 2011; Van Schie et al.,

2011). In this regard, Basil et al. (2011) argued that corporations may, in fact, be "steering volunteerism" (p. 65) by moving the focus of volunteering away from other initiatives outside their best corporate interests, or by over-supplying volunteers toward contributing to specific causes perceived as more socially accepted by the public. Contemporary forms of EV become manifest in new strategies to engineer volunteering (Locke, 2008), harness from it (Williams, 2002) and resuscitate it (Eliasoph, 2008) to confine to new management practices. These strategies enabled the mobilization of volunteers and the organisation of their activities (Haski-Leventhal, et al., 2010). Another by-product to be carefully considered is that EV may influence the recruitment criteria of volunteers when voluntary organisations choose to take a higher preference for professional and highly skilled candidates. While this can be valid for voluntary organisations within the high-tech, special-need and professional services sector; some individuals may still find it cumbersome to undergo selective procedures to offer their free support simply.

A holistic view of the form and capacity transformations of EV over the past years may suggest an individualistic desire of volunteerism to keep the organisational principles of volunteerism untouched while maintaining EV structure to endure constant and sometimes dramatic change. Interventions of private companies and government institutes have manipulated the components of free choice and non-remuneration as employees are invited and even required to participate and expect a return from their contribution such as time-off from paid work (Handy et al., 2000).

This study emphasises with Van Schie et al. (2011) that volunteerism in principles must be maintained and preserved when companies decide to develop their volunteering programs. This study argues with the need to examine the evolving types

of volunteerism within the corporate context and to reconfigure how these principles can be sustained by any organisation. The study argues that the influence of employers on employee's decision to participate should be kept to a minimum by playing a passive support role and providing a platform for voluntary work and sponsorship. Both employer and employees should respect the core principles of volunteerism and sustain adequate distance to keep them untouched. To enable this, they require a better understanding of those systemic factors that contribute to the formation of EV programs in term of practices and functions. To achieve the aim of this case study, Schie et al. (2011) provide a checklist for this study to lead an in-depth exploration of application of volunteerism's principles within the Library for Community Initiative (L4CI) by investigating of the factors that contributed to the formation of the EV program's practices and functions that support the core principles of volunteerism.

2.2.6.   Gaps in employee volunteerism literature

The literature review showed that while EV studies have extensively covered many areas, some areas remain ripe for further investigation. This section highlights the shortage of literature supporting employee volunteering, whereby this thesis will apply a systemic lens in an attempt to close these knowledge gaps.

This study argues that once receive an ever-increasing control, volunteers can reflectively perceive it as a threat to some core principles. In volunteering, this is mainly related to their "free will", which can lead them to make a systemic shift. For example, the questioning of core principles regarding employee volunteering programs that are designed and imposed by corporates and/or governmental policies. The high sense of control leaves nothing to the essence of 'free will' that ordinarily accompanies the term

'volunteering'. Instead, EV seems to be 'planned-well' and completely removes the innate reasons that underpin the dynamic re-formation of EV. This phenomenon was anticipated by Pym (1980), who foresaw a "physical and psychological flight from modern employment" by which employees feel these organisations are no longer serving wider goals or common aims. The literature thus revealed a gap where volunteerism in its core principles seems to be ignored with more focused on identifying EV types, motivations, and impact. There are underprovided of studies that explore the extent that the EV programs were able to develop their practices and functions according to the core principles of volunteerism and the factors that contribute to the development process of the EV programs in that respect.

What researchers in the field of EV require is a systemic thinking tool specifically designed to understand better these interactions, including how components work together within distinct systems. Firstly, investigating EV from a systems perspective aims to introduce a holistic approach to explore the EV system at both its individual parts and the aggregate whole. This can be achieved by starting to look at the EV system as an independent unity with a clear distinction between its organisational level and operational level. It is found that researchers provide little insight thus for regarding the autonomous and dynamic characteristics of EV systems from the perspective of both the volunteering employees and the parental system of their employer. With respect to the organisational level at which EV decision-support is made, the policies, formal volunteering activities and requests within the firms were found to follow heterogeneous patterns (MacPhail & Bowles, 2009). Consequently, there may be differences in the perceptions of how employees adapt and react to different levels of organisational support.

At the operational level, volunteers exemplify dynamic interactional networks. Building on this, Muthuri et al. (2009) adopted a more general approach and found evidence of "EV creating closely-knit groups among employees who frequently volunteer and among the different actors of the EV networks" (p. 85). Subsequently, their study investigated the dimensions of social capital generated under differing EV schemes, which are now further discussed. Volunteering employees were instrumental in mobilising others, and tended to form informal volunteering clusters characterised by a strong recognition of its members' abilities. The authors; Muthuri et al. (2009) claimed that the social capital of EV flourished by enhancing fundamental social interactions through existing networks, by fostering bonding and trust among actors, and by facilitating participation that was mutually beneficial to each member. Additionally, their study concluded that the maintenance of EV relations are cemented in the interactions and interdependence of actors involved, and in a shared understanding of purpose, process and outcomes. A possible outcome from further exploration of this dynamic is the revelation of a new characteristic of EV organisational structure where emotional influences are instrumental to its purpose, connectivity, hierarchy and evolution. Until now, studies on EV have failed to approach the EV system as a collective entity or an independent organisational structure in which volunteers operate. Moreover, there are limited studies have conducted investigations into how EV's practices, functions and activities are developed, organised and performed with respect to volunteerism's principles.

Overall, this study confirmed the importance of examining EV in greater depth as a set of interdependent, defined systems of unique social interactions that occur within organisations. It appears that the focus of previous studies on EV has been unable to

isolate the EV from its hosting organisation. This literature review shows that current studies in this area treat EV as entities dependent on the host organisation, lacking defined interactional or communicational structures to connect volunteers independently. Even within the studies that highlight volunteerism using a top-down organisational level approach still fail to explain how the EV system is itself structured and managed, nor how it interacts with the surrounding environment. Moreover, previous studies reviewing EV forms did not discuss cases where EV was an employee-led bottom-up scenario. In particular, there was no evidence of EV genesis in the absence of established CSR policies or guidance from upper management levels. Therefore, this investigation aims to enrich our understanding of the systemic factors that contribute to the formation process of the EV system. The study decides to adopt a more deterministic perspective into the formation of the EV practices and function. It applies systemic thinking approach in that sense to reveal systemic factors contributing to the formation of the EV system through the exploration of the properties and boundaries of EV as a new part (sub-system) within an established whole.

The particular case study employed by this thesis, L4CI, thoroughly documents an employee-led EV system. Thus, it offers an interesting form of EV and presents a case for a system evolvement that can enrich our understanding by reducing the knowledge gaps identified through the above literature review.

2.3   PART TWO: Systems Thinking

Part two of the literature review aims to provide a 'systemic lens' to explore the case under examination, where systems thinking concepts are used to enable a holistic view. The systemic lens in the study of employee volunteerism is missing, and many of

the previously discussed EV studies tend to narrow our perspective of social events and phenomena into problems and focus in on cause-and-effect relationships. Applying systems thinking 's tools to explore EV assumes that any organisation is a system of interrelated parts, which simultaneously work to satisfy their desire for change and its need for stability. In this part, a short review of systems thinking is provided, and arguments are raised for the adoption of a systemic approach.

2.3.1. An introduction to systems thinking

Systems perspectives refer to a school of thought developed by systems theorists that are applicable to myriad types of systems. For example, social, ecological and biological systems. The main interest of this philosophical approach is how the parts of a system are related to each other along with their context within the larger system. Systems Thinking (ST) approaches and methodologies offer an escape from the reductionism of defining exact problems to bring precise sets of solutions. This approach does not rely on theories to explore the validity of its final judgment. Instead, ST science approaches reality in terms of (1) the *whole* instead of *all*, and (2) *interrelatedness* instead of *relationships*. In doing so, it brings forth various processes of understanding and inquiries that range from *systematic* borrowing real systems models which relay on Hard Systems Thinking (HST) to encourage more *systemic* mental modelling process found in Soft Systems Thinking (SST). Both Hard Systems Thinking and Soft Systems Thinking to provide creative approaches to modelling, called Systemic Thinking methodologies. For a clear comparison between the two schools refer to Table [2-3].

In general terms, Systems Thinking seeks to understand the interrelationships between things and discover how individual parts work by their effects on

surroundings. Churchman famously stated that a systems approach "begins when first you see the world through the eyes of another" (Churchman, 1968, p. 231). The proper application of Systems Thinking requires a formal definition of "systems". Ackoff (1981, p: 64-65) define "system" is a whole that cannot be divided into independent parts, to do something and can be identified as having special meaning where it comprises of a set of two or more elements connected in an organised way that satisfies the following three conditions:

- The behaviour of each element has an effect on the behaviour of the whole.
- The behaviour of the elements and their effects, on the whole, are interdependent.
- However, subgroups of the elements are formed, each influences the behaviour of the whole, and none has an independent effect on it.
- Therefore, the essential properties of a system taken as a whole derive from the interaction of its parts, not their actions are taken separately.

The United Kingdom Systems Society linked the "system" and "system thinking" concepts by stating that, "The concept of system embodies the notion of a collection of elements connected together to form a whole. Systems thinking uses this concept to help understand the world. Central to the approach are the ideas of emergence and hierarchy, and communication and control. Systems practice employs systems ideas to design and manage complex processes and artefacts for the benefit of individuals, organisations and society" (UKSS, 2003). Other similar definitions have been contributed by others (Checkland, 1984; Checkland, 1999; Jackson, 2000).

Systems thinking theories and models were developed to tackle various challenges present in conventional research practices. The first concept Systems Thinking deals with is the degree of system *complexity*. The complexity of systems is influenced by continuous change and adaptation within its environment, making it so irrational to assume our ability to fully comprehend. Systems Thinking also holds two core aspects; *holism*, and *pluralism* in which it is about "gaining a bigger picture" (going up a level of abstraction) and appreciating other people's perspectives" (Chapman, 2004, p. 14). According to Reynolds and Holwell (2010), *pluralism* suggests there is no single resolution to a given situation due to its complexity and uncertainty. It involves multiple unifying factors of investigation in searching for/or thinking of relevant wholes (i.e. those systems of interest). In addition, the notion of 'wholeness' has been stressed by Stowell (2009), who states this concept is central to systems epistemology. Stowell suggests that wholeness enables the placing of intellectual structures into the complex world. These intellectual structures help to organise concepts and provides an analytical framework to explore the investigated reality. Jackson (2000) and Stowell (2009) explained that researchers could identify meaningful wholes, analyse the relationships between their structure and processes, and consequently gain a greater understanding of their behaviour. For additional readings on the core concepts and ST movement, the following sources are recommended: (Midgley, 1992; Flood & RA, 1996; Midgley, 2000; Jackson, 2006b; 2006a; Paucar-Caceres, 2008; Flood, 2010).

In the language of System Thinking, care must be taken to distinguish the terms systemic and systematic, which carry principally different meanings. In this study, systemic thinking approaches and tools represented in Soft thinking were borrowed to construct the explorative systemic lense. Thus it is crucial to understand the difference

between the two schools of thinking. Table [2-3] demonstrates a comparison between these two terminologies ontologically, theoretically and in practice from a systems perspective.

Table 2-3: Comparison between Systemic and Systematic thinking approaches

Definitions	Systemic	Systematic
Dictionary Meaning	Affecting the whole of something (Collins English Dictionary, 2012)	Characterised by the use of order and planning; methodical (Collins English Dictionary, 2012)
Ontology/ Epistemology	The systemic approach assumes the reality is problematic and complex. It follows interpretive-emancipatory-postmodern paradigms and applies soft, critical and creative thinking to understand and learn about it (Checkland, 1999; Midgley & Ochoa-Arias, 2001). Social, creative constructions of human beings, all social phenomena are by way of interpretation made through the cognitive processes of the human brain (Flood, 2010)	The systematic approach assumes reality is simple and made up of a set of systems. It follows functionalism approaches and applies hard thinking to problem-solving (Checkland, 1999). Representations borrowed from natural science and all social phenomenon are real systems (Flood, 2010)
Thinking Inquiry approach	Refers to the understanding of a phenomenon within the context of a larger whole. To understand things systemically literally means to put them into a context, to establish the nature of their relationships (Ison, 2008) Systemic thinking is nothing more than a combination of analytical thinking (understand the parts of the situation) and synthetically thinking (know how they work together) (Bartlett, 2001)	Thinking which is connected with parts of a whole but in a linear, step-by-step manner (Ison, 2008) A Systematic procedure involves: establishing clear objectives and then using generalizable models, based on systems logic, to enable prediction and control of the real-world systems of concern so that the objectives are realised with maximum efficiency and efficacy (Jackson, 2003)

Purpose of systems Interventions	Enhance a problematical situation systemically that is purposeful action by an agent to create change about reflection on boundaries (Midgley, 2000)	Systematic intervention begins with problem identification and concludes with some final solutions and an expectation that things will reach a desirable condition (Flood, 2010)

Flood (2010) applied an ST approach to suggest that all social phenomena are made through the cognitive processes of the human brain. Flood identified two main streams that lead to different understandings of systems interventions that explain this claim. Firstly, a systematic approach that assumes the existence of real-world systems. It reinforces a positivistic reality or Hard Systems Thinking. The modelling relies on an understanding of how these systems work to facilitate the understanding and adaptation of its elements and principles. The aim is to achieve optimisation. Secondly, the systemic approach that assumes the social construction of the world is mentally subjective. Under this assumption, no systems exist to model. Instead, each phenomenon will produce its own mental model. Systemic thinking understands phenomena through Soft Systems Thinking that adopts interpretive models produced via human cognition.

The term 'systemic' refers to effecting the whole system. Thus, using systemic thinking approach to understand a social transformation will enable its placing into a larger whole and the application of both synthetic and analytic analysis (Bartlett, 2001). More succinctly, systemic thinking aims to establish the nature of relationships between things (Ison, 2008). Based on this approach, systems theorists attempt to follow interpretive-emancipatory-postmodern paradigms and apply soft, critical and creative thinking to understand and learn about systems of interest (Checkland, 1999; Midgley

& Ochoa-Arias, 2001). This study employs the Soft Systems Thinking lens to apply a systemic approach and guide the explorative case study in the context of EV.

In short, Mella (2013: 3-5) specifies the main logical rules of systems thinking that make possible exploration of complexity, dynamics and change in this world. He pointed that applying systems thinking models "operationalizes the holonic view, in that it not only specifies how far the observation of the whole/part relationship should extend but above all tries to identify the links and constraints that make the whole and its parts interdependent" (Mella, 2013: 3). The second logic privileges the search of variation over time when it aids that researcher to shift from the world of "objects" to the world of "variables". The third and fourth rules of systems thinking assess the effort to understand the cause of the variations in the variable by forming chains of causal variables (input and output variables) while identifying caused variables (effects) before being able to draw loops among all variations. Mella (2013) added that employing the concept of boundaries is the fifth rule that makes exploring any real-world system using system thinking logical.

Other important key principles of the systems thinking approach discussed by Churchman (1968) is the hierarchical nature of the system. This principle implies that a system is always part of a larger system. With the case study in hand, these rules provide a strong argument for the rationale of adopting a systemic thinking lens. For instance, applying these logical rules enabled the creation of a holistic view of the newly formed L4CI and traced its development process within its hosting parental system and the relationships that emerged with the surrounding environment. The use of rich picture and network engagement along other diagrammatical representation tools assessed in gaining deeper exploration of what happened, how, and why. The application of these

rules also revealed the contributing systemic factors in the establishment of the system's practices and functions with respect to basic principles of volunteerism. The following sections detail the application of the systems thinking lens in this study.

2.3.2. Applying systemic thinking to organisational volunteerism

According to Campbell et al. (1991: 8), the fundamental concept of ST is that "every organisation at each developmental stage must manage an appropriate balance between difference and sameness". In this sense, the growth of organisational volunteerism produces change that must be explored—at each developmental stage—to understand how various external and internal factors contribute to the formation of the EV project within its existing system. Adopting a systems perspective requires a systemic thinking approach that in turn enables a system-wide view of volunteerism in organisations.

L4CI as an EV in this case study is conceptualised as an independent system that has been established to expose a distinct identity and clear system boundary. The systemic lens employing soft systemic thinking is believed to fulfil the lack of studies on EV that fail to recognise it as an independent system of unique patterns of the organisation from its containing context. This study aims to explore "volunteerism" within employee volunteering programs and the factors that contribute to the development of the EV system's practices and functions that support the basic principles of volunteerism. This is achieved by examining the interactions between various agents across multiple levels of the whole and its role in the development of the project. This lens is necessary to maintain a holistic view of the story told in the development of the EV system, the formation of its organisational and operational levels, and influence on

and from the hosting organisation (i.e. the old whole). Together, these are able to capture the systemic factors that contribute to its transformation. The lens facilitated the identification of the systemic factors that caused a transformation within the larger whole and contributed to the formation of, and relationships between, its main elements.

The rationale behind adopting soft systemic lens and employing these concepts and tools stands on the following advantages:

- The view of a system as a subjective mental construct, which provides the ability to distinguish between a systems description and a real-world situation. It provides the analyst with the freedom to develop constructs that make sense in a particular setting and to use the theory of their choosing. It also acknowledges the researcher's subjectivity.

- ST is trans-disciplinary. This allows for the introduction of theories or concepts from other disciplines to gain greater insight into a situation;

- ST balances the whole-view and the parts-view.

- Similarly, the process first involves identification of the larger whole of which the entity to be investigated is part (i.e. L4CI in relation to its parental systems) followed by an investigation of the behaviour of the larger whole (the L4CI as new part). Lastly, the behaviour of the part in terms of its role within the containing whole (the interaction of employees within L4CI) can be investigated.

- ST's focus on the interaction of a system as a whole, together with the process, allows the researcher to compare L4CI at the high level with the interaction of its agents at the lower level.

In reference to the checklist of volunteerism adopted from Van Schie et al. (2011, p: 123-124) a number of principles are required to identify volunteerism within corporates' volunteering programs. In that, volunteering should be:

1. Unpaid job,

2. Personal decision

3. Organised

4. Beneficial to other parties, and;

5. Requires an investment of time.

Adopting a soft systemic lens in this study is meant to act as an explorative approach that enriches the investigation of these principles and the factors contributing to the formation of the L4CI system's practices and functions accordingly. Starting from the first point mentioned in the advantages where it claims that the view of the system is a "mental construct", the study employed participant's perceptions and stories in developing a rich picture to build a mental model of the reality been expressed by the participants. The main role of the rich picture as argued by Checkland (1989, 1999) is building a conceptual understanding of the situation under the light (see section 5.3.4). It also draws network evolvement to track the intensity of interaction between the agents within the EV system and with their environment (see section 5.3.5). Analysing the network from this aspect helps to evaluate the impact of various actors on the formation of the L4CI and how it influences the formation process of its identity, organisational and operational structure and define its boundary. Moving the next point, the use of soft systems concepts and tools allowed the study to explore the volunteerism concept by relying on the social constructionist paradigm. It enabled the researcher to develop a checklist of volunteerism principles adopted from Van Schie et al. (2011, p:

123-124) and explore internal and external factors contributed to the development of practices and functions that support those principles.

To be able to run this explorative mission, the system was explored as a whole (recognised unit), and part (a new part within the old whole). In chapter one, Figure [1.1] shows how the researcher pictured that new emergent part within its old whole. The systemic lens also enabled to see the system components where it consists of L4CI's identity, boundary, organisational level (order and authority structure, the formal flow of communication and the chain of command). Also, the operational level (internal processes), agents (actors, owners, beneficiaries, etc.), and interactions with environment systems (parent systems, and external stakeholders). The following diagram [Figure 2-1] shows the systemic lens applied to view the L4CI systems' components and levels.
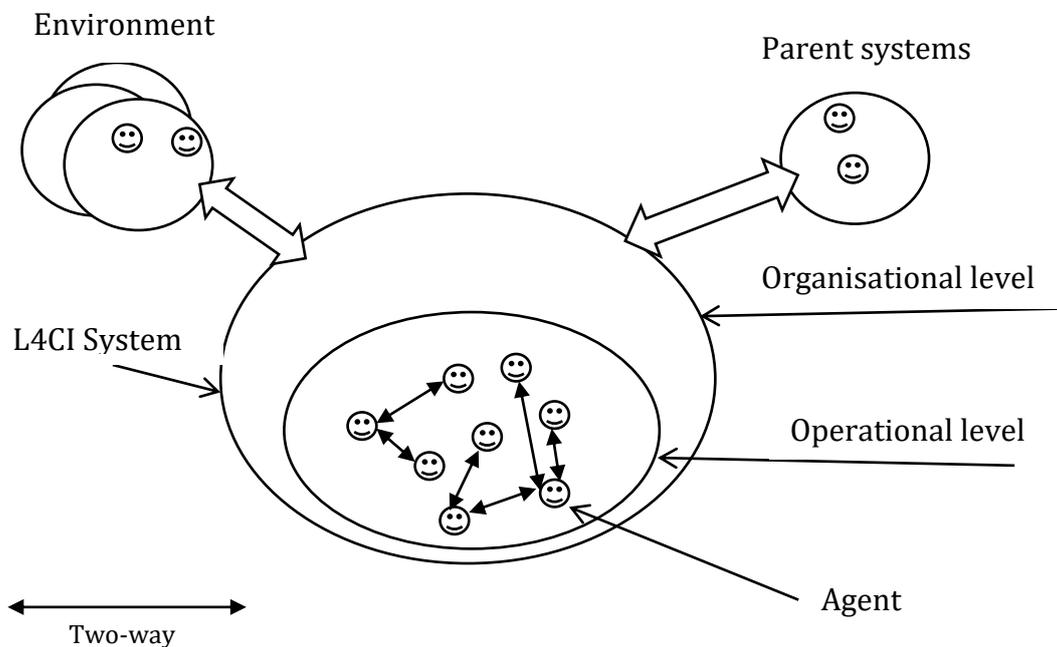
Figure 2-1 Model of the systemic Lens adopted to explore the L4CI system's components and levels

From the above diagram [Figure 2-1], the following systems concepts were perceived as useful in exploring volunteerism in EV systems and specifying the contributing systemic factors involved in the formation of the L4CI' practices and functions:

- **Emergent properties;** are those properties that do not exist in the parts but are found in the whole (Weinberg, 1975:60). A system is always more than the sum of its parts. This explores the formations of the system's identity over time. The identity of a system is a concise verbal description according to Avison et al. (1992). Using guidance from Checkland (1981), a checklist technique called the CATWOE criteria to be used to identify elements of the root definition of the L4CI.

- **Boundary:** a membrane separates the system from the external world. It serves to concentrate interactions inside the system while allowing exchange with external systems. (Hoagland, Dodson, and Mauck 2001). This concept helps to draw a line between what is considered part of the L4CI system and what is outside it.

- **Hierarchy:** suggests that a system is always part of a larger system (Churchman, 1968). This concept allocates the L4CI within its old whole and determines that the nature of the relationship exists with this whole and the environment system.

- **Resources:** are the means that the system uses to reach it's objective and are located under the control of the system (Churchman, 1968). This includes both physical (monetary and non-monetary) and nonphysical assets (human capital).

- **Organisational level:** It implies structure; a set of parts that relate together in a specific order to perform a function (Saaty and Kearns, 2014: 72). It is the arrangement of components that help to achieve objectives. The concepts seek to define the structure of the L4CI system including the line of power, authority, positioning within its parental system (larger system) and the nature of relationships exists internally and with the external environment.

- **Operational level (processes):** are studied in terms of inputs, outputs, transformations, and interconnections between the components that make up the system (Checkland, 1981). This concept helps to focus on exploring the system from within and spell its operations, function, programs, allocation of resources and role, decision-making process, etc.

- **Interactions:** The properties, capabilities, and behaviour of a system are derived from its parts, from interactions between those parts, and from interactions with other systems. (Hitchins, 2009: 60). Exploring the interaction of the system from within and with outsiders aims to examine the level of employment of the volunteerism principles in these interactions.

- **Environment:** is "a set of elements and their relevant properties, which elements are not part of the system but a change in any of which can produce a change in the state of the system." (Ackoff, 1971:662). Being able to distinguish the system from its surrounding environment generates a deeper understanding of the nature of the relationships and the forces imposed on both sides.

The contribution of the above concepts' application is clearly outlined in the finding chapter (section 5.3.7) resulting in the identification of the characteristics of the EV project. The systemic explorative lens in this case study was designed to investigate the availability of the core principles of volunteerism and the factors that contributed in the development of the L4CI's components and levels with respect to these principles. L4CI was viewed as an independent system hosted and interacting with its parental system and both are in constant dialogue with environment systems [Figure 2-1]. In that, the study carried three levels of analysis: the L4CI system; its interaction with the hosting system level; and the systems environment level.

The first level involved identification of the system identity and boundary within its larger whole. It carries out an exploration of the emergent order at its organisational level and the nature of the relationship with that old whole (i.e. L4CI in relation to its parental systems). The investigation also focused on exploring the processes at its operational level within the new system and how it was informed by the principles of volunteerism. The L4CI's resources were questioned to understand how it was used to achieve the system objective within the volunteerism realm.

In the second level of analysis, exploration aimed to picture the L4CI system within its whole; the parental system. This level involved questioning factors contributed to the development of the L4CI identity, positioning, authority division, management intervention, control and channels of power, and the allocation of resources. In addition, it investigated the hierarchal nature of the entire system to be able to allocate the L4CI within its hosting whole and in relation to other environmental systems. Moving to the third level of analysis, the systems environment was investigated to discover the level of interactions and influence exposed to all parties during the

establishment process. In all level of analysis, the investigation focused on exploring those environmental factors that contributed to constructing the system according to the core principles of volunteerism.

Furthermore, the interactions of agents from various level and systems was addressed for the purpose of defining a wider view of factors contributing to the establishment process of the L4CI. Those agents involved the volunteering employees, the managers from the parental system and the various actors and beneficiaries from other environmental systems. The analysis levels and the process is described in more details in the following two chapters. The exploration adopted a case study strategy where the specific emphasis has been placed on outlining the basis for choosing interpretive paradigms with a subjective view.

2.4   Conclusion

The literature review chapter was designed to discuss the most relevant academic literature in the area of EV. The chapter defined EV before discussing EV types, and its impacts and motivations from a variety of perspectives. Gaps in the literature were identified, which provided justification for the L4CI case study. For example, previous studies failed to examine the level of volunteerism in corporate volunteering and the factors that contribute to the formation of employee-led volunteering programs. The chapter argued for the need to stand still on basic principles of volunteerism by adopting a checklist developed after Van Schie et al. (2011). The chapter argued for the need to investigate these areas by applying concepts and tools from Systems Thinking. It introduced a conceptual framework that explains the systemic lens and discussed how systems concepts are to be used to derive the exploration mission in this particular case

study. Systems thinking concepts such as system's properties, boundary, hierarchy, resources, interactions, as well organisational and operational level were discussed in relation to the adopted checklist. The following chapter justifies the need for the interpretive paradigm as a philosophical approach and details the qualitative tools adopted to implement the case study strategy.

Chapter 3: Methodology in theory

3.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the philosophical foundations of four key axioms: ontology, epistemology, the nature of human perspectives, and methodology (McGregor & Murnane, 2010: 420). The following case study explores "volunteerism" within employee volunteering (EV) programs and the systemic factors that contribute to the formation process of its practices and functions that support the principles of volunteering. When discussing how reality underlies these systemic factors, specific emphasis has been placed on outlining the basis for choosing interpretive paradigms with a subjective view.

The discussion includes justifications to support the qualitative inquiry method of conduct semi-structured interviews that was selected. The questions were designed to explore participants' description of what happened, how others reacted, why others reacted in the way they did, and to determine their justification for establishing an EV program at their workplace. Document analysis and field notes were added to support the data collected for the purpose of method triangulation and to achieve credibility and reliability. The rationale behind using this interview method is discussed in the following chapter. Furthermore, this chapter explains the data analysis approaches, with clear justification for electing content and thematic analyses to achieve the aim of the study.

A theoretical basis of methodology design does not always guarantee its utility in practice, and this was evidenced in this study. Under unexpected circumstances, the researcher was forced to combine the two rounds of semi-structured interviews into a time-extended single semi-structured interview format. Due to this, document analysis and field notes were adopted to improve the quality and richness of the study data. Details of the practical data collection procedures, difficulties, limitations and data coding strategies are discussed in Chapter four.

3.2   Philosophical Position

The discussion in this section presents the subjective ontological and epistemological assumptions brought from the employment of *social construction* to the area of inquiry before illuminating the methodological approach. These ontological and epistemological approaches inform the strength of the interpretive approach and were influenced by the work of Jackson (2003) and Burrell and Morgan (1979).

Jackson (2003, p.23) emphasised that, although scientists commonly employ ST without providing explicit real-world accounts, ST originators either consciously or unconsciously incorporated assumptions about the nature of the systems science and the nature of social systems (i.e. sociology). Jackson claimed that systems approaches rested upon a metaphorical understanding of the nature of systems, whereby metaphors were "not incommensurable but can be used by skilled manager alone or with others to enhance creative insights and develop critical thinking" (Jackson, 2003, p.27). In Social Studies, Burrell and Morgan (1979) identified four paradigms [Figure 3-1] each of which carries different philosophical assumptions about reality.

According to Burrell and Morgan (1979), the *functionalist* and *radical structure* paradigms both take the side of objectiveness, believing in reality's existence and its measurability. Moreover, according to Giddens, August Comte argued that all knowledge is scientific and empirical, and can only exist following the positive affirmation of theories with strict scientific (positivist) methods (Giddens, 1993). The two paradigms are each a form of positivism, meaning reality is what we sense and that we reach realisation through our abilities *or* via scientific methods.

The Sociology of Radical Change

	Radical Humanistic	Radical Structuralism	
Subjective	Interpretive	Functionalism	Objective

Sociology of Regulation
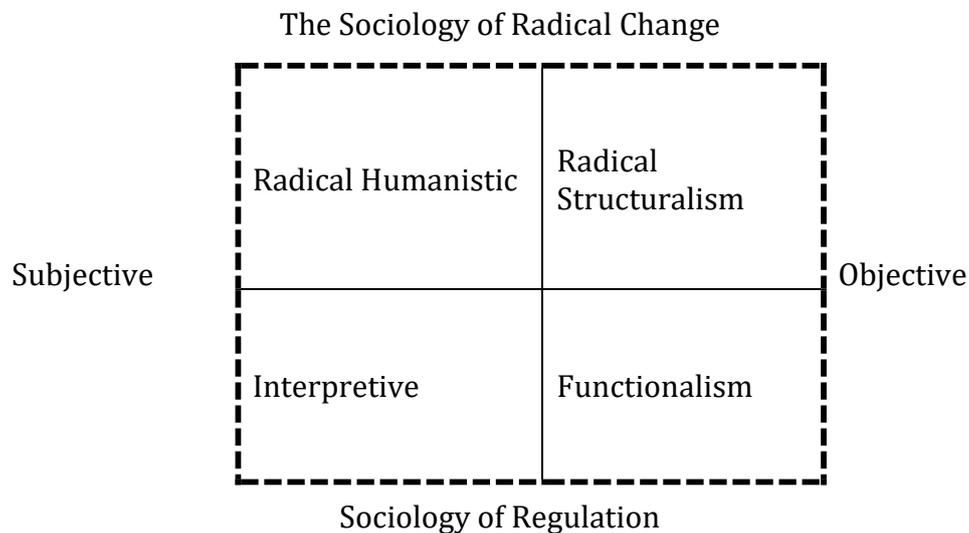
Figure 3-1: Four paradigms for the analysis of social theory (Burrell & Morgan, 1979: 22)

Within functionalism, the researcher's ontology is more mechanical and even biological. Derived from a combination of discoveries in the natural sciences and a macro view of society, functionalists linked these concepts in terms of biological relations. This suggests that just as organs serve diverse functions in a biological system, so too individual institutions meet the needs and purposes of society at large. The view of systems within the functionalist paradigm seems to have a hard, easily identifiable existence, independent of observers (Jackson, 2003: 24). Human beings here are no more than problems. Thus, it is facile to construct a model of the system that captures

the status quo and facilitates the prediction and control of system behaviour. Functionalists seek to explain social affairs in an essentially problem-oriented approach. The research process begins with the definition of a problem using hypothetical, causal or experimental relations to fit well with nomothetic methodology, which is one concerned with providing practical solutions to practical problems (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

When the functional approach generates regulative sociology, the radical change paradigm generates structural relationships within a realist social world. The approach argues, as stated by Burrell and Morgan (1979: 34), that fundamental conflicts characterise contemporary societies. With its external hard existence, this view of systems aims to discover causal regularities that govern behaviour. Jackson (2003) described systems within this paradigm and emphasised the contradictions and conflicts between diverse groups in the system. Jackson continued, describing how these facilitate the emancipation of people from contemporary, existing social structures. This approach views the role of various social forces as the direct reason for social change or development.

The structures of social systems often appear more flexible when the points of view and intentions of human beings (who possess a precarious interpretation of reality), are understood more subjectively. Jackson (2000:24) argued that it is not possible to build a model of such soft systems and instead suggested that researchers must gain an insider's perspective by being involved in its activities.

This research employs an interpretive approach to explore "volunteerism" within employee volunteering programs and the factors that contribute to the

development of the EV system's practices and functions that support the basic principles of volunteerism. Therefore, the study takes a subjectivist position and advances the belief that reality can exceed our sensory faculties by comprising imagination, ideas, understandings and mental products. In this context, the researcher studied the formation process of the L4CI as a socially reconstructed process created by the participants' interactions. This enables an understanding of how the various elements of the EV system are established, defined and located. These researchers do not need to identify a problem, as they believe social life to be multi-dimensional and, essentially, none of them can be proven false nor correct. In the following section, this position is explained in further detail.

3.2.1. Social constructivism: an interpretive approach

This research was conducted within the subjective paradigm where, ontologically, knowledge is nominal and framed in terms of labels and names that are continually constructed by people (each constructing their own reality). Prior to conducting this case study, the literature revealed a gap in the existing academic knowledge, which arose due to a lack of studies that adequately examined volunteerism in EV programs and the need to acknowledge its distinctive system structure. From the social constructivist perspective, this study employs assumptions from an interpretive view, systemically exploring the formation of a new system called L4CI. This is examined from the perspective of participating actors to explore the systemic factors that contribute to a system-wide transformation.

The *interpretive* paradigm allows the utilisation of qualitative inquiry to conduct an inductive investigation. As shown in Figure [3-2], Morgan and Smircich (1980)

specified the core ontological and epistemological assumptions of this research as well as a human agency in this reality. Here the study views reality as a by-product of subjective social construction and uses a subjectivist lens and an interpretive paradigm to understand how it has been created. Within the ontology of *social construction*, humans play a major role by voluntarily constructing and creating their world. According to contributions from Mills *et al.* (2009), constructivists "focus on human social processes and activities that are considered both reflexively transformative and self-sustaining, rather than objective artefacts, things, or substances, as phenomena of interest" (p: 224). It views knowledge and truth as created, not discovered (Schwandt, 2003). However, this does not make it inconsistent with realism, instead of helping to maintain the construction of concepts more correspondent to something real. Hammersley (2013) explains that when the reality is socially defined, it refers to the subjective experience of everyday life as it is understood, rather than to the objective reality of the natural world. This knowledge or reality is created through interactions of the individuals within society (Schwandt, 2003), and the maintenance of that conversation is an essential means for maintaining, modifying, and reconstructing a subjective reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

In its tendency to grasp a holistic view and explore systemic factors, the study appreciates interpretive epistemologies. The interpretive epistemology refuses to assign the world as a source to study human beings because humans are also influenced by their subjective perception of their surroundings—their subjective realities (Willis, 2007: 6).

Core Ontological Assumptions (Reality)	Reality as a projection of human imagination	Reality as a social construction	Reality as a realm of symbolic discourse	Reality as a contextual field of information	Reality as a concrete process	Reality as a concrete structure
	Nominalism					**Realism**
Basic Epistemological Stance (Knowledge)	To obtain phenomenological insight, revelation	To understand how social reality is created	To understand patterns of symbolic discourse	To map contexts	To study systems, process, change	To construct a positivist science
	Anti-positivism					**Positivism**
Assumptions About Human Nature	Man as pure spirit, consciousness, being	Man as a social constructor; the symbol creator	Man as an actor; the symbol user	Man as an information processor	Man as an adaptor	Man as a responder
	Voluntarism					**Determinism**

Figure 3-2: The research's core ontological and epistemological assumptions (Morgan and Smircich 1980)

This research looks at how the formation of L4CI represents a social re-construction where the new EV system is a product of social progress. The reality is thus consistently created, controlled, and developed by various stakeholders who are at the same time influenced by the existing social structure. It is assumed that the relationships between individuals and social structures are dynamic in nature, changing over time, and resulting in a persistent renewal of that particular interpretation of reality. Individuals outline various levels of interpretations that arise from both an intrinsic understanding and an extrinsic understanding that is based on the shared interests, goals and needs of a communal organisation. Thus, a relationship exists by which individual agency influences and is influenced by the social structures that surround the individual.

One of the main justifications for employing the interpretive scenario is to work within the practical limits and boundaries of social systems. The application of a systemic lens to explore the formation of EV in this study underpins social constructivism. This is thus essentially interpretive, where social reality is a form of social construction enacted by knowledgeable social agents. Investigating systemic factors in term of social structure and human agency requires both superficial and interpretive analyses to question where the underlying sources of a given reality are presumed to reside. Gioia and Pitre (1990) explained that "proponents of interpretive theory build focus on how a particular social reality is constructed and maintained" (p: 589). Therefore, within these theoretical constraints, hypothesis testing is rare, inquiry approaches are inductive, and literature reviews are not central.

The various current levels of interrelated systems within this EV project means analysis can be problematic; people view multiple realities, and there are different levels of formal and informal social systems. This makes such systems difficult to categorise, as they do not easily conform to defined patterns. Stowell (2009) observed that human behaviour often does not conform to these theories and that organisational behaviour is both dynamic and determined by the values and beliefs of its members. Thus, this paradigm can be applied when exploring EV by questioning the political power, societal structure, beliefs and values of its agents. This can facilitate our understanding of the "why" and "how" this EV project was established and maintained.

3.3   Research Strategy: a Case Study

The research strategy implemented here uses a single explorative, intrinsic case study to investigate the systemic factors that contribute to the formation of an EV

subsystem (new part). An inductive approach was selected to gain a rich understanding of the EV context, which has previously received little attention from systems science. Generally speaking, the case study strategy was selected to present 'an all-encompassing method' (Yin, 2013: 14) of the investigation, despite being considered in itself a methodology by many researchers. This thesis adopted the view of the case study as an object of study defined as:

> *"...a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system [a case] or multiple bounded systems [cases] over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information [e.g., observations, interviews, audio-visual material, and documents and reports] and reports a case description and case-based themes" (Creswell et al. 2007: 245).*

According to Yin (2013), a case study strategy is desirable when the focus is to answer 'how' and 'why' questions. In this case, it was essential to explore *how* "volunteerism" was perceived and employed in the produced structure of the L4CI system. Also, as part of the study aim, *why* pursues the factors behind decisions that were made that affected the formation process of the L4CI's practices and functions that support the core principles of attached to volunteerism concept. Creswell (2007) added that "case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e., a setting, a context)" (p. 73). In this particular case, volunteerism within employee volunteering programs presented the context where L4CI is the bounded system. Research in this style cannot manipulate the behaviour of participants. Thus, the aim was to cover the contextual conditions, believing they are relevant to understand the phenomenon, particularly when boundaries are ambiguous

between the case and the context. From this perspective, this strategy provided a strong potential for exploring voluntary organisations and groups by defining how and why EV can uncover more about its unique organisational structure and the relevance of contextual social interactions.

There are various types of strategies for conducting case study research, often differing in definition, form and substance across research groups [Table 3-1]. Yin (2013) categorised case study research as explanatory, exploratory or descriptive. In contrast, Stake (1994: 237) described three other types of case studies: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. In their encyclopaedia, Mills et al. (2009) provided two further types of case study research by adding introducing participatory and prospective case studies. This case study, according to the definitions given by Yin and Stake, is, in fact, both explorative and intrinsic. It is explorative in that it focuses on conducting an in-depth investigation in order to understand the "why" and "how" of EV formation within a well-established institution. However, it is also intrinsic because with "all its particularity and ordinariness, this case itself is of interest" (Stake, 1994). The researcher has been engaged in various volunteering events and carries high interest in studying volunteerism within the corporate context. The previous experience in this field increased the researcher appetite for revealing the unique structure of the EV systems when found to be part and under the control of corporations.

The strategy of this case study is broadly shaped around the gaps found in the literature review, and in addressing how the methodology should contribute towards filling these gaps. First, it prioritises the development of a learning inquiry about the system, then selects qualitative methodological approaches that secure the generation of in-depth data. For instance, it follows purposeful sampling where participants are

purposefully targeted for their direct relationship to the L4CI system. Second, the data collection in this case study intensively aims to draw an in-depth picture of the context. For this particular case study, the methodological framework consisted of semi-structured interviews, document analysis and field notes. These inquiry methods are selected for their explorative potential to collect intensive data about the EV project. Third, the study defines data analysis approaches to make sense of data and specifies the area of reflections (Yin, 2003). Applying a systemic lens, the data analysis moves from holistic analysis of the entire context of volunteerism to an embedded analysis of specific factors contributing to the establishment of the practices and functions within the EV project that support and respect volunteerism's principles.

Table 3-1: Definitions and examples of various types of case studies; Mills et al. (2009)

Case study type	Definition	Published example
Explanatory	This type of case study is used when seeking to answer a question that attempts to explain the presumed causal links in real-life interventions that are otherwise too complex for a survey of innovative strategies. In the evaluation language, the explanations would link program implementation with program effects (Yin, 2003).	Balmer, J. M. T. (1996) *The nature of corporate identity: an explanatory study undertaken within BBC Scotland*. Diss. The University of Strathclyde.
Exploratory	This type of case study is used to explore situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes (Yin, 2003).	Keaveney, S. M. (1995). Customer switching behaviour in service industries: An exploratory study. *The Journal of Marketing*, 71-82.
Descriptive	This type of case study is used to describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred (Yin, 2003).	Klem, M. L., Wing, R. R., McGuire, M. T., Seagle, H. M., & Hill, J. O. (1997). A descriptive study of individuals successful at long-term maintenance of substantial weight loss. *The American journal of clinical nutrition*, *66*(2), 239-246.
Intrinsic	Stake (1995) uses the term intrinsic for researchers who have a genuine interest in the case and when the intent is to understand the situation better. It is not undertaken primarily because the case represents other cases or because it illustrates a particular trait or problem, but because "in all its particularity and ordinariness, the case itself is of interest". The purpose is NOT to come to understand some construct or generic phenomenon. The purpose is NOT to build theory, although of course, that is an option (Stake, 1995).	Wicks, D., & Grandy, G. (2007). What Cultures Exist in the Tattooing Collectivity? Ambiguity, Membership and Participation 1. *Culture and Organization*, *13*(4), 349-363.

Table 3-1 (Continue)

Case Study Type	Definition	Published Example
Instrumental	Is used to accomplish something other than simply understanding a particular situation. It provides insight into an issue or helps to refine a theory. The case is of secondary interest; it plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else. The case is often looked at in depth, its contexts are scrutinised, and its ordinary activities are detailed because it helps the researcher pursue the external interest. The case may or may not be seen as typical of other cases (Stake, 1995).	Falk, I. (2003). Designing effective leadership interventions: a case study of vocational education and training. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *24*(4), 193-203.
Multiple/ Collective Case Studies	Collective case studies (Stake, 1995) or multiple case studies (Yin, 2003) enable the researcher to explore differences within and between cases. The goal is to replicate findings across cases. Because comparisons will be drawn, it is imperative that the cases be chosen carefully so that the researcher can predict similar results across cases, or predict conflicting results based on a theory (Yin, 2003).	Maton, K. I., & Salem, D. A. (1995). Organizational characteristics of empowering community settings: A multiple case study approach. *American Journal of community psychology*, *23*(5), 631-656.
Participatory Case Studies	A participatory case study is a mode of case study research that involves participants, local groups, and/or the community in all phases of the research process, from conceptualising the study to writing up and disseminating the findings. It is ideologically oriented in its focus and is explicitly emancipatory in its goals (Reilly, 2009)	Jason, L. A., Keys, C. B., Suarez-Balcazar, Y. E., Taylor, R. R., & Davis, M. I. (2004). *Participatory community research: Theories and methods in action*. American Psychological Association.
Prospective Case Studies	Prospective case studies (PCS) represent an alternative to traditional *post hoc* (retrospective) case studies in deductive theory-testing. PCS design allows researchers to formulate a set of theory-based hypotheses on the evolution of an ongoing social process and then to test these hypotheses at a predetermined follow-up time by comparing the hypotheses with the observed outcomes using pattern matching or a similar technique (Bitektine, 2009).	Bonnet, C., & Wirtz, P. (2012). Raising capital for rapid growth in young technology ventures: when business angels and venture capitalists invest. *Venture Capital*, *14*(2-3), 91-110.

3.4   Methodological Framework: Qualitative Inquiry

The research methodology comprises the overall arrangement of multiple methods and techniques used in data collection. In this case study, the qualitative inquiry facilitated three types of data collection; semi-structured interview, document analysis, and personal field notes. The interviews were designed to be implemented in two rounds. Both rounds of data collection involved the use of semi-structured open-ended questions. Document analysis and filed notes were added later to enhance the credibility of the method and reliability of the findings. The data content was analysed according to two main approaches: thematic analysis and content analysis using Nvivo software. In this single case study research, questions focused on gathering details about how volunteers arrived at their initiative to explore the volunteerism nature of their produced systems and the systemic factors that contributed to the formation of the practices and functions of the EV project—the Library for Community Initiative (L4CI) that support and respect the volunteerism principles identified by Van Schie et al. (2011, p: 123-124) in the literature review. The interview questions were used to highlight factors that acted as systemic forces to lead a behavioural interaction between agents who engaged in the establishment of the employee-led volunteering system, L4CI. These factors are explored by retrieving and examining the surrounding events, thoughts, emotions and behaviours, as well as understanding the timeline before, during and after the formation process of L4CI.

