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Investigating the Competing Values of Digitalizing Organizational Learning: An Action Research Ethnography

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Abstract

Digitalizing organizational learning inherently has cultural values that may be competing. To better understand these competing values, I report an action research study of a higher learning institution's development of a Digital Portal to their organizational learning initiative of *Reflective Practice-based Learning*. I use Cameron and Quinn's (2006) questionnaire, a Competing Values assessment instrument designed to access competing values in organizational culture related to the dimensions of an internal versus external focus and flexibility versus stability. However, I adjust the instrument through ethnographic sensitivity, making it useful to the organization's technical development of a Digital Portal. As an ethnographer and action researcher, I braid problem-solving and research experiences by adjusting and using this assessment instrument. The paper presents an ethnography of this braiding with an impressionist tale of how competing values can inform action research in digitalizing organizational learning. Finally, the contribution of using ethnographic sensitivity to question questionnaires and establish symbolic artifacts when digitalizing for individual and organizational learning is discussed and related to previous research.

Keywords: Organizational learning, digitalization, organizational culture, action research, ethnography, competing values framework.

Introduction

Studying the kaleidoscopic phenomenon of organizational learning with its many definitions is challenging (Wang & Ahmed, 2003). When engaging in the field of organizational learning, researchers need an understanding of the individual learning process as essential to the learning process of organizations. However, they must also be aware of the organizational context as more complex than the individual learning environment, which is not just a collectivity of individual learning processes (Basten & Haamann, 2018; Wang & Ahmed, 2003). Organizational learning is transactional, embracing all levels of the learning system rather than individual and then organizational (Farjoun, Ansell, & Boin, 2015). It is not just participation/knowledge followed by practice/action. Organizational learning derives from inquiry where action and knowledge are co-constructing and continuous, and socialization is intertwined with creative practice forming real-time experience (Elkjaer & Simpson, 2011).

In this study, I explore the value transactions of a digital technology for organizational learning with its social context in an organization. The organization is a Higher Learning Institution (HLI) developing a Digital Portal to their newly formalized learning initiative they call *Reflective Practice-based Learning* (Horn et al., 2020). HLI had developed *Reflective Practice-based Learning* (RPL) by combining educators' experiences with prominent pragmatic learning and practice perspectives (Dewey, 1933; Elkjaer & Wiberg, 2013; Schön, 1983; Wenger, 1998). After seven years of formalizing RPL into a White Paper (Horn et al., 2020), HLI strategically decided in 2018 to gather a team to develop a Digital Portal for an organization-wide educator to educator diffusion launched at the beginning of 2020. Developing this Digital Portal transacts with their organizational culture, which inherently has competing values.

To better understand how cultural values affect and are affected by such a digitalization of organizational learning, I used the Competing Values Framework (Cameron & Quinn, 2006) in a collaborative inquiry into HLI's development of their Digital Portal to RPL. The Competing Values Framework outlines some of the competing dimensions in an organizational culture for organizational effectiveness (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1981; Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983) and culture (Martin, 1992; Schein, 1985). Its intended use is to facilitate change in organizational culture by drawing attention to the dimensions of flexibility versus stability and an internal versus external focus based on scores from questionnaires that are then used to draw figures in coordinate systems. In this study, I adjust the Competing Values Framework's assessment instrument to help HLI's problem-solving (McKay & Marshall, 2001) by turning it into a symbolic artifact (Schembri & Boyle, 2013). An artifact constructed to draw attention to the fleeting, processual quality of ethnography in action research. Thus, this paper reports the intertwined interest in ethnography and action research of digitalizing organizational learning with the research question: *How can organizational ethnography of competing values inform action research in digitalizing*

organizational learning? Here, *inform* implies that the idea of competing values can guide an organizational ethnographer's actions. In this study, these actions involve adjusting and using an instrument to assess competing values in digitalizing organizational learning. The end-in-view is a recursive process (Farjoun et al., 2015) across the ethnographic research interest and problem-solving in the organization. I report this recursive process as an ethnography with an impressionist tale to *keep both subject and object in constant view* (Van Maanen, 2011, p. 102). This ethnographic writing allows the reader, as far as possible, to feel, hear, and see as the ethnographer felt, heard, and saw. Before unfolding the impressionistic tale of this learning journey, I present the theoretical background for organizational learning, digitalization, and competing values. Next comes the study's action research approach to investigate the Digital Portal to RPL at the HLI. I unfold the study's tale in the analysis section. Finally, I discuss the usefulness of the Competing Value Framework for investigating the digitalization of organizational learning and my contribution to organizational learning research.

Theoretical background

Researchers of organizations (Argote, 2011; Argote, Lee, & Park, 2021; Elkjaer & Simpson, 2011), knowledge management (Hayes, 2011), and organizational culture (Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Martin, 1992) seem to agree that organizational learning, in its various disguises, is central to the success of an organization's performance and its members' prosperity. Organizational learning is a creative and habitual social practice where knowledge is necessarily incomplete and open-ended (Elkjaer & Simpson, 2011). In organizations, learning is the acquisition of complex and varied predispositions to act, making the world more differentiated and *infused with meaning* (Biesta & Burbules, 2003, p. 37). Organizational learning creates new knowledge (Basten & Haamann, 2018; Chiva, Ghauri, & Alegre, 2014), crucial to organizations operating in complex and unpredictable environments (Argote et al., 2021; Garvin, Edmondson, & Gino, 2008).

Organizations are multifaceted, complex, paradoxical, and part of a rapidly changing society (Morgan, 1998). Organizations experiencing several mergers and consolidations often lead to managers and employees facing difficult challenges in their attempt to keep up with multiple demands from a fluctuating world (Corley, Gioia, & Nag, 2011; Morgan, 1998). The introduction of new technologies also demands changes in organizational learning (Argote et al., 2021), which is important for exploiting existing knowledge and exploring new knowledge (Hayes, 2011; Kane & Alavi, 2007). One action to accommodate these multiple demands is for managers to show leadership by doing strategy work explicating external and internal demands (Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Morpew, Fumasoli, & Stensaker, 2018). Here, the way an organization is structured can influence how its members seek and use new knowledge (Csaszar, 2013). Strategic action

of implementing learning technologies can involve management in a top-down process or make it a bottom-up process with employee involvement (Lisewski, 2004), and the potential dualism between micro/individual and macro/collective issues (Lorino, 2020) is critical for organizational learning.

New strategies in Higher Learning Institutions also build on older strategies, integrating management and employees' experiences to form the new strategy (Øvrelid, Grøttum, & Westbye, 2020). A strategy can help form the way an organization wants to be. In a more general sense, the organization's identity or culture is constructed and reconstructed by transacting with organizational learning in a continuous process. An organization *relearns its identity as its enacted environment recursively influences further meaning making and action taking* (Corley et al., 2011, p. 350). A way to strategically construct and reconstruct organizational culture – or in terms of Cameron and Quinn (2006) diagnose and change organizational culture is by using the Competing Values Framework.

