

EXAMINING ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING FOR APPLICATION IN  
HUMAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

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## ABSTRACT

Monique Busch

### EXAMINING ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING FOR APPLICATION IN HUMAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

This study examines organizational learning (OL) with member organizations of a state association for children and family services. OL has been studied in business organizations, but the concept has value in the context of Human Service Organizations (HSOs) as well. HSOs face increasing demands for accountability through evaluating outcomes, requiring new organizational skills and activities. The state association has collected outcome data from member organizations for nine years, and has recently provided external consultants to help organizations interpret and make use of the information to improve organizational functioning.

The process of OL was measured pre- and post-external consultation using an OL questionnaire developed by Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002). Sixty-two member agencies received questionnaires and 42 responded for a response rate of 67%. Qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 CEOs/Executive Directors of HSOs.

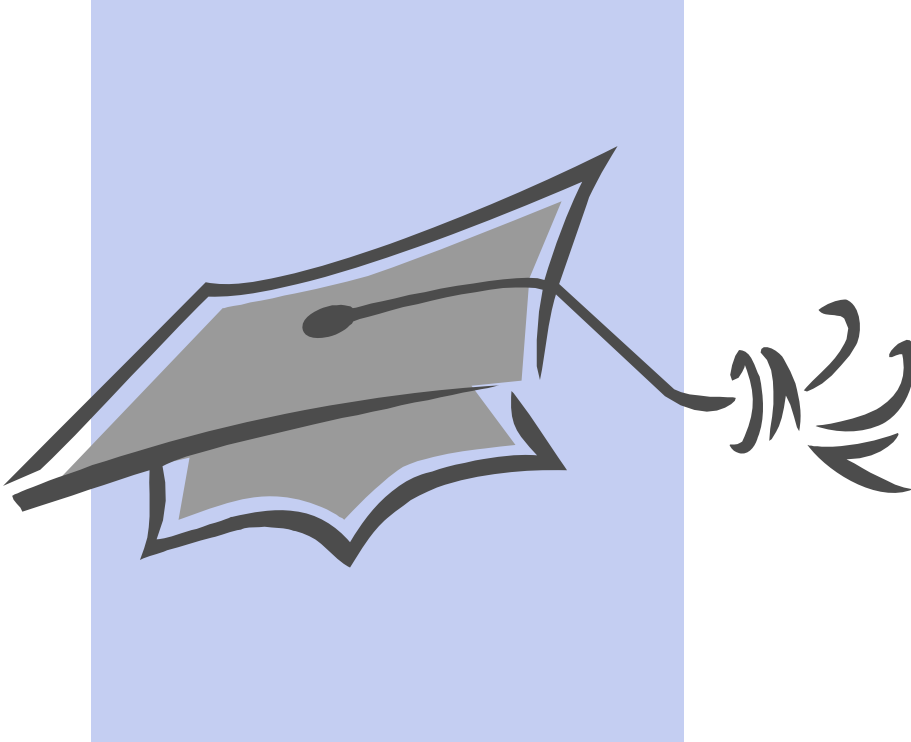
The OL questionnaire was found to have sufficient reliability and validity for the sample of HSOs in the study. Two factors were identified through factor analyses, Organizational Culture and Environmental Awareness. Satisfaction with an external consultant was not found to be related to increased OL. In the qualitative findings, the origins of learning themes that were identified were External Pressures, Philosophy, Planning, and Financial Pressures. The facilitating factor themes identified were

Leadership, Philosophy, New Staff/New Leadership, Willingness, Planning, and Training. The perceived obstacles to OL were Resistance, Philosophy, Finances, and Time. External consultants were found to contribute to Evaluation, Awareness, Motivation, and Training.

The main practice implication of the study is the identification of an instrument that may be used to examine OL in HSOs. The identification of facilitating factors and factors that may impede OL is a valuable contribution, as is the use of a standard definition of OL. The educational implications are for awareness in the education of future leaders by introducing OL and the application to HSOs. Future research is needed to address the development or modification of a better matched instrument for use with HSOs.

Keywords: organizational learning, human service organizations, external consultants, social work macro practice, social work education.

William H. Barton, Ph.D., Chair



Through learning we re-create ourselves.

Through learning we become able to do  
something we never were able to do.

Through learning we re-perceive the world  
and our relationship to it.

Through learning we extend our capacity to create,  
to be part of the generative process of life.

(Senge, 1990a, p.14)

## Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction	1
Extend OL Research into Human Service Organizations	2
Replicate a Promising Measure of OL	4
Explore the Impact of Consultants on OL	4
Push for Accountability in Human Services	7
Development of OL Concepts in Business	10
Potential Value of OL Concepts in Human Service Organizations	11
Potential Value of OL Concepts for Social Work Education and Training	11
IARCCA	13
Outcome Measures Project	13
Consultants	14
Preview of Subsequent Chapters	16
Chapter 2. Literature Review	17
Origins of Concept of OL	17
What is OL?	17
Definitions	17
Similarities and Differences --- Learning Organization and Knowledge Management	18
Who learns?	19
Individuals	19
Groups	19
Organizations	20



Populations of Organizations	20
What Kind of Learning Occurs?	21
Types of Learning	21
What Factors are Associated with OL?	22
Facilitating Factors	22
Inhibiting Factors	26
Assessment of OL	27
Qualitative Approaches	27
Quantitative Approaches	32
Assessment of the State of Knowledge About OL	34
Conceptual Clarity/Confusion	35
Measurement Issues	35
Application to Human Services Settings	35
Summary of Gaps and Place of Proposed Study	36
Research Questions	37
Chapter 3. Methods	38
Study Design	38
Sample	39
Participants	39
Measures	42
Organizational Learning (OL)	42
Satisfaction with Consultants	44
Qualitative Interviews	44

Data Collection Procedures	46
Human Subjects Considerations	47
Data Analysis Techniques	48
Quantitative	48
Qualitative	49
Chapter 4. Quantitative Results	51
Introduction	51
Research Question #1	51
Research Question #2	54
Research Question #4	59
Research Question #5	61
Summary	62
Chapter 5. Qualitative Results	65
Understanding Tacit Learning	65
Origins of Learning	66
Content of Learning	68
Changes as a Result of Learning	69
Identification of OL	70
Facilitating Factors and Impediments to OL	73
Impact of External Consultants	78
Increased OL Post-Consultation	80
Emergent Themes	80
Summary	81

Chapter 6. Discussion and Implications	83
Summary of Key Findings	83
Implications of Findings	89
Practice	89
Education	90
Use of Consultants in HSOs	90
Limitations	91
Future Research	92
Conclusion	93
Appendix A, Semi-Structured Interview Questions	94
Appendix B, Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002) Factors and Items	95
Appendix C, OL Questionnaire	97
Appendix D, CEF	101
Appendix E, Semi-Structured Interview Questions	104
Appendix F, Sample Qualitative Analyses Chart	105
Appendix G, Factor Structure Matrix	108
Appendix H, Glossary of Terms	110
References	114
Curriculum Vitae	

## Chapter 1. Introduction

This study explores the concept of organizational learning (OL) in the context of Human Service Organizations (HSOs). It examines the meaning of OL, its measurement and development. In so doing, this study contributes to the growing body of OL literature.

HSOs face a multitude of uncertainties in today's environment of shifting resources. OL has been identified in business administration and management studies over the past forty years as a means of growth, efficiency, and competitive advantage for organizations. Crossan, Lane, White, and Djurfeldt (1995) have identified OL as being linked to organizational performance and competitive advantage. Lahteenmaki, Toivonen, and Mattila (2001) view learning as a prerequisite for an organization's survival. OL has also been identified as being important as organizations are increasingly becoming learning environments (Veilleux, 1995). Social work macro practitioners as managers and administrators of HSOs may benefit from further exploration and study of OL.

The concept of OL is widely accepted, yet there is no widely accepted theory or model of OL (Fiol & Lyles, 1985; Crossan, et al., 1995). Different definitions have been used and there has been little to no systematic approach to conducting research. Huber (1991) asks in reference to OL, "Why is there so little cumulative work?" (p. 107). This study builds on previous research and makes the following contributions: 1) OL will be measured pre- and post-test following external consultation within a state association of member agencies providing services to children and families; 2) an OL benchmark will be established for other HSOs; 3) the use of external consultation and the contribution to

OL will be better understood; and 4) OL's relevance and existence in HSOs will be better understood. Factors contributing to OL, as well as inhibitors are identified.

For purposes of this study the following definition will be used, "OL means the process of improving actions through better knowledge and understanding" (Fiol & Lyles, 1985, p. 803). There are many definitions of OL in practice and research which creates confusion that is not limited to the definition of OL, but is spread across many ideas related to OL. It is clear that it is important to conduct the proposed study in order to clarify the concept of OL and to extend it into HSOs. The next section will delve into extending OL into HSOs.

#### *Extend OL Research into HSOs*

HSOs must be managed well to be competitive in today's market. A first step in doing this would be to understand how this may be achieved. The literature points largely toward the benefits of an organization achieving OL, and thus being more effective, more competitive, and more knowledgeable. OL has been explored only preliminarily in human services. HSOs may benefit by increasing their learning (OL) and thus become better learning organizations.

There has been a movement in human and social services to hold organizations more accountable, driving a better understanding of what works and what may be done to improve what is not working. The author believes that OL may be a relevant concept for gaining a better understanding for using and expanding upon learning in HSOs, leading to improved services for children and families. The idea that "knowledge is power" certainly gains added meaning when discussing OL and provides an enhanced

understanding of how OL may improve organizations, thus improving service effectiveness.

It has become increasingly evident that HSOs must mimic business/corporate trends in the pursuit of measuring outcomes and demonstrating accountability. HSOs should expect a stronger focus on accountability with the future of funding being tied to effectiveness of services. One example of this is the development of report cards demonstrating measurable outcomes for purchasers of services. The growing interest in accountability is largely driven by the need to demonstrate effectiveness to a variety of stakeholders (Vermillion & Pfeiffer, 1993). Decision-makers are examining outcomes and accountability (Young, Gardner, Coley, Schorr, & Bruner, 1994). In a time of major budget reductions in HSOs, there is even more call for demonstrating the difference that comes with services provided. If HSOs wish to stay in business and be competitive, there will be more pressure to demonstrate outcomes.

The study is a contribution to the field of human services management as well as to business and management by measuring the process of OL within HSOs. The study also contributes to social work education and macro social work practice by examining a largely business and management concept and applying it to the field of social work.

The study has a practical as well as an academic/theoretical application, with the relatively limited exploration of OL that has been done in the field of social work. The literature on OL leans heavily towards pointing out the benefit of an organization's success in improving performance if the organization is, in fact, learning.

### *Replicate a Promising Measure of OL*

A goal of the study is to replicate a promising measure of OL from the management information system (MIS) business arena (Templeton, Lewis, & Snyder, 2002). Further testing of this instrument and measurement of OL in HSOs is a significant contribution both to business and management, as well as to the field of social work. The Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002) findings provide an initial benchmark against which to measure the pre- and post-test findings. The OL questionnaire will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3. Methods.

### *Explore the Impact of Consultants on OL*

It is one thing for HSOs to begin identifying and measuring outcomes; it is yet another for HSOs to fully understand and make constructive use of the information collected. A United Way of America (2000) study assessed outcome measurement and found that 42% of the organizations (N = 391) surveyed were uncertain "...about how to make program changes based on identified strengths and weaknesses" (as cited by Ebrahim, 2003, p. B2). This study indicates a need in HSOs which may be filled through the use of a consultant assisting Executive Directors/Chief Executive Officers (EDs/CEOs) in better understanding and using outcome measures to strengthen their organizations, and in this process impact OL.

Consultants are being used more frequently in human services, for example, to provide perspective, expertise, new ideas, and assistance with transitions (Walsh & Moynihan, 1990). Consultants may also contribute by providing explanation, comparison, prediction, and prescription (Phills, Jr., 1996). Understanding how consultants may contribute to OL would seem to be a worthwhile pursuit.

Halvari, Johansen, and Sorhaug (1998) examined the use of external consultants and the relationship between autonomy and control in the management of external consultants and OL. The Halvari, et al. (1998) study is the most similar to the current study with reference to examining external consultants and OL. The authors administered survey questions developed for each area; for example, in the assessment of attitude towards learning, four expectancy and three value items were used:

To what degree do the following statements describe the results you expected of the project: (i) increased knowledge and skills among managers; (ii) increased knowledge and skills among employees; (iii) increased ability among managers in relation to project leader responsibility; (iv) increased ability among managers in order to participate in similar projects; What importance do you think the goal of this project has for: (i) the managers; (ii) the employees; (iii) involved departments in the divisions (Halvari, et al., 1998, pp. 299-300)

Each item was rated on a seven-point scale ranging from ‘a very little degree’ (1) to a ‘very high degree’ (7) for the expectance items and from a ‘very low value’ (1) to ‘a very high value’ (7) for the value items (Halvari, et al., 1998, p. 300).

Assessment of OL was done in a similar manner to the attitude toward learning.

The following five items were used:

To what degree did the consultant influence the learning and development of managers and employees with respect to: (i) knowledge; (ii) skills; To what degree did the co-operation with the consultant influence your competence in order to carry out similar projects in the future with respect to: (iii) knowledge; (iv) skills; and (v) To what degree do you think the use of an external consultant has influenced the knowledge of the division in such a way that they can solve similar situations in the future by themselves. (Halvari, et al., 1998, p. 300)



These items were measured similarly to those above; items were scored on a seven-point scale ranging from ‘to a very little degree’ (1) to ‘a very high degree’ (7) (Halvari, et al., 1998, p. 300).

Participants in this study consisted of employees who had participated in projects with external consultants in a large public transport company (surveyed participants were 109 managers and 22 employee representatives). There was a 55% response rate resulting in a total of 72 participants. Multiple regression analysis explained 69% of OL as a function of employees’ attitude toward learning, control in managing consultants, and the attitude toward involvement of employees, as well as employees and client-consultant cooperation (p. 295). Managers responded significantly more positively than employees’ representatives towards the control in managing consultants and for the measure of OL. The strongest predictor of OL was attitude toward learning (0.61,  $p < 0.001$ ) (Halvari, et al., 1998, p. 303).

The greater the expectation was for learning and the higher the value on the effect of learning, the more positive the attitude towards learning will be (Halvari, et al., 1998). The greater employees’ attitudes were toward learning involving external consultants, the more positive the relationship to OL (Halvari, et al., 1998). Attitude toward learning was found to be significantly related to OL at  $p < 0.001$  (p. 301). The researchers also assessed the consultant-client relationship as a “two-way exchange” in which the consultants “...should help clients to learn from their experience” (Halvari, et al., 1998, p. 295). This study indicates that the use of consultants can lead to improved OL through a cooperative, collaborative client-consultant relationship.

### *Push for Accountability in Human Services*

Lately, there has been an increasing call for accountability in human services. The public and private sector want to know what it is that they are purchasing for their dollars, and then how effective the services are. The push for accountability has led many organizations to outcome measurement as a form of evaluation and assessment of services.

In 1993, the U.S. Government approved the Government and Performance Results Act (GPRA, U.S. Congress, 1993). This policy aims at increasing the accountability and effectiveness of services for government and local public services. The GPRA has impacted human services via state government by forcing government agencies to plan more effectively and to be more accountable (U.S. Congress, 1993; Buckmaster, 1999). Outcome measures are a way for HSOs to demonstrate accountability, and as Buckmaster (1999) points out, “Outcome measurement is a tool for learning” (p. 192).

Performance measurement has been of growing interest since the late 1980s (Kravchuk & Schack, 1996). From the federal government to local government, people want to know what their tax dollars are purchasing. HSOs are no exception. In 1993, the GPRA was legislated, “To provide for the establishment of strategic planning and performance measurement in the Federal Government...” (U.S. Congress, 1993, p. 1). The purpose of the Act is to:

- improve the confidence of the public in federal agencies;
- help agencies to establish goals, and to measure performance against these goals; improve effectiveness and accountability;
- improve service delivery; improve congressional decision making;
- and improve internal management.

(U.S. Congress, 1993, p. 2)

Federal policies impact organizations that contract with the government, such as the for-profit and not-for-profit providers of human services. Accountability in child welfare has been impacted additionally by the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997. The Act is designed to address many areas in child welfare, including adoption assistance provisions as well as provisions to promote child safety and permanency (Adoption Policy Resource Center, 2000). ASFA is the first major reform of federal child welfare policy since 1980.

ASFA,

...attempts to shift the emphasis of the 1980 act, explicitly stating that the 'paramount concern' of all child protection efforts must be health and safety of children, even if this means overriding the 'reasonable efforts' requirement in some cases.  
(Gelles, 1998, p. 2)

The implementation of ASFA is monitored by the federal government through data collected in each state via the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs). ASFA drives outcome measurement. It directs the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services in consultation with the American Public Welfare Association, the National Governor's Association, National Conference of State Legislators and child welfare advocates, in creating a set of outcome measures that will result in the compilation of an annual report. The outcome measures are being used to identify state performance in protecting children and operating child welfare systems (Adoption Policy Resource Center, 2000).

A common policy framework has been implemented through ASFA to share financing and hold states accountable for spending federal dollars and achieving results in policy and programs. The federal government has specified that the current outcomes in

the child welfare system are: child safety, permanency, and child and family well-being (U.S. DHHS, 2000, p. 47).

In order to measure these goals the federal government implemented the CFSRs.

The purpose of the reviews is to:

ensure conformity with federal child welfare requirements;  
determine what is actually happening to children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services; and assist states to enhance their capacity to help children and families achieve the positive outcomes. (U.S., DHHS, ACF, CB, 2000, Fact Sheet, p. 1)

The CFSRs have been completed in each state public child welfare agency responsible for child protective services, foster care, adoption, independent living, family preservation, and family support. The outcomes that have been reviewed are:

Safety - Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect. Children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate.

Permanency - Children have permanency and stability in their living situations. The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.

Child and Family Well-Being - Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs. Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs. Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

(U.S. DHHS, ACF, CB, CFSR, Procedures Manual, 2000, p. 3)

The CFSRs gathered data from the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System, the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System, as well as onsite reviews by state and federal teams made up of internal and external child welfare experts. These reviews were completed in 2004 (Center for the Study of Social Policy, 2003).

Together, the GPRA and ASFA are impacting human services, particularly on a public level. However, public policies impact private and non-profit agencies as well. Individual states have now developed Program Improvement Plans (PIPs) which will

drive the collection of outcome measures and thrust human services toward greater accountability. The Center for the Study of Social Policy (2003) has stated that, “PIPs offer both substantive and political leverage to focus serious, sustained attention on a reform agenda” (p. vii). This federal action has impacted all child and family serving organizations in heightening awareness of the need to better understand what they are doing that is working and what may need to be improved upon.

#### *Development of OL Concepts in Business*

OL developed from discussions about behavioral theory of organizations (Cyert & March, 1963). The authors claimed that organizations learn from their experience. Organizations make choices that are conditioned by rules, guidelines, standards, and policies. OL is reflected in how the organization adapts to the environment. Cyert and March (1963) argued that organizations are adaptive systems and experience problems of learning. Individuals serve as instruments for adaptation (p. 123). Cyert and March (1963) also believed that it was possible to deal with adaptation at the aggregate (organizational) level. This concept was the impetus for taking OL to an organizational learning level. OL is not dependent on individuals, but may be achieved on an aggregate organizational level.

Argyris and Schon (1978) discuss the theory-of-action perspective and introduce different levels of learning with the concept of OL. Levels of learning will be discussed in a later section. Argyris and Schon (1978) supported Cyert and March (1963) in the belief that no OL occurs without individual learning, yet individual learning is not the only source for OL (p. 20).

Fiol and Lyles (1985) summarize the early literature and knowledge of OL. They discuss areas of agreement, types of learning, contextual factors, the concept of learning, content of learning, and levels of learning. At the time of their writing, Fiol and Lyles (1985) summarize that there is little consistency in use of terms, and that the only consensus exists around the term ‘learning’ over ‘adaptation’ and the need to examine both behavioral and cognitive development with regard to learning (p. 809). The next section will discuss the potential value of OL concepts for HSOs.

#### *Potential Value of OL Concepts for HSOs*

As HSOs become more aware of and involved in performance-based evaluation and outcome measurement to demonstrate accountability (Poertner, McDonald, & Murray, 2000; Wells & Johnson, 2001), the concept of OL becomes increasingly relevant because of the competitive edge that knowledge provides to an organization. It would seem that OL concepts used in business would be interchangeable or applicable to HSOs which are arguably run more and more like businesses. Understanding how organizations learn and unlearn would seem to be useful for organizations that are struggling with resources and consistently needing to demonstrate their service effectiveness. Unlearning (Dodgson, 1993) refers to the process of “...forgetting past behavior which is redundant or unsuccessful” (p. 385). Understanding the factors that facilitate and inhibit learning would also seem to be valuable information to apply in HSOs.