From a methodological perspective, this study employs an interpretive form of Soft Systemic Thinking, using qualitative inquiry methods to diagnose ill-structured situations without intervening in any way. The case methodology aimed to inductively

enter a situation with no prior assumptions or identified problems and engage with the system's actors individually to express the situation qualitatively. The aim of the study was to use qualitative methods to understand the role of human agency in the creation of EV's practices, values and interactions which lead to the formation of system's identity, boundary and resource allocation. Analysis of individual participants' responses in this way is also then used to construct a collective story of what had happened and map a network of engagement of various actors across time.

The selection of qualitative inquiries in case study research plays a major role in determining the data depth and width. Thus, using focused open-ended questions in semi-structured interviews improves focus on the topic and at the same time allows flexibility to the interviewees to share their memories and personal reflections. Employing open-ended questioning encouraged free discussion on what, why and how L4CI was established. It allows the researcher to adjust questions depending on the attribute of a specific interviewee's role and the nature of their relationship with the system in focus. In that, it allows the researchers to regulate the order of the questions where some participants have the opportunity to expand their ideas and give deep information relative to their level of engagement rather than relying only on the solid concepts and questions defined in advance of the interview. Darmer (1995) favours the semi-structured interviews for its ability to establish a free conversation.

One typical problem with qualitative inquiries is that collected data is generally led by participants' personal interests and opinions. Added to the problem of the misunderstandings and misinterpretations of words when interviews are conducted in a language which is not the mother tongue for neither the respondents nor the interviewer. However, this particular case study welcomes those personally flavoured

opinions as it enables the understanding of perceptions surrounding the volunteerism concepts and its core principles. As for the misunderstanding and misinterpretation, the interviews were carried out using the Arabic language, which is the mother tongue of the participants and the interviewer. Moreover and in order to increase the reliability of the answers the interviews were recorded and transcribed into Arabic, then approved by respondents before transcribed into English. Details on testing methodology in practice are the main focus of chapter four.

The primary data here were designed to be collected using semi-structured interviews supported by document analysis and field notes. The purpose of utilising multiple data collection approaches was to allow the researcher to cross-check information and, in doing, both assess and increase reliability (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). The interviews were designed to follow two rounds. Informed by the concepts adopted in the study framework, questions were designed to explore "volunteerism" within employee volunteering programs and the factors that contribute to the development of the EV system's practices and functions that support the basic principles of volunteerism. The question themes were developed to investigate the role of human agency in defining and allocating rules and resources, and to determine how existing social structures enable and constrain these within the L4CI context. A greater focus was directed toward understanding the temporal relationship between past and present, and to identify systemic factors that contributed to the social transformation process. The analysis of the context scattered across three levels: the external (environment systems), institutional (hosting systems) and EV project levels (EV system) using the systemic lens modelled in Figure [2-2]. These three levels represent the main tree node

structure in this study after grouping themes into predetermined themes and emergent themes in chapter five [presented in Figure 5-1, section 5.2.1].

Details of the semi-structured interviews, along with selected interviewing techniques are discussed below. It is followed by a discussion about the importance of document analysis and personal field notes to achieve triangulation. The rationale of using each of these qualitative data inquires is explained table [3-3]. In Chapter four, the practical implementation of these methods is discussed, and the data analysis procedures and software used are explained.

3.4.1. Semi-structured interviews

According to Kvale (1996), interviewers in qualitative research are either a 'miner' seeking to reveal some knowledge hidden within the subject of the interview, or 'travellers' taking a journey through others' life whilst gathering stories to retell later. The researcher in this study is a passenger attempting to bring interviews "into the vicinity of the humanities and art" (p: 5). In the second round, the semi-structured open-ended interviews are designed to inspect the factors contributed to the formation of the EV system by examining it from three levels. The investigation includes environmental factors (external level), organisational factors (institutional level) and systemic factors (EV group level). The questions were based on systems thinking theories and applied these concepts to investigate the role of volunteerism in identity building, subjective and objective boundaries of the system and networking within EV members (both within and between external bodies). It also examined the decision-making nature of resources acquisitions, allocation and management. Furthermore, this approach examined the

tangled influence of structure and human agency, and how each moves over time and responds to environmental turbulence.

3.4.1.1 *Interviewing technique and researcher role*

According to ÅstedtKurki and Heikkinen (1994), Whiting (2008) and Turner (2010) semi-structured interviews consists of two levels of questioning: the main theme and follow-up. The main theme covers the central content of the research topic and follow-up questions are used to question the main themes. Setting an order for the main theme in this study were progressive and logical starting with a warm-up to break the ice with family issues for the participants yet central to the subject (Whiting, 2008). After that, the interviewer should proceed by moving back and forth between lighter questions and more emotional and in-depth ones. Follow-up questions were used to ensure participants' understanding of the main theme and redirect the conversation toward the core topic (Turner, 2010). In this study, spontaneous propping and following-up questions were used to maintain the flow of the conversation and gain accurate records of the events based on the participants' answers.

According to (ÅstedtKurki & Heikkinen, 1994; Whiting, 2008; Turner, 2010) semi-structured interview guide consists of two levels of questioning: the main theme and follow-up. Where the main theme covers the main content of the research topic, follow-up questions are used to question the main themes. Setting an order for the main theme in this study were progressive and logical starting with a warm-up to break the ice with family issues for the participants yet central to the subject (Whiting, 2008). After that, the interviewer should maintain moving onward and backwards between lighter questions and more emotional and in-depth ones. Follow-up questions were

used to ensure participants' understanding of the main theme and redirect the conversation toward the core topic (Turner, 2010). In this study, spontaneous propping and following-up questions were used to maintain the flow of the conversation and gain accurate records of the events based on the participants' answers.

Data collection through interviews followed techniques outlined by Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000). Applying these methods, the interviews were conducted in four phases [Table 3-2]: (1) preparation, (2) initialisation, (3) narration and question, and (4) a concluding talk. The technique explains the role of the research and provides greater detail on the ways in which participants' storytelling may be encouraged and extended. This technique was selected to provide the researcher and the interviewees with desirable flexibility to retrieve events and narrate stories to capture deep meanings and personal perceptions. It allowed the easy flow of perceptions, feelings, and at-that-time opinions that accompanied the participants during the establishment of the L4CI. The questions were designed to extract and interpret agent texts that explain their personal perception of the transformation process, thus allowing an exploration of the systemic factors that contributed to the establishment of employee-led volunteering as a new social system.

Inquiry during the semi-structured interviews began with preparing main theme questions relevant to the aim of the study, revising gathered documents, gathering initial field notes about the workplace structure and culture, and checking rules and rights, and issues related to the confidentiality of the gathered data. During the initiation and narration phases, the questioning aimed for the collection of memories, opinions and personal learning focusing on familiar yet central issues. The researcher encouraged the participants to share their stories, opinions and personal reflections through propping,

follow-ups and non-verbal signals. The subsequent questioning phase was directed to those main themes regarding the meaning attached to the volunteerism concept and in practice and the nature of relationships developed over various stages of establishment This is justified by the fact that the semi-structured interviews are completed separately during the second round, or combined into one single interview with a time break in-between. The interviewing was thus directive and moved across various concepts gradually following the recommendations of Whiting (2008) and Turner (2010). The researcher respected the need for a rule of 'no interruption' and applied non-verbal encouragements whenever necessary.

Table 3-2: Basic phases of INI (Jovchelovitch and Bauer 2000: 60)

Phases	Rules
Preparation	- Explaining the field - Formulating permanent questions
Initiation	- Formulation of the initial topic for narration - Using visual aids
Main narration	- No interruptions - Only non-verbal encouragement to continue story-telling - Wait for coda
Questioning phase	- Only "what happened then." - No opinion or attitude questions - No arguing on contradictions - No "why" questions - Immanent questions
Concluding talk	- Stop recording "Why" questions allowed - Memory protocol immediately after the interview

3.4.2. Document analysis and field notes

The plan to use two-rounds of semi-structured interviews, document analysis and field notes were based on achieving in-depth data and to utilise the time in between to check data, revise questions and to triangulate the methods. In practice, researchers must demonstrate flexibility to cope with unexpected events that result in possible data shortages. According to Patton (2002), triangulation of qualitative research can be achieved through the use of multiple methods and sources of data. As explained previously, document analysis and field notes were selected to compensate for the possibility of missing data after the cancellation of the pre-planned two-round interviews. Consequently, the focus of the study was shifted to data triangulation by comparing interview data against documents collected in the field from various informal and official publications and personal field notes.

One method is to check interviews against written documents and compare the perspectives of people from different point of views. Blumberg et al. (2014) state that documents and archival sources of evidence play a crucial role in case study researches. These documents consisted of annual reports, financial statements, new press and online pages from multiple blogs and articles, as well as photos and short-clip videos. It also included a review of major external events reported in public news channels during the years 2011-2013 that examined the formation process of the EV project. Most of these document were collected and reviewed before the interviews and were used to develop the interview main theme questions. Others were requested after interviews based on the participants' answers and availability. The collected documents collected provided an accurate source of data and enabled the researcher to double check stories and events.

In addition, the researcher added personal field notes through voice records gathered during the interviews to describe workplace structure, the nature of interactions, indoor events related to the EV project and post-interview notes. The researcher focused on generating a deep description of the organisation's culture and workplace values. The researcher also maintained a close distance from most participants to capture in-time statements and immediate reactions. The major advantage of personal field notes is that it often offers access to information that is not available to other researchers (Blumberg et al. 2014).

3.4.3.   Methodology rationale

In this single case study, the rationale for adopting a qualitative inquiry using ST perspectives was its potential for understanding and analysing the formation of systems, identity and identification, focused learning and management change. This could be achieved by seeking the generative source of knowledge about meanings, and capturing and communicating the nuances of the event, relationship and purposes (Dodge et al., 2005).

The semi-structured interviews provided the power of touching inner-thinking and attaching behavioural and emotional states together is that they enable social actors to engage in mind-shift moments that can be turned into a decision of change. Both document analysis and person field notes added a potential source to develop a descriptive image of the organisation's culture and cross-check stories and facts. The key features and rationale behind each of these methodologies are illustrated in Table [3-3].

The inquiry approaches were designed to provide the basis with which the boundaries for consideration of softer elements (those that fall beyond the predefined systems modelling elements) may be widened. Thus, a major justification for adopting open-ended interviews was their ability to observe and assess in a style that provides deeper insight into sensitive issues. These include those related to emotional and behavioural roles of self-regulation, social values, interpersonal relationships and personal meanings.

Table.3-3: Methodologies, characteristics and rationale

Method	Characteristics	Rationale
Semi-structured interviews	- Situation exploration and understanding - Analysis of stakeholder, their role and relationships - Access to the chronology of an individual's experiences - Focus on construction of meanings and attached feelings - Incorporates actors, events, context, and place - Participants engaged in the formal interview - Use guidelines to manage the direction of interview and cover required areas for investigation	- Generative sources of knowledge about meanings - Touch inner thinking and attaching emotional states - Engage in mind-shift moments - Expressive situation vision - Knowledge creation learning - Provides a clear set of directives for the interviewer - Provide reliable, comparable qualitative data. - Semi-control of time and data
Document Analysis	- Archival sources form a rich source of evidence - Useful in preparing the outline of an interview and in discovering and identifying issues relevant to the case - Mostly are in written form, and appear to be objective and truthful, yet documents are written with a specific purpose in mind and addressed to a specific audience	- Used to re-check facts and events - Beneficial in preparing main theme questions - Useful in developing a chronology of the major events - Provides official allocation of the L4CI within the parental systems and specify a line of authority and power - Correspondences help to draw a picture of the network evolution.

Method	Characteristics	Rationale
		• Allows a clear record of participants movements in and out of the system.
Field Notes	• Useful in providing tacit information • Describes the situation inside the organisation under investigation	• Describes the organisational culture and workplace environment. • Describes the physical existence of the L4CI in term of space, materialistic assets, and timing • Adds personal experience of L4CI activities • Collects participants' on-time statements and capture immediate reactions

Although in practice the two interview rounds were merged into one long semi-structured interview, the researcher still focused on asking most of the questions and gave suitable time for the interviewee to answer and elaborate through probing and body language. Chapter four gives more details about the unexpected circumstances that pushed for this change and explains how documentation and field notes formed adequate alternative inquiry methods to overcome any possible shortage of data.

The rationale for adopting document analysis was mainly for its potential to form a source of evidence and chronology of major events. The review of correspondences, invitations, meeting records, and annual reports enabled the researcher to prepare for the interview questions and generate accurate data.

The personal field notes provided another powerful source for tacit information. The personal records on the workplace culture, office layouts, work-timings, and daily interaction levels inside the organisation helped to develop a comparative view between the image created during the interviews and the appearance of the organisation. This "discrepancy (or 'lack of fit')" between the researcher's personal observations and what

been recorded in documents and heard in interviews is very valuable to the analysis of a firm's culture (Blumberg et al.. 2014). The main rationale for selecting field notes was to describe the physical existence of the L4CI system in terms of space (workshop hall), furniture, programmes, capacity, and activities performed. Also, being close to the participants could capture in-time statements and reactions.

3.5   Data Analysis

Fundamentally, data analysis treats stories as the knowledge that constitutes 'the social reality of the narrator' (Etherington, 2004:81). According to Gubrium and Holstein (2009), the study of textual properties is concerned with structural and thematic properties, and the way characters are narrated in time and space. This section adopts a theoretical perspective to discuss the data analysis process in line with the research ontology, epistemology and methodology. It explains the triangulation of inductive-deductive approaches that were used to run the *content* and *thematic analyses.* For both analyses, this triangulation is achieved through the combination of an Attride-Stirling (2001) framework for thematic networks with guidelines from Gioia et al. (2013) for thematic analysis. A substantial account is provided to justify the analytical triangulation and demonstrates its potential to interpret and present the research findings.

3.5.1.   Inductive-deductive analysis approaches

The approach chosen to analyse qualitative data is of utmost importance to the study, as this process represents "the route by which the study conclusions are reached" (Green et al., 2007: 545). Qualitative data is analysed through the application of various

analysis approaches, incorporating both a holistic analysis of the entire case along with an embedded analysis to trace more detailed aspects of the case (Yin, 2013). Overall, the approach to the data analysis was characterised by moving beyond the raw data to instead consider how fragments are socially and culturally managed (Churchill & Churchill, 1982), whereby researchers "render or signify the experiences of persons-in-flux in a personally and culturally coherent, plausible manner" (Sandelowski, 1991: 162).

As briefed by Burnard et al. (2008), Thomas (2006) and Elo and Kyngäs (2008), there are two common approaches to qualitative data analysis. These are summarised in Table [3-4]. To recognise the extent to which stories can provide insight into lived experiences, researchers can choose between deductive and inductive approaches. The predominant difference between these two approaches is the degree to which pre-established themes were used to guide data analysis during the coding process.

In this study, an inductive approach was developed and used to run the data analysis in the form of coding that was left open to new themes and ideas. Although inductive data analysis can be time-consuming, it fits well with the primary exploratory aims of this particular EV case study. The open coding also aimed to capture emergent themes. Moreover, further thematic coding was derived from predetermined themes generated from the interview questions. This framework facilitates the application of a systemic lens to the classification of these themes. Essentially, this systemic view is an investigative lens, in which concepts of system identity, boundary, allocation of resources and roles, and structure, are pre-marked. As described in the table underneath, the data was derived from predetermined themes generated from the interview questions. The coding analysis in this study followed Attride-Stirling's (2001)

framework for thematic networks with guidelines from Gioia et al. (2013) for thematic

analysis.

Table 3-4: A comparison of approaches to deductive and inductive qualitative data analysis (Thomas, 2006; Burnard et al., 2008; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008)

Approaches	Deductive Analysis	Inductive Analysis
Definition	Refers to data analyses that set out to test whether data are consistent with prior assumptions, theories, or hypotheses identified or constructed by an investigator.	Refers to approaches that primarily use detailed readings of raw data to derive concepts, themes or a model through interpretations made from the raw data by an evaluator or researcher
Features	Using a structure or predetermined framework on data and then uses these to analyse interview transcripts	Uses actual data itself to derive the structure of analysis. Involves analysing data with little or no predetermined theory, structure or framework.
Process	Developing a categorization matrix ➔ Data coding according to the categories ➔ Hypothesis testing, correspondence comparison to earlier studies, etc.	Open coding ➔ Creating groups and categories➔ abstraction
Strengths	Useful where researchers are aware of probable responses and problems. Also, relatively quick and easy	Suitable where little or nothing is known about the study phenomenon.
Weaknesses	Can potentially bias the analysis process, and thus severely limit theme and theory development	Comprehensive and time-consuming

There are many typologies and models of data analysis: content analysis,

thematic analysis, structural analysis, interactional analysis, and performative analysis

(Riessman, 2005). The data analysis in this study adopted the concepts of content and

thematic analysis.

3.5.2. Content analysis

Kerlinger (2000) defined content analysis as a method of studying communication in a systematic, quantitative manner of quantifying variables. Krippendorff (2004) considered it a technique for placing replicable and valid textual inferences into the context of their use. For White and Marsh (2006), content analysis represented a 'highly flexible research method' that applied a systematic, rigorous approach to analysing documents' (p: 22). There are many advantages to content analysis. For example, this reductive approach helps to reduce data into manageable categories. In addition, in quantitative researches, the content analysis allows the production of results that can be measured and analysed through conventional quantitative techniques. Moreover, it enables the researcher to structure the data in a way that the accomplishment of research objectives can be assessed. However, Krippendorff and Bock (2009) argued that human error is a major problem in this type of analysis due to the potential to misinterpret data and increase the likelihood of generating false and untrustworthy conclusions.

Content analysis was used to analyse the data from personal interviews, documents and personal field notes. The data that arose from the interview questions were categorised by themes and further into sub-themes for simplification and comparison. Therefore, this procedure helped to minimise the risk of misinterpretation by focusing on important themes. The application of content analysis strategy and process is explained in further detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.5.3. Thematic analysis

The inductive approach to qualitative data analysis focused on a data-led derivation of analysis structures. The aim of thematic analysis, besides allowing new concepts to surface, is to spotlight the main themes and conceptual propositions that arise from the original key research aims. Thematic analyses can be used as a conventional method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within raw data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun et al., 2014). This is elaborated by Gioia et al. (2013) and (Attride-Stirling, 2001) who inductively explained how to move from open-coding to first- and second-order thematic categorisation, the construction of global themes, and finally the building of thematic network analysis.

Marks and Yardley (2004) discussed in detail the differences between content analysis and thematic analysis. They referred to content analysis as fairly quantitative, for example by establishing categories and counting the number of instances used within a given text or image. Although it provides a model for systematic analysis with clear strategies for confirming data analysis quality, this method has also been accused of removing meaning from its context. Results are therefore judged as trite, as they rely simply on the frequency of outcomes. Such criticisms can be overcome by thematic analysis by incorporating code frequency analysis simultaneously with an analysis of meaning within context (p: 56-57). In this research, the thematic network data analysis framework of Attride-Stirling (2001) therefore was combined with the thematic analysis guidelines of Gioia et al. (2013). More details on this can be found in Chapters 4 and 5.

In this regard, descriptive data were collected through personal interviews that focused on collecting stories from the past, present and future as told by the participants. Based on social constructionist philosophy, it is proposed that thematic analysis will reveal multiple realities arising from these texts that have been socially re-constructed by the participants. For example, regarding the conceptualisation of L4CI, the concern is not actually with the accuracy of the representation of the process. Rather, the concern lays with the meanings and explanations people have attached to their understanding of the volunteerism phenomenon, and the consequences of such interpretations for themselves, others and society. Hence, the focus is on exploring the systemic factors that contribute to the formation process of the EV project. This study aimed to uncover the enabling and constraining factors that influence the formation of EV systems structure and agency. These include various environmental, organisational and individual factors.

3.6   Conclusion

This chapter reviewed in detail the philosophical basis and overall methodological framework applied in this single embedded case study. The selected methods were explained along with adequate justification and rationale. The following chapter moves the discussion toward an elaboration of practicalities surrounding the case study, the units of analysis, data collection and sampling and data analysis process. It details the problems and limitations of the methodologies applied and why document analysis and field notes were added to maintain effective data analysis and maximise validity and rigour. Moreover, important ethical issues and remarks on research quality standards are discussed.

Chapter 4: Methodology in practice

4.1   Introduction

This chapter is divided into three core sections: (1) the research context and unit of analysis, (2) data collection and interviews, and finally, (3) data analysis. As such, this moves the theoretical discussion of methodologies into the practical arena as it is applied in the field work. The first section introduces the case unit of analysis where an embedded case study design was used. It also provides factsheets about the main case study unit of L4CI embedded in two sub-units of analysis; the XYZ College's Centre for Community Services and Training (CCST) and the Information Centre (IC). Section two of this chapter details the data collection process. This begins with initial contact with the EV group leader and ends with the completion of interviews. Details of research interviews, informants and sampling are all discussed. The chapter's third section describes the textual analysis process, in which the research analysis methods merge the thematic network framework of Attride-Stirling (2001) and thematic analysis guidelines of Gioia et al. (2012) and Gioia et al. (2013). The frameworks of both types of analysis form the basis of an interpretive paradigm to simultaneously give respect to the voice of the informants and the researcher. The final sections of this chapter are dedicated to discussing research ethics considerations and limitations before closing with a concluding remark.

4.2   The institutional and EV Project Context

The following factual data documents vital facts about the project and its organisational context.

4.2.1.   An overview of the organisational context

The following diagram [Figure 4-1] represents the multilevel hierarchy of the ABC University system. The EV project is found to be operating under two authoritative bodies; the Centre for Community Services and Training (CCST), the Information Centre (IC), both are officially located within XYZ College.
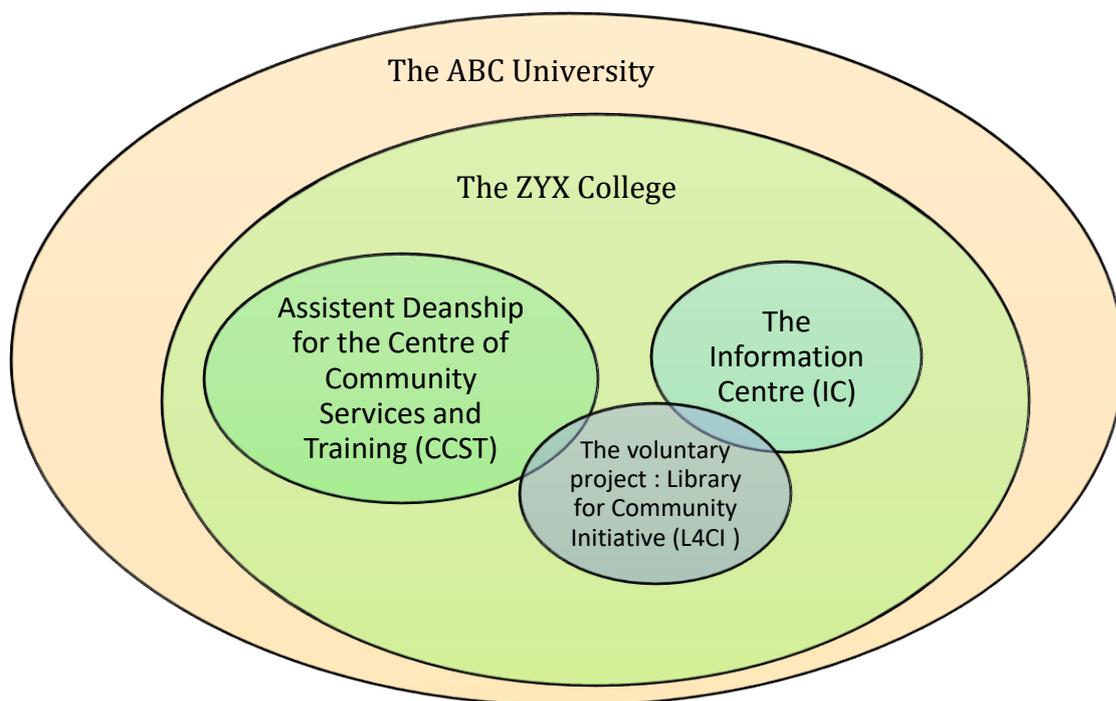
Figure 4-1: The multilevel systems hierarchy of the L4CI

The following points provide brief background information about each level:

- **ABC University:** Established by the government to offer free higher education in various specialisations for top school achievers.

- **XYZ College**: Established to expand ABC University's mission to provide higher education in economic studies. It includes:

  - **The Information Centre (IC):** Composed of two main divisions, (1) the library and (2) Technical/Media Support.

  - **The Deanship of the Centre for Community Services and Training (CCST):** Founded in 2010 as a result of the decentralisation of the Centre of Continues Education and Community Development (CCECD).

    - The L4CI project: is a voluntary community service managed by volunteering employees of the IC aimed at educating school students about libraries and encourage reading at an early age.

4.2.2.   The L4CI case and units of analysis

The research context focused on the L4CI as the main case unit of analysis with two embedded sub-case units of analysis, namely IC and CCST. These units were examined to explore "volunteerism" within employee volunteering programs and the factors that contribute to the development of the EV system's practices and functions that support the basic principles of volunteerism. The examination was conducted at three levels: (1) external level, (2) institutional level and (3) L4CI project level. In doing so, the analysis specified three units of analysis (CSST, IC and L4CI) to cover all conditions, motives, and factors that may have contributed to the establishment of EV within XYZ College [i.e. 'the whole']. The three units of analysis have been incorporated

into the research project to emphasise the major transformations and organisational changes that accompanied the rise of this particular EV project. A diagrammatic representation of the areas of research focus is shown in Figure [4-2] and highlights the hosting units within this single embedded case.
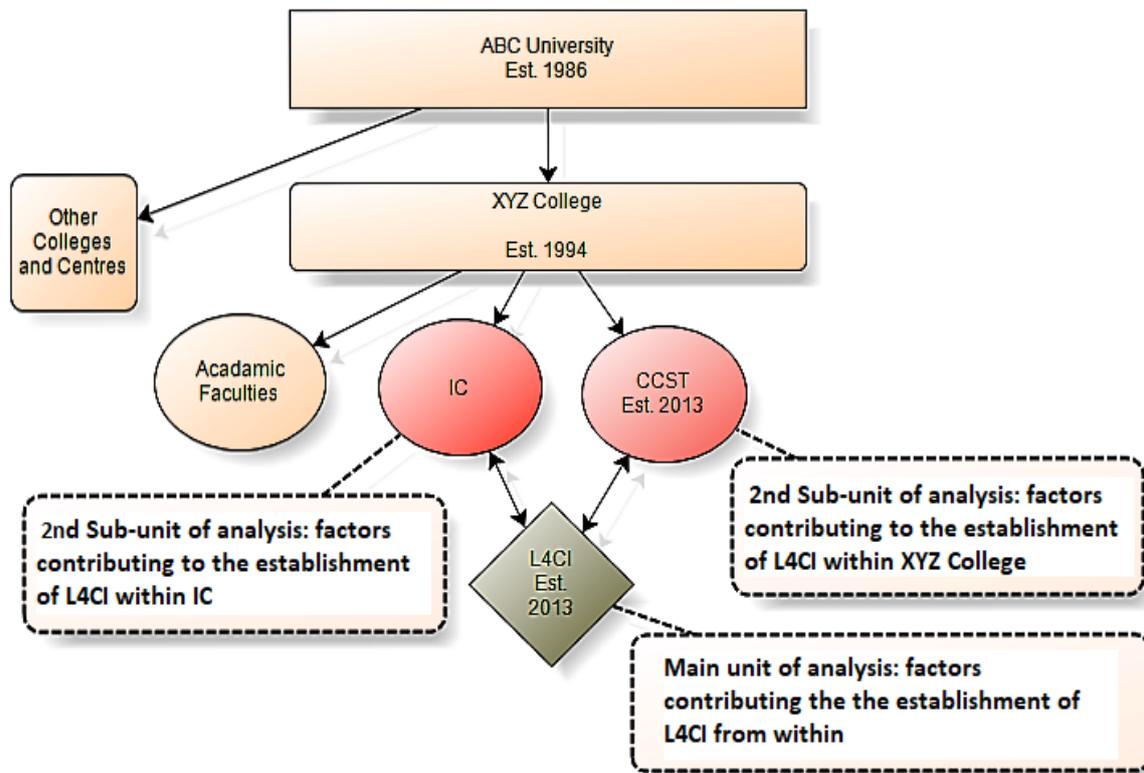
Figure 4-2 L4CI as the main unit of analysis and two embedded subunits of analysis for this research

The L4CI case study strategy was designed to capture a wealth of information and consequently provide the opportunity for extensive analyses that are not suited to less complex single, holistic case study designs. If the analysis focused solely on L4CI as the only unit of analysis, it would be in conflict with informants that contributed wider scope in their responses to desires, interactions and connectivity. According to (Yin, 2013), the embedded case study design is important to avoid changes during the course

of research and for examining the social phenomenon in detail. Studying the formation of this EV project according to this strategy allocates interactions of all levels at the heart of the analysis (although the number of the informants is relatively a small within large educational institutions). At the employee level, the major phenomenon explored is the individual's perception and explanation of the factors that contributed to generating the original L4CI idea, the convincing of management at IC and CCST, and the pushing for the official establishment of the L4CI. At the management level, the focus is in the interactions between the two sub-units of analysis to explore the factors involved in the initial acceptance and structural changes maintained by the managers to assess the birth of L4CI as a new social system within its formal boundary.

4.3   Data Collection in Practice

Theoretically, semi-structured interviews were planned as the main sources of primary data for this study. However, due to unexpected cultural and religious considerations in the fieldwork, the two-round design of semi-structured interviews was dismissed. The researcher found most male interviewees (85% of total population) feeling uncomfortable staying in an isolated room with a female interviewer for two hours. Religiously this is not acceptable, and culturally it is not supported. They tended to request keeping the door open during the interview, and most of them requested to merge the two interviews into one. To cope with these unanticipated field circumstances, the researcher added additional data collection tools: document analyses and personal field notes. As discussed previously in Chapter three, data triangulation was the primary purpose of the combination of various sources of data with the interviews to improve the validity and reliability of the case study research as

proposed by Lietz et al., (2006) and Yin (2013). Merging the two-round interviews into single long semi-structured interviews and adding document analysis and field notes maintained the triangulation of data. More details about the actual field work in this regard are discussed in the following sections.

Table 4-1: Research Data Collection Phases

Data Collection Phases	Actions	Dates
Phase One	Initial contact with Group leader in person	July 2015
	Communicating research goals with the group leader and IC director (via email)	October 2015
Phase Two	Reaching agreement with L4CI and IC management. Formal research invitation letter for both was sent, and final consents were received (via email)	5th -19th November 2015
	Applied and received ethical approval from Research Ethics Committee at the University of Hull (via mail)	27th November 2015
Phase Three	Reviewed and finalised research questions	January 2016
Phase Four	Fieldwork started with requesting individual consent from all informants, planning interviews schedule, ended with the completion of interviews. The two rounds of interviews were rearranged into one single, longer and semi-structured interview leading to the addition of document analysis and personal field notes to fill the possible gap in gathered data	25th January 2016 to 27th March 2016
Phase Five	Email requesting feedback and emphasising on the right for claims enclosed with a thank you note.	6th April 2016

The data collection was accomplished following various phases [Table 4-1]. From initial contact made with the group leader and IC director in phase one to the actual interviews in phase four and closing at phase five. The initial contact (phase one) was made with the group leader in person during a visit to the Information Centre (IC) in July 2015. It took numerous short meetings before the researcher's wish to use L4CI as a case study for doctorate research was proposed. During these early meetings, the

group leader provided authorisation and requested a formal research invitation. Further discussions (via email) suggested the requirement for formal approval from the IC director to facilitate full access to the organisation and its employees. Contact with the IC's director to discuss formalities and participation was maintained through email to ensure conformity to the expected content of research invitation letters [see Appendix A].

In November 2015, the researcher finalised the case and received consent from both parties [see Appendices D and E] that guaranteed access to the organisation. The consent forms were developed according to standards provided by the Research and Ethics Committees of the University of Hull and submitted to the concerning body. At the end of phase two, the committee gave final permission and mailed the official ethics approval letter at the end of November 2015 [see Appendix F]. During this stage, the researchers were able to finalise the research themes and interview questions. By the end of phase three, two sets of interview questions and protocols for the semi-structured interviews were approved by the academic supervisor by the mid of January 2016. The first set of questions targeted the volunteering group, while the second set was directed toward program coordinators and managers [See Appendices B and C]. Due to visa expiry and a requirement to start field work, the researcher travelled to Oman on 21st January 2016. The first two weeks involved gaining individual consent from informants and producing the interview schedule (phase four). Interviews were then conducted between the 2nd February to 27th March 2016.

The field work concluded by sending official letters to all participants consisting of general feedback. These letters emphasised the right of the participant to raise any claim or personal inquiries and ended with a note of gratitude to thank the individuals

for their participation (phase five). No further claims were received. A number of active volunteers, however, remained in contact with the researcher by sending news and updates about the on-going events and plans of L4CI, to asking the researcher's opinion and feedback.

4.3.1. Research participants

Patton (2002) argued that qualitative research is credible and serves a useful purpose. Although there are no formal rules for sampling and size, it is influenced by the purpose of the study and what can be achieved with available time and resources. Additionally, studies on systems within ST science agrees it is irreducible and "results when principles that keep a system orderly break down where current assumption are clarified and new possibilities surface" (Holman 2010: 5). As the focus of the research is to explore "volunteerism" within employee volunteering programs and the factors that contribute to the development of the EV system's practices and functions that support the basic principles of volunteerism, it was more critical to purposefully target the informants intimately involved in the early moments of L4CI development and capture their stories, memories, perceptions and explanations. These participants were therefore prioritised to capture the early moments of L4CI genesis.

In total, 13 participants contributed to this study [Table 4-3]. Informants from the IC comprised 6 librarians (one of whom was identified as the group leader), 3 technicians (one of whom is the assistant leader) and 2 from the management team. There were 2 Informants from the CCST, including the previous and current dean of the CCST.

The population of prioritised individuals consisted principally of 5 volunteering employees from IC, an ex-IC employee and a former CCST director (who does not presently reside within the circle of XYZ College but is still in touch with its members). The contribution of formerly active participants is significant as it allows an outsider to gain a reflective view on what had been going on at the IC *before* the establishment of the Library for Community initiative (L4CI). In addition, the IC director and deputy director were interviewed to provide an insider's perspective from the highest level of management. These upper-management interviews focused on the circumstances, challenges and environmental changes that the IC faced following the formation of L4CI.

It was deemed necessary also to interview those employees that played supportive roles. This allowed for the examination of perspectives across all management levels and thus created a more holistic collection of responses to the interview questions. This population consisted primarily of other librarians and technicians who worked alongside the volunteering employees who had performed at least one small voluntary task within the L4CI. The selected informants were extended to include the director and deputy director of the Information Centre (IC). In addition, a former IC employee was interviewed regarding his direct relationship with the team leader and his contribution to the establishment of L4CI during its earliest stages. Within the CCST, the previous and current directors were interviewed. The former CCST director was interviewed due to his early connections with L4CI and his high involvement in the required negotiations with the XYZ deanship and OMAC, the company that provided the program's funding. The current Assistant Dean for CCST was interviewed to expose current views and perceptions regarding the EV project, including insights into its future.

The team leader continually emphasised that all employees at the IC were valuable as active participants. However, through personal conversations that occurred during phase one with the group leader (Table 4), the researcher was able to gain perspective and context for the existing positioning of L4CI as primary analysis unit within the two overlapping sub-units. Within the sphere of this EV act, L4CI is governed by five main actors. The rest of the IC employees were coordinators that participated when required; they entered and exited the system based on their complete free desire. This early conversation offered a snapshot [Figure 4-3] of the current situation within L4CI, illuminating how its connections with IC and CCST as authoritative units. It also shows the existing variety of employee roles in terms and demonstrates their connectedness to the L4CI.
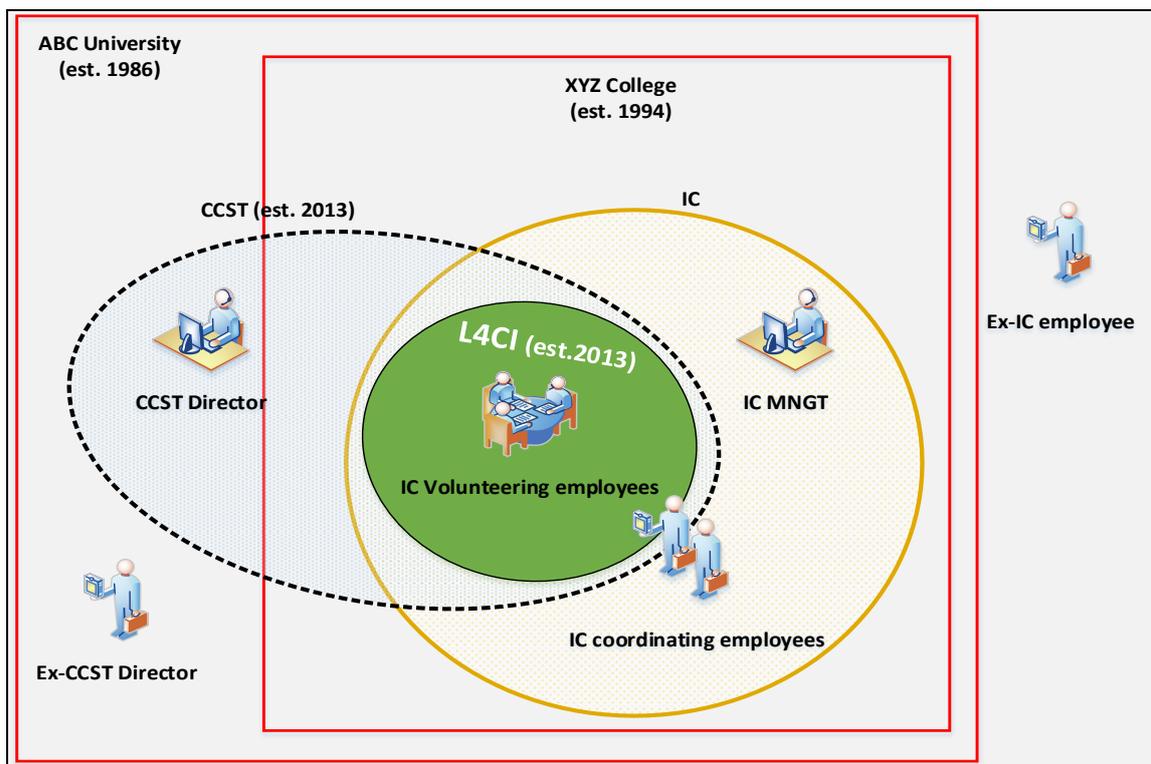
Figure.4-3: Categorization of informants used for sampling strategy in this study

4.3.2. Participants' demography

To develop an overview of the participants, basic demographic data were collected during the interviews. The first section of the interview focused on gathering participant data on key demographic fields: age, sex, job designation, and years of experience. Accordingly, the study participants were divided into two broad categories:

- Volunteers (VOL): consisting of IC employees engaged in the voluntary project including librarians

- Coordinators (COR) consists of engaged decision-makers from the management of the IC and CCST.

Preparing the data for analysis and coding was done using the Nvivo Pro Software. The coding in this study applied these two categories on the organisation of sources. The codes used during the interview process are summarised in Table [4-2].

Table 4-2: The coding categories of interviewees

Coordinators (Management level)	
IC level	COR 1, COR 2
CCST	COR 3, COR 4
Volunteers (Employee level)	
The EV project leader	VOL 1
Participating employees	VOL2, VOL3, VOL4, VOL5, VOL6, VOL7, VOL8, VOL9

The statistics defined two main categories of participants. The first is the volunteering employees (VOL) who indicated they were an employee who voluntarily decided to give up their personal time to perform a task within the L4CI project. The second category consists of coordinators (COR) who performed managerial tasks to facilitate and assist in the
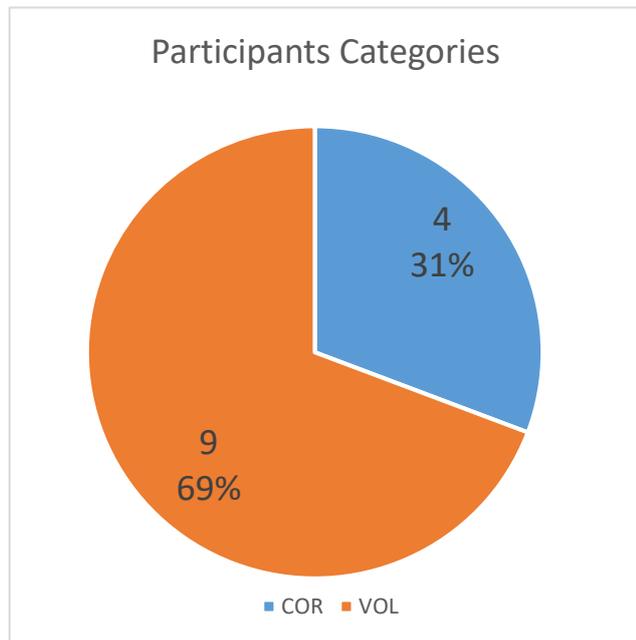
Figure 4-4: Participants' main categories

directing of volunteers within the hosting organisation. Figure [4-4] shows the representation of the two categories within the overall pool of interview participants.

Most of the EV project volunteers were employees of the IC at XYZ college and were either librarians (6 employees) or technicians (3 employees). Regarding the gender mix of participants, of the 13 participating interviewees, just 2 participants were female [Figure 4-5]. These two females were librarians, while the rest of the project's participants were a mixture of technicians and librarians.

Figure 4-5: Participants' job designation

The data shows that two interviewees (VOL 2 and COR 3) are currently no longer participating actively in the EV project [Figure 4-6]. However, both of them were highly engaged during the early stages of the project establishment and were able to provide an outsider's view of the project at its current stage. The L4CI project is currently under the direct supervision of the IC management (COR 1 and COR2), positioned under the direct management of COR4 (the Assistant Dean of the CCST).

Figure 4-6: Participants' role within the EV project

Furthermore, the application of Nvivo Pro classification sheets enables rich visualisation of the participant's movement (in/out) over the twelve-month period before and after the establishment of the L4CI project. The timeline below demonstrates that employees volunteering at L4CI's initial stages have been working together for an extended period [Figure 4-7]. The diagram shows that 55% of the volunteering employees (5 out of 9) have shared their work life for ten years. Since 2002, the project founders VOL1, VOL2, VOL4, VOL5, VOL6 could have managed to develop a practical and emotional bond and gain vast experience in their specialisation. These employees may have gained additional experience in understanding how the hosting system works, both managerially and diplomatically. This fact is discussed later in the analysis, where it is identified as one of the contributing factors to the formation of the EV project.
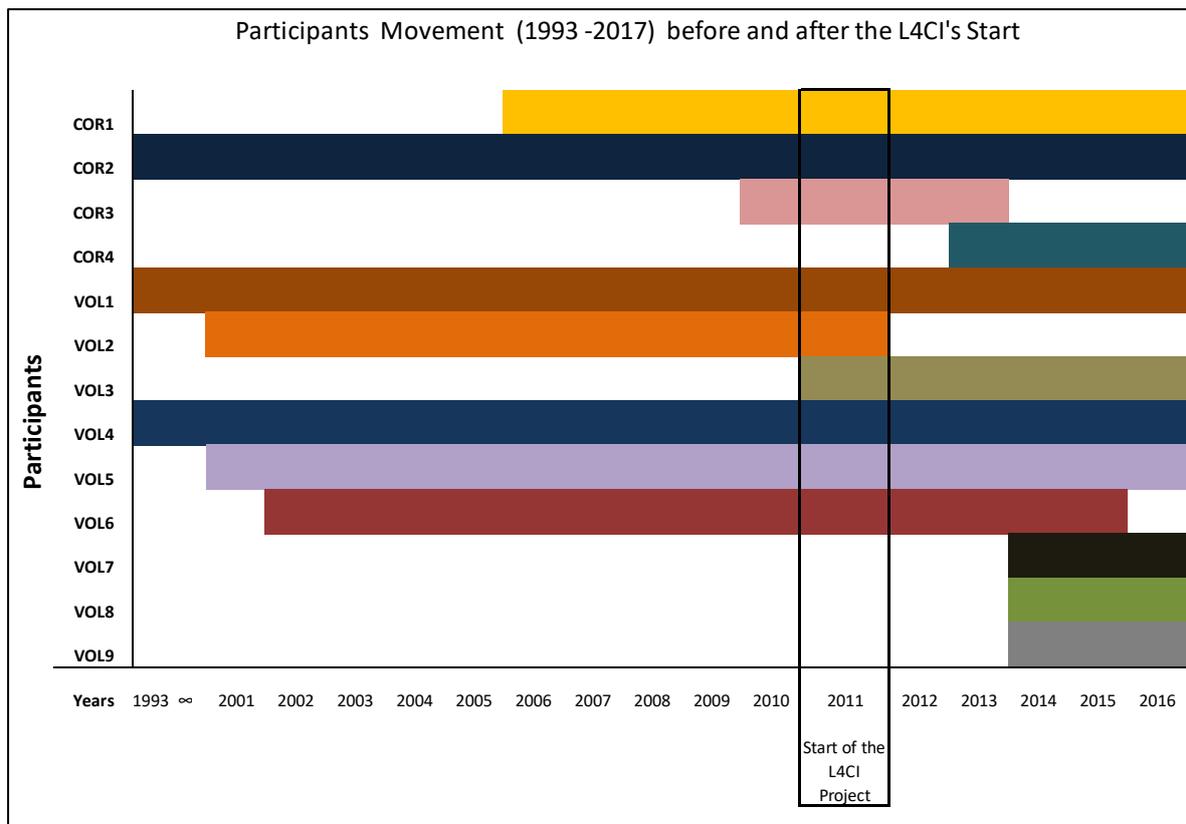
Figure 4-7: Participants movement (1993-2017) before and after the establishment of the EV project in 2011

At the coordinator level, the project benefited from a change in IC management when COR1 became the director of the IC in 2006. Also, establishing a local Centre for Community Services and Training in 2010 invited the joining of COR3 as its inaugural Assistant Dean. Both managers appeared to be ready to support the goals of enthusiastic employees and worked closely in the formation of the EV project. Their role, level of engagement, and motivations are revealed in the following chapter.