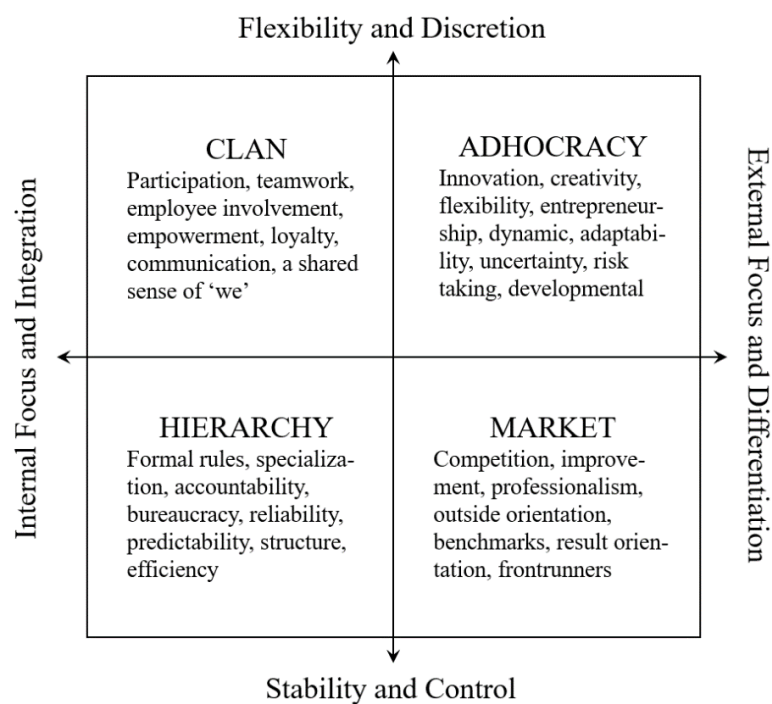


Figure 1, Competing Values Framework adopted from Cameron & Quinn (2006). Vertical-axis (Flexibility and Discretion vs. Stability and Control). Horizontal-axis (Internal Focus and Integration vs. External Focus and Differentiation).

The Competing Values Framework has two dimensions, displayed in Figure 1; the first dimension emphasizes flexibility, discretion, and dynamism, in opposition to control, order, and stability, shown as the vertical-axis. The second dimension emphasizes unity, integration, and internal orientation in opposition to rivalry, differentiation, and external orientation, shown as the horizontal-axis.

The two dimensions form four quadrants, each representing a distinct set of *core values* on which judgments about organizations are made (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 35). The four quadrants are Clan, Adhocracy, Market, and Hierarchy, explaining how organizations, over time, become associated with different organizational values. Figure 1 assembles several values outlined in the Competing Values Framework. Based on this framework, Cameron and Quinn created the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI), a questionnaire to help diagnose organizational culture.

OCAI assesses organizational culture based on six questions that each have four statements relating to one of the four quadrants in Figure 1. The respondent divides 100 points among the four statements, whereafter the scores are drawn into a coordinate system. However, as pointed out by the organizational ethnographer John Van Maanen, it would be a mistake to think only four cultures represent the wonderful world of organizations (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). Competing Values Framework visualizations are simplifications used to interpret and discuss organizational culture. They can serve as symbolic artifacts for generating valuable ethnographic knowledge (Schembri & Boyle, 2013) or simply as boundary objects (Wenger, 1998) between researchers and practitioners. Through action research, I adjust OCAI to a Higher Learning Institution's development of a Digital Portal to RPL combined with ethnographical reflections on what lies behind the numbers following Einola and Alvesson's (2021) call for questioning questionnaires.

Action Research Approach

Action research calls for a researcher to enter a real-world situation aiming to improve it and at the same time acquire knowledge (Checkland & Holwell, 1998). I combine ethnography, as an empirical gathering method and as writing (Neyland, 2007), with action research to gain in-depth insights into the competing values of digitalizing organizational learning. The problem-solving and a research cycle in action research (McKay & Marshall, 2001) become ethnographically interwoven through the Competing Values Framework based instrument's (OCAI) adjustment and use by maintaining cultural sensitivity (Neyland, 2007).

My ethnographic sensitivity relates to Marshall's work of *living life as inquiry* (Gearty & Marshall, 2020; Marshall, 1999), having an *inner human yearning to learn but also to be creative in the service of outward systemic change* (Gearty & Marshall, 2020, p. 443). *Living life as inquiry* in conveying the researcher's theoretical and methodical reflections into practice and using practice experiences to become sensitive towards suitable theories and methods is a balancing act. The action researcher can easily end up as just an observer of practice or, on the other side going native in practice. The same balance act is present when *being creative* in presenting action research in writing to *outward systemic change*.

Van Maanen (2011) distinguishes between three ways of writing ethnography as tales; (1) the realist tale, where the ethnographer poses an impersonal tale passing on more or less objective data, (2) the confessional tale, concerned with the ethnographer's personalized fieldwork odyssey, and (3) the impressionist tale where the researcher seeks the balancing act of being transparent about moving between research and practice. The impressionist tale supports my pragmatic philosophy of science in viewing the researcher as a part of the studied organizational practice (Farjoun et al., 2015; Lorino, 2018) and carefully writing about the researcher's movement between theory and practice reflections.

I became ethnographically attentive towards the competing values in digitalizing organizational learning based on previous experiences with OCAI to diagnose and change the organizational culture on other occasions. However, Competing Values Framework and OCAI do not offer a way to investigate competing values for a technology in its organizational context. Therefore, using ethnographic methods in an action research effort, I show with this study how OCAI can be adjusted to a specific technological and organizational setting. Moreover, the ethnographic field of my inquiry in digitalizing organizational learning is a key area of concern for higher learning institutions (Argote et al., 2021; Munro, 2018; Øvrelid et al., 2020).

The field

The Higher Learning Institution (HLI) in this study has approximately 900 employees and almost 20,000 students. The educational programs involve bachelor's degrees targeted at specific work practices; however, most HLI's educations target working practitioners seeking further educational training. HLI has undergone two major merges, one in 2007, moving from individual learning institutions to one institution of nine study branches, and again in 2009, moving from nine to 27 study branches. HLI has embraced a multitude of educational institutions with different organizational cultures and formed an organization under one executive board and one Rector.