#### *Potential Value of OL Concepts for Social Work Education and Training*

Preparing masters’ level graduates for real life practice as the administrators in HSOs is not a task to be taken lightly. Are MSW graduates being introduced to widely accepted, popular business and management concepts? The history of the social work

profession is macro oriented and yet the profession has moved away from its foundation with a stronger focus on clinical and micro practice. How can attention be returned to macro practice in social work education? Perhaps the field can learn from other disciplines that have identified effective concepts such as OL. The author would argue that it is beneficial to prepare macro practitioners with all the possible tools they may need.

The National Association of Social Work *Code of Ethics* (1999) calls upon social workers to value *competence* (p. 1), and an ethical principle is for *social workers to develop and enhance their professional expertise* (p. 6). Assessing competence and expertise fits well with the call for increasing accountability. Human services are dedicated to serving others by providing necessary services to “promote health and well-being” in order for people to become “more self-sufficient” (Barker, 1999, p. 453).

In order to best serve others, organizations must work effectively and efficiently. HSOs are moving toward evidence-based practices via outcome-based accountability (Jacobs, 2003). Schools of social work must provide the best possible education for our future leaders. This will be done by using the most appropriate concepts from within social work, as well as from other disciplines.

Contributing to the use of a standard definition and cumulative research with a specific OL instrument would be a major contribution to the field of OL, as well as making a significant contribution to human services through establishing a foundation or a baseline for measuring OL in HSOs.

## Context of Present Study

### *IARCCA*

The opportunity to examine OL in HSOs has come about because of a large Outcome Measures Project being conducted by IARCCA. IARCCA was founded in 1944 as the Indiana Association of Residential Child Care Agencies. In 1994, IARCCA began to include foster care and home-based programs in its membership and changed its name to IARCCA...An Association of Children and Family Services. In 2005, IARCCA had 92 member agencies. IARCCA is committed to high quality services and provides training, monitoring and dissemination of state and federal legislative issues, liaison activities, advocacy, and placement assistance. IARCCA has an active membership that is greatly concerned with the welfare of children and families.

One of the services that IARCCA provides to member organizations is the IARCCA Outcome Measures Project. The Outcome Measures Project has collected outcome measures data from approximately 64 member agencies every year since 1998. Outcome measurement and concern for accountability are part of IARCCA's commitment to everyone the association serves.

### *Outcome Measures Project*

In 1995, the Indiana Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges challenged the residential childcare community to demonstrate that the services provided to abused/neglected/delinquent children were effective. The IARCCA Board of Directors made a commitment to work with the Indiana Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges to establish an Outcome Project and identify measurable variables to evaluate the effectiveness of these services.



A volunteer committee was formed from IARCCA member agencies to design the project, focusing on an assessment of the strengths and limitations of existing services; and ultimately, attempting to answer the question: “*What services are best suited for a given child and his/her family, and under what conditions are these services most effective?*”

A pilot outcome study was completed in 1997 with 19 member agencies participating. The Outcome Measures Project was expanded in 1998 to include all member agencies of IARCCA. With approximately 75% of agencies participating and providing data collectively for over 5,000 children, the Project has continued to identify areas for improvement. At the end of 2005, the Project completed its eighth full year of data collection from the broad array of services including residential care, foster care, transitional/independent living, home-based services, day treatment, shelter care, and crisis stabilization.

### *Consultants*

In 1999, IARCCA expanded to establish the *Institute for Excellence, Inc.*, a nonprofit training institute developed for the purpose of providing education and training throughout the state of Indiana. Training and education services are provided with the idea of enhancing providers’ ability to offer the best possible care to those children and families they serve. Through the promotion of quality services via education, specific emphasis is placed on responsiveness to cultural, racial, and ethnic differences (Wall & Minnich, 2004).

IARCCA’s Institute for Excellence, Inc., through a generous Lilly Endowment Inc. grant for expansion of the Outcome Measures Project, is in a position to offer

external consultation to participating member organizations. The consultants must possess a master's degree in a social science, child development, educational or research-based field (such as social work, psychology, educational psychology, or criminal justice), business administration, or public administration. The following credentials/licensure or any combination were considered: ACSW, LCSW, HSPP, Ph.D., Psy.D. Previous experience in research/program evaluation is required, and prior experience in child or adult services (e.g., residential care, foster care) is preferred. The individuals must be proficient in data analysis and interpretation. The consultants must have excellent oral and written communication skills and be able to travel within the state to member agencies.

The fundamental objectives for the consultants (from the Lilly Endowment Inc. grant proposal) are: 1) to strengthen the participating agency's ability to understand and interpret individual agency data to improve services; 2) to encourage participating agencies to share their data interpretations with stakeholders and local funders for program awareness; and 3) to encourage continued agency involvement in the Project, thereby, providing a greater level of credibility and reliability given to the Project.

The study examines OL pre- and post-consultation in organizations that are participating in the Outcome Measures Project. Consultants were made available to organizations for 22.5 hours. The consultants were used to assist EDs/CEOs on how to better utilize their organizational data and findings from the Outcome Project. Post-consultation organizations could very well have a higher level of OL.

## Preview of Subsequent Chapters

The following Chapter (Chapter 2) will discuss the origins of OL, definitions of OL, who is learning, types of learning, and facilitating and inhibiting factors to learning. This Chapter discusses quantitative and qualitative research studies that have been conducted, conceptual clarity and confusion, measurement issues, application to human services, and a summary of gaps potentially filled by the study. Chapter 3 describes the methodology for the study, outlining the instruments, data collection, participants, and analysis. Chapter 4 addresses the quantitative results of the study and discusses the research questions via hypotheses. Chapter 5 addresses the qualitative results according to the research questions addressed. Chapter 6 discusses limitations to the study, the summary findings in comparison to previous studies, limitations, and future research.

## Chapter 2. Literature Review

### Origins of the Concept of OL

#### *What is OL?*

As previously introduced, the following definition of OL will be used for purposes of this proposal, “OL means the process of improving actions through better knowledge and understanding” (Fiol & Lyles, 1985, p. 803). OL is a process of adaptation that organizations use in learning. OL is different from individual and group level learning. It does in fact mean that on the organizational level, learning is possible. The following sections will outline more about what OL is and how it may be understood uniquely from individual and group learning. It is important to understand the differences in definitions as well, so examples from several of the authors cited in this study are included below.

#### Definitions

OL has many definitions in addition to the one referred to above. Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002), in undertaking the task of developing an instrument to measure OL, found nearly 80 different definitions. This indicates the inconsistency in the use of the concept. Examples of definitions follow:

- 1) “Organizational learning is the set of actions (knowledge acquisition, information distribution, information interpretation, and organizational memory) within the organization that intentionally and unintentionally influence positive organizational change” (Templeton, Lewis, & Snyder, 2002, p. 189).
- 2) “The learning processes of and within organizations, largely from an academic point of view” (Tsang, 1997, as cited by Easterby-Smith & Lyles, 2003, p. 2).

3) An ongoing systematic process operating formally and informally which enables the organization to transform environmental information into knowledge that will improve performance. The probability of the occurrence of learning increases when: there is support from senior management; the organization is sensitive to its operating environment; the system permits the organization and its members to go outside the established norms and procedures; the culture is conducive to teamwork, experimentation, and forgiving of mistakes; organizational members reflect on information; and there is open communication. At its highest level, the organization not only learns, but also learns to learn. (Veilleux, 1995, p. 7)

These definitions serve as examples of different thoughts and ideas about the content and understanding of OL. The next section will discuss concepts that are frequently intermixed and/or confused with OL.

#### Similarities and Differences - Learning Organization and Knowledge Management

As with the definitions of OL, additional concepts have been utilized, causing further confusion about definitions and meaning. The following two concepts in particular are included in many studies and are defined as follows:

*Knowledge Management* "...a technical approach aimed at disseminating and leveraging knowledge in order to enhance organizational performance" (Easterby-Smith & Lyles, 2003, p. 3). A *Learning Organization* (LO) is "...an entity, an ideal type of organization, which has the capacity to learn effectively and hence to prosper" (Easterby-Smith & Lyles, 2003, p. 2). A LO is the outcome of OL. For purposes of the current study, these

are the distinguishing definitions for these other concepts which are viewed as separate yet related to OL. The next section discusses who is learning in OL.

### Who Learns?

A common question in the literature is “Who learns?” Is it the individual, group, organization, or populations of organizations? This is a critical component for understanding and will be discussed in more detail with examples provided for clarity.

#### *Individuals*

Miner and Mezias (1996) define individual learning as individual interpretation, as well as acquiring new norms, values, and skills (p. 91). This type of learning results in “trial-and-error learning” which is a solitary form of learning. Lahteenmaki, Toivonen, and Mattila (2001) summarize the literature, focusing on the separation of individual learning versus OL. They provide an example from Cummings and Worley (1997) of an employee learning to assist a client in an improved fashion without sharing the learned improvement with other employees. This is an example of individual learning.

#### *Groups*

Miner and Mezias (1996) describe group learning as made up of “Performance feedback, shared understanding, coordinated behavior” (p. 91). Group learning results in “Inferential Learning” which is a shared process of understanding. An example of group learning would be that of a unit of employees in an organization attending an in-service training and learning a new method of intervention. The unit practices in the training how to use the new technique. The unit leaves the training with new skills.

### *Organizations*

Organizational-level learning is described by Miner and Mezias (1996) as “Aspiration level, intraplant and interplant learning, organizational information processing” (p. 91). OL results in “Vicarious Learning” based on the systemic exercise of adaptation, modeling, history and norms, despite turnover of staff (Lahteenmaki, Toivonen, & Mattila, 2001, p. 116). Organizations may learn without individuals learning -- changes in systems and improvements in equipment may occur -- but this does not mean that individual learning is taking place (Cummings & Worley, 1997 as cited by Lahteenmaki, Toivonen, & Mattila, 2001, p. 116). An example of OL is seen in an HSO that over the years has operated with very specific guidelines. When a federal policy is enacted changing state policy which impacts all agencies serving children and families, systemic changes follow. Employees are expected to do things differently to meet the demands of the new policies. This is an example of organizational-level learning, in that the changes stay with the organization despite employee turnover.

### *Populations of Organizations*

Another type of organizational-level learning discussed by Miner and Mezias is groups or “populations of organizations” (1996, p. 92) These groups may have shared standards, shared experiences, and shared timing which may result in “Generative Learning” (p. 93). Building on the example from above, Generative Learning consists of one HSO observing fellow HSOs, noting the changes and adjustments that are made based on policy changes, and learning from the other HSOs.

## What Kind of Learning Occurs?

### *Types of Learning*

There are many different types of learning that may impact OL. Argyris and Schon (1978) are largely responsible for heightening the awareness of learning specific to organizations and defining different types: single-loop, double-loop and deuterio-learning.

Single-loop learning is primarily concerned with dealing with a specific problem resolution, and tends to be immediate. It would be rare to search extensively for a solution in single-loop learning (Argyris & Schon, 1978). Fiol and Lyles (1985) refer to this type of learning as “lower-level” learning with the immediate impact on a specific act within the organization. An example of single-loop or lower level learning would be an employee walking into a cottage in a residential child treatment center and noticing that a child is acting out and is not being attended to by other staff. The employee immediately intervenes and assists by addressing the acting out behavior and finds a positive outlet for his or her energy while providing supervision.

Double-loop learning goes beyond the immediate and may consist of changes in organizational norms (Argyris & Schon, 1978). This is referred to as higher-level learning by Fiol and Lyles (1985) and is more concerned with a broad overview versus the specific activities that resolve a situation. To continue the example from single-loop of the unsupervised child, a double-loop or higher-level learning approach would be that staff would problem solve within the organization as to how this situation will be avoided in the future. Addressing staffing issues, supervision of youth, and the need to be present at all times would be a double-loop or higher-level method of addressing the underlying problem.



Finally, deutero-learning is examining methods or strategies for learning, evaluation, and generalizing to develop a new process which is then reflected in OL practice (Argyris & Schon, 1978). An example of deutero-learning would be if an organization receiving its outcome measures findings and examining the findings to identify areas that it was doing well in and areas in which it needed to improve. The organization can then use the aggregate data to measure their individual organization's findings to better evaluate their services. Through this process, strategic plans may be created for programmatic improvements to address areas where outcomes are less positive for youth.

What Factors are Associated with OL?

#### *Facilitating Factors*

Veilleux (1995) in his literature review identified fourteen (14) elements that facilitate OL:

- 1) Culture; Example: The organizational atmosphere, the way of being within the organization --- the values, beliefs and so forth that are exuded from the organization.
- 2) Leadership (Schneider & Shrivastava, 1988; Morgan, 1986; Friedlander, 1983); Example: Values and beliefs adhered to and espoused or modeled by the leader(s) (p. 44).
- 3) Vision (Jelinek, 1979; Senge, 1993): Clearly communicated, clearly understood, and shared vision of the organization. The vision is part of the belief system of employees (p. 45).
- 4) Systematic Approach (Jelinek, 1979; Womack & Jones, 1994; Drucker, 1992; Schon, 1975): A planned approach that is clearly understood, structured, and yet flexible and adaptable (p. 45).

- 5) Environmental Awareness (Daft & Huber, 1987): Attentiveness to the internal and external environment for change, knowledge, information --- communicated throughout the organization for competitive advantage (p. 46).
- 6) Knowledge Workers (Drucker, 1992 & 1994; Harrigan & Dalmia, 1991): These employees must be “provided with visionary leadership” rather than stifled with rules and complex management systems (p. 47). They also must be viewed as part of the organizational communication process (p. 47).
- 7) Sharing (Harrigan & Halmia, 1991): Between employees, across units, with consumers, as well as other organizations. Sharing best practices, and sharing what may be learned through poor outcomes as well as successful outcomes (p. 47).
- 8) Network (Charan, 1993): This is a multi-level, slice of an organization – slicing across or through all levels of the organization for thorough representation, meeting regularly, and working to advise the leadership on performance management and promotions (p. 48).
- 9) Alliances (Adler & Cole, 1993; Pucik, 1988): Working to gain knowledge through cooperative alliances (p. 48).
- 10) Slack (Easterby-Smith, 1990; Nadler, et al., 1992; Senge, 1993): Time available to complete tasks other than those that must be done. The idea is that slack allows for time for the organization to reflect (p. 49).
- 11) Failure (Klein, 1989; Argyris & Schon, 1978; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Easterby-Smith, 1990): The opportunity to learn from mistakes is valued (p. 50).
- 12) Conflict and Tension (Friedlander, 1983): This would be expressed organizationally as an unmet need which drives the desire to learn (p. 50).

13) Technology: Using technology to increase learning via all available methods. This allows for more effective and efficient information and knowledge (p. 51).

14) Written Instructions (Documentation) (Jelinek, 1979; Adler & Cole, 1993; Kim, 1993): Creating a shared piece of information, documenting a shared reference that “preserves knowledge” (p. 51) (Veilleux, 1995, pp. 43-52).

DiBella, Nevis, and Gould (1996) identified seven learning orientations:

- 1) *Knowledge source* – the extent to which an organization prefers to develop new knowledge internally versus the extent to which external knowledge may be preferred;
- 2) *Product-process focus* – a preference for knowledge related to products or services rather than knowledge about basic processes that may support products;
- 3) *Documentation mode* – “...variations in what constitutes knowledge and the repositories of knowledge” (p. 373). Knowledge may be viewed as very personal or as more objective, for example, information processing or organizational memory;
- 4) *Dissemination mode* – the difference between the environments in which learning may evolve and learning may be structured/induced. There may be a structured approach in which decisions would be made about valuable information with the idea that this information is shared and used across the organization, often in written form. An informal approach would be communication that occurs via professional groups on a regular basis, formally or informally (p. 374);
- 5) *Learning focus* – learning that may be focused on methods and instruments to improve what is being done rather than testing the underlying assumptions. This is suggestive of single-loop and/or double-loop learning which reinforce each other (p. 374);

6) *Value-chain focus* – “...which core competencies and learning investments are valued and supported” (p. 374). This may be demonstrated for example by an organization that changes from “market-driven” to “best-practice focused” demonstrating the value of learning; and

7) *Skill development focus* – individual rather than group learning.

Lahteenmaki, Toivonen, and Mattila (2001) identified three learning steps:

1) Building the ability to learn; 2) Collaborative settings of missions and strategies; and 3) Building the future together. When all three indicators are positive, the organization demonstrates “...characteristics of double-loop or generative learning” (p. 126). When all three indicators are negative, the organization “...could not possibly be considered a learning one” (p. 126).

Veilleux (1995) found that the factors most likely to influence OL positively were:

- 1) Organizational culture;
- 2) CEO (i.e., leaders);
- 3) Being customer-focused (i.e., information acquisition from the customer);
- 4) The business (market) organization is in (i.e., monitoring the competition through information acquisition);
- 5) Good organizational memory; and
- 6) Information/knowledge the organization already possessed (i.e., core competencies) (p. 202).

Understanding the facilitating factors to OL would seem to be a positive area to focus on, however it would be negligent to presume or proceed without examining inhibiting factors. The next section will discuss those factors that have been identified as inhibiting OL.

## Inhibiting Factors

Veilleux (1995) also identifies five inhibitors of OL: 1) bureaucratic and mechanistic organizations (Brown, 1994; Morgan, 1986; AT&T, 1994) which tend to be internally focused, may have a dehumanizing effect on employees, discourage employees taking initiative, encourage people to do their job and not challenge what they are doing; 2) lack of diversity (Easterby-Smith, 1990); 3) poor organizational memory, not retaining what has been learned; 4) defensive routines (Argyris, 1990) rather than face embarrassment over a given situation, the act is covered up, not allowing the organization to learn from possible mistakes; 5) insufficient capacity includes the inability to act, reflect, and disseminate (Nadler, et al., 1992) (Veilleux, 1995, pp. 54-56). Meyer (1982) identifies similarly slowing or retarding learning in formalized / complex organizations (as cited by Fiol & Lyles, 1985, p. 805).

Veilleux's (1995) research study indicated that there are four significant factors influencing OL negatively:

- 1) Organizational culture;
- 2) Internal politics;
- 3) Lack of financial resources; and
- 4) Lack of information/knowledge (p. 202).

It is important in understanding the concept of OL to be versed in both facilitating and inhibiting factors, so as to look for additional support for similar findings in the research literature. The next section will discuss different measures that have been used in examining OL, both in qualitative and quantitative studies that have been conducted.

## Assessment of OL

### *Qualitative Approaches*

Case studies and semi-structured interviews have been used in qualitative studies examining OL. DiBella, Nevis, and Gould (1996) applied a grounded theory approach and conducted interviews and field observations to identify organizational changes that occurred as a result of learning. Seven orientations to learning were identified from the data collected which characterized how learning occurred and how knowledge was disseminated within the participating organizations. These seven forms of learning were discussed previously. Validity was tested through a series of action learning workshops. The workshops resulted in revisions to the labels and definitions of categories. The authors do not report the revisions that were made; however, the overall framework was retained.

Lahteenmaki, Toivonen, and Mattila (2001) used a single case study to examine whether OL occurred during operational and business culture change process. A 110-item Likert-scale survey was administered with statements dealing with different aspects of changes within the organization, both on the emotional level and the systemic level. Top and middle management (n = 150) of one company were survey participants. Three learning steps were identified and discussed earlier. When all three indicators are positive, the organization demonstrates "...characteristics of double-loop or generative learning" (p. 126). When all three indicators are negative, the organization would not be considered a LO (Lahteenmaki, Toivonen, & Mattila, 2001). The authors were unable to identify who the learner is – individual or the organization. They suggest that it is much

easier to identify individual learning (Lahteenmaki, Toivonen, & Mattila, 2001, p. 126). The three step process identified has not been replicated in any additional studies.

Veilleux (1995) conducted a quantitative and qualitative study with a large random sample of 395 (N = 186, response rate of 47%) Human Resource Development (HRD) leaders in the United States. He wanted to know 1) If HRD leaders knew about the concept of OL; 2) If HRD leaders believed in the concept of OL; 3) How widespread the concept of OL was in organizations; and 4) What perceived factors influence OL effectiveness, if it was occurring.