4.3.3. Research interviews process

Phase three of data collection, as detailed in Table [4-1], was conducted over 8 weeks, starting on 3rd February and ending on 27th March 2016. The interview protocol and questions are available in [Appendices B and C], while the consent forms can be found in [Appendix D and E]. The primary data source comprised a total of 17 interviews across 13 informants. The overall fieldwork consisted of 4 two-round interviews (a total of 8 interviews with 4 key participants) and, and 9 long semi-structured interviews.

The interviewees were categorised into two main groups [see Table 4-3]: volunteers (VOL) and coordinators (COR). The first group included volunteering employees who performed the actual volunteering activities and tasks. The second group comprised other collaborating members such as IC employees and the management of CCST and IC who were engaged in the program's facilitation and managerial decisions. Therefore, two sets of interview questions were designed to run two rounds of the semi-structured interviews to accommodate each category and their associated knowledge base best.

The interview questions were designed to provide rich data with an aim to uncover the systemic factors that contributed to all aspects of the formation of L4CI. In

addition, the planned triangulation of interview types was achieved by combining the semi-structured interviews with document analysis of data obtained from L4CI's publications, reports and private field notes. This strategy helped to validate, contrast and compare the interviews findings with formal documents to ensure accuracy and reliability of the large interview component of the study. Each informant's role within the units of analysis, the interview type, and duration is documented in Table [4-3].

At the beginning of each interview, all candidates were informed of the interview protocol to ensure informed consent was granted and to encourage honesty when answering all questions. To confirm confidentiality, privacy and an environment that fosters good communication, the researcher made sure that all interviews were conducted in a private, one-to-one environment, where thoughtful open-ended discussions were encouraged and maintained through probing questions and the use of encouraging gestures. For convenience and efficiency of time, all interviews were conducted in the Arabic language and took place in the informants' offices within the IC building during working hours. The researcher speaks Arabic as their mother tongue and thus found it more comfortable and easy to understand, especially due to the mutual sharing of culture and belief systems. These common backgrounds (e.g. language, culture and beliefs) can be considered a significant strength of the study due to the reduction in the possibility of elaborating personal beliefs, values, and biases during the data analysis process (Creswell and Miller 2000). This reduced the likelihood of confirmation bias, where the interviewee might otherwise modify their responses to interview questions based on their personal belief of what they think the interviewer wants/needs to hear.

Table.4-3: Research informants' work unit, job designation, and interview type and duration

Sr.	Informants (pseudonym)	Job designation	1st round semi-structured interview/ duration	2nd round Semi-structured interview/ duration	Total duration
Information Centre (IC)'s Volunteering Employees					
1.	VOL 1	Senior Librarian	Yes/ 01:45:00	Yes/ 01:40:00	03: 25:00
2.	VOL 3	AV Media Technician	Yes/ 01:40:00	Yes/ 01:36:00	03:16:00
3.	VOL 4	Senior Librarian	Yes/ 01:35:00	Yes/ 01:40:00	03:15:00
4.	VOL 5	Senior Librarian	NA	Yes/ 02:00:00	02:11:00
5.	VOL 6	Senior Librarian	NA	Yes/ 01:35:00	01:35:00
6.	VOL 7	Assistant Librarian	Yes/ 01:45:00	Yes/ 01:22:00	03:07:00
7.	VOL 8	Assistant Librarian	NA	Yes/ 01:30:00	01:30:00
8.	VOL 9	Technician	NA	Yes/ 02:05:00	02:05:00
Management of Information Centre (IC)					
9.	COR 2	IC Deputy Director	NA	Yes/ 01:20:00	01:20:00
10.	COR 1	IC Director	NA	Yes/ 01:50:00	01:50:00
Management of the Centre for Community Services and Training (CCST)					
11.	COR 4	CCST Assistant Dean	NA	Yes/ 01:35:00	01:35:00
Ex- Actors					
12.	COR 3	Ex-CCST Assistant Dean	NA	Yes/ 01:55:00	01:55:00
13.	VOL 2	Ex-IC Technician	NA	Yes/ 02:10:00	02:10:00
Total No. of Interviews = 17			4	13	29:14:00

The researcher began the interview process with open and general questions and followed up gradually with focused semi-structured questions across two separate meetings. All interviews lasted 1.5 to 2 hours. However, the researcher was able to complete just 4 two-rounds interviews due to unexpected occurrences. The first occurred when three informants notified the researcher (during the first minutes of the 1st round interview) about their incapability to give a second interview. Two male informants were going to be absent and unreachable due to travelling abroad for a family holiday (VOL 6) and work-related causes (COR 2), while one female left on maternity leave to stay with her family in a village with weak telecommunications support and a 5-hour drive from her workplace, rendering second interviews impossible. The second trend occurred when the remainder of the informants requested the combination of the two interviews into a single, more extended interview. Under these circumstances, the researcher agreed to rearrange the interview design to accommodate valuable participants.

The interview structure was modified to one single semi-structured interview that largely considered of pre-defined questions, with a 10-minute break between interview sections. This unfortunately placed pressure on the researcher's ability to reduce the probing questions and instead direct the conversation to fit into the available interview timeframes. Gioia et al. (2012) advised the researcher to pay extraordinary attention to interview protocol revisions as the research progresses to fully appreciate the flexibility of interpretive research. Thus, it became essential to look for additional sources of data to maintain triangulation and ensure analytical rigour. At this stage, the researcher decided to include document analysis and personal field notes. These two sources are briefly discussed in the following section.

Nonetheless, the researcher was provided with second semi-structured interviews with the four key active volunteers. Importantly, these participants were key active volunteers that both performed volunteering activity on a regular basis and perceived themselves as members of the group. From Table [4-3], they represent participants with the highest interview durations when total interview hours were compound (exceeding 3 hours each). The interview process resulted in 4 two-rounds semi-structured interviews (two interviews with each of the 4 key participants) and 9 single long semi-structured interviews with which broad questions and specified areas of examination were carefully designed to collect rich content.

Overall, the interview process [phase four in Table 4-1] went smoothly, and informants showed an exceptional level of interest in sharing their stories and learnings. Interestingly, one potential limiting factor of this study was the personal friendships that developed between the researcher and some of the informants. This may have introduced challenges in acting as an impartial outside observer. In addition, the intimacy generated through the initial general questions and spontaneous conversations instigated more involvement at the time of data collection and later during the data analysis. Conversely, Walsham (1995; 2006) saw this as potentially beneficial to studies and suggested these relationships may lead participants to perceive the researcher as a contributor to their field site rather than an outsider who takes data away and then disappears.

4.3.4. Systemic interviewing

Studying the formation of new systems entails holistic systemic lens as discussed in chapter two in order to understand the factors that contributed to the formation of L4CI's organisational and operational structure (practices, norms, activities) and its new identity and values. Questions were also posted to better understand the role of human agency in the organisational change and the behavioural and emotional acceptance of this change. The researcher was insistent on acting as an 'involved researcher' (Walsham, 1995), thus enabling a complex understanding of the participants including their memories, how they learn and how they manage their emotions and personal perceptions. Being involved researcher requires conforming to the participants' expectations, including the adherence to promised deadlines for feedback for their concerns and contributing to enhancing their current situation. As such, the level of involvement varied depending upon each of the informant's desires and expectations, as well as their perceived role within the L4CI case. It should be noted that close involvement does not conflict with the research being a neutral observer (Walsham, 2006) as the researcher ensured that no pre-conceived notions were brought into the interviews nor were particular beliefs regarding study populations allowed into the analysis. Moreover, the researcher acknowledges no personal gains were to be derived from this study beyond its academic purpose.

Nevertheless, a total of 29 hours and 14-minutes worth of interviews provided rich data that was tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim. The study framework facilitates the application of a systemic lens to the specification of a set of pre-determined themes. Essentially, the systemic lens acted as an investigative lens were

thematic coding was implemented through semi-structured interviewing. The pre-determined themes of the interviews were primarily designed to capture:

- The principles of 'volunteerism' achieved across the L4CI systems levels.

- The formation of L4CI's identity, values and boundaries, and the role of human agency within that.

- The pre-existing environmental and institutional conditions, and their contribution to the formation of L4CI at both an individual and institutional level.

- The systemic factors are contributing to the establishment of L4CI's operational and organisational structures.

- Participant's motivations, backgrounds and perceptions, across managerial levels.

- Descriptions of the organisational structure of the L4CI including its formal identity, positioning, a line of power, the boundary of responsibility, sources of financial and physical resources, the role of hosting system (IC and CCST), and so on.

- Descriptions of the internal operations of the L4CI including decision-making processes, allocation of resources and roles, leadership styles, a membership scheme, workshop design, activity development and individual agency.

- The transitional status of IC and CCST in relation to the L4CI at various stages of its development and the formation process of the 'new whole' that connects these systems.

- The present state of L4CI within its new whole and its effect on the structure of both IC and CCST.

The above core themes were guided from the systemic lens modelled in chapter two and present the pre-determined themes discussed in the findings chapter. The interviews primarily focused on personal stories and remembering moments that created major shifts within the 'old whole' of XYZ College. The interview process sought the perceptions and reflections of individuals regarding their role in the formation of L4CI at both the organisational and operational levels. All interviews began with a series of general and open-ended questions, although all questions were planned in advance to enhance accuracy and consistency between interviews. The interview data was strengthened by probing questions that aimed to simulate memories, encourage friendly conversations and an open-minded attitude from the participants. Edwards and Holland (2013) acknowledge that probing and following up in interviews are good strategies "to get interviewees to open up, provide more information, elaborate and expand on what is been said" (p: 72). In this study, two sets of interview questions were designed. The first set was developed for volunteering employees, while the second set was designed for coordinators that largely consisted of IC and CCST management. To maximise objectivity, the same questions were asked in the same way and in the same order within each set of informants. This enabled comparison and contrast and aimed to remove the possibility of subjectivity and demand characteristics from the informant (Edwards & Holland, 2013). Following interviewing techniques described by Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000), it was essential not to restrain participants but rather to give them open-time to describe their understanding of their experiences with EV [see Table 3-2 in Chapter 3].

4.4   Data Analysis Procedures

The initial data analysis processes occurred alongside the interviews (Gioia et al., 2013) where ideas, patterns and themes all begin to emerge (Patton, 2002). This study followed an interpretive paradigm that views reality as a social construct to understand the creation of L4CI and the role of human agency in this process. For qualitative research, this means respecting the subjective interpretation of research findings. Seeking additional guidelines, coding, categorisation and theme development in this research, the approach of Gioia et al. (2013) was first incorporated followed by a second-order analysis using the guidelines for thematic and network analysis of Attride-Stirling (2001). In this section, the two approaches are discussed theoretically while the implementation of the data analysis process and results are detailed in the finding and analysis of [Chapter 6].

To move beyond a 'hard feel' for data, the researcher followed the suggestion of Attride-Stirlings (2001) to devise a theoretical framework that gives an account of pre-established criteria as well as recurrent issues in the transcriptions. The salient issues that arise in the text support the work of Gioia et al. (2013) who argued the necessity of initial coding being begun in isolation from any theoretical assumptions. The Gioia methodology contributed valuable coding techniques founded on treating informants (and the researcher) as knowledgeable agents, representing their voices prominently in the reporting of the research. The methodology suggests that initial coding prefers "not to impose prior constructs or theories on the informants as some sort of preferred *a priori* explanation for understanding or explaining their experience" (p: 17). This was found to fit with this research ontology and epistemology for social construction. Gioia

et al. (2013) propose the use of visual aids to demonstrate rigour in qualitative research, where Attride-Stirling (2001)' thematic networks technique is most appropriate. The thematic network diagram [Figure 4-9, section 4.4.4] presents a graphic "web-like nets to remove any notion of hierarchy, giving fluidity to the themes and emphasizing the interconnectivity throughout the network." (p: 389). This analytical triangulation of analysis methods aimed to improve findings, validity and reliability. Both methods provided an extended procedure to deal with data beyond the thematic identification stage.

There are many coding techniques and commercial software available to assess analytical processes, such as Thematic Network, Microsoft Word and Nvivo Pro. These data analysis tools are summarised in Figure [4-8], which details each step explained in the following sections. The main purpose of employing these techniques was to smooth the analysis of data during the coding process by detailing and visualising it to enhance the reliability and validity of the data.

1. Data Collection: Interviews, Documents and Field Notes	→	2. Data transcription (Microsoft Word), and Data Organisation and Categorisation (Nvivo)	→	3. First Order Analysis (level 1-Volunteers): coding transcripts from main unit of analysis (L4CI) and develop basic themes using Nvivo

4. First Order Analysis (Level 2- Coordinators) : Coding transcripts from sub-units of analysis (IC and CCST) and develop basic themes using Nvivo	→	5. Second Order Analysis (level 1) interpreting and cross-referencing major codes from main unit of analysis to find factors using (Nvivo)	→	6. Second Order Analysis (level 2) interpreting and cross-referencing major codes from sub-units of analysis (IC and CCST) to find factors using (Nvivo)

7. Develop basic outcomes and organizing themes for thematic networks of all unit of analysis	→	8. Comparing and contrasting themes across units of analysis and compare it with literature using (Nvivo)	→	9. Draw global theme of thematic analysis

10. Build visual representation of thematic networks using Nvivo	→	11. Describe thematic networks and interpret patterns

Figure.4-8: Data analysis stages adopted from Attride-Stirling (2001) and Gioia et al. (2013)

It should be noted that, from step four to step seven [Figure 4-8], the data was divided into two levels based on the case unit of analysis. Level 1 focused on the central case unit of analysis (L4CI) located at the employee level. Level 2 was assigned to the sub-case units of analysis (IC and CCST) through the lens of management. Each level was

interviewed using a different set of interview questions. At Level 1, coding aimed to identify stories and critical events *of volunteering employees within the L4CI system*, along with the meaning they attached to explain these phenomena. At Level 2, the coding transcripts of sub-units were directed to capture the memories and personal perceptions of *managers at IC and CCST*. The first- and second-order analysis for level 1 was carried out during steps 3 and 5, while level 2's first- and second-order analyses were achieved through steps 4 and 6. The division of individual transcripts in each level is detailed below in Table [4-4].

Table.4-4. Two levels of data analysis; volunteering employee level and management level.

Level 1 Volunteering Employee Level (L4CI)		
Sr.	Participants	Role
1.	VOL 1	Senior Librarian
2.	VOL 3	AV Media Technician
3.	VOL 4	Senior Librarian
4.	VOL 7	Assistant Librarian
5.	VOL 8	Assistant Librarian
6.	VOL 6	Senior Librarian
7.	VOL 5	Senior Librarian
8.	VOL 9	Technician
9.	VOL 2	Ex-IC Technician

Level 2 Management level		
Sr.	Participants	Role
IC		
10.	COR 2	IC Director
11.	COR 1	IC Deputy Director
CCST		
12.	COR 4	CCST Director
13.	COR 3	Ex-CCST Director

4.4.1. Immersion in data

According to Green et al. (2007), the data immersion stage involves more than just through reading and re-reading of interview transcripts, but also requires the remembering of context, including "hesitation, tone of voice and confidence in answering the questions as well as shared experience of the researcher and interviewee" (p. 547). In this study, the interview tape-recordings were transcribed across multiple rounds, where each interview transcript was re-checked for accuracy, producing a vast amount of text using Microsoft Word. In the first round, the researcher, in collaboration with an external body, produced Arabic transcriptions. Those transcripts were checked for consistency and accuracy before being translated into English versions. A third round was conducted by the researcher where both the Arabic and English version of each interview was re-checked to ensure a high degree of reproducibility and accuracy. The main reason for Arabic-to-English translation was it enabled the use of Nvivo Pro software (which is unable to analyse Arabic text). The Nvivo Pro software is a program that facilitates data tracking for coding and categorisation. It was appointed by both supervisors to be used for data organisation and in the implementation of the data analysis.

The English language transcripts and memos were imported into the Nvivo Pro computer software. Before beginning the coding process, obtained documents were uploaded, and all field notes were added to the margins to capture important ideas and emerging themes. As all interviews were stored and organised, searching through the transcripts and memos was effortless, enabling statements to be sorted to define or redefine codes to support the analysis procedure. Another advantage of Nvivo Pro

software was the ability to filter text, which made it is possible to view passages assigned to specific codes and print them for further interpretation.

4.4.2.   Coding (first-order analysis)

Coding enables the researcher to conduct a 'taxonomic process' of sorting and tagging data (Green et al., 2007). It is the first step in qualitative research, and its techniques have generated adequate literature. Many researchers have identified multiple levels of analysis to guide the coding process. For example, the first- and second-order analysis of Gioia et al. (2013) matches the first and second cycle of coding described by Saldaña (2014). Following the coding techniques contributed by Gioia et al. (2013), coding was conducted using first- and second-order analysis.

By adopting Gioia's definition of first-order analysis, we agree to give an "extraordinary voice to informants, who are treated as knowledgeable agents" (Gioia et al., 2013, p. 17). Coding with Nvivo Pro was kept open at this stage, requiring line-by-line coding to ensure a good match with the concepts that arose from participants' words and statements. At this initial open coding, the methodology gives strict guidelines to remain "informant-centric" and remain a representation of participants' voices. Therefore, this method provides the potential for discovering new concepts rather than simply affirming existing ideologies (Gioia et al., 2013). The first-order analysis thus consisted of an account of "Basic Themes" (Attride-Stirling, 2001) for each piece of data. This may be a single word or short phrase that "symbolically assigns a summative, silent, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (Saldaña, 2014, p. 4). Gioia et al. (2013) proposed a more

informal method of coding to stay close to the participant's terms by choosing the most appropriate codes to represent the interviewee's voice.

In this research, the initial basic coding was more open and informal to encompass loose texts and phrases before similar ideas were assembled around basic themes were either pre-established or found to occur repeatedly. For level 1 [Step 3, Figure 4-8], the first-order analysis focused on how L4CI targeted volunteering employees to reveal personal perception and meanings. It tackled texts and determined repeated patterns, themes and stories about the early moments that accompanied the establishment of L4CI, the motives for change, behavioural reactions, feelings, emotional attachment, concerns and challenges, along with expectations and change recommendations. It also examined how values, identity, structure and internal team management were constructed. The first-order analysis for Level 2 [Step 4, Figure 4-8] was assigned for the sub-units of analysis; the IC and CCST. At this management level, the coding aimed to capture the memories and personal opinions of the managers at IC and CCST. It examined their early perceptions and the premise for those perceptions when the idea of L4CI was raised, as well as reactions to manage the EV phenomenon, and how the existed regulatory systems at XYZ College (old whole) encapsulated the formation of L4CI (new part). In doing, it seeks repetitive patterns, themes and stories that can shape some of the systemic factors that contributed to the formation process of L4CI. The overall basic themes resulting from both levels (volunteering employees and managers) were cross-examined and compared for similarities and differences.

Beside pre-established criteria, emerging codes of repeatedly new issues and unanticipated meanings received adequate considerations at this stage. The following table [4-5] presents examples of coded texts and produced basic themes at this stage.

For more details, in Chapter five the produced basic themes from first order coding are summarised in tables [5-1] and [5-2] of section [5.3.1]. Both tables summarise the key pre-determined and emergent themes after initial coding was conducted.

Table 4-5: Example of coded text and production of themes in this study

Coded texts	Themes
"In Oman let's be very honest there are no public libraries, only the academic specialised libraries…" *"In Oman, there is no public libraries, no place for families to sit and enjoy reading."*	Lack of Public Libraries
"This is my life principle that I follow. I feel satisfied and grateful, and I teach my children to engage in such voluntary activities and not to wait for someone to ask them for help nor to thank them for it." *"Break the routine and engage in joyful a learning experience that offers our children an opportunity to discover new knowledge. That is my main motive to be part of L4CI."* *"I believe that if today I did good deeds and helped that in-need or serve my community, tomorrow definitely I will be paid back and I'll find others serving me when I am in need. This life the more you give, the higher it paybacks you. It is a cycle, and it should be a good-deeds cycle."*	Personal Motives
"It's a collection of activities delivered in a workshop by an experienced librarian to school students on various areas related to the library… where students learn about library types, functions, books, copyright, and the importance of reading…. So, the main goal of this initiative is to inform school students about the available resources of information and that reading is a lovely habit they can spend their time on" *"I knew for instance that L4CI aims to create awareness among 6-grade school students about libraries and the importance of reading books. It runs a one-day workshop here at the library where they teach those students about library systems, types, functions, services and social roles."* *"It is a program …. a voluntary program that aims the spread the knowledge about Libraries roles, functions, books and copyright, and the importance of reading as a way of learning… by targeting young generations… so we can have well-educated children and great learning communities who will continue building our country.*	L4CI Identity

4.4.3. Categorisation (second-order analysis)

Theoretical and subjective interpretation guided the categorisation process. In the second-order analysis, which was based on the Gioia et al. (2013) methodology, the researcher asked whether pre-determined and emerging concepts might help to describe and explain the phenomenon under investigation. In this study, ST approaches led to the categorisation of core themes. The second-order analysis explored how basic codes can help to describe and explain the establishment process of L4CI by identifying the systemic factors contributing to the formation process of its organisational pattern and structure. Moreover, it explored how reality was created through system agents' communication with each other. Attride-Stirling (2001) called these code categories "Organising Themes", referring to "lower order premises evident" (p. 388) used to cluster the "Basic Themes" around similar issues. In this stage, basic codes obtained in the first-order analysis were re-arranged and segmented into second-order "Organizing Themes" for each level of analysis [Steps 5 and 7, Figure 4-8]. The organised themes in this study represented repetitive patterns and major themes frequently mentioned in the interview transcripts.

Categorised themes can be found across chapter five where both pre-determined and emergent themes were grouped in organising categories and represented in thematic network diagrams.

4.4.4. Aggregate dimension

Attride-Stirling (2001) stressed that the "identification of the themes requires a great deal of interpretative work" (p. 392). Interpretive work is, therefore, a crucial step

required to link what was learnt from the interview with what is now known from the literature. Green et al. (2007) argue that the extent to which this is accomplished determines the scope of generalisability and transferability of this study to other settings. The rigour of the study, as claimed by Gioia et al. (2013), is the ability to use an aggregate dimension to build a data structure that allows readers to visualise how the data analysis advanced from raw data to codes and themes. At the final stage of data analysis, all codes obtained from first- and second-order analyses were further interpreted to refine codes into basic and organising themes. The organising of themes from both levels was informed by the literature and compared, contrasted and interpreted further to derive "aggregate dimensions" and build "data structure" (Gioia et al., 2013, p. 20). Using a thematic network structure, the predicted representation is visualised in Figure [4-9].

In this step, organising themes from both levels were compared and contrasted with the literature to derive "global themes" from both levels. The diagram below [Figure 4-9] explains how the data analysis can be visualised by when first order themes, second order themes and global themes from both <u>level 1 and 2</u> are compared, contrasted, and interpreted into aggregate dimensions. After running the 2nd order analysis, global themes emerged. Figure [5-20] at the end of Chapter five shows the resulting data structure that sums all factors found to contribute to the establishment of the EV system into an aggregate dimension.
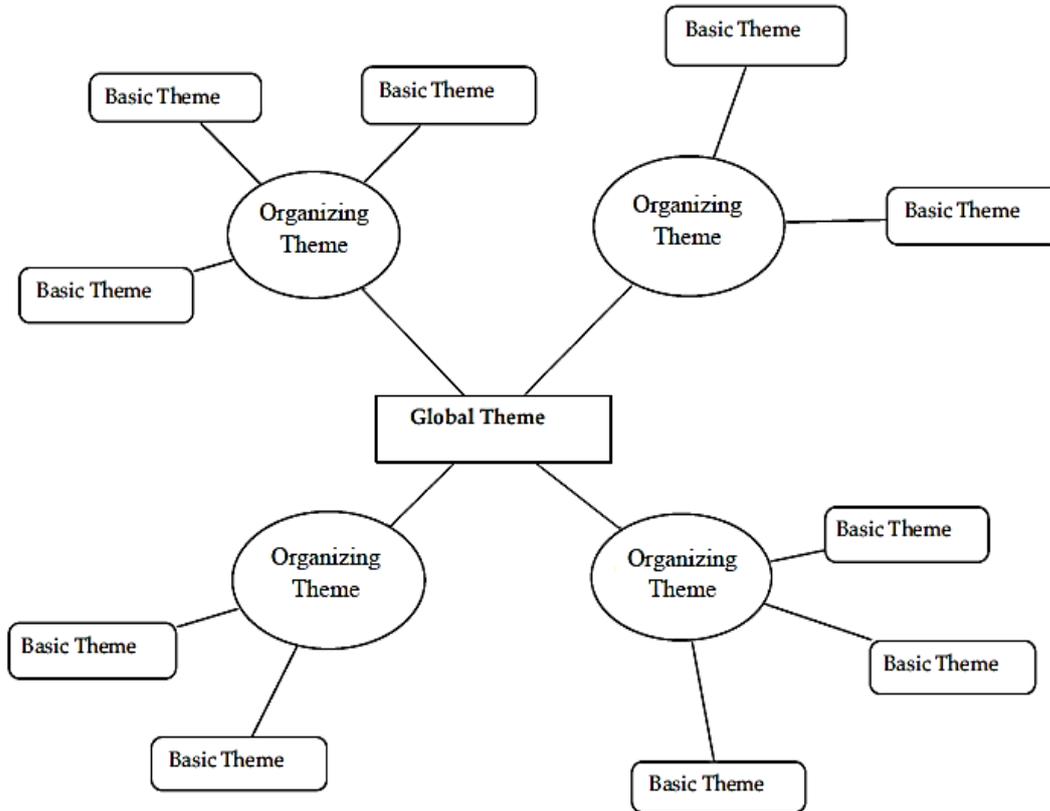
Figure.4-9: Thematic networks analysis (Attride-Stirling 2001, p: 388)

4.5   Ethical Considerations

Research ethics is concerned with how the researcher communicates and clarifies to participants and readers the investigation in terms of the research topic, design, data collection, processing and storing (including anonymity of responses), as well as the writing up of research findings in a moral and responsible manner. More succinctly, four main areas of concern that were identified by Diener and Crandall (1978): (1) harm to participants, (2) lack of informed consent, (3) invasion of privacy, and (4) deception. In this section, these concerns are handled and discussed in detail.

Dealing with deception and legal access, the researcher ensured that informed consent was obtained from every participant. As per the requirement, ethics approval was granted [Appendix F] with the formal permission of Hull University's Research and Ethics Committee. In this letter, the research topic and methodology were approved. Moreover, verbal permission was granted from L4CI's leader before starting the fieldwork. The first contact with the L4CI's leader was made in person to discuss the nature of and the aims of the investigation. Through multiple telephone discussions and emails, all concerns were answered, and the final agreement was maintained before access was granted to the organisation and its resources. During the initial contact [Phase one, see Table 4-1, section 4.3], both the IC director and the leader of L4CI received a formal letter of invitation detailing the research aims, objectives, targeted participants, interview styles and ethical research standards to be used [Appendix A]. Consents were obtained within two weeks from both parties two months before the start of actual field work allowing for easy access for the organisation and its employees [Appendix D].

Shortly after arrival in Oman, individual consent forms [Appendix E] were sought to ensure the permission to record the interviews and confirmed the confidentiality of participants in each interview. To avoid causing harm to participants, the consent forms were carefully and thoroughly constructed, stating the topic, nature of the study, methodology and preserved rights of participants for confidentiality and security. Importantly, to preserve the anonymity of participant identities, the organisation and participants' identities were not listed on these forms. Participants were informed that unique identity codes would be used in place of names for their raw data to ensure the complete removal of any possibility of identification. Procedures, data confidentiality,

and the role of the researcher were discussed fully with each participant at the beginning of each interview. Beyond complying with ethical and moral requirements, this motivated the freedom of thought and expression of participants. As the researcher, it was important to be conscious of the importance of remaining an attentive listener, being supportive of all thoughts and ideas, while making no attempt to judge or devalue their opinions. It was also essential to emphasise the neutrality of the researcher's role in refusing to be aligned with hidden organisational goals or special interest groups, and for declaring no potential for financial or personal gains. No pressure was imposed on participants, and verbal feedback was provided at the end of each interview (upon request). All participants were informed that they reserved the right to withdraw their contribution and/or receive a copy of their recorded interview at any time.

Complying with research ethics ensured formal permission was granted, and ensured validity, confidentiality, freedom of participation, while also clarifying the research objectives and aims, and acknowledged the participating organisations. However, there are also certain social norms and values that must be considered and respected from a research ethics perspective. In Oman, this includes religious codes for keeping a respectful distance between females (i.e. the researcher) and males. Secondly, the need for the researcher to dress appropriately; wearing a head-cover and conducting the interviews in open-door meeting rooms. This saves the participants and the researcher any unnecessary embarrassment and sustains an interview environment that conforms to cultural norms. Although these codes were considered and appreciated, many informants felt uncomfortable to be alone with the researcher in a private office for extended periods. This appeared in their unexpected request for keeping it to one single interview. Also, many of them found offering short answers to

cut time. Under this unanticipated culture, the researcher had to use probing question more often to encourage detailed stories and personal perceptions when informants kept their answers rather abrupt.

4.6   Research Quality Criteria

The rigour of this research process requires the strength of data reliability and validity to be communicated and stand up to external scrutiny. Moreover, potential research bias that can stem from the researcher's background and previous work experience must be demonstrated not to impact the data or its interpretation. In this section, the researcher discusses the reliability and validity of the research data and its interpretation, highlighting the credibility and rigour of the process.

4.6.1.   Reliability and validity

In case study qualitative design, one of the leading strategic principles is to select the best methods and procedures that promote 'truth value'. Issues of reliability and validity are essential parts of any qualitative research. According to Stiles (1993, p. 601), "reliability refers to the trustworthiness of observations or data; validity refers to the trustworthiness of interpretations or conclusions".

In qualitative studies, reliability relates more to the trustworthiness of the procedures and data generated rather than the repeatability of the findings. The way to achieve this is through maintaining thorough records of interviews and observations and by providing detailed documentation of the analysis process (Mays & Pope, 1995). In this research, all documents are attached. These include ethics approval, access permission and individual consent. Moreover, all interviews were recorded, transcribed

in full and stored. Moreover, data was organised and reduced into plots for further analysis using Nvivo Pro software. This digital storage of data is considered another strategy that can enhance reliability by applying the rules built into the programme (Robson, 1994; Roberts & Woods, 2001).

According to Riessman (1993), the validity of findings in qualitative research is presented in four ways: persuasiveness, correspondence, coherence and pragmatic use. Persuasiveness refers to the *width* (Lieblich et al., 1998), which is attributed to the comprehensiveness and amount of evidence. Through using semi-structured interviews conducted across two separate rounds, this research covered all key participants in the volunteering act as well as other coordinating employees and managers. Correspondence refers to the verification process, which was achieved by informing participants of their right to discuss any concerns regarding their stories or request a copy of the interview transcripts at any time. The researcher also ensured that the organisation's right to receive a copy of the research was explained to all participating managers and included in the permission letter. So far, no claims of any kinds have been received from any participants, yet their rights are reserved until the date of submission of this thesis.

Coherence, as explained by Riessman (1993), considers the way interpretation creates a meaningful picture both internally (how the parts fit together) and externally (how research compares to existing theories and previous studies). The combination of Attride-Stirling (2001) for thematic network analysis and Gioia et al., (2013) for thematic analysis provided a detailed framework for how interview transcripts were treated; data was segregated into themes, the grouping of data into a higher level of themes before discussions were aggregated toward existing theories and concepts. A

further contribution to the study's validity arose through a pragmatic use of the study's main findings, which can be viewed as a foundation for further studies. Both coherence and pragmatic use are deeply embedded within the findings and discussion chapters.

4.6.2. Trustworthiness and rigour

To communicate the rigour of research processes is to touch on issues regarding the truthfulness, authenticity and representativeness of the results in a way that accurately represents what was described by the study participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Interestingly, Lietz et al., (2006) argued against relating 'rigour' in qualitative research (as in this study) with 'validity'. Lietz and colleagues state that this would, in fact, contradict the philosophical positions of social construction that promotes and acknowledges multiple realities, claiming that it is instead more focused on trustworthiness and dealing with biases.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) referred to trustworthiness as the need for the findings to reflect the meanings described by the participants. This requires a variety of strategies to deal with textual interpretation. Such strategies can include dealing with problems of reactivity and bias for both researchers and participants (Padgett, 1998, p. 92). Lietz et al. (2006) suggested five key strategies that can enhance the trustworthiness of qualitative inquiry, including reflexivity, audit trail, triangulation, peer debriefing, member checking and prolonged engagement. In this research, the interview recordings were transferred into written documents and revised comprehensively by the researcher and an external editor. No personal or organisational identities were revealed in the interview recordings (as per the

conditions of the confidentiality agreement). The external editor's primary task was to listen to the recordings and re-check the accuracy of transcriptions.

4.7   Limitations

In terms of real-world applications, this research provides a unique study of a one single embedded EV program in an Omani context. However, due to the uniqueness of this particular case study, the findings are not generalisable and more case studies are required to obtain validation within Omani and other contexts. Additionally, the time given for field work (three weeks) represented a severely limiting factor. It is believed that, with more time in the field, a greater depth of data could have been gathered. More time may have allowed interviews with a wider set of stakeholders, such as individual beneficiaries, suppliers and clients.

4.8   Conclusion

This chapter was dedicated to the detailed explanation of the practical procedures of data collection and analysis. The first section discussed the study context and defined the main case unit (L4CI) and sub-case units of analysis (the IC and CCST of XYZ College). The next section described the data collection processes, detailing the sampling criteria and interview procedures. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews; a triangulation of methods using document analysis and field notes to enhance trustworthiness and data rigour. Furthermore, the data analysis process was carefully designed to ensure consistent triangulation at the analytical level. The entire analysis process was described to show how the researcher progressed the raw data through codes, categories and then themes. This was achieved by adopting qualitative

coding procedures combining data structure approach (Gioia et al., 2013) with thematic network analysis (Attride-Stirling, 2001). The research ethics, quality criteria, and limitations were incorporated into the last three sections. The research finding is consolidated in Chapter 5. There, the data analysis process and results are described in full details as the findings progressed.

Chapter 5: Findings and analysis

5.1   Introduction

As stated previously in chapter three and chapter four, the analysis process of this study incorporating both a holistic analysis of the entire case along with an embedded analysis to trace more detailed aspects of the case. The analysis of the case study implements three levels of analysis according to the systemic lens designed for this particular case study [Figure 2-2 in chapter two]. The process accordingly consisted of the analysis of bounded system (EV group level), the analysis of the hosting systems (the institutional level which comprises of IC, CCST within the XYZ College) and the environment systems (the external level). The analysis put considerable effort to analyse the L4CI as a bounded system by identifying its emergent properties consisting of identity, boundary, the organisational and operational structure as well as resources and hierarchy (check section 2.3.2). The systemic lens balanced the whole-view and the parts-view during the analysis process.

This results chapter aims to present the findings that arose from the myriad data sources uncovered through the L4CI case study assessment. The findings were generated according to the data analysis process discussed in Chapter 4, and so the presentation of the ideas employs both thematic and network analysis. The findings are arranged using themes investigated in the interview questions (pre-determined themes) along with other themes that emerged during the interviews (emerged themes) [Figure 5-1]. Tables [5.1 and 5.2] summarises these themes respectively. All interviews

transcripts were coded and organised using Nvivo Pro software. Nvivo Pro facilitated the content and thematic analyses by offering various tools that included resource classification, node development and organisation, text frequency, word cloud, treemaps and queries.

The data gathering process placed large pressure on the researcher, leading to a continued revision of the interview protocol. Gioia et al. (2013) claim that in interpretive research, flexibility is required, and the researcher must be prepared for interview questions to change as data collection proceeds. In this study, the unexpected circumstances that saw various participants withdraw their consent for interviews (as discussed in Chapter 4) forced the researcher to pay extraordinary attention to ensure the interviews still focused on the core research questions. For example, participants desire for one single extended interview instead of two rounds of interviews minimised propping questions, yet saved the researcher from falling into the trap of asking leading-the-witness type questions.

According to Gioia et al., (2013), thematic analysis follows three main stages of first-order, second-order and aggregate dimension analysis. In the first part of this chapter, the process and results of the first-order analysis are described. Here, basic themes based on interview questions are displayed and reviewed. This stage is focused on authentically following the informant's terms and made little attempt to extract categories (Gioia et al. 2012). The entire analysis informed the systemic lens modelled in chapter two [Figure 2-2] where the exploration of the case study emphasised on the need to identify EV system independently to identify its identity and structure in isolation of its hosing system. In that, volunteerism principles and factors contributing to the formation of the EV group were analysed at the EV group level, institutional

systems level, and external systems level. At this stage, data presentation applied the rich picture (Checkland, 1989) and thematic network analyses of Attride-Stirling (2001) to maintain a holistic presentation of findings. The use of these two tools aimed to map the contextual conditions, express the problem situation and background story of the EV project. The second-order analysis applied matrix analysis, where themes from the three levels were cross-referenced to show influence on each other. This data analysis stage focused on the search for similarities and differences among the many categories. This eventually reduced the number of categories to a more manageable level. The data analysis then moved to the third stage that required an aggregated theme dimension. This was developed by cross-referencing the second-order analyses to illustrate the relationships between emerging factors. The focus is placed on understanding the influence of volunteerism as it relates to those factors. More detail regarding the process implemented at each stage of analysis is explained as the analyses progress through the chapter.

5.2 Pro Data Analysis

This section describes how data was categorised and organised to improve the readability of the findings chapter. Using Nvivo Pro software to run the analytical process, the pro-data analysis section shows the overall node structure and results generated through basic analysis tools that included tree node analysis, text analysis, coding analysis and node-to-reference analysis.

It must be emphasised that the findings are generated initially after entering the transcripts into the Nvivo program and developing a basic node tree. This helps to establish a quick examination of the data collected and evaluate its richness and depth.

Therefore, all interview transcriptions were uploaded to Nvivo Pro for data analysis. This enabled the organisation and preparation of data for further content and thematic analysis. This section explains and discusses the results of running basic text and node analyses.

5.2.1. Tree Node Structure

The data ability to follow a tree node structure was examined using Nvivo Pro software. In this study, the node tree was structured into two broad categories: pre-determined themes, emergent themes. For each category, sub-nodes were created that enabled the analysis of data at three different levels: external level (environment), institutional level (hosting system), and EV (group) level [Figure 5-1].
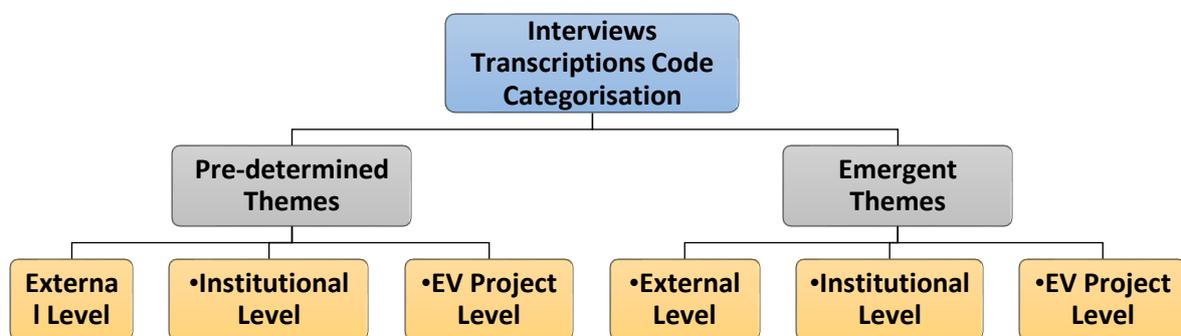
Figure 5-1: Initial Tree Node Structure (parent/ Child)

Arranging the node structure in this format led to an analysis strategy of first coding the text using the predetermined key concepts and emergent concepts. Then, further categorisation was applied to generate codes whereby themes were distributed across the three levels of analysis:

a) External levels: contains codes of events, perceptions and facts relevant to the external environment (actors, event, organisation)

b) Institutional levels: contains themes dealing with events, perceptions, relationships and facts relevant to the hosting organisation (the ABC university, XYZ College, CCST and IC)

c) The EV group level contains coded text relevant to the voluntary project and its members. For instance, the EV project structure, operations, allocation of task and resources, membership, as well as the volunteering employees' backgrounds, motivations, experience, roles, and agency.

5.2.2. Node analysis

The analysis of the intensity of the nodes helps to verify which nodes played a major role in driving the results.
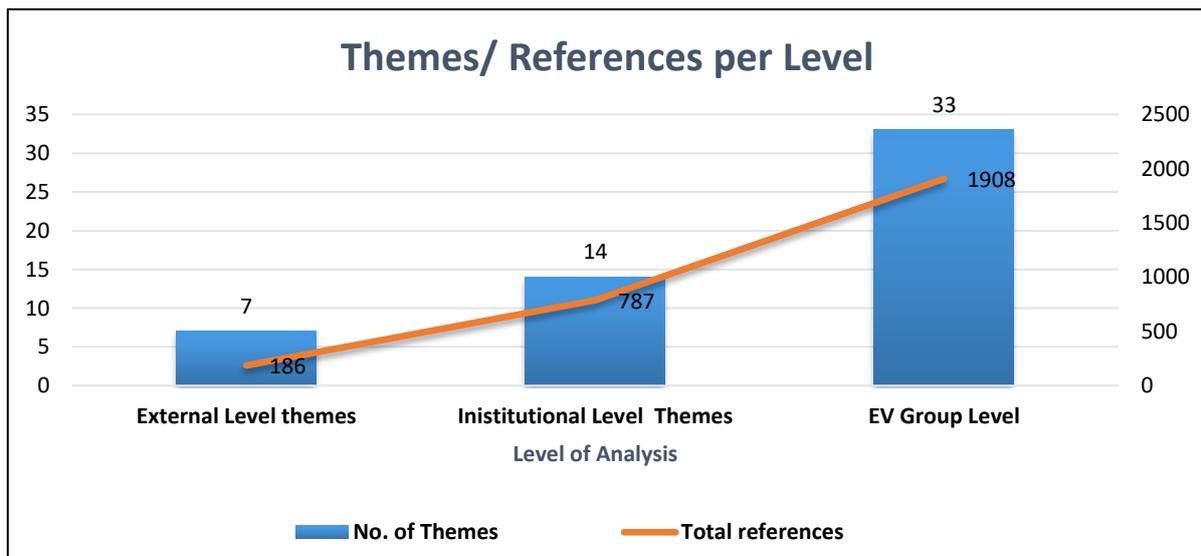
Figure 5-2 Intense of References Coded at each Level

The categorization of nodes according to its area of concern divided them into three main levels: codes regarding EV group, codes describing issues at the institutional level, and codes related to conditions at external environment [Figure 5-2]. the analysis showed the high intensity of nodes with reference to EV group level with a total of 1908 references distributed in 33 nodes.

5.2.3. Coding analysis

Coding analysis aims to provide an overarching view of the total contribution from each source. In Figure [5-3], the amount of coding completed by each source (interview) is displayed by the size of the block.
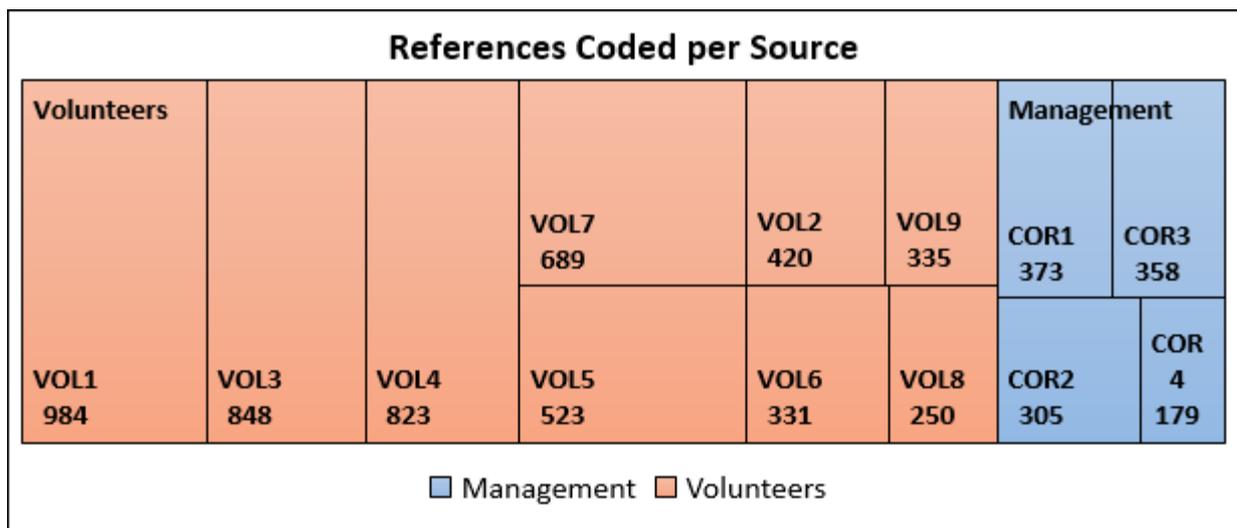
Figure 5-3: Total coding by each source

It clarifies precisely the amount of data provided by each source, the number of nodes that codes can be attributed to and the numbers of text references for each source. This shows that some answers were highly impacted by the level of participants' involvement and by their years of participation. As explained in the previous chapter, participants VOL1, VOL3, VOL4 and VOL7 were those who agreed to give two separate interviews [refer to Table 4-3, section 4.3.3]. This provided richer data and resulted in

their occupying the largest share of the above diagram. Participants with a low percentage of coded references were those that joined the project later and had no knowledge regarding the early stages of L4CI project formation. Consistent with Figure [4-7], this group includes VOL9, VOL6, VOL8, and COR4 whose participants joined the project two to three years later, between 2013-2014.