The White Paper on RPL's purpose is defining and identifying RPL at the theoretical and fundamental level and primarily targets the educators working at HLI. Horn et al., define RPL as *reflection on/in/with practice with theoretical analyses and practical syntheses* (2020, p. 13). RPL takes its stand in learning theory, e.g., (Dewey, 1933; Elkjaer & Wiberg, 2013; Schön, 1983; Wenger, 1998). From this theoretical framing, six fundamental principles are derived as starting points for teaching methods and techniques that establish the framework for RPL. The principles are: 1) *The students' own experiences are incorporated into teaching and learning activities*; 2) *Teaching and learning activities designed to include appropriate disturbances*; 3) *Learning activities are organized as exploration*; 4) *The content of teaching and learning activities is based on the good example*; 5) *Lecturers and students work together on learning processes*; 6) *Lecturers and students create room for dialogue* (Horn et al., 2020, p. 17-19). HLI develops and reinforces RPL as a learning philosophy to benefit students, educators, employees, recruiters, collaborating partners, and HLI as an organization (Horn et al., 2020). The organizing of RPL had, according to the Program Manager Liza, been a bottom-up process of *having a thousand wildflowers, of which we needed to pick up a bouquet* which was the White Paper on RPL.

The Digital Portal was launched in February 2020 to diffuse RPL among the HLI educators. HLI has a strategic goal to use RPL to profile their learning institution and make it a useful learning philosophy for educators and students to establish higher learning quality and competent graduates. Nonetheless, the Digital Portal is only for internal use on their intranet

and has very few visitors. An educator entering the Digital Portal (in September 2020) can choose between three categories: 1) *Stories* for educators to inspire other educators about using different methods and techniques for RPL in their everyday work; 2) *Activities*, which are RPL specific activities, methods, and techniques applicable in the educators' teaching; and, 3) *Themes and Terms*, indexing the theories, themes, and terms related to RPL. The HLI educators can contribute to the Digital Portal by filling out a Word-template for one of the three categories and sending it to the Portal Editor. She then interviews the contributor to edit the article before publishing it on the Digital Portal. Some educators contact the Editor without having filled out the template to set up an interview, from which she then writes the article. The contributor must assign a minimum of one and a maximum of four RPL principles, but most want to assign all six principles, requiring the Editor to make them reflect and argue for their choices.

A key editorial task is to make the contributed article generic and applicable across all study branches at the HLI. An article should be relevant and useful for different educators' teaching. Nevertheless, in the early development stage of the Digital Portal, it has very limited use at the HLI – even among the authors of the White Paper on RPL assigned to be RPL ambassadors. Therefore, the study's empirical gatherings focus on a collaborative inquiry into values for the Digital Portal

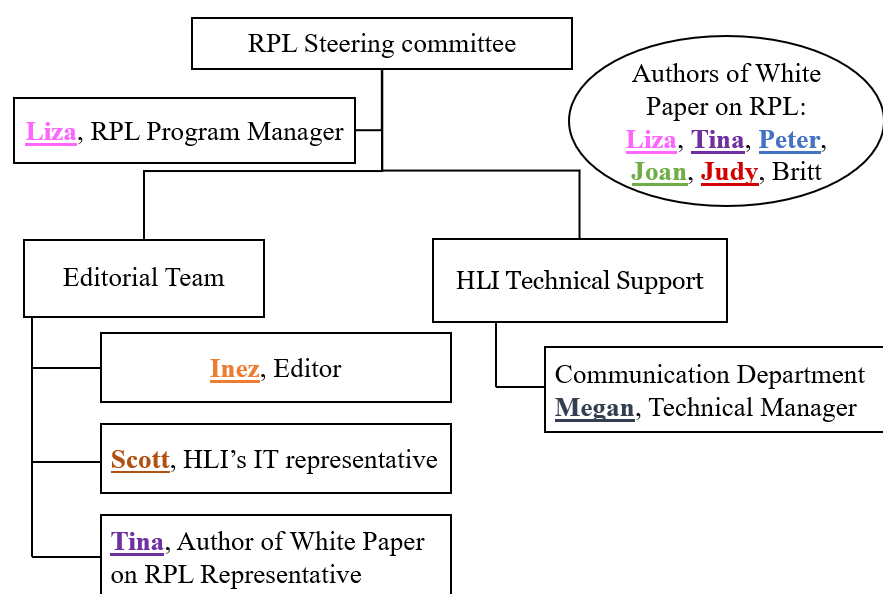


Figure 2, organizational diagram of the study's participants (colored according to the OCAI visualizations presented in the analysis)

to RPL at the HLI involving people working with the Digital Portal and six out of seven authors of the White Paper on RPL. Nine participants who, in different ways, work with the Digital Portal to RPL were central to the investigation, as shown in Figure 2. The RPL Program Manager Liza was the gatekeeper granting me access to the field, while my primary contact

was Inez, the Portal Editor. Ethnographers observe and participate in everyday life within particular groupings aiming to describe what it means to be a part of this group and how changes affect the group - resulting in translating in-depth data to descriptive recommendations of what can be done (Neyland, 2007). In this study, I centered on the Digital Portal – and aimed to interact with the people behind the Portal – not to take the usual ethnographer role of translating between them and their end-users (educators). Through several interactions, I worked with their competing values attributed to the

Portal, not the broader field of educators' practices, which already was these peoples' area of research and practical expertise. Using an action research approach to study the Digital Portal and the people behind it evolved my role as an ethnographer, pushing me to act in practice and support change, not just recommending what could be done.

Empirical gatherings

The empirical gatherings at the HLI took place from August 2020 to May 2021, where key activities are outlined below in Figure 3, involving participant observations, eight structured interviews based on the adjusted OCAI, two workshops on the instrument's results, and two feedback sessions on my written material.

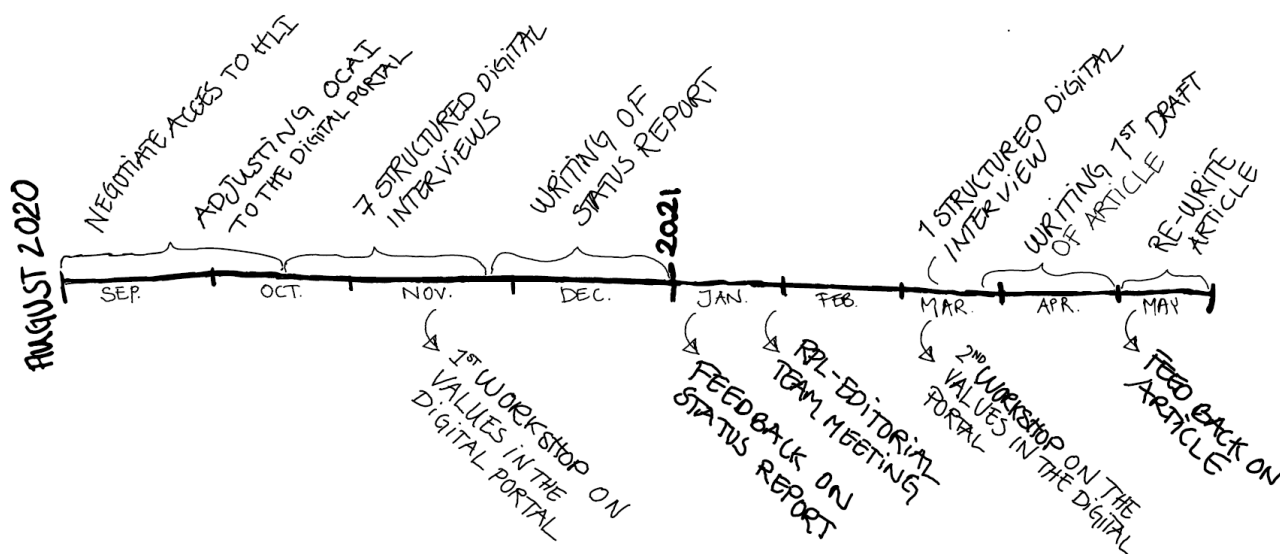


Figure 3, Timeline of individual inquiry (above the line) and collaborative inquiry (below the line).

