

GROWTH BEGINS FROM WITHIN: How Internal Transparency Influences Organizational Learning

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NPA 622: Nonprofit Data Analysis - Capstone

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OVERVIEW / INTRODUCTION

- Ample research exists that focuses on organizational learning in the context of program efficiency and outcomes, and organizational transparency in the context of governance and compliance.
- The goal for this project is to further explore the relationship between organizational learning and the commitment to internal transparency, specifically pertaining to the internal members of an organization (i.e. board members, executive leaders, staff, and volunteers).

DEFINITIONS

- *Transparency* – “a continuous flow of information from an organization to the public about the organization’s mission, financial situation, and governance” (BoardSource 2010: 366).
- *Organizational Learning* – “The intentional practice of collecting information, reflecting on it, and sharing the findings, to improve the performance of an organization” (Stanford Social Innovation Review, 2011).

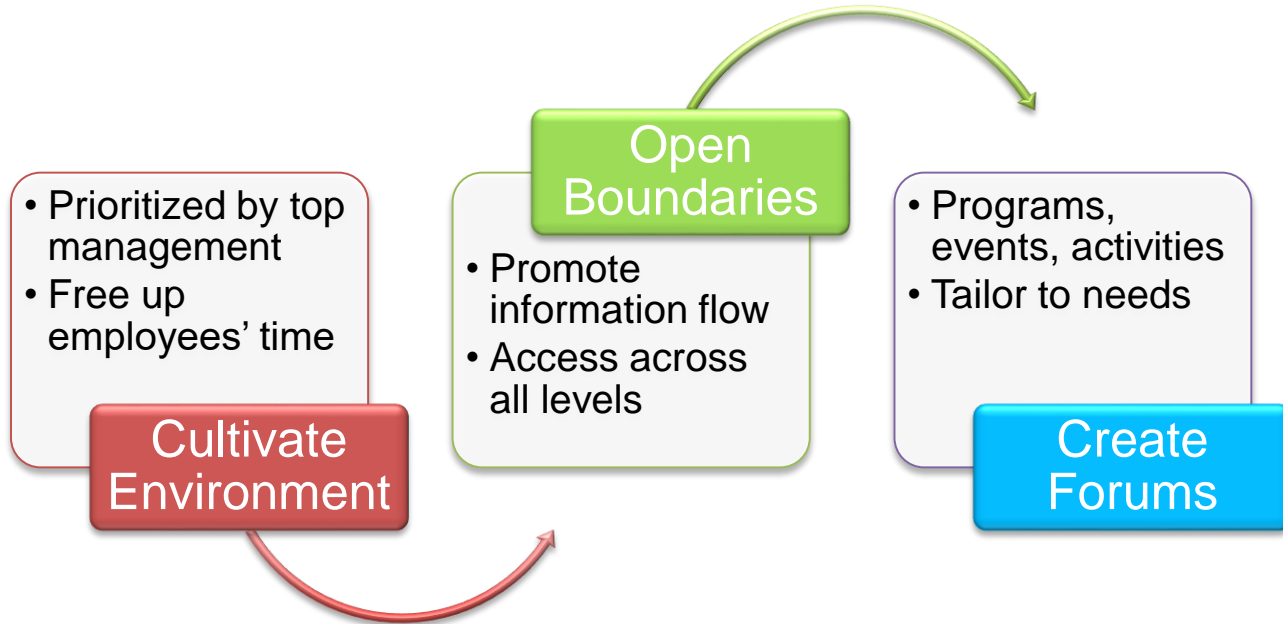
OBJECTIVES AND VALUES

1. Research Question: How do internal successes and short fallings in an organization influence organizational learning culture and growth?
2. Highlight the impact of these factors on multiple levels within an organization
3. Outline model for incorporating internal transparency into the development of organizational learning culture