A majority of the respondents (87%) reported knowing about OL (Veilleux, 1995, p. 200). A majority of the respondents (96%) agreed or strongly agreed that it was possible for organizations to learn. As mentioned previously, the facilitating factors were: organizational culture; CEO (i.e., leaders); being customer-focused (i.e., acquiring information from the customer); the business (market) that the organization is in (i.e., monitoring the competition through information acquisition); good organizational memory; and information/knowledge the organization already possessed (i.e., core competencies) (p. 202). The four most significant factors influencing OL negatively were: organizational culture; internal politics; lack of financial resources; and lack of information/knowledge (Veilleux, 1995, p. 202).

Gould (2000) used a grounded theory approach, semi-structured interviews with individuals and groups in a national, voluntary child care organization. The interviews focused on two questions: 1) how participants felt that learning was integrated within their professional activity (p. 588); and 2) how participants conceptualized the process of learning from practice (p. 589).

Themes were identified from the interview data, coded manually, compared, and used to refine categories. Reliability was addressed by presenting the identified themes to the participants and soliciting comments. Additional comments were collected and added to the report (Gould, 2000). An inventory of 'learning' was created which included: supervision provided through the chain of line management, learning logs, shadowing, coaching, inter-team meetings, joint working, practice learning, and courses and training events (Gould, 2000, pp. 588-589). This inventory is a list of items that Gould (2000) found assisted practitioners in learning in their organizations.

This study was designed as an evaluation to compare two projects, and to examine how learning is produced through history, context, and organizational structure of the project. Four themes were identified from the data collected: 1) team learning was a critical context for learning referring to shared learning experiences (p. 590); 2) dissemination of learning within the organization, sharing of information, respect for internal knowledge (p. 590); 3) the importance of 'organizational memory' to document efforts for a systematic history (p. 595); and 4) the development of a continuous process of evaluation within organizational practices to assess learning (Gould, 2000, p. 595).

As a result of this research, a model was developed that moves beyond an individualistic learning model to one that is more complex and can incorporate three issues that emerged: 1) knowledge which may be encouraged by supporting knowledge seeking activities, for example, reading journal articles; 2) evaluation and action inquiry being explained and understood; and 3) organizational memory by identifying where expertise may be in the organization, and where similar issues may have been addressed. These would be suggested ideas for a prescription for change (Gould, 2000, p. 596). This



study contributes specific items which individual practitioners have identified as being helpful to learning, as well as a model for a learning organization.

Harvey and Denton (1999) used both qualitative and quantitative methods, consisting of an exploratory questionnaire, case studies, and semi-structured, open-ended discursive and direct questions. They studied the use of OL as a means of addressing business challenges over a three year period (1994-1997). Interviews were conducted with 66 employees in one of five manufacturing companies in the UK and in one of the following groups: Human Resources (HR), Research and Development (R&D), and Strategy. The research questions for this study were: 1) What real-world pressures make senior managers predisposed to adopt new organizational models, aspirations and language? 2) How do senior managers become aware of potential solutions to their perceived problems and anxieties? 3) What is the particular appeal of OL as a means of addressing current business challenges? In response to a questionnaire administered on a random basis to 400 medium and large firms in England, 160 useable responses were received. The results were: 74% of the organizations were familiar with OL; 63% took active steps to promote learning; and 84% of the American-owned organizations were familiar with OL compared to 64% of the British-owned (Harvey & Denton. 1999, p. 900).

A conceptually-clustered matrix technique was used to look for recurring themes in an iterative search to find meaning and generalizations. Harvey and Denton (1999) separated out the clusters of HR, R&D, and Strategy. In the HR cluster, a dominant theme was the idea that people are a “key business asset which is worth investing in” (p. 901). OL appeared attractive based on the idea that it may assist organizations in

relieving tensions and preparing staff for change. A quote from an HR manager captured the dominant idea: “Learning builds confidence in the individual that they can adapt and survive, it encourages a positive outlook, a willingness to look at something, not just reject it out of hand” (p. 902). In the Research and Development cluster, two issues crucial to OL were: 1) primacy of knowledge as a source of competitive advantage; and 2) increasing demand made by customers (p. 902-903). “OL is valued as a concept because it affirms the strategic significance of Research and Development to their business” (p. 6). In the Strategy cluster four themes emerged: 1) top managers commonly echo the official line on employees being one of the main assets of the business; 2) the group almost universally agrees that change is happening at an increasing rate; 3) the importance of creation, innovation, and new knowledge – generation to long-term competitive success; and 4) the need to address the demands of the customer (Harvey & Denton, 1999, pp. 903-904).

Harvey and Denton (1999) identified six antecedents of OL through the conceptual clustering matrix technique. The antecedents are driving OL’s popularity as a management tool and are motivators for becoming a LO: 1) a shift in importance of the factors of production away from capital towards labor; 2) rapid pace of change in the business environment; 3) acceptance of knowledge as a source of competitive advantage; 4) growing demand of consumers; 5) increasing dissatisfaction with the traditional management paradigm; and 6) the intense global competition in business (p. 897).

Harvey and Denton (1999) report five main points with respect to supporting the conceptualization of the OL phenomenon: 1) the concept of OL is a valid and logical response to challenges and change in nature and intensity of competition; 2) it is apparent

that the concept has taken root in fertile ground; 3) OL is attractive to all three clusters (HR, R&D, and Strategy) and serves as a unifying concept; 4) there is a natural interplay and commonality of interests between management practitioners and management theorists; and 5) OL is best viewed as a mainstream idea with the canon of contemporary business strategy (Harvey & Denton, 1999, pp. 912-913).

Qualitative studies have contributed to what we understand about OL today. In this review of the literature, it is apparent that replication is missing. This suggests that the same or similar questions should be examined more fully. OL is apt to be discussed, philosophized, and conceptualized, yet as HSOs are driven to evidence-based practice, staff are being driven to grow and expand their research skills. This lends itself to examining and using both qualitative and quantitative studies in attempting to learn more about OL. The next section is a summary of quantitative studies examining OL.

### *Quantitative Approaches*

Surveys and questionnaires have been developed for quantitative examination of OL. A criticism in the field has been the lack of cumulative research. This applies to the following studies, none of which has been replicated.

Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002) designed an instrument to specifically measure the construct of OL. Theirs is the initial work in developing an empirically reliable and valid measure of OL (p. 175). The research to develop this instrument was thought by the authors to be significant because:

the concept of OL is a paradigm for organizational thought, without a measure it is difficult to assess the extent of OL in organizations, a better understanding of OL is important for management, and empirical research in OL will benefit from a quantitative means of measuring the concept. (p. 177)

The literature collected for the definition of OL also informed the development of the OL questionnaire (see Chapter 3, Methods for more content related to the instrument). The findings from this study may be used as a benchmark to measure an organization's level of OL. For example, organizations that would score above these standards may be considered *learning organizations* and organizations that score below may need to assess their resources in the areas of the identified OL dimensions (Templeton, Lewis, & Snyder, 2002). The establishment of a benchmark is a significant contribution for measuring OL empirically. However, the validity of this measure has not been well established, as there has not been any attempt to link scores with other indicators, for example, organizational performance.

Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002) identified the following limitations of this research: 1) OL theory is still emerging, the complexity of the construct; 2) focus on the social-action perspective (per content analysis for their definition of OL, p. 189) rather than assessing change outcomes which many definitions of OL include, 3) the disproportionate number of CEOs in the sample; 4) the limited geographical area limits the generalizability of the study; and 5) the reliability scores of some of the factors indicated the need for additional research (pp. 208-209). Two factors were below acceptable reliability levels and several factors would indicate the need for additional follow-up research for exploratory research. The final instrument was an eight-factor, 28-item questionnaire. Templeton, Lewis and Snyder (2002) encourage further empirical testing of the OL questionnaire. This study has made a contribution, although the test results are not overly impressive. It is an instrument from which to gather benchmarks and to further the research in OL.

Veilleux's (1995) study as cited earlier resulted in the identification of a number of facilitating and inhibiting factors on OL. Organizational culture was reported as the factor that had the greatest influence both negatively or positively on OL (Veilleux, 1995). The size of the organization or business did not appear to impact how widespread OL was (Veilleux, 1995). This study's contribution is the identification of facilitating and inhibiting factors both from the literature and from the resulting research. A major limitation to the study was that participants not familiar with OL were instructed not to complete the survey. Participant's lack of familiarity does not necessarily indicate that OL is not occurring in an organization. In other words, a great deal of content may have been missed.

#### Assessment of the State of Knowledge About OL

Although empirical studies have been conducted, different populations, different research questions, and different methodologies, as well as different definitions of OL have been used. There is a pervasive belief or assumption that OL exists with little evidence to support this belief.

Easterby-Smith and Lyles (2003) consulted with an expert panel with regard to future directions in OL research. The panel of experts suggested that improvements in research methods and measures of OL/knowledge management would have the greatest impact (p. 645). Easterby-Smith and Lyles (2003) concluded that the field's theoretical development required much more research. This field is ripe for more in-depth study and research. The present study may fill a significant gap in the research literature by using a developed instrument and comparing the results to the previously conducted study.

### Conceptual Clarity/Confusion

Conceptually, there is a belief that OL exists, although defined and applied in a variety of ways. OL has been used interchangeably with knowledge management and/or learning organizations which lends itself to confusion in attempting to comprehend the research. Identifying facilitating and inhibiting factors to OL has been very helpful and yet, the factors do not seem to be well tested in the field with reference to application and replication for generalizability.

### Measurement Issues

Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002) developed an OL questionnaire in attempting to address a gap in the field. Veilleux (1995) also created an OL survey. The missing link in the OL research studies is the replication of either qualitative or quantitative instruments in order to further test the ability of one instrument to measure OL with different populations and different research questions. There is a real need for retesting and sharing of results.

### Application to Human Services Settings

The importance of addressing accountability in HSOs and in doing so having a better understanding of outcome measures may be related to enhanced OL. If through learning, an organization could acquire a stronger understanding for outcome measures and thus be more effective and efficient in demonstrating accountability, this would be a benefit to the organization. HSOs struggle frequently with limited resources. If learning or knowledge is viewed as a resource, it may be argued that whatever can be done to enhance learning should occur. In learning, the organization enhances its resources which then contribute to the generation of additional resources. The process of enhancing OL

should be viewed as a positive and enriching cycle, one that organizations would deem to be of significant value.

Masters' level social work students graduating and entering program management and administrative positions should be primed to understand business and management concepts to benefit their organizations. If OL is in fact something that can be enhanced as we understand it, one must understand the relevance of teaching students about this resource. It would be irresponsible to not address OL in a field that will be experiencing greater scrutiny and checks and balances for accountability of services provided.

#### Summary of Gaps and Place of This Study

Veilleux (1995) identified a gap between theoretical concepts and practice. This is an important gap as it means that what may be learned has not been understood and translated into practice. This would suggest that the application of theoretical concepts is an area to earmark in future studies. As has been discussed in the literature review, another gap is a lack of cumulative research in the area of OL.

Lahteenmaki, Toivonen, and Mattila (2001) identify three gaps in the research:

- 1) Too much emphasis on the learning of individuals and not the learning of organizations;
- 2) Urgent need for rich empirical studies in order to validate models; and
- 3) A lack of conceptualization of the process and description of how learning is transferred from individuals to organizations (pp. 117, 119, & 121). The current study addresses at least two of these identified gaps (#1 and #2).

The study also builds on an instrument developed specifically to measure OL with the hope of contributing to generalizability. There is no known research linking the specific areas that are discussed in the current study: OL, accountability, and the use of

external consultants, although there have been articles implying connections between OL and accountability (Buckmaster, 1999; Ebrahim, 2003). There is a need for research examining OL in HSOs and the relevant social work education contribution to macro practice.

#### Research Questions

- 1) Does the OL questionnaire designed by Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002) demonstrate sufficient levels of reliability and validity for this sample of HSOs, as specified by the authors?
- 2) How may OL be identified in HSOs?
- 3) What factors facilitate or impede OL in HSOs?
- 4) Will participating HSOs demonstrate significantly increased OL following the use of external consultants?
- 5) Is satisfaction with the IARCCA external consultants correlated with increased OL?

An organization may be expected to experience increased OL as a result of learning from the data and findings from the IARCCA Outcome Measures Project, through facilitation by external consultants. An organization, if particularly satisfied with and perhaps, motivated by the consultation experience, may participate in activities that enhance OL. If, on the other hand the organization is dissatisfied with the consultation experience, there may be little to no motivation for addressing learning opportunities.



## Chapter 3. Methods

### Study Design

The current study examined the OL process in the context of HSOs, specifically, several non-profit and private child and family services organizations. The study used a mixed methods approach with an exploratory quantitative, two group design (organizations that used consultants and those that did not) with a pre- and post-test questionnaire, as well as descriptive, qualitative, semi-structured interviews with top administrators of participating organizations. Due to this being an exploratory study, formal testing of hypotheses derived from theoretical propositions will not be done, but rather quantitative analyses will be used to explore several of the research questions.

Some authors argue that quantitative and qualitative methods may be viewed as complementary (Miner & Mezas, 1996; Easterby-Smith, Snell, & Gherardi, 1998). Triangulation, the process of using multiple methods, may enhance confidence in the findings (Malhotra & Grover, 1989; Glesne, 1999). Multiple methods allow a researcher to "...counteract the threats to validity identified..." in the different instruments that are used (Berg, 1995, p. 5 as cited by Glesne, 1999, p. 31). As Frechtling, Sharp, and Westat, Inc. (1997) found in discussing mixed methods, "Combining the two methods pays off in improved instrumentation for all data collection approaches and in sharpening the evaluator's understanding of findings" (p. 1-8). The multimethod approach may increase the reliability and validity of study data. The mixed method approach or triangulation allows for the researcher to build on strengths of each type and minimize the weaknesses of a single approach (Frechtling, Sharp, & Westat, Inc., 1997, pp. 1-8). Qualitative research provides new tools for use in learning research and allows for insight and

interpretation (Miner & Mezias, 1996). Qualitative methods are sensitive to contextual factors in attempting to understand the process of OL (Easterby-Smith & Lyles, 2003).

## Sample

### *Participants*

The 62 IARCCA member organizations participating in the IARCCA Outcome Measures Project were invited to participate in the study; and 42 agreed to participate. Eight to ten external consultants were commissioned to work with the state association participating member HSOs for 22.5 hours each. The participating ED/CEO of the HSOs were presented with a list of brief bios of the external consultants with a couple of names highlighted by the Principal Investigator based on the needs of the HSOs and the skill set of the individual consultants. The ED/CEO then selected an external consultant of their choice. Twenty-seven of the 42 organizations participating in this study used a consultant and 15 did not. Once participants selected an external consultant, the Principal Investigator assisted in finalizing the selection and facilitated the initial contact between the executive director and the external consultant. Individual consultants had different experience and backgrounds despite attending an orientation training discussing the specific Project recommendations for this service, it is possible that the choice of an individual may have influenced results.

The external consultants were used to assist and educate the administrators of some of the HSOs with regard to program evaluation, performance improvement, quality assurance, and marketing, based on outcome measures findings. Most of the individuals selected as consultants had backgrounds, as well as direct experience working with the Outcome Measures Project. The consultants helped to disseminate the IARCCA outcome

data to empower individual organizations to take action, and as a result of this exchange, the participating organizations may have experienced improved OL. HSOs that did not access an external consultant were used as a comparison group.

Study respondents were either the ED/CEO of HSOs or a delegate that the ED/CEO appointed to respond to the questionnaire(s) and participate in the interview process. Respondents to the OL questionnaire were largely CEOs (n = 26) and other program directors (n = 14), or vice presidents (n = 2). The number of years that they had worked in their organization ranged from 1 to 33 years and they had been in their current position ranged from 1 to 23 years. The age of their organization ranged from 8 to 154 years. The number of employees in their organization ranged from 7 to 550. Most respondents held a masters degree (n = 31) with a number holding other degrees and / or certificates (n = 7); a few had a bachelor's degree (n = 4).

Table 1 OL Pre- and Post-Consultant Questionnaire Demographics

Pre-test N = 38	Post-test N = 42
CEO = 23	CEO = 26
VP = 4	VP = 2
Other = 11	Other = 14
Number of Years Worked in this Organization	
Pre-test	Post-test
Median = 8.5 years, Range = 1-33 years	Median = 11 years, Range = 1-33 years
Number of Years in Current Position	
Median = 6.5 years, Range = 0-21 years	Median = 6 years, Range = 1-23 years
Age in Years of Organization	
Median = 27 years, Range = 6-154 years	Median = 31 years, Range = 8-154 years
Number of Employees	
Median = 40 employees, Range = 10-387	Median = 45.5 employees, Range = 7-550
	Education Background
	Bachelors = 4, Masters = 31, Other = 7
	Gender
	Female = 18, Male = 24

Respondents to the Semi-Structured Interview (N = 11) were program directors (n = 5), vice presidents (n = 3), or CEOs (n = 3). The number of years that they had worked in their organization ranged from 1 to 33 years. The number of years that they had been in their current position ranged from 1 to 22 years. The age of their organization ranged from 8 to 153 years. The number of employees in their organization ranged from 12 to 300. These demographics nicely mirror the OL Questionnaire respondent demographics above. A majority of the respondents held a masters degree (n = 10), with

one holding a doctoral degree (n = 1). (See Appendix A, Semi-Structured Interview Organization Demographics).

The next section describes the specific measures and the reliability and validity information of the instruments as related to the hypotheses and research questions.

## Measures

### *Organizational Learning*

This study supports the cultivation of a cumulative tradition of OL research by using existing and validated measures (Malhotra & Grover, 1998). Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002) designed an instrument to specifically measure the construct of OL. Theirs is the initial work in developing an empirically reliable and valid measure of OL (p. 175). An original draft included 46 questions. Demographic variables were also collected (Templeton, Lewis, & Snyder, 2002). A pretest was conducted, followed by a pilot test to further appraise and clarify the instrument. The questionnaire was revised based on feedback. The content validity was assessed by employing a “content evaluation panel of individuals knowledgeable about the concept...” (p. 190). Thirty-one of the 46 items were found to be significantly content valid based on a content validity ratio (CVR) which was evaluated at the 0.05 level. Statistical significance was found based on 50 percent of the participants rating an item as either “essential” or “important” (p. 193). The 31 significantly content valid items remained on the final version of the questionnaire (Templeton, Lewis, & Snyder, 2002, p. 193).

The final version of the questionnaire was administered to top management of organizations in Huntsville, Alabama (p. 193). Three hundred eighty-three high tech and knowledge-based organizations were randomly selected out of the 1,259 in the directory,

*1999-2000 Industrial Directory* for the Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County (p. 193). The response rate was 31.1% (119 out of 383). A chi-square test was conducted to assess for differences between the industry distribution of the respondent group and the population. The chi-square test resulted in a p value of 0.451, implying no difference between the population and sample groups (Templeton, Lewis, & Snyder, 2002, p. 197).

Exploratory factor analysis resulted in eight reasonable dimensions to describe OL. These factors and the alpha scores demonstrate evidence of the construct validity of the OL questionnaire (Templeton, Lewis, & Snyder, 2002). The eight factors identified and the alpha scores follow (for a complete listing of the items comprising the eight factors, see Appendix B):

- 1) *Awareness*, “the extent to which organizational members are aware of the sources of key organizational information and its applicability to existing problem areas” (alpha = 0.86);
- 2) *Communication*, “the extent of communication and that exists between organizational members” (alpha = 0.85);
- 3) *Performance assessment*, “the comparison of process- and outcome-related performance to organizational goals” (alpha = 0.76);
- 4) *Environmental adaptability*, “technology-related items pertaining to organizational responses to environmental change” (alpha = 0.74);
- 5) *Intellectual cultivation*, “the development of experience, expertise, and skill among existing employees” (alpha = 0.69);
- 6) *Social learning*, “the extent to which organizational members learn through social channels about organizational concerns” (alpha = 0.66);
- 7) *Intellectual capital management*, “the extent to which the organization manages knowledge, skill, and other intellectual capital for long-term strategic gain” (alpha = 0.52); and
- 8) *Organizational grafting*, “the extent to which the organization capitalizes on the knowledge, practices, and internal capabilities of other organizations” (alpha = 0.46) (Templeton, Lewis, & Snyder, 2002, p. 207)

The combination of factor analysis and known group analysis provides empirical evidence that the OL questionnaire exhibited acceptable construct validity (p. 201).