The participant observation (Neyland, 2007) included 2-3 encounters a month at HLI from September to November 2020 and digitally from January to May 2021, approximately 21 hours total, to gain insights into the problem situation of the competing cultural values related to RPL and the Digital Portal. During the participant observations from September to October, I adjusted the OCAI questions to fit the HLI context of the Digital Portal. Instead of handing out the adjusted OCAI (can be found in Appendix A) as a questionnaire for the participants to distribute scores, I conducted structured interviews where I simultaneously could be open for ethnographic sensitivities (Neyland, 2007). The adjusted OCAI has six questions, each containing four options related to Clan, Adhocracy, Market, and Hierarchy values. The participants fill out OCAI by distributing 100 points, e.g., if option A (Clan) is very recognizable, you could score it 55, B (Adhocracy) and C (Market) are somewhat recognizable with scores of 20, and option D (Hierarchy) is hardly recognizable with a 5. OCAI is filled out twice; first, they respond to all the questions of how they experience the Digital Portal now, and second how they prefer the Portal in 5 years. The participants and I filled out the adjusted OCAI through online screen sharing

using Microsoft Teams; meanwhile, we engaged in dialogs helping me understand the reasoning for their distribution of points.

I conducted the structured digital interviews with seven of the beforementioned participants In October and November 2020. A last structured interview was conducted in March 2021 to include all Editorial Team members on the Digital Portal for a second workshop. The interviews were all video recorded, resulting in 8 hours of data.

In November 2020, I presented the results from the structured interviews of the participants' experience of values in the Digital Portal in a Workshop to establish Collaborative Dialogs (Ripamonti, Galuppo, Gorli, Scaratti, & Cunliffe, 2016) about RPL and the Portal. The workshop revolved around coordinate systems visualizations, as shown in Figure 4, and elaborated below in the section on processing and analyzing the empirical gatherings. In the first workshop, the participants shared their perspectives on how they experience and attribute value to the Digital Portal as individuals.

In the second workshop in March 2021, see Figure 3, I presented an extension of the participants' experience of values in the Digital Portal supplemented with activities to enable a new vision for the Digital Portal. This workshop primarily focused on their joint average scores to support reflections on how they collectively move forward in digitalizing RPL at HLI. The two workshops were conducted on Microsoft Teams and video recorded, resulting in 3 hours of data.

Finally, throughout the entire period of the study, I wrote a diary to support my memory and reflections in fieldnotes (Neyland, 2007) based on jottings (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011) from my interviews, participant observations, and workshops. These were critical to producing the ethnographic narratives creating meaning when I am puzzled or experience a breakdown in my understanding (Brinkmann, 2014), as explained in processing and analyzing the empirical gatherings.

Processing and analyzing the empirical gatherings

In processing the participants' OCAI scores from the structured interviews, they are entered into an Excel sheet to plot a coordinate system. The plotting is done for individual respondents or a joint average following a procedure where first, all Clan scores are added and divided by six (the number of questions). This procedure is then repeated for Adhocracy, Market, and Hierarchy scores. When the four scores are plotted, I draw lines to form a figure. Figure 4, below, plots all participants' average scores of the Digital Portal Now (blue) and in 5 years (green).

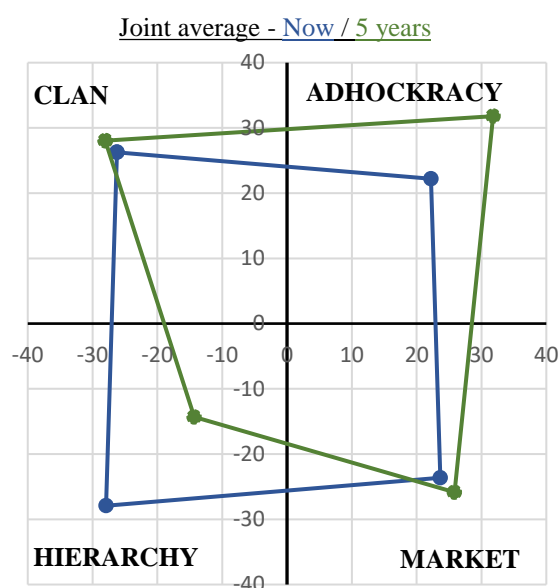


Figure 4 Visualization of competing values in the Digital Portal

I processed the Excel sheet several times, extracting discrepancies or incongruencies in the participants' perspectives on the Digital Portal values. A discrepancy is when there is a ten-point difference between the scores of Now and 5 years in a quadrant. Discrepancies are shifts in what the participants see as important Now but want to be considerably different in 5 years (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). Effective performance in an organization has a more congruent perspective in values; therefore, paying attention to incongruence is important. Incongruent value perspectives occur when the plotted figures have no particular pattern of similarity, reflecting differences in goals, perspectives, and strategies

in organizational values (Cameron & Quinn, 2006), in this study, the Digital Portal. After detecting discrepancies and incongruence, I rewatched the recorded interviews to deepen my understanding of these findings. The most interesting of these findings were visualized and shared in the workshops.

To report this process ethnographically, I produced narratives in an abductive process of interweaving fieldnotes, participant observations, interviews, and workshops, inspired by Richardson & St. Pierre: *These data were neither in my interview transcripts nor in my fieldnotes where data are supposed to be, for how can one textualize everything one thinks and senses in the course of a study? But they were always already in my mind and body, and they cropped up un-expectedly and fittingly in my writing – fugitive, fleeting data that were excessive and out-of-category. My point here is that these data might have escaped entirely if I had not written; they were collected only in the writing* (Richardson & St Pierre, 2005, p. 970). In this way, my study is not solely theory-driven (deductive) nor data-driven (inductive); it is breakdown (abductive) driven (Brinkmann, 2014; Coghlan & Shani, 2021). Through abduction, I act in practice and through the writing of ethnographic narratives forming an impressionistic tale inspired by Van Maanen (2011). Impressionist ethnographers also have the intention of evoking its reader. Methods are words, figurative language, metaphors, and expressions that call for the ethnographer's experience (Van Maanen, 2011). These assemble into a first-person-tale, where the focus becomes tight, vivid, and concise, and in that process becomes an impressionist tale of the ethnographer's results.