METHODS AND APPROACHES

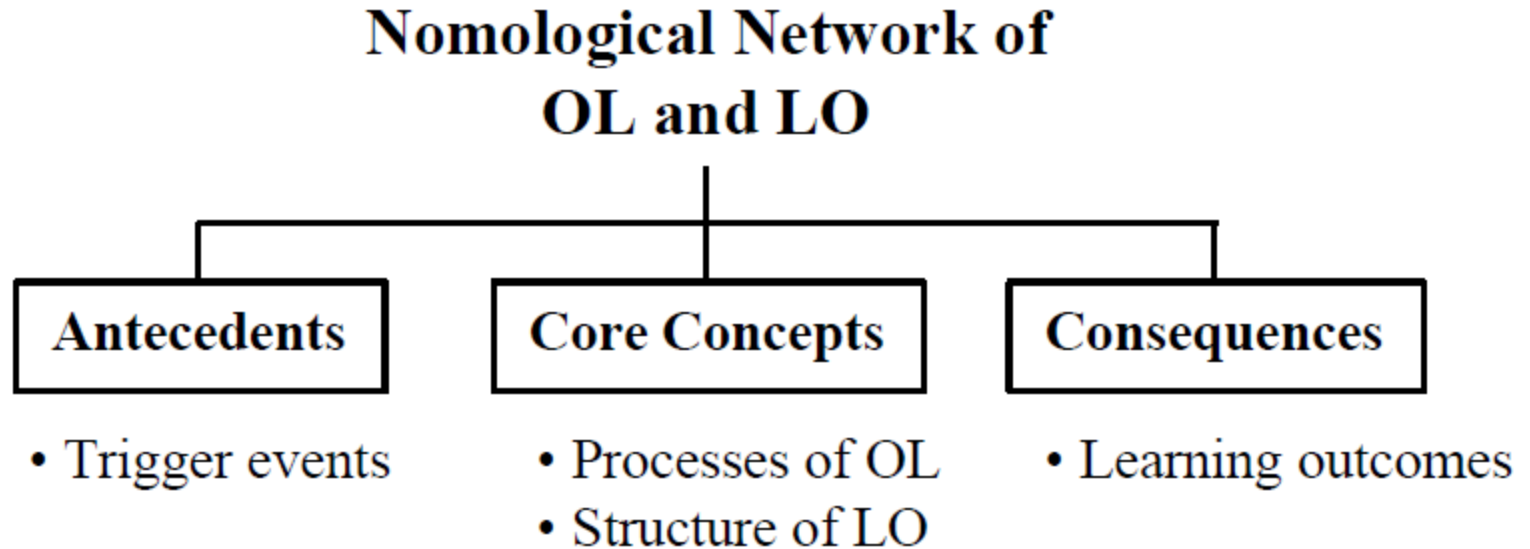
1. Literature Review
2. Qualitative Analysis: Expert Interviews
 1. 10 Interview Participants
 1. 2 Board members, 2 Executive leaders, 3 Staff, 1 Volunteer, and 2 Content experts
 2. 4 Participants with secondary roles, 14 Nonprofit Perspectives Total
 2. Semi-structured, 45-60 min.
 3. Purposive & Snowball Sampling

DATA ANALYSIS: Literature Review



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Figure 1: Nomological Network of Organizational Learning and Learning Organizations



DATA ANALYSIS: Expert Interviews

Management



- More formal
- Consistent Structure
- Tiered Process, Situational
- Based off Strong Culture
- Shows Up in All Spaces
- Strategy-Driven