5.2.4. Textual analysis

Conducting word frequency analysis using Nvivo provided insight into the most common words across all sources. The following word cloud illustrated in Figure [5-4] identified the most frequent words in the study and are represented by the largest font sizes. Terms such as employee, volunteering, community, library, workshop, college, students stand out as dominant, key concepts. These results are perhaps unsurprising but reinforce the fundamental importance of these concepts in the L4CI program. Further word frequency analysis is detailed later in the proposition specific findings.

Figure 5-4: The 50 most frequent words identified across all sources

5.3   Part One: First-Order Analysis

This section is highly descriptive in terms of its focus on describing what happened at three essential levels: (1) the broader context, (2) the institutional/organisational level, and (3) the L4CI project level. It represents the voice of knowledgeable informants and its analysis required line-by-line coding to assign concepts to participant words and statements. The first-order analysis thus consisted of an account for "Basic Themes" (Attride-Stirling, 2001) of each piece of data.

5.3.1.   The process

According to Gioia et al., (2013), the first order analysis peruses adherence with informants' terms to generate exploded fruitful basic themes out of the interview transcripts. As there is one source of primary data (semi-structured interviews), and three levels of analysis (external level, institutional level, EV project level), two coding strategies were implemented. The first strategy applied predetermined thematic coding, with the interview texts coded according to themes specified in the interview questions. The second strategy applied an open coding strategy to add more flexibility to code emergent themes that fell beyond the interview questions.

The interview questions were scattered to capture perceptions regarding issues and decisions made relevant to the three levels of analysis; external level, institutional level and EV project level. Table [5-1] and Table [5-2] summarised the key pre-determined and emergent themes across the three analysis levels. For the pre-determined themes, interview questions were designed to examine participants' perceptions, stories, and learnings experiences and to listen carefully to their

clarifications of changes and decisions made over time. The pre-determined themes consisted of Networking and Communicating with external bodies, L4CI impact on external beneficiaries and clients, L4CI impact of the hosting systems, employees, and volunteers, motivations, challenges, L4CI identity, formal positioning, allocation of resources and roles are among [Table 5-1].

Table 5-1: Interview's pre-determined themes (basic themes)

Pre-determined interview themes (planned coding strategy)		
External level	**Institutional level**	**EV Project level**
• Networking and Communicating with external bodies • L4CI impact on external beneficiaries and clients • News and media coverage • Impact of strikes on EV	• Changes and major shifts • characteristics of the work environment • characteristics of IC employees (work culture) • L4CI impact on IC employees and participants • L4CI impact on the workplace hosting system • L4CI internal relationships and connectivity with IC employees • L4CI ownership and independence • L4CI relationship with the hosting system • L4CI relationship with IC management • Management motivation • Networking and Communicating with hosting organization • Hosting system reactions	• Agent Power • Allocation of resources/roles • Changes and major shifts • L4CI leadership • employment vs volunteering • evaluating L4CI • future perspectives • L4CI begin story • L4CI challenges • L4CI identity • L4CI impact of IC employees and participants • L4CI joining and leaving • L4CI meetings and decision-making process • L4CI relationship with hosting systems • L4CI sustainability and continuity • Most enjoyable part • Motives • Participants role within L4CI • Description of programs, beneficiaries, workshops • Recommended changes to the L4CI agency • Recommended changes in the L4CI structure • Sponsorship funds • L4CI relationship with the Sponsor • Values and beliefs associated with volunteering Act

On the other hand, using the open coding helped in giving space for other themes to emerge. The emergent themes [Table 5-2] included unexpected topics such as political conditions, library systems, education and schooling in Oman, training committee and previous and current management approaches, consistent problematic work environment at the Information Centre, and extra-volunteering activities.

Table 5-2: Interview's emergent themes (basic themes)

Emergent interview themes (open coding strategy)		
External level	**Institutional level**	**EV project level**
• Political issues in 2012-2013 • Previous Experience in Volunteering • Public Libraries in Oman • Schooling in Oman • HM Prize for Voluntary Work	• IC training committee • New management style • Noisy library users • Establishing CCST	• 1000 student celebration • First workshop design and mistakes • Feedback mechanism • L4CI meaning and values associated • New programs development • Recent volunteering activities of participants beside L4CI act

At this stage, the data was ready for first-order analysis. To be able to read through the nodes, Gioia et al. (2013) propose the use of visual aids to demonstrate rigour in qualitative research, where the Attride-Stirling (2001) thematic networks technique serves best. The thematic network diagram presents graphic "web-like nets to remove any notion of hierarchy, giving fluidity to the themes and emphasizing the interconnectivity throughout the network." (p: 389).

The technique was implemented in this stage of group codes from various levels based on their relationship to an issue of interest. In the following section, various thematic networks were developed to move the reader through the major themes that

best describe the pre-existing contexts to narrate the EV project's genesis, structure, employee motivation.

5.3.2. Results

One of the basic systemic approaches is to understand the impact of the external environment systems on the construction of the new system. This happens through the development of the holistic picture and grasps the maximum of what happened in this case. In that, the findings demonstrate the story on three levels in reference to the systemic lens employed [Figure 2-2]. The first level described the external environment conditions accompanied the EV establishment of how they were perceived to be a source of influence on their story. The second level pronounced conditions within the institutional level including the changes, facts, events, and perceptions in relation to the hosting organisation. The third level focused on presenting the story at the EV project using four life cycle phases: (1) Initiating and selecting, (2) Planning and designing, (3) Implementing and executing, and (4) Closing and realising.

5.3.3. Contextual conditions (environment systems)

Exploring the data and looking for codes that tell about participants' perception and interaction with external systems is one of the core strategies of the systemic lens. It reveals the nature of relationships existed and how various participants reacted and interacted accordingly. It also helps to create an understanding of various enabling and constraining forces that might play a role in the formation of volunteerism within the EV group.

First-order analysis evidenced numerous themes able to describe the pre-existing institutional and external conditions prior to the establishment of the L4CI. Following Attride-Stirling (2001), the thematic network of Figure [5-5] represents various codes from Tables [5-1]and [5-2].
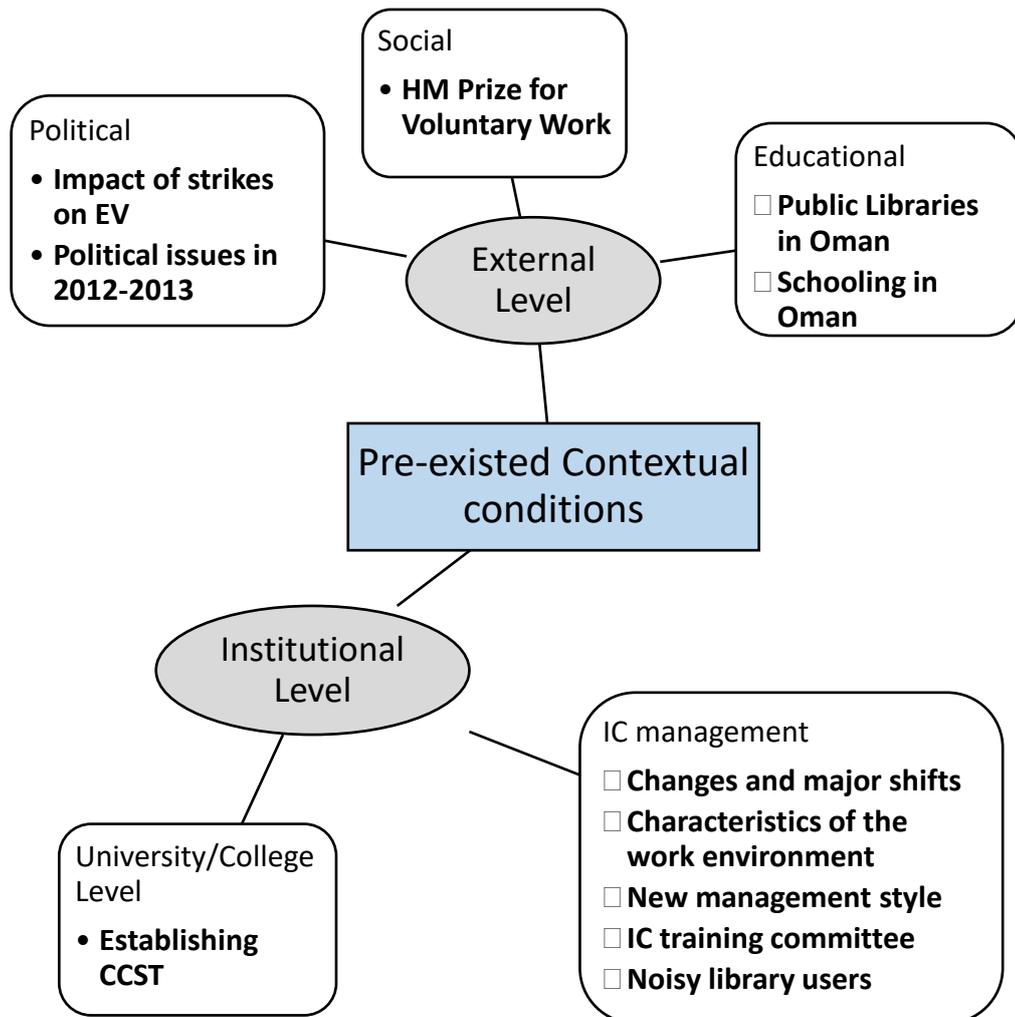
Figure 5-5: Thematic network of pre-existing conditions

Within the thematic network, these codes are assembled into basic themes before being categorised into two organising themes (external and institutional) within

a unifying global theme (pre-contextual conditions). The following sub-sections discuss these contextual conditions in more details:

5.3.3.1 *External context and events*

The following description aims to capture the external conditions present during the establishment of the L4CI EV program. The analysis of findings suggested to include a number of political, educational and social conditions mentioned by various participants.

5.3.3.1.1 Political level

At the political level, 2011 to 2013 witnessed vast social demonstrations and strikes. Demands for higher wages, higher allowances for water, electricity, and housing, lower prices for basic goods, an end to corruption at the ministerial level, and more transparency in the distribution of oil and gas revenue were among the chief grievances expressed by protesters (Valeri 2011, Worrall 2012, Johnson 2014, Worrall 2015). The 2012 strikes in the educational sector had major impacts on the number of workshops delivered.

> *"In that first year, we faced a lot of problems; you remember the strikes that many schools underwent in 2013. This was one of the problems that constrained our progress." (VOL 1)*

Moreover, a number of participants shared strong opinions about the community's right to enjoy access to all government-funded libraries. Table [5-3] displays key quotes.

146

Table 5-3 Quotes reflecting the political influence on participants' perceptions

Evidences (Quotes)	Participants
"Here in the ABC University, it is even worse, because all libraries are limited to serve only higher education's students, …. To me, this has blocked the society from their right to use these libraries if we consider that it is funded by the government, the people money."	VOL 4
"After all, it is a commonwealth, The ABC University get a huge budget from the government, so it is people's money, and all people in Oman have the right to use the University's libraries."	COR 1
"When you build a library to serve a specified group of people only, you commit a crime of prohibiting public people's right for easy access to knowledge. In Oman lets are very honest, there are no public libraries. Most are academic libraries… they are not open to all ages and do not serve the public's needs for knowledge… The ABC University's libraries, for instance, are built and funded by the government; in other word are public property… The University should rethink this seriously when we consider the huge budget allocated for its libraries yearly… The University libraries must open its door to all people… I mean everyone wants to read a book…. kids, adults, adults, employed and unemployed, elderly people, handicapped, you name them, even foreigners…. we need to rethink this serious issue and fix it… I cannot understand why we are protecting books from people!"	VOL 6

Their expression found to fit well with street posters during the strikes, which demanded fair distribution of wealth where 'The people want the reform of the regime' (Valeri 201, p: 4). However, it is hard to establish substantial evidence in this regard, and the impact of this political disturbance on the EV project cannot be confirmed.

5.3.3.2   *Social level*

At the social level, the year 2011 witnessed the announcement of the inaugural Sultan Qaboos Prize for Voluntary Work. On December 2012, ten winners were honoured for their voluntary work across personal and institutional domains. Official reports published by the Ministry of Social Development illustrated an increase in the number of voluntary associations, charitable funds, and professional societies. The

number of such institutions increased by 50%, from 40 (2001-2010) to 60 by the end of 2016. Importantly, the community of members and volunteers numbered 5,924 by the end of 2016. Figure [5-6] illustrates the 33% growth in the number of registered voluntary associations and charities in the last six years alone (Ministry of Social Development, 2016). It is not known, however, whether the presence of the Sultan Qaboos Prize for Voluntary Work led to the aforementioned increases, or if the prize was in fact established to reward the growing number of Omani citizens that engage in volunteering activities.
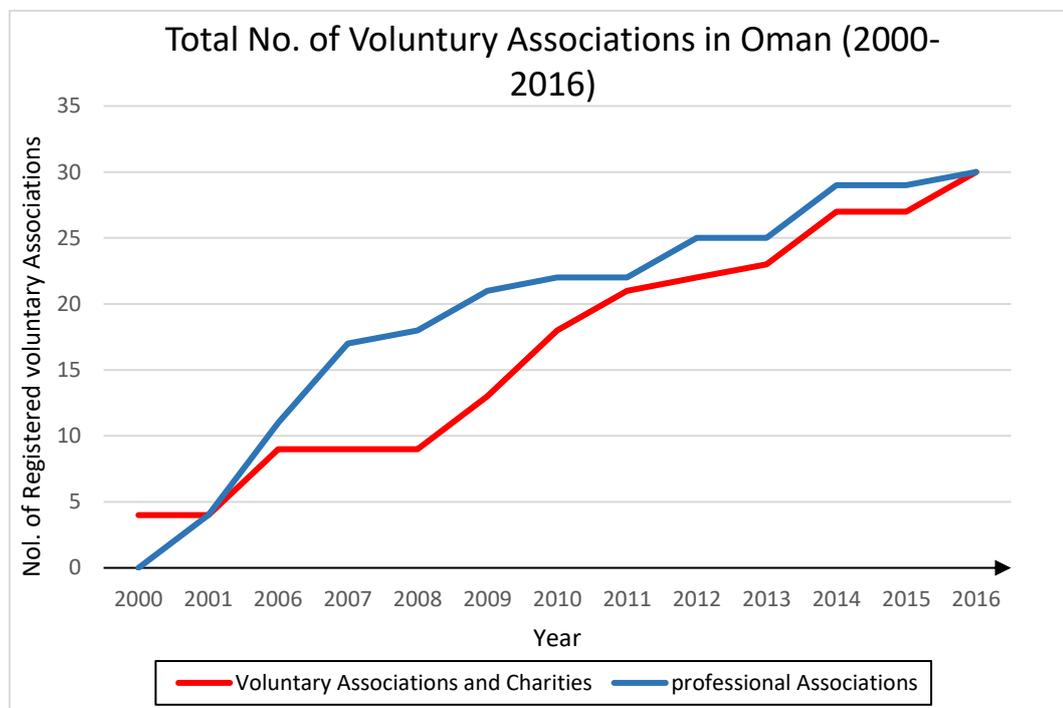
Figure 5-6: Total number of voluntary organisations in Oman by the end of 2016

Adapted from Ministry of Social Development (2016)

The findings captured some signals from the interview where two participants expressed their hope to compete for winning the Sultan Qaboos Prize for Voluntary Work.

"One day comes, and we receive the Sultan Qaboos's Prize for Volunteering Work. That day we will be among the first three winners." (VOL 1):

"I really wish L4CI to win the Sultan Qaboos Prize for Voluntary Work. I think it is time to go and read about its rules and prepare to compete for it." (VOL 4):

Further investigations are required to examine if such external motivations (the prize) has had an impact on the L4CI EV project.

5.3.3.3 *Educational level*

At the educational level, evidence from interviews highlighted negative perceptions of the Omani schooling system and libraries availability. For instance, most participants expressed concern regarding the absence of public libraries, as these would enable communities to enjoy unrestricted access to literature and knowledge sources. Moreover, the schooling system was generally perceived in as a "spoon-feeding" passive teaching was accused by many informants for contributing to a learning environment that discouraged reading among younger generations.

These collective views agreed with the academic literature and reports from news outlets that discuss Oman's lack of public libraries and undesirable schooling system. (see Al-Mahrooqi and Denman, 2016; Porcaro, 2014; Al-Seyabi, and Al-Rashdi, 2016; Bouazza and Al-Mufaraji, 2005). Most of these studies have highlighted the limited budgets of school libraries and the peripheral utility of school libraries that are not part of the school curriculum leading students to use them rarely. References found in the interviews scripts argued that these two factors perceived by the participants to

contribute to the low rate of reading among people. Table [5-4] provides interview quotes that support this argument:

Table 5-4 Codes about the educational conditions

Area of concern	Coded Text (quotes)	Participant
Schooling system	*"..toward the miserable situation of our school students who join the higher education with no adequate knowledge about libraries… and suffer from a lack of free reading as a daily habit. I mean school students need to know how libraries play a major role in increasing their awareness and prepare them for the next phase after the secondary level."*	VOL 6
	"..you know, at our elementary through secondary schools, libraries are not activated, and very few students got the chance to know about them. They might finish schooling without visiting their school library even for once!"	VOL 7
	"we need to see school librarians, so our message reaches them directly… Libraries at schools should become an active hub for our children… they need to learn how they can do that.."	VOL 8
	"..we acknowledge that western communities are aware of what libraries are and how to deal with the books. In our society, students' community is not aware of libraries nor are they ready to use them because reading is not part of their school life."	VOL 1
	They told me they want us to play a role in raising awareness among school students. I -myself- have conducted many lectures in schools about the need to activate the school libraries and information centres, but still, I do not know what holds them back!"	COR 1
Lack of public libraries	*"In Oman let's be very honest there are no public libraries, only the academic specialised libraries…"*	VOL 6
	"..there are no well-known public libraries at the Sultanate level to hold such initiative, in fact… I feel proud of our library because we do have L4CI."	VOL 7
	"we came across many studies indicating the low demand on libraries in Oman because of the low average rate of reading among our people and of course due to the fact the insufficient number of public libraries that allow full access."	VOL 4
	"In Oman, there is no public libraries, no place for families to sit and enjoy reading."	COR 1

The intensity of quotes regarding the educational system and conditions of Omani libraries is confounded by the fact that most participants are employed by the Omani educational service. Being part of the system, the findings show they are not satisfied by the Omani educational sector in which they are part of as an employee in one of the leading university. For example, the IC is part of the public university and holds a library inside it. Faults in the educational system were used to justify the misconduct of college students inside the IC library along with the low rate of library book borrowing.

5.3.3.4 *Institutional level (hosting systems)*

The institutional conditions move the exploratory systemic lens into the narrower boundary. Here, it explores the level of interactions between the EV group and it's hosting systems. It aims to uncover existed perceptions, opinions, and nature of the relationship to understand how these worked in enabling and disabling the establishment process of the EV system. To describe the pre-existing conditions at the institutional level, particular focus was placed on the hosting organisations. That is ABC University, XYZ College and the IC.

5.3.3.4.1 The university and college level

In 2009, the University decided to decentralise the Centre for Community Service and Continuing Education. The decision aimed to establish independent Centres for Community Services and Training (CSST) that allowed each college to provide social services and training programs that better serve the needs of particular segments of the

Community. By 2010, COR 3 was appointed the Assistant Dean of the Newly established CCST at XYZ College.

5.3.3.4.2 The Information Centre level

The Information Centre (IC) consists of two main divisions: the library, and the Technical/Media Support. It aims to provide a resource to support scientific research and meet the educational needs of the College's student body. These parts focus on the conditions, major changes and events that took place at their work-place prior to the establishment of the EV project.

In 2006, COR 1 became the director of the IC. With his arrival at the IC, he initiated a contemporary management style to improve the relationship between his employees and facilitating their ability to work together. One important outcome was their improved problem-solving abilities through cooperative teamwork. Additional meetings were created to identify daily problems and encourage the IC employees to engage in the collective decision-making process. COR 1 described his approach by stating that:

> *"I know that people do not like the bossy style, someone on their heads telling*
>
> *them what to do/don't. I feel this is going to be an obstacle and put them off*
>
> *especially when my point of view differs from theirs. I don't want that, I don't*
>
> *want to create an unnecessary point of worry, everything is in their hand, and*
>
> *I only make sure to keep them within the main principles we agreed on at the*
>
> *start."*

The new style captured the attention of the employees and had definite impacts on their relationship with IC management. VOL 4 described the impact at the employee level:

"…I can say that I have noticed a degree of changes… The main changes have happened at the employees' level… For instance, if an employee feels uncomfortable or facing any problem with his colleagues or in performing his job tasks… he/she is now readier today to raise his concerns to the others and to top management… I can feel that the employees learnt to open themselves and [are more likely to] discuss any bothering issues with our manager than before."

At the IC level also, interviews described two problems that played a leading role in forcing the IC management to undertake a series of changes and actions prior to the establishment of L4CI EV project. Librarians were under continuous strain from College students' misbehaviours inside library hall, including eating and drinking and making excessive levels of noise. The conditions inside the IC became the main concern of the new director (COR 1) as he explained:

When I came, the main problem was that the library suffers a noisy environment and the employees were so stressful with this situation. The Centre, to be honest, was [an] uncomfortable place for its users and librarians. So, my first mission was to change this and bring more discipline [into the] library sphere."

The IC employees undertook various actions to minimise the disrespectful behaviours of library users and the ensuing employee burnout. For instance, stricter

rules were enforced, and more power was delegated to librarians, allowing them to take immediate action against misbehaving students. The IC building underwent a complete interior redesign in 2010 to facilitate better student monitoring and greater control by library staff.

The second issue was related to the lack of further education and training opportunities due to budget limitations. Due to this, the IC team formed an informal committee to search for affordable training opportunities, both domestically and internationally. This committee was led by VOL 1 and VOL 2, as VOL 6 explained:

"So, we were looking for a good cheap alternative.... practical training free of charge... and we were successful in getting unexpected on-job-training opportunities for all IC employees ... there were some who went to Russia, Singapore, Malaysia, China... I went to France with a colleague of mine... everyone got a chance to go.... all of them were free."

In the space of three years, this informal committee succeeded in securing free-of-charge training opportunities to all IC staff (technicians and librarians). However, the pressure was applied by the College's HR administration who wanted to keep this committee's efforts under their direct control, Quoting VOL2:

"They started to be very sensitive, although most of the training is for free or at a low cost, they started to refuse by saying that other college employees need to go now, it is enough for IC to have two employees only in a year, and so on. We started to get angry, fight back, and then we decided just to stop it, and to let this task be on the hand of the College's training officer."

Both VOL 1 and VOL 2 decided to delegate this work to other employees to avoid unpleasant clashes and painful sensitives. By 2011, the committee became inactive. Just two months later, VOL 1 surprised his colleague and IC management with his idea for establishing an EV project to raise awareness about the importance of libraries within the school students community. He linked the termination of the training committee to the EV project by stating:

> *"The idea of the Library for Community Initiative (L4CI) is the daughter of the training committee. This time we made sure that this idea is ours and that implementing it is not going to clash with anybody outside the IC." (VOL 1)*

5.3.3.5   *The EV project level*

Moving down the nest direct the systemic lens toward the EV group. At this level, the systemic lens was used to guide the analysis of data in building a collective story that describes the establishment stages of the EV system. It employs a rich picture from soft system methodologies in defining the problem as perceived collectively by interviewees. A storyline was developed from the analysis of interviews to describe decisions made as the EV system move from an idea into action. The richness of data facilitated the generation of adequate evidence for network engagement evolved and motivations at both the individual and collective level.

Technically in this section, basic nodes relative to the story timeline of the establishment of the L4CI is described. The focus is structured around participants' memories and stories of early stages and their motivations for engagement. It also provides descriptions of the L4CI when viewed as a new unity. The descriptions offered a valuable picture of how the EV as a system function, allocate resources (physical and

non-physical) and was positioned within its hosting whole (between the IC and the CCST).

More than 1900 references distributed across 33 nodes were provided descriptions of the EV project structure, operations, relationships and participants [Figure 5-2, section 5.2.2]. The following thematic network [Figure 5-7] grouped these nodes into meaningful representations to facilitate the reader's understanding of the EV as a collective story contributed by various participants. The story timeline followed five main phases: (1) problem definition, (2) idea initiation and acceptance, (3) initial approval and planning, (4) funding and execution, and (5) closing and realising. A holistic rich picture was used to illustrate the problem as perceived by informants. Nodes were scrutinized to build the story timeline, and references from coded texts were provided. The discussion then moves onto the main employee motivations to join and volunteer. The discussion ends with a snapshot of the network evolvement over time, with care taken to represent this EV project. In addition, the EV project is framed in terms of its identity, goal, capacity, resources and positioning.
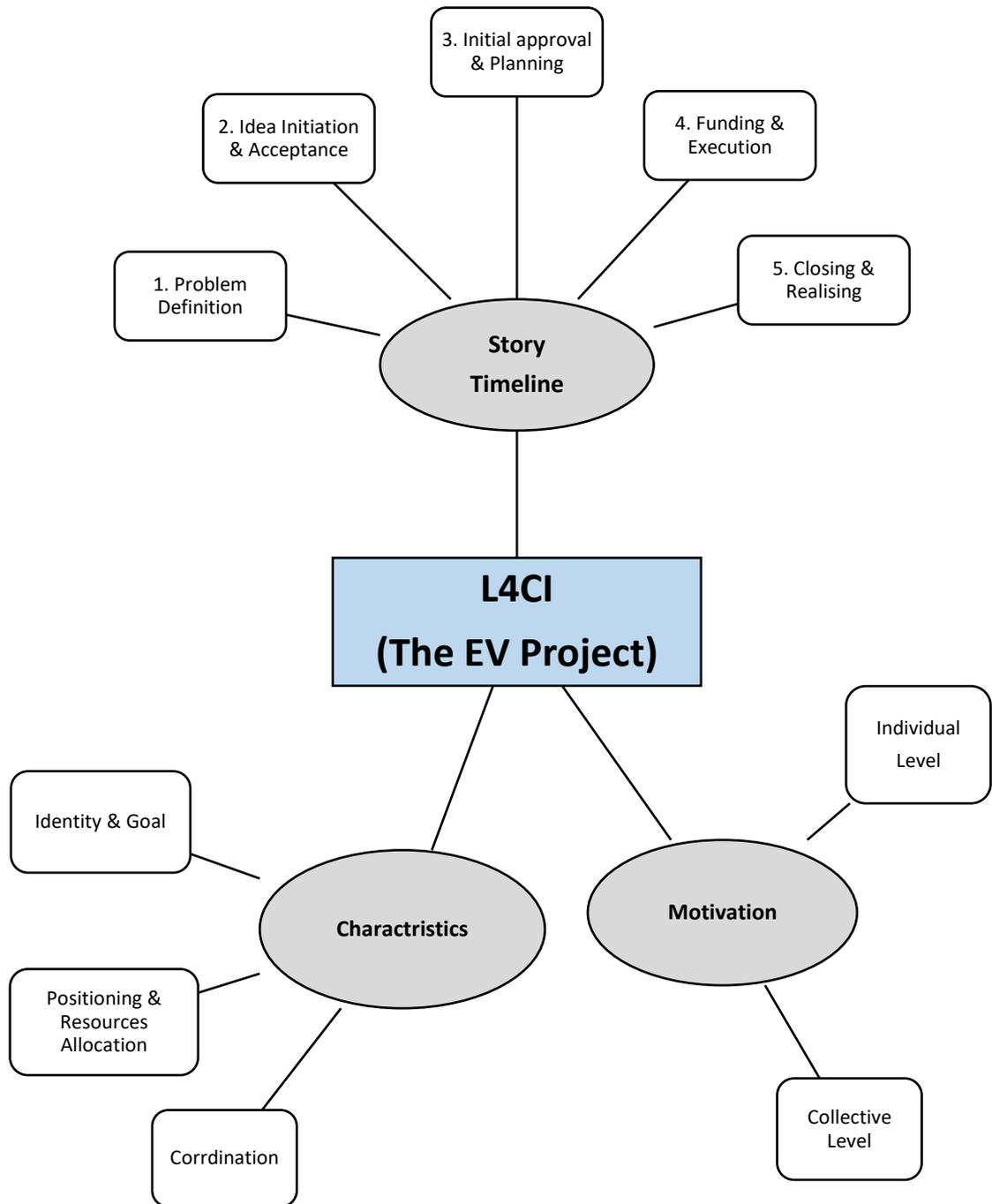
Figure 5-7: Thematic network of the L4CI (EV Project)

5.3.4. The EV system: Establishment story

5.3.4.1 *Problem definition*

In order to introduce a clear view of the problematic situation that existed prior to the development of the EV system, rich picture tool was employed. In soft system methodology, the rich picture was introduced by Checkland (1975) who stressed on the "need to see the problem situation in a more structured way but without a commitment to any particular solution or even a particular kind of solution" (p 279). In this study, the tool provided a starting point in linking nested systems under investigation with the external environment systems [refer Figure 4-1 in section 4.2.1] and develop a holistic view of the entire situation.

Avison *et al.* (1992) referred to the process of constructing a rich picture as an 'appreciating the situation' (p: 399) as it usually consists of gathering, sifting and interpreting data. The interview transcripts provided the research with two different perspectives of this problem situation, as it was reported through the eyes of both the volunteering employees as well as the IC management. By applying a rich picture tool technique, the researcher was able to describe the collective perceptions and opinions supporting the multiple contextual conditions that supported the establishment of the L4CI [Figure 5-8]. In order to develop a rich picture of the situation under study, a number of sources of information were coded and utilised to capture views of the participants and check accuracy from the perspective of the managers, coordinators and employees. The main source of the information was coded texts from the interviewees. Secondary sources used included news press reports, government and university documents that describe the existed conditions internally and externally. Coded text

from personal field notes was acknowledged to describe the general environment of the workplace and its culture.
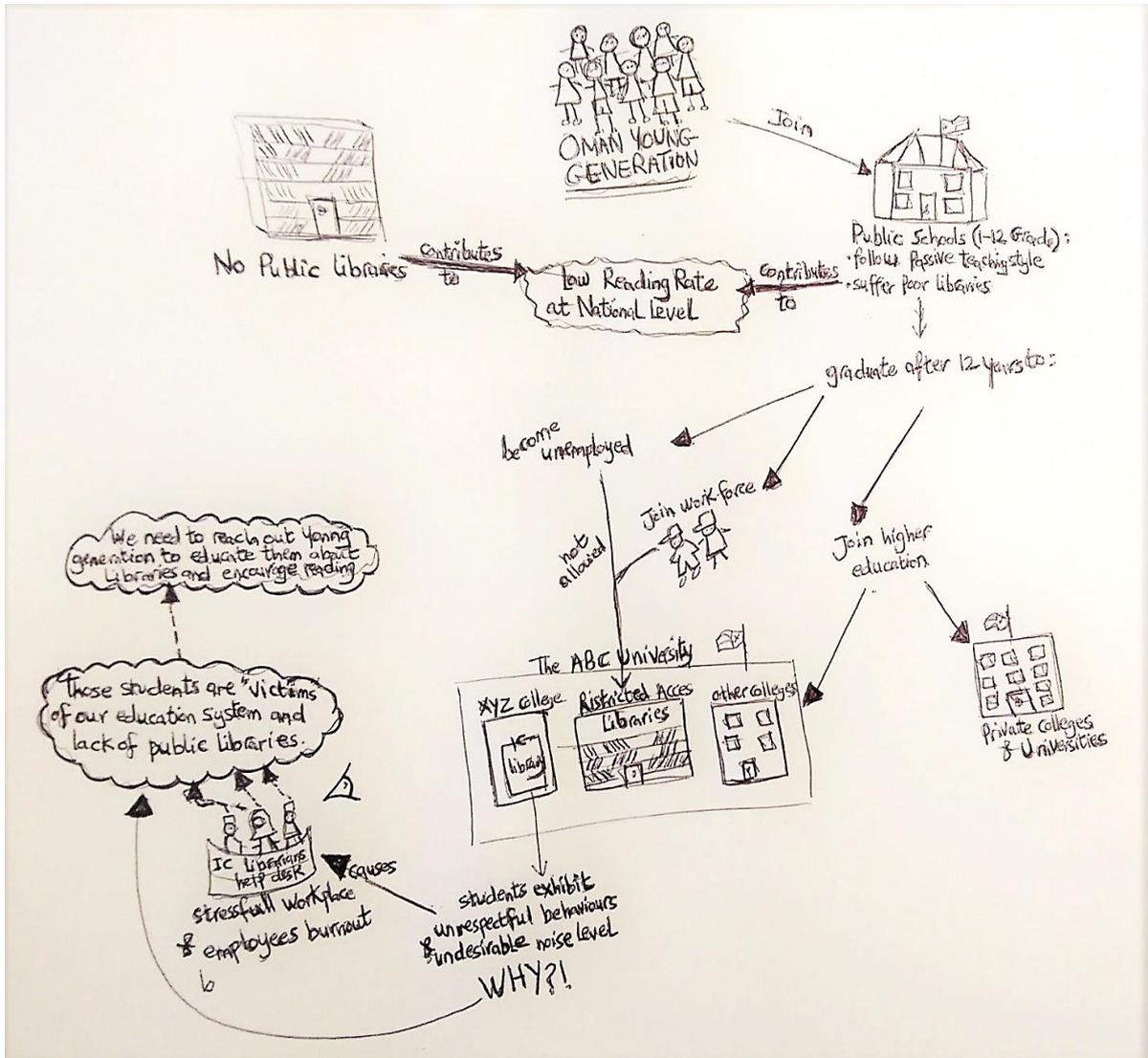
Figure 5-8 Rich picture of situation expressed by informants

The rich picture described how multiple informants viewed their internal struggle with the unacceptable levels of noise caused by College students in the IC library and related this to external conditions. All informants agreed that dealing with trouble-making and disrespectful students is an on-going headache.

"When I became IC director-, the main problem was that the library suffers noisy environment and the employees were so stressful with this situation. The Centre, to be honest, was an uncomfortable place for its users and librarians." (COR 1)

Librarians shared stories about how frequently they would be to anger when students would purposefully, and repeatedly, make loud noises inside the library. In fact, these students did not stop even after they were explicitly asked. There were many incidents where librarians asked students to leave the library hall immediately, which in some cases has ended up with unpleasant verbal conflicts that demanded top management involvement. The repetitiveness of this problem has always been a daily challenge to all employees in the IC.

"One of our colleagues I remember, she asked for early retirement. This problem [misbehaving and rude students] was one of the reasons to retire. At first, she asked to be moved upstairs to perform any administrative role… then that's it… she couldn't really bother herself anymore…. Another one also VOL 5… also shifted his work after been continuously in a clash with trouble-maker students" (VOL 5)

At an external environmental level, the stories focused on the gradual change in the participants' perceptions of what they view to be a painful situation that falls outside their control limit and line of power. Referring to personal statements provided previously on external and institutional conditions (section 5.3.3), the situation contains several interrelated and interconnected themes. These have been summarised into:

- Lack of open-access public libraries for local community groups

- Highly restricted access to academic libraries (owned by both public and private sectors), where access is limited to higher education students.

- School libraries are inefficient, and students rarely encouraged or allowed an unpermitted visit.

- Learning approaches at schools and higher education facilities are perceived to be "passive teaching" where students need to memorise given textbooks to pass their exams.

At the management level, stories described the formal working environment and the various work-related problem that employees have tried to overcome over the years.

"The L4CI's people have decided to take the responsibility of preparing school students to use library resources effectively and encourage them to start connected to reading and books. They try to make sure that students get enough knowledge about libraries role in their higher education life and how they can search for the information in the best way." (VOL 6)

Again, findings demonstrated that participants tended to perceive their views through an interpretation of what is happening at an external environment level. This enabled the participant to build an understanding of the root cause, which was not simply the level of noise in the library, but also the weak reading habits of students from a young age. In their stories, it became clear that the participants viewed the establishment of the EV project as a potential way to solve the problem of unruly, disrespectful students (largely characterised by high levels of noise) in the long term.

"The idea stands - from its early stage - on the how can the IC contribute in preparing the new students with adequate knowledge about the library usage,

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so in the future, the new students joining the SQU are expected to show signs

of library respect and eventually noise is to reduce" (COR 1)

In conclusion, their individual perspectives suggested different problematic realities, which contributed to these employees and the whole Omani community being viewed as victims of the educational institution and library systems. Being able to interpret and reflect on this helpless learning environment, helped participants to change their perspective of what is the core problem was.

5.3.4.2   *Idea initiation and acceptance*

After two months after the termination of the informal training committee, VOL 1 introduced the idea of establishing a voluntary community service called Library for Community Initiative (L4CI) to his IC colleagues.

"VOL 1 came and introduced the idea to us. we were a group of employees

sitting together around the coffee table ... At that time, the idea wasn't clear,

very general broad thoughts...we were sitting together, and he came to us to

tell us about this idea. We started to discuss it to understand it more. I

remember him after a while...he came and gave me a paper with some general

points about the idea, explained a little bit about it, and asked me to comment

on it. I can recall how we felt. All of us ... I mean the employees of IC ...we were

very enthusiastic and fortified about it" (VOL 5)

This was followed by a discussion in which many employees placed emphasis on the voluntary nature of this case. The founding L4CI employees agreed to keep participation in the EV program up to the employee's desire and capacity, with no

obligations, pressure, or judgment surrounding their chosen level of involvement. These employees also agreed to call an IC management meeting and formally discuss the project. The IC director described that meeting:

"So, the guys came to me and addressed their need to go to the community and educate them about libraries and its unique culture. They told me they want us to play a role in raising awareness among school students." (COR 1)

In September 2011, IC management gave its support for the idea. However, they highlighted the need to gain upper-level approval from the University. After consulting the University's Presidency office, the IC Director (COR 1) was advised to contact the Centre for Community Development and Continual Education. COR 1 advised VOL 1 to produce a short proposal and formed a team that consisted of VOL 1, VOL 2 and himself. They delivered the proposal to the Centre and started discussing it. The Centre proposed taking over the idea to implement it into the University's Main Library. The suggestion was entirely refused by the team who insisted on full ownership of the idea and the right to implemented at the IC's library. Their previous experience with losing control over their informal committee may have contributed to the unanimous opposition to the removal of autonomy and control.

"Our respond, it is not their idea, and we should not force our idea into them. They are not part of our team! We are the one who has the idea, and we are ready to make it true." (VOL 1).

In 2012, VOL 1 decided to personally propose the idea to the newly appointed Assistant Dean (COR 3) of the CCST within XYZ College. Although one of many proposals, COR 3 found L4CI to be the most attractive proposal and gave his approval.

"At that time, I was receiving many ideas mainly from students; this one was unique and special for three main reasons. The first one, it was the first employee volunteering initiative. The second thing, it came from their own speciality, they are librarians, so they did not present an idea that does something in the unrelated field. They thought about their own expertise and how they can translate it into a great benefit to society. The third aspect that was also outstanding; it targeted children; which means in library science, you are not only able to supply the library with books and database but extending the concept of a library to comprise book, education and learning." (COR 3)

By the end of this stage, the EV project had received the acceptance of the IC management and the Deanship of CCST. By this time, all parties (the IC, CCST and engaged employees) reached a mutual agreement on defining the volunteerism notion and the expectations of each party. With the support of an adequate number of IC employees, the planning and designing of the programs and workshops began.

5.3.4.3   *Initial approval and planning*

Under the direction of COR 3, the project leader (VOL 1) led the team to generate a detailed proposal collectively. The proposal was meant to specify the project's main aim, values and participatory nature, along with its target benefits, expected outcomes, initial workshop designs, location, and party responsibilities. After conducting a preliminary field study, meeting with educational consultants at the Ministry of Education, and discussions with friends and relatives with experience in education, the team was able to build a case for their idea. COR 3 described the process as follows:

"I ordered them to go and re-write the proposal in the way I saw it more efficient and effective, and I told them how to do in detail, do this and do that. VOL 1 and the others went back to their IC and worked very hard to meet my expectations. They took two weeks to revise their vision and proposal. I checked it and returned it back to them two to three times to allow them to develop their idea by questioning every part of it. Then when I saw it presented a good package, and it can be accepted, I asked them to send it to me as an official request to approve it, and that what I did."

The search and discussions between the participating employees resulted in major changes to the initial EV proposal. The two major changes were, (1) the EV project will be officially under the management of the CCST (instead of the IC), and (2) the target group will be 6th-grade school students instead of secondary-level students. Within one week, the team was able to deliver a winning proposal to the CSST Deanship.

5.3.4.4   *Funding and execution*

By mid-2012, the team were advised to start looking for sponsorship from an external source. For months, all required correspondence was carried out by the CCST. The team described this stage to be the most frustrating task as largest enterprises refused to fund their project. Described by COR 2:

"I recall VOL 1 telling us about the difficulties they faced when they started communicating with companies… most of them rejected to sponsor them; including Omantel and Bank Muscat. They were lucky that Moosa had a relative in this current sponsor who could put some pressure on the board of directors to give it a try." (COR 2)

The year 2013 witnessed a dramatic shift in the development of the L4CI project. Sponsorship was achieved, and funds were granted that covered the first-year plan. At this time, the EV project received final approval from the University's Deanship. The IC management kept its promise to allocate a hall to run the workshops and equipped it with the required office supplies and even IT support. This signalled the start of the actual design and execution of the voluntary programs.

> *"After we got the funds, we received the approval from the ABC University and the XYZ College. We also started to do brainstorming for new ideas in terms of a logo and slogan for the program, also searched for technical help and logistic support." (VOL1)*

After implementing two workshops, feedback from school supervisors, along with employee volunteer's personal observations, were used to make enhancements to future program offerings. For example, sharp tools were replaced by safer alternatives to ensure children's safety, breakfast meals were altered to provide healthier alternatives, and workshop timing and duration were revised to better suit school timetables. By December 2013, the volunteers had run 11 indoor workshops in its first year.

5.3.4.5   *Closing and realising*

At this stage, the EV project started to reach a stabilising status. At an organisational level, the hierarchy of power and the boundary of responsibility was established between the EV project and its hosting organisation. At the operational level of the EV project, the self-organisation process resulted in a gradual formation of internal structures.

At an external level, the L4CI EV project attracted positive reviews from schools and this news was published in the University's news bulletin. School supervisors provided free promotion after teachers uploaded their reviews online to the official forum of the Ministry of Education.

"The famous local Al- Witan newspaper has covered two of the L4CI's events. Also, I have seen what the school supervisors have uploaded in the Ministry of Education Portal. Also, The ABC University's owned news bulletin have dedicated two full pages about the L4CI with interviews with some of the team's member and our direct IC manager." (VOL 8)

In 2014, L4CI's corporate sponsor decided to continue funding the project for another two years, and 18 indoor workshops and L4CI's first targeted outdoor event was delivered to the Centre for Children with Disabilities. That year, the IC Director (COR 1) was invited for an interview on Oman national television's Morning Show. The interview received high recognition from the University presidency and College Deanship. The College decided to expand its support to offer free meals for the children.

"L4CI has managed to attract the attention and blessings. For example, previously everything was financed by sponsorship funds. In 2014, the college agreed to pay for meals and drinks. That is a sign of their satisfaction." (COR 3)

The L4CI project is dedicated to its continued development and evolution. Specifically, its members are continually improving its operations, inviting new members and promoting its message to potential new beneficiaries.

5.3.5. Evolvement of Networks

The systemic lens on the network engagement and evolvement determines the intensity of interaction between the actors within the EV system and with their environment. Analysing the network from this aspect helps to evaluate the impact of various actors on the formation of the L4CI and how it influences the formation process of its identity, organisational and operational structure and define its boundary. Progressing from the story above indicates the presence of a dynamic network evolvement. The IC employees were able to engage various actors and groups during the formation of the project. The interactions between the IC employees as a group and the IC management, CCST, external bodies such as educational expertise as well as friends and relatives have impacted the final project outcome. Diagram [Figure 5-9] presented evolving networks engagement. It focused on visualising how various agents were engaged to achieve different goals over a time-line starting from 2011 to 2013.