Organizational grafting (alpha 0.46), as well as intellectual capital management (alpha

0.52) were two factors that had relatively low internal reliability, indicating possible concern (p. 201). However, a number of the factors have mid-level alpha scores. The OL questionnaire was found to be reasonably reliable based on using a Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 as the minimal acceptable level (Templeton, Lewis, & Snyder, 2002, p. 201)

The current study used the Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002) instrument to assess OL in HSOs. Six items that were reverse coded were recoded, so that high scores consistently indicate greater OL. Two questions were added to the questionnaire to collect demographic data on educational background and gender. (See Appendix C for the OL questionnaire). This additional demographic information may be used to better explain OL.

#### *Satisfaction with Consultants*

The Consultant Evaluation Form (CEF) developed by Erchul (1987) was used to measure the organization's satisfaction with consultants. Erchul's CEF is a 12-item, 7-point rating scale to measure the consultant's effectiveness. The scale ranges from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). The instrument was determined to be reliable with an alpha (Cronbach, 1951) of .94 (Erchul, 1987). (See Appendix D for the CEF).

#### *Qualitative Interviews*

One of the main ideas behind the qualitative component of the study is to examine tacit learning, the type of learning that most often occurs on an unspoken level.

Ethnography is a qualitative method that addresses description, analysis, and interpretation of the culture-sharing group (Creswell, 1998, pp. 152-153). Although a full, in-depth ethnographic study was not conducted here, comparable naturalistic interview methods were used by incorporating feedback from participants.

Huber (1991) suggests that interpretation be more closely examined with regard to defining OL. This study has included qualitative research as a way to better understand how information is interpreted (Argyris & Schon, 1978). Thematic analysis is a method for studying communication. Walker (2003) examined OL through story gathering and interpretation which resulted in the identification of themes. Barone (2000) as cited in Walker (2003) suggested that themes are “a central insight or controlling idea that gives unity to the complex operations of appreciation and disclosure in qualitative investigations (p. 30)” (Walker, 2003, p. 103). Walker explains that themes are a way to organize and interpret content.

The qualitative interview guide was pilot tested with two EDs and the questions were revised to include: 1) Can you share an example of a particular situation in which your organization learned a lot? Probes: What do you feel learning has helped with? What has helped facilitate change? What are the obstacles or barriers? When does learning take place? 2) Are there a lot of situations like this or would you describe this situation as being unusual? 3) What impact, if any, has the Outcome Project external consultant had on OL in your organization? Please describe the impact.

An additional volunteer respondent pilot-tested the second sequence of questions and provided input on the questions and format. The probes were viewed as much easier to respond to than question one. The respondent did not have copies of the probes and suggested that they be included to review before the interview with the questions. Suggestions were made about the wording on number one which was then revised and all respondents were provided with questions and probes in advance of the interview. (See Appendix E for the final semi-structured interview guide).



Reliability of the interview content was addressed both by sending complete transcriptions of individual interviews to respondents, and also by sending identified themes. Facilitating factors and perceived obstacles that were suggested in the interview content were also presented to respondents. Input and feedback were requested and received from ten of the eleven respondents.

#### Data Collection Procedures

Announcements were posted describing the study in the weekly IARCCA member newsletter. A cover letter from the Executive Director of IARCCA and the primary investigator were sent with the Organizational Learning questionnaire and the informed consent with a stamped self-addressed envelope to each participating member organization. Follow-up announcements were posted in subsequent weekly newsletters. Individual follow-up phone calls were made to EDs/CEOs encouraging participation. If a new questionnaire was requested, a second copy with an informed consent was faxed. The process was the same for the collection of post-test questionnaires.

The OL questionnaire by Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002) was administered pre- (Spring 2004) and post-test (Fall 2005) to participants in the IARCCA Outcome Project. Post-consultation questionnaires were administered 20 months following pre-consultation questionnaires, in order to allow for organizations which planned to use a consultant the time to complete the 22.5 hours available. The Consultant Evaluation Form (CEF) was administered upon the completion of consultation in organizations participating in the IARCCA Outcome Project. Data were analyzed and compared using SPSS (Statistical Program for the Social Sciences) software.

Qualitative interview respondents were selected to represent: a) both organizations that did and did not use consultants; b) small, medium, and large organizations; and c) urban and rural organizations. Eleven organizations were selected as shown in the following table.

Consultant	Urban/Rural	Small (1-30)	Medium (31-100)	Large (> 100)
Yes	Urban	1	1*	2
Yes	Rural	1*		1
No	Urban	1	1*	1
No	Rural	1		1

\*Three of the eleven respondents suggested that they were between rural and urban.

Email messages were sent to EDs/CEOs of the selected organizations asking if they would be interested in participating or if they could identify someone in their organization who would be familiar with how the organization learns. The researcher then contacted each person who was recommended by the ED/CEO for scheduling an interview time. Interviews were conducted either by phone and face-to-face. Respondents received a copy of the semi-structured interview questions in advance of the interview. All interviews were tape recorded and informed consents were collected.

#### Human Subjects Considerations

In compliance with University protocol, the research plan and interview protocol were reviewed and approved by the Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Study #0310-70B). All interview participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses and of their organizations. All

participants received two copies of the Informed Consent, one to keep and one to return. Participants had the right to refuse to participate at any point in the study. Participation in the interviews was voluntary. Matching between pre- and post-test questionnaires occurred with permission from participating organizations as identified in the Informed Consent. The study also received formal approval from the IARCCA Outcome Measures Task Force and the IARCCA Board of Directors.

The researcher who is also the Project Coordinator and facilitated matching between HSOs and consultants was aware of her role primarily as a researcher when discussing elements related to the current study. The multiple roles may be viewed as a potential conflict of interest or bias. However, the study was introduced as a dissertation study by the researcher and the role of researcher or student was emphasized.

#### Data Analysis Techniques

##### *Quantitative*

As had been done by Templeton, et al. (2002), principal components factor analysis was used to extract dimensions of the OL questionnaire. Some researchers would argue that factor analysis would not be appropriate to use with a small sample size. However, Arindell and van der Ende (1985) suggest that sample size is not an issue as long as the strength of the factors and comparable eigenvalues are adequate (p. 172).

Testing of assumptions prior to conducting factor analyses was done using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's test of sphericity. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy can range from 0.0 to 1.0 and measures the extent to which the items in a factor analysis can be predicted without error by the remaining items. A coefficient .80 or above is good, and 1.0 indicates perfect

errorless measurement (Pike, 2002, p. 36). The Bartlett's test of sphericity is a statistical test of the significance of correlations between items in a factor analysis (Pike, 2002, p. 36).

Factor analyses were used to examine the data and compare results with those of Templeton, et al. (2002). Factor analysis allows the researcher to identify how various items may be related to one another and form clusters. Since each factor represents a number of different items, factors can be more efficient than measurement of individual items (Salkind, 2000). The idea is to represent items that may be related to one another and identify the relationship as a factor and to name the factor by examining the items that fall into the factor. Factor analyses were used by Templeton, et al. (2002) in their OL study and it is helpful to identify factors that may or may not be related in the two studies. Reliability analyses using Cronbach's alpha were conducted for each factor. Deleting items did not increase reliability.

Paired t-tests and independent samples t-test were used to examine possible differences between pre- and post-test OL questionnaire results and to assess possible differences between organizations that used a consultant and those that did not.

The CEF results are assessed by reviewing the mean score of each item. Pearson product-moment correlations were used to test the relationship between dimensions of OL and satisfaction with the consultants.

### *Qualitative*

Interview content was transcribed verbatim from audio tape. Each transcription was reviewed by the principal investigator a minimum of four times for content. A table was set up to organize responses (See Appendix F). Sections responding to each specific

question were copied and placed into a table to organize the data. Interview transcriptions were sent to the individual respondent for their review and input. The researcher reviewed the summary interview table content numerous times to identify and code emerging themes and specific responses to facilitating factors and perceived obstacles to OL. The possible themes were then put into a Word document and emailed to each interview respondent for their input and suggestions. Ten of the eleven respondents replied.

The following Chapter discusses the results from the quantitative instruments and methods used for analyses.

## Chapter 4. Quantitative Results

### Introduction

The following sections will address each of the research questions in the order presented at the end of Chapter 2. Chapter 5 contains qualitative results from the study addressing related research questions. Chapter 6 contains a summary and discussion of the implications of the findings.

Research Question #1: The OL Questionnaire designed by Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002) demonstrates sufficient levels of reliability and validity for this sample of HSOs identified for the current study.

Factor analyses were computed for all 30 items. Principal components factor analyses with Promax rotations were used for these computations. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and the Bartlett's test of sphericity were used to test the assumptions. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .580, which is a mediocre score with closer to 1.0 indicating an adequate sample size (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Field, 2005). The Bartlett's test of sphericity was applied for these items. A significant result means that there is a sufficient amount of correlations among the items for their use in factor analysis. These analyses indicated that the items were sufficiently correlated for use in factor analyses (chi-square = 776.541,  $p < .001$ ).

The initial analysis was conducted using the post-test data because there were a larger number of respondents ( $N = 42$ ) than pre-test. The post-test data were used to examine the number of factors that represented the items. The initial analysis extracted two factors. The scree plot indicated a steep grade between the first and second factor and a leveling off after the second factor. Factor 1 accounted for 29% of the variance, and Factor 2 for 13% of the variance. The primary loadings for the structure matrix for each

factor were moderate to good, ranging from .348 to .792. One item, “Management removes obsolete information from employees’ access” was not weighted heavily on either Factor 1 (.319) or Factor 2 (.374). These low loadings indicate that the item is not strongly associated with either Factor. (See Appendix G, Factor Structure Matrix).

Factor 1: Organizational Culture contains 19 items. This factor is related to the internal practice of an organization, values, beliefs, atmosphere (Veilleux, 1995, p. 44) that may contribute to OL. The loadings of the 19 items for Organizational Culture range from .348 to .792. The 19 items related to this factor describe characteristics of the inner workings of the organization, both positive and negative; for example, hiring highly specialized staff would be a positive item, whereas, keeping information from others or being resistant to change may be viewed as a negative item. Organizational culture is a broad and encompassing factor as the 19 related items indicate (See Appendix H, Glossary of Terms for definitions).

Factor 2: Environmental Awareness contains 11 items with loadings ranging from .374 to .783. This factor is related to the awareness of the internal and external environment for knowledge and information (Daft & Huber, 1987 as cited by Veilleux, 1995, p. 46) including electronic management and information management that may be related to OL. Environmental Awareness refers to how information is managed, the actual conduct around systems to manage communication. This is an electronic management, information technology related factor and more procedural than Organizational Culture, which is more practice oriented.

Unlike Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002), the current study identified two factors. The eight factors that Templeton, et al. (2002) identified were discussed in detail

in Chapter 3 (pp. 51-52). The scale internal consistency reliability coefficients ranged from 0.46 to 0.86 and were identified as follows: 1) *Awareness*; 2) *Communication*; 3) *Performance assessment*; 4) *Environmental adaptability*; 5) *Intellectual cultivation*; 6) *Social learning*; 7) *Intellectual capital management*; and 8) *Organizational grafting* (Templeton, et al., 2002, p. 207).

Internal consistency reliability analyses were conducted for the two factors that were identified through factor analysis. The Cronbach's coefficient alpha for Factor 1: Organizational Culture was .88 and for Factor 2: Environmental Awareness was .86. These are both high levels of reliability. The coefficient alpha would not have increased by deleting any items. The Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) is the estimate of the degree of error measurement. The SEM scores are low for both factors which indicates higher reliability. For Factor 1, the SEM score was 3.33 as compared to the possible range of scores for Factor 1, which was 19 - 95. For Factor 2, the SEM score was 2.78 compared to the possible range of scores for Factor 2, which was 11 - 55. (See Table 3).

Table 3 Results from Internal Consistency Reliability Evaluations Post-test (N = 42)

Factors	Mean	SD	Alpha	SEM
Factor 1: Organizational Culture	71.04	9.99	0.889	3.33
Factor 2: Environmental Awareness	40.30	7.62	0.866	2.78

In these analyses, the level of internal consistency reliability is high with Factor 1, 0.889 and Factor 2, 0.866. The SEM scores for both factors also indicate very low error measurement as indicated in Table 3 above.



Research Question #2: OL will be identified in a similar manner in HSOs as it has been identified in the literature.

The Templeton, et al. (2002) instrument was used with management information systems (MIS) specialists, whereas the current study applied the instrument within HSOs. These are two different populations with different goals and objectives. It may be of interest to compare similarities and differences between the two different groups of respondents.

In order to compare OL in HSOs to the OL in Templeton's, et al. (2002) study, the researcher conducted independent t-test analyses by organizing individual items into the eight factors identified by Templeton, et al. (2002). Mean scores, Ns, and standard deviations were provided in the Templeton, et al. (2002) study. Descriptive statistics were computed on the current study data to compare to the Templeton, et al. (2002) data. This is a small sample (N = 42) in comparison to that of Templeton, et al. (2002) (N = 118).

Indices were developed with the items identified by Templeton, et al. (2002) to match the eight factors identified. T-tests were used to compare the results from the two studies. Conducting eight t-tests may result in an inflated Type I error rate. The Bonferroni's Correction for Inequality was used to reduce the potential for inflated Type I error rates. The probability level nearest a tabled value was .005 (.05/8) and had a t-critical value at  $df = 40$ ,  $tcv = \pm 2.704$ . The Bonferroni Correction for Inequality is a satisfactory strategy when there are not many differences to compare as was the case in the current study (Newton & Rudestam, 1999, p. 236).

In grouping items by Templeton, et al. (2002) factors, there are four significant differences: *Communication* ( $t = 3.13$ ) includes three items and is related to having access to tools that may increase or encourage communication, for example, electronic tools,

telephone, email, and internet, as well as employees being encouraged to communicate in a clear fashion. The Templeton, et al. (2002) study's mean was 13.60 and the current study's mean was 12.07. The mean score indicates a lower score for the *Communication* scale for HSOs than for MIS organizations for this factor. MIS type organizations may have more access to electronic tools and technology than HSOs which may explain the difference in this scale between the two populations.

*Intellectual Capital Management* ( $t = 4.23$ ) includes three items. This factor is related to acquiring organizations, departments, or functions for short-term financial gain, as well as the organization having a certain mix of skills among employees, and hiring employees who have specialized skills and knowledge. The Templeton, et al. (2002) study's mean was 12.04 and the current study's mean was 7.81. Again, the current study respondents scored lower on the *Intellectual Capital Management* scale than the Templeton, et al. (2002) respondents. These items may exemplify differences that exist between HSOs and MIS organizations with reference to making a profit, however, with HSOs being in a highly competitive market, one would assume that there would be more similarity today than 10-15 years ago. The items contained in this factor may identify areas to target for future educational and developmental work with HSOs.

*Environmental Adaptability* ( $t = 3.58$ ) includes four items and is based on technology items, for example, extensive use of information systems and electronic storage. The Templeton, et al. (2002) study's mean was 15.32 and the current study's mean was 11.74. The current study scored lower on the *Environmental Adaptability* scale. It is not surprising that HSOs would score differently in this factor than MIS

organizations. HSOs are typically struggling in this area and working to build better access to technological advances.

*Social Learning* ( $t = 4.29$ ) which includes three items and is based on staff learning internally about organizational concerns in informal ways. Each item related to this factor is worded in the negative. For example, “Our employees resist changing to new ways of doing things.” The Templeton, et al. (2002) study’s mean was 11.69 and the current study’s mean was 9.85. This is the last scale with a significant difference with a lower mean score for *Social Learning* for the current study. One would believe that there is considerable collaboration internally in HSOs in order to best meet the needs of the clients served, however that may not be the case. Perhaps, MIS organization employees are more independent and not as collaborative. This would be a good factor to examine more closely in future research (See Table 4, Differences by Groups).

Table 4 Difference by Groups – Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (T) (2002) (N = 119) and Busch (B) (N = 42)

Factor	T of items	T Mean	T SD	B Mean	B SD	t
Awareness	5	19.52	3.78	19.51	2.24	.016
Communication	3	13.60	2.74	12.07	2.67	3.13*
Performance	4	14.20	3.26	14.03	3.36	.288
Assessment						
Intellectual	4	15.75	2.67	14.55	1.86	2.24
Cultivation						
Environmental	4	15.32	3.38	11.74	2.96	6.07*
Adaptability						
Social	3	11.69	2.48	9.85	2.08	4.29*
Learning						
Intellectual	3	12.04	2.36	7.81	1.68	10.67*
Capital						
Management						
Organizational	2	7.63	3.22	7.14	1.37	1.24
Grafting						

Note:\* = significant @ .005

The four factors with significant differences were found to have lower scores in the current study when compared with the Templeton, et al. (2002) study scores. Higher scores indicate higher levels of OL. It is also important to keep in mind that each of the eight factors has a limited number of items, ranging from two to five items per factor.

The factors that did not differ significantly were: *Awareness* ( $t = .016$ ) which is made up of five items. This scale is related to understanding how the organization operates and where to find information internally, as well as problem-solving skills. The Templeton, et al. (2002) study's mean was 19.52 and in the current study, the mean was 19.51. This indicates little to no difference in scores between the current study and the Templeton, et al. (2002) respondents. It is not surprising that there is little difference

between the two studies, one would hope that both HSOs and MIS organizations would be aware of how to access information and work on problem-solving skills.

*Performance Assessment* ( $t = .288$ ) includes four items and is related to outcome collection, data management, and decision-making models. The Templeton, et al. (2002) study's mean was 14.20 and the current study's mean was 14.03. This is little to no difference in scores. Again, it is not surprising to see little difference here. The HSOs that participated in the current study are all participants in a statewide outcome measures research project and MIS organizations would more than likely be involved in performance assessment, as well.

*Intellectual Cultivation* ( $t = 2.24$ ) includes four items and is related to developing skilled cross trained staff, as well as developing the ability to learn from customers, competitors, and payors. This factor is related to examining community needs, examining both internal and external content that may contribute to enhanced learning. It could also be related to training needs, in order to develop experts from within the organization. The Templeton, et al. (2002) study's mean was 15.75 and the current study's mean was 14.55. This again is a lower, but not significant, score for the current study respondents. This is another factor that would not be expected to have significant differences between HSOs and MIS organizations. HSOs have to be competitive in the current climate, as do MIS organizations.

The last factor with no significant difference is *Organizational Grafting* ( $t = 1.24$ ) which includes two items that are related to examining strategies of competitors and acquiring information externally as needed when that information is not available internally. The Templeton, et al. (2002) study's mean was 7.63 and the current study's

mean was 7.14, indicating a lower score for the current study respondents. Again, it is not surprising to see little to no difference here, as both HSOs and MIS organizations must examine strategies of competitors and know when to pursue information from external sources. Each of the eight Templeton, et al. (2002) factors for OL were scored lower for the current study respondents.

Research Question #3 is addressed in Chapter 5, Qualitative Results.

Research Question #4: HSOs will demonstrate significantly increased OL following the use of an external consultant.

Paired samples t-tests with HSOs pre-test and post-test data, and the two factors identified earlier were used to assess differences in OL, following the use of an external consultant.

#### Overall Change Pre- to Post-Test on OL Factors

As stated previously, the two factors identified in the factor analysis were Factor 1: Organizational Culture and Factor 2: Environmental Awareness. Factor 1 is related to the internal practice of an organization, values, beliefs, atmosphere (Veilleux, 1995, p. 44). Factor 2 is related to the awareness of internal and external environment for knowledge and information (Daft & Huber, 1987 as cited by Veilleux, 1995, p. 46) including electronic management and information management. The two factors were examined pre- and post-test with the matched sample that had used a consultant (n = 20) in order to assess any difference that may be attributed to the consultation.

Paired t-tests compared pre- and post-test results to identify change over time. Differences for Factor 1: Organizational Culture and Factor 2: Environmental Awareness (cv = 1.706, df = 26). Note that, the power for a paired-samples t-test is low due to the small sample size, increasing the probability of a Type II error (See Table 5).

Table 5 Paired Samples t-tests (N = 27)

Factors	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	T-test	p
Organizational Culture	69.00	64.92	3.206	.004
Environmental Awareness	38.29	39.44	-1.378	.180

The results from the t-test on Factor 1: Organizational Culture demonstrates a significant difference pre- to post-test, however this is an observed change in the opposite direction of the hypothesis. The results indicate that the null hypothesis on factor 1 pre- to post cannot be rejected [t (19) = 3.206,  $p < .05$ ]. The results for Factor 2: Environmental Awareness do not demonstrate a significant difference pre- to post-test and therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected [t (19) = -1.378,  $p > .05$ ]. It is possible that a larger sample size for Factor 2: Environmental Awareness may have been significant.

