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ABSTRACT

This symposium is comprised of three papers on organizational learning, change, and socialization. "A Study of the Organizational Learning Profile (OLP)" (Rae Dorai, Adela J. McMurray) reports findings that show the OLP (Pace et al. 1998) is a reliable instrument for measuring organizational learning and its content validity is high. "The Ability to Change: A Holistic Model of Organizational Change" (Olivia Kyriakidou, Mike Riley) introduces a set of ability to change measures developed to study whether change occurred during the operational and business culture change process of a case company. (A supportive learning context and employee perceptions of discrepancy, efficacy, personal significance, appropriateness, and moderation are the main characteristics of change, indicate a strong organizational and individual ability to change, and are strongly related to employees' commitment to the introduced change.) "Integrating an Interactionist Perspective into the Theory of Organizational Socialization" (Monica M. Tuttle) discusses the viability of integrating a more inclusive perspective and provides implications for human resource development in the research and discovery of the phenomenon of organizational socialization. All papers contain substantial references. (YLB)

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A Study of the Organizational Learning Profile

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The purpose of this research was to determine the content validity and reliability of the Organizational Learning Profile (OLP) instrument that was designed by Pace et al (1998) to measure factors of organizational learning. The 34-item scale was administered to 169 respondents working in both the manufacturing and service industries yielding a response rate of 100%.

Keywords: Organizational Learning, Learning Organization, Validity and Reliability

Organizations acknowledge that learning is crucial for their survival; however, attempts to understand how organizations learn remain obscure even though the 1990s saw a dramatic growth of publications both reviewing and evaluating the concept (Crossan and Guatto, 1996). The literature on organizational learning has viewed the concept from different perspectives and abounds with various conceptualizations and definitions (Nicolini and Meznar, 1995). The seminal definition for learning was provided by Argyris and Schon (1978) who defined it as the process of detection and correction of problems.

Their definition is based on two premises: firstly, that organizational learning is anthropomorphic, that is there is a lack of evidence showing that organizations can learn; and secondly, that problems in organizations do not have permanent solutions and only give rise to new problems. Subsequent definitions have viewed the concept from the content and the process perspectives.

Cyert and March (1963) viewed learning as a change in behavior in response to a stimulus. Fiol and Lyles (1985) defined learning by organizations as the process of improving actions through better knowledge and understanding and agreed that it is essential to include both cognitive and behavioral elements in the definition of organizational learning. Miller (1996) defined organizational learning as the acquisition of new knowledge by actors who are able and willing to apply that knowledge to making decisions or influencing others in the organization. Dodgson (1993) and Crossan (1999) viewed organizational learning as a construct that is used to describe certain types of activity (or processes) that may occur at any one of several levels of analysis, or even seen as a part of the change process as suggested by Schein(1996). Kilmecki and Lassleben (Sadler Smith, 2001) defined organizational learning as changes in organizational knowledge that are induced by information processing and enable an organization to find new ways in order to survive and be successful in new situations.

Organizational learning as defined by Leavitt and March (1988) is routine bas ed, history dependent, and target oriented, meaning that organizations are seen as learning by encoding inferences from history into routines that guide behavior. This definition is expanded in further detail by Nicolini and Meznar (1995) who assert that organizational learning is socially constructed and dependent on a person's ability to transform practical knowledge into abstract knowledge.

Four theoretical views of organizational learning are identified by DiBella (1995): an outcome or economic view, a developmental view, a normative view, and a resource based or capability view. The economic view sees learning as that which accrues to experience and collective production. The developmental view looks at the learning organization as a stage in the evolution of the firm. While the normative perspective looks at an optimal way of achieving organizational learning, the capability view looks at learning as endemic to all firms, which is grounded in individual learning and embedded in the structure of internal relationships.

Huber (1991) looks at organizational learning as shared knowledge involving knowledge acquisition, information distribution, information interpretation, and organizational memory. Knowledge acquisition, according to Huber, is essentially information acquired by the organization while monitoring the environment; distribution, interpretation, and memory involve using information systems to store, manage, and retrieve information. Carrying out research and development is a way to acquire information. Some of the unique conclusions drawn by Huber include the idea that learning does not always increase the learner's effectiveness and learning need not always result in change in behavior. According to Huber (1991) learning occurs when an individual processes information that results in a behavior change.

Several different approaches to the study of organizational learning have been identified. For example, DiBella, Nervis and Gould (1996) recognize organizational learning capabilities along different learning orientations. Each of these orientations is conceived as a bipolar continuum that reflects the learning processes. In a more recent study, DiBella (2001) goes beyond the individual to address groups such as departments within organizations. He suggests there are seven different bipolar orientations to learning which result in fourteen learning approaches. These learning approaches are measured by the Organizational Learning Inventory (OLI) intervention tool where a group's learning capabilities are identified and may be used in the improvement of the creation, dissemination or use of knowledge to facilitate their alignment with the organization's strategic direction. Like the OLP, the OLI deals with knowledge and learning processes, however it differs from the OLP in that its focus is on organizational group learning and not individual learning.

Watkins, Yang and Marsick (1997) identified five different approaches to organizational learning: (1) the conscious detection and correction of errors, (2) a change in organizational memory, (3) a change in mental models, (4) a culture of inquiry and generativity, and (5) extracting and building knowledge.

Leavitt and March (1988) in their change-in-organizational-memory approach view organizations as learning by encoding inferences from history into routines that guide behavior. Routine-based conceptions of learning assume that the lessons of experience are maintained and accumulated by translating them into routines. In this view, learning is defined as a process rather than an outcome.

Leavitt and March's (1988) explanation of organizational learning is based on three classical observations drawn from behavioral studies of organizations.

First, behavior in an organization is based on routines that are based more on the past than anticipation of the future; second, organizational actions are history dependent; and third, organizations are oriented to targets, which means their behavior depends on the relationship between outcomes achieved to outcomes expected.

The notion that organizational learning results in a learning organization is a taken-for-granted-assumption. The learning organization can be described as an environment in which organizational learning is structured so that teamwork, collaboration, creativity, and knowledge processes have a collective meaning value (Watkins and Marsick, 1993, 1996).

Watkins and Marsick (1996) identify six factors that characterize organizations that move towards becoming a learning organization. These are to create continuous learning opportunities, promote dialogue and inquiry, promote collaboration and team learning, empower people towards a collective vision, establish systems to capture and share learning, connect the organization to the environment and provide strategic leadership for learning.

Sadler-Smith, Spicer and Chaston (2001), using Extant theory, established the relationship between organizational learning and performance, at both the individual and the collective level, by examining the active-passive learning orientations of 300 smaller manufacturing and service firms. Active and passive learning orientations was measured using a prototype scale that consisted of 30 items that measured zero loop learning, single and double loop learning. Cronbach alpha for the instrument was 0.70. The instrument was administered to 1000 owner managers and managing directors of small businesses in the south and west of UK. Size of the business was a variable. The response rate was 30 %. Findings showed a positive relationship between growth and learning orientation. The results further showed that the greater the learning orientation the higher the sales growth. However, there was no significant relationship between growth and core rigidity in business service firms. Sadler-Smith et al's (2001) approach to learning, to some extent, is similar to Pace et al's (1998) approach in that both view organizational learning as a process that may be performance related.

The preceding paragraphs share a commonality in that organizational learning is behavioral and involves action based on experience. However, these organizational learning definitions are based on different perspectives and, therefore, different theoretical frameworks. The major problem is that they appear to lack convergence. This is because organizational learning is embedded in different schools of thought (Bell, Whitwell, and Lukas, 2002). For example, DiBella, Nevis and Gould (1996) take a normative perspective and define learning as a collective activity that only takes place under certain conditions. Huber (1991) on the other hand notes that an organization learns when through its processing of information, it increases the probability that its future actions will lead to improved performance.

Pace (2002 in press, pp. 109-121) views organizational learning as the acquisition, retention, and distribution of information quickly and efficiently through an institution's social and technical networks in order to systematically solve problems and to experiment with new approaches to working and managing to avoid problems in the future.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the Organizational Learning Profile is based on the change-in-organizational memory approach described by Levitt and March (1988). They state that "organizations are seen as learning by encoding inferences from history into routines that guide behavior" and that routine-based conceptions of learning presume that the lessons of experience are maintained and accumulated with routines despite the turnover of personnel and passage of time."

According to Levitt and March, learning is defined as a process rather than an outcome. Knowledge acquisition is the process by which knowledge is obtained. Information distribution is the process by which information from different sources is shared and thereby leads to new information or understanding. Information interpretation is the process by which distributed information is given one or more commonly understood interpretations. Organizational memory is the means by which knowledge is stored for future use. Huber (1991) comments that an organization learns if, through its processing of information, the range of its potential behaviors is changed. This paper reports the development and analysis of an instrument designed to measure factors of organizational learning.