Findings from basic coding found that the L4CI leader (VOL1) was actively engaged with various groups internally and externally. During the idea development with a group of interested employees of the IC, VOL 1 was able to obtain the support of the IC management (COR 1 and 2) and develop a simple proposal to submit it the ABC University's interested body for community services. Determining to implement the idea, a group of volunteering employees gathered to write a decent proposal to obtain an initial agreement from the newly established Centre for Community Services and Training (CCST). The work engaged multiple external bodies and agents' experts in the educational field plus a number of friends and relatives. Moving ahead, the volunteering employees used their personal contacts to obtain external sponsorship, which guaranteed later a final approval from the College Board. The delivery of the workshop

undergone continues developments and enhancements based on reviews and observations gathered from schools' supervisors, volunteering employees, management of IC and CCST, and other IC's employees. An additional timeline was produced [Appendix H] to visualise the timeline of events happened at various levels using Excel software. The timeline described events happened at the external level (political and social), institutional level (the ABC University, the XYZ College and IC level) and EV group level.
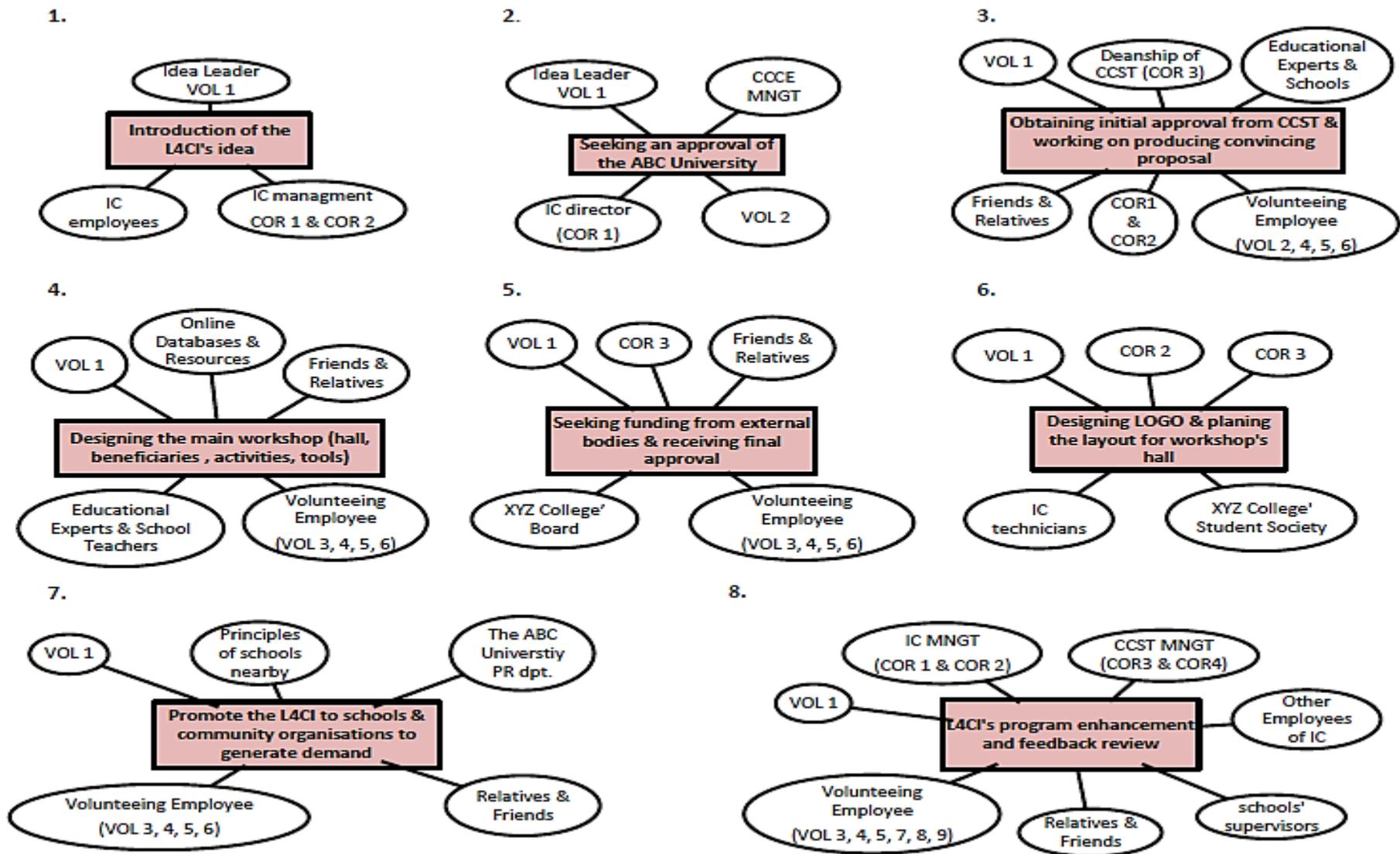
Figure 5-9: Visualisation of Network Engagement (between 2011-2016)

5.3.6. Motivations to volunteer

Interesting findings arose from the analysis of employee motivations to join the L4CI project. In this section, the personal motives of participants are collated and described at the individual and collective levels.

5.3.6.1 *Individual level*

From the start, many found the idea of establishing an EV project to be an attractive notion. Participants described their various motives for joining or becoming engaged in the formation of L4CI.

The personal motivations for joining L4CI varied across the volunteering participants. For instance, participants VOL 6 and VOL 4 linked their motivations to join L4CI with their disturbing view of the Omani education system, which they perceived as lacking effective school libraries, provided limited access to library systems, and the absence of community libraries. Some provided more spiritual reasoning. VOL 5 raised the idea of self-actualisation, whereby they felt their participation would have a positive impact on their lives, while another participant (VOL 9) believed that participation would please Allah (= God) and lead to rewards in the future. Both VOL 4 and VOL 5 highlighted the personal gains from becoming volunteering employees. VOL 4 stated that it offered a "*chance to give for free, to step out of paid work life.*" VOL 5 said it offered the opportunity to feel free from employment control and the need for money, "it was our chance to do something different and break the routine". For many volunteers, the decision to volunteer was first triggered by being asked by VOL 1, which soon escalated the feelings of value

described above for VOL 4, VOL5, VOL 7 and VOL 9. Table [5-5] provides some interesting examples.

Table 5-5: Motives at Individual Level

Participant	Motive	Coded Text (quote)
VOL 1	A life principle	*"This is my life principle that I follow. I feel satisfied and grateful, and I teach my children to engage in such voluntary activities and not to wait for someone to ask them for help nor to thank them for it."*
VOL 5	Create a positive impact	*"The main reason is that I wanted to have a positive impact in my life... even if it is simple...but I wanted to feel happy about myself and satisfied that I took part in delivering a good service to others."*
VOL 7	Join great people	*"...what really attracted my attention more than anything ... the fact it started as a small idea inside the mind of one person; Participant MS, and then inspired everyone around to join the idea establishment process. I am proud and blessed to join this work-place and work next to these great people."*
VOL 8	Break work routine	*"Break the routine and engage in joyful a learning experience that offers our children an opportunity to discover new knowledge. That is my main motive to be part of L4CI."*
VOL 9	Payback of good deeds	*"I believe that if today I did good deeds and helped that in-need or serve my community, tomorrow definitely I will be paid back and I'll find others serving me when I am in need. This life the more you give, the higher it paybacks you. It is a cycle, and it should be a good-deeds cycle."*

5.3.6.2 Collective level

Here, the employees decided to be pro-active instead of re-active and their motivation was more associated with conditions at the political and educational levels. They decided to reach out to school students and teach them about library systems instead of waiting for them to join higher education when, by then, they would lack even a basic understanding of the library system.

Table [5-6] below shows these participant's stories of establishing L4CI. This table offers examples of coded text regarding the motives shared at the collective levels.

Table 5-6: Coded Text on Motives at Collective Level

Participant	Motives	Quotes from interview transcripts
VOL 8	**Activating school libraries**	*"we need to see school librarians here so our message can reach them directly… libraries at schools should become an active hub for our children… they need to learn how they can do that."*
VOL 5	**A core mission of librarians**	*"We saw how it touched us as librarians, we saw this idea as something new but at the same time reflects our mission of librarians."*
VOL 1	**Raise awareness about the importance of libraries**	*"..we acknowledge that western communities are aware of what libraries are and how to deal with the books. In our society, students community is not aware of libraries nor are they ready to use them because reading is not part of their life."*
VOL 4	**The basic role of libraries**	*"why do we follow a library system that blocks people from books… I am so pissed off really … why are our libraries designed to protect the books from people instead of putting the books in their hand…"*
COR 1	**The library is part of children's education**	*"I have studied my PhD in Moscow, Russia and I saw how libraries are merged within communities and the great positive impact this had on encouraging people to read and spend long hours in libraries. When I look at our country, I always feel that people lack this atmosphere. In Oman we need more of these initiatives; that focus on reading, books, children's education. If we want an educated and mature nation, we should facilitate their access to knowledge."*
COR 1	**Encouraging other community services**	*"…. it is a "seeding program" that will help and develop the importance of books and reading to the new generation in Oman. It might be small, but I hope it will encourage others to start similar initiatives."*

The coded texts in the table described participants' evaluation of the problematic situation they have to live with and deal with its impact on their workplace. The employees (especially the librarians) displayed strong views against the educational conditions (particularly the library systems) in Oman. These employees

held the education systems responsible for the unacceptable attitude of many students toward libraries. They argued that the education system does not encourage reading outside of textbooks, and school students were rarely invited or permitted to use school libraries. Moreover, they shared their worries about the lack of public libraries in Oman. These claims found were validated by previous studies that investigated in this area (see Al-Mahrooqi and Denman, 2016; Porcaro, 2014; Al-Seyabi, and Al-Rashdi, 2016; Bouazza and Al-Mufaraji, 2005).

5.3.7. Characteristics of the EV system

This part describes the L4CI as a new unity that has been established to act independently. To develop a systemic view of the EV system, root definition technique from soft systems methodology is employed to construct the L4CI's essential elements. Following the systemic lens [figure 2-1], the system was explored as a whole (recognised unit), and part (a new part within the old whole). Systems concepts specified early [see section 2.3.2] were applied in exploring the EV system from a holistic view. References from the quoted text were demonstrated to describe the L4CI system's components including identity and membership, official positioning and resource allocation, and the hierarchy and communication.

5.3.7.1 *EV System: Identity and Membership:*

In order to capture the nature of the EV system and develop an adequate root definition, all participants were asked the same questions, "Tell me, what is L4CI?" and "How would you introduce L4CI to others?" Participant answers are summarised in Table [5-7]. The root definition technique was employed here to build a systemic view

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of the L4CI system and how participants intended at this stage to respond to the perceived ill-structured situation within their capacity.

Table 5-7: Coded answers about the L4CI identity

Participant	Quotes
VOL 4	*"L4CI is our first well organised community service volunteering act that requires long-term commitment compared to previous one-time charitable activities. The idea came to go against the unacceptable domination of libraries at ABC University."*
VOL 3	*"It's a collection of activities delivered in a workshop by an experienced librarian to school students on various areas related to the library... where students learn about library types, functions, books, copyright, and the importance of reading.... So, the main goal of this initiative is to inform school students about the available resources of information and that reading is a lovely habit they can spend their time on"*
VOL 8	*"I knew for instance that L4CI aims to create awareness among 6-grade school students about libraries and the importance of reading books. It runs a one-day workshop here at the library where they teach those students about library systems, types, functions, services and social roles."*
VOL 5	*"It is a program .... a voluntary program that aims the spread the knowledge about Libraries roles, functions, books and copyright, and the importance of reading as a way of learning... by targeting young generations... so we can have well-educated children and great learning communities who will continue building our country.*
VOL 2	*"We agree on the basic idea that is the need for the library to start providing community services. We started to work on it in a more serious way; we sat down to plan it."*
COR 1	*"this should be pure volunteering act....to me it is a "seeding program" that will help and develop the importance of books and reading to the new generation in Oman. It might be small, but I hope it will encourage others to start similar initiatives."*
COR 3	*"L4CI represents the sum of knowledge and experiences packaged by well qualified professional employees. I think L4CI has created a learning process that they use what they learn to develop their workplace, and vice versa."*

Despite the nobleness attached to their definitions, the root definition of L4CI can be expressed using guidance from Checkland (1981). The root definition according to Avison et al. (1992) is "concise verbal description of the system which captures its

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essential nature" (p. 399). Checkland (1981) suggested that a checklist technique called the CATWOE criteria to be used to identify elements of the root definition. Table [5-8] describes each of the elements comprising the CATWOE technique.

Table 5-8: Element of CATWOE in Soft Systems Methodology

Element of CATWOE	Description
Customers	Who are the victims or beneficiaries of the transformation?
Actors	Who makes the transformation happen?
Transformation	What are the inputs and (transformed) outputs?
Weltanschauung	What makes the transformation meaningful in context?
Owners	Who could stop the transformation process?
Environmental Constraints	Which elements outside the system are taken as given?

Having established from the rich picture [Figure 5-8, section 5.3.4] a description of the problematic situation expressed by a number of participants, a root definition of the EV system could be constructed. The analysis of data provided adequate coded texts to answer the checklist description of the CATWOE element. Table [5-9] summarised these elements and believed to capture the essential nature of the EV system under investigation.

Table 5-9 the CATWOE element of the L4CI system

Element of CATWOE	Description
Customers	All school students who might be enrolled in XYZ College and use the IC library.
Actors	The IC librarians and technicians
Transformation	The need for students' negative attitude to be transformed to meet the acceptable standards of library usage and successful accomplishment of the IC library vision and mission designed to encourage reading
Weltanschauung	Educating school students about the basic knowledge of libraries and the acceptable attitude and behaviour when using them is essential to reduce negative behaviours and encourage reading among them when enrolled in XYZ College.
Owners	Dean of XYZ College and IC director

Environmental Constraints	Financial resources, library hall, and other technical and educational resources specifically required by intended workshops, other general physical and human resources required for the effective learning environment and employee support.

From the above table, the nature of the EV system appears to respond to the problematic situation expressed. Hence, this root definition of the system passed through various development. During the early stages of L4CI genesis, VOL 1 and his colleagues wrote down a detailed list of suggestions and recommendations to present to their direct manager. These findings highlighted that their general ideas at the beginning of L4CI's development were to create a system that functioned as library community service. This is in keeping with the initial mission of L4CI to raise awareness among secondary school students about the importance of libraries, books and reading within the community. It is apparent that the L4CI reflects their opinions of the public right to access, the refusal of restricted access systems within government-owned libraries, and the desire to share their knowledge and expertise.

The project leader, VOL 1, described it as a voluntary program and encouraged his colleagues to consider sharing his ambition. He stated that "it is a volunteering act, one does it with no invitation… it is serving the community… and it is an away-from-routine". He also stated that participation in the project is affiliated with a principle taken directly from the Quran, which states "We feed you for the sake of Allah alone:

no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks"[1], insisting that participation is open to all those who are willing to volunteer and do not expect anything in return. Thus, VOL 1 made it clear to everyone who agreed that community service, reading and learning, and volunteering all set the foundations for the development of L4CI.

Additionally, other participants expressed further added-value ideas, VOL 2 and VOL 8 believed that L4CI provided a transferable knowledge platform, whereby IC librarians could combine their accumulated knowledge and expertise to create a positive impact. Furthermore, VOL 4 declared that L4CI promoted revolutionary ideas that opposed the traditional system. He viewed individuals involved in this process as "*defending the community right to reach books in all government-owned libraries.*" These values were shared by his colleague, VOL 6, who stated:

> "*It reflects the pure goal of establishing any library… I think libraries are not only for higher education students but also for public property. We can have libraries in public places where everyone has the right to use it and read books to learn or to increase general knowledge…that's what a library is for… we should not stop public people from using libraries.*"

Once the team started to negotiate the idea with the IC management, on-going meetings and discussions led to the agreement of voluntary work hours, suitable places and timing. These initial negotiations played a major role in framing the identity of L4CI

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[1] The Nobel Quran (n. d) chapter 76, Sentence 9 in Ali, M. M. (2011), Translation of the Holy Quran. eBookIt. com Store.

at the employee level and influenced how L4CI would fit within the existing University structure. The IC Director (COR 1) described this dialogue:

"I recall that we moved through a number of suggestions, ideas, additions and droppings, modifications. One of the issues that came to my mind at that stage to make it clear to them, that is, this should be a pure volunteering act, it should not clash with working hours, nor neglect our main beneficiaries- the ABC University's faculties and students."

This indicated that COR 1 may have been thinking from the perspective of an individual who wanted to safeguard the original IC system and that his main agenda was to ensure the EV system under establishment was incorporated into the organisational system of the IC in a manner that protected its status. Therefore, COR 1 requested that employees clarify any issues relating to their understanding of "pure volunteering" in terms of workload to ensure a common understanding was reached. It is possible that if this was not agreed upon in the beginning, employees might have wanted to volunteer during their working hours. However, within the interviews, there was no clear indication that this was an expectation of the team. In fact, most of the participants understood that pure volunteering relied on an ultimate free-will to volunteer, with no expectations of invitation or pressure from anyone. Additionally, communication between employees and management led to a formalised agreement that no employee should expect to receive any kind of reward, such as financial payments or time off working hours, should they decide to participant in L4CI. It was agreed that all activities involving the L4CI program were to be carried out outside of ordinary working hours. These findings revealed precise guidelines for employee volunteering that were highlighted by many informants:

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- *"It is a volunteering act... today one is not free to join us, tomorrow he/she is in and ready"* (VOL 2)

- *"No procedures! I just told them I am in"* (VOL 4)

- *"This volunteering act is an open platform for everyone's ideas and suggestions and that their contribution is a personal choice"* (VOL 8)

- *"Those who accept to join should expect no return at all...they should be ready to give from their free time"* (VOL 1)

- *"Should be within employees' area of expertise; that is library system, books, database management, learning and reading."* (VOL 4)

The provision of these guidelines reduced the possibility of conflict between employees and reduced the likelihood of the proposal being declined by the College Board. For the same purpose, the Assistant Dean for CCST at that time (COR 3) put a significant amount of effort into developing the final guidelines and defining what was meant by "community service" with the negotiating team. COR 3 ensured this understanding was in line with the University's official definition of community service, allowing for smoother approval and support from the College Board:

> *"I was using my full capacity when I introduced L4CI as one of the community service initiatives" ... "L4CI represents the sum of knowledge and experiences packaged by well qualified professional employees. I think L4CI has created a learning process that they use what they learn to develop their workplace, and vice versa."*

This statement emphasised that the organisation's community service is centred around an organisational mission formed by the collective experiences of its

employees. In doing so, COR 3 wanted to ensure that the L4CI provided benefits beyond its immediate environment. He stated that all aspects of L4CI and its volunteers must also fulfil the aim of improving the CCST and the overall mission of the university. Therefore, when attempting to reach a mutual definition of community service, he emphasised the need for the service to:

"...come from their own speciality; they are librarians. so, they did not present an idea to do something in an unrelated field. They thought about their own expertise and how they can translate it into a great benefit to society".

The same argument was found with the current CCST (COR 4), who stated: "the ABC University or the XYZ College doesn't need to put itself in opposition to activities that benefit the community and fits well with its ultimate goals and vision".

In concluding this discussion, the final identity of the L4CI was found to represent organisational ideas of community service that argued for the increased responsibility of library staff to provide community development. The community service offered by the library has been perceived as desirable by its hosting organisations, particularly XYZ College and the ABC University. At an individual level, it relies on the employee's professional identity as librarians and technicians to apply their expertise and knowledge. By harnessing the varied motivations of volunteers, an overall L4CI 'identity' was guaranteed. This L4CI identity relied on the following core principles:

- A library-based community service, owned by the IC, under the direction of CCST at XYZ College, and funded by external bodies

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- A voluntary initiative run by IC's employees who are willing to volunteer their expertise outside of ordinary work hours

- Aims to (1) increase awareness among various community groups about libraries role, book, and encourage reading, and (2) act as a knowledge transfer platform that allows employees to exchange their knowledge and expertise

- In the long run, will promote the opening of all government-owned libraries to all

- No formal meetings and membership are kept open to anyone who can volunteer.

5.3.7.2 *EV system: Boundary and Resources Allocation*

The positioning of L4CI in relation to IC and CCST eventually rested on formal arrangements where each unit defined its position from the EV project and from each other.

The CCST: Responsible for internal and external communication, media coverage and representation, and connection with potential org. and groups.

L4CI

The volunteering employees manage internally their activities, program design, role and resource allocation, and overall development

The IC: Safeguards smooth implementation of L4CI's activities by ensuring minimum negative impacts on IC's functions and services quality

Figure 5-10: The EV project positioning between the CCST and IC

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The boundary concept serves to concentrate interactions inside the system while allowing exchange with external systems (Hoagland, Dodson, and Mauck 2001). Figure [5-10] demonstrates the current positioning of L4CI within the two authorities and its arrangement of responsibilities. Officially, the IC is responsible for the maintenance of L4CI's proper functioning and for ensuring the quality of its services for IC users and employees. Thus, they perform direct supervision and review of the implementation and delivery of indoor workshops and event to ensure no negative impact on IC's functions and services quality. For example, management ensures events and workshop activities are run without disturbing other library users. They also ensure L4CI does not prevent employees from fulfilling their paid job tasks. COR 1, the director of IC, shared one example of such an incident early on in the EV project:

"I do recall one incident. I was going around, and I did notice extra movement as the kids perform one of the workshop tasks. After the closing of the workshop, I spoke to [VOL 1] and [VOL 2] about it and the need to educate the young students about being quiet inside the library. After all, this is what L4CI is all about. This was my point, and they were pleased to hear it."

The L4CI is positioned under the Assistant Dean of CCST. This position facilitates its communication with internal and external bodies besides reviewing development and project progress. The previous Dean of CCST (COR 3) explained:

"So, our role starts with giving permission to internal and external communications, and we do not give permission unless we are convinced. We gave them permission to go ahead, and we also helped them to communicate with outsiders and insiders because I needed to write letters to the various

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parts inside SQU to spread the idea. We helped them to get sponsorship which

was the main challenge at that time also. We also help them connect with

other organisations and facilitate the meetings and discussion between

them."

According to Churchman (1968) resources represent the means that the system uses to reach it's objective and are located under the control of the system. The allocation of resources for the EV project has contributed to its establishment and sustainability. Internally, the L4CI receives physical and logistical support from the College, such as an appropriate hall to run the programs, internet and local network access, and full installation of computer and media systems. Additionally, the College agreed to provide breakfast meals for visiting school children. For these major operation expenses, the L4CI receives funds from an external sponsor annually.

5.3.7.3   *EV system: Hierarchy and Communication (internal/external)*

The concept of hierarchy suggests that a system is always part of a larger system (Churchman, 1968). Within the EV project, the employees apply open-space communication. All internal communications were structured in a way to smoothen the interactions between the new EV system and its environment. They take advantage of coffee breaks to discuss program development, review recommendations and brainstorm new ideas. Communications with internal and external bodies is conducted through the CCST. This helps maintain accountability away from volunteers while also eliminating the chances of access to power. Lastly, L4CI reports its activities and provides updates to the CCST and IC management. All the communication is carried by

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the EV project leader (VOL 1), who is considered by all informants as the representative of the project at the official level.

5.4   Part two: Second-Order Analysis

Adopting Gioia et al. (2013)guidelines for grouping basic themes into concepts, tentative relationships have already emerged from the interview data. This was achieved through a second-order analysis. In addition, a directed analysis of the influence of volunteerism is discussed to reveal interrelationships between the factors that influence volunteerism as group behaviour. The analysis of data in the first and second round of analysis was done with reference to the systemic lens provided in chapter two [Figure 2-2]. In that, three levels of analysis were created; the EV project (system level), institutional level (parental systems), and external level (environment systems). All emergent and pre-determined themes coded in these three levels were crossed referenced.

To facilitate the analytical process, all interview transcripts were uploaded to the Nvivo Pro with data analysis constructed according to the software's guidelines. Two rounds of analysis were applied at this stage. The first round of analytical processing was conducted through a matrix analysis of themes according to its level (external, institutional, and EV project). In the second round of analysis, the resulting concepts of each matrix were cross-referenced again for more aggregation. The process and results of each round at this stage are detailed throughout this chapter.

5.4.1. The process of first-round of analysis

In the first round of analysis, to find interrelations and influencing factors. Matrix coding queries in Nvivo compared coded (i.e. anonymous) material across nodes, search folders and set attribute values. The matrix difference is for searching nodes against others. To accomplish this task, nodes need to be relatively large passages for effective subtraction of coded texts. Importantly, resulting cells only indicate if two nodes share subtracted texts from various sources. Therefore, careful inspection of each cell is necessary to confirm links between nodes, to suggest a relationship between different themes, and to determine whether an issue is a majority or minority view.

5.4.2. Results

For the purpose of exploring influences on the EV group, all nodes were allocated to an external level, an institutional level or the EV group level, before they could be cross-sectioned with two in each query. The results demonstrated links between external and institutional themes, external and EV group themes, and institutional and EV group themes. The results from the matrix analyses are displayed in tables as well as in chart view for further examination. The focus is directed toward those relationships demonstrated between external and institutional groups to the EV group. This focus is recovered to uncover those themes that influenced the EV system. In the following section, the results of each matrix query are presented and discussed.

5.4.2.1.1 External level themes–institutional level themes matrix query

After excluding cells that suggested no shared concepts, clear links were found between external themes and institutional themes [Figure 5-11]. We should note that universities and academic libraries (as in this case study) are intimately linked with various political, social and educational systems and can, therefore, be influenced by changes at any of these levels. Although reference analysis was low in this area [Figure 5-2, section 5.2.2], it is likely that negative perceptions of external conditions have a high association with how participants interpreted the possible influence of these factors on their working life.

For example, one prominent issue existing in the participants' workplace—disrespectful student behaviour—was believed to be caused by external conditions. Namely, schooling approaches. The problem of the unacceptable noise level and disrespectful behaviour of college students appeared to be a long-term problem facing the IC and its librarians. The matrix query found a strong association between this issue and (1) the approach to education at school or college, and (2) the lack of public libraries. Passive teaching approaches were associated with low reading rates among students and poor levels of book borrowing. Moreover, college students were not encouraged to read outside their modules' textbooks.

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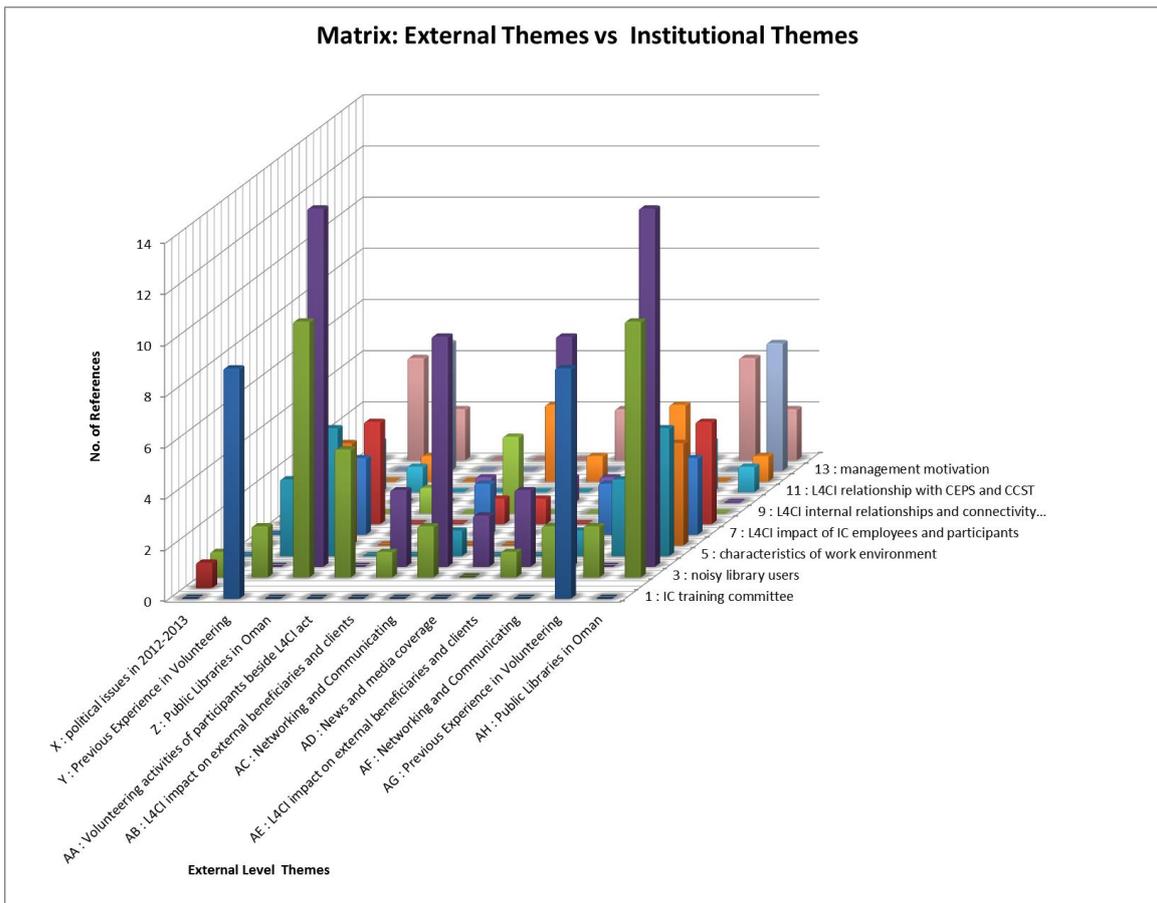
Figure 5-11: Matrix query to show a link between External and Institutional Themes

Matrix analyses demonstrated negative perceptions among participants of ABC University library's lack of community services. The fact that the University's libraries receive substantial government funds add more weight to the participants' desire to see the libraries open their doors to the public and offer community services. Currently, these libraries offer controlled access to its buildings, where users must be registered as a higher education student or researcher. Below, [Table 5-10] provides insight into the main connecting issues linking external themes with institutional themes based on participants' perceptions and beliefs along with evidence from coded texts.

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Institutional issue	Perceptions/ Beliefs	Evidence
Noisy library users	School students are not aware of libraries systems because of inexperience with school libraries	VOL 6: *"… toward the miserable situation of our school students who join higher education with no adequate knowledge about libraries… moreover, suffer from a lack of free reading as a daily habit. I mean school students need to know how libraries play a major role in increasing their awareness and prepare them for the next phase of secondary education."*
The low book borrowing rate	College students are not encouraged by lecturers to read outside textbooks	VOL 4: *"As librarians, we are against the use of textbooks for each module… It costs the college huge financial resources and reduces the student's desire to search for information… A lot of them graduate without reading anything besides these textbooks!… this is not a school… It is a college… We need to stop this spoon-feeding teaching* (passive teaching style)*… This is shameful and academic faculties should rethink about this seriously…"*
Access to the University's libraries is restricted to its students	Community members should enjoy full access to government-funded libraries including the University's academic libraries	VOL 6: *"The University should rethink about this seriously when we consider the huge budget allocated for its libraries yearly… Its libraries must open its door to all people…"* VOL 7: *"As a specialised academic library, we were not allowed to welcome young age from school students."* VOL4: *"… Why we follow library system that blocks people from books… I am so pissed off really … Why our libraries are designed to protect the books from people instead of putting the books in their hand…"*

To summarise the above arguments, Figure [5-12] aims to map the relationship between the factors identified in external and institutional themes.
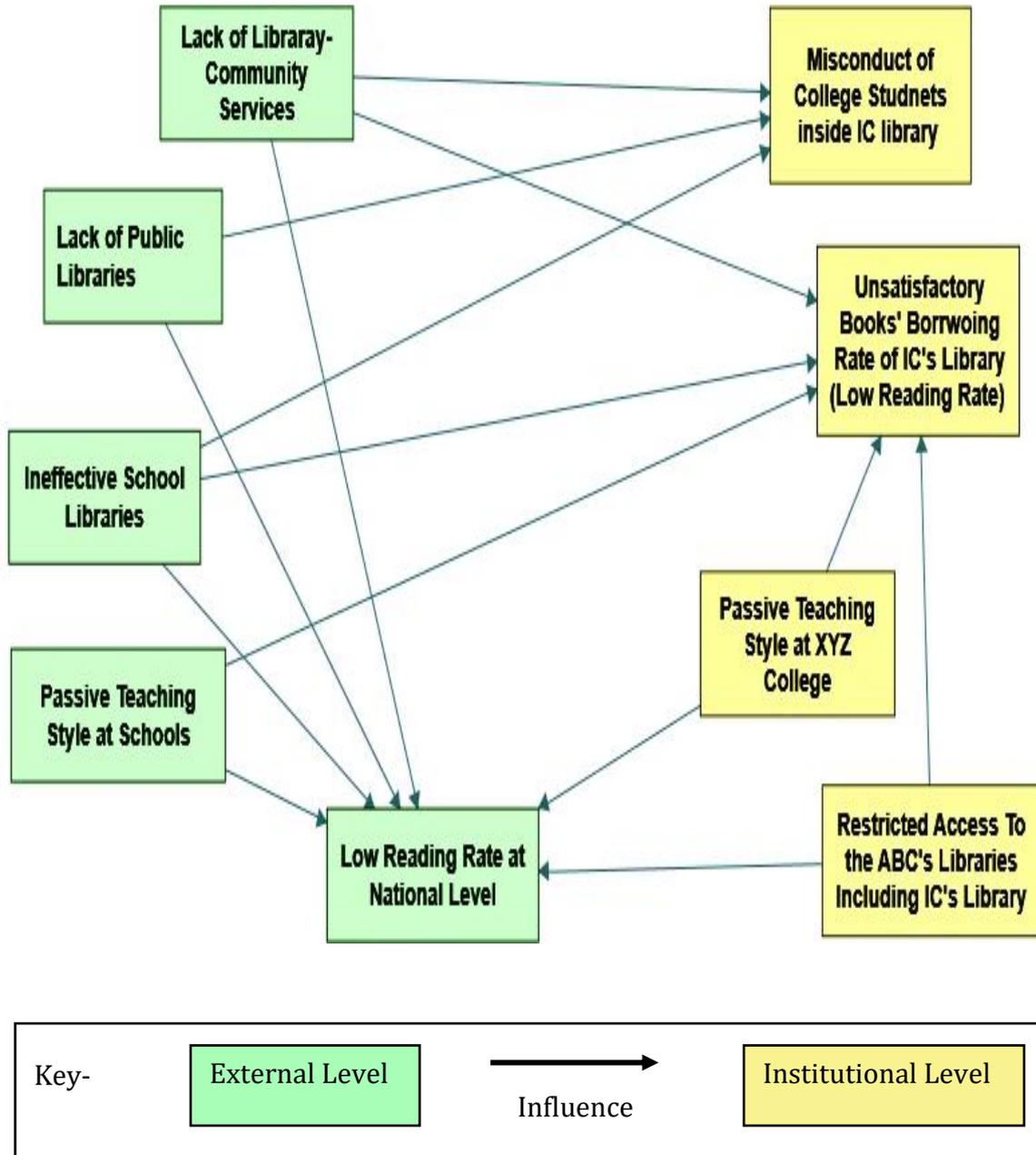
Figure 5-12: Matrix analysis of factors derived from External-Institutional themes

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5.4.2.1.2 EV group level themes - external themes matrix query

Exploring major influences on the EV group from its environment, Figure [5-13] presents the major results when nodes from external themes are cross-sectioned with EV group themes.
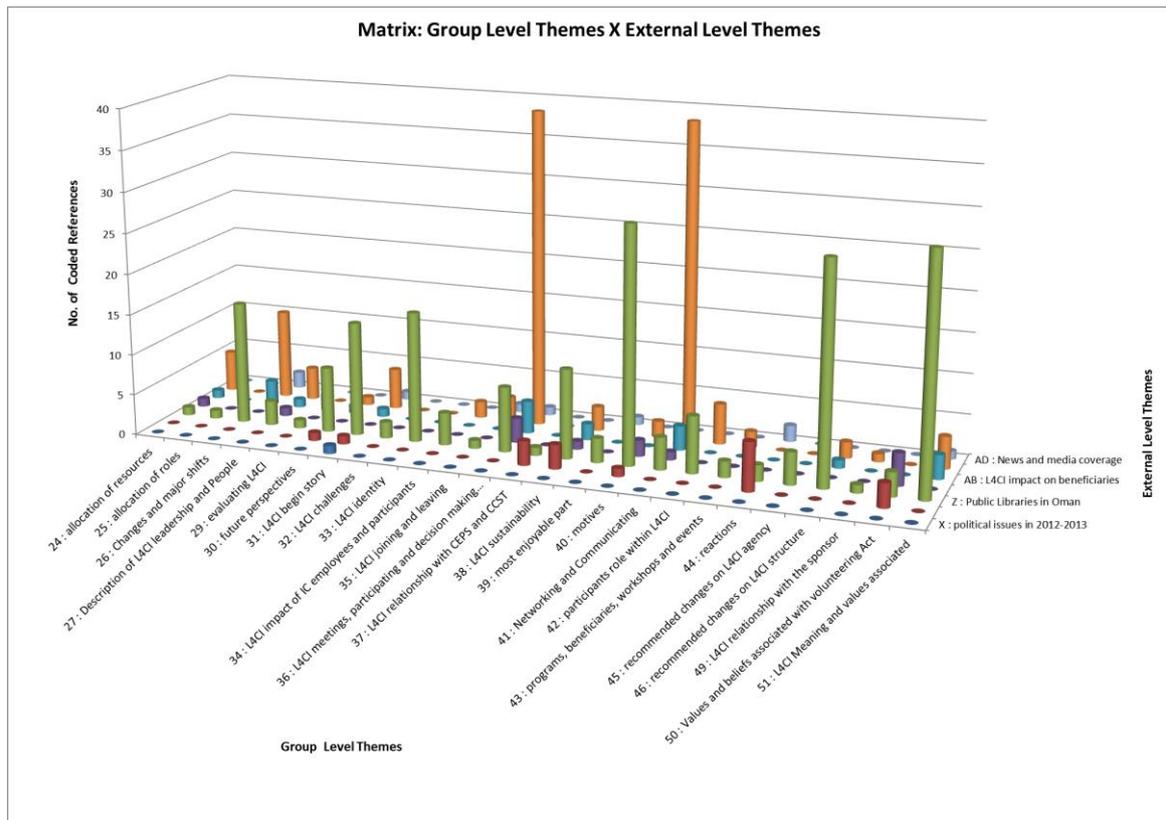
*Figure 5-13 Matrix query of Group themes - external themes*

Deep examination of these cells suggested that participants' perceptions and motivations were highly influenced by conditions related to libraries and the schooling system in Oman. Moreover, political events during 2011-13 are proposed to have sparked a need to act. Table [5-11] summarises these external influences and provides evidence from coded references:

Table 5-11 External influences on participants' perceptions and motivations

External conditions /events	Participants perceptions/ beliefs	Evidence
Schooling system	• Schools offer a poor environment for reading	**VOL 4:** *"They (school students) might finish schooling without visiting their school library even for once!"*
	• School libraries are inactive and inefficient	**COR1**: *"They [the volunteering employees] told me they want us to play a role in raising awareness among school students. I myself have conducted many lectures in schools about the need to activate the school libraries, but still, I do not know what holds our schools back!"*
	• Students are not aware of the importance of libraries and the benefits of reading	**VOL 1:** *"In our society, students' community is not aware of libraries nor are they ready to use them because reading is not part of their school life."*
Library system	• Shortage of public library	**VOL 6:** *"In Oman let's be very honest there are no public libraries, only the academic specialised libraries..."*
	• Lack of community-library programs	**VOL 7:** *"... There are no well-known public libraries at the Sultanate level to hold such initiative-community Services-, in fact... I feel proud of our library because we do have L4CI."*
	• Law reading rate among people	**COR1**: *"In Oman, there are no public libraries, no place for families to set and enjoy reading."*
	• The community should enjoy full access to books especially in government-funded libraries	**COR1:** *"After all, it is a commonwealth, The University got a huge budget from the government, so it is people's money, and all citizens in Oman have the right to use the University's libraries."*
	• Controlled access to academic libraries (public/ private)	**VOL** 4: *"to me, this has blocked the society from their right to use these libraries if we consider that it is funded by the government; the people money."*
Political events	• Social demands during 2012-13 for reform witnessed massive strikes and demonstrations	**VOL1:** *"In that first year, we faced many problems; you remember the teachers strike that many schools underwent in 2013. This was one of the problems that constrained our progress."*

One of the interesting findings that arose from cross-referencing these themes was the fact that most active volunteering employees held previous histories of independent voluntary work (external to the University) [Table 5-12]. This external voluntary experience allowed the participants to embed core principles of volunteerism into the newly formed L4CI. More findings to support this conclusion are provided as the analysis progresses in this chapter.

Table 5-12: Participants' independent volunteering experiences and its influence on the EV project

Causes of previous volunteering activity	Evidence
Natural Disasters	**VOL1**: *"I always volunteer here inside the university or outside it; actually, I did a lot of volunteering activities before I initiated L4CI. I do remember in the Gono storm (referring to big storm and flooding happened in 2006), I was a leader in one of the rescue teams."* **VOL 9**: *"…as you know rains, and seasonal floods usually ruin these canals and also damage streets. These unexpected rains and floods can drag trees, throw big woods and move big soils into the streets. A car driver visiting the village can be endangered by unexpected natural blocks located in the middle of the only street that leads to the village. A lot of car accidents result in casualties happening if no one acts. There was a death tragedy just one month ago because of this. So, what we used to do me and my relatives and friends; is we take our parent's big car, shawls and invite foreigners who work on our farms. We call all available guys in the village."*
Religious Causes	**VOL 1:** *"…if someone has Zakah or Sadaqah they directly deposit it into my account and call me to donate it on behalf of them to charities and community development programs."*

Health Causes	*VOL 3:* "*I have a handicap sister, and I was responsible and taking care of her all the time ...I used to participate in their camps, taking her to various workshops and training programs... this has seeded the volunteering inside me. So I have been engaged with volunteering by being connected with charitable organizations and groups, and that earned me an adequate experience in this area.*" *VOL 1:* "*I am appointed by my family to be responsible for my handicapped brother. So, it is like everyone around me knows that I am capable always to volunteer and to put the effort into good things.*"
Community Development	*VOL 9:* "*For instance, in our village, I with a group of friends and relatives participated in a yearly activity called the "falaj service" which means that all males come together to clean and maintain underground and surface water canals that are used to irrigate the farms. We clean these canals from rubbish and soil that can block the flow of water.*" *VOL 9*: "*...another thing that we used to do also is tree planting. We tend to plant trees whenever we see water resources. Such as, we planted a palm tree next to each mosque, so the water that is used for ablution is not wasted. We direct it to irrigate a new tree.*" *VOL 6:* "*I always volunteered when my school used to organise a full day for cleaning and tree planting. I was also a member of a local sports team, and we regularly organised volunteering activities where we go to clean mosques and neighbours.*"
Educational Causes	*VOL 7:* " *I was a member of the student group, and I was a deputy head of the group. I also worked as a coordinator. It was called "The Library group". This group was also serving society. We have conducted many volunteering activities inside and outside the university... such as The Arab's Orphan Day... I remember we participated in this event that was located at Qurum Park. I do remember exactly what we have done there and also; we gave some gifts to families and kids. Our aim was also to increase the awareness of parents about their children's need to be connected to libraries.*" *VOL 8:* "*I was a member of a student society called "Library Group" back when I was a student, and we did a lot of volunteering activities related to libraries and reading.*"

At the employee level, themes emerged that revealed many participants volunteered for various different causes. Moreover, interviews uncovered that the IC employees with a history of volunteering activities for different causes were those that consistently took on the main tasks within the L4CI system. As a consequence, they were termed the volunteering "doers". Sifting through the themes revealed various types of volunteering areas; religious, health, weather emergencies, and community development. In the case of the religious causes, VOL 1 had always been known among his family and friends as a charity collector for both *Zakah* and *Sadaqah*[2] as part of his own personal religious practices. Moreover, regarding weather emergency volunteering, VOL 1 and VOL 9 had previous experience in helping people during weather crises. Due to health reasons, VOL 1 was appointed by his family to be responsible for his handicapped brother. Additionally, VOL 3 described himself as the guardian for his handicapped sister from a young age.

The participants as individual volunteers also contributed towards the community development. For example, VOL 9 explained that he previously participated in the annual cleaning and maintaining of the Falaj[3] with his friends and

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[2] *Zakah* and *Sadaqah* are both considered religious worship practices and are used to declare poor people's rights on rich people's income. The *Zakah* is an annual compulsory giving of a set proportion of one's wealth to charity. It is regarded as a type of worship and of self-purification as well as the third Pillar of Islam. The *Sadaqah* can be translated to benevolence and is the wider umbrella of charity functions. For further reading on this topic, see Atia, M. (2011), "Islamic approaches to development: A case study of Zakat, Sadaqa and Qurd al Hassan in Contemporary Egypt," *8th International Conference on Islamic Economics and Finance, Center for Islamic Economics and Finance, Qatar Faculty of Islamic Studies, Qatar Foundation*.

[3] Falaj: is Arabic word for water channels and represent an irrigation system in Oman may date back to AD 500. For more information, check: "Aflaj Irrigation Systems of Oman". UNESCO. http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1207/ ; Retrieved 05/09/2016.

neighbours. This involved cleaning roads after seasonal floods in his small village and to "plant a tree whenever we see water resources". VOL 4 shared his volunteering experiences in his village and described how he was put in charge of a small sports group that organised and participated in various sporting and social programs. Furthermore, the two female participants (VOL 7 and VOL 8) were found to have a history of community development volunteerism. In addition, these two new librarians expressed their readiness and willingness to volunteer for L4CI in the same month as they joined the IC. They both gained experience in volunteering when they were studying for their Baccalaureate degrees at the Art College in Library Science. Overall, it is arguable that carrying previous experience in various independent volunteering activities could impact core principles of volunteerism within the new project by emphasising participation on the EV project to be a personal decision, purely voluntary, unpaid, and performed outside working hours.

Furthermore, to be able to build a convincing case for their EV project, participants demonstrated self-motivated networking efforts. They worked closely with various external players for diverse purposes. The engagement of these external agents influenced major decisions regarding the internal structure, operations, and promotion of the EV system. This was achieved through "*field survey and consultation*" (VOL 6). VOL5 described how they networked with available sources during the initial stages:

> "*We started a process of collecting data from all available resources;*
> *teachers and professionals, friends and relatives, and those who are friends*
> *to our relatives, and practitioners. We wanted to know the best age group*
> *regarding receiving, understanding, and processing information. Also, we*

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wanted to get advice on what is the best way to deliver any information…

You know… the proper teaching style gets students' attention."