#### Independent Samples T-test on Post-test Data

The statistical analyses were conducted with a small matched sample of 20 HSOs that used a consultant and seven HSOs that did not (pre-consultation and post-consultation measurement occurred using the OL questionnaire).

Independent samples t-tests were run on the post-test OL questionnaire data comparing organizations that did and did not use consultants ( $cv = 2.92$ ,  $df = 25$ ). The results were not significant indicating that in this small sample using an external consultant did not cause a significant change in OL (See Table 6).

Table 6 Independent Samples t-test between subsamples with and without consultants

	Consultant	Mean	SD	T	p
Factor 1 post	No = 7	65.28	6.82	.158	.876
	Yes = 20	64.80	7.06		
Factor 2 post	No = 7	40.85	7.15	.702	.489
	Yes = 20	38.95	5.85		

HSOs that did not use consultants make up a small sample (n = 7). Interestingly, the overall mean score for the organizations that did not use consultants is higher than those that did use a consultant, although not significantly.

Research Question #5: Satisfaction with the external consultants is correlated with increased OL.

This research question was addressed by examining the correlation of satisfaction scores from the Consultant Evaluation Form (CEF) with the two OL factors identified earlier, Factor 1: Organizational Culture and Factor 2: Environmental Awareness. To be sure that the variables were suitable for a correlational analysis, the Fmax test for homogeneity of variance was examined. The critical value for the Fmax was 11.1, at the .01 level of probability. The obtained value of the Fmax was 2.33. Therefore, the null hypothesis of homogeneity of variance cannot be rejected. The test results indicate that the Pearson's r may be used to examine the correlation between satisfaction and the two factors.

The satisfaction scores and the two factor scores were correlated to test the hypothesis that satisfaction is related to OL. The probability for Satisfaction and Factor 1: Organizational Culture =  $-.301$  ( $p = .240$ ) and Satisfaction and Factor 2: Environmental Awareness and Satisfaction =  $.101$  ( $p = .700$ ) indicate that satisfaction with consultation



is not correlated with either factor (See Table 7). However, the results are somewhat surprising given the literature on consultation and the need for a collaborative relationship for learning to occur (Halvari, Johansen, & Sorhaug, 1998). As stated in

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**Table 7 Relationship Between Consultant Satisfaction and Factor 1 and Factor 2 (N = 27)**

Variable	Satisfy	Organizational Culture	Environmental Awareness
Satisfy		-.301 (p = .240)	.101 (p = .700)
Organizational Culture			
Environmental Awareness		.417 (p = .030)	

Chapter 1, the Halvari, et al. (1998) study is most similar to the current study in examining external consultants and OL. The consultant-client relationship was assessed by the Halvari, et al. (1998) study which found that the more the consultant-client relationship resembled a “two-way exchange” and the more likely it was that the use of a consultant may lead to improved OL. In that study, a cooperative, collaborative relationship reinforced more positive learning (p. 295). One would assume that satisfaction with consultation would be related to both an increase in OL and some level of correlation between satisfaction and the factor scores. The Consultant Evaluation Form (CEF) that was used by HSOs that had worked with an external consultant includes a specific question regarding collaboration between the consultant and the HSO. This is based on a 7-point Likert scale and the mean was 6.5 with a standard deviation of .571. This indicates that the respondents felt that the relationship was at least somewhat collaborative.

### Summary

In examining the quantitative analyses and the research questions addressed in this Chapter, it is clear that (1) the OL questionnaire developed by Templeton, et al.

(2002) does demonstrate sufficient reliability and validity for the sample of HSOs in the current study. Two factors were identified with moderate to good loadings for the structure matrix, ranging from .348 to .792. The Cronbach's alpha for both factors: Factor 1: Organizational Culture (alpha = .88) and, Factor 2: Environmental Awareness (alpha = .86) both indicate high levels of reliability. The SEM indicated low measurement error.

In addressing Research Question #2 regarding OL being identified in a similar manner in HSOs as it has been in the literature, the findings are split between factors with significant differences and those with no significant difference in independent t-test analyses examining Templeton's, et al. (2002) factors. Four factors were significantly different: Communication, Intellectual Capital Management, Environmental Adaptability, and Social Learning and four factors were not significantly different: Awareness, Performance Assessment, Intellectual Cultivation, and Organizational Grafting.

The four factors that were significantly different contain items related to information systems, electronic tools, as well as negative items related to keeping information from one another and learning about change through informal means. It may be with the small sample size and the possibility that HSOs are not as familiar with macro systemic organizational questions, as well as being less familiar with OL, that the differences were significant between MIS organizations and HSOs.

The four factors that were not significantly different include items that are related to knowing where to find information, collecting data, being performance oriented, integrating information, and management being proactive in addressing problems. These are more clinical, practice related items. It could be that HSOs are more familiar with a clinical line of questioning than with macro systemic organizational questions. Therefore,

differences would not be significant differences between MIS organizations and HSOs with these factors. HSOs scored lower on each Templeton, et al. (2002) factor than did MIS organizations.

Research Question #4, HSOs will demonstrate significantly increased OL following the use of an external consultant. In fact, in examining the results for Factor 1 (Organizational Culture), pre- to post-consultant, Organizational Culture scored higher at pre-consultation. Factor 2 (Environmental Awareness) was not significant. Independent samples t-test on post-consultant data for organizations that had used a consultant were not significant, indicating that the use of an external consultant did not cause a significant change in OL.

Finally, Research Question #5, Satisfaction with external consultants, was not found to be correlated with increased OL as measured by examining the relationship between factor scores and satisfaction scores. Yet, the Halvari, et al. (1998) study would lead us to assume that satisfaction would be correlated with increased OL.

The next Chapter will address qualitative analyses of Research Questions 2, 3, and 4 as outlined in Chapter 3. Following Chapter 5, Chapter 6 will provide a summary and discuss the study findings and implications.

## Chapter 5. Qualitative Results

### Understanding Tacit Learning

The main goal in conducting semi-structured interviews was to address tacit learning through understanding how HSOs identify OL. Tacit or covert learning, which is unspoken learning, is challenging to identify through quantitative approaches. To bring tacit learning to light, semi-structured interviews were used. Tacit knowledge is subjective and experience based (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995) or as Polanyi (1966) would explain, we may know more than we can explain. It is important to study tacit knowledge, in order to understand the process of knowledge conversion between tacit and explicit knowledge. This knowledge conversion is a “social” process between individuals (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995, p.61).

In order to examine the results from the present study, it is helpful to revisit findings from the literature as reviewed earlier in Chapter 2. The literature will be drawn upon in response to each semi-structured interview question and / or the study research questions. While qualitative content was not present in Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder’s (2002) study, comparing the results of the two studies may prove useful.

Interviews were conducted with eleven HSO representatives. Six HSOs used IARCCA consultants, two had used private consultants, and three HSOs did not use a consultant nor had their organization had consultation experience.

The semi-structured interview content was analyzed for content themes addressing each of the interview questions that were asked. The themes were reviewed by the respondents (N = 11) and their feedback was taken into consideration in the final analysis.

## Origins of Learning

The first question that respondents were asked was, “Can you share an example of a particular situation in which your organization learned something important that helped it function better in some way?”

This was a broad question and responses were facilitated by asking ten additional probes. The content themes in response to question #1 were based on describing how learning occurred. The table below indicates the items that were mentioned more than once and were the most common themes in response to question #1.

Table 8 Origins of Learning (motivators, causes)

Theme	# of Respondents
External Pressures	5
Philosophy	2
Planning	2
Financial Pressures	2
Total	11

Five respondents discussed external pressures as the reason that the organization was called upon to learn. Two respondents made the following comments as examples of the external pressure:

“...over the past 1 ½ year, we started in April 2004, we were approached by another organization in town to merge and it had been brought up about 3 years ago and it really never went anywhere, 1 ½ yrs. ago they came to us with a serious proposal to merge, so my board took a look at that and decided to explore it. It took 1 ½ yrs. of me working with this other organization and their board and going through the diligence process and working with my board intensely and all the while to keep it hush hush from my staff and the community.”

“...when we have visitors on campus that just don’t know our program their questions seem to always open up new avenues....like this last situation, we had a parent who wanted to make payment on their account in a special way and it opened up a whole new area of revenue for us that we’d never thought of before. You see usually, unfortunately, it’s been either a crisis orientation or a parent helping us improve in areas of operation.”

Two respondents mentioned philosophy as the motivator for OL. Philosophy includes beliefs, agency approach, and organizational culture. One respondent shared philosophical changes that had taken place:

“...mid 70’s when we transformed our organization from what was basically a reform school to a treatment facility... We reduced our staff ratio drastically toward our current treatment facility...”

The second respondent said:

“...We were looking at the future, looking at the potential for Medicaid, looking at does this really fit with what our mission is and we said no.”

Two respondents discussed planning as being a means for HSOs to learn.

Planning includes responsiveness, strategic planning, a proactive position, and meeting clients’ needs. These examples demonstrate addressing both internal and external planning needs that have led to learning:

“I can think of two instances. One would be our accreditation effort and the other would be our strategic planning effort.”

“I think there are a lot of situations, but generally they’re around the children and how the children can have access to other agencies, particularly in terms of acting out. An example I was thinking of is how we were able to develop our networking with the various police communities...”

Two respondents discussed financial pressures as the motivation behind learning.

Financial pressures include revising budgets or budget items. Two respondents shared how the HSOs had learned through financial pressures:

“We ...had a line of credit that was approaching a million dollars and we knew that we had to do something to get the agency staff to own more of the issues around budget.”

“I guess what made it a huge need was the financial strain and the agency had to take out a line of credit to pay payroll. It was evident that all the revenue was coming from one source...”

A probe following the first question addressed the content of learning in organizations, “What is being learned?” (See Table 9 below).

Table 9 Content of Learning

Theme	# of Respondents
Self-Assessment / Evaluation	8
Philosophy	4
Planning	3
Total	15

\*The total number is larger than the number of respondents because some respondents discussed more than one item.

Eight respondents discussed self-assessment or evaluation in response to the content that the organization had learned. Self-assessment or evaluation was described as follows:

“...people didn’t get the bottom line to know whether they’re on a watch list by the board at this point. They know to scrutinize their balance sheets to some extent, and what it looks like to them, and give feedback to the finance committee that there’s something wrong. But it’s a lot about knowing how to read balance sheets, how to propose budgets...”

“...there have been some changes in services...that have adversely impacted clients and I think the next step of learning is to try to identify what are the areas that we want to target for improvement out of that and what are the possible positive factors that we need to address to correct them.”

Four respondents discussed philosophy in response to the content that the organization had learned. Philosophy was described as follows:

“I think that the content clarifies in better language what our core culture and values are as an organization and I think the organization learned or relearned those things in better ways...got a better understanding from people beyond our senior management team about their role and influence in directing the path of the organization.”

“It [the learning] has primarily caused a whole different way of thinking or approach to treatment, getting away from the punitive idea and more into treatment. Improving techniques for dealing with kids in residence. A more behaviorally based approach and also adding counseling...”

Three respondents discussed the organization having learned about the

importance of planning which was described as follows:

“...the need to make sure we never end up in a position like that again and that we have a different training program for our lead staff to move into supervisory positions...increasing our staff to client ratio so that in the future we were not working with a bare minimum...”

“... we need to safeguard and make sure that we are planning not just for the next year, but planning to be here for another ten years, looking long term, so I think as the board of directors are concerned that they through the process have learned a little more of what their responsibilities are by working with a consultant, reminding them about what their responsibilities are, what questions they should be asking, and just preparing the agency to become an organization that they can sustain and be around without getting into the financial difficulties.”

Another probe following the first question, addressed changes that have been made as a result of learning. Respondents described self-assessment, planning, and communication (See Table 10 below).

Table 10 Changes as a Result of Learning

Theme	# of Respondents
Self-Assessment	4
Planning	3
Communication	3
Total	10

Four respondents discussed self-assessment as a change that had been made as a result of learning. Self-assessment was described as follows:

“I think our effectiveness is working together in understanding commonality of organization direction and valuing each others roles and understanding them a little bit better. It helps.”

Three respondents described planning and communication as changes as a result of learning. One respondent summarized both themes as follow:

“... they now understand what it is that we’re looking for from them, what they can expect from us, and you don’t get the passing the buck...”



The second semi-structured interview question was, “Do situations like this occur frequently in your organization or would you say that this is unusual?” Eight respondents said that it was unusual, two were unsure, and one said that it was usual behavior. A typical comment, describing the learning experience as unusual, was:

“This is totally unusual. Yeah, not so much that the dynamics don’t occur in different settings, the charge was much higher and occurred at all levels, it was the board, executive, and myself, all levels. It impacted all levels with some decisions.”

In summarizing responses to the first question about examples of learning in their organization, it is evident that HSO respondents identified external pressures as the most likely motivation or cause for learning, followed by the philosophy driving the organization, planning in the organization, and financial pressures. It is also evident in summarizing the probes that were specifically related to the content of learning and changes as a result of learning that self-assessment or organizational assessment and evaluation were considered gains.

#### Identification of OL

In addressing Research Question #2, “How may OL be identified in HSOs?”, respondents mirrored a great deal of content from the literature. The main themes discussed by HSO respondents are:

- External pressures
- Philosophy
- Planning
- Financial Pressures

External pressures can be linked to Environmental Awareness (Daft & Huber, 1987) as noted by Veilleux (1995). This has to do with the attentiveness to the internal and

external environment for change, knowledge, information, communicated throughout the organization for competitive advantage (p. 46). External pressures were described as follows:

“...you have to give people tools to be able to deal with the change...so I think part of the change process needs to be understanding why this needs to occur and then okay, how are we going to do it...a lot of staff development and enhancing their skills, creating opportunities for them to grow and say okay so I think I can handle this piece of it, now I’m ready for the next piece.”

“I think the environment has a big impact on our potential for learning because again if you just sit and don’t make an opportunity for growth you’re going to be out of business.”

Environmental Awareness also relates well to two other themes identified in the present study: philosophy and financial pressures. Philosophy is similar to Veilleux’s (1995) discussion of culture, or organizational atmosphere, the way of being within the organization. This has to do with values and beliefs that are exuded from the organization as two respondents described:

“...one incentive has to be your ability for growth, because if you become stagnant, and you don’t see any new opportunities, you’re kind of a sitting duck waiting for the other shoe to drop, which eventually it will, especially when you deal with state funding. You have to look at ways to expand your business, expand your customer base, and expand your program to make sure it’s going to be something that’s going to be continued to be needed.”

“How does this fit with the big picture, what kind of facility do we want to be? We wanted to move to a more pro-social model rather than be a punitive model and a lot of it was recognizing that you have to change a philosophy... it had to start with a general philosophy first and a lot of training, a lot of supplemental things had to put into place as far as policies and new ideas, new programming had to be developed, in order to accommodate that change. So, you almost had to rebuild your system somewhat from the ground up.”

Planning is similar to the Systematic Approach (Jelinek, 1979; Womack & Jones, 1994; Drucker, 1992; Schon, 1975), another theme that Veilleux (1995) identified from the OL literature. The Systemic Approach relates to a planned approach that is clearly

understood, structured, and yet flexible and adaptable (Veilleux, 1995, p. 45). Planning was described as follows:

“We’re kind of in the middle of this and beginning to understand the value of being proactive. The phrases that you have here, incentives and motives, the incentives, there’s a significant benefit [in being proactive]...”

“I think what we’ve learned is how can we be more proactive about at looking at how we do things and enhancing them on the front end, as opposed to that middle where it’s kind of, where there is an issue that needs to be addressed or something.”

Conflict and Tension (Friedlander, 1983 as cited by Veilleux, 1995) was another theme identified in the literature that would be expressed organizationally as an unmet need which drives the need to learn (p. 50). The current study’s themes about external pressures and financial pressures are related to the theme of Conflict and Tension.

“...okay we need to safeguard and make sure that we are planning not just for the next year, but planning to be here for another ten years, looking long term...just preparing the agency to become an organization that they can sustain and be around without getting into the financial difficulties.”

In summary, respondents’ answers to the Research Question #2, “How may OL be identified in HSOs?” appear to be similar to the literature about business organizations. As discussed, the themes of External pressures, Philosophy, Planning and Financial Pressures seem to be congruent for managers in HSOs and business organizations. In a probe asking how often learning takes place, it is interesting to note that HSO CEOs/EDs stated that the experience is unusual. In other words, learning was not identified as a common occurrence. The next section will address the identification of factors that may facilitate or impede OL.

## Facilitating Factors and Impediments to OL

The research question about which factors facilitate or impede OL was addressed in probes in response to the first semi-structured interview question. Table 11 shows the distribution of responses.

Table 11 Facilitating Factors for OL

Themes	# of Respondents
Leadership	3
Philosophy	2
New Staff/New Leadership	2
Willingness	2
Planning	2
Training	2
Total	13

\*The total number is larger than the number of respondents because some respondents discussed more than one item.

Three respondents discussed leadership as a reason that the organization is more likely to learn. Leadership as a facilitating factor meant that individuals in upper level management were invested in learning, and their involvement was manifest for staff to sense and observe. One respondent made the following comment as an example of leadership as a facilitating factor:

“...having inner leadership [means I would] be intentional about those things and helping the organization at least so that it’s important that we at least move in concert and try to define roles and expectations, but at the same time try to get a sense of input from everyone with their empowerment and participation...”

Two respondents discussed philosophy as a facilitating factor in OL. Philosophy was described earlier as organizational beliefs, the agency approach, organizational culture, and being on the same page. Two respondents highlighted the importance of shared beliefs in facilitating OL:

“...the belief, the shared belief that the more educated direct care staff is a better, direct care staff, both for themselves and for the residents...”

“...having inner leadership be intentional about those things [shared beliefs] and helping the organization at least so that it’s important that we at least move in concert and try to define roles and expectations...”

Two respondents mentioned new staff/new leadership as a facilitating factor in OL. New staff/new leadership occurred when there was turnover in staff and new hiring had taken place. Respondents shared how new participants facilitated learning in the organization:

“New leadership in that program...probably the most significant was the employees reshifting.”

“...new board members coming on, change of some older ones, actually some staff that had to move on as well, the leadership, and new leadership coming on. I think those are the big ones.”

Two respondents discussed willingness as being a facilitating factor for OL. Willingness was identified as having the willingness to tackle something new, to learn. Respondents described willingness as follows:

“...the willingness to learn. I think that really begins from, it comes down [to] type of perspective, I think. I would think that learning organizations have to perfect a method throughout the organization that change and quality improvement is a continuous process that people raising concerns or giving information is for the good of the organization and not something to be avoided. I think that just examining the methods that measure your business and applying those in a useful way, to day-to-day operations.”

“[With a] new CEO [and a] willingness to learn the finance process [staff] were eager to do that. They wanted more control. I would say that it was getting a new CFO that was a little more program friendly.”

Two respondents discussed planning as a facilitating factor for OL. Planning meant being responsive, taking a proactive position to meet client needs. Respondents discussed in detail the ways planning facilitated OL in their organization:

“...we immediately called together our administrative counsel and had four separate meetings to discuss changing the inner dynamics of [the agency]...We needed to come together and make sure that even though we were having hard times, we were continuing our quality of care...And the conclusion was in looking at our overall strategic plan, recognizing that not only the residential department, but other departments on this campus were in need of additional employees to make sure that we were getting the job done correctly. And so we started adding staff to different areas, of course we had to get board approval to do that. We went to our board making sure that they were approving that we were adding additional staff, knowing that it might put us into a deficit for a period of time, but increasing the overall quality of care of everyone in the organization.”

“And the conclusion was, looking at our overall strategic plan, in looking at that strategic plan recognizing that not only the residential department, but other departments on this campus as well were in need of additional employees to make sure that we were getting the job done correctly.”

Two respondents discussed training as a means of facilitating OL. Training refers to any type of training provided or made available to staff that is viewed as assisting in the provision of services. Respondents shared the following in identifying training as a facilitating factor:

“Training. In order to make the change process, or to make [a] learning curve, you have to give people tools to be able to deal with the change... so I think part of the change process needs to be understanding why this needs to occur and then okay, how are we going to do it...a lot of staff development and enhancing their skills, creating opportunities for them to grow and say okay so I think I can handle this piece of it, now I’m ready for the next piece.”

“...we need [to] have better trained staff in some other situations and then just being responsive to new technology...”