Based on the above framework, this research attempts to answer three key research questions: First, what factors describe organizational learning? Second, can an internally reliable instrument measuring aspects of organizational learning be developed? Third, does the instrument have content validity?

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to further establish the reliability and content validity of the Organizational Leaning Profile. The development and validity of the original instrument may be found in Pace et al's (1998) report.

This study was designed to reevaluate the OLP and test the instrument's reliability and content validity in a different culture and multiple contexts. It was administered to 169 respondents working in diverse contexts ranging from banks, hospitals, insurance companies, hotels, finance, education, and automotive manufacturers. The reliability of the instrument was calculated using the Cronbach Alpha test, resulting in a value of 0.95, a high reliability score.

Sample for the study was a convenience sample consisting of full time employees working in diverse industry backgrounds such as banks, hospitals, insurance companies, hotels, finance, education, and automotive manufacturers. The respondents were drawn from local industry (60%) and the remainder (40%) part -time MBA students. This explains the 100% response rate.

Analyses

Demographic Analysis

Respondents were drawn from diverse industry backgrounds with 67% from service and hospitality and 15% from manufacturing. The majority of the respondents belonged to the managerial cadre (38.4%) and 26.2% were workers. The ethnic background of the respondents was predominantly Australian (59%), but 15% were Asians.

Principal Components Factor Analysis

Responses to the thirty-four items of the Organizational Learning Profile were subjected to a principal components analysis (PCA) using SPSS. Prior to performing the PCA the suitability of data for factor analysis was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. Orthagonal rotation was chosen because it is the simplest case of rotation of factors, which is viewed as being an important tool in interpreting factors. Results, Tables 1 and 2, showed that the data were suitable for further analysis. Principal components analysis was carried out using Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. The VARIMAX method has proved very successful as an analytic approach to obtaining an orthagonal rotation of factors (Hair et al, 1998)". A forced four-factor solution was obtained from the data. Principal component analysis with variance rotation yielded a total variance of 64.3% explained across three factors.

The PCR revealed the presence of four factors with items having Eigen values exceeding 1.0. The analysis resulted in factors that were slightly different from the original study, but provided support for the original pattern of factors.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.948
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4243.451
	df	561
	Sig.	.000

Table 1. *Values for KMO and Bartlett's Test*

	Component 1	2	3	4
OLP25	.693	.276	.146	.352
OLP26	.690	.344	.147	.197
OLP27	.672	.258	.224	.352
OLP28	.666	.242	.183	.354
OLP30	.615	.146	.391	.288
OLP22	.594	.158	.465	.214
OLP24	.592	.230	.276	.262
OLP23	.585	.313	.415	7.901E-02
OLP29	.553	.351	.130	.442
OLP20	.539	.160	.278	.259
OLP21	.505	.346	.433	.131
OLP3	.164	.721	.358	.299
OLP10	.223	.697	7.515E-02	.276
OLP1	.288	.690	.293	.317
OLP2	.210	.651	.388	.296
OLP4	.275	.592	.515	.173
OLP11	.254	.578	-7.693E-02	.409
OLP31	.422	.577	5.967E-03	-6.368E-02
OLP6	.175	.549	.510	.220
OLP32	.489	.541	.264	.317
OLP5	.353	.503	.399	.296
OLP19	.233	4.074E-02	.700	.197
OLP8	.319	.189	.677	.309
OLP9	.339	.273	.553	.428
OLP34	.476	.437	.521	9.088E-02
OLP7	.325	.271	.521	.381
OLP33	.419	.407	.440	.143
OLP14	.326	.363	7.363E-02	.720
OLP15	.306	.178	.329	.716
OLP17	.287	.301	.276	.666
OLP13	5.951E-03	.215	.517	.582
OLP16	.388	.239	.446	.558
OLP12	.358	.260	.187	.550
OLP18	.268	9.917E-02	.366	.540

Table 2. *Rotated Component Matrix*
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. a Rotation converged in 11 iterations. Source: Authors

Results

Comparisons, as shown in Table 3, between the original OLP factors and the revised OLP factors reveal certain similarities and differences. They are similar in terms of information storage and memory (Items 1-6). They are different in terms of information dissemination and channels of dissemination. In the revised version individual members (men and women) of the organization have a role to play in the

Table 3. Comparison of Items in Factors of Original OLP and Revised OLP

Original Organizational Learning Profile (Pace et al, 1998)	Revised Organizational Learning Profile (Dorai and McMurray, 2001)	Original Organizational Learning Profile (Pace et al, 1998)	Revised Organizational Learning Profile (Dorai and McMurray, 2001)
Factor 1: Information Distribution and Memory (ten Items 1,2,3,4,5, 6,28, 30, 31,34) **Items:** The organization I work for: 1.has effective ways of getting information of value to organizational members. 2.has effective ways of making sense out of the information it gets 3.has effective ways of storing or remembering the information it gets. 4.has effective ways of using the information that it gets to solve its own problems. 5.has effective ways of learning from its mistakes. 6.understands the concept of a learning organization. 28.encourages us to learn while we are working 30.encourages me personally to make this a learning organization. 31.has information about its history and its past. 34.has effective ways to remember decisions that have been made.	**Factor 1: (Information Sharing patterns includes the following 10 items: 1,2,3,4,5,6,10,11, 31, 32)** **Items:** The organization I work for: 1.has effective ways of getting information of value to organizational members. 2.has effective ways of making sense out of the information it gets 3.has effective ways of storing or remembering the information it gets. 4.has effective ways of using the information that it gets to solve its own problems. 5.has effective ways of learning from its mistakes. 6.understands the concept of a learning organization 10.involves men and women somewhat equally in decisions about how to improve the organization. 11.involves individuals of different cultural backgrounds in decision about how to improve the organization. 31.has information about its history and its past. 32.has policies that encourages us to learn how to improve our work.	**Factor 2: Experimentation and Initiative (Eleven Items: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 29, 32, 33)** **Items:** The organization I work for: 7.encourages us to experiment with ways of improving our work. 8.encourages us to regularly make changes in how we do our work. 9.encourages us to challenge the way things are done in the organization. 10.involves men and women somewhat equally in decisions about how to improve the organization. 11.involves individuals of different cultural backgrounds in decisions about how to improve the organization. 12.insists on management practices that involve organization members at the lowest levels in decisions about how to improve the organization. 13.makes changes in organization policies that allow us to do our work in the most effective manner. 14.rewards organization members who work with positive enthusiasm 29.encourages us to take the initiative in making improvements in our work areas. 32.has policies that encourage us to learn to how to improve our work. 33.uses teams as a way to improve the effectiveness of work.	**Factor 2: Inquiry Climate (includes 6 items: 7, 8, 9, 19, 33, 34)** **Items:** The organization I work for: 7.encourages us to experiment with ways of improving our work. 8.encourages us to regularly make changes in how we do our work. 9.encourages us to challenge the way things are done in the organization. 19.encourages us to share information about our work with members of other organizations. 33.uses teams as a way to improve the effectiveness of work 34.has effective ways to remember decisions that have been made.

Table 3. *Comparison of Items in Factors of Original OLP and Revised OLP*

Original Organizational Learning Profile (Pace et al, 1998)	Revised Organizational Learning Profile (Dorai and McMurray, 2001)	Original Organizational Learning Profile (Pace et al, 1998)	Revised Organizational Learning Profile (Dorai and McMurray, 2001)
Factor 3: Achieve Growth Goals (seven items: 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21) **Items:** The organization I work for: 15.encourages us to regularly seek new opportunities in the organization. 16. encourages us to do our work in creative and innovative ways. 17. encourages us to aspire greatness in our work. 18. encourages us to go beyond what the organization requires in doing our work. 19. encourages us to share information about our work with members of other organizations. 20. trusts us to do our work in the most effective ways. 21. help organization members learn.	**Factor 3: Achievement Mindset (seven items: 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18)** **Items:** The organization I work for: 12.insists on management practices that involve organization members at the lowest levels in decisions about how to improve the organization. 13. makes changes in organization policies that allow us to our work in the most effective manner 14. rewards organization members who work with positive enthusiasm. 15. encourages us to regularly seek new opportunities in the organization. 16.encourages us to do our work in creative and innovative ways. 17. encourages us to aspire to greatness in our work. 18. encourages us to go beyond what the organization requires in doing our work.	**Factor 4: Share and Review Information (six items: 22, 23, 24, 25, 26,27)** **Items:** The organization I work for: 22.share among ourselves ways to improve the organization 23.ep a record of things we do to improve the organization. 24. make sense of the organization. 25.engage in frequent face-to-face information sharing. 26.see ourselves as the top performers in our industry. 27.constantly review the results of what we do to learn from what happens.	**Factor 4: Learning Practices (11 items: 20,21,22,23,24,25,26,27,28,29,30)** **Items:** The organization I work for: 20. trusts us to do our work in the most effective ways. 21 helps organization members learn. 22. share among ourselves ways to improve the organization. 23. keep a record of things we do to improve our work. 24. make sense of the organization 25. engage in frequent face-to face information sharing. 26. see ourselves as the top performers in our industry. 27.constantly review the results of what we do to learn from what happens. 28.encourages us to learn while we are working. 29.encourages us to take the initiative in making improvements in our work areas. 30.encourages me personally to make this a learning organization.