More evidence from coded references demonstrated how networking with external agents influenced L4CI progress and development [Table 5-13].

Table 5-13 Influence of networking with external agents

External Agents	Purpose of Contact /Area of Influence	Evidence
Specialised Associations and Private Enterprises	• Looking for support and sponsorship	**VOL 1:** *"I tried to gain the support of Oman Librarian Association (OLA) when I first initiate my idea, but I got no response."* **VOL 3**: *"The team members tried to contact all whom they know in various big companies… However, no one believed in our idea… It was a very tough market when we were compared with those well-establish charitable and community organisations."*
Educational Consultants and Experts at the Ministry of Education	• Deciding about the appropriate target, age group, workshop design, and activities' selection	**VOL 5:** *"That is why my first idea was to target secondary school students. ……. however, later on, when we started to collect more information, talk with various stakeholders and professional groups, we came to know that students the at the 4th and 5th grade are the one who is more suitable to our mission."* **VO 3:** *"The team has developed a feedback mechanism since its start, where schools' supervisor was encouraged to answer a short questionnaire. ……… These questionnaires were of immense help to us… We received many comments and suggestions that we could implement and enhance our workshop's activities."*

Online database and Previous Studies	• Collecting evidence to develop a strong proposal • Decide on age group and suitable activities	*VOL 5: "No one had recommended us to start with teenagers!... so, I begun to read on the internet about this. I recall myself searching for hours about this issue to reach a convincing conclusion. I remember one day… I had an evening shift… So I remember sitting there at the student service desk searching for answers that can convince me that a secondary school student is an inappropriate target…"*
Schools administrations and Students Supervisors	• Promoting the L4CI program and invitation • Timings and duration of the workshops	*VOL 1: "At the beginning, we faced the lack of telephone numbers of schools that pushed us to visit them in person to sell ourselves. This was solved when the ministry of education sends an announcement to all educational directorates, and we started to receive calls from schools interested."* *COR 4: "well the only obstacle is with the school timing … Visiting groups have insufficient time… When the bus arrives late or when they need to leave early due to the fact some schools are located far away… Workshops in these circumstances are shortened, and some activate are terminated."*
Various Community Groups	• Offer outdoor workshops for various community groups based on their needs	*VOL 3: "VOL 2 … he used to be an active member during the process of establishing L4CI before he left the University for new job… He called us to ask us if we can organise a workshop for Al-Hamra's community library… It is a 3-hour drive from here."* *VOL 4: "L4CI started to organise other events with modified workshops to serve new segments, all children, such as Children with special needs, and Orphans."*

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News Media and Social Media platforms	• Promoting and marketing programs to gain recognition, attract support, ensure constant support	VOL 4: "the leader- VOL1- try hard to send our news to SQU media department, actually the SQU have made a short introductory video about L4CI and we use it all the time in our exhibitions. There have been many interviews on local TV and Radio where our direct manager accepted our request to represent L4CI." **VOL 3:** "I am following more than 100 accounts related to reading… This connectivity serves me to get inspired with new ideas… Whenever I came through creative ideas in reading, I start to think about how we can take it, customise it to our needs and capacity, and implement it successfully…"
Relatives and Friends	• Consultation, and proofreading publications, printing, before distribution	**VOL1:** "I was passing it -the workshop booklet- to everyone I know, there was also a librarian at the Medical Library…., we also took it to an Arabic teacher to proofreading it – a wife of our colleague ……… In the end, we made it to Mr X– a colleague- who worked on printing it like that." **VOL1**: "I did once buy a collection of short books and gave it to our colleague Mr A, asking him to pass it to his wife… She is a teacher. She can provide us with valuable feedback on books of educational benefit to children. I wanted to make sure that our books will have a positive impact on our students learning and life before I order a huge bulk and spend lots of money."

The following diagram [Figure 5-14] summarises the external influencers and their area of impact on the EV project. Most of these areas fall within the formation of the EV project's internal components and thus influence the structure of L4CI's operations.

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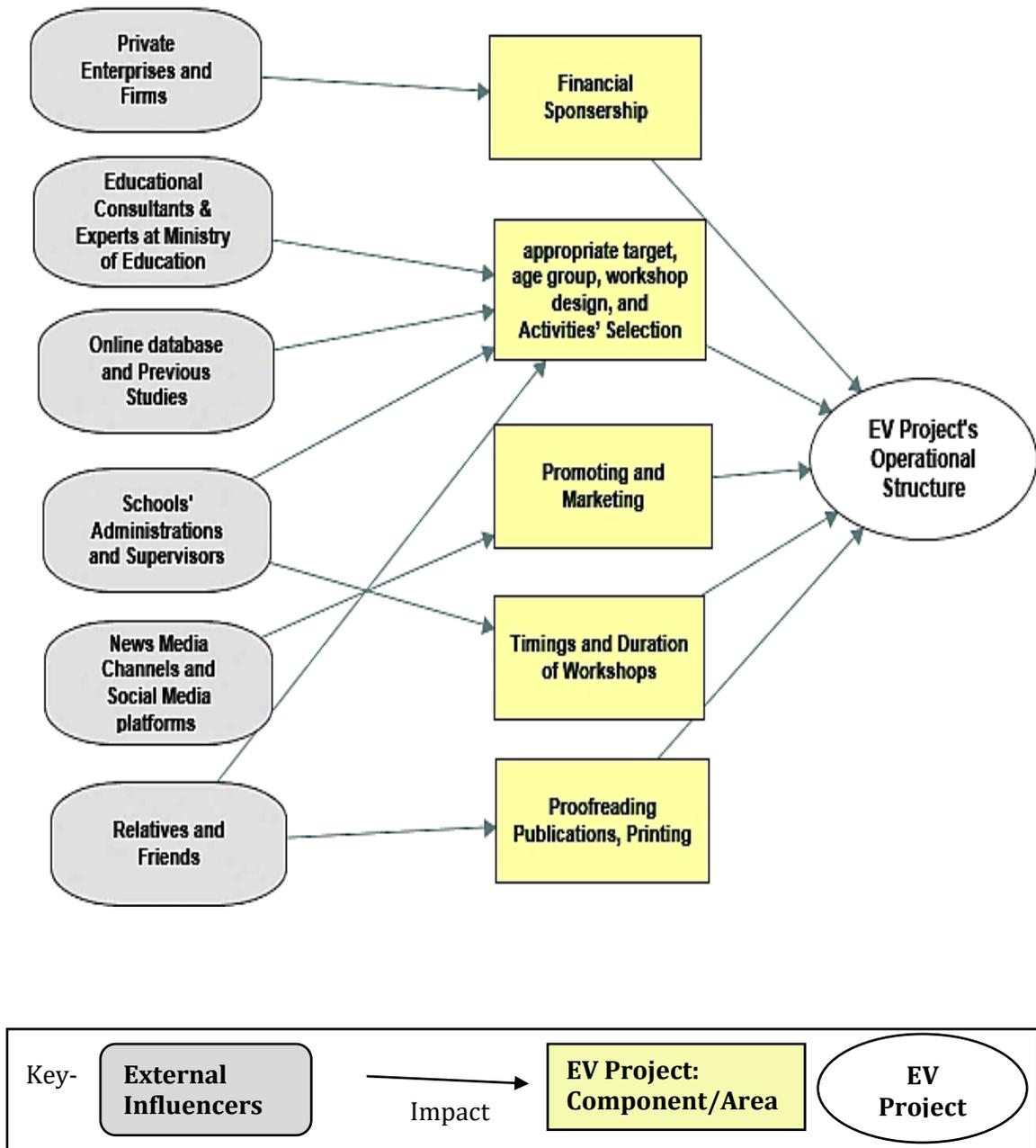
Figure 5-14: Key external influencers on the development of the EV project at operational level

5.4.2.1.3   Institutional-EV group matrix query

The primary aim of this matrix query was to explore the influence of the EV group's hosting systems (consisting of the University, the College's Board, CCST and IC) on the EV group itself. The matrix analysis results are presented in Figure [5-15].
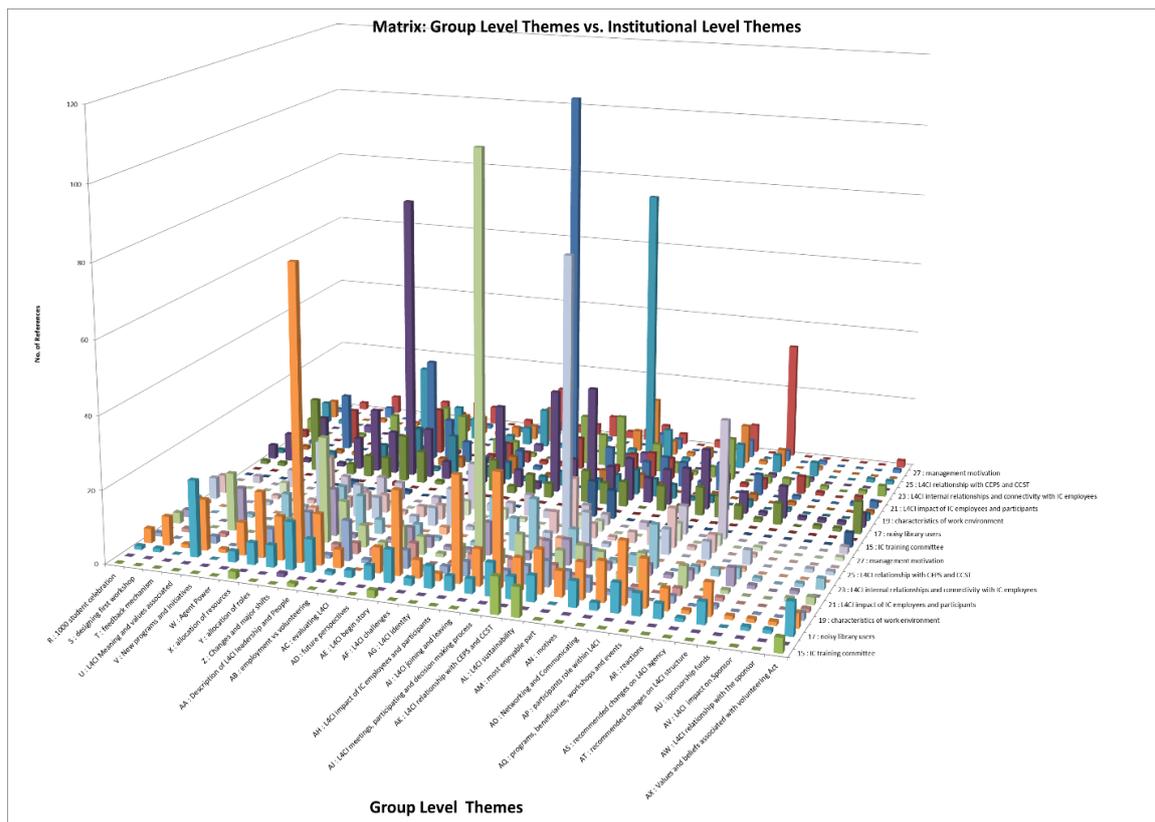
Figure 5-15: Matrix query of group themes-institutional themes

To determine the institutional factors that influenced the EV group, cells with shared contents were scrutinised. Conditions inside the IC buildings were found to be referenced heavily in the matrix. These included the work environment, work culture, employees' charitable functions and volunteering experience. The cross-coded references described an impressive teamwork environment on one end and a burn-out work routine on the other end. Stories also provided an adequate description of the physical nature of the workplace.

The participants overall agreed on the presence of healthy relationships between IC employees. This is evidently found in their personal attachment, willingness to exchange love, respect and care. The team readily provided other

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members advice or help and overcame unnecessary sensitivities. Both VOL 2 and COR 3 (who have left their work at the College) confirmed the positive IC's teamwork characteristics. They said IC members "are prepared as a team to work together" (COR 3) and that it represented the "best workplace that I miss so much now" (VOL 2). Their strong connection appears in them as a group. VOL 4 reminisced about travelling "to various places together around Oman and outside Oman". These trips offered the Information Centre (IC)'s employees the chance to socialise together and "return with new ideas" (COR1).

It appears that the spirit of being "one big family" has worked to reduce the potential negative impacts of "killing routine" (VOL 5). The IC employees complained about their previously repetitive, boring work nature of library work and lack of opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and share their accumulative expertise. Thus, they filled their work life with various volunteering acts that are discussed in the next section.

As for the place of work, it is condensed into one average size building with two floors. This increased the likelihood of daily interaction, facilitating discussions about work and other personal issues, strengthening the relationship between them. They all "share one kitchen and rest area" (VOL 2) and this place appears to provide a vital platform for all IC employees, even though no IC or CCST management-level participants mentioned this.

Table [5-14] summarised evidence of institutional conditions and their influence on EV groups.

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Table 5-14: Institutional conditions are heavily referenced to influence the EV group

Institutional atmosphere	Characteristics	Evidence
Work environment	Boring work routine	*VOL 7: "Honestly, I feel if there were no volunteering program, we would be so tired. The L4CI helped us to break the boring work routine."* *VOL 5: "Working in libraries is extremely boring, and the work nature follows a killing routine. There's nothing that can bring pleasures or engage the employees in a joyful experience."*
	The short budget for training opportunities, creativity, and career development	*VOL 4: "we were in urgent need of something different to rescue us from this killing routine… We have accumulated experience in libraries and database that we were not offered the chance to present it to any. Another thing…. All this knowledge… no one cared about… No one was given the opportunity to show one's expertise…"*
	The constant struggle with disrespectable behaviour from library users (college students)	*VOL 5: "I worked in the library's help desk for more than ten years when I fed up with students'' troubles and felt that I need to work on something different."* *COR 1: "When I came, the main problem was that the library suffers a noisy environment and the employees were so stressful with this situation. The Centre, to be honest, was an uncomfortable place for its users and librarians."*
Work Culture	Interactive workplace	*VOL 2: "because all employees are sharing the same facilities and kitchen, we were meeting every day at various times of the day. We all have the chance to know each other job duties, ideas, and problems and discuss various issues related to work life as well as the social one. These discussions and our daily dialogue about our job details and challenges tend to present to us the opportunities on how to improve our work-place inside the information centre IC."*

	Strong teamwork and positive interpersonal relationships	*VOL 1: "It is about a group of charming people who trust each other, understand each other limit…"* *VOL 7: "They are great listeners and always try to get us into discussions before taking any decisions."* *VOL 3: "Here we are like one big family. We interact like brothers and sisters…when you ask someone to help you… they are so honest in their answers… if they can help, they will do so… if they cannot they will say so… there are no sensitivities between us …we learn to be honest, clear and truthful."*
	Organize external social activities and group trips	*VOL 4: "…we have been to various places together around Oman and outside Oman…we organise these trips on a regular basis…it makes us so connected with each other … these trips have created kind of family bond… some of these trips can last 2 to 3 days… we enjoy camping during the winter" … "As males, we are meeting outside work time over coffee, or we go watch a movie, and on many occasions, we go shopping."* *COR1: "They usually organise trips together, they go camping all the time and return with new ideas … This push toward creating a work culture where everyone cares about each other and ready to cover extra duties that might be needed when someone has urgent leave."*
	Perform and encourage charitable functions and volunteering.	*VOL 5: "We have done many charities works. For example, we collect donations whenever we come to know that there's someone in-need for help. I am not sure if that also counts as a charity but when anyone is blessed with a new baby, undergoing tragic loss death of a relative, or celebrating marriage, the group call for donations to buy gifts or give financial support."* *VOL 2: "…we tend to collectively donate money for worthy causes whenever we hear about a family going in critical conditions. So, for instance when someone comes to know about an employee at the University who suffer severe living conditions, we directly make a box, and that box goes around to everyone who donates to help… We also once have fixed old PC been cancelled by ICs and offered it for free for needy students."*

Overall, the following network theme analysis [Figure 5-16] summarises the characteristics of the work environment and culture at the institutional and employee levels.
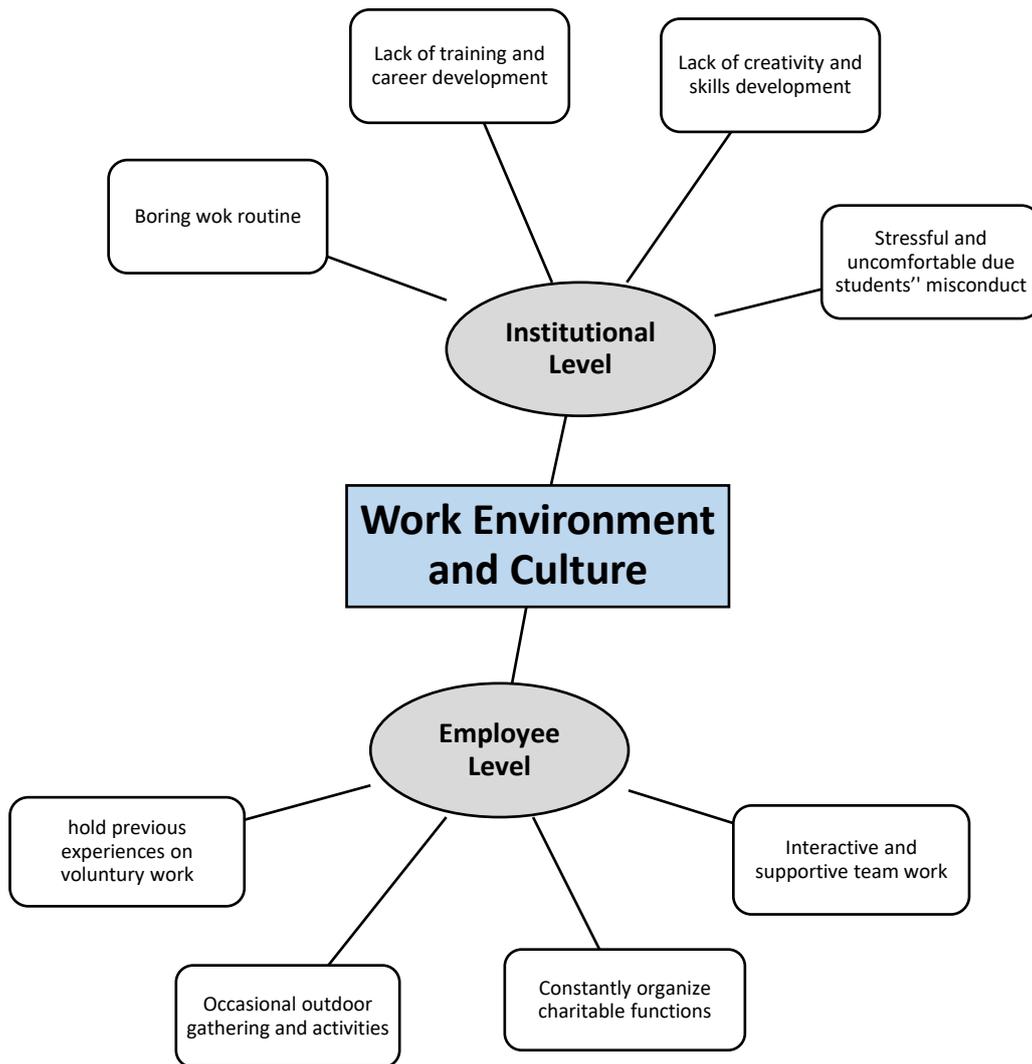

Figure 5-16: Thematic network of work environment at the Institutional and employee levels

Perhaps unsurprisingly, major institutional events were found to have played a significant role in shaping the EV group's activities and internal decisions. These findings suggest that changes to IC management, the ongoing struggle with the noise level and irresponsible actions of library users, the dissolution of the informal IC training committee, and the openness of the CCST were all major influences on the IC employees prior to the establishment of the EV project. For example, in 2006 COR 1 was appointed as the new IC Director. His management approach demonstrated a focus on problem-solving and close communication with IC employees. He worked closely with the librarians and technicians to introduce new strategies to tackle the unacceptable noise and behavioural problems of library users. These strategies included a complete interior redesign of the library hall and help desk. The work on this new interior designed was completed in 2010. During this time, more power was granted to library staff to minimise conflict with disruptive students. This included the introduction of a 3-stage warning card, temporary account suspensions, ID withdrawals and the risk of immediate eviction from the library.

The crossed nodes also highlighted the case of the now-defunct informal IC committee that was established to provide training and international internship opportunities for IC employees. VOL 1 and VOL 2 headed the committee and successfully managed to secure affordable or cost-free training opportunities for all IC employees within its first three months. In 2011, the committee was terminated by the College due to pressure from the College's HR administration. VOL 1 and VOL 2 interpret the increase of administrative procedures and conditions as a sign of the HR department's discomfort with this informal committee "crossing the line of responsibility". However, one of the major events that pushed toward the actual

establishment of the EV project was the opening of the CCST under the management of COR 3. His long-term interactional relationship with IC employees and authority as the new Assistant Dean for CCST enabled his close working with VOL 1 that provided the necessary validation and approval to establish the EV project formally. Table [5-15] describes these events, the nature of their influence on the EV project story along with evidence from coded texts.

Table 5-15 Institutional Events Influence on EV Group

Institutional Events	Influence on EV Group	Evidence (Quotes)
The appointment of a new director for the Information Centre (IC) in (2006)	Introduction of a new management approach where direct communication is open between management and employees, more formal meetings focused on discussing and solving problems.	***VOL 4:*** *"our previous manager was very good as a leader who listens and supports…anyway…. What I want to say … Although both managers are good regarding leadership… I would be honest… The previous one was from those who wait for his employees' suggestions… He lacks being initiative… However, the current manager –(COR1) is more dynamic, and from the start, he is a motivator and initiator in a participatory way."* ***VOL 6:*** *"the current manager (COR1) has always been keeping us in a problem-solving mood… If he sees something, he calls for a meeting, and we discuss it frankly and end up with a solution that fits everyone…"*

Establishment of IC informal Training Committee (terminated in 2011)	Found to tackle the short of budget allocated for training. The establishment of the informal committee successfully had secured many low-cost training opportunities for all IC employees in a matter of 3 years. The committee was terminated due to an unexpected rise of sensitivity and increased complications from the College's HR administration.	**VOL 6:** *"The continuous dialogue on the need to promote on-job development and training and examining the challenges that stop employees from getting appropriate career and skills development, we initiated a team for such purpose. We called it "Training Committee", targeting the career development of the IC's employees (technicians and librarians). The main reason behind this is that the training budget allocated for the IC employees is part of the College's total allowance. Each employee has to wait 4 to 6 years to deserve training of any type."* **VOL2**: *"The committee stopped in 2011, There was internal growing resistance from the college' administration led to decrease the support from our direct manager who needed to answer their endless questions. They started to be very sensitive, although most of the training is for free or at a low cost, they began to refuse… They said that other colleges' employees need to go now, it is enough for IC to have two employees only in a year, and so on. We started to get angry, fight back, and then we decided just to stop it, and to let this task be on the hand of the college training office."*
A New Interior Design for IC' Library building and library hall (2010)	The new interior design aimed to reduce the noise level and disrespectful behaviour of the IC users. Librarians have encountered constant confrontations with library users. This has impacted them negatively, and many of them decided to resign, move out of the help desk, or ask for a transfer.	**COR 1**: *"So, my first mission was to change this and bring more discipline to fit the library sphere. Our first meetings were about reconstructing the whole building, redesign its interior to avoid the continuity of students' noise and make it is comfortable for its librarians."*

Founding of College's Centre for Community Services and Training (CCST) in (2012)	The Centre is found to connect the College to the community and provide students with excellent internships in Oman and internationally. The CCST happened to play a vital role in the process of validation and approval of the EV project.	***COR 4:*** *"This office (the CCST) is part of the decentralisation strategy that aims to simplify the administrative procedures, and that is what gives us the power to decide insolently to support the L4CI, the decision was entirely our decision … We were the body that gave the final say on this… So, this has just started, and that is a good sign. In the next few years, more community services will appear, and we are ready to support them independently.* ***COR 2:*** *"I was appointed as an Assistant Dean for Community Services. So, I was pleased to hear about their idea, and I know at that time that it will be one of the successful ideas because of the reasons I already told you. We sat together to decide what we can do to get it through the Deanship office for the approval."*

In addition, findings suggested that the hosting organisation had a noticeable influence on the formation of the EV project. This influence focused on the critical issues of validation, legitimacy, organisation, support and control. The interaction between the EV group and institutional level agents (IC management, CCST, XYZ College and ABC University) impacted the formation of the EV system's identity, goals, positioning, responsibility, scope, and the definition of its boundaries, without affecting its internal operative structure. Table [5-16] demonstrates how various agents within the hosting system influence the formation of the EV project.

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Table 5-16 The institutional influence on the formation of the EV project

System/ Responsibility Area	Function	Evidence (Quotes)
IC management: • *Supervision* • *Control* • *Logistic and Technical Support*	• Keep track and document all workshops and events • Make sure to sustain quietness inside the library hall during workshop day • Offer hall to host the workshops inside the IC building supplied with required equipment and IT services	**COR 1**: *"My role from the start I loved to stick with supervision. I do not interfere with their details and the way they manage it. I follow their progress from a distance and ask them from time to time to give me a summary of what is going on with them…"* **COR 1:** *"… Discover defects of any sorts that require me to go and warn them about them so they can take the necessary step to avoid or solve problems. For instance, the use of the library during the workshop day. I go downstairs to make sure it does not affect our main library users."* **COR 1:** *"We worked together on allocating the workshop hall, the equipment, and tools, the design according to the first proposal approved by the college."*
College Deanship: • *Financial Control*	• Manage the financial transactions of the EV project	**COR 1:** *"They College hold the funds in their bank account to record the financial transactions and make statements to submit later for the internal auditing."*
The University: • *Support and Promotion*	• Publish the EV project news at the University internal press and website • Develop a short film about the EV programs and activities	**VOL 8**: *"Also, The University owned news bulletin, called XXXX has dedicated two full pages about the L4CI with interviews with some of the team's member and our direct IC manager."* **VOL 1:** *"The SQU produced a short documentary about the initiative; we gave them a copy of it."*

Deanship of CCST:	• Worked in gaining approval of the College's board and define the scope of responsibilities of the L4CI and the CCST	COR 3: "What I did, is that I approved the L4CI and did not bother to put an effort to receive higher approval from the College's deanship. This was under my authority, and I decide about students and employee's initiatives that aim for community services."
• *Legitimacy and Validation* • *Communication*		
	• Handle official Communication with internal and external bodies including public agencies, schools, sponsors, visitors, and community groups	COR3: "So I made sure they go by the procedures and follow the regulations and follow the proper process for establishing their program. I made sure they do not jump over crucial steps." COR4: "We are presenting L4CI officially to the inside and outside community… By facilitating and fully being responsible for communication that we send as per their group requirements and specifications. We also work to connect them to other organisations to share the same interest, invite them to similar events and introduce them to new opportunities."

The following network analysis Figure [5-17] illustrates the factors and their influence on the formation of the EV project. Most of these influences are found to play a major role in constructing the organisational structure of the L4CI. These are consisting of its formal positioning, a line of power, the boundary of control, allocation of resources and financial flew.
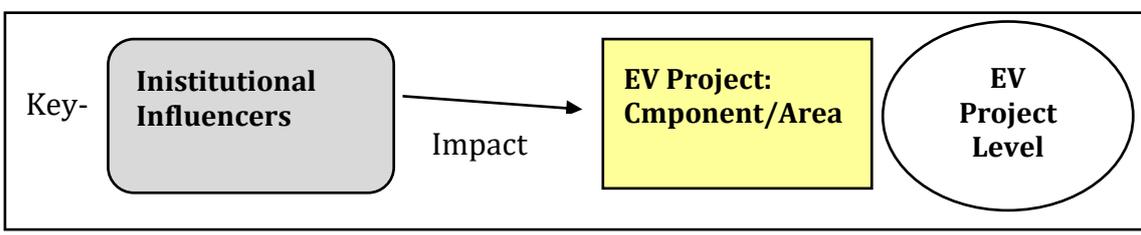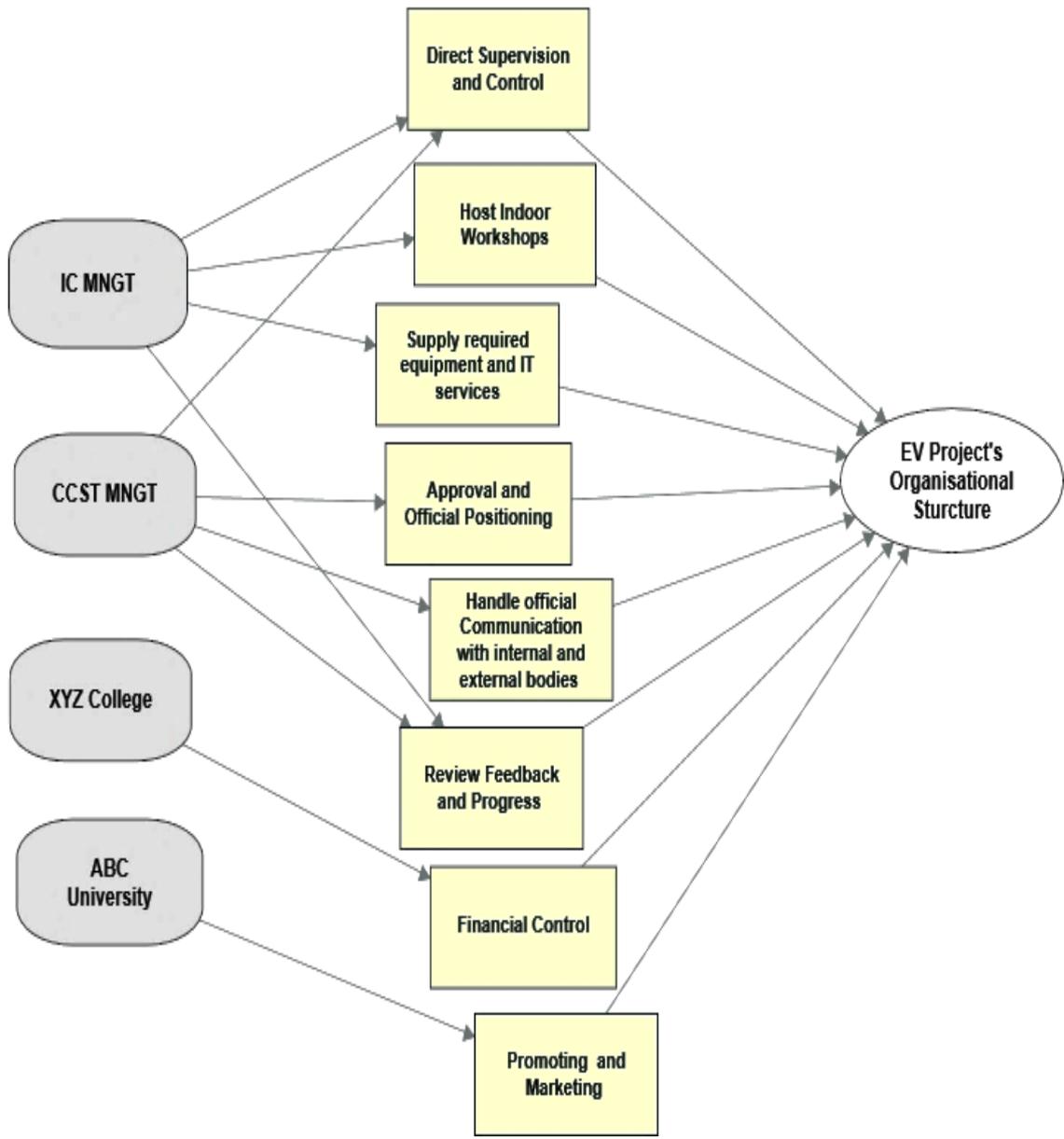
Figure 5-17: Institutional influences and area of impact on EV Project's organisational level

5.4.3.　The process of second-round analysis

To finalise the second-order analysis, nodes generated from the matrix analyses of the first-order analysis were cross-referenced for a second round. In the first part, the results showed a list of themes with the highest number of crossed-references. The goal of this step was to refine further the factors generated in the previous matrix analysis to those of the highest demonstrated influence. In the final part of this analytical process, the focus was directed to the core concept of this study—the volunteerism.

5.4.4.　Results

5.4.4.1　*Themes with the highest references*

The re-examination and refinement of results from the first-order analysis enable the identification of/and focusing on, those nodes with the greatest references. To achieve this, a description of the arguments in the highest nodes are depicted from each matrix analysis.

5.4.4.1.1　Matrix 1: External Themes X Institutional Themes

Examining the highest nodes regarding a total number of references (coded texts) direct attention to the strongest themes. These themes include public libraries in Oman, noisy library users, networking and communication, and changes and major shifts [Table 5-17]. The table shows that participants within these themes linked their constant struggle with unacceptable college student behaviour to the lack of publicly-accessible libraries in Oman. Interviewees viewed their struggle with undesirable

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student behaviours as one drifting from being a 'problem' to an 'outcome', where in fact those 'trouble-making students' are victims of the Omani schooling system, its absence of public libraries, and are therefore warranting of further education and opportunities. The highly routine nature of the employee's boring work environment adds to a situation where employees feel a desire for a more creative and innovative work-place and the opportunity to engage in social activities. Managers at the IC and CCST (COR 1, COR 2, and COR 3) expressed their motivation to share employees call for the need to establish a link with external communities.

Table 5-17: List of nodes with the highest references from matrix 1

SR.	External Themes	Institutional Themes	No of Sources	No of References
1.	Public libraries in Oman	Changes and major shifts	11	14
		Noisy library users	9	10
		Characteristics of the work environment	3	5
		Management motivation	3	5
2.	Networking and communication	Changes and major shifts	5	9
3.	Volunteering activity beside L4CI	Noisy library users	4	5

In addition, networking and communicating with external bodies were the next strongest themes. Communicating with educational consultants, school principals and supervisors, as well as friends and relatives, are evidenced to have influenced the final proposal submitted to the CCST that consisted of recommended workshop activities suitable for the 6th-grade school students. Moreover, the success of gaining external sponsorship played a critical role in gaining final approval from the College's deanship.

Volunteering activities and charitable functions determine the work culture of the employees that keep them connected to the external environment. The coded texts demonstrated an intense desire of staff to create a positive impact on other people's lives. The collective effort in this area helped the employees overcome their struggles with unacceptable noise levels and disrespectful college students, instead of adding motivation to come to work.

5.4.4.1.2   Matrix 2: External themes X EV group themes

The following table focuses on the main external themes of arguments on public libraries in Oman, networking and communication, and previous experience in volunteering, and demonstrates how these intersect with a verity of the EV group's themes [Table 5-18].

Table 5-18 List of nodes with the highest references from matrix 2

SR.	External Themes	EV Group Themes	No of Sources	No of References
1.	Public libraries in Oman	L4CI meaning and values associated	11	27
		Participant's motives	8	25
		Recommended changes in the L4CI structure	9	24
		L4CI identity	10	16
		Changes and major shifts	11	15
		L4CI begin story	8	13
		L4CI sustainability	7	9
		Future perspectives	6	8
		L4CI decision-making and meeting	7	8
		Participants role within L4CI	4	7
		Designing the first workshop	5	7
2.		L4CI decision making and meeting	8	37

		Changes & major shifts	5	10
	Networking & communication	L4CI begin story	3	5
		Participants role within L4CI	5	5
		Allocation of resources	3	5
3.	Previous experience in volunteering	Reactions	3	6

Using the earlier matrix analysis that contrasted external themes with group themes, the table focuses on the arguments in the highest nodes. In the matrix, the analysis examined the influence of the strongest external themes on the group themes to understand the relationships between them better. Again, the quality and accessibility of public libraries in Oman appear as one of the strongest external themes impacting the various group-level themes. This influence touches L4CI's identity, sustainability, the decision-making process and the design of the workshop. For instance, the identity and sustainability of L4CI were found to be highly dependent on a continued lack of public libraries in Oman (as this would sustain the demand for more community-focused library services). The design of the workshop where school students were invited to search for book titles, respect quietness inside the library hall and manually make books aimed to correct their lack of awareness of library systems.

Networking and communicating with external bodies provided another strong external theme. It was found to have a high impact on the decision-making process and the allocation of roles and resources at the group operating level. For example, networking and communicating with various education experts and consultants determined many decisions and imposed necessary changes to the workshop structures and internal operations. Most of the major shifts were implemented as a

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direct result of feedback arising from the communication and networking of L4CI with external parties. School supervisors' feedback has played a critical role in changing the L4CI at the operational level. For instance, feedback identified the need to change and modify workshop activities, tools, durations and the types of food offered. In addition to this, the decision-making process and allocation of role and resources followed a flexible procedure. Employees were invited to volunteer upon their desire and availability. Eventually, communications with external bodies were found to depend on the availability and willingness of volunteering employees.

As these findings suggest that most of the employee volunteers have previous volunteering experience, the matrix shows the strongest link is between previous volunteering experience and their initial receptiveness to the idea of L4CI. The arguments in this node demonstrate the participants' support for the voluntary project through positive reactions. Such positive statements also evidence the participant's willingness to work hard toward the implementation of L4CI.

5.4.4.1.3   Matrix 3: Institutional themes X EV group themes

This last matrix analysis continued to improve the reader's understanding of the nodes with the highest crossed references, in this case, between the institutional and group themes [Table 5-19]. This analysis aimed to draw the reader's attention to the strongest themes to reveal influence and links.

Table 5-19: List of nodes with the highest references in matrix 3

Sr.	Institutional Themes	EV Group Themes	No of Sources	No of References
1.	L4CI impact on IC employees	Changes and major shifts	9	27
		L4CI meaning and value associated	9	16
		Description of L4CI leadership	8	12
		L4CI decision making and meeting	6	9
		Future perspectives	5	7
		Participants role within L4CI	6	7
		Employee motives	5	7
2.	Noisy library users	L4CI meaning and value associated	11	20
		Changes and major shifts	8	13
		Description of L4CI leadership	6	9
		L4CI begin story	5	9
		L4CI decision making and meeting	5	9
		Values and beliefs associated with volunteering	6	9
		Participants role within L4CI	6	8
3.	L4CI relationship with the hosting system	Allocation of resources	8	18
		L4CI begin story	8	11
		Changes and major shifts	5	9
4.	L4CI relationship with IC management	L4CI relationship with the hosting system	9	15
		Allocation of resources	7	13
		Participants role within L4CI	7	11
		L4CI begin story	6	10
5.	L4CI internal communication with IC employees	L4CI decision making and meeting	11	14
		L4CI impact on participants	8	13
		Changes and major shifts	8	12
		Participants role within L4CI	7	12
		Description of L4CI leadership	8	10
		L4CI sustainability	5	8

6.	Characteristics of the work environment	Changes and major shifts	5	11
		Employment vs volunteering	6	10
7.	L4CI impact on hosting systems	L4CI impact on participants	6	9
		Changes and major shifts	6	9
		L4CI meaning and value associated	5	7
8.	Management motivations	L4CI begin story	6	10
9.	L4CI internal relationship with IC employees	L4CI joining and leaving	7	9

Within the above table, the impact of L4CI on IC employees was the strongest node, which leads the discussion on how this impact has influenced or is linked to the group themes. The examined arguments suggest that IC employees benefited from the increased interactions, connections and voluntary participation in small tasks within the L4CI. The volunteering employees all highlighted that the L4CI 'door' was always open to all IC employees whenever they were willing to volunteer. This open-door strategy helped the L4CI to create an interactive platform where all employees were invited to share their ideas and suggestions. Roles were allocated based on personal desires and readiness. This was consistent with node No. 9, where internal relationships with IC employees followed a flexible participation scheme. With no membership, the participation levels of IC employees varied and changed over time.

Moving to the second-largest node, the disrespectful library users had a clear impact on how the L4CI was proposed as a long-term solution to this problem. Moreover, many participants viewed the voluntary project as a source of additional self-respect and knowledge exchange, which both worked to minimise the stress caused by disrespectful college students.

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The L4CI relationship with the hosting systems (the College Board, CCST and IC) are more associated with the process of allocating resources. The project is held accountable for managing and using all financial and material resources under the direct supervision of the CCST and IC Deanships. These relationships take a hierarchal line of power; the L4CI reports its financial performance directly to the college's finance department, while the CCST holds full control of all internal and external communications. The project is also linked with IC management, as L4CI's operations and actors are located within its building.

The self-allocation of roles is highly influenced by participants' workloads and the structures imposed by shift work. IC management is responsible for the decisions made about the design and capacity of L4CI workshops, ensuring the workshop is performed in an acceptable manner. This was evidenced when the IC management ensured that the main library users were not interrupted negatively by L4CI's workshops.

The internal communication with IC employees was kept to a minimum level, where news and updates were posted on a whiteboard near the coffee room. The leader (VOL 1) applied his personal judgement and experience to communicate with IC employees selectively based on their individual skills and expertise. The descriptions show that the distribution of printed suggestion forms enabled most IC employees to give their ideas and recommendations and gain a sense of belongingness.

Examining how the characteristics informed major changes inside the group, descriptions focussed on routine work and the struggle with unacceptable noise levels inside the library hall. This placed pressure on the IC management to modify the

existing library layout to better control the college student's behaviour inside the building. The help-desk was relocated to the centre of the library room, while new rooms were provided to facilitate group discussions. The librarian's perception of their own work routines as 'boring' appeared to be a conditioning factor that encouraged the IC employees and management to welcome the establishment of the L4CI library-community program. The work environment was also found to follow a bureaucratic system. The participants described their engagement in volunteering as an escape from the system's formalities. To conclude, the pre-existing work environment was found to be a factor important in the push toward the formation of the L4CI in the long-term.

The L4CI's impact on its hosting systems is described as revolutionary, changing the traditional thinking about academic libraries forever. Participants across both management and employee levels provided arguments favouring the positive impact of the EV project on them. For management, the CCST described it as a successful idea for community services. For the employees, it represented the librarians' voices and embodied a noble mission of creating awareness and increasing the accessibility of libraries.

5.4.4.2   *Themes on Volunteerism*

In this analysis, the second layer of coding is conducted to accurately target arguments around volunteerism. Employing the systemic lens developed [Figure 2-2] with distinguished three levels of analysis, a second round coding was applied to the first matrix to understand how volunteerism is described. This aimed to expose a correlation between volunteerism and the factors that affect its definition and implementation within the context of the EV project.

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5.4.4.2.1   Matrix 1: External themes X institutional themes

Volunteerism in this matrix was found to describe the perceptions that enable a relationship to be established between the hosting system (at the institutional level) and the environment (at the external level). Focusing first on the arguments of participants at the management level reveal how decision-makers could correlate to volunteerism and implant it inside the existing system. For instance, to be able to institutionalise it successfully, the development of the EV project in this case study was modified concerning general regulations, rules, and values of the hosting system; that is, the IC and CCST. For the management of the Information Centre, COR 1 describes:

> *"One of the issues that came to my mind at that stage to make it clear to them, that is, this should be a pure volunteering act, it should not clash with work hours, nor neglect our main beneficiaries - the University's faculties and students."*

For the CCST, COR 3 and COR 4 both insisted on keeping the EV project within the definition of community service. This would maximise the likelihood of gaining approval and help to avoid unnecessary administrative burdens. COR 3 who was the newly appointed Assistant Dean for CCST at that time played the main role in ensuring the establishment of the EV project was conducted within a valid domain. COR 3 explains the main reasons for approving this project and for its success is:

> *"One of the main factors that contribute to the success of L4CI is that the knowledge used is part of their long practical experience. It is like as if they looked into themselves and asked, "what can we give back to our community?"*

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Volunteering in this matrix shows the need to balance the three axioms of efforts to encapsulate L4CI within the hosting system, appreciating the value of the knowledge asset, and the human capital who can benefit from it. This equation smoothened the institutionalisation of the employee volunteering and provided a practical strategy for interested organisations. For instance, the arguments support a need for CSR in public organisations to establish a close connection with community groups. The L4CI project provides a living example of a successful EV project in the public sector. As told by COR 4,

> *"When we compare it to private companies, it is the opposite. Private sector carries on CSR more seriously, and many companies develop, run, or fund charitable organisations located across Oman. So, I think it is hard to see that is happening until more employees' volunteering initiatives take place."*

Looking at the references from participants at the employee level, volunteerism in this matrix was described as a linkage that ties their workplace to various communities. To many, this bond has allowed the participant to change how they view their (paid) workplace. This concept was described by VOL 5:

> *"We saw it a great chance for our IC's name to be promoted to wider communities. We knew that if this initiative is implemented successfully and people started to talk about it, our work-place will not be the same and our IC will start to generate high reputation."*

Not only has the L4CI program improved the reputation of their place of work, but the EV project has also attracted the attention of other parties, both inside and outside of the University. VOL 5 continues:

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"Many people from inside the University and outside as well came to ask us why we are doing this and how we succeeded in establishing a volunteering project within the public organisation."

In this way, volunteerism appears to open the community's eyes to the varied possibilities and opportunities offered by linking public and private organisations with community groups.

5.4.4.2.2   Matrix 2: External themes X EV group themes

Volunteerism in this node was found to summarise arguments surrounding the unique features and sustainability of the EV group in relation to the influence of its external environment. The text volunteerism was highly repeated by those employees who have been practising it for long periods of time. Most active employees in the EV project were also found to be engaged in volunteerism outside of the workplace.

The quotes and arguments about volunteerism were also influenced by participants' desires to be awarded the Sultan Qaboos Prize for voluntary work (first awarded in 2011). The reputation brought by the EV project was fuelled by the news and social media coverage, and this led some participants to dream about being awarded one of the biggest national prizes. VOL 1 argued for this award to be their 'green light' to ask for more support and funding for the project:

"One day, we will receive Sultan Qaboos's Prize for Voluntary Work. That day we will be among the first three winners and we will [be] able to force our self and demand all that we need."