Impressionist tales are not what typically happens, but of what seldom happens, because these tales are marked in the fieldnotes leaving memorable experiences within the ethnographer (Van Maanen, 2011). The tale is in fairly chronological order and told in present tense. The epistemological ambition is *to braid the knower with the known* (Van Maanen, 2011,

p. 102) and draw the reader into an unknown story world and allow, as far as possible, to feel, hear, see as the ethnographer felt, heard, and saw. The participants in the tale have names, motives, faces, and lines to speak (Van Maanen, 2011). In the following impressionist tale, I braid theoretic analytical points into the writing and make headlines to point out a change of scenery in the tale.

Analysis

Sensing competing values

In August 2020, I excavated HLI's many strategic documents available on the website. I want to research how technology transacts with organizational learning, and a higher learning institution seems an obvious place to start. Here I stumble upon their White Paper on Reflective Practice-based Learning (RPL) and their strategic goal of launching a Digital Portal to RPL on their intranet to diffuse the learning philosophy among all the educators. I am captivated by their bottom-up process of formalizing the educators' understanding of RPL and the top-down process of digitalizing RPL with a Portal on their intranet. Already, in the project's birth, I sensed the competing values familiar to me from past studies of organizational culture. With the Competing Values Framework lurking in the back of my mind, this Digital Portal to RPL, just like organizational culture, could be full of competing values providing interesting and useful insights into the digitalization of organizational learning.

I spent a few months observing, chatting, emailing, phoning, trying to establish a stable relationship with Liza, the RPL Program Manager. After a while, I reach out to Inez, the Portal Editor, who quickly becomes my confidante and ally in this learning journey at the HLI. Liza, in her beautiful green dress, blond hair, clear-cut glasses, and Inez with her vivid brown eyes, blue and white striped dress, and catchy smile work closely together getting the Portal running. Their office has ten workplace units, a purple sofa, a small dark grey laminated coffee table, and a wooden lunch/conference table with a half-empty jar of candies. I experienced firsthand how the values Liza and Inez attribute to the Portal can be competing. Liza explains; *Inez turns subjective learning experiences from an educator into generic learning stories related to the principles for RPL so every study branch can use the stories and principles in their teaching*. Thereby, Liza and Inez control the articles published on the Portal and what they consider to be RPL. Opposite to this centralized control, Inez explains; *we want RPL to be alive - the articles should inspire and engage the educators*. Being in their office, listening, and talking to them brings me into their world, and I genuinely feel the importance of RPL as HLI's learning philosophy.

Beyond the vanilla OCAI

Liza explains; *The RPL-philosophy lived in every corner of HLI, but there wasn't an institutional, theory-based framing* before she and the six other learning researchers published the White Paper on RPL in 2020. *We spent a long time gathering information about what RPL is at this institution.* Inez elaborates further; *the authors had dialogs with the HLI educators combining it with an eclectic mix of learning theories forming six ground principles and philosophy for RPL.* Reading the White Paper on RPL alongside the strategic documents shows how HLI wants to brand it internally and to practitioners outside HLI. Just like the competing horizontal-axis of an internal versus external dimension. Also, the vertical-axis stands clearer with the flexibility of RPL living freely in every corner versus pinning it down as a clear and well-defined concept in the White Paper. At this point, I want to use OCAI's simple visualizations as a symbolic artifact of how they experience the Digital Portal today and what it could be in the future – not to determine these values as unequivocally true. I wonder if constructing a symbolic artifact can provide a different understanding of the digitalization of RPL. I want to engage them in a dialog about their Digital Portal by using the adjusted OCAI's interview guide – not just the output score suggested in the vanilla version of OCAI.

A frisky morning in September, I start on what I believed to be a simple translation of OCAI to Danish. It turns out to be more tricky than I expected. What was even more complicated was translating it into the organizational context for the Digital Portal and RPL. I had to integrate everything I had read about HLI, gain legislation perspectives for higher learning institutions, consider that HLI is a state-financed education, not private. Also, to understand what a Portal is and be attentive to the information I had gained from Liza and Inez. In abstract hindsight, I changed the questions from a socio-organizational to a socio-technical perspective to make them useful for a dialog about a technology and not an organization. As I sit in front of the keyboard revisiting fieldnotes and the Cameron and Quinn Book, I feel like I am fraudulently abusing a classic by rewriting the questions. I will not try to justify these rewritings but simply point to Appendix A with the six original questions (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 26-28) and my translation of them back to English.

As I carry out the structured interviews, trying to reap the rewards of my struggles in rewriting the questions, the participants have their struggles distributing the 100 points, as I purposely ensured that each option has a distinctive allure. This dilemma incites some of them to make an equally distributed score of 25 for each of the four options. I acknowledge their struggle to choose between these four attractive options while encouraging them to prioritize the most attractive option, leaving other attractive options with a lesser score. I estimated a 30 minutes structured interview –much more time compared to the 10 minutes suggested for the vanilla OCAI (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 23). However, passionate people take more time to interview, and I change my digital invitations to 60 minutes. When I share questions on the screen, they

are not answered in silence as I have previously tried with the vanilla OCAI questionnaire - they seem to come to life. Distributing scores over structured dialogs, in this case, equals rich conversation about the digitalization of RPL.

Visualizing competing values attributed to the Digital Portal

After an interview, I lean back in the chair at my home office, waiting for the visual recording of the interview to finish encoding and make the video file available for me to watch. These rich sets of recorded data bursting into bloom on my computer screen are filled with qualitative statements topped up with facial expressions – it's stunning. Each interview provides new perspectives, useful for the next interview session's deliberations. I plot the scores into the coordinate system, revealing graphical visualizations of the values they attribute to the Portal and, more importantly, how it compares to the other participants.

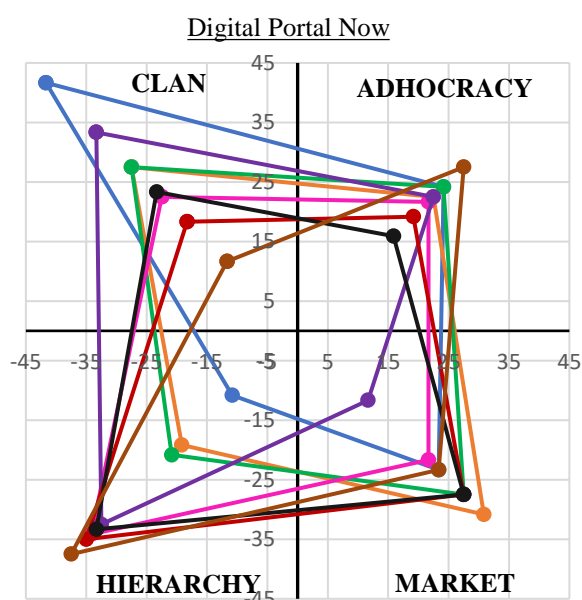


Figure 5, plotting of how all participants experience the Digital Portal Now. Pink is program manager Liza, Orange is portal editor Inez, Purple is author and RPL representative Tina, Dark blue is technical manager Megan, Light blue is author Peter, Green is author Joan, Red is author Judy, Brown is IT representative Scott.