Source: Authors

storage and sharing of information; in addition, this version also highlights the importance of information sharing in creativity and innovation. The original OLP scale has a skewed distribution of items where the majority of the items loaded on factor 1 and factor 2. On the other hand, the revised OLP has an equal distribution of items, thereby showing that organizational learning is a process of influence on the learning practices that prevail in organizations, the achievement mindset of the individuals, the information sharing patterns that occurs across the organization, and the inquiry climate that is created in the organization.

Individual factors of the original OLP and the revised OLP were tested for reliability. Factor 1, Learning Practices, of the revised scale showed a Cronbach Alpha (α) of 0.93. Factor 2, Information Sharing Patterns, had 10 items and showed a Cronbach Alpha score of 0.92. Factor 3, Inquiry Climate, had a reliability score of 0.88. Factor 4, called Achievement Mindset, had a reliability score of 0.90. This shows that the reliability scores of individual factors were high. The names of the revised factors were refined to account for the new clusters of items that were loaded on each of them. Factor 1 was labelled Information Sharing Patterns. The items were analyzed in terms of what type of information patterns they represent. This label is consistent with Huber (1991) and Levitt and March's (1988) definition of organizational learning as the processing of information, and that organizations learn if any of their units acquire knowledge that they recognize as potentially useful to the organization. Factor 2 was labelled Inquiry Climate. Most of the items have something to do with inquiring, challenging, and experimenting as elements of organizational climate. This factor is supported by many studies of organizational climate and creativity (Amabile, 1997). Factor 3 was labelled Achievement Mindset. The items relate to the mindset workers regarding the desire to achieve. The items were grouped on the basis of how they contribute to achievement. This factor is consistent with the premise that individuals are the unit of learning in the organizational learning process (Cummings and Worley, 1997; Argyris and Schon, 1978). Factor 4 was labelled Learning Practices. The items all appear to represent learning practices that contribute to learning. This factor highlights the importance of organizational variables like structure and culture and their role in the organizational learning process.

Renaming the factors creates a more specific view of organizational learning, but at the same time it tends to retain the basic approach visualized when the OLP was originally developed. The next task in developing the OLP will be to refine the items to more clearly reveal each of the basic concepts and to make each item simple to understand and easy to respond to. The factor coefficients appeared to meet acceptable standards (all except one above .50), and the Cronbach Alpha score of .95 is high. In addition, the Test of Sphericity is significant at the .000+ level of confidence.

Conclusion

This study identified four factors associated with organizational learning referred to as Information-Sharing Patterns, Inquiry Climate, Achievement Mindset, and Learning Practices. The findings in this study show that the OLP is a reliable instrument for measuring organizational learning and that its content validity is high. Thus, the higher organization members score on the Profile, the more they are in tune with the principles and practices of organizational learning. Therefore, it may be argued that this study makes a significant contribution to the understanding of organizational learning. The results show that organizational learning is a holistic process that encompasses learning practices, information sharing patterns, an inquiry climate, and an achievement mindset of individuals.

The Organizational Learning Profile approaches organizational learning as a process and focuses on factors that affect learning in an organization. On the other hand, Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire measures seven dimensions of a learning organization. Both measures describe aspects of some phenomena associated with learning and organizations. The Organizational Learning Profile provides a description of factors that affect learning in an organization; on the other hand, Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire describes organizations that have evolved sufficiently to be called learning organizations.

The Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire is based on the model of the learning organization developed by Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996). It has six dimensions–create learning opportunities, promote dialogue and inquiry, promote collaboration and team learning, empower people towards a collective vision, establish systems to capture and share learning, connect the organization to its environment, and provide strategic leadership for learning. Together, these instruments provide a measure of two facets of learning and its relationship to organizations. Although different in approach, they should have some compatible aspects and provide a more comprehensive analysis of learning and organizations than either does alone.

Contribution to New Knowledge in HRD

This study contributed to the refinement of the original OLP, and identified four factors that characterize organizational learning. They were labeled Information-Sharing Patterns, Inquiry Climate, Achievement Mindset, and Learning Practices. Future research could further validate the OLP by refining items for greater clarity and administering it to other populations. This research has furthered our understanding of the specific items that comprise the four factors of organizational learning.

The findings suggest that organizational learning and learning organizations may evolve from similar concepts, but differ as a result of the individuals who operate within them and the environment that is created by them. It might be worthwhile to examine the extent to which the OLP and the DLOQ correlate with one another. The findings in this study indicate that the two instruments should not correlate because they measure different aspects of learning: learning in the organization versus organizations that learn, but that the two instruments should be complementary.

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The Ability to Change: A Holistic Model of Organisational Change

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This paper introduces one set of ability to change measures developed to study whether change occurred during the operational and business culture change process of a single case company. Results show that a supportive learning context as well as employee perceptions of discrepancy, efficacy, personal significance, appropriateness and moderation as the main characteristics of change indicate a strong organisational and individual ability to change and are strongly related to employees commitment to the introduced change.

Keywords: Change, Learning, Measurement Model

In the words of Van de Ven and Poole (1995) "it is of a great challenge for scholars in management and many other disciplines to find ways of explaining, understanding and analysing how organisations change" (p.510). The ability to change and learn is expected to create the major source of competitive advantage for organisations (Armenakis, 1999), since organisations continuously need to change internally, as well as to adapt to changes they meet in their organisational environment. However, although the literature abounds with evidence of change efforts that have gone wrong (e.g., Cummings & Worley, 1997; Dunphy, 1996; Kotter, 1996), theorists have been relatively silent on why organisational change often is unsuccessful. In this sense, there is a growing need to understand the most favourable conditions that enhance organisations' ability for change, the processes of both organisational change and learning, as well as organisational inability to change or inertia, in order to improve change effects.

A feature of the literature is diversity of viewpoints regarding the nature of organisational change. The emphasis on organisational change research has clearly been based on either individual process research (micro-level) or on organisational conditions for change (macro-level). No successful attempts to create a holistic model of organisational change ability have been accomplished, although the elements for its construction should already be in existence. The aim of making a clear-cut separation between change as a process and the elements of a 'changing' organisation (i.e. an organisation that can exhibit the ability to constantly transform itself), and thus studying them whilst disconnected from each other has not, in our view, furthered the building of a holistic picture. Those concerned with the organisational change processes, imp licitly at least, tend to link organisational change with learning by assuming that the more an organisation develops certain characteristics (such as participative decision-making culture or innovativeness) the more change therefore will take place. Paradoxically, at the same time, they ignore the other factors of the change process, such as individuals' ability to change or unfreeze their cognitive schemas. In our view, the loosely coupled perspectives can offer no more than pieces of theory and cannot create synergy but rather cause conceptual confusion. Therefore, there is a need to develop a holistic model of the organisations' ability to change that operates with clarified and sensemaking concepts.

Moreover, despite vivid discussion and the development of consultation tools for turning companies into changing companies (e.g., Armenakis, 1999; Cummings & Worley, 1997; Senge, 1990), one cannot avoid the feeling that little has been done to develop valid measures for organisational change. This might be due to, but also the reason for, a lack of comprehensive research in this area (Huber, 1991). Another reason for the shortage of methodological discussion and the underdevelopment of measures of organisational change is the fact that the very concept and the process through which organisations actually change still is vague. It is of course impossible to measure the phenomenon without knowing what is.

This paper will attempt to develop a holistic model addressing the ability for organisational change based on the 'grounded' analysis of a case study trying to explore how organisations change. This paper also participates in the methodological discussion on organisational change, by introducing one set of organisational change measures developed to study whether change occurred during the operational and business transformational change process of a single case company.

What is organisational Change Ability?

According to change theorists, organisational change is initiated and carried out by individuals in organisations (Bartunek, 1984; Porras & Robertson, 1992). Senge (1990) argues that it is only through the learning of individuals that organisational routines are changed and it is individuals who create organisational forms that enable change and facilitate transformation (Dodgson, 1993). Therefore, improving *organisational change ability* should first mean the creation of favourable conditions for change and learning by individuals (Cummings & Worley, 1997). The more extensive the change in the organisation is, the more it calls for a total change in dominant logics and cognitive frameworks, not only in behaviours (Prahalad & Bettis, 1996). In other words, a high degree of a context enabling organisational learning that includes individuals adopting new mental models and corresponding behaviour is needed (Hedberg, 1981; Senge, 1990).