Appreciation from external bodies such as winning awards and enjoy publicity appeared critical to sustaining volunteers' enthusiasm. Moreover, such appreciation was necessary to secure the funding required to sustain the voluntary L4CI program, which is characterised by a complete lack of financial return. To others, volunteerism sustainability is associated with the volunteers' ability to continue developing and inviting innovative and creative ideas. The sustainability of volunteerism was associated with participants' ability to apply foresight to the identification of new needs, beneficiaries, ideas, or new members. COR 4 describes:

> *"They need to be ready for the future that demand wider sets of services, new creative ideas, new beneficiaries and sustainable financial resources… I do not want to see them get bored by repeating the same activities over and over; they need new blood… "*

In any voluntary project, finding a replacement who understands that volunteerism is about commitment and willingness to give, with no expectation for personal gains, is not an easy task. At the management level, the EV project was found to emphasise the full responsibility of the volunteering employee full responsibility to establish long-term EV projects. This would occur through achieving a mutual understanding and definition of EV and outlining of participant/managerial expectations. For instance, COR 1 stressed the idea that when a founding member in any voluntary project left, the whole EV system could be brought down:

> *"I know how at the start a person may feel pushed by its desire or surrounded community, and then when the work starts to get intense, people's expectations get higher and personal space get lower, withdrawing from the*

volunteering act can harm the voluntary progress and offend the people of that organisation. So, if you initiated an idea, spread among your people, and at the end withdraw, you should expect reverse side-effect, and you may harm the person who joined and those who trusted you!"

The above arguments introduce and frame the voluntary project as a vulnerable social system. This idea connects L4CI's vulnerability to its weak power over volunteering members, who are in turn expected to give more and expect less, react positively in the face of challenges, and continually be able to create innovative new ideas. With employee volunteerism, the pressure on volunteers is even higher. In contrary to employees who are hired to perform a specific task for monetary return, volunteers in this case study were expected to run a *complete* system; they were required to take full responsibility in sustaining its operations, resources and people.

In this case study, the membership scheme found to be undesirable. The L4CI EV project kept an open-door participation scheme to avoid dividing IC employees into L4CI members and non-members. Although a defined membership scheme is missing in this project, employee volunteerism offers an advantage over other voluntary groups for being always one step closer to its potential participants (i.e. future members). VOL 9 elaborated on this benefit:

"There are no barriers and if the person really wants to join and commit. See what really good about this volunteering act is that all of its members are close to each other and from the same workplace. We do not have any externals or strangers."

This advantage ensured not only high connectivity but also offered the volunteering employee the privilege of being located close to their workmates who were able to offer friendship and personal support, while also sharing expertise, knowledge and assistance when required. In other words, recruiting volunteers for EV projects should be easier than for independent voluntary organisations.

The external environment plays a vital role in sustaining voluntary work through incentives, funds, training, and rewards. In this case, external sponsorship was found to play an essential role in sustaining financial resources, while the constant increase of demand from schools found to provide a reliable reason for the volunteers to continue. Both were made possible through publicity, networking, and social media.

5.4.4.2.3 Matrix 3: Institutional themes X EV group themes

Volunteerism in the workplace has been found to increase employees' attachment, honesty and loyalty in many studies discussed in the literature review. These notions were reflected in this study, as evidenced by the following statements from volunteering employees and managers [Table 5-20].

Table 5-20 The impact of volunteerism on participants

Participant (pseudonym)	Evidences (Quotes)
VOL 8	*"I was really very impressed and happy to join a workplace that hosts such beautiful volunteering act for community services."*
VOL 5	*"What is added; from my personal view; is that sense of connectivity...the emotional connection with volunteering activities ...they are more passionate ... giving their time and putting the effort to serve the community... one of the reason can be that this volunteering act has brought to their boring routine jobs a pleasure; an out of paid jobs atmosphere. I think they feel more satisfied, happy and valued."*
VOL7	*"I can add that my dealing with other workmates started to be freer. I mean I tend to interact with them strictly and formally. Now, I feel we are one family, we help each other, and understand the need and personality of each other... Volunteering turned me into a flexible person who appreciates people differences and requirements."*
COR 1	*"L4CI, as I can see, is a hob, new place for new ideas; employees compensate their daily frustration from a routine job with volunteering act that is fully owned by them and represent their knowledge creatively. I also notice they became more loyal, committed, and productive to both their jobs and L4CI."*
COR3	*"It seems that L4CI gave them a new dimension to look into themselves and their lives, might it have made them love their jobs even more. This is generally what is good about doing volunteering acts at the workplace; it gives the employee a sort of newness and freshness especially if what he voluntarily does is part of his experience."*

Volunteerism was also found to impose influence on the IC management team in relation to smoothening their demands, expectations, and official procedures. Volunteerism within this context was strictly defined by all members at the IC; volunteering employees should not be forced to join, and those who wish to join should not expect to get extra payment nor a reduction in working hours. The mutual acknowledgement of these conditions appears to impact how management determined

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their level of involvement. For instance, COR 4 (the Deanship of the CCST) expressed his hesitation toward requesting volunteers prepare formal reports or written updates:

> *"Taking they are volunteers I feel asking them for more paperwork is … I do not know… I think they do not need another load even if they do not mind… I think a meeting at the beginning of each semester is enough to get me this information."*

At the IC, COR 2 confessed his neglect of registering work-leave requested by employees to perform roles for the EV project:

> *"Being a part of the IC management, we tend to neglect recording job-leave requests sometimes and help on this by keeping VOL 1's leave credit without deducting those days. As long as we know the reason for his leave is for L4CI related issues, the requests for any off-days to perform L4CI activities are not considered seriously. Personally, because I am the one who is responsible for employees' working hours, I tend to ignore many of his requests."*

Moreover, for the IC director, COR 1 expressed his willingness to accept employees to handle EV project operations during official work hours as a plan to sustain it in the long-term:

> *"We feel it is part of the IC and we work hard to sustain it. One of the things that we are now trying to offer the active members of the L4CI is enough time to work on it."*

Both COR 1 and COR 2 at the IC management feels they are obligated to give extra credit to those involved in the EV project in their annual employee evaluation report. COR 1 stated:

"This is part of the employee's annual evaluation where the management gives credits for those who submit their ideas, opinions and initiation to develop the work of the centre. I assume that this is clear to all, and it should justify any extra credits go to volunteering employees."

From the above, the arguments show the importance of management consideration and tolerance in sustaining the employee volunteering projects within their organisations. However, it also presents a compelling case of confounding volunteer motivations. While it was earlier discussed that volunteers had various internal motivations (e.g. self-actualisation), such formal recognition by management may motivate additional staff to volunteer. These incoming staff may have different (more extrinsic) motivations that the current volunteers. Interestingly, over time, this could change the dynamic of the L4CI program. When reflecting this to what Cohen (1994) ascribed to be "magic", the IC and CCST management by reducing paper-work and minimising procedures have successfully maintained enough space for enabling volunteers to utilise "time available" in performing voluntary work. In that case, the management bodies of CCST and IC were able to give a sense of ownership and independence to volunteering employees. This was achieved through careful assignment of responsibilities in a manner that provided employees with adequate space to plan, design and run all internal operations of the EV project.

A focus on keeping volunteerism a personal decision, along with the shift-work policy of the IC, determined the pattern and structure of communication between IC employees. Here, the project leader sought to design an unfastened communication strategy where he distributes a piece of paper to all IC staff inviting their ideas, suggestions and opinions on upcoming proceedings. VOL 7 pictured this scenario:

"To me, I think this is a convenient and comfortable method to assess the decision-making process. All we need to do is to read that paper thoroughly and write our comments and put it back. This is to me a valid process and saves everyone time. This flexibility gives the employees and L4CI member effortless and relaxing way to submit their opinions. You know what happens in these brainstorming meetings, they argue a lot and waste valuable time. So, we got this piece of paper, write whatever we want, freely. Usually, we are given two days' maximum, fair enough to think about the issue and generate good comments. When VOL 1 receives back these papers, I see him reading them carefully and questions the comments with us in privet to understand the real meaning behind them. So, we will have a chance to discuss and got quick feedbacks. In the end, he would take the most valid comments and inform us about it. I feel this process is simple and logical. To my knowledge, I have not heard anyone criticising this process and calls for a meeting."

The participation of volunteers was not enforced. To the project leader (VOL 1), the spirit of volunteerism presented participants with the willingness to offer voluntary help and time. VOL 1 explained:

"I cannot force anyone to join; it should come from inside their hearts. I believe when asking help from someone does not show signs of appreciation; the outcome is going to be of poor quality."

"I always try to let them understand that this is a "volunteering" and should not have to do anything with your job-time. For instance, I told them that the workshop is done in the morning time shift, so anyone volunteer must put in mind that this morning shift is not part of the work-time, and must do his night shift after the workshop ended, so it is 8:00 am to 8:00 pm."

The volunteering employees believed firmly in the principle of "volunteerism" taking the form of even a small idea or suggestion. VOL 3 emphasised that all IC employees were volunteers since their thoughts and recommendations were received and incorporated:

"We believe a little idea is enough to make that person part of the team. New programs or ideas always bring new actors… that does not mean that we do not have permanent members… We do… However, we do not admit this segregation."

However, when it comes to role allocation or the implementation of programs, the skills and job specifications of employees become a determinant. For example, IC employees that held a strong relationship with the project leader were most likely to be invited based on their experience and skills to perform small tasks. VOL 1 explains:

"With other colleagues, I have learned who I can trust and ask, and on what area, for instance, I ask MR. XX on helping me with any computer issue, such

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as opening an Excel sheet to track our finance, uploading the news on the
university website, developing any sort of files and pictures, etc. Moreover, I
always ask (VOL 9) for technical problems and (VOL 6) to check for
management issues."

It became clear that the type and level of relationship determined the expected level of future participation. For example, the close colleagues of active volunteers were always easier to reach than other staffs. Participation was invited but not enforced, ensuring the core principle of volunteerism—the free-will and willingness of participation.

Regarding the external environment, volunteerism was viewed as an 'ought to be' solution to a permanent problem. The 'problem' that L4CI sought to solve was the noise level inside its hosting system. The solution' stood on the librarians' abilities to see the value of their knowledge and experience in solving the problem, by going beyond its boundary to criticise the education and library systems at a wider level (and blame them for this now-internal problem), and educate young children on library values to prevent such disrespect in the future. The employees could spot how the deficiency in the education and library system in Oman has, in the long run, produced a generation of students lack proper knowledge about library values and usage and who score low reading rates. Librarians used this argument to build a compelling case for their voluntary project by holding the Omani education system responsible for their long struggle with disrespectful behaviour inside the library. Although the hosting system demonstrated a low level of empathy to this core problem, the CCST adopted it as an opportunity to offer its first community service. Volunteerism offered them the means to use their existing human capital, to generate positive publicity at a low cost,

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and importantly, to convince the public sector to sponsor the program. Figure [5-18] summarises the above arguments, demonstrating the thematic network analysis of volunteerism's impact on employees, IC and CCST management, and the EV project

Moreover, Volunteerism was found to play an agency role in both defining expectations from project participants and managers and in determining the nature of communications employed. This agency concept imposed clear influence over the EV project's organisational and operative structures. An agreement on defining the project as "pure volunteerism" preserved the spirit of volunteerism despite varied participant motivations. The agreed definition aims to minimise possible hypocrisies arising in top-down, short-term EV projects where employees may instead be acting to earn their employer's appreciation. This argument is validated by referring to management's desire to keep an adequate operational distance and prevent interference with the EV system' s operative parts. This level includes the group's internal decisions regarding the allocation of roles and resources, selection of the next visiting school, activity design for each workshop and the reaching out to new community groups.
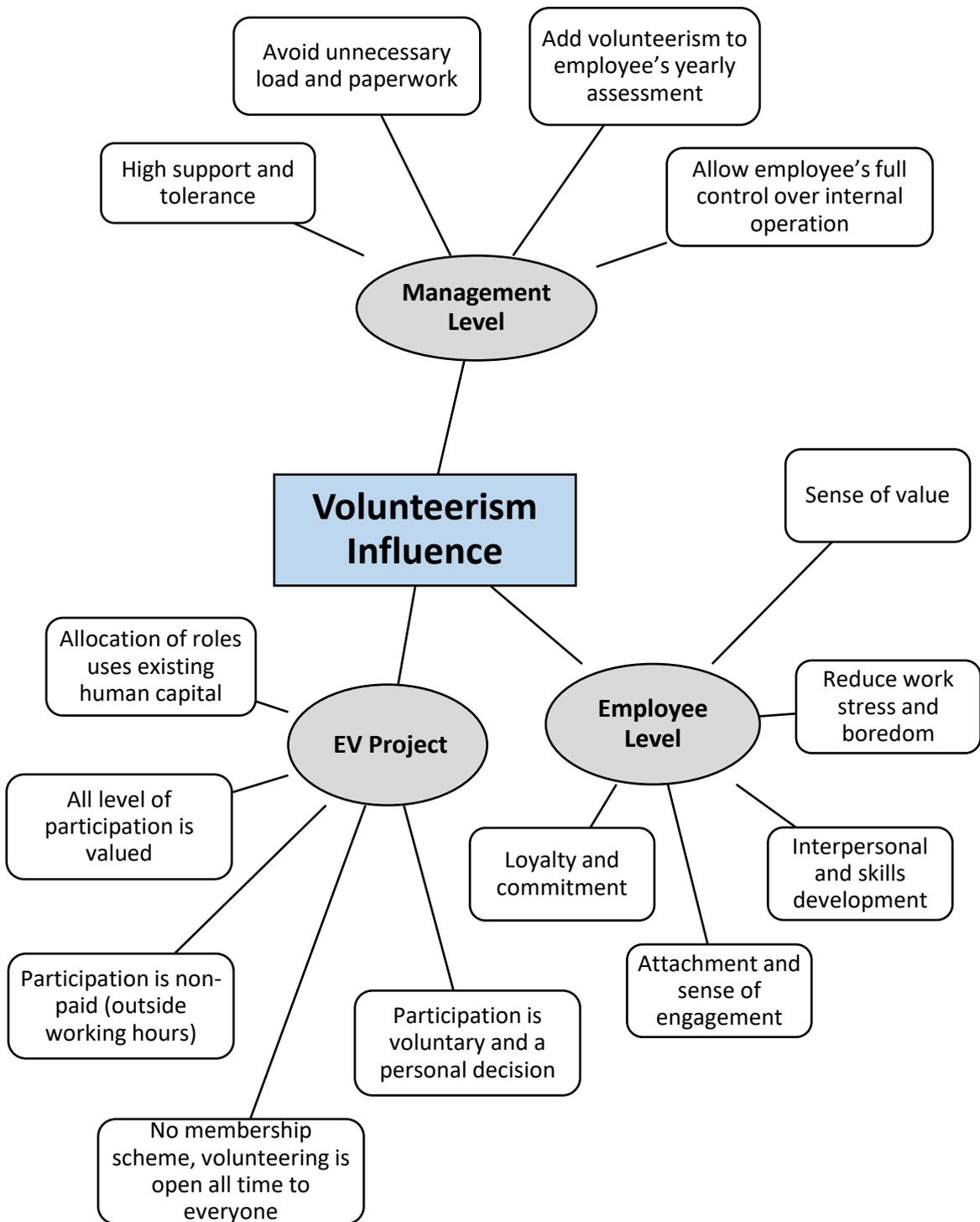
Figure 5-18: a Thematic network of volunteerism impact on employees, management and EV project

When the EV system was viewed as an independent whole, the presence of managerial participation was found to fall within managerial functions. This included supervision, logistical support, official communications and feedback reviews. Figure [5-19] illustrates the division of control over the EV system, particularly between management bodies (IC and CCST) and volunteers, and demonstrates how volunteerism is encapsulated.

Employee Volunteerism is defined as employee' free-will to participate in L4CI project outside working hours and with no expectation for extra payment.

EV project organisational level
- Managed and controlled by CCST and IC (EV project as a whole)
- Includes: Supervision, logistic supply, resource management, communication with external and internal bodies, feedback review

EV project operational level
- Managed by volunteers of IC librarians and Technicians (EV project as composite parts).
- Includes: Allocation of resources and roles, Workshop design, delivery and development, Budgeting and Purchasing, Informal networking with community groups

Figure 5-19: Employee volunteerism and its implication on the EV project at organisational and operational levels.

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The easy access and exit scheme also respected employees' external commitments and free-will and was found to contribute to the sustainability of the EV project and the preservation of a volunteerism spirit. IC staff found themselves free of pressure from both management and volunteer employees. A 'pure volunteerism' concept in this unique organisational structure appeared to establish a strong sense of ownership among volunteering employees. In turn, this ownership provided the means to construct a long-term EV project that continued to improve and grow.

5.5   Part 3: Aggregate Dimensions and Data Structure

The development of aggregate dimensions aimed to derive additional information from the first- and second-order analyses. These new aggregate dimensions attempted to understand how these concepts might help to describe and explain the phenomena under investigation. This part concluded with the data structure, where the resulting aggregate dimension shows the relationships between themes generated from the first- and second-order analyses. Gioia et al. (2012) described building a data structure into a configuration that becomes a sensible visual aid and a key component in the demonstration of rigour in qualitative research.

5.5.1.   The process

To develop data structure into a visual representation, the Concept Map tool from Nvivo Pro software was employed. The representation of the aggregate dimension within a thematic network required further examination of the results of first- and second-order analyses, which were provided earlier in this chapter. First, basic themes were grouped into organising themes. Next, these organising themes

were associated with a global aggregate dimension following the methodology of Attride-Stirling (2001).

5.5.2. Results

The development of the aggregate dimension with reference to the systemic lens developed for this particular case study assessed in analysing the L4CI independently and in relation to its surrounding systems. The findings were presented to deliver a holistic picture to describe how factorial events, actors and objects interacted together and played multiple roles in the formation of the L4CI system in consistency with the volunteerism principles identified from the literature review. These factors effects were temporal as the EV project was constructed, while the various actors were found to change roles to serve the needs of each period best.

Pre-existing conditions (pre-2011): The conditioning factors were determined after examining the pre-existing environmental settings. These factors had either indirectly affected the project's formation or informed participants' individual motivations. The analysis specified the following had major influences on the formation of the EV project's identity and purpose:

A. **External factors/conditions/events:**
- Political disturbance, which called for system reform and equal distribution of wealth
- The announcement of the Sultan Qaboos Prize for Voluntary Work
- Poor educational system; schools follow passive teaching styles, and school libraries are largely inactive and/or inaccessible

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- Lack of publicly-accessible libraries

B. Institutional factors/conditions/events:

- Routine job

- Lack of career growth and skills development

- Misconduct of IC library users

- Leadership and management styles

- Dissemination of the IC's informal training committee

C. EV group level factors/conditions/events:

- Interactive teamwork

- Extra-organisational volunteering activities

- Charitable functions

Development Stage (2012-2013): Following the timeline of L4CI's development revealed factors that contributed directly to its establishment. For instance, the operational structure engaged external actors and bodies, which resulted in constructing workshop design, workshop timing and duration, deciding target groups, and the selection of activities. Moreover, factors at the institutional level were found to impose a major influence on the formation of the organisational structure. This included decisions about the project's purpose, along with its official positioning, legitimacy, a line of command and scope of responsibility. The following points summarised the factors influenced the formation process of L4CI's organisational structure according to its source.

A. External level factors/conditions/events:

- Funding from an external enterprise

B. Institutional level factors/conditions/events

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- Reaching collective agreement on the definition of volunteerism

- Establishment of the Centre for Community Services and Training (CCST)

- Support for IC management

C. **EV group level factors/conditions/events:**

- Well-experienced employees in libraries and volunteering

- The diversity of employee's skills and area of expertise

- Project leadership style

- Project design and effective tasks assignment

The formation of the L4CI's operational structure included discussions regarding workshops' design, duration, and activities. It also required constructing the scheme for the allocation of tasks and resources, budgeting and financial control, purchasing, and maintenance and development. In this realm, the following factors found to influence decisions made in this area as listed in the points below:

A. **External level factors/conditions/events:**

- Input from the educational expertise and school principles

- Recommendations from relatives and friends

- Previous studies findings, Online data and resources

B. **Institutional level factors/conditions/events**

- A delegation of power to L4CI's leader

- IC management observations and supervision

C. **EV group level factors/conditions/events:**

- Well-experienced employees in libraries and volunteering

- The diversity of employee's skills and area of expertise

- Employees' feedbacks

Moreover, examination of volunteerism as a concept demonstrated a clear influence on employees, management and the EV project itself. In that, the factors were analysed for their contribution to the development of the EV system' identity, organisational level and operational level according to the Schie et al. (2011)' volunteerism checklist. At the EV project level, volunteerism defined the nature of relationships between the employees and the EV project. Principles of volunteerism, such as the voluntary well, free-of-charge, and production of goodness defined how the volunteers perceived their participation. For example, volunteering is allocated outside working hours and participation is based only on personal willingness. In short, the concept of volunteerism can influence the resulting identity of the EV program and the nature of its internal/external relationships (between volunteers, with managerial bodies, and with the community). The Volunteerism definition and principles found to influence the formation of various EV project's components. The following points summarised these principles and their influence on each level:

D. **External level factors/conditions/events:**

- Volunteering is beneficial to other parties: voluntary work adds value to beneficiaries
- Volunteering is organised: aims and objectives are announced, workshops are well-designed, and communication with beneficiaries is maintained through official channels.

E. **Institutional level factors/conditions/events**

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- Volunteering is unpaid: voluntary activities are performed from an employee's personal time, and they should not expect remunerations of any kind.

- Volunteering is beneficial to other parties: develop a product (service) that help to add value to the community

- Volunteering is a free-will: the employer does not impose any influence on employees to participate.

- Volunteering is organised: the employer is obligated to ensure it operates according to pre-specified rules and under the direct supervision of IC and CCST.

F. **EV group level factors/conditions/events:**

- Volunteering is unpaid: employees agree to perform it outside working hours.

- Volunteering is personal: employees are free to decide the role they want to perform

- Volunteering is free-well: employees' participation is based on their personal desire and is always welcomed.

The diagram below shows the resulting data structure that sums all the above points into an aggregate dimension [Figure 5-20].
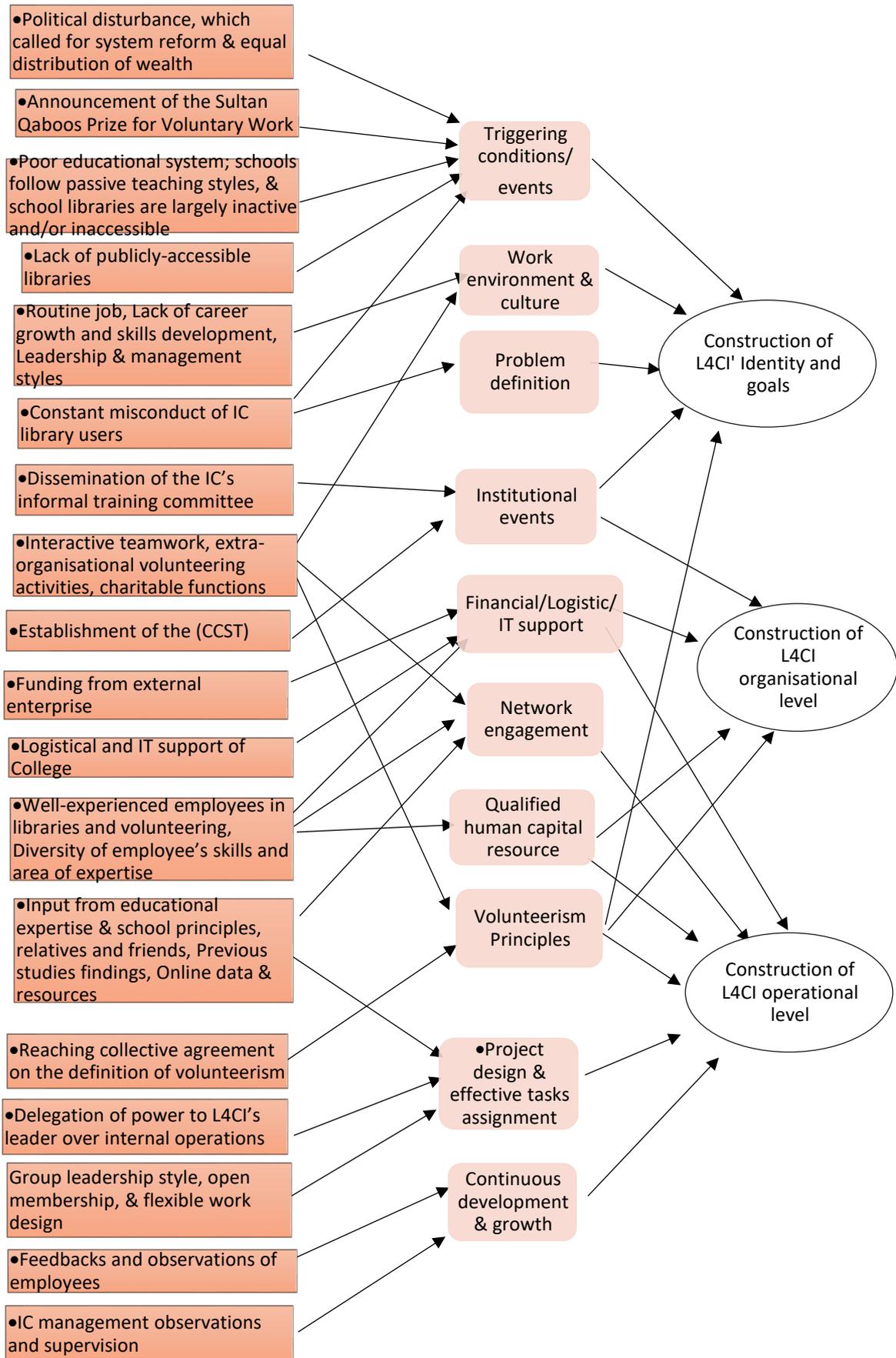
Figure 5-20: Aggregate Dimension of factors contributed to the constuction of the L4CI

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5.6   Conclusion

This chapter was constructed into three main parts to demonstrate the findings resulted from content and thematic analysis. The application of Gioia et al. (2013) thematic analysis procedure comprised of first-order (part one), second-order (part 2) and aggregate dimensions (part three). The thematic analysis provided appropriate strategies for data categorisation, organisation and matrix analysis using Nvivo Pro software. For most data representation in this chapter, the Thematic Network style of Attride-Stirling (2001) was adopted. The thematic network represented how various codes are first assembled into basic themes before being categorised into organising themes for eventual grouping into a single unifying global theme. All the thematic networks in this chapter were developed using the Concept Map tool installed in the Pro Nvivo Software. The visualisation of data also utilised the rich picture technique contributed by Checkland, (1989) as part of the Soft System Methodology. The rich picture was utilised to draw the problem definition as perceived by the participants. Other tools such as Excel tables and diagrams found to be influential in summarising results from various matrix analysis. An overall aggregate dimension of findings was discussed in the final process where factors contributed to the formation of L4CI's identity, and operational and organisational structure is identified. The following chapter discusses these findings as well as providing recommendations for future studies.

Chapter 6: General Discussion and Conclusion

6.1   Overview

This chapter concludes the thesis and is dedicated to reviewing the entire thesis and highlighting the academic contributions of this project. The thesis began with an introduction to the research problem, its context, its significance, and structure of the chapters (Chapter 1). An exhaustive literature review was then provided, which discussed the contemporary academic understanding of EV programs within a corporate context. This literature then elaborated on the potential of systemic thinking concepts and tools to provide an exploratory lens to contribute to identified gaps in the academic literature (Chapter 2). An interpretive, epistemology and qualitative approach to research encompassed the case study strategy to collect data through the application of semi-structured interviews, documents analysis and field notes (Chapters 3 and 4). After discussing the theoretical underpinnings of the research methodology, Chapter 4 transitioned the thesis from theory into practice. Chapter 4 detailed the research design, data collection and sampling, and discussed the major changes required to overcome unexpected aspects of the field work. The research findings in Chapter 5 were divided into three parts of in-depth data analysis to achieve the analytical presentation of the findings.

This general discussion chapter takes the research project back into the theoretical realm by reflecting on the connections between the EV literature and the case study results. This chapter, therefore, establishes how the case study project

solved its overall research question, fulfilled its objectives, and contributed academic knowledge to the field. The discussion part was designed to discuss the findings from three angles. The first concentrated on volunteerism in principle, and it's current and future application within the organisational framework. The second angle went on to discuss the factorial approach by arguing for more contextual studies acknowledging the need to understand and examine systemic factors contributing to the formation of a system including EV and CV programs within the organisational context. The third elaborated on the enrichment brought by the use of the systems thinking's concepts and tools in generating a holistic view of the EV project and define its components as well as the nature of the relationships with its surroundings. Critical reflection is made on the role of the systems thinking approach.

It must be noted that the case study does not claim the generalizability of its findings and posits that more studies are necessary in order to confirm them. Thus, a critical discussion was also provided into the implications of this research for organisational studies and volunteerism in general. The critical discussion highlights the limitations of the current study and suggests future directions for this research.

6.2   Discussion and Contribution

6.2.1.   The V of EV: A need for extended definition

Where does volunteerism (V) stands in the context of corporates' employee volunteerism (EV) programs? This is one of the leading questions that was raised during the literature review. Ranging from most complex EV programs to least complex (like "dollar for doors"), the value of volunteerism appears to have escaped the programs' structure. If we look at CV definitions, Lorenz, Gentile, & Wehner (2011)

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describe a voluntary system that is owned, managed, and funded by a corporate in which employees are invited to engage in charitable endeavours beyond their specific job description voluntarily often (but not necessary) in cooperation with non-profit organisations. This common scenario gives ultimate power to the hand of companies, thus enabling them to steer the EV to achieve their agenda and gain recognition. The volunteering employees within this rigid structure are expected to fulfil the EV programs according to the corporate's expectations. Thus, the main value of the EV has drifted away from the spirit of volunteerism and instead moved toward the achievement of business-oriented strategic values. It should be noted that this discussion has been restricted to focus only on volunteerism within the inter-organisational EV and intra-organisational EV by which the employer influence and involvement are evident and excludes extra-organisational forms of volunteerism, For example, the personal volunteering conducted without employer involvement [refer to Peloza & Hassay, 2006 in Table 2-1].

As highlighted by the literature review and project findings, a more careful examination is a priority when using EV label to categorise corporate voluntary programs. The definition of EV must not ignore that the volunteerism concept carries definite criteria and, therefore, there is a need to revisit previous studies conducted in the area of Corporate EV programs. In line with Licandro (2017), this study argues for caution when adding the V to a project within the corporate context to be able to accurately present it as 'employee volunteering' (EV). The study argues that the label EV should only be assigned to those project that put the volunteerism principles into practice. This means allowing employees to voluntarily decide the cause they wish to serve, and how they invest their personal time compared to corporate working hours

and empowering them to manage their participation to a level that ensures a sense of ownership. In contrast, CV should be associated with programs and activities designed by employers as part of their CSR policies or other relationships with the community or the development of human capital.

The study's findings support claims that failing to respect some of the most basic principles of volunteerism exposes the various actors to undesirable confusion. For instance, employees may feel uncomfortable to be labelled 'volunteers" when their participation is paid, and their incentive to join is not based on a personal desire. This does not mean that EV is an unachievable task. The case study offers an example of a case where an EV project succeeded in allowing the principles of volunteerism to underpin the formation of the project's organisational and operational levels and to define the practices and functions that support these principles. The case of L4CI exemplified the spirituality of volunteerism despite the close engagement of the employer. Moreover, the L4CI case study suggests the need to expand the definition of employee volunteerism (EV) within a corporate context to offer a strategic understanding of the factors that can be turned into tools to assess the development of EV programs, in terms of practices and functions, to fulfil and support the basic principles of volunteering in the future.

As the findings revealed, the L4CI program presented a case of a group of passionate employees who invited their employer to engage in the establishment of an EV project that:

- Offers a well-designed library-community service within a public organisation

- Engages employees in activities that fall beyond their job description, yet within the core value of their organisation

- Targets non-profit community organisation (selected by employees)

- Ensures voluntary activities are performed outside employee's paid working hours, yet are bounded by the organisation's operating hours

- Utilises employer facilities and physical space

- Believes volunteerism is a personal decision and keeps participation open to all interested staffs

- Operationally is planned, implemented and managed by the employees

- Organisationally is supervised, reviewed, logistically supported and directed by the employer

- Sponsored externally by a private company

The L4CI represents a bottom-up employee volunteering (EV) project that is of a more advanced and flexible type when compared with current Corporate Employee Volunteering programs. This suggests L4CI (and similar programs) might become a potential future model in the field compared with the existing Corporate EV formats discussed by Peloza & Hassay (2006), Lukka (2000) and Meinhard et al. (2008) [refer to Table 2-1, Chapter 2].

Building on previous literature and extending the comparison between personal volunteering (PV) and corporate employee volunteering (EV) contributed by Van Schie et al. (2011, p: 123-124), the study findings provide further distinctions between common corporate volunteering (CV) and bottom-up employee volunteering (EV). The following discussion summarises the key features that differentiate the L4CI program from widely practised CV programs in particular.

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As evidenced by their definitions, EV places more considerable attention on the capacity and role of employees to initiate volunteerism programs. In contrast, the employee participants of common CV programs are expected to join pre-designed CV programs established by their employer, which serve specific causes and are conducted during paid working hours. The L4CI project was found to follow a different route. In L4CI, the employees initiated the project, and only then did they invite their employer to approve and support their desired cause and project proposal. Where most CV programs are initiated in cooperation with the external non-profit organisation, here the EV project in itself operated as a not-for-profit system jointly owned and managed by the employer and the volunteering employees while sponsored by the external private sector body.

One of the main contributions of this study is to present and test a checklist to measure and evaluate the validity of forming EV programmes with respect to the basic principles of volunteerism within corporate contexts. The checklist examines a number of basic principles of volunteerism using the Van Schie et al. (2011) criteria. The checklist covers the following variables: payment, organisation, personal, beneficial to other parties, and investment of time. Table [6-1] shows the findings in this regard by comparing the existing structure of the EV system under investigation with the volunteerism checklist developed by Van Schie et al. (2011) early in chapter two. Hence, more studies are required to prove the validity of this checklist and subject it to further enhancement.

Volunteerism Criteria adopted from Van Schie et al. (2011)	Application in EV project
volunteerism is unpaid.	The volunteering activities are performed outside employees' working hours
volunteerism is organised work	The volunteering work is well-structured and positioned within its hosting system. The management of the voluntary work on the basis of in-time allocation of roles and resources.
volunteerism is personal	Participation in the voluntary activities depends on personal desire and capacity where no membership scheme and a rewarding system is established to control or encourage volunteering
volunteerism is beneficial to other parties	Volunteering aims to educate school students about libraries and encourage reading through practical workshops
volunteerism requires an investment of time	L4CI is a long-term voluntary project and requires a substantial investment of time by volunteering employees. Workshops are consuming a maximum of 4 hours on a monthly basis.

In the L4CI the above criteria or principles were emphasised from the earliest stages when it was mutually agreed by all parties to shape L4CI as a 'purely voluntary' project. Discussing Table [6-1], the first principle of volunteerism suggests it should be unpaid. The reported finding suggested that employees were more willing to give up their free time to perform voluntary activities if they received permission to use their employer's assets and facilities for these activities. Although they performed the voluntary activities outside employee's paid working hours, the project was still bound by its own official working hours. Having a 'shift' system during their paid working hours enabled these employees to allocate available free time that fell within L4CI's working hours. To consider any physical (or non-physical) efforts, volunteers stressed

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the need to implement the program for free. Of course, volunteering for L4CI represents unpaid work.

The second principle of volunteerism relates to whether activities qualify as organised work. Volunteers were found to prefer efficient engagement to run projects with clear goals and constructive tasks (Meijs and Ten Hoorn, 2008). In most CV programmes, the employer designs the volunteerism program to fit its own predefined corporate goals. Thus, the employer has influence over the aims and goals of the project, the nature of participation, the variety of voluntary activities, its duration, and so on. In contrast, the L4CI project witnessed far stronger employee participation in defining the projects aims, goals and scope. Volunteering employees, for instance, were held responsible to put these ideas into practice. They were allowed to select the cause, define the nature of their voluntary project, select its beneficiaries and specify the program's structure and duration. The employees were able to decide, plan and implement the voluntary project of their choice despite it being entirely influenced by their educational background and area of expertise. Moreover, the employees were permitted to take over the management and execution of the voluntary project's operations, allowing them to feel a sense of ownership. This format of the EV system appears to give more space for an 'employee voice', and the employer's engagement was instead restricted to authorisation and support. We also conclude the L4CI in this case study meets the criteria of being organised volunteerism like many CV projects.

The third principle of volunteerism stresses on the need to keep participation based on personal decisions. According to Van Schie et al. (2011), the corporates take the lead in initiating the CV programs. In most cases, an employee's decision to join is to satisfy their employer's expectations and/or achieve a more positive performance

assessment. Peloza et al. (2009) added that these motives to support the employer operated, in the context of organisational citizenship behaviour. In this sense, the motivation of employees to volunteer is always questionable. In this particular EV project, participation lacks a membership scheme, performance assessment or reward. The decision of volunteers is highly associated with the employee's desire and willingness. Of course, their desire might be impacted by the availability of free-time and pressure of workload, or the perception that their paid employer view their participation as either favourable or unfavourable. Thus, the minutest of corporate control over the internal management of the L4CI and absence of peer-pressure on the decision to participate has preserved the spirit of volunteerism. In this case, volunteering achieved the criteria of remaining personal.

Moving to the point of being beneficial to other parties as one of the essential criteria of any volunteering act, most EV programs involve the targeting of pre-specified beneficiaries. The volunteering employees at L4CI worked directly with the management of the IC and Deanship of the CCST to specify the potential beneficiaries of the project. To gain official approval, the volunteering employees were requested to submit a proposal that showed a list of benefits scattered among stakeholders, which included the University, College, CCST, IC and of course non-profit community groups and organisations. Therefore, volunteerism in this CV program proved beneficial to various external parties and the employer.

Moving to the last criteria, volunteerism requires an investment of time. Although the time allocated for the voluntary activities was not consumed from the official working hours of the employees, the L4CI program pushed employees to adapt their paid shift-work scheduling to the best interests of the EV project. For instance,

volunteering, employees frequently choose evening shifts to enable morning workshops to be run. For outdoor workshops, employees commonly took a whole day off work. Therefore, volunteerism, in this case, was not just a matter of investment of time but also required effective time-management. Hence, they were able to utilise the work breaks for discussions and short meetings This was noticeable when most meetings and brainstorming activities were conducted informally during coffee breaks.

The above discussion answers the first study question related to exploring "volunteerism" within the corporate EV context. It concludes that adding the "volunteerism" label to any corporate social programs must ensure that the basic principles of volunteering are satisfied and put into practice. The absence of any of the **Van** Schie et al. (2011) criteria raises questions about the possibility to acknowledge the volunteerism nature of EV projects. In the case where these principles were dismissed intentionally, employers are manipulators for claiming their programs are EV and employees are hypocrites for believing that participation is a volunteering act.

6.2.2.   Modelling Volunteerism of EV

It is essential to this study's argument to provide a model of the EV system which appears to succeed in translating the basic principles of volunteerism into practice within its organisational and operational structure. In the previous discussion, it was clear that L4CI represents a case of an EV project that was able to implant volunteerism across the system's practices and functions. The following diagram [Figure 6-1] models the structure of the L4CI system in the context of the above discussion. The diagram specifies how the L4CI system is linked to its surrounding systems (parental systems, sponsoring system, and beneficiary systems)   with a clear

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distribution of roles that guaranteed the insertion of volunteerism principles. The proposed model offers a new perspective on the integration of EV programs within a corporate context while maintaining the essential principles of volunteerism.
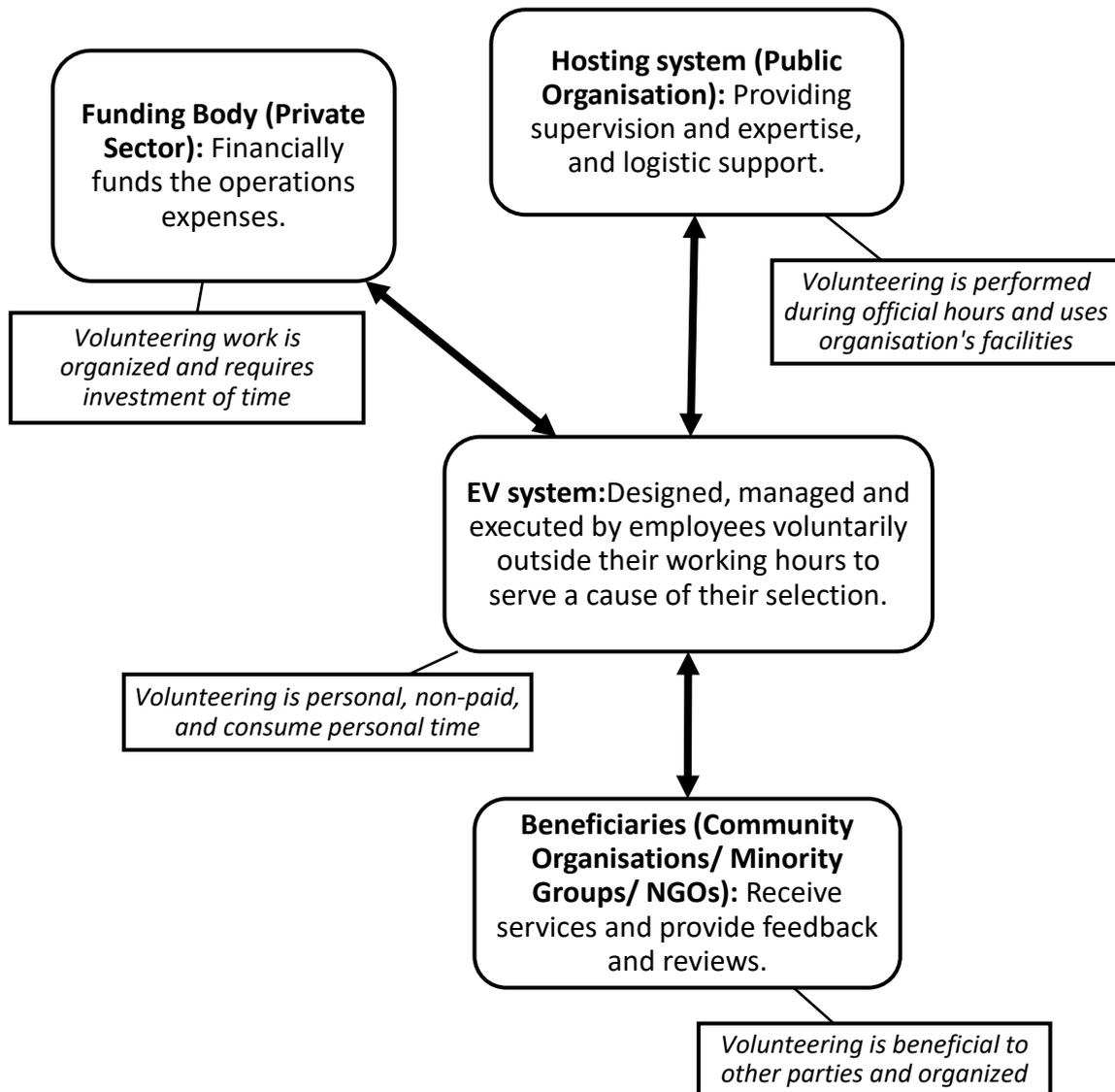

Figure 6-1: A model to capture the principle of volunteerism within EV systems

The model captures the role of volunteerism in defining the nature of relationships between the EV system and partners. For instance, volunteerism determines that the participation is unpaid, when the employees and their employer design a system that works within the working hours, yet consumes the free-time of the employees. This equation offers the employer the chance to be a dynamic contributor to the EV project. The recognition of the employer' central role in the success of the EV project was also maintained by offering a capacity to host the EV activities and utilise necessary resources. The connectivity with the beneficiaries through workshops and feedback mechanism ensured volunteerism is an organised work and beneficial to other parties. Investment of time was illustrated mainly when employees manage to provide benefits to the targeted groups within their personal time limits to achieve L4CI goals.

To conclude, the model [Figure 6-1] represents an EV project that clearly highlights the central role of the 'volunteerism' in defining the functions and practices of the EV project. As discussed previously, Bart et al. (2009), Caligiuri et al. (2013) and Basil et al. (2011) claimed that corporate EV could be a source of exploitation regarding the type of partnership and the nature of the voluntary program. Basil et al. (2011) accused employers in corporate volunteerism of "steering volunteerism" (p. 65) by guiding volunteers away from other causes that fall outside the company's best interest, to those perceived to be more socially accepted and rewarded. Bart et al., (2009) found that employees are more concerned about meeting managerial expectations, their reputation and performance assessment by others. The unique organisational and operational structure of L4CI in this study provided a possible model for employees to avoid the potential downsides and criticisms of general CV programs. The motivation

of employees to participate in CV programmes is claimed to be influenced by a corporation's CSR policy. In this case, the evaluation of L4CI's volunteerism could extinguish these possible pitfalls as both employees and management were mutually committed to keeping the 'spirit' of volunteerism active during the development process. They were able to achieve this by imparting the core principles of volunteerism into the overall aim and practices of the L4CI. The main strategies supporting volunteerism in L4CI was an emphasis on keeping all voluntary tasks outside of paid working hours, leaving participation up to employees' desire and willingness, a focus on delivering beneficial services to the community and the empowering of employees to take over the management of the internal EV project's internal operations.

However, there remain some limitations to the application and generalisability of this model. The first limitation relates to an employee's willingness to initiate a voluntary program. In the case of L4CI, this was enabled by employees' previous experience in volunteering and continuous engagement in charitable functions. The second limitation is associated with the availability of an enriching work environment that offers dynamic interaction and values the creativity of employees. In this study, the IC served as a hub that offered employees an exceptional interaction space, shares knowledge, suggests creative solutions to daily work-related problems.