Non-management

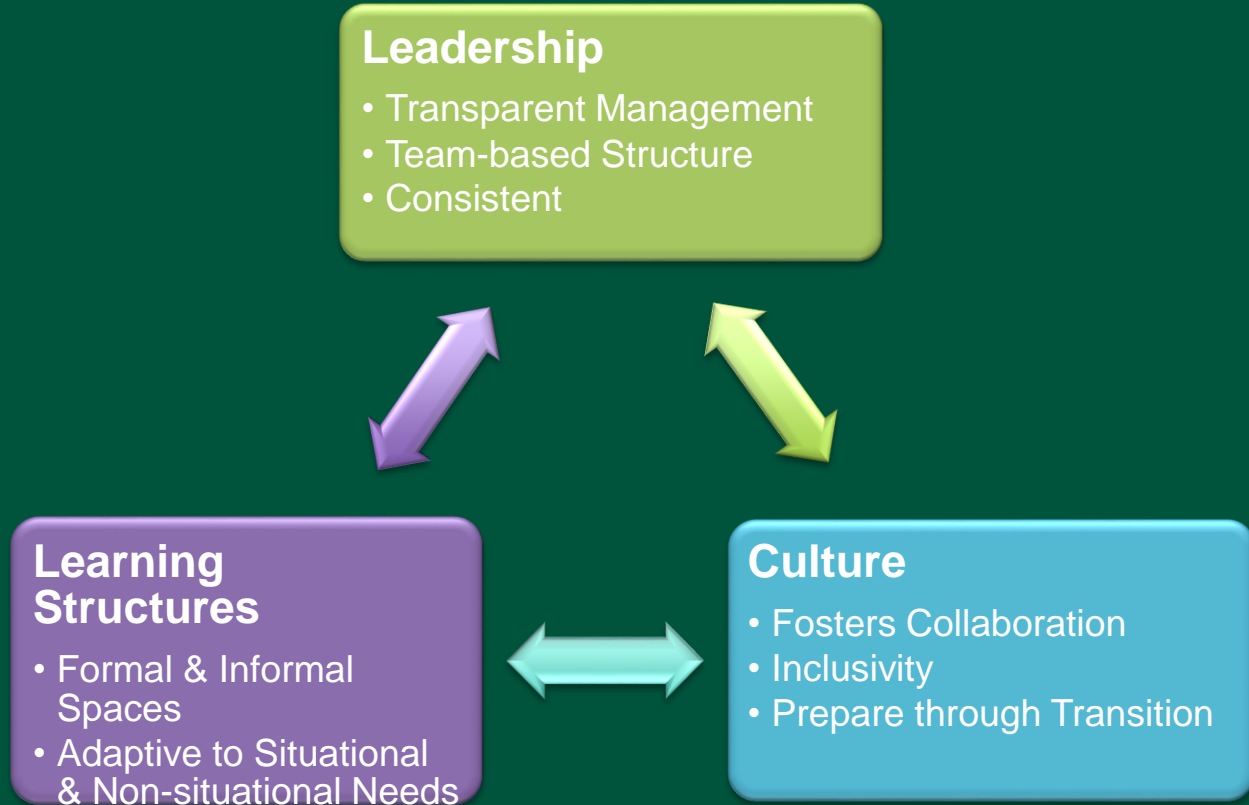


- More informal
- Ambiguous / Inconsistent Structure
- Dependent on individuals/situations
- Lack of Strong Culture
- Shows Up in Formal Spaces
- Experience-Driven

IMPLICATIONS

- Disconnect between Management & Non-management levels – misaligned values on transparency and organizational learning.
- Organized structures lose formality and accountability as hierarchy level decreases.
- Process and priority shifts based on situational needs, either internally or externally.
- Once aligned and prioritized, organizational learning is carried by the leadership, culture, and learning structures for internal transparency.

PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING MODEL W/ TRANSPARENCY



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Leadership
 - Align Executive leadership and board directors on transition into learning organization.
 - Promote & model unified vision with transparency and consistency – share with entire organization (i.e. town halls, internal newsletters/reports, etc.)
- Culture
 - Promote inter-departmental collaboration and transparency sharing.
 - Prioritize time to develop transparency and learning projects (i.e. communications, focus groups, etc.).
- Learning Structures
 - Build consistency and transparency sharing within pre-existing structures – both formal and informal (i.e. meetings, check-ins, feedback sessions, employee surveys, etc.).

REFERENCES

- Ang, S., & Joseph, D. (1996). Organizational Learning and Learning Organizations: Trigger Events, Processes, and Structures. *Academy of Management Meetings*.
- Garvin, D. A. (1993). Building a Learning Organization. *Harvard Business Review*.
- Hale, K. (2013). Understanding Nonprofit Transparency: The Limits of Formal Regulation in the American Nonprofit Sector. *International Review of Public Administration, 18*(3), 31–49.
- Milway, K. S., & Saxton, A. (2011). *The Challenge of Organizational Learning*. Stanford Social Innovation Review.



GROWTH BEGINS FROM WITHIN: HOW INTERNAL TRANSPARENCY INFLUENCES ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING

Wes Cheung, MNA - Master of Nonprofit Administration - Capstone Project

SUMMARY

Ample research exists that focuses on organizational learning in the context of program efficiency and outcomes, and organizational transparency in the context of governance and compliance. The goal for this project is to further explore the relationship between organizational learning and the commitment to internal transparency, specifically pertaining to the internal members of an organization (i.e. board members, executive leaders, staff, and volunteers).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this research is to highlight the impact of these factors on multiple levels within an organization. Adopted from previous models, this project highlights an outline model for incorporating internal transparency into the development of organizational learning culture.

RESEARCH

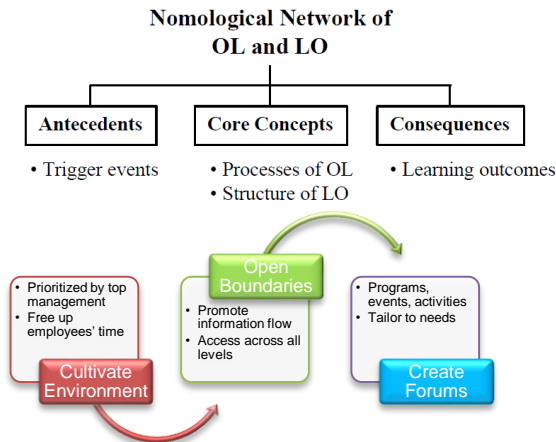
How do internal successes and short fallings in an organization influence organizational learning culture and growth?

METHODS

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DATA AND ANALYSIS

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RESULTS



RECOMMENDATIONS

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