In the change management literature, the concept of learning is there. It is seen as something that increases an organisation's ability to implement planned change and reach its objectives. It is not only through learning of the new but also unlearning of the old that is needed in order to make the change successful. In the organisational turmoil learning reduces uncertainty and thus inevitable also helps in reducing change resistance (Geertz, 1964). Because organisational learning thus improves the organisation's efficiency and performance, it is a vital part of every change process (Cummings & Worley, 1997). In this sense, learning can be seen as a mediating factor between change objectives and business results.

However, one of the shortcomings of the change management literature is that the mechanisms through which change and learning translates into an organisation's performance are ignored (Cummings & Worley, 1997). This is mainly due to the fact that the literature ignores that employees often resist change and learning in order to maintain the status quo and feel secure.

Therefore, according to the present framework, in order to enhance the organisation's ability to change and learn, aspects such as organisational power structure, values and culture, individuals, technology and goals need to be considered and any unfavourable conditions negatively affecting change and learning should be removed before the implementation of change starts. When members of an organisation learn what the change actually requires and participate to its formation, it reduces both collective and personal insecurity (Coopey, 1995). At the same time, when change is implemented and presented in a way that enhances employees' perceptions of their organisational membership (e.g., their organisational identities), it reduces feelings and perceptions of threat. If learning does not occur, employees then develop defensive routines which help them to resist change (Argyris, 1992).

The present paper tries to grasp the core of the organisation's ability to change. From our point of view, organisational change is represented by changing associations, frames of reference and programmes and not just by behavioural adaptation. In order, therefore, to distinguish between change and behavioural adaptation, one needs to know if association development has occurred (Fiol & Lyles, 1985). Consequently, measuring change and learning at one and the same time, without trying to strictly distinguish them from each other, is meaningful because it offers the possibility of seeing the whole picture. We argue that change and learning are also interactive processes, as learning has a mediating role in the change process. Consequently, they should not be isolated from each other (Lahteenmaki et al., 2001).

A Holistic Model of Organisational Change Ability

The holistic and dynamic model of organisational change that is suggested here, brings together the concept of procedural change processes and the concept of learning both at organisational and at individual levels suggesting a constant interaction between both the individual and organisational levels. Reaching an organisational level in the change process means, in practice, organisational changes, which in turn affect the individual level and call for more individual change and learning.

According to this model then, one commences by establishing a necessary context enabling individuals' ability to learn, i.e. supportive conditions and a favourable attitude towards personal development and the adoption of new behaviours (Pedler, Burgoyne, & Boydell, 1991; Tannenbaum, 1997). Individuals' ability and willingness to learn are necessary conditions for organisational change. It is assumed here that learning takes place when the organisation supports the change process in a proper way and obstacles to individual's learning are removed. Within the context of a learning organisation, employees accept that the formation of the organisation's identity is never closed and that it will develop a series of identities through time that reflect the organisation's and its members' evolving self-concepts.

Learning involves a reintegration of the processual, structural, and content aspects of the organisation (Senge, 1990) promoting thus organisational change and confining perceptions of threat (Argyris, 1990).Hirschhorn (1988) argues that in order to promote acceptance of change, a new work context is needed that challenges the suppression of doubt and ambivalence in the modern organisation and is single minded in the pursuit of its goals and in its one-dimensional understanding of its unchanging and fully formed identity. The changing organisation is characterised by a "culture of being open to others", that "uses doubt as a springboard for learning" (Hirschhorn, 1997, pp 17-18). Only after establishing the supportive context for learning can employees participate in the goal-setting process as well as in the building of strategies by the company.

The ability to change then involves the development and acceptance of new cognitive models, which is facilitated by the learning context. The adoption of new mental models indicates the level of commitment to the new working practices. Individual change of mental models indicates that individual-level cognitive and the subsequent attitude changes are becoming an organisational-level phenomenon. Cognitive reorientation of organisational members is involved at the essence of organisational change. From this perspective, the organisation's ability to change depends not only on the organisation's ability to undergo a significant shift in direction, vision, and values, but also the cognitive ability of organisational members to understand, interpret as attractive and develop a new conceptualisation of the organisation (Smircich, 1983).

The development of new cognitive models supported by a climate of a learning organisation will contribute to change rooted in the organisation through the enabling of changes at the organisational level. Without change at the organisational level, i.e. new procedures, structures, routines, systems and so on, it is difficult for an organisation to be more efficient or change and adapt to environmental changes.

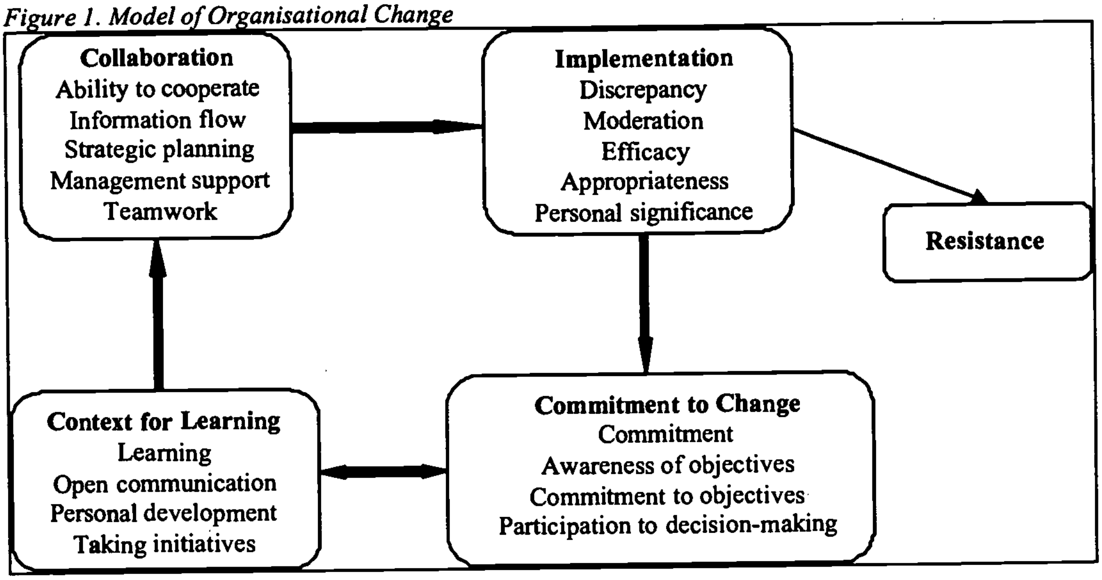
Organisational change is a dialectical process where building the ability to adapt to changes and develop new cognitive models is in dialectical relationship to implementing changes (Lahteenmaki et al., 2001). As argued by Kyriakidou (2001), to be effective, the implementation of change should incorporate at least the following components: a) discrepancy (i.e. we want to change), b) efficacy (i.e. we have the capability to successfully change), c) personal significance (i.e. it is in our best interest to change), d) appropriateness (i.e. the desired change is right for the focal organisation), and e) moderation (i.e. the discrepancy is large enough to create the stress necessary for employees to desire change but the dissimilarities are not so great that change is perceived as unattainable). In this way, the implementation f change further contributes to employees' development of new cognitive models and internalising change.

Internalisation of change however, is not always problem-free even in the most suitable learning environments. Organisational changes are not fully accepted at an individual level. If the implemented change is subjectively interpreted as being threatening it is bound to provoke resistance to change. Respectively speaking, if the change is internalised, the employees involved commit to the mission and relinquish their resistance to change.

When this occurs, internalised organisational change then create favourable conditions for change and learning and enable the ability to adapt to these changes, adopt new behaviours and, thus, change. This is turn relates back to the collaborative setting of strategies and gradually to second-order change in terms of accepting and creating new structures again (Senge, 1990) (see Figure 1).

Referring back to the measurement problem one has to ask, how can we measure this type of ability to change? Here we share the views of Collins (1996) who states that due to the complicated nature of the change process, the existence and effectiveness of organisational change ability cannot be measured directly but only in the long run, through business results. However, it is possible – at least in theory – to measure the process of change step by step. Therefore, focusing on the process and the people instead of the organisational change reveals more of the ability to change itself, no matter how difficult this might be (Starkey, 1996). Building the ability to learn and change should be revealed through attitudes towards change (internalisation versus coercion) within the organisation, whereas the capability to set objectives and collaborate towards their future could be measured through adopted new behaviours (Argyris & Schon, 1996).

Figure 1. Model of Organisational Change



The Study

The aim of the present study has been to develop measures for testing the dynamic model of organisational change, a dynamic model in which the three approaches of change research, i.e. the individual and organisational levels of change and the contextual factors of change, are utilised. An initial battery of measures was derived from theories concerning factors which were expected to enhance the organisation's ability to change (Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell, 1991; Cummings & Worley, 1997, Tannenbaum, 1997), and from the measures used in previous studies concerning change processes and learning (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Kline & Saunders, 1993; Senge, 1990; Tichy, 1983). These measures assessed attitudes on such organisational conditions as changes in routines, the organisation of work processes, feedback and reward systems, climate and culture, management support, information flow, the openness of communication, participation in decision-making, teamwork, cooperation, HRD and so on.

Participants

Questionnaires were distributed to 224 members of the industrial electronics section of a large electronic communications company based in the UK. In the year before the realisation of the current project various changes had been made to the identity, strategy, culture, and structure of the company. 203 participants responded.

The Materials

The Change Survey was comprised of scales addressing the organisational learning context, the collaborative setting of strategies (Lahteenmaki et al., 2001), the elements of implementation and the development of new cognitive models.

The Organisational Learning Context

The development of a learning context that supports and enhances the individuals' ability and willingness to learn is a necessary condition for organisational change. In our model we assume that change takes place when hindrances to individual's learning are removed and the organisation supports the process in a proper way. Thirty items were developed on theoretical grounds, informed by the learning model (Kyriakidou, 2001), integrating ideas from the literature on communication, trust, learning modes (Pedler et al., 1991), innovation, personal development, and an open culture.

Collaboration

Structural elements constitute the very essence of change as they contribute to the organisation's ability to change, because by them, change is rooted in the organisation. Without new structures, i.e. new enabling organisational arrangements, routines, systems and so on, it is difficult for an organisation to develop an strong ability to change. Eight indicators have been chosen for the measurement of this stage forming a 24-item scale (Lahteenmaki et al., 2001). Some of them include ability to cooperate, ability to use teamwork, fluent and efficient information flow, efficient strategic planning.

Commitment to change

Commitment to organisational goals and strategies is a necessary condition for organisational change. Committed people are apt to accept the new mission which in turn indicates that individual-level attitude changes are becoming an organisational-level phenomenon. Ten items relating to commitment to change process, awareness of business objective, commitment to objectives, and active participation in decision-making were chosen to operationalise the internalisation of change in the form of developing new cognitive models. Commitment to change may indicate that cognitive reframing and the adoption of new cognitive models has been initiated (Albert & Whetten, 1985).

Implementation

The implementation scale included fourteen items for discrepancy, moderation, efficacy, personal significance, and appropriation.

Results

Construct Validity

To ascertain the degree of construct validity and examine the relative independence of constructs within the Change Survey a factor analysis was performed using a confirmatory principal components solution. As it could not be assumed that the factors were uncorrelated, an oblique rotation to simple structure was specified. The analysis predicted and yielded five factors, converging in 16 iterations, explaining 53.45% of the variance within the data. Only four of the five factors were meaningful in psychological terms, and moreover, did not in the main confirm the predicted factor structure or item composites. Factor 1 accounted for 29.7% of the variance and comprised 25 items. The highest loading items were about tolerance of discontinuities, open communication, personal development and innovation. The factor was labelled 'The Learning Context'. Factor 2 accounted for 7.8% of the variance, and comprised 17 items predominantly about collaboration and setting a future together. It was labelled 'Collaboration'. Factor 3 accounted for 6.3% of variance and comprised 11 items pertaining to change implementation and was thus labelled 'Change Implementation'. Finally, Factor 4 accounted for 5.3% of variance and comprised 8 items pertaining predominantly to 'Commitment to Change'.

Reliability

The internal consistency of items comprising each factor was assessed using α Coefficients for each of the change factors. In all instances, satisfactory coefficients of either .70 or above (Kline, 1996) were obtained making it viable to compute an average score for each factor or item composite.

Concurrent Validity

All composite items were intercorrelated prior to the appliance of linear regression analysis to ascertain the degree of covariance across the data.

Table *1* reports the obtained bivariate correlations. In summary, the factor Learning Context was found to correlate positively with the factors labelled Collaboration, Implementation and Commitment. Collaboration correlated positively with Implementation and Commitment and finally Implementation correlated positively with Commitment to Change.

Table 1. Correlations across variables

	Learning Context	Collaboration	Implementation	Commitment
Learning Context		0.175	0.477**	0.444**
Collaboration	0.175		0.259**	0.293**
Implementation	0.477**	0.259**		0.506**
Commitment	0.444**	0.293**	0.506**	

To identify the factors which best predict the development of commitment to change, a regression analysis was carried out using the Enter method. This method was selected as the most appropriate as a calculation of bivariate correlations indicated the existence of significant covariance between a number of the identified factors. The regression analysis took the 'Commitment to Change' ratings as the dependent variable. All the other independent variables were entered into the regression equation. These variables were found to account for 35% of the overall variance, as the regression analysis produced an adjusted R2 value of .348, F = 5.772, p<.001, d.f. = 12.95 (these are the properties of the predicted model identified). The β weights (indicative of the proportion of this 35% each factor accounted for) for each factor are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of Regression Analysis

Predictor factor	β weight	P-value
Implementation	0.477	P<0.05
Learning Context	0.321	P<0.05
Collaboration	0.223	P<0.05

The above table shows that the best predictor of commitment to change – as independently assessed – is the mode of implementation and to a lesser extent the learning context and the degree of collaboration. More analysis to indicate the specific effects of the sub-factors within each scale will be performed.

Discussion

In this article our main goals was to uncover the organisational elements or factors that enable change and enhance the organisations' ability to change. Suggested elements of organisational change have been introduced by various practitioners and researchers, although a clear verification through empirical research of these elements is still scarce. Most of these contextual factors of learning and change are expected to improve organisational change ability by sharing knowledge (e.g., information systems, shared visions and team learning). However, one has to recognise here that organisational members do not necessarily share one common frame of reference, but each have their own history-bound frames of reference. The individual is emphasised here also because the question of empowerment of the individual is a crucial one in this context. In order to increase the empowerment of the individual, attention is focused on organisational culture and leadership, structure and HRM questions. Organisational change can be realised or prevented by different organisational elements of factors.

Finally, the present paper has also introduced one possible set of measures and offered suggestions for the measurement of an organisation's ability to change. According to the understanding so far, when an organisation's ability to change is evaluated using these measures, the following interpretative rules could be applied. If indicators on each of four three levels are strongly positive using the scales mentioned here, the organisation then shows a strong ability to achieve second-order change (Bartunek, 1984). Individual and organisational change takes place at the same time as the development of the context and conditions needed in the future. Conversely, when all indicators are negative, the organisation in question cannot be considered a changing organisation. This model however, is based on one single empirical study and should therefore be re-tested, by gathering more data from different change processes in other organisations.

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Integrating an Interactionist Perspective into the Theory of Organizational Socialization

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The prevailing theory of organizational socialization, presented by Van Maanen and Schein, describes activities used by organizations in the socialization of employees. Some argue this theory does not address individual differences as affecting employee responses to that context. This paper discusses the viability of integrating a more inclusive perspective, called an interactionist perspective and provides implications for HRD in the research and discovery of the phenomenon of organizational socialization.

Keywords: Socialization, Interactionist, Theory-building

In a society plagued with shades of gray in each life situation, some squint to make out the black and white of it, while others embrace and mull over each shade of cloudy gray. Those that are determined to differentiate the thin line between the black and the white, inevitably end up falling victim to a dualistic argument, such as nature versus nurture or upholding corporate values versus pursuit of profit. When a dualistic argument is exposed, individuals mass on either side of the debate, feeling strongly about one side. It has been stated that when one only sees the dualistic nature of circumstances, he or she falls victim to the "tyranny of the OR". Conversely, when one is able to discard the dualistic argument and pursue knowledge along both avenues he or she achieves the "genius of the AND" (Collins & Porras, 1994). Collins and Porras state that organizations that have been successful, profitable, and have shown longevity, are able to achieve the "genius of the AND."

This paper will explore one particular dualistic argument that has surfaced concerning the topic of organizational socialization. In its most general form, organizational socialization looks at the context that surrounds an individual's adjustment process during transitions into and within the workplace, with the ultimate purpose for the organization being to facilitate the individual becoming a contributing member to the cause. The black and white argument surrounding the topic is whether an individual's prior socialization experiences, or personal differences, are relevant to the socialization of the individual within the organization. Those who would argue individual differences are not relevant look for the most invariant components of the phenomena and seek to construct the theory around those components, hoping that the propositions will transcend individual differences (Feldman, 1981; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Moreover, incorporating individual variables reduces the efficacy and precision of the theory by creating a situation of relativism. This means that if one believes that all individuals have their own experiences and differences, that there can be no conclusions or patterns derived about human phenomena, thus making it very difficult to create a theory about anything. Those who believe individual differences should matter argue that one cannot make conclusions about individual responses to socialization efforts without first understanding their previous socialization experiences. This view is called an interactionist perspective (Jones, 1983; Louis, 1980; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Interactionists would argue that it provides a more inclusive lens through which to analyze the resulting responses to organizational socialization tactics.

The topic of socializing individuals to their host organization is of utmost importance to the field of Human Resource Development (HRD). Organizations today consider human knowledge, human expertise, in effect, human capital as the constrained resource in today's business economy (Boudreau & Ramstad, 1997). The ability to attract, develop, and maintain the right human capital for one's organization is viewed as a powerful strategic advantage. One might ask, does an organization have to be able to pinpoint and bring in the perfect talent to accentuate the organization, or can the organization itself mold the individual to fit its needs? The prevailing theory of organizational socialization suggests the possibility that organizational tactics can be used to affect the incoming talent in a fashion that makes them more valuable to the organization. The entire process of actions taken by the organization during an employee transition to ensure effective adjustment is called organizational socialization. Facilitating this process effectively to help ensure strong performance at the individual, process, and organizational levels is paramount for the HRD professional. Researching the units, framework, and propositions about this theory so that it may be used in practice, is paramount for the HRD scholar.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the viability of integrating an interactionist perspective into the prevailing theory of organizational socialization, in effect magnifying the shades of gray to get rid of the dualistic argument that exists now. First, it will provide a description of the prevailing theory of organizational socialization presented by Van Maanen and Schein (1979) by delving into the propositions concerning organizational action and resulting individual responses. Second, this paper will further present the interactionist perspective and how some theorists have reconciled the criticism of creating a relativist situation. Third, this paper will present some of the advantages and disadvantages that exist for integrating an interactionist perspective with organizational socialization theory. Finally, the author suggests possible research directions for the field of HRD.

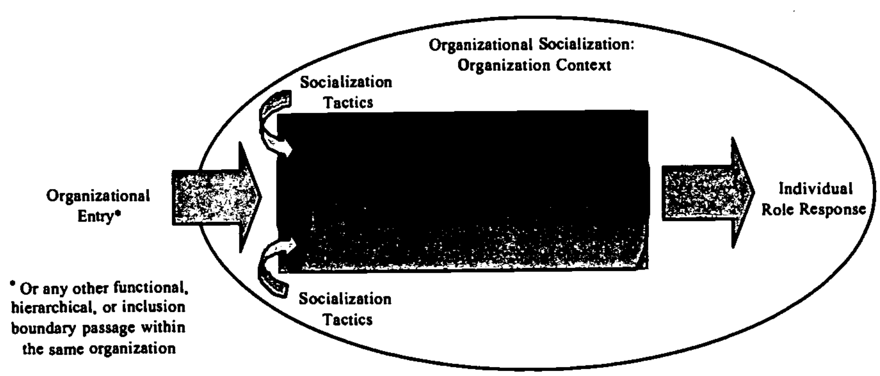
Prevailing Theory of Organizational Socialization

The interest in the topic of socialization in the workplace stemmed from a concern about matching individuals with organizations to reduce the amount of unnecessary turnover, costing companies much time and money (Wanous, 1980). The field of Industrial Psychology focused its attention on the organization's perspective about how to reduce this turnover effect, tackling topics such as measuring individual aptitudes, skills and abilities, personality, as well as job and task analysis, recruitment, selection, job placement, and training (Wanous, 1980). The work on socialization took this information and started to construct schemes for determining their combined affect on individuals, Van Maaenen and Schein were some of the first to put together a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon.

Prior to the publication of Van Maanen and Schein's theory article in 1979, each published several works concerning organizational socialization (Schein, 1968, 1971, 1978; Van Maanen, 1976) which built off of previous research on socialization, work adjustment, and career transitions (Berlew & Hall, 1966; Brim, 1966; Manning, 1970). Therefore, while not the first authors to address the topic of socialization in the workplace, Van Maanen and Schein were forerunners among those attempting to formulate a coherent description of organizational socialization in such a way as to facilitate the empirical research to come. In their article they state, "we offer the beginnings of a *descriptive* conceptual scheme which we feel will be useful in guiding some much-needed research in this crucial area [...] we are interested consequently in generating a set of interrelated theoretical propositions about the structure and outcome of organizational socialization processes" (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p.214).

The theory itself explores the socialization context created by the organization by the tactics it uses and it also looks at the response from the individual to this context. However, the gap that remains is that it does not examine is the actual process of adjustment an individual would go through during that time of organizational socialization. The theory illuminates the organization's actions and the individuals' response; yet, a large black box remains in the place that would show the activity in the middle, the activity in between receiving the organizational context stimulus and the resulting response. In essence, Van Maanen and Schein (1979) argue in their theory that the experience of organizational socialization, given a predetermined set of organizational context variables, is a relatively invariant experience for the individual. Black and white—organizational context variables are relevant and individual differences are not (see figure 1). The units of the theory are described below.

Figure 1. Representation of the Prevailing Theory of Organizational Socialization



Five Units of the Theory of Organizational Socialization

Van Maanen and Schein (1979) describe several elements of their theory, which can be loosely grouped into five general units. Admittedly, this brief presentation does not do justice to the elegance of the entire theory, but it is necessary to frame the rest of this discussion. The five units can be labeled as: (1) targets, (2) agents, (3) process, (4) content, and (5) role responses.

Targets. The targets of the socialization process are individuals encountering adjustments in their careers, either entering a new organization or making changes in their functional, hierarchical, or social roles within the same organization. At these boundary transitions these individuals are most vulnerable to the changes they will encounter and most receptive to the socialization tactics employed by their host organization. It is an underlying assumption of the theory that individuals encountering these types of workplace changes are faced with some level of anxiety due to the change and are driven to learn the functional and social requirements of their new role in an attempt to reduce that anxiety. Individuals must acquire knowledge of what is expected of them not only in their functional role but as a member of a new cultural surrounding.

Agents. The agents of the socialization process are the existing employees within the organization. Their decisions about how to construct socialization experiences for the targets determine the socialization tactics, whether formal or informal, used by the organization. Additionally, existing employees interact with the targets, consciously and unconsciously affecting that individual's experience. Part of the purpose of this paper is to argue that the targets themselves are also their own agents of socialization. Many authors have begun to argue that the individual is not passive in this process (Jones, 1983, 1986; Morrison, 1993; Schein, 1968, 1971) and that most individuals actively seek out materials and draw on personal experiences to help them adapt to their new surroundings.

Process. Van Maanen and Schein view the organizational socialization process as one that occurs continually over the working life of the individual, as he or she enters the new organization and as he or she makes various transitions within that organization. The authors show that the employee experiences movement along three different aspects of his or her role in the organization. First, employees are designated to be in a functional role. Learning the different requirements and expectations of that role are one aspect of *functional* socialization. Second, employees are hired into the organization at a certain hierarchical level. As employees adjust and gain experience, they increase their *hierarchical* socialization. Finally, employees are faced with the need to interact with the social fabric of the organization, which affects their level of *inclusion* socialization. Each organization will differ in the number and types of boundaries that exist given its societal, industrial, and organizational culture contexts.

Content. As Van Maanen and Schein are viewing the process primarily through the lens of the organization, the idea of content refers to any organizational action that drives the process. In essence, the context for socialization is created by all of the formal and informal activities and the conscious or unconscious messages that are delivered by the organization. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) argue, "*what* people learn about their work roles in organizations is often a direct result of *how* they learn it" (p.209). In other words, the tactics organizations use can relate to what messages transitioning employees will retain about their role, the culture of the organization, and how they fit in. The authors present their conceptualization of several tactics in the form of six continuums, each showing an extreme on either end of the continuum. They are: (1) collective vs. individual, (2) formal vs. informal, (3) sequential vs. random, (4) fixed vs. variable, (5) serial vs. disjunctive, (6) investiture vs. divestiture.

The first continuum of *collective* and *individual* tactics refers to the way in which the transitioning employees are either grouped together for a common socialization experience, or are isolated from one another to be paired up with a more seasoned member for their socialization experience, respectively. Referring to the second continuum, organizations that use *formal* tactics have clearly defined activities for transitioning employees that separate them from existing members. The third continuum of *sequential* versus *random* tactics refers to the way in which activities for the transitioning employees are either structured sequentially, or not structured at all, respectively. *Fixed* versus *variable* tactics refer to the degree to which there are definitive time frames established for the socialization process. The fifth continuum of *serial* versus *disjunctive* tactics refer to whether or not transitioning employees are groomed by their predecessors, or if they have no one in the position to walk him or her through the way it should be accomplished. The final continuum, *investiture* versus *divestiture* tactics refers to the degree to which the organization supports or attempts to break away from individuals' prior socialization experiences and identity.

Role Responses. The final unit of the theory is the outcome of the socialization process. Logically, the more proximal outcome of the process would be the level of socialization as measured by the response of the individual. This response could be individual perception (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994), internal changes in the social construction of self (Schein, 1971; Wanous, 1980) or behavioral changes (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), all of which are either effective or ineffective for the new role. Because Van Maanen and Schein were looking through the organizational lens, they chose to focus on outwardly observable behaviors from the individual. These were termed *role responses*. The possible role responses were grouped into a few categories; the responses were either custodial, meaning compliant, or they were innovative. If the transitioning employee accepts the socialization process and its tactics without question, the response is determined to be a *custodial* one. However, if the transitioning employee feels that some of the values, norms, or practices do not align in some way with his or her ideas, that individual will likely question and want to make changes. If the individual's response is to make substantive improvements or changes to the "knowledge base or strategic practices of a particular role" (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p.227) then the response is termed *content innovation*. However, there can also be an almost complete rejection of the organization's socialization process and the practices of his or her role. This role response is termed by the authors as *role innovation*. The authors argue that organizations benefit from the response of content innovation. Conversely, organizations are vulnerable if they are only able to see custodial responses, which would limit the possibility of progress, or role innovation responses, which may eat away at the very core essence the organization wishes to preserve.

In their theory of organizational socialization, Van Maanen and Schein are not proposing that individual variables do not play some role in how the process unfolds. However, they are arguing that the organizational variables supersede the individual variables, due in part to the drive to reduce anxiety through absorbing the immediate information presented by the organization. The authors make the decision to focus their theory building efforts on aspects of the organizational socialization experience that transcend organizational, individual, cultural, and societal differences. The authors hoped to provide a theory that was not only an attempt to model some aspect of the empirical world but also one that would have practical utility in the world. As stated previously, there are scholars who have started to argue that such a perspective is not possible, that the theory is not complete without taking into account individual variables (Jones, 1983; Morrison, 1993; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992).

Defining the Interactionist Perspective

Researchers such as Jones (1983) argue that an individual's, "subsequent orientation towards the organization cannot be adequately explained until the socialization process is analyzed from an interactionist perspective in which newcomers are accorded an active role in mediating personal and role outcomes" (p. 464). This perspective argues that analysis of the socialization process cannot be complete unless three things are taken into consideration, "(1) the effects of individual differences and (2) the effect of the attributional process involved in organizational learning" (p. 464), and (3) individuals as active participants in their own socialization experience.

The way these factors interact during the process of socialization can be likened to a game between the target employee and the other existing members of the organization. Jones (1983) describes some elements of this interaction. To begin, the individual learns patterns of behavior and develops values through experiences with work and through interactions with others in life. Now, faced with a boundary transition, either entering a new organization or changing roles within the organization, he or she calls upon past knowledge and patterns to deal with the surroundings. The individual monitors the surroundings and the existing members looking for clues about norms and values; the individual makes a first move based on attributions he or she has made about the surroundings.

The game continues with the reward and punishment contingencies from existing members based on the behavior of the individual. Existing members do not always have the same perception of organizational reality and, therefore there is often a conflict of meaning of intended behavior and the perceived behavior. The individual goes through a sense making process, first analyzing his or her own behavior, second, analyzing how others perceive the behavior; the individual makes a second move based on the perception of acceptance or non-acceptance of the first move. Often the discrepancies in behavior and organizational norms are worked out through these interactions. However, it is not necessarily so; there is the possibility that the individual and existing members are never aware of the disparities between their worldviews (Brim, 1966). The individual's previous notions of acceptable behavior are what will continue to guide actions. In sum, while individuals may be subjected to the same organizational context of initiation or orientation content, the way in which they experience that context may be greatly divergent.

Can These Perspectives be Integrated?

The above discussion has presented, in an abbreviated form, the foundational theory of organizational socialization presented by Van Maanen and Schein (1979), as well as theory development by Jones (1983). While perhaps having rival or competing theories around the same phenomenon is not a bad thing, it makes sense to consider each thoroughly, both separately and in concert, to see if they are truly rivals, or whether a "genius of the AND" can be achieved by combining the elements of each to explain the same phenomenon. So, the questions are:

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of hailing one perspective as the most accurate depiction?
2. Are the two points of view even different enough to warrant being called rival theories?
3. If not, what are the ways in which the two theories can be merged to work in concert?

To address the first question, if the field of HRD has to decide on one theory in order to make more headway in research and practice, there would be consequences of choosing one perspective over the other, such as (1) theoretical, (2) moral, and (3) practical consequences.

Theoretical Consequences. One of Patterson's criteria for assessing a theory is *comprehensiveness*, meaning that a theory should be complete and include all data that are known (cited in Gradous, 1989). If the theory of organizational socialization does not take into account all of the necessary variables, such as an individual's previous socialization experiences, then perhaps it does not meet this criteria for being comprehensive. Using the criteria of comprehensiveness, those seeking to utilize the theory of organizational socialization in their workplace would benefit from this broader description of the phenomenon.

Moral Consequences. Organizations may view the process of socializing employees as a means to an end, the end being an individual who is an effective contributor to the organization. Kantian ethics state that humans may be viewed as a means to an end, as we would use a taxi cab driver to take us to our destination; yet, it states humans should not be treated as a means to an end (Beauchamp & Bowie, 1997). Treating each human that walks through the door as part of a homogeneous pool that would all respond to stimuli in the same manner and could therefore each be molded and crafted to the organization's desire, would be treating humans as a means to an end. Valuing each individual for his or her experiences and understanding how those influence their current experience of socialization, more closely satisfies Kantian ethics. Thus, excluding research and discussion around the affects of individual differences on socialization would be to ignore possibly significant variables, and would continue to allow organizations to think their actions were the only factors that would determine a socialization outcome.

Practical Consequences. While theoretically and morally inclusive, using an interactionist theory in the workplace brings about several concerns about its practicality. Organizations trying to incorporate this more comprehensive perspective may bog down already effective socialization processes, whereby decreasing the effectiveness curve and increasing a cost or time curve. It may not be practical or fiscally prudent to design and administer assessments to transitioning employees to determine the intricacies of their individual differences or their previous socialization experiences.

From the above discussion points, it is clear that integrating an interactionist perspective into the HRD rhetoric for organizational socialization would mean more research. However, it is the opinion of this author that integrating the two lenses means seeing the phenomenon more clearly. Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) lens through which to view the phenomenon of organizational socialization could be described as a process of formal and informal activities by the organization to direct the individual in the process of adjustment to and acquisition of roles, tasks, knowledge, and values. However, the lens Jones's (1983) work describes is one in which individual context variables play a large role in how the activities by the organization influence the individual's process of adjustment to and acquisition of roles, tasks, knowledge, and values. Upon consideration on how to answer the second discussion question, it is apparent to this author that these two lenses are looking at the same phenomenon only from two different vantage points. In effect, the work of Van Maanen and Schein (1979) and the work of Jones (1983) are not rival theories; rather, they are merely two sides of the same coin. In sum, the theoretical and moral consequences should overtake the practical consequences in the initial phases of discovery. Once such information is available, how practitioners allocate corporate dollars to improve socialization processes should be up to them.

Merging the Prevailing Perspective with the Interactionist Perspective

Figure 1 visually represents the gaps that remain from Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) theory. Their theory illuminates the different boundary movements that individuals experience throughout their careers entering into and moving within an organization. The theory explains different socialization tactics employed by organizations during these boundary movements. It also explains the behavioral responses that can be expected from individuals in reaction to the organizational socialization tactics. The large black box represents what is missing from this theory, the individual experience of socialization and all of the intervening variables. In effect, merging Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) work with that of Jones's (1983), would help to illuminate what is inside the black box. Bringing to light the individual experience of socialization, would have to include two elements, (1) a general stage theory model of an individual process of adjustment, and (2) an explanation of the various effects of human differences on that process. Some progress in the literature in these areas is presented here as possible material to advance the interactionst discussion of organizational socialization.

Necessary Element 1: A Stage Model of Organizational Socialization

A few researchers have presented stage models of socialization. Wanous' (1980) three critical areas of an effective stage model are used here in determining which would be most applicable and effective for use in an interactionist perspective of organizational socialization. First, Wanous states that either the passage of time or the occurrence of events should determine the organization of a stage model. He states that in this case the occurrence of events is most applicable. Second, he states that the model must exp lain how each stage relates to the others. Third, the model must explain what defines movement from one stage to the next.

Out of the models examined (Feldman, 1976; Schein, 1978; Van Maanen, 1976; Wanous, 1980) one presented by Van Maanen (1976) appears to be the most parsimonious for inclusion here. The first stage in Van Maanen's model is *Anticipatory Socialization*. This stage includes the knowledge and experience that the individual collects throughout the lifetime with regards to work, meaning attitudes towards work in general and prior experiences of socialization with previous organizations. The second stage is *Encounter*. This stage can refer to an individual entering a new organization, or making a boundary change, as previously defined by Schein, within the organization. Van Maanen describes this moment of encountering the new boundary as a reality shock for the individual. He states that the severity of the shock is in part related to the congruence or disparity between how the individual anticipated the expectations of the organization and what is actually experienced. It is during this stage that environmental, organizational, group, task, and individual forces combine to determine the movement, or lack of movement, of the individual to the next stage of the model. To describe a few of the forces in more detail, relevant group forces are those that are created by the participation of the individual in a smaller subgroup of the organization, the smaller subgroup lies, "outside the control of the formal organization" (p. 90). It is in this group that the individual tests most of his or her perceptions of the organization. Elements of the tasks assigned to the individual influence the socialization process; often there is a disparity between what was assumed by the individual to be the task and what is experienced. Finally, personal characteristics, or individual differences also affect the socialization process. The interaction of these forces influence the "game" that ensues between the individual and existing organizational members, determining the next moves of the individual.

The third stage presented by Van Maanen is *Metamorphosis*. This is the stage where the individual tests new solutions to the problems initially faced within the organization. It is also in this stage that the individual accepts or rejects the socialization efforts of the organization. Several theorists have discussed what "acceptance" means for the individual. In short, the prevailing attitude is that individuals are composed of an, "integrated set of social selves organized around a basic image or concept of self. His basic temperament, intellectual equipment, learned patterns of feeling expression, and psychological defenses underlie and partially determine this self-image and the kinds of social selves which the individual constructs for himself to deal with his environment" (Schein, 1971, p. 409). It is, therefore, the work portion of the social self that is changed when the individual accepts the norms, behaviors, values and patterns of the organization, and not the foundational concept of self.

Necessary Element 2: Accounting for Individual Differences in Organizational Socialization

Van Maanen's (1976) three-stage model of socialization makes it clear that individual differences, including previous socialization experiences, influence current socialization experiences; these factors are woven into each stage of his model. Similarly, Jones (1983) states that along with previous socialization experiences, attributional processes will affect each individual's ability to make sense of the organizational context. As stated previously, the individual experience is complex and there are many variables that could be brought to bear on the experience of socialization. However, work by Louis (1980) provides some direction in this area. While not all inclusive, as a framework, it would help to guide further research in this area. In his model, Louis describes how the elements of *change*, *contrast*, and *surprise* are what trigger varying individual responses based on individual differences.

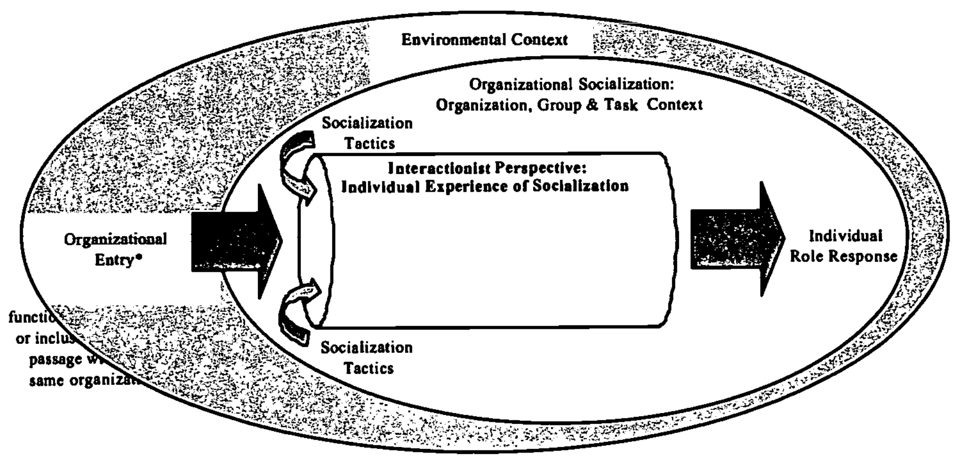
The boundary transition the individual is encountering may be entering a new organization completely, a promotion, a transition into a new functional role, or a change to a new level of inclusion or acceptance into the social fabric of the organization (Schein, 1971). Regardless of which boundary transition it is, there is an element of change. Here, *change* is defined as "an objective difference in a major feature between old and new settings" (Louis, 1980, p.235); it is the physical and the knowable changes between the old and the new. A few of such examples would be the job location, job tasks, or new coworkers. Logically, the more physical elements of change present in the boundary transition, the greater the degree of change the individual is required to cope with.

While the first element of change is concrete and external to the individual, the second element of *contrast* is experienced internally. Each new piece of information is compared with a previous understanding about work and is felt by the individual only to the degree that it contrasts with prior conceptions. An organization that encourages and models risk-taking behaviors may or may not be seen as a contrast to previous experience. If the contrast is great between previous experience and the new surroundings, the individual may take longer to let go and accept the new norms of risk-taking in his or her new surroundings. Louis (1980) states that the individual, "may evaluate aspects of the new role using old-role experiences as anchors on internal comparison scales. Or the newcomer may try to incorporate aspects of the old into the new role or resist the new role in favor of the old role" (p. 237).

The third element, *surprise*, reflects the difference between anticipations and subsequent experiences and encompasses the affective or internal reaction to change or contrast. Overmet or undermet expectations about the job, about one's own abilities, or about the culture of the organization can lead to an affective response of surprise. Each individual would have a different degree of surprise based on how his or her preconceived notions and interpretation schemes matched with the settings encountered. In essence, "discrepant events, or surprises, trigger a need for explanation, or post-direction, and correspondingly, for a process through which interpretations of discrepancies are developed. Interpretation, or meaning, is attributed to the surprises. Based on the attributed meanings, any necessary behavioral responses to the immediate situation are selected" (Louis, 1980, p.241).

Taking into account how previous socialization experience and attributional processes influence the stages of socialization for individuals, we now would have a more complete model to work with. Figure 2 depicts an integration of the new pieces, chosen by this author, into a new theoretical model of organizational socialization (see figure 2). As the individual enters a new boundary transition into or within the organization, an array of forces are already at work. The organization, in its societal and industrial contexts has determined the socialization tactics it will employ to ensure that those within it are content innovators, accepting the vital norms, values, and roles, and innovating that which will make the company more successful. The individual, in his or her societal and cultural contexts, has been exposed to a variety of socialization experiences that help to inform, for better or worse, the actions and responses to the boundary transition. As these forces interact in real time, the individual moves through the socialization process. For each individual, and for each organization, there are different collections of forces. As we begin to take into account the set of forces that exist with considering the individual experience of socialization, it is apparent that research is required to determine the interaction of all of these elements.

Figure 2. The Process of Orgaizational Socialization Using Interactionalist Perspective



Conclusions and Research Directions for HRD

"Indeed, from the time individuals first enter the workplace to the time they leave their membership behind, they experience and often commit themselves to a distinct way of life complete with its own rhythms, rewards, relationships, demands, and potentials" (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p.210). As organizations struggle with the tension between protecting their core essence and adjusting to the demands of the market, they must incorporate new members into that journey in the most effective ways possible. What has been revealed here is that the prevailing theory of organizational socialization and the new interactionist perspective are merely two lenses through which to view this complex human phenomenon. By overlaying the lenses, our view of the phenomenon becomes clearer. There are some steps, however, that must be taken in order for this integrated theory to be viable in HRD practice.

First, a complete synthesis of the literature on organizational socialization would need to be done. The purpose if this step would not only be to bring to the surface all of the work mounted on the sides of the organizational lens and the interactionist lens, but also to begin to sort through what empirical research has supported or refuted claims presented in the theoretical literature. It has been more than two decades since the publication of the prevailing theory by Van Maanen and Schein, and not all of their claims have been empirically tested. Second, in line with

Dubin's (1983) stages of theory building, this stage requires the development of new propositions about how all of the elements of the theory affect one another. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) developed propositions about how the tactics of socialization utilized by the organization affected the role response of employees. One example would be the proposition that having an organization utilize an *individual* socialization tactic would be more likely to produce the specific outcomes that were desired by the socialization agents because of the greater control found in an individual context versus a group context. These would have to be reevaluated given the integration of individual variables. Finally, HRD scholars and practitioners need to remain in touch on this issue in order to communicate about the viability of this more inclusive view in practice; scholars cannot become too engrossed in the theoretical intricacies of socialization forgetting its practicality in organizations.

HRD is a messy field. We muck around in shades of gray with every move we make; after all, we are dealing with people. This paper has presented the need to continue to wade through those shades of gray to have a more inclusive and informative view of the phenomenon of organizational socialization.

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