The third limitation related to the ability of the management team to contribute toward the formation of the EV organisational and operational structure by being engaged directly with employees. The findings showed that the development of L4CI witnessed direct inputs from managing bodies who were keen to share their expertise, guidance, observation, and formal authority. Fourth, the cause to be served by the

program is essential in motivating participation. Studies claim there is a positive relationship between how volunteering project design affect the pro-social behaviour, the potential for the increased social network, overall participants experience and significance of project (see Grant, 2012; Mallum, 2016; Pajo and Lee, 2011). For instance, the study conducted by Mallum (2016) noted that work design on the volunteering program help to recruit, train and motivate employees to volunteer . It is found that the L4CI main cause and workshop design found to fit with employees' professional area and educational background and respond to their constant clashes with troubles caused by the library's visitors. The workshop is designed around themes that constitute libraries, books, and reading. Also, its long-term mission reflects employees desire to enhance an institutional problem that found to have a negative impact on employee's job satisfaction. The bottom-up approach is evident in pro-social behaviour.

Therefore, long-term strategies are essential for the successful establishment of EV projects. The development of future EV projects could be initiated by recruiting candidates with previous volunteering experiences, gathering data about employee's volunteering experience, companies'support for charitable organisations, the creation of an event-based of volunteering duties, and the development of policies for employee volunteering containing clear guidelines of process, expected level of support, and criteria for evaluation, assessment and reward. It should be noted that the study does not devalue corporate objectives to establish voluntary programs that fit with their strategic goals. However, attaching the 'V' to any voluntary project or program must be carefully assessed and examined with respect to its ability to put the principles of volunteerism into action. It should be understood at this point that these principles

should be used to push toward the positive evolution of voluntary systems and provide a starting platform for introducing new types and entering new spaces.

6.2.3. Factorial Approach to EV

Exploring the factors contributing to the establishment of this unique EV program structure in terms of practices, and functions that support the basic principles of volunteerism was one of the primary objectives of this study. The literature review illuminated a significant gap in the academic literature that rarely questioned these contributing factors nor examined their impact on the development of EV programs within a corporate context. Applying systems concepts "begins when the one first sees the world through the eyes of others" (Churchman, 1968, p. 231) by explicitly recognising that changes in social organisations are a result of collective learning (Checkland, 1981). The study findings suggest numerous circumstantial and temporal factors that exert influence on the development of an EV project. Hence, specifying those factors contributing substantively to the formation of an EV system with respect to the basic criteria of volunteerism achieves the aim of this study. In this section, factors that contributed to the formation of the L4CI system structure is detailed, followed by a discussion targeting how those systemic factors participated in developing the system in accordance with volunteerism's core principles.

After the intensive content and thematic analyses of participants' perceptions, motivations, beliefs, and expectations, a factorial approach was adopted to understand how volunteerism influenced and was influenced by the hosting system (existed structure) and its agents (employers and employees). The aggregate dimension [Figure 5-20, section 5.5.2] summarised the main conditions, events, and factors that

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contributed to the initiation and construction of the EV system's components. It also illustrated those factors that led to iterative changes in the L4CI system throughout the period 2012 to 2016.

The findings in this regard were established to build an extended picture of the extent and emerging factors as the construction of the EV system progressed. Most studies in volunteerism ignore the fact that establishing bottom-up voluntary organisations or projects embodies a reaction at some level towards an economic, social, political or environmental crisis. Once the negative impact has occurred, it pushes an individual or group of people to act voluntarily to enhance the undesirable state. However, their movement seems to always face forces that work in both directions to enable or constrain their progress.

The pre-existing conditions (political disturbance, poor educational system, insufficient public libraries, and the announcement of the first national prize for voluntary work, added to the misconduct of IC library users), believed to have been triggering factors, contributed to the formation of the L4CI identity and its goals. Participants were able to link these factors to the ability to build a solid case for confronting the hosting system of the need to act. Once their idea was validated and accepted, constructive factors consisted of: participants' accumulated experiences in volunteering and libraries, the establishment of a community service centre within the hosting system, and acquirement of external sponsorship, which all played major roles in the formation of the new entity. The L4CI witnessed non-stop building efforts where multiple agents from both external and internal environment systems participated in structuring its components and building its operational and organisational structures.

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Findings found that most of the factors contributed to the construction of the L4CI's organisational structure came from internal sources (EV group level and Institutional level). In contrast, the operational structure that consisted of the actual design of volunteering tasks and allocation of human capital and physical resources found to be imposed from external level. This included input from external agents (educational experts and consultants, online database, and friends and relatives who are involved in the education).

Moving to those factors, which primarily contributed to the formation of the L4CI's practices and functions that support the volunteerism's principles, we find that volunteerism, in and of itself, played a critical role. The principles of volunteerism in that sense appeared as a leading factor in the formation of the L4CI identity, work design and organisational structure. We can conclude that the influence of these principles was evident in enabling and disabling agency and in drawing a broad line and guide in the formation of the L4CI system. The main source of this influence came from the fact that most of the volunteering employees and managers carried the long-term experience of voluntary work. The participants at the early stage of the L4CI establishment were able to impose their understanding and respect of the volunteerism principles. This was clear when managers and employees agreed to define what "pure volunteering" does and does not. Not only that, it was found that the employees were able to defend these principles by insisting in owning their voluntary system in terms of managing, directing, and executing all the internal decisions related to the day-to-day operations. This demand found receptive ears from the managers who agreed to keep an adequate distance that allowed them to supervise the volunteering team without intervening with their wish to operate the EV project. From

the above discussion, we can conclude that there were two main factors that contributed to the establishment of a real volunteering system; the previous experience in voluntary work, the capacity of the parental system to give proper space to volunteerism principles.

Implanting the volunteerism principles in the foundation of the organisational structure of the L4CI determined the final identity and structure of its operations, such as the allocation of roles and resources. It also defined its boundaries (what is part of the system and what falls outside it?), which enabled its agents to develop proper communication networks with its surrounding systems. Therefore, the study argues that corporates need to specify volunteerism's principles with their employees and let these principles lead to the development of its EV programs.

6.2.4.   The EV from Systems Thinking perspective

In the language of Systems Thinking (ST) science, a purposeful social system is defined as a group of people that form an interactional network to achieve a specified purpose (Checkland, 2006). At this point in the discussion, the EV project was explored through a systemic lens and examined as a purposeful system, facilitating our understanding of its complex web of internal and external relationships. Application of the systems thinking concepts such as the holism concept enabled the researcher to uncover interactions between the EV system, its environment and the factors that contributed to the construction of its components. In this section, the discussion is guided by the systemic lens model developed for this particular study [Figure 2-2] to elaborate on its potential in aiding the exploration of the case unit from various angles.

The systemic lens model recognises the need to draw a boundary of the L4CI to identify its organisational and operational structure and define its emergent identity. It also specifies the importance of building a holistic view of the context by examining the hosting systems and environmental systems to reveal the factors contributing to the formation process of the L4CI system with respect to specified volunteerism criteria. Viewing the L4CI through a systemic lens also enabled the researcher to reveal the EV project as an independent system with emergent structures across organisational and operational levels. It also enabled the exploration of principles of volunteerism, which were found to exist at the heart of the EV system. The volunteerism concept was used in building the system's identity as it was found to inform role and resource allocation, the nature of relationships between its members, and also limited the ceiling of expectations and responsibilities. The systemic lens's ability to view the EV as an autonomous entity aided the examination and evaluation of the relationships that were formed with its hosting bodies and with the external environment. It presents an EV project by which the L4CI was positioned within its hosting system to be in itself a non-profitable voluntary system serving specified educational causes that were simultaneously perceived as valuable by its employees; misconduct and misuse of library facilities and resources represented the core long-term educational problem the employee's wished to solve with this EV project.

Systemically exploring the hosting system, power and administrative zones were divided between the employer and its employees, rather than being solely dictated by the mission and identity of the corporation. Two managing bodies represented the employer's authority in this case; the director of the IC, and the deanship of CCST. The main role of these two managing bodies focused on top-level

functions including validation and regulation, official communication, supervision and revision, and logistic support [see Figure 5-10, section 5.3.7.2]. The findings observed these two management bodies maintain a level of engagement that allowed them to provide essential advice and guidance on issues that fell within their authoritative zones. In doing so, both management bodies ensured their influence on employee decision-making (regarding the allocation of roles, resources, workshop design, and capacity) was kept to a minimum. This also held true for their communication with the project, where the employer limited its contact to the L4CI project's leader.

By focusing on the internal structures of the L4CI project, this project revealed a dynamic, interactional network by which the employees completed their voluntary tasks without interruptions to their paid work. According to Muthuri et al. (2009), EV systems create a tangible network of employees that volunteer frequently. This network was characterised by a high recognition of the member's abilities and skills, which were instrumental in the mobilising of other volunteers. The findings of this study support these claims while adding that volunteering employees exist and move in a parallel sphere. This parallel domain enabled them to form an independent view of their voluntary system that was essential to meeting the L4CI's goals. This independence allowed volunteering participants to recognise, evaluate and define the interrelated nature of volunteers, the institutional systems of ABC university and those agents located externally.

For example, the interaction of agents within the EV system was event-based, and these relationships were characterised by an elevated level of respect and trust. The refusal to establish a formal membership scheme reduced the segregation between volunteering employees and those who desired not to participate. Simultaneously, an

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open-door communication strategy provided an open platform that stimulated innovative ideas and the spread of the project news and updates, while also encouraging others to join. Such strategies also enabled the EV project leader to identify required skills and those non-participating colleagues who hold these skills and seek appropriate assistance when required. By considering what was expected from each of these three groups, the project leader was able to mobilise these groups to suit various tasks.

Perhaps of greatest interest, the use of rich picture and root definition in expressing the study findings suggest that volunteering employees show signs of being 'systems thinkers'. In that, their employee-led volunteering project reflected an intervention to solve existing problems, which can be contrasted with Checkland's soft system methodology (1983, 1984, 1999). The rich picture presented in Figure [5-8, section 5.3.4] described the problem definition, whereby 'causal loops' were drawn around employee's perceptions of reality to discern the source of their institutional problems. Through negotiations with their hosting system, a desirable identity and purpose were identified. This is referred to as 'root-definition' in the Soft Systems Methodology's language. The development of the system involved multiple rounds of written proposals which were viewed as an iterative process of conceptual model development. The final conceptual model of the EV system captured the design activities that specified the primary tasks, required resources, working structure, monitoring and controlling elements. In this sense, an activity model of organisational functions linked the EV project with the IC, CCST and another activity model of workshop design. These initial models witnessed an iterative series of development and enhancement based on feedback from customers (beneficiaries that included

schools and community groups), actors (employees performing the voluntary tasks) and owners (decision makers that included the L4CI leader, and IC and CCST directors). This gradual process of development and enhancement produced an additional activity model for teamwork that effectively described the allocation of voluntary tasks, resources and maintains control elements.

In addition, members of purposeful human systems according to Checkland's CATOWE (1981), consist of three types: (C) customers (beneficiaries), (O) owners (decision makers) and (A) actors (those who carry out the task). Further examination was conducted to examine how the roles were allocated and how the EV's ownership and functions were distributed across participating systems with multiple players, the CCST and the IC. Although the EV project is considered to be under the 'ownership' of the IC and part of the CCST's community services, the overall decisions were made by the volunteering employees. This, therefore, qualifies them as actual owners of the EV project. It is hard to limit the operational task to one party alone. Major managerial functions related to organising level were found to be carried out by the CCST and IC, which left employees to perform internal operational functions and other small tasks.

Adoption of the CATWOE framework [Table 5-9] to examine all actors facilitated the detection of three different levels of participation:

1. The first level includes managing volunteers who perform primary operational tasks including planning and organising the workshops, financing and budgeting, purchasing tools and gifts, reporting and communicating with IC and CCST. The team leader and his assistant were responsible for most management and administrative functions, where the majority of the paperwork was required.

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2. The second level can be called the 'active volunteers' and represents those participants most interested in delivering the workshops.

3. The third level of participation is event-based volunteering. This includes employees who occasionally participate whenever invited to perform small tasks.

The latter two types were kept away from paperwork and other operative tasks that did not fall within the actual service delivery. From a systems perspective, this can contribute to our understanding of EV systems and how roles and participants are connected through personal desires, availability, and skills rather than through job specifications and designation.

Acknowledging the need to understand the varying levels and nature of participation within voluntary organisations is essential in the design and development of future systemic interventions. The case study captured that fact that volunteering systems stand on a vulnerable foundation that presents members with high access/ exit. Interestingly, this vulnerability also provides a strong attraction to those members that are loyal to its ultimate purpose. Most voluntary organisations hold no power over its members due to the lack of employment contracts. Instead, volunteers are connected via 'social contracts' that secure mutual protection and welfare or regulate the relations among its members. Studies applying ST concepts need to acknowledge the unique features of every social system and invest more in developing exploratory tools to investigate these features further, and critical ST appears to offer one such opportunity.

6.3   Future Studies

The examination of L4CI at a systems level brings the study of EV to a level that is more easily approached by HR managers, CSR planners, sociologists and Systems Thinking scientists. For those interested in developing corporate employee volunteering programs, it provides a new approach to establishing sustainable EV projects that could replace the more common short-term events and programs. Future studies are warranted that examine the factors can ensure the long-term viability of CV programs. Further studies are also recommended to identify the contextual factors that contribute to the empowering of volunteers, which could contribute to our understanding of the strategies at national and international levels. This can be achieved by providing a supportive atmosphere for volunteers in any context and sector through rules and regulations that empower and encourage corporate EV and create beneficial, enjoyable and safe volunteering conditions for employees.

For those interested in the field of corporate volunteering, more studies need to start speaking about the perceptions and stigmas attached of non-volunteering colleagues compared to differing perceptions of employees participating in EV programs that nonetheless lack some of the essential principles of volunteerism. Future researchers may benefit from in-depth case studies on the potential risks to the sustainability of corporates' community projects when employees give up one or more of these basic principles of volunteerism. There is also an opportunity for scholars in human resource development to study possible impacts on the relationship between volunteering and non-volunteering employees and the best strategies to avoid conflicts and negative attitudes that might arise when the management decides to give more credits to the "volunteering" employees.

Understanding the partnerships that exist in CV programs is still under investigation. The L4CI project exemplified the case of a joint venture between the public and private sectors. Financial budgets are commonly restricted in public sector organisations, while this is less common within the private sector. Therefore, convincing private sector organisations to support external EV projects opens the door for a new form of volunteering systems as potential joint ventures between two organisations located in the same or different sectors. This type of collaboration saves the employer time, effort and money to be invested in corporate EV programs, and offers those in the private sector ready-made opportunities to enrich their CSR curricula. As this case study was limited to the scope of predefined objectives, further studies are required to develop models of CVs that involve joint venture or partnership schemes. This can contribute to connecting various sectors under a unified scheme of volunteerism and consequently reduce the steering of volunteers or capitalise toward the interests of one party (Basil et al. 2011; Van Schie et al., 2011, Bart et al., 2009).

In addition, this case study provided an opportunity for researchers on organisational behaviour (OB) and entrepreneurial orientation (EO) to expand their investigations into the field of EV. According to Miller (1983), EO is concerned with the assessment of behaviours at the organisational level where Anderson (2011) ascribed it to the extent to which an organisation displays innovative, risky, and proactive behaviour. In this case study, the proactive behaviour and growing interactions of participants were a remarkable example of organisational entrepreneurship. The noticeable creative networks and engagement between various stakeholders emerged during the formation stage of the EV project. This sparked the need for an in-depth examination of agents' skills and movements across time and multiple systems. The

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researchers believe this area provides fertile ground for the examination of relationships within and between employee volunteering and entrepreneurship.

Sociologists and others interested in social systems are encouraged to examine EV to uncover novel examples of social structuration and to understand the emergence of social systems better. Giddens (1981) claimed that "all human action is carried on by knowledgeable agents who both construct the social world through their action, yet whose action is also conditioned and constrained by the very world of their creation" (p. 54). Although the scope of this study was informed by the need to examine volunteerism within the context of Corporate EV and the factors influencing the formation of the EV system in respect to volunteerism criteria, little evidence emerged regarding the agent-structure dualism or the emergence of self-organising systems. For instance, the spontaneity and self-allocation of roles and resources within the EV was detailed by many informants. During the earliest stages of the EV project's formation, the allocation of roles across various voluntary activities took on a self-organising process where employees self-nominated themselves for specific tasks. However, this process of self-organisation gradually reduced when the functions began to form a defined network. As the network matured, it became more evident where gaps existed in the network of tasks, resulting in members being delegated explicitly to those tasks. The now-defined roles include 'managing volunteers', who are expected to tackle project management and paperwork, while 'active' or 'event-based' volunteers move in and out according to the scheduling requirements. Further studies are required to examine the transition between self-organisation and defined allocations of roles, as this may deliver unique insight into all forms of networks that develop without a pre-defined purpose and with minimal financial resources, from other forms of

volunteering to start-up companies (that can begin with nothing but intellectual property).

6.4   Conclusion

Volunteerism in the contemporary corporate environment has proved to be an important source of employee loyalty, job satisfaction and community involvement. Commonly, the core principles of volunteerism are dismissed to meet corporate goals. As such, any EV programs that are designed and/or initiated by companies fail to meet the basic principles of volunteering (free-will, personal involvement, no payment, and the generation of benefits to other parties). This study provided a unique EV model that successfully overcame the absence of some principles of volunteerism from contemporary forms of corporate employee volunteering projects. It also explored factors that contribute to placing volunteerism at the heart of the system, which leads to the formation of a sustainable EV project. The academic literature lacked a true understanding of the factors contributing to the formation of an EV project from its earliest stage. This study aimed to fill this knowledge gap that is commonly overlooked by academic researchers. The application of ST tools and concepts to design this exploratory study resulted in an improved ability to grasp a holistic overview of the EV case through enabling investigation into each of the nested systems in isolation, as they relate to each other, and in relation to their environment.

It is believed that this research contributes to developing a checklist to evaluate the extent to which corporate EV programs are able to employ volunteerism in the workplace. By focusing on the L4CI case study, various factors were revealed, from which an argument was derived to promote the critical role of those factors in enabling

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accurate implantation of volunteerism into corporate EV. The findings contribute to the varied fields of organisational behaviour, strategic management, entrepreneurship, leadership, and systems thinking. In turn, advances in these fields will contribute to our future understanding of corporate volunteerism.

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Appendances

Appendix A: Invitation Letter to IC management and L4CI Leader

Appendix B: Interview Protocol and Questions for Volunteers

Appendix C: Interview Protocol and Questions for Collaborators

Appendix D: Consent Form for Organisation (Management)

Appendix E: Consent Form for Employees

Appendix F: Hull University's Approval of Research Ethics Committee

Appendix G: Photocopies of Some Arabic Transcripts

Appendix H: Time Line of Events (2010-2016)

Note: All Names in photocopied documents were covered to ensure confidentiality and ensure anonymous of participants

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Appendix A: Invitation Letter to The IC manager COR 1 (same was sent to the L4CI's group leader VOL 1)

UNIVERSITY OF **Hull**
Business School

Dear Dr XXXX XXXXXXX

Director of Information Centre (IC) at XXXXX

After greetings;

Subject: Invitation to participate in Exploratory Study as Part of PhD

I am pleased to write to your respectful organisation pointing out its astonishing un-ignorable participation in the educational sector in Oman. The Information Centre at the XXXX XXXXXX XXXXXX is playing now more than before a critical role in providing high-quality services dedicated for the college faculties, researchers and students along with a broad set of technical and educational technology support. It comes to our knowledge that the working team of the library have extended the worldview of the Centre by initiating a social program called Library for Community Initiative (L4CI) aims to spread the education of library' usage and attach young generation to the book. All of these features make the Centre one of the leading targeted organisations in my study.

Before deciding to participate, it is important to inform you more about the action research project.

What is the objective of this study?

Continuous changing capacity through employee volunteering defines the viability of today organisations. This research is design to carry on an explorative study to understand the emergence of Library for Community Initiative (L4CI) at your centre. The learning process's primary objective is to examine and identify its roles and impact and what we can learn to promote employee volunteering within the various institutions in Oman.

What are the scope and nature of this study?

The study focused on the L4CI and bounded its investigation on its members and those of direct relation to it. The two round interviews are going to contact each member, management and employee at the Information Centre, previous and current manager of Training and Social Development Office. The study plans run two rounds of interviews; narrative interview and semi-structured interviews in 3-4 weeks' time.

During each interview, the participants are encouraged to express all their stories, information, and feelings toward the L4CI freely. The researcher also would like to gather documents, emails, formal correspondences about the L4CI. The primary role of the researcher after declaring ethical consideration is to encourage the participants to communicate their stories in the highly trustful environment.

Why are chosen to be part of it?

Employee Volunteering EV proved to add-value to the visions, roles and strategy building in today organisations, impacting employees' engagement level and moral behaviours positively. Studies have linked EV with an increase of organisations' overall performance, productivity, morality and social responsibility as well as its contribution to building strong organisational repetition. Being part of this research can enrich the academic studies and assess your organisation in assessing the impact of L4CI on knowledge exchange and learning process of its employees and overall performance.

What is expected from the participation in the study?

Your support to this study and invitation to all employees to participate will be appreciated. All participants will be asking nothing more than other members. Interviews encompass two stages and participants are encouraged entirely and freely to give their opinions and decide the amount of information to contribute. As part of ethical considerations, a legal consent is required from the organisation as well as from individual participants. However, a permission of access is essential before sending the individual consent forms.

What are the benefits that you will gain?

The research promotes for knowledge exchange, widens the internal communication, and provides an excellent interaction platform for participating members to establish collective efforts, and networks and share expertise and values. The Organizations also will be helping to further academic researchers within various contexts including employee volunteering, capacity building, and community development. As for researcher, the completion of the work as planned definitely can consider an achievement and provide an academic contribution to the field of systems thinking research and volunteerism development.

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Confidentiality

There are no risks involved in taking part in this research. Participating members' confidentiality and privacy will be ensured as the findings will be presented anonymously. No personal data will be collected. All information obtained from the interviews and additional documents or via feedback forms will remain confidential and will be used for academic purposes only. Data generated by the research must be retained in accordance with the University of Hull's Ethical Procedures for Research (for further information, please contact the committee chair at (ethics@brookes.ac.uk). Should participants have any concerns about the conduct of this research project, please contact the Secretary, HUBS Research Ethics Committee, University of Hull, Cottingham Rd, Hull, HU6 7RX; Tel No (+44) (0)1482 463410; fax (+44) (0)1482 463689.

Findings

The data gathered will be a part of my doctoral thesis. Furthermore, the analysis of the data and the findings may be used for further research and disseminated at academic conferences and used to publish journal articles. A summary of the findings will be available on request; please contact the researcher on the details below:

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Thank you

Appendix B: Interview Protocol and Questions for Volunteers

A.1. Introductory Protocol

> *Good morning (afternoon). My name is ___. Thank you for coming. My study involves two rounds of interviews. This interview aims to listen to your side of the story about the L4CI, your opinion, experiences, involvement and expectations. It is entirely free to talk, and there is no right or wrong, desirable, or undesirable answers. I would like you to feel comfortable with saying what you think and how you feel.*
>
> *The second round of the interview will be scheduled at the end of this one. Alternatively, it can be conducted just after we are done upon your request. During the second round, I will be asking open-ended questions to investigate certain areas within the L4CI. I appreciate if you bear with me as it will take a maximum of two hours. We will be having a break in between upon your request.*
>
> *If it is okay with you, I will be tape-recording to both interviews. The purpose of this is so that I can get all the details but at the same time be able to carry on an attentive conversation with you. I assure you that all your comments will remain confidential. I will be compiling an analysis report, which will contain all participants' comments without any reference to individuals.*
>
> *Before we start, do you have any inquiry?*
>
> *If No, please take a few minutes to read and sign this consent form before we get started.*

A.2. Basic Information

Date: _____   Place: _____

Time from: _____ to: _____ Duration: _____

Institutions: _____

Interviewee (Title and Name): _____ Code (VOL - _____)

Gender: F / M   Age: _____

Job position: _____   Joined Year: _____

Acting Role within the L4CI: _____ From: _____To: _____

Documents Obtained: _____

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1st round Interview questions
Project organisation Level
At first, can you tell how did the idea of this initiative begin, who and what was happening at that first time? What do you remember most?
How can you describe the reaction of the employer and other employees at that time?
What major changes happened and for what reasons?
Today, if one asks you to introduce it, what would you say?
What are the challenges that faced the initiative at the beginning and now?
Probs. What for? Can you explain? Can you remember any incident? How do you feel about that? How did you react?
Can you define that in a different way? How do you feel about it? Do you want to do something about that?
Closing: that was interesting. Do you have anything to add?
Project structure Level
I want to move now into more details to discuss practices and members participation. Tell me about the group activities and your activities within the group. How do you describe your role?
Your motivation?
Core values?
Prob. How do you feel about that? Do you recall any event/examples?
After being part of this volunteering group, do you notice any change in your thinking and emotions of any sort? What? How is that important to you? How is that important to the initiative?
Do you feel different about yourself when you perform as a volunteer than when you perform your regular job? **Prob.** In what sense
If you would change anything what would it be a priority?
What did you learn and how that was of any use to you in the initiative?
Probs. Can you explain or give an example
Closing: Do you have anything to end this interview that is of importance?
Agency
How the system's actors do feel and act to adapt, engage, change and contribute to the group?
How did you feel working with the group and with the library

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2nd round Interview questions
Project organisation Level
What caused the initiative? Moreover, how did that help?
What is the critical thing, benefit and value – would you change or keep?
What holds it together? Does everyone believe so?
Is it a different project from others because it is a volunteering one?
Do you understand what this initiative is heading to? (Project objective) can you describe?
How do you see the relationship between the initiative and the employing organisation now and before?
Do you feel that the initiative has gained its independence? How and when?
Project structure Level
What kind of resource activities were important – decision making and allocation on a budget, cost/benefit, outsource, purchase, distribute etc.   What was your role?
How did you communicate – describe the main ways you use in the group? What was your role?
Describe the main activities – as a group – which one was enjoyable, important, unpleasant, etc. and the different roles in the group? What was your role?
Who and how decided about action? What were their primary reasons for justifying? Moreover, what are things that are done based on the mutual agreement? What was your role?
Who decides what your (next) group goals are? Can you describe this process? Do you think it is correct? Could you change it? What was your role?
Agency
Do you think you have the power to change the way the group acts?
Would you be heard if you had objections or suggestions?
Why do you think what you do in volunteering activities is essential/has an effect?
Do you want to change something particular?
Do you think you and your volunteer colleagues act differently? Why is this so?
Do you think it is right to act independently?
Can you improvise in your activities?
Can you do your act on your own do you need permission?
Are you supported in the activities you want to do? How
Are there difficulties or conditions to encourage or discourage you from participating?

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Appendix C: Interview Protocol and Questions for Collaborators

A. Introductory Protocol

> *Good morning (afternoon). My name is __. Thank you for coming. My study involves two rounds of interviews. This interview aims to listen to your side of the story about the L4CI, your opinion, experiences, involvement and expectations. It is entirely free to talk, and there are no right or wrong, desirable, or undesirable answers. I would like you to feel comfortable with saying what you think and how you feel.*
>
> *The second round of the interview will be scheduled at the end of this one. Alternatively, it can be conducted just after we are done upon your request. During the second round, I will be asking open-ended questions to investigate certain areas within the L4CI. I appreciate if you bear with me as it will take a maximum of two hours. We will be having a break in between upon your request.*
>
> *If it is okay with you, I will be tape-recording to both interviews. The purpose of this is so that I can get all the details but at the same time be able to carry on an attentive conversation with you. I assure you that all your comments will remain confidential. I will be compiling an analysis report, which will contain all participants' comments without any reference to individuals.*
>
> *Before we start, do you have any inquiry?*
>
> *If No, please take a few minutes to read and sign this consent form before we get started.*

A.1. Basic Information

Date: _____   Place: _____

Time from: _____ to: _____ Duration: _____

Institutions: _____

Interviewee (Title and Name): _____ Code (COR- _____)

Gender: F / M   Age: _____

Job position: _____   Joined Year: _____

Acting Role within the L4CI: _____ From: _____To: _____

Documents Obtained: _____

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1st round Interview questions
System Level
Give me please some background on the library's / CCST processes and especially on the processes that help special interest groups use the library?
Describe how you came to know and/or take part in the project
Structure Level
I want to move now into more details to discuss initiative practices. What can you tell me about that?
What sort of interaction level do you keep with the project? and how do you feel about that? How do you communicate with the project people
Probs. Do you recall any event of this interaction?
Probs. Can you explain or give an example
Agency
How does the library (management and employees)/ CCST feel and act with the group?
Do you feel that the library (management and employees) has the right to intervene with initiative activities and management?
Since the start of the volunteering activities inside the library, do you feel that this has influenced the behaviour of the participants, employees, management?
Probs. Can you explain in what sense?
Semi-Structured questions
System level
Being an outsider, what do you think was the main reason for the successful establishment of the initiative?
How do you see the relationship between the project and the library/CCST changing over time?
What is the benefit, cost, risk or value this initiative has brought to the library/CCST in your opinion?
Structure Level
Do you have a role in the resource, decision-making and allocation of budget, cost/benefit, outsource, purchase, distribute etc.
Who makes all these decisions- if you know
Did the presence of the project change something in the resource and rules in the library
Agency
Do you think you have the power to change the way the group acts?
Do you think the initiative is essential to the library? Why?
Do you want to change something particular in the current relationship between the initiative and the library?
Are there conditions to encourage or discourage volunteerism?

Appendix D: Consent Form for Organisation (Management)

UNIVERSITY OF Hull

Business School

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSENT FORM – For Institutions/Organisations

(to be completed by the person legally responsible)

I, ...

Holding the Job Position as : ....

In (Name of the Institution): ....

Hereby give permission to be involved in a research study being undertaken by:

Mrs. Mouza M Al Hadhrami; and I understand that the purpose of the research is:

The aim of this exploratory research is examine the emergence of voluntary groups within established institutions by conducting a single case study strategy. The study main aim is to understand the **systemic factors that contributes in the construction of an employee volunteering program** taking the case of Library for Community Initiative [L4CI] at the Information Centre at XXXXX XXXXXXX. A careful considerations is invested to use a systemic lens to explore and explain the role of the emotions in the emergence of this EV group in reflections to various concepts discussed in the literature review within the organization emergence. In this case study, two methods for narrative inquiry are selected to implement two rounds of data collection. The first round involves of unstructured narrative interviews and the second round consists of semi-structured open-ended interviews. All interviews is going to be audio recorded, participants identities will be coded, and data are treated confidentially according to research ethical standards and regulations

and that involvement for the institution means the following: -

Give permission and support to the researcher to implement data collection by interviewing number of members of the institution in a period of 3 - 4 weeks.

I hereby declare that

1. The aims, methods, and anticipated benefits, and possible risks/hazards of the research study, have been explained to me.

2. I voluntarily and freely give my consent for the institution/organisation to participate in the above research study.

3. I am free to withdraw my consent at any time during the study, in which event participation in the research study will immediately cease and any information obtained through this institution/organisation will not be used if I so request.

4. I understand that case studies will be used for research purposes and may be reported in scientific and academic journals, non-academic publications and the internet.

Note: This consent must be filled on a voluntary basis by *the person legally responsible* after confirming their approval of the merits of the study and accompanying information expressed in the letter of invitation.

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UNIVERSITY OF Hull

Business School

I agree that   **(Please circle your choice)**

4. The institution/organisation MAY / MAY NOT be named in research publications or other publicity without prior agreement.

5. *I / We DO / DO NOT require an opportunity to check the factual accuracy of the research findings related to the institution/organisation.*

6. *I / We EXPECT / DO NOT EXPECT to receive a copy of the research findings or publications.*

Signature: Date:

The contact details of the researcher are:

    Mrs. Mouza Mohamed Saif Al Hadhrami
    117 Inglemire Lane,
    HU6 7TR, Hull
    Mobile: +447706764096
    E-mail: m.m.al-hadhrami@2012.hull.ac.uk

The contact details of the secretary to the HUBS Research Ethics Committee are:

    Amy Cowling, Hull University Business School,
    University of Hull, Cottingham Road,
    Hull, HU6 7RX.
    Email: a.cowling@hull.ac.uk
    Tel. 01482-463410.

Note: This consent must be filled on a voluntary basis by *the person legally responsible* after confirming their approval of the merits of the study and accompanying information expressed in the letter of invitation.

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Appendix E: Consent Form for Employees

UNIVERSITY OF Hull

Business School

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSENT FORM- for Individual Participant

I, ...

Working in:...

Hereby agree to participate in this study to be undertaken by **Mrs. Mouza M Al Hadhrami**

and I understand that the purpose of the research is:

The aim of this exploratory research is examine the emergence of voluntary groups within established institutions by conducting a single case study strategy. The study main aim is to understand **the systemic factors that contributes in the construction of an employee volunteering program** taking the case of Library for Community Initiative [L4CI] at the Information Centre at XXXXXX XXXXXXX XXXXX. A careful considerations is invested to use a systemic lens to explore and explain the role of the emotions in the emergence of this EV group in reflections to various concepts discussed in the literature review within the organization emergence. In this case study, two methods for narrative inquiry are selected to implement two rounds of data collection. The first round involves of unstructured narrative interviews and the second round consists of semi-structured open-ended interviews. All interviews is going to be audio recorded, participants identities will be coded, and data are treated confidentially according to research ethical standards and regulations.

I understand that

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

Note: This consent must be filled on a voluntary basis by all participating members after confirming their approval of the merits of the study and accompanying information expressed in the letter of invitation.

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I agree that (Please circle your choice)

4. My name MAY / MAY NOT be identified in research publications or other publicity without prior agreement.

5. *I DO / DO NOT require an opportunity to check the factual accuracy of the research findings related to my contribution.*

6. *I EXPECT / DO NOT EXPECT to receive a copy of the research findings or publications.*

Signature: Date:

The contact details of the researcher are:

Mrs. Mouza Mohamed Saif Al Hadhrami
117 Inglemire Lane,
HU6 7TR, Hull
mobile: +447706764096
E-mail: m.m.al-hadhrami@2012.hull.ac.uk

The contact details of the secretary to the HUBS Research Ethics Committee are:

Amy Cowling, Hull University Business School,
University of Hull, Cottingham Road,
Hull, HU6 7RX.
Email: a.cowling@hull.ac.uk
Tel. 01482-463410.

Note: This consent must be filled on a voluntary basis by all participating members after confirming their approval of the merits of the study and accompanying information expressed in the letter of invitation.

Appendix F: Hull University's Approval of Research Ethics Committee

UNIVERSITY OF Hull

Ms Mouza Al Hadhrami
117 Inglemire Lane
HULL
Yorkshire
HU6 7TR

Hull University Business School
Research Office
T +44(0)1482 463536
E h.carpenter@hull.ac.uk

Ref: HUBSREC 2015/32

27 November 2015

Dear Mouza

Re: The emergence of social voluntary systems within established institutions from Systems Thinking prospective: an explorative case study on employee volunteering at █████████████████████

Thank you for your research ethics application.

I am pleased to inform you that on behalf of the Business School Research Ethics Committee at the University of Hull, Dr Ashish Dwivedi has approved your application on 27 November 2015.

I wish you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Hilary Carpenter
Secretary,
Research Ethics Committee

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Appendix G: Photocopies of Some Arabic Transcripts
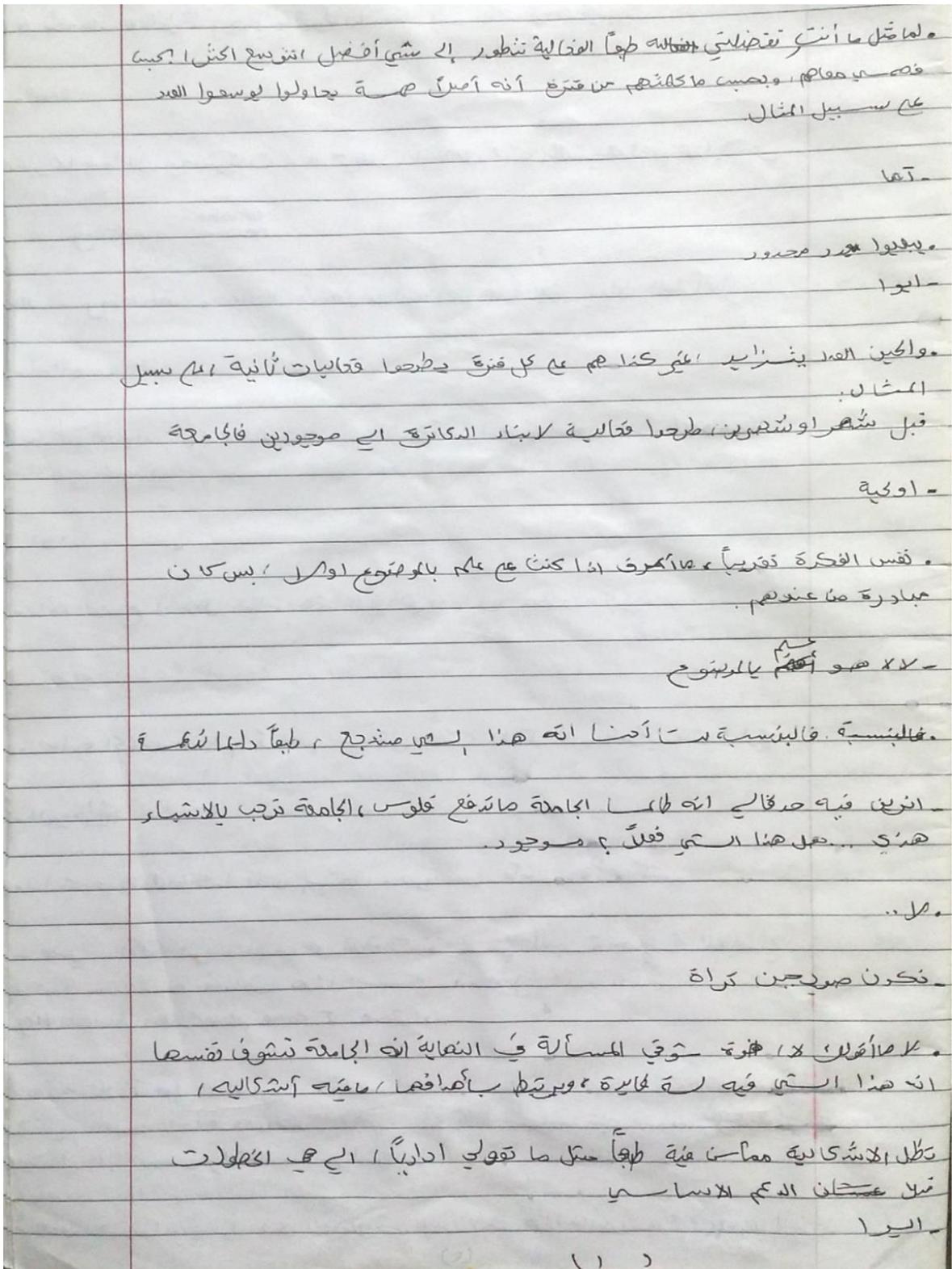
A photocopy of the Arabic Transcript of the interview with COR 3

- ايوا آخر ضيقة واحد .. وحركتنا فيه واحد ضيقة ،

- يعني تقدر انت تقول ،انه لو كنت من البدايه طلاب كثيرة اكبر ،كان بفضّل؟

- هذي الغايه لكن بطريه لكن لكن حصلناها .. كانت أصلاً هي حا طاقة ،

- هيا هي طاقة انا اعرفها

- ايوا لا وبطريه حصلناها لي ... كان فيه مشاكل عند الطلاب بواد

- والبنات ما عندهم !

- والدلالي خذ هذا هذا الكلية سووها حال MBA

- ايوة MBA

- عاد هذا انا أصويت ،عادم اشوا خذيوا ذي اعطونا صيزي

- اوكية ، فصارت كذا شل مثل negotiation اه وعمل يوسف انه كن انه الكليه يعني كأنه جالسة نقاوضهم في سوبر ماركت

- ايوا

- انه المفروض تجي من عندهم ، ونحن أصرينا اتوصوا ذي اعطونا صيزي وزوجت هيني الحلال ؟ وعطوتا اياها .

- اوكية ،

- وعدنا مع طول يعني سيناريو الديكور ، واستغللنا فيها يعني بكل الاستعدادات ، ... ويعني ا هه يعني خليناها جاهزة خلا هذا الكلاس ، وطلاب ي أجتماع كويره قة يعني .

- مزي من همن الاشياء

- يعني شي من الدكاترة عندي عاصوا يسووا أجه عاذ هم حارد ،
(٣٦)

Appendix H: Time Line of Events (2010-2016)

Level of analysis	Data Type	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Socio-political level	Secondary		Feb. Protester demand jobs and political reform (one shot dead). The government reacted by promising jobs and benefits	Sep. trails begin of activists accused of posting abusive and proactive critisms online aimed reports of a crackdown on protests over employment and lack of democracy	March. The Sultan pardoned around 30 convicted people including online activists and protesters	May. Former minister of commerce was sentenced 3 years in prison for corruption		
			Oct. 2nd elections for the consultative Council. Following unrest pushing the government to grant the Council greater powers		End of strikes and more gov. reformations were declared and implemented. The Gov announces a plan to employ 1000s of unemployed graduates			
Voluntary Work and community -led Associations level	Secondary		Feb. The Gov announces His Majesty Prize for Voluntary work for the first time	Dec the 5th is he International Volunteer Day which falls on . Ten winners of his Majesty prize were honoured		Official reports shows that the number of charitable, community-based societies increased by almost 100%; from 20 in 2005 to 39 by 2011, with a total number of 6,700 registered members & volunteers.		
The University Level:	Secondary / Primary	feb. Establishes Assistant Dean for Community Services and Training in each college.						The Centre for Continual Education formed the "Voluntary Group" which aims to utilise the capabilities and expertise of the University's employees to benefit the society
Centre for Community Services and Training (CCST) level	Primary	COR 3 became the first assistant dean to manage the Centre for community services and training.	Dec. The CCST accepted the L4CI when proposed by (VOL 1) and (VOL 2) and decided to support it and work to present it as community service.		(COR 4) replaced (COR 3) and become Assistant Dean of CCST			
Information Centre (IC)	Primary	End of 2010. The IC building has a new interior re-plan to reduce noise level and deal with employees complaints of unacceptable students' behaviours	June. (VOL 1) and (VOL 2) decided to quite the Training Committee. The committee became inefficient since then					
			Sep. The L4CI was presented to the IC director (COR 1) who worked with them to seek approval from the university.					

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Level of analysis	Data Type	EVENTS					

Library for Community (L4CI) level:	Primary	Sept. The first idea to establish the L4CI was initiated by the Group leader (VOL 1) and his colleague (VOL 2)	A group of IC employees represented by (VOL1) works to collect field data and produce strong proposal under direct guidance from CCST assistant dean (participant YS). The L4CI proposal receives the College board initial approval .	June. Succeeds to get a sponsorship and funds arrives to cover first year activities. The employees works to prepare the workshop hall with furniture, tools, and monitors.	the L4CI receives the second funds and plans for intensive year plan full of internal and external activities	The workshop number drops to 10 due to delay in receiving funds from the sponsor. The group manages to run two external workshops and ma makes sure to report their news to local newspapers.	The L4CI receives the third fund after celebrating the "Number 1000" which was attended by the CEO of the sponsor company. The CEO promises the company commitment and high level of satisfaction
		Oct. L4CI as an idea was under construction . It was proposed to IC director who asked the idea leader and his colleague (VOL 1 and VOL 2) to jointly put it in the table of the Centre for continual education at the University. The Centre proposed to take over the idea to implemented at the Main Library. This suggestion was refused and the team insisted on their full ownership of the L4CI idea.	the IC management agrees to allocate a hall for the L4CI to run the workshops. L4CI starts to design its workshop activities, budget plan, and logo . The Team starts to search for financial sponsor. All external corresponds were carried by the CCST director.	by Dec. L4CI managed to run 11 indoor workshops. Reviews from colleagues and school supervisors recommends some improvements in issues related to timing, tools, and activities.	accomplished 18 workshops; one of them were external. Also, a group of IC female employees designs and implements one of the internal workshops. One of them raises demands for more healthy meals which was approved latter. The L4CI news started to appears at the University bulletin and social media.		The L4CI implemented 9 workshops; one of them was in coordination with the Science Group at the Science College. The decided to keep it one workshop per month to reduce expenses and ensure long-term functionality
			(VOL 2) left the IC centre to join external job. (VOL 3) voluntarily replaces (VOL 2) and automatically become the assistant of the group leader since then.		The I4CI attracts local media attention and IC director attends an interview in famous TV show		

Participating Employee Level:							
VOL2	Primary			VOL 2 Offered his resignation from IC and moved out			
VOL 3	Primary			VOL 3 Joined the Ice as Media technician and voluntarily become L4CI 's leader assistance			
VOL 6	Primary			VOL 6 left on study leave			VOL 6 became Liaison Officer at CCST
VOL 9	Primary					VOL 9 Joined IC as technician	VOL 9 Joined IC as Librarian and become active EV in L4CI workshops
VOL 7	Primary					VOL 7 Joined IC as Librarian and become active EV in L4CI workshops	
VOL 8	Primary					VOL 8 Joined IC as Librarian and become active EV in L4CI workshops	
COR 3	Primary		COR 3 Becomes assistant dean for CCST		COR 3 Moved to occupy assistant dean for students" affairs (outside college)		
COR 4	Primary				COR 4 Became the assistant dean for CCST		
COR 2	Primary				COR 2 Offered to make L4CI printings with very low prices from his self-own shop		

Year		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016

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