ABSTRACT

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Dissertation Title: Action/Leadership Logics and Action Inquiry for Personal and Organization Development, with Diverse Groups

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Organizations of all types around the world are facing an increased pace of change and higher levels of complexity (Charan, 2009; O’Hara & Leicester, 2012). Traditional approaches to getting results and resolving issues, which used to be successful in the past, are losing their effectiveness (Anderson & Anderson, 2001; Cannon, 2011). It is more important than ever that people and organizations utilise more expansive strategies in order to succeed in the current environment (Anderson & Anderson, 2001; Torbert, 2004; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2007).

This research project worked with expansive strategies, the frameworks and tools of Adult Developmental Psychology, namely Action Logics, Leadership Logics, and Action Inquiry, in an Organization Development Intervention (ODI). The subjects of this study were three teams made up of twenty eight participants living in Myanmar and Singapore, in the Corporate, Government and Non-profit sectors, all of whom were working in the field of OD (Organization Development).
The pre-ODI stage of this project consisted of an individual assessment called the LDP (Leadership Development Profile), and a team assessment called the LCS (Leadership Culture Survey). Team workshops were conducted, followed by individual coaching sessions. The post ODI phase consisted of a re-administration of the LDP and LCS assessments, as well as interviews with the teams and individuals. While the pre and post assessments measured quantitative shifts, qualitative information was gathered through the interviews.

All 28 of the participants in the project reported that they found the tools and frameworks useful and interesting, with varying degrees of impact. Specifically, half of the participants and two-thirds of the teams shifted in their LDP and LCS scores. Significantly, the team that shifted the most on the LCS team report had six of their eight members shift in their LDP individual report. In their roles as OD practitioners, a number of the participants reported heightened awareness of the stages of development when interacting with their clients, and were applying the tools of Action Inquiry in their work.

The findings of this study are based on a small sample of participants who work in the same field and who live in a similar geographical region. Because of the limitations of the sample, a logical follow-up study to this one would be with a larger, more diverse sample.

In light of the outcomes of this study in which integrating the concepts and tools from Adult Developmental Psychology into OD practices, this could be used as a roadmap for individuals and organizations who want new ways of navigating through this fast changing and highly complex world.
Field of Study: Doctor of Philosophy in Organization Development

Graduate School of Management

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Student’s signature ................................

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