The colorful squares in the coordinate system in Figure 5 show how my participants (five of the White Paper of RPL authors, two Editors, and the Technical Manager) in average attribute values to the Digital Portal Now. Clearly, they do not agree on the Portal values. Standing out when talking to Liza [pink square] is, the average scores are highest in Hierarchy values; *for the Portal to succeed, I hope it is reliable and helps direct people to use RPL. Creating a usable structure motivated the design because the White Paper on RPL does not direct or control peoples' use of RPL.* While Inez [orange square], an active user of the Portal, wants the Portal to engage and include people; *I want my colleagues to take responsibility and build up their competencies by using the Portal. No, wait. It needs to be*

useful in practice. Inez differs on the diagonal between the competing values in Clan and Market values.

Among the authors, Tina [purple square], with her blond hair, round glasses, and a light blue shirt, states from her kitchen chair; *I don't find enough content at the Portal. It's not yet a community, and I don't use the Portal content.* When we talk about the Portal Now, Tina scores the highest in Clan, seeking an RPL community, not a Portal community. Another author, Judy [red square], sits with her beautiful black hair, black glasses in a kid's room with a blue lamp filled with fluffy white clouds. She explains; *I don't find the content in the Portal profound enough. I have spent so much time on RPL, but the Portal is just like every other search engine.* Judy scores the highest in Hierarchy values when she describes

the Portal Now. She wants the Portal to be profoundly different in five years; *we need to differ out*. Several White Paper authors see themselves as representatives for RPL, not as users of the Portal. The author Peter [blue square], tuning in with a smile, kind eyes, and a big beard, states that; *the Portal is only available on our intranet. It's totally off. In the initiating work, we wanted accessibility for everyone. People need to see our work and be included*. He suggests a Clan-like RPL community of Portal users extending far beyond HLI. The author Joan [green square], with wavy blond hair sitting in her kitchen, points out some of the same perspectives as Peter. However, mostly related to RPL and not the Portal; *it's important to involve outside practitioners to support the future RPL-practitioners educated from our institution*.

Doing the interviews, plotting figures, and relistening their elaborations of distributing scores, it seems - RPL stands firm, but the Portal is movable, maybe even removable. It triggers my mind; all of them spend a tremendous amount of time developing RPL. A learning philosophy firmly founded on how reflection is supported by acting in practice and vice versa. However, few of the authors act - by contributing content to the Digital Portal or use the Portal content in their teaching to make it better for other educators.

The Technical Manager, Megan, the dark-blue square, provides a different perspective scoring the questions. She sits in her office wearing a headset framing her loose blond hair and talks extensively about the Portal and its potential. However, RPL is not on her mind; *I want the Portal to work and for everyone to get an enjoyable user experience*. Her perspective reflects the dualism of separating the Digital Portal from RPL, which I also heard in the other interviews. I try to engage Megan by revealing what the authors, Liza and Inez, answered during their interviews. Megan expresses; *maybe I should talk to the authors. If they want something different, then it would be nice for me to know*. Megan attributes Hierarchy values to the Portal because; *the strong focus on developing a reliable and clear structure makes it easy to use*.

After the interviews, I want to show the participants my visualizations in coordinate systems – create a symbolic artifact of their different perspectives to share experiences about how the Digital Portal can support the digitalization of RPL. I want to disturb their habit of jumping into an RPL context, leaving the Portal aside, and help Megan to see how RPL can be more intertwined with the technical development of the Portal.

Deliberation on individual perspectives on the Digital Portal

Tuesday 9. November, I write an email to Liza asking for one hour of her, Inez, Megan, and the authors' time to conduct a workshop presenting my results. Thursday, I am too impatient; I resend the mail and CC Inez, hoping our alliance can help the process. Within an hour, Inez replies, Liza, during the afternoon. They are game; Liza sends email invites to Megan and the authors for Thursday, 19. November. Almost everyone accepts the invite, and I am excited and a bit

nervous. Nevertheless, on the day of the workshop, the cancelations keep ticking into my inbox. The dark November weather echoes my mood. I jot; *Nobody cares about the Portal! – Why?* I consider a cancelation but stand firm with a; *yes, we're on* when Inez, 15 minutes before showtime, writes; *I can only see myself participating. Are we still on?* At 3.59 PM, Inez enters the virtual meeting. At precisely 4.00 PM, a grey-haired woman in an Icelandic knitted sweater arrives. Never having seen her before, her appearance confuses me. I stutter, *Hi, you must be Britt, one of the authors of the White Paper. I'm so glad to see you.* I haven't interviewed her since she never replied to my invite. Liza enters, and I briefly explain my study to Britt. To ensure all three participants understand my visualizations, I present the Competing Values Framework and adjusted OCAI before moving on to my chosen two points with four visualizations.

Point one is a general visualization of how they attribute values to the Portal. I start by presenting their average Now, then

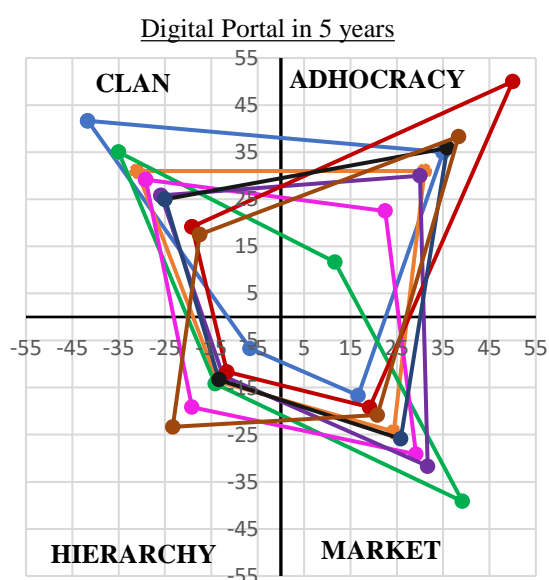


Figure 6 plotting of how all participants experience the Digital Portal in 5 years. Pink is program manager Liza, Orange is portal editor Inez, Purple is author and RPL representative Tina, Dark blue is technical manager Megan, Light blue is author Peter, Green is author Joan, Red is author Judy, Brown is IT representative Scott.

their average in 5 years. I then split them up to show their individual squares, which usually gives a wow-effect; today is no exception. I explain that the colored squares with their names enable them to deliberate on their individual perspectives. Before I could show them the discrepancy between their joint average Now and in 5 years, Inez, Liza, and Britt are eager to talk about Figure 6. Seeing Inez laughing into the muted microphone, I ask for her thoughts, she replies; *I am just doing a small analysis. I see all of our differences and our 'darlings' and what different areas we represent at HLI. I am not surprised that Liza [pink] stands out in Hierarchy because she has been a part of the whole development process. And Joan [green] is oriented towards market values due to her teaching on Business educations.*

Britt unmutes; *my thought exactly, Inez. I immediately started to fit everyone in. And I am not that surprised. I think it reflects our differences.* Liza unmutes; *we needed a firm RPL-ground, which I see in the Hierarchy values. It is not just anything goes. The Portal is still too immature, and I am accountable; we risk two years of work if it is just set free.* I joyfully watch their immediate experience of the visualizations – how they reflect and bounce on each other's statements delivering all kinds of perspectives. I move on to my second point, related to incongruence in their individual scores of question 6 – *Success criteria for the Digital Portal in 5 years.*

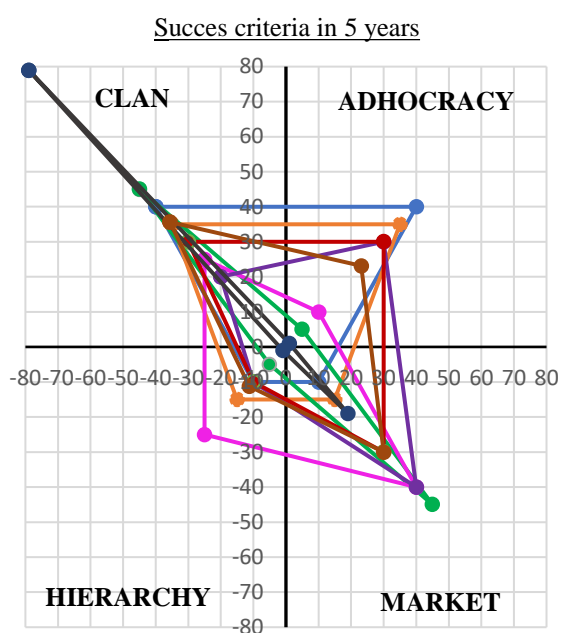


Figure 7, plotting of how all participants experience the Digital Portal success criteria in 5 years. Pink is program manager Liza, Orange is portal editor Inez, Purple is author and RPL representative Tina, Dark blue is technical manager Megan, Light blue is author Peter, Green is author Joan, Red is author Judy, Brown is IT representative Scott.

Once more, they turn to their individual figures and find their differences interesting (Figure 7). Megan's answer with a score of 80 in Clan value attracts their attention. Their dialog tunes in on them knowing RPL as authors of the White Paper and as Editor, while Megan and her co-workers in the Communication department sometimes have difficulties understanding RPL. Liza states that; *Megan is not interested in showing the Portal to people outside the HLI. The Communication department doesn't want to brand us on something they do not understand.*

On May 6., 2021, six months after our meeting, Liza provides feedback on this written analysis, and she struggles with this quote. She states; *I sound harsh in writing. I acknowledge Megan's work. It's more that we have different perspectives and skills.* On this cold rainy day in May, I engage in a dialog with

Liza about where I went wrong in this part of the analysis. I didn't intend to make Liza sound harsh; I know she is not. Instead, I would use the word passionate, describing her work with the Digital Portal to RPL. I agree with Liza that I portray her differently than how she perceives herself. It is one of the struggles of an impressionist tale and why I find her input on this day in May important and insightful. In this light, Figure 7 also shows how different skills ties to different values and how being aware of their skills as potentially competing can help combine strengths from diversity or reveal a need for congruence.

Back at the workshop in November 2020, I suggest involving the Communication department, especially Megan, in RPL. Who better than the authors of the White Paper on RPL and the Editor to share this knowledge. Making a sharp distinction between the Portal, which Megan develops, and RPL developed by the authors is not beneficial. They wrote the White Paper to create a learning philosophy for the whole of HLI. Megan's score of 80 in Clan could indicate her wanting to know more about the authors' RPL-Clan, enabling her to make the Portal more accessible to outsiders of the HLI. I share my thoughts; *suppose you onboard Megan into your RPL-Clan, and at the same time, you get insights into Megan's development work with the Portal. Then you have a chance of establishing a reflective practice learning situation about RPL and the Portal.*

Inez describes my point of RPL being an RPL-Clan; *Peter is one of my closest companions regarding the Portal and RPL. We do not question what RPL is. We know.* Peter and Inez are more congruent in their perception of the Success criteria for the Portal, which the blue [Peter] and orange [Inez] squares in Figure 7 display. I elaborate on the downside of several participants having a high degree of incongruence. Those not as close to defining RPL might not be ready to shoot for the Market values of having a Portal being leading in practice, like Liza [pink], Tina [purple], and Joan [green] in 5 years. Alternatively, to set the Portal free with Adhocracy values of creativity and innovation like Inez [orange], Peter [blue], and Judy [red] wants in 5 years.

We move on to talk about how I see potential in engaging the educators in RPL by using the Portal, making it a part of their practice – then the Portal has a future at HLI and the potential of supporting RPL even more. They are recursively dependent. Britt cuts me short; *I am spreading the word of RPL. It is just not the Portal I refer to; it is the White Paper and how the educators can relate to the six ground principles. I don't see how my specific education can use a story about RPL from a completely different education branch.* I have heard similar comments from the authors, Tina and Judy. I am puzzled - they don't even bother to try out the Portal. The White Paper clearly expresses that RPL involves action and reflection in and over practice - RPL's ground principle 4 states *teaching is formed from a good example*. Using it could make them reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the Portal and make it a part of their practice, setting a good example to follow. Moreover, Inez writes learning generic stories for all educations to use. Inez unmutes; *Britt, It seems like you judge the Portal content without even reading it.* I sense her frustration – my own too. We have talked about exactly this point several times in our one-on-one dialogs.

I need to wind up the debate, having already spent 10 minutes more than planned. I ask; *what do you bring from this workshop?* Britt states; *I found the insights about the Portal very interesting. I could definitely follow along even though I didn't do the interview. To see our differences and similarities in the figures helps with new perspectives on what we ascribe to the Portal.* Inez follows; *this tool shows a lot of our implicit knowledge. Looking at the figures helps us put this knowledge into words. It was enjoyable and impressive.* The workshop is over. However, I have a little nagging voice in my head, which I chose not to pay attention to this November day. I write a status report including the above subanalysis. I hand it in for Liza and Inez to read.

The Digital Portal Now and in 5 years

We arrange for a follow-up meeting on the status report in January 2021. Liza and Inez are excited by the analysis and visualizations - they provide new insights into incongruence and discrepancy in the Portal and RPL. They agree that there has been a tendency to separate the Portal and RPL, which needs attention. During our conversation, the little nagging

voice from November is back. I share my thoughts; *the workshop turned out to focus mostly on the individual experiences and not the joint group perspective*. Organizational learning is more than individual learning in a collective setting – they need to learn from each other and develop new perspectives together. I want the participants to see potential in the Portal to RPL from a joint perspective – not just as individuals. Inez and Liza see development potential if I focus on the Editorial Team and establish a more joint development perspective on the Portal. For the Portal to succeed and be useful, they need to agree on what they want the Portal to be. If everyone has their agenda, then there is no shared vision for the Portal to RPL, which may challenge their digitalization efforts to organizational learning at the HLI.

The weather is splendid - blue sky and sunny on January 25. I participate in an Editorial Team meeting, I listen and jot. I arrange for another structured interview with Scott, an IT representative from HLI. He is the only one from the Digital Portal's Editorial Team I haven't interviewed. Scott sits in his home office; he has a kind face, square glasses, gray hair framed by a headset. I already took the liberty of plotting his scores as the brown square in the visualizations above (Figure 6 and Figure 7). Scott has new and interesting perspectives and sees potential in the Portal but admits; *I need to read up on RPL and visit the Portal more often*. After the interview and analyzing Scott's scores, I set up a meeting with Inez to arrange a second workshop. She shares a thought; *I just want people to use it, see its potential. I write all these articles...* This resignation is so unlike the Inez I have come to care for over the past seven months. I know she loves the Portal and RPL - she breathes it. I respond; *we need to get some joy and spirit into your work and make the Editorial Team lift some weight. It's not just on you and Liza*. We agree that the workshop should focus on their joint perspective in question 2 – *the vision for the Digital Portal* (c.f. Appendix A). I want to help Inez and the Editorial Team unite in pushing forward the agenda of RPL with the Portal at the HLI.

On March 25, 2021, I start the second workshop with the Editorial Team feeling less nervous than the first time. Inez has invited all the other authors of the White Paper and Megan, the Technical Manager. Unfortunately, only Scott, Inez, Megan, and Tina participate. I'm just happy to see them and want to make the best of it. I follow the structure from the first workshop. Megan is excited when I present, Figure 8. The visualization shows the discrepancy between the Portal

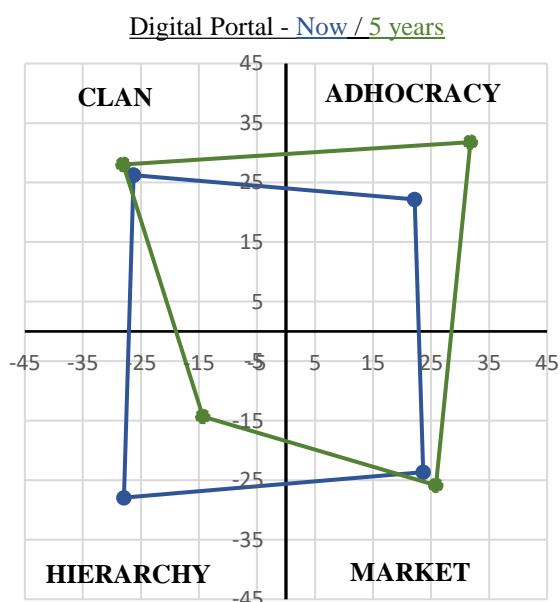


Figure 8, plotting of how all participants, in average, experience the Digital Portal Now and in 5 years.

Now [blue] and what they want it to be in 5 years [green]. They want to move from the structured and controlling Hierarchy to Adhocracy values such as innovation, creativity, and flexibility. I explain the difficulty of making a push from one value quadrant to another. Megan forcefully states; *this is interesting. We have some low-hanging fruits, and I can easily make adjustments to make the Portal more alive based on user interactions. It could be a feature of most-read articles and new articles.* Megan has many interesting ideas about how the Portal can become more attractive and innovative. Tina, an author of the White Paper on RPL, supplements Megan; *I like the idea of getting people*

to interact more with the Portal, make it come to life, and be a co-creating Portal. Create a culture where commenting on articles is allowed. Tina wants to move from a Digital Portal that administrates and facilitates already experienced knowledge to; *the idea of using the Portal to create new reflections and generate new knowledge about already existing articles. E.g., commenting and sharing one's own experiences could be very interesting – it suits the thoughts in RPL.* Inez, as Editor, sees their current Hierarchical structure as counteracting new Adhocratic initiatives, stating; *maybe I need to distribute some of the work. Right now, I am doing almost everything, I discover, I gather, I write, I publish. It isn't easy to make the stories come to life if it is only me.* In their dialog, they see potential in developing the Portal towards the Adhocratic values, repeating that; *we just need people to visit the Portal*, but with few specifics on what should lead them there.

Sharing a vision for the Digital Portal

Almost as if I conspired with Inez, which, of course, I had. She being my confidante and always supporting my study - I tune in on question 3 - *the vision for the Digital Portal*. I want them to create an illustrative story about their vision of moving from Hierarchy to Adhocracy values for the Digital Portal.

I show them the visualization of the discrepancy between how they score the vision today and in 5 years. Megan reminds us; *the strategic vision of the Portal, in the beginning, was to write generic RPL-stories showing good examples of RPL*

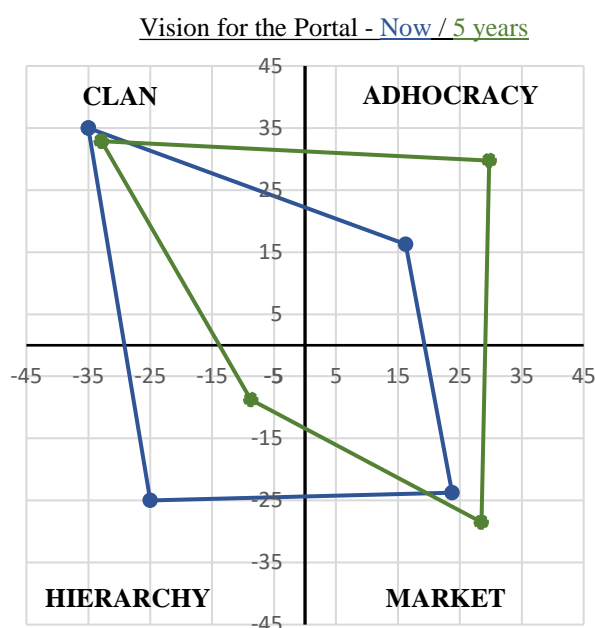


Figure 9 plotting of all participants, in average, experience the Vision for Digital Portal Now and in 5 years, question 2

that are useful to the educators at HLI. She refers to the blue square in Figure 9, which scores the Hierarchy values of simplification and predictability and Clan values of staff well-being and development the highest. She moves on; *We have that now and can begin moving towards more freedom in the Adhocracy* [referring to the Portal in 5 years - the green square] *by shaping a new vision for the Portal.* Scott wants to move towards Adhocracy; *