In identifying factors most likely to influence OL positively, many of the themes identified in the current study are reflected in the literature. Leadership as identified in the current study is paralleled by Veilleux’s view of the CEO (i.e., leaders) facilitating OL (1995). Philosophy as identified in the current study is seen in Veilleux (1995), with organizational culture as a facilitating factor. This study’s identification of Planning is

similar to the Veilleux (1995) concept of being customer-focused (i.e., acquiring information from the customer). Training was another theme that Veilleux (1995) identified as information/knowledge that the organization already possessed (i.e., core competencies) (Veilleux, 1995, p. 202). Again, it can be seen that administrators in HSOs perceive similar factors facilitating OL as do administrators in businesses.

The factors that were mentioned most often as impediments to OL are presented in the following table and discussed below.

Table 12 Factors Identified as Perceived Obstacles to OL

Themes	# of Respondents
Resistance	6
Philosophy	2
Finances	2
Time	2
Total	12

\*This total number is larger than the number of respondents because some respondents discussed more than one item.

Six respondents described resistance as an obstacle to organizations being able to learn or participate successfully in OL. Resistance was defined as staff being resistant to change, reluctant to learn new things, reluctant to try new things or to do things differently. Respondents described resistance as follows:

“...whenever there’s change there’s resistance and to do something as large and encompassing as this change was for us...you have to get them to buy into the philosophy or at least try it and put their own philosophy aside...if you can’t fit into our modality now, maybe this isn’t a good fit for you. So you lose some people. Again the people that you gain can bring them in and then it’s a philosophy for them and they have to accept it, because that’s what it is.”

“[staff asking] why do we have to do it like this and addressing those concerns...”

In a similar vein to resistance, two respondents mentioned philosophy as being an obstacle to OL. Obstacles in philosophy means not being on the same page, not sharing beliefs, or feeling like there is continuity in the organizational culture. Respondents had this to say about philosophy being an obstacle to OL:

“...whenever there’s change there’s resistance and to do something as large and encompassing as this change was for us,...you have to get them to buy into the philosophy or at least try it and put their own philosophy aside...if you can’t fit into our modality now, maybe this isn’t a good fit for you. So you lose some people. Again the people that you gain can bring them in and then it’s a philosophy for them and they have to accept it, because that’s what it is.”

“...when people move in kind of differing directions, have different visions of what it is that is required and important.”

Two respondents mentioned finances as an obstacle to OL. Obstacles in finances meant not having enough money to do the things that may be observed as needing to be done. One respondent described this as finances related to new staff and multiple needs as follows:

“I would say the great obstacle with any organization is, can we do this financially and of course, what are the benefits by adding more staff? Who will be the individuals that will be training these new individuals coming in? And I would say the greatest obstacle was determining where the need was the greatest. Because every department on campus felt that there was a need to make changes in their own department, but ...where did we truly need to add additional staff to start to make things run smoother.”

Two respondents mentioned time as an obstacle to OL. Respondents saw time as a resource, and referred to not having enough time. Respondents described time as related to additional resources:

“Time and resources. Which usually comes when you’re getting people together, other than the fires that come up on days you just have to take



care of. Even though the bigger picture needs to be addressed, it's the small-time, everyday things that get in the way of the bigger picture workings..."

"Time in a sense of getting everyone together to have systematic training or coordinating it, so when you're small like this we need to have it at least 2 or 3 different times, the same trainings to make sure that we hit everybody, which can be a time issue. Time in the sense of we're looking at when you come in where you are, where we want to see you, with the reality of direct care, because sometimes they're very fluid and time in the sense that many of our staff are part-time, so that they have other jobs or responsibilities that doesn't necessarily give them the flexibility..."

Many of these themes are reflected in the literature. Resistance in the current study is most closely paralleled by internal politics, as well as insufficient capacity to act, reflect or disseminate (Nadler, et al., 1992 as cited by Veilleux, 1995, p. 56). Philosophy is most closely paralleled by Veilleux (1995) with organizational culture operating as an obstacle when not shared. Lack of finances or financial resources was identified by Veilleux (1995) as an obstacle also.

#### Impact of External Consultant on OL

The final semi-structured interview question was, "What impact, if any, has the Outcome Project external consultant had on OL in our organization? Please describe the impact." This question informs the fourth research question about whether HSOs demonstrate significant increases in OL following the use of external consultants. Six respondents had accessed and worked with an IARCCA external consultant, and one had used another external consultant. Their responses are categorized in the table below.

Table 13 Impact of External Consultant

Themes	# of Respondents
Evaluation	4
Awareness	1
Motivation	1
Training	1
Total	7

Four of the six respondents who had used IARCCA external consultants indicated that they had benefited through the process by gaining evaluation content and thus a better understanding of who their clients are. Respondents made comments, such as:

“One thing that we talked about at length is really the, from the statistical stand point, the issues of the clients that we serve and how can we be better at providing training that is genuinely linked to the services that we provide? You know probably the primary thing is training staff on issues, and at a greater number of trainings...”

“We focused on some areas we slated for improvements, such as assessment, we want to do better assessments and just some various program improvements that we are trying, we thought would help. We have begun some with our new director.”

Evaluation is not a surprising theme to see identified in response to this question, as the consultation was provided as a service to member agencies participating in the IARCCA Outcome Measures Project. An objective of the consultation was to support HSOs in their use of data and results. The respondents’ mentioning the evaluation indicates that they see value in using a consultant to evaluate client outcomes.

The literature supports the themes that were identified by the respondents. Awareness and motivation as identified in the current study most closely parallel attitude, a term identified by Halvari, Johansen, and Sorhaug (1998) in examining OL and consultation. Halvari, et al. (1998) found that the strongest predictor of OL was attitude toward learning (p. 303). Training was an item identified earlier in the discussion of the current study as a facilitating factor for OL. Training in the area of consultation came out in the quotation above as an identified area of need. Respondents suggest that when they understand who the client is, they are prepared to meet client needs.

## Increased OL Post-Consultation

The fourth research question is the following: “Will participating HSOs demonstrate significant increases in OL following the use of external consultants?” While the semi-structured interviews did not ask if the consultation produced significant increases in learning, the general question of impact was addressed and is reflected in the Table 13 discussed earlier. One comment by a director of an HSO in reference to the question of the consultant’s impact was:

“...being able to specifically look at data and make something out of it and be able to use that to determine what has been the primary issues with kids coming in, or what has been the primary number of problems and looking at your outcomes and being able to say both internally and externally...we’ve not just done this ourselves, we’ve had consultants put this data together for us, so it has to be true cause nobody else did it...here’s what the outcomes are showing us...what do we need to do internally to kind of shore up some of that.”

The opportunity to use the data that the HSO has contributed to the IARCCA Outcome Measures Project was a new experience for organizations. The responses provide support for an affirmative answer to the research question about the increases in OL following the use of external consultants.

## Emergent Themes

Many HSOs mentioned board participation and the importance that the board plays in any substantive change – this is a concept that came up a surprisingly large number of times and had not been mentioned in the literature reviewed by the author.

Two respondents shared the following:

“I think more of the organizational learning and the strategic planning and the success and operation of the organization really comes from the board...”

“First it was a board decision to make this change, along with our directors,

along with our CEO.”

Communication was repeatedly emphasized as being crucial to OL. The following statements capture the relevance and importance placed on communication when HSOs think about OL:

“...common knowledge and perspectives are communicated throughout the organization so that people have the knowledge to go ahead and use it. We do a lot of group, regular meeting structure with multi-layers throughout the organization and so that happens throughout the organization in a fairly structured way and then we also are attempting to be a little bit more intentional about structured administrative learning.”

“Processing...coming together and talking about it.”

There was also an emphasis on meeting client needs which one would hope to see in HSOs providing services to children and families:

“We need to be responsive. What we would rather do is be proactive rather than reactive and so we try to look at all the situations we have with our kids, where we want to go with them and how we want to meet their needs.”

“I believe that learning increases the aptitude of the staff, that you’re a better informed, better learned, more competent staff, definitely effects how the residents receive treatment.”

## Summary

In conclusion, the qualitative findings were revealing with reference to tacit learning in HSOs. This study’s findings may help others identify the unspoken learning in an agency. Making the unspoken learning explicit may allow people to more readily identify daily activities as learning activities.

It is useful to note that the majority of respondents point to concrete examples of what had changed as a result of consultation. HSOs that accessed and used external consultation made changes to improve their evaluation processes.

The findings from the first interview question are well-supported in the literature, as seen in the four themes that emerged: external pressures, philosophy, planning, and financial pressures. Similarly, the same themes emerged in responses to the second interview question asking for identification of organizational learning. Responses to the research question about which factors facilitate OL provided six themes: leadership, philosophy, new staff/new leadership, willingness, planning, and training. These themes parallel the themes identified by Veilleux (1995), as do the perceived obstacles to OL: resistance, philosophy, finances, and time. The final question about the possible impact of the Outcome Project external consultant led to the identification of the themes of evaluation, awareness, motivation, and training. These would appear to be useful themes in assessing success and satisfaction with consultation.

The qualitative findings have shed light on the unspoken learning that takes place in HSOs, providing a relevant comparison to other types of organizations that have been studied. The following Chapter will discuss the overall learning implications and suggestions for future research.

## Chapter 6. Discussion and Implications

Examining OL in HSOs is a unique research study in that it extends the literature from business and management to human services. The small sample has been useful in opening an area for exploration in HSOs. It is hoped that these findings will encourage the use of OL by sharing what has been learned and to lay a foundation for future exploration for HSOs. A mixed methods approach using quantitative and qualitative methods was used to study OL in HSOs. The mixed methods approach allows for a richer comparison between the relevant research questions using the OL questionnaire, quantitative results and the qualitative interview results. In this Chapter, the two sets of results are compared and examined for each relevant research question that was addressed, implications of the findings are discussed, and future research ideas are explored.

### Summary of Key Findings

As discussed in Chapter 1, this study builds on previous research and makes the following contributions: 1) OL has been measured pre- and post-test following external consultation within a state association of member agencies providing services to children and families; 2) an initial OL benchmark has been established for HSOs; 3) the use of external consultation and the contribution to OL is better understood through the understanding of tacit learning; and 4) OL's relevance and existence in HSOs is better understood. Factors contributing to OL, as well as inhibitors are identified for use in practice. Tacit level learning is examined through the qualitative results.

The five research questions employed in the current study were introduced in Chapter 2 and are revisited here:

- 1) Does the OL questionnaire designed by Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002) demonstrate sufficient levels of reliability and validity for this sample of HSOs, as specified by the authors?
- 2) How may OL be identified in HSOs?
- 3) What factors facilitate or impede OL in HSOs?
- 4) Will participating HSOs demonstrate significantly increased OL following the use of external consultants?
- 5) Is satisfaction with the IARCCA external consultants correlated with increased OL?

In using a mixed methods approach, the author was able to use a previously tested quantitative instrument with HSOs, a different population than the MIS organizations than had been studied by Templeton, et al. (2002). This allowed for an interesting comparison. Semi-structured interviews allowed for a more in-depth, qualitative approach in attempting to address the tacit learning that may take place in connection to OL. The two approaches strengthen the information gained from the research. Each research question is addressed in summary below.

*1) Does the OL questionnaire designed by Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002) demonstrate sufficient levels of reliability and validity for this sample of HSOs, as specified by the authors?*

This research question was addressed through factor analyses and examination of the internal consistency of reliability analyses. Two factors were identified: Organizational Culture (alpha = 0.88) and Environmental Awareness (alpha = 0.86). Both factors indicate high levels of reliability demonstrating sufficient reliability for the sample of HSOs in the current study. This research question was not addressed

qualitatively. The author is not aware of other use of the Templeton, et al. (2002) instrument: therefore it is hoped that as a result of this finding, the OL questionnaire may be used in assessing OL with different organizations to continue testing of the instrument. Another goal would be that the instrument may incorporate some components of the findings from the qualitative results. This will be discussed more in the future research section.

## 2) *How may OL be identified in HSOs?*

This research question was analyzed by organizing individual items in the present study into indices reflecting the eight factors identified by Templeton, et al. (2002) and then using independent t-tests to compare the findings from the two studies. The quantitative results are split between factors with significant differences and those with no significant differences in independent t-test analyses examining Templeton, et al. (2002) factors. The factors where there were significant differences each had a lower mean score in the current study as compared to the Templeton, et al. (2002) study. The HSO sample in his study scored lower on Communication, Intellectual Capital Management, Environmental Adaptability, and Social Learning than did the MIS sample in the Templeton, et al. (2002) study. These differences are more than likely due to the different populations, HSOs and MIS organizations. An interesting future study might include a more indepth comparison to understand these differences.

There were also four scales that did not differ significantly: Awareness, Performance Assessment, Intellectual Cultivation, and Organizational Grafting. Although HSOs scored lower on each scale than MIS organizations, the differences were not



significant. It would be even more interesting to understand the scales that are more similar in nature as it may be that these would be similar across organizations of all types.

In contrast to the quantitative results which are more related to differences and similarities, the qualitative results support identification of a number of themes that are represented throughout the OL literature. *External Pressures* which are tied to the need for organizations to be competitive and ready for change are linked to Environmental Awareness (Daft & Huber, 1987) as noted by Veilleux (1995). *Philosophy* was identified and mirrors Veilleux's (1995) discussion of culture or organizational atmosphere. *Planning* which is similar to the Systematic Approach which is a planned approach (Jelinek, 1979; Womack & Jones, 1994; Drucker, 1992; Schon, 1975), and is another theme identified by Veilleux (1995) from the OL literature. *Financial Pressures* which may be linked to Conflict and Tension (Friedlander, 1983) indicating an unmet need, another theme that Veilleux (1995) identified in the OL literature. Again, it would be interesting to use the identified themes in the enhancement of the Templeton, et al. (2002) instrument or to develop a new instrument with the information supported in the literature.

In summary, in both quantitative and qualitative results there was evidence of support for similar findings between the current study and the literature in the field of OL. In the quantitative results, both similarities and differences are noted. In the qualitative results more similarities are noted. The qualitative results may be more reflective of HSOs as the quantitative instrument was developed for MIS organizational use and assessment.

### 3) *What factors facilitate or impede OL in HSOs?*

This question was addressed qualitatively with interesting results. Six facilitating factors were identified: *Leadership, Philosophy, New Staff/New Leadership, Willingness, Planning,* and *Training*. These facilitating factors are represented in the literature.

*Leadership* is paralleled by Veilleux's (1995) view of the CEO facilitating OL. *Philosophy* is related to organizational culture in Veilleux's (1995) study. *Planning* is similar to the concept of being customer-focused (Veilleux, 1995). *Training* is another facilitating factor that Veilleux (1995) identified as information/knowledge that the organization possesses in the form of core competencies (p. 202).

Similarly, the identified impeding factors are mirrored in the literature. The four factors impeding OL as identified by HSOs in the current study are: *Resistance, Philosophy, Finances,* and *Time*. *Resistance* is identified by Nadler, et al. (1992) and Veilleux (1995) as internal politics or the inability to act, reflect or disseminate (p. 56). *Philosophy* is mirrored as organizational culture by Veilleux (1995). *Financial Resources* are discussed by Veilleux (1995) as an obstacle also.

In summary, the ability to identify both facilitating factors and impeding factors to OL is a step in facilitating improved OL. In disseminating these findings to HSOs via publications and presentations, it would be hoped that the factors facilitating OL would be employed to enhance OL and the factors that have been identified as impeding OL would be noted. This is a positive contribution to all organizations interested in improving their OL. This research question was not addressed quantitatively.

4) *Will participating HSOs demonstrate significantly increased OL following the use of external consultants?*

The quantitative results did not support this expectation. However, this is a research question that may lend itself to more exploration following additional time for organizations to incorporate learning over time. This will be discussed more in the section on future research.

The qualitative results supported this expectation with the caveat of “significantly” not being related to the qualitative results. The qualitative results were more general in nature to the consultation benefiting the organization than being tied to significantly increasing OL. Four themes were identified with reference to how respondents felt their organization had benefited as a result of consultation: *Evaluation, Awareness, Motivation, and Training*. *Awareness* and *Motivation* are identified in the Halvari, et al. (1998) study as being related to attitude toward learning and the strongest predictors of increased OL. The responses to the qualitative interview questions support the positive results in response to this research question. Respondents indicated being more aware and able to use the data that their organization contributes to the IARCCA Outcome Measures Project as a result of the consultation and this was the primary goal of using external consultants.

In summary, this would be a useful research question to reexamine quantitatively and to flush out more thoroughly in qualitative work. The timing of this study did not allow for a deeper level of examination.

5) *Is satisfaction with the IARCCA external consultants correlated with increased OL?*

The quantitative results did not support this expectation. Satisfaction was not found to be correlated with increased OL. As stated in Chapter 4, this is a somewhat

surprising finding given the literature on consultation and the importance of a “two-way exchange” as discussed by Halvari, et al. (1998) in their study examining OL and consultation. Satisfaction scores on each of the 12-items measured by the CEF were good, ranging from 5.4 to 6.6 on a 7-point scale (Erchul, 1987). The item specifically addressing the consultant role as collaborator had a mean score of 6.5. However, despite positive satisfaction scores, satisfaction was not found to be related to an increase in OL.

In summary, this would be an area to reexamine with a larger sample size. It would also be an area to explore more fully using qualitative methods, particularly with the Halvari, et al. (1998) findings.

#### Implications of Findings

##### *Practice*

“It is a platitude in social work that the wheel is continuously reinvented because developments in learning and new knowledge are not effectively disseminated” (Gould, 2000, p. 590).

As Gould (2000) states above, rather than reinvent a wheel that exists, let us build on what we know and continue the building process so that we may fully utilize OL to make HSOs better organizations. The findings from the current study have implications for HSOs practitioners, as well as people in any discipline interested in OL. Being in a position to understand more about how organizations learn empowers the employees of that organization and allows for that organization to potentially be more successful and competitive with other similar organizations.

The literature in OL readily identifies a gap in the research on OL and the use of a tested instrument. Each research study on OL has ventured out into new territory and has

developed independent instruments rather than adopting a previously tested instrument. Therefore, this study's use of an existing instrument to measure OL in HSOs is a positive contribution to the field of human services, as well as to other disciplines interested in measuring OL. The current study contributes to the identification of facilitating factors to improve/increase OL in organizations which could be employed by organizations to better understand and assess current OL. Understanding that HSOs are aware of OL and want to participate in better use of and understanding of OL is a good awareness for practitioners. This study contributes to a standard definition of OL and cumulative research building on an instrument developed for a different population. It also establishes a baseline for HSOs in examining OL.

#### *Education*

This study contributes to teaching preparation for the education of future leaders in social work by introducing business and management concepts for application in HSOs and providing a sample study. It is strongly suggested that collaboration with other disciplines occur in order to learn as much as we can learn about OL.

#### *Use of Consultants in HSOs*

The impact of consultants is not clearly understood in HSOs and is an area that this study attempted to address. It is relatively unusual that HSOs would have the financial resources to hire external consultants to address program evaluation and use of outcome measures data and findings. The results do indicate benefits to HSOs that had an external consultant working with them. This lends itself to access and encouragement for external consultation, as well as to the need for follow-up studies and additional research in this area.

## Limitations

This study is limited by the small number of participating HSOs and the fact that it was a convenience sample. The sample size did not allow for more extensive subgroup analyses which could have explored the possibility that organizational characteristics, such as size, may affect OL results. The sample size also limits the reliability and validity of the quantitative analysis results. The participating HSOs are all member organizations of a state association and participants in the study also participate in the state association outcome project. These participating HSOs may be more motivated or apt to be organizations that are conscientious about OL. The HSOs that participated in the current study are members of the state association and participate in the IARCCA Outcome Measures Project, and this may be viewed as a limitation to generalizing findings. These agencies due to their pursuit of membership are much more likely to be examining themselves for efficiency, productivity, and striving to stay informed of policy and practice change. It may have been useful to know what staff in the agencies understood about OL, as staff may offer a unique position on OL. The single geographical location is a limitation to the study in that all participants are from the state of Indiana. Due to the limitations discussed above, the findings do not lend themselves to generalizability to other types of organizations.

It is not known if consultants alone may increase and/or improve OL versus other possible variables. There is no independent measure to corroborate perceptions of OL change. This would be a limitation to address in future research. For example, the examination of overall organizational outcomes based on the IARCCA Outcome Measures pre- and post-consultation would be useful.

## Future Research

It would be advisable to revise the OL questionnaire specifically to address HSOs' needs based on knowledge gained through this study and the literature reviewed. However, a study comparing the multiple measures of OL would be a good place to begin. It is a goal of the principal investigator to do a more extensive study of OL in HSOs with some refining of the OL questionnaire (Templeton, et al., 2002). The instrument could be used as a focus group discussion guide and developed or modified with permission based on direct input from the HSO field, as well as be informed by the specific themes identified in the qualitative results. The instrument could look quite different if the themes from the current study were used as the basis for focus group discussions and / or a pilot study. For example, questions could be phrased around the identified origins of learning themes: External pressures increase OL; The philosophy of the organization directly impacts OL in a positive manner; The philosophy of the organization directly impacts OL in a negative manner; Organizational planning impacts OL in a positive manner; Organizational planning impacts OL in a negative manner; and Financial pressures impact OL in a positive manner; Financial pressures impact OL in a negative manner. Each of these items would be rated on a 7-point Likert scale.

An OL instrument could be used as a strategic planning instrument for enhancing OL and this process could be studied. The relationship between organizational culture and OL could be examined. Tacit learning may be more closely examined through the understanding of themes that may drive this component of learning, particularly the reoccurring themes.

The benefits of using an external consultant for increasing OL in HSOs could be studied after a period of time of delivery of service. In the current study, this expectation may have been premature given the fact that only a year had passed and the author has not examined improved outcome measures as a result of the consultation. This would be content for a future study. It would appear that there are many opportunities for expanding research in HSOs and the examination and understanding of OL.

### Conclusion

As stated in Chapter 1, HSOs struggle frequently with limited resources. If learning or knowledge is viewed as a resource, it may be argued that whatever can be done to enhance learning should be done. Encouraging learning can be done more successfully if there is a deeper understanding of factors that may facilitate and impede learning taking place. The themes identified in the qualitative results may be used in a number of ways with HSOs to enhance OL and to understand it better. This research study contributes to the OL literature in business and management, as well as expanding into human services. It is a baseline, a starting point in understanding OL in human services. As Senge (1990b) states, “Learning organizations represent a potentially significant evolution of organizational culture. So it should come as no surprise that such organizations will remain a distant vision until the leadership capabilities they demand are developed” (p. 22). In order for HSOs to be successful in the provision of services to children and families, it is critical to understand how OL may be enhanced, and how OL may be incorporated into our day to day organizational culture. Organizations should strive to incorporate OL as a most valued resource.



Appendix A, Semi-Structured Interview Organization Demographics

Title or Role of respondent	# of years Worked in this organization	# of years in current position	# of Employees	Age of Organization	# of Clients Served	Rural or Urban location	Used Consultant Yes or No	Gender	Ed. Back-ground
1. Other	7	2	70	40	100	Between	Yes	M	Masters
2. Other	33	8	300	153	5,000	Urban	Yes	F	Masters
3. Other	26	1	170	122	82+	Urban	No	M	Masters
4. VP	31	9	14	9	18	Between	Yes	M	MSW
5. VP	11	Less than 1 year	260	84	94	Rural	Not IARCCA	F	Masters
6. CEO	Less than 1 year	Less than 1 year	16	18	300	Rural	Not IARCCA	M	Masters
7. Other	7	7	12	8	50	Urban	No	F	MSW
8. Other	5	Less than 1 year	110	9	85	Rural	Yes	F	MSW
9. VP	11	7	24	50	30	Rural	Yes	M	Other, Ph.D.
10. CEO	23	22	39	31	37	Between	No	F	MSW
11. CEO	12	11	225	13	890	Urban	Yes	M	MBA

Appendix B, Templeton, Lewis, and Snyder (2002) Factors and Items

Factor and Items	Loading	Alpha
<b>Awareness</b>		0.86
When employees need specific information, they know who will have it.	0.69	
Management monitors important organizational performance variables.	0.69	
Management proactively addresses problems.	0.60	
Top management integrates information from different organizational areas.	0.58	
Employees are keenly aware of where their knowledge can serve the company.	0.55	
<b>Communication</b>		0.85
Employees use electronic means to communicate.	0.84	
Employees have a large variety of communication tools (telephone, email, internet, and so on) from which to choose.	0.79	
Employees are encouraged to communicate clearly.	0.51	
<b>Performance assessment</b>		0.69
The company collects data on all facets of performance.	0.68	
The company stores detailed information for guiding operations.	0.78	
There is a formal data management function in the company.	0.63	
Management encourages the use of frameworks and models to assist in decision-making	0.58	
<b>Intellectual cultivation</b>		0.69
The company develops experts from within.	0.68	
Management learns from the company's partners (such as, customers, suppliers, allies).	0.66	
Management assigns employees to other parts of the organization for cross training.	0.61	
Management learns new things about the company by direct observation	0.51	

Factors and Items	Loading	Alpha
<b>Environmental adaptability</b>		0.74
Employees make extensive use of IS to support their work.	0.66	
The company makes extensive use of electronic storage (such as, databases, data warehousing, scanned documents).	0.65	
The company is slow to react to technological change. (-)	0.65	
Employees retrieve archived information when making decisions.	0.60	
<b>Social learning</b>		0.66
Employees keep information (such as, numbers, plans, ideas) from other employees. (-)	0.74	
Our employees resist changing to new ways of doing things. (-)	0.73	
Employees learn about the company's recent developments through informal means (such as new stories and gossip). (-)	0.63	
<b>Intellectual capital management</b>		0.52
The company acquires subunits (such as, organizations, functions, departments) based on short-term financial gain. (-)	0.66	
The company maintains a certain mix of skills among its pool of employees.	0.60	
The company hires highly specialized or knowledgeable personnel.	0.56	
<b>Organizational grafting</b>		0.46
Management ignores the strategies of competitor's top management. (-)	0.82	
When internal capabilities are deficient, we acquire them from the outside.	0.56	

## Appendix C

### Organizational Learning Questionnaire

*Instructions:* The following questions pertain to your agency's operations, employees, and management. Please respond to each question using the following scale and return in the SASE as soon as possible.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Undecided	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

The following questions relate to your agency's *operations*:

	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1. The agency develops experts from within	1	2	3	4	5
2. The agency stores detailed information for guiding operations	1	2	3	4	5
3. There is a formal data management function in the agency	1	2	3	4	5
4. The company is slow to react to technological change	1	2	3	4	5
5. The agency maintains a certain mix of skills among its pool of employees	1	2	3	4	5
6. The agency hires highly specialized or knowledgeable personnel	1	2	3	4	5
7. The agency makes extensive use of electronic storage	1	2	3	4	5
8. The agency collects data on all facets of performance	1	2	3	4	5
9. When internal capabilities are deficient, we acquire them from the outside	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions relate to your agency's *employees*:

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
10. Employees use electronic means to Communicate	1	2	3	4	5
11. Employees have a large variety of communication tools (telephone, email, Internet, and so on) from which to choose	1	2	3	4	5
12. Our employees resist changing to new ways of doing things	1	2	3	4	5
13. Employees learn about the agency's recent developments through informal means (such as news stories and gossip)	1	2	3	4	5
14. Employees retrieve archived information when making decisions	1	2	3	4	5
15. Employees make extensive use of information systems to support their work	1	2	3	4	5
16. Employees are keenly aware of where their knowledge can serve the agency	1	2	3	4	5
17. Employees keep information (such as, numbers, plans, ideas) away from other employees	1	2	3	4	5
18. When employees need specific information, they know who will have it	1	2	3	4	5
19. Employees are encouraged to communicate clearly	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions relate to your agency's *management*:

20. Management proactively addresses problems	1	2	3	4	5
21. Management monitors important organizational performance variables	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree		
22. Management removes obsolete information from employee access	1	2	3	4	5	
23. Management assigns employees to other parts of the organization for cross training	1	2	3	4	5	
24. Top management integrates information from different organizational areas	1	2	3	4	5	
25. Management learns from the agency's partners	1	2	3	4	5	
26. Management ignores the strategies of competitors' top management	1	2	3	4	5	
27. Management learns new things about the agency by direct observation	1	2	3	4	5	
28. Management encourages the use of frameworks and models to assist in decision-making	1	2	3	4	5	
29. Management uses feedback from agency experiments (such as surveys and trials of new methods)	1	2	3	4	5	
30. Employees are discouraged from recommending new work ideas	1	2	3	4	5	

31. Which of the following best describes your position (check one)?

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)                       Technology Director

Chief Information Officer (CIO)                       Data Center Director

Vice President     Project Manager

Other \_\_\_\_\_

32. Number of years you have worked in this agency \_\_\_\_\_

33. Number of years worked in your *current position* in this agency \_\_\_\_\_

34. Number of employees in your agency \_\_\_\_\_

35. Age (in years) of your agency \_\_\_\_\_

36. What is your educational background?

Bachelor's degree \_\_\_\_\_

Masters degree \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

37. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Male

38. Has your agency accessed an IARCCA Outcome Project External Consultant? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes  
\_\_\_\_\_ No

**Thank you for your participation!**

Adapted from Templeton, G.F., Lewis, B.R., & Snyder, C.A. (2002). Development of a measure for the organizational learning construct. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 19(2), 216-218. Copyright M.E. Sharpe, Inc. Used with permission.

Appendix D

Consultant Evaluation Form

Agency Name:

ED/CEO Name:

Consultant Name:

Contract Period: From To

Please circle the number that best represents your experience.

1. The consultant was generally helpful.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree

2. The consultant offered helpful information

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree

3. The consultant's understanding of social service organizations and their primary goals were similar to my own ideas.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree

4. The consultant helped me find alternative solutions to problems.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree

5. The consultant was a good listener.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree



6. The consultant helped me identify useful resources.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree

7. The consultant fit well into the organization's environment.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree

8. The consultant encouraged me to consider a number of points of view.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree

9. The consultant viewed his or her role as a collaborator rather than as an expert.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree

10. The consultant helped me find ways to apply the content of our discussions to specific employee or work situations.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree

11. The consultant was able to offer assistance without completely "taking over" the management of problems.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree

12. I would request services from this consultant again, assuming that other consultants were available.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree

Adapted from Erchul, W.P. (1987). A relational communication analysis of control in school consultation. *Professional School Psychology*, 2(2), 113-124. Copyright Guilford Press. Used with permission.

## Appendix E

### Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Discuss what OL is prior to asking interview questions:

“...the process of [an organization] improving actions through better knowledge and understanding” (Fiol & Lyles, 1985, p. 803).

Please describe your organization

- Size/number of clients served annually?
- Age of organization?
- Number of employees?
- Location - urban or rural?

- 1) Can you share an example of a particular situation in which your organization learned something important that helped it function better in some way?

Probes

- Context of the situation
  - How has the organization learned? (Process)  
(Prange, 1999, p. 26)
  - Why do you consider this an important situation?
  - What is being learned (Content)
  - What does learning yield? (Efficiency and effectiveness)
  - What is different or what has changed?
  - What action has taken place?
  - Facilitating factors?
  - Perceived obstacles?
  - When does learning take place? (Incentives and motives)
- 2) Do situations like this occur frequently in your organization or would you say this is unusual?
  - 3) What impact, if any, has the Outcome Project external consultant had on OL in your organization? Please describe the impact.

Appendix F, Sample Qualitative Analyses Chart

Semi-structured interview questions	Themes	Quotes	Unexpected Findings
<p>Can you share an example of a particular situation in which your organization learned something important that helped it function better in some way?</p>	<p>Beliefs (+) Philosophy (+) Approach (+)</p> <p>Finances (-)</p> <p>Shared responsibility</p> <p>Understanding Outcomes (+) Using research (+) Evaluation</p> <p>Philosophy (+)</p> <p>Add staff (+)</p> <p>Turnover (-/+)</p>	<p>1) [Confusion about program – different explanations – decision to use existing program as a model for replicating. Idea to have a shared philosophy. Program designed around the philosophy of another program – staff able to maintain shared philosophy between programs]</p> <p>2) “We ...had a line of credit that was approaching a million dollars and we knew that we had to do something to get the agency staff to own more of the issues around budget.”</p> <p>3) Examining Outcome findings and looking at trends against the aggregate, prepare presentation for staff and the board...this is where we are, what are we going to do about this?</p> <p>4) “...mid 70’s when we transformed our organization from what was basically a reform school to a treatment facility and ... [use of] a treatment model organization. We reduced our staff ratio drastically toward our current treatment facility...”</p> <p>5) 12-15 staff left to work at large organization with good benefits. “The benefits were just phenomenal---the overtime amount of money was great, numerous individuals who maybe recently were out of college or worked for us for 5-10 years, that was an opportunity to not pass up.”</p>	<p>6) “I think more of the organizational learning and the strategic planning and the success and operation of the organization really comes from the board...”</p> <p>7) [I: You really see individuals learning contributing to how the organization learns? R: Very much so, particularly when you’re a small organization. I: And why is that? What would it be about being a small organization that would lend itself better to learning? R: Because each individual has a significant impact in a small organization. When you’re in a large organization you can _____ it. Okay. One of my own little personal theories</p>

	Evaluation Negative findings	6) "... the Board of Directors had some difficulty with the way the agency was structured and how some of the programs were operating, pretty independently of the governing board and so, what they did was talked to some other agencies and they pulled in a consultant and have been working with the consultant to help them structure and give them a process they could follow and that was a big turning point for them in making some decisions they had to make."	is that, you know, being in large organizations are a hot bed of mediocracy. You can get there and do nothing and be nothing and still survive, whereas you can't do that in small 46 employee organization that's open 24 hours
	Consultant (+) Change (+)		
	Evaluation services		
	Client behaviors	7) "...I think there are a lot of situations, but generally they're around the children and how the children can have access to other agencies, particularly in terms of acting out. An example I was thinking of is how we were able to develop our networking with the various police communities when we had a runaway and through that 1 incident we were able to establish a process and relationship, so that we now have exactly who we would alert."	11) "One of the things we try to do that most common knowledge and perspectives are communicated throughout the organization so that people have the knowledge to go ahead and use it. We do a lot of group, regular meeting structure with multi-layers throughout the organization and so that happens throughout the organization in a fairly structured way and then we also are attempting to be a little bit more intentional about structured administrative
	Community relationships		
	Change/Philoso phy Approach	8) "The example I would put out there would be the time when we decided to go to no restraints and seclusions."	
	Crisis	9) "I think whenever we have a critical incident where our policy or our practice does not cover something and usually it's crisis oriented things, so kind of things usually point glaring holes that we have, so then we have to formulate something to cover that, a policy or something. Then also when we have visitors on campus that just	

	<p>Outside perspective</p> <p>Change merger</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <p>Strategic planning</p>	<p>don't know our program their questions seem to always open up new avenues....like this last situation, we had a parent who wanted to make payment on their account in a special way and it opened up a whole new area of revenue for us that we'd never thought of before. You see usually, unfortunately, it's been either a crisis orientation or a parent helping us improve in areas of operation.”</p> <p>10) “...over the past 1 ½ year, we started in April 2004, we were approached by another organization in town to merge and it had been brought up about 3 years ago and it really never went anywhere, 1 ½ yrs. ago they came to us with a serious proposal to merge, so my board took a look at that and decided to explore it. It took 1 ½ yrs. of me working with this other organization and their board and going through the diligence process and working with my board intensely and all the while to keep it hush hush from my staff and the community.”</p> <p>11) “I can think of two instances. One would be our accreditation effort and the other would be our strategic planning effort.”</p>	<p>learning.”</p>
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## Appendix G

### Factor Structure Matrix (Post-test, N = 42)

Items	Organizational Culture Factor 1	Environmental Awareness Factor 2
Top management integrates information from different organizational areas	.792	.257
Employees are encouraged to communicate clearly	.765	.220
Management learns from the agency's partners	.718	.045
Management proactively addresses problems	.713	.444
Employees are discouraged from recommending new work ideas ( <b>reverse coding</b> )	.710	.083
When employees need specific information, they know who will have it	.655	.102
Management uses feedback from agency experiments (such as surveys and trials of new methods)	.634	.432
Management ignores the strategies of competitors' top management ( <b>reverse coding</b> )	.614	.152
Employees retrieve archived information when making decisions	.589	.368
Employees learn about the agency's recent developments through informal means (such as news stories and gossip) ( <b>reverse coding</b> )	.576	.292
The agency hires highly specialized or knowledgeable personnel	.565	.519
Employees are keenly aware of where their knowledge can serve the agency	.553	.363
Management encourages the use of frameworks and models to assist in decision-making	.541	.339
The agency develops experts within	.523	.510
The agency maintains a certain mix of skills among its pool of employees	.519	.438
Management assigns employees to other parts of the organization for cross training	.507	.197
Management learns new things about the agency by direct observation	.495	-.024

Employees keep information (such as, numbers, plans, idea) away from other employees ( <b>reverse coding</b> )	.361	-.022
Our employees resist changing to new ways of doing things ( <b>reverse coding</b> )	.348	.159
There is formal data management function in the agency	.088	.783
Employees make extensive use of information systems to support their work	.261	.716
The agency makes extensive use of electronic storage	.291	.713
The agency is slow to react to technology change ( <b>reverse coding</b> )	.310	.699
Employees use electronic means to communicate	.004	.697
Employees have a large variety of communication tools (telephone, email, Internet, and so on) from which to choose	-.047	.668
When internal capabilities are deficient, we acquire them from the outside	.280	.644
The agency stores detailed information for guiding operations	.372	.637
The agency collects data on all facets of performance	.163	.605
Management monitors important organizational performance variables	.474	.530
Management removes obsolete information from employee access	.319	.374



## Appendix H

### Glossary of Terms

*Accountability* “1. The state of being answerable to the community, to consumers of a product or service, or to supervisory groups such as a *board of directors*. 2. An obligation of a profession to reveal clearly what its functions and methods are and to provide assurances to clients that its practitioners meet specific standards of competence”

(Barker, 1999, p. 3). “Accountability is defined as assuming responsibility for both learning and implementing lessons learned” (Lipshitz, Popper, & Friedman, 2002, p. 86).

*Administration* “The terms ‘management’ and ‘administration’ are used interchangeably in social work practice. The term “management” is used more frequently with social work education, and the term “administration” in curriculum descriptions (Austin, 1995, p. 1644).

*Benchmarking* “...a disciplined process that begins with a thorough search to identify best-practice organizations, continues with careful study of one’s own practices and performance, progresses through systematic site visits and interviews, and concludes with an analysis of results, development of recommendations, and implementation” (Garvin, 1993, p. 86).

*Consultant* “One with a special expertise or access to those with the needed expertise whose skills are sought by professionals or organizations. Consultants advise or educate about the nature of the problem or possible solutions or find better ways to achieve the organization’s goals” (Barker, 1999, p. 101).

*Effectiveness* “Refers to answering the question of whether the services or intervention plans are accomplishing the intended goals” (Compton & Galaway, 1994, p. 540).

*Efficiency* "...refers to the cost of services and intervention plans in money, time, and other resources" (Compton & Galaway, 1994, p. 540).

*Empowerment* "At the heart of the value system of the human service professional – and critical to this model – is the concept of empowerment: self-determination and self-direction for individuals and groups within an interdependent society" (Kettner, Daley, & Nichols, 1985, p. 10). "In social work practice, the process of helping individuals, families, groups, and communities increase their personal, interpersonal, socioeconomic, and political strength and develop influence toward improving their circumstances" (Barker, 1999, p. 153).

*Evaluative inquiry* the continuous processes of evaluation (Preskill & Torres, 1999).

*Human Services* "Programs and activities designed to enhance people's development and well-being, including providing economic and social assistance for those unable to provide for their own needs" (Barker, 1997, p. 224).

*Knowledge* "the content that the organization possesses" (Easterby-Smith & Lyles, 2003, p. 3).

*Knowledge Management* "...adopt a technical approach aimed at disseminating and leveraging knowledge in order to enhance organizational performance" (Easterby-Smith & Lyles, 2003, p. 3).

*Learning* "the process whereby the organization acquires content" (Easterby-Smith & Lyles, 2003, p. 3). Dodgson (1993), "Learning is seen as a purposive quest to retain and improve competitiveness, productivity, and innovativeness in uncertain technological and market circumstances. The greater the uncertainties, the greater the need to learn" (p. 378).

“...the capacity of an organization to process and make meaning of data and to increase its repository of knowledge (Hasenfeld & Patti, 1992)” as cited by Cherin & Meezan, 1998, p. 9).

*Learning Organization (LO)* “...an organization that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future” (Senge, 1990a, p. 14). “...an entity, an ideal type of organization, which has the capacity to learn effectively and hence to prosper” (Easterby-Smith & Lyles, 2003, p. 2).

*Macro Practice* “*Social work practice* aimed at bringing about improvements and changes in the general society. Such activities include some types of political action, community organization, public education campaigning, and the administration of broad-based social service agencies or public welfare departments” (Barker, 1999, p. 285). Meenaghan (1987), “The unifying concern of macro workers is how the agency relates to its environment and the forces that shape that environment. These forces include changing needs, shifting demographics, interest group politics, legislative influences, funding patterns, and a host of other factors. The macro worker, therefore, must understand the community within which an organization operates and have the policies that affect the service delivery system within that community” (as cited by Netting, Kettner, and McMurtry, 1993, p. 4).

*Organizational Learning (OL)* “OL means the process of improving actions through better knowledge and understanding” (Fiol & Lyles, 1985, p. 803). “Organizational learning is the set of actions.... within the organization that intentionally and unintentionally influence positive organizational change” (Templeton, Lewis, & Snyder,

2002, p. 189). “Tsang (1997), “the learning processes of and within organizations, largely from an academic point of view’ ” (as cited by Easterby-Smith & Lyles, 2003, p. 2).

Veilleux’s (1995) definition of OL:

An ongoing systematic process operating formally and informally which enables the organization to transform environmental information into knowledge that will improve performance. The probability of learning occurring increases when:

- 1) there is support from senior management
- 2) the organization is sensitive to its operating environment
- 3) the system permits the organization and its members to go outside the established norms and procedures
- 4) the culture is conducive to teamwork, experimentation, and forgiving of mistakes
- 5) organizational members reflect on information
- 6) there I open communication.

At its highest level, the organization not only learns, but also, learns to learn (p. 7).

*Organizational Culture* is defined as the normative beliefs and shared behavioral expectations in an organizational unit (Cooke & Szumal, 1993 as cited by Glisson & James, 2002, p. 770).

*Unlearn* is the term used to describe “...forgetting the past behavior which is redundant or unsuccessful” (Dodgson, 1993, p. 385). Unlearning may be considered as important as learning, since slow “unlearning” could be a detriment to organizations (Hedberg, 1981, p. 3 as cited by Dodgson, 1993, p. 386).

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## Curriculum Vitae

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### EDUCATION

- Ph.D. Indiana University, School of Social Work, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN. 2006.  
M.S.W. Social Service Program Management Track,  
Portland State University, Portland, OR. 1996.  
B.A. Liberal Arts, Marylhurst College, Marylhurst, OR. 1986.

### CERTIFICATION

- A.C.S.W. Academy of Certified Social Workers, Portland, OR. 1999.

### PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- 2004 - present Academy of Management (AOM)  
2004 - present Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors (BPD)  
2004 - present International Society for the Scholars of Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL)  
2004 - present Phi Alpha Social Work Honor Society  
2000 - present Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)  
1994 - present National Association of Social Workers (NASW)  
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### HONORS & AWARDS

- 2006 Outstanding Associate Faculty Award, BSW Student Association, Indiana University School of Social Work, IUPUI, Indianapolis, IN.  
2005 Nomination for the K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Award, Association of American Colleges and Universities, Washington D.C.  
2005 Outstanding Associate Faculty Award, BSW Student Association, Indiana University School of Social Work, IUPUI, Indianapolis, IN.  
2004 Outstanding Associate Faculty Award, BSW Student Association, Indiana University School of Social Work, IUPUI, Indianapolis, IN.

2002            Esprit Award for Academic Excellence, Indiana University School of Social Work, IUPUI, Indianapolis, IN.

#### TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2003 - present Associate Faculty. Indiana University School of Social Work. Executive Leadership Practice (S661), Integrated Practice/Policy Seminar: Family and Children (S442), Emergence of Social Welfare Services (S251), Indianapolis, IN.

2002            Teaching Assistant. Indiana University School of Social Work. Generalist Practice I (S231), Carol Hostetter, Ph.D., Bloomington, IN.

2001            Teaching Assistant. Indiana University School of Social Work. Interpersonal Research (S621), Gail Folaron, Ph.D., Indianapolis, IN.

2001            Visiting Lecturer. Indiana University School of Social Work. Advanced Child Welfare Policy (S631), Indianapolis, IN.

1997 - 2000    Assistant Professor. Portland State University, Graduate School of Social Work. Child Welfare Field Seminars (SW507), Portland, OR.

#### EMPLOYMENT

2002 - present Outcome Project Coordinator, IARCCA...Indiana Association of Child and Family Services, *Institute for Excellence, Inc.* (Outcome Project Expansion, Lilly Endowment Inc. grant) Indianapolis, IN.

Coordinate the IARCCA Outcome Measures Project. Supervise coordination of data integration from member agencies. Compile individual agency reports and work with individual agencies regarding the use of their data. Provide training on software and/or paper packets. Promote the Outcome Project to member agencies, non-member agencies and other organizations, including national marketing, training, and consultation. Recruit consultants and coordinate contacts with member agencies for individual agency consultation. Grant proposal development and submission, as well as current grant reporting. Work with external evaluators to compile an annual report, executive summary, and special reports. Review the measurement instruments for continued use and program effectiveness. Submit proposals and present at local and national conferences. Develop manuscripts for publication. Maintain records and submit required reporting for the grant.

- 2002-2002     Research Assistant, Preparing Future Faculty (PFF), Office of Professional Development, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), Indianapolis, IN.
- Assisted with a review of PFF programs nationwide for IUPUI website development and brochure development. Assisted in planning and creating a calendar for upcoming PFF seminars.
- 2001-2002     Research Assistant, Casey Transitional Living Project, Indiana University School of Social Work, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, IN. Co-PIs: Gail Folaron, Ph.D. and Bill Barton, Ph.D.
- Assisted with a review of independent living literature and attended community meetings.
- 2001-2002     Research Assistant, Customer Satisfaction for the Indiana Division of Family and Children, Indiana University School of Social Work, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, IN. Co-PIs: Gail Folaron, Ph.D. and Bill Barton, Ph.D.
- Assisted with reviewing literature, developing data collection instruments, conducting focus group interviews, retrieving archival data, entering and analyzing data (SPSS), and preparing reports.
- 2000-2002     Research Assistant, Determining Educational Needs of the Indiana Division of Family and Children, Indiana University School of Social Work, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, IN. Co-PIs: Gail Folaron, Ph.D. and Carol Hostetter, Ph.D.
- Assisted with reviewing literature, developing data collection instruments, conducting focus group interviews, retrieving archival data, entering and analyzing data, and preparing reports.
- 2001-2001     Interviewer, Assessment of Adult Protective Services, State of Indiana, Indiana University School of Social Work, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, IN. Co-PIs: Valerie Chang, Ph.D. and Roberta Greene, Ph.D.
- Conducted five interviews with APS workers around the state and submitted written reports.
- 1997-2000     Coordinator & Assistant Professor, Child Welfare Partnership, Graduate Education Program, Portland State University, Portland, OR.
- Assisted program director. Collaborated with the Portland State University, Graduate School of Social Work faculty. Developed and supervised graduate student field placements. Advised 19-30 students

annually around the state. Provided academic advising. Designed and taught two sections of child welfare field seminars.

#### COMMUNITY/PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- 2006 Book review, *Child Welfare and Family Services: Policies and Practice*, (7<sup>th</sup> ed.) by Downs, S.W., Moore, E., McFadden, E.J., & Costin, L.B. for Allyn and Bacon publishers. Honorarium awarded.
- 2006 Presentation to the CDFS 454 Class, Career Assessment and Professional Development, Networking with IARCCA member agencies. Purdue, Department of Child Development and Family Studies, West Lafayette, IN.
- 2005 - present Family and Social Service Administration, Department of Child Services, Indiana Disproportionate Minority Committee, Research Subcommittee Chair, Indianapolis, IN.
- 2005 Marion County Commission on Youth (MCCOY), Results Work Group for Child Welfare System Planning Project, Indianapolis, IN.
- 2004-present Preparing Future Faculty, Oversight Committee, Indiana University Purdue University, Indianapolis, IN.
- 2004 "Orientation to Preparing Future Faculty." Guest speaker. Office of Professional Development, IUPUI, August, 2004. Indianapolis, IN.
- 2004 Prospectus review for proposed text, *Child Welfare*, by Popper for Allyn and Bacon. Honorarium awarded.
- 2004 "Orientation to Preparing Future Faculty." Guest speaker. Office of Professional Development, IUPUI, January, 2004. Indianapolis, IN.
- 2003-present National Council on Research in Child Welfare, Strengthening Practice Committee, Child Welfare League of America, Washington, D.C.
- 2003 Prospectus review for proposed text, *Tears and Tenacity: Empowering the Parents of Children with Special Needs*, by Cynthia Crossen-Tower for Allyn and Bacon publishers. Honorarium awarded.
- 2002 Book review, *Child Welfare and Family Services: Policies and Practice*, (7<sup>th</sup> ed.) by Downs, S.W., Moore, E., McFadden, E.J., & Costin, L.B. for Allyn and Bacon publishers. Honorarium awarded.
- 2002 Preparing Future Faculty, Advisory Council, Indiana University Purdue University, Indianapolis, IN.

- 2002 Prospectus review for proposed text, *Child Welfare: A Strengths Approach*, by Sakinah Salahu-Din for Allyn & Bacon publishers. Honorarium awarded.
- 2002 Ph.D. Program Advisory Committee, Indiana University School of Social Work, Indianapolis, IN.
- 2001 Preparing Future Faculty at Indiana University Purdue University, Indianapolis, IN.
- 2000 - 2002 Ph.D. Committee, Indiana University School of Social Work, Indianapolis, IN.
- 1998 - 2000 Co-Chair of Political Action Committee, National Association of Social Workers, Oregon Chapter.
- 1998 - 1999 Secretary of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee, National Association of Social Workers, Oregon Chapter.
- 1997 - 2000 Admissions Committee, Portland State University, Graduate School of Social Work.
- 1997-1999 Extended Studies Committee, Portland State University, Graduate School of Social Work.
- 1997 - 2000 Field Sub-Committee, Portland State University, Graduate School of Social Work.
- 1999 - 2000 Faculty Affairs Committee, Portland State University, Graduate School of Social Work.
- 1999 - 2000 University Curriculum Committee, Portland State University, Graduate School of Social Work.

## GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

- Busch, M., Koch, S.M., & Graham, C. (2006). Lilly Endowment Inc., Youth Programs Grant Request. Project titled, *Applying Research To Develop Best Practice*. \$649,500. [Under review].
- Koch, S.M., Wall, J.R., & Busch, M. (2005). Department of Health and Human Services Public Health Services, Extramural MCH Research. Project titled, *The IARCCA Research Outcome Project*. \$278,049. [Not funded].
- Busch, M. (2004). Indiana University Office of Professional Development, Grant-in-Aid of Research. Project titled, *Social Presence in Distance Education*. Award: \$1000, travel for CSWE, APM presentation, Fall 2004.

- Adamek, M., Busch, M., & Kratz, A. (2003). IUPUI Program Review and Assessment Committee (PRAC). Project titled, *Examining the Role of Doctoral Students in Social Work Field Education*. Award: \$2,000.
- Busch, M. (2003). *Organizational Learning: Examining the Process within Social Service Organizations*, Nonprofit Research Sector Fund, Aspen Institute, Dissertation Grant proposal for \$19,000. [Not funded.]

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## RESEARCH REPORTS

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Barton, W., Folaron, G., & Busch, M. (2003). *Customer Satisfaction with the Division of Families and Children*. State of Indiana, Family and Social Service Administration, Division of Families and Children. Indianapolis, IN.

#### PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

2006 Koch, S.M., Busch, M., & Wall, J.R. "I've Grabbed a Tiger by the Tail, Now What? Using Outcome Data to Guide Service Delivery." Foster Family-based Treatment Association (FFTA), 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Treatment Foster Care, July 17, 2006, Pittsburgh, PA.

2006 Busch, M., & Jani, D. "Disparities for Children of Color in Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice and other Human Service Systems: Status and Solutions." Disproportionate Minority Committee Train the Trainers, April 21, 2006, Indianapolis, IN.

2006 Anderson, C.H., Busch, M., & Jani, D. "Disparities for Children of Color in Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice and other Human Service Systems: Status and Solutions." Disproportionate Minority Committee Train the Trainers, March 24, 2006, Indianapolis, IN.

2006 Busch, M., & Jani, D. "Disparities for Children of Color in Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice and other Human Service Systems: Status and Solutions." Children's Bureau Inservice, March 3, 2006, Indianapolis, IN.

2006 Anderson, C.H., Busch, M., & Jani, D. "Disparities for Children of Color in Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice and other Human Service Systems: Status and Solutions." National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Indiana Chapter, Diversity Conference, Feb. 24, 2006, Indianapolis, IN.

2006 Anderson, C.H., & Busch, M. "Children of Color in the Indiana Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems: Identifying Overrepresentation and Disproportionality." Indiana Black Legislative Caucus, Feb. 22, 2006, Indianapolis, IN.

2006 Busch, M. "Outcome Measures and Organizational Learning", Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), Annual Program Meeting, Feb. 19, 2006, Chicago, IL.



- 2005 Busch, M. "Caring for the Sexually Abused Child." The Faces...The Voices...The Villages, 2005 Fulton Conference. Sept. 14, 2005. Indianapolis, IN.
- 2005 Koch, S.M., & Busch, M. "Data-driven decision making: The use of consultation with agencies to improve services for children and families." Child Welfare League of America, Annual Conference. Mar. 9, 2005, Washington, D.C.
- 2005 Busch, M. "Organizational Learning: Application and Relevance to Social Service Organizations." Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), Annual Program Meeting, Mar. 1, 2005, New York, N.Y.
- 2005 Hostetter, C., & Busch, M., "Effective Communication in Online Courses." Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), Annual Program Meeting, Feb. 28, 2005, New York, N.Y.
- 2004 Hostetter, C., & Busch, M., "On the Road to Community Building in Online Education." Annual Conference of the Association of Baccalaureate Social work Program Directors (BPD), Nov. 5, 2004, Detroit, MI.
- 2004 Hostetter, C., & Busch, M., "Effective Communication in Online Courses." Faculty Colloquium on Excellence in Teaching (FACET), 2004 Associate Faculty & Lectureres Conference, Teaching with Style: Considerations for Effective Communication and Student Motivation, Oct. 15, 2004, Bloomington, IN.
- 2004 Hostetter, C., & Busch, M., "Perspectives on an Emerging Field." The International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (IS-SOTL) Inaugural Meeting, Oct. 23, 2004, Bloomington, IN.
- 2004 Koch, S.M., & Busch, M. "How Can My Agency Access and Use An IARCCA Outcome Project Consultant?" IARCCA Annual Conference, Sept. 22, 2004, Indianapolis, IN.
- 2004 Link, J., & Busch, M. "Accountability in Child and Family Services: The IARCCA Outcome Project." IARCCA Annual Conference, Sept. 23, 2004, Indianapolis, IN.
- 2004 Koch, S.M., & Busch, M. "Chasing Elephants with Butterfly Nets: The IARCCA Outcome Project." Summer Quarterly Membership Meeting and Child & Adolescent Conference. Indiana Council of Community Mental Health Centers, Inc. July 29, 2004, West Lafayette, IN.

- 2004 Busch, M. "Accountability in Child Welfare Services: A Model Program." Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies (OACCA), July 22, 2004, Columbus, OH.
- 2004 Link, J., & Busch, M. "Accountability in Child Welfare Services: A Model Program." Mid-West Region Training Conference and National Juvenile Justice Summit, Child Welfare League of America. June 7, 2004, Indianapolis, IN.
- 2003 Koch, S.M., & Busch, M. "Outcome Evaluation in Services for Children and Families: A Model Project." Walker Trieschman National Center for Professional Development and The National Council on Research in Child Welfare, "Tools That Work: Improving Child Welfare Services Through Research, Performance Measurement, and Information Technology, Child Welfare League of America, Nov. 14, 2003, Miami, FL.
- 2003 Koch, S.M., & Busch, M. "Outcome Evaluations in Services for Children and Families." 59<sup>th</sup> Annual IARCCA Conference, Sept. 25, 2003, Indianapolis, IN.
- 2003 Link, J., & Busch, M. "Indiana Outcome Measures." Child Welfare League of America, Public Private Summit VI, Aug. 19, 2003, Indianapolis, IN.
- 2002 Busch, M. "Caring for the Sexually Abused Child." Prevent Child Abuse Indiana, Breaking the Cycle XXIV Conference, April 22, 2002, Indianapolis, IN.
- 2002 Busch, M. "Mission Statements in Public Child Welfare: What Do They Tell Us?" Indiana University School of Social Work, Spring Symposium, Poster Presentation, April 19, 2002, Indianapolis, IN.
- 2002 Greene, R., Chang, V., & Busch, M. "A Study of Service Delivery by Community Mental Health Centers as Perceived by Adult Protective Services Investigators." Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), Annual Program Meeting, Feb. 27, 2002, Nashville, TN.
- 2002 Folaron, G., & Busch, M. "Mission Statements in Public Child Welfare: What Do They Tell Us?" Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), Annual Program Meeting, Feb. 27, 2002, Nashville, TN.
- 1999 Busch, M. "Public Child Welfare in Oregon: Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect." Portland State University, Graduate School of Social Work, Generalist Practice Classes for Dr. Miller, Dr. Graham, and Paula Mike, Portland, OR.
- 1999 Busch, M. "Graduate Education Program Field Placements: Working with Field Instructors and Other Field Related Issues." Northwest Field

Coordinators Consortium, Child Welfare Partnership, Portland State University, Portland, OR.

## PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

- 1997 *Core Training Program for Child Protective Service Workers*, Salem, OR. (4/97- 5/97). Sponsored by the State Office for Services to Children and Families.
- 1995-1996 *MSW Advanced Placement, Program Management (500 hours)*, Portland State University, Graduate School of Social Work, Task Supervisor: Sarah Holmes, Field Instructor: Chris Metcalf.
- 1994-1995 *MSW Generalist Practice Placement (500 hours)*, Portland State University, Graduate School of Social Work, Field Instructor: Molly Wise
- 1989 *Comprehensive Course in Child Abuse and Neglect*, Portland, OR. (9/89-10/89). Sponsored by the American Association for Protecting Children, the Children's Division of the American Humane Association and Oregon Children's Services Division. 60 hrs.
- 1988 *Basic Training Course for Residential Child Care Workers*, Portland, OR. (5/88). Sponsored by the Oregon Association of Child Care Workers.

## PRACTICE EXPERIENCE

- 1997 Protective Services Worker, Social Service Specialist, State Office of Services to Children and Families, Midtown Branch, Portland, OR.
- 1995-1997 Foster Care Certifier, Social Service Specialist, State Office of Services to Children and Families, Deschutes Branch, Bend, OR.
- 1994-1997 Protective Services Worker, Social Service Specialist, Children's Services Division / State Office of Service to Children and Families, Deschutes Branch, Bend, OR.
- 1992-1994 Family Sex Abuse Treatment Coordinator, Social Service Specialist, Children's Services Division / State Office of Services to Children and Families, Washington Branch, Hillsboro, OR.
- 1990-1992 Social Service Specialist .5 / Family Sex Abuse treatment Specialist .5, Children's Services Division / State Office for Services to Children and Families, Harney Branch, Burns, OR.
- 1989-1990 Protective Services Worker, Social Service Specialist, Children's Services Division Washington Branch, Hillsboro, OR.

- 1988-1989     Family Counselor, Janus Youth Programs, Inc., Harry's Mother Runaway and Homeless Shelter. Portland, OR.
- 1987-1988     Residential Care Counselor, Salvation Army, White Shield Shelter Care. Portland, OR.

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 2005            *The second annual CANS Conference*, Sponsored by Buddin Praed Foundation, (05/24-05/25), Chicago, IL.
- 2005            *Children 2005: Crossing the Cultural Divide*, Sponsored by the Child Welfare League of America, (03/9-03/11), Washington, D.C.
- 2004            *The first annual CANS Conference*, Sponsored by Buddin Praed Foundation, (05/27-05/28), Chicago, IL.
- 2003            Walker Trieschman National Center for Professional Development and The National Council on Research in Child Welfare, *Tools That Work: Improving Child Welfare Services Through Research, Performance Measurement, and Information Technology*, Sponsored by the Child Welfare League of America, (11/12-11/14), Miami, FL.
- 2002            *Strengths-Based Person Centered Planning Training*, Sponsored by Casey Family Programs, Indianapolis Transition Program, (06/27), Indianapolis, IN.
- 2002            *Social Work: Celebrating 90 Years of Leadership Conference, 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Research Symposium*, Sponsored by Indiana University School of Social Work, (04/12), Indianapolis, IN.
- 2002            *School of Social Work Workshop Series*, Sponsored by Indiana University School of Social Work, (03/02), Indianapolis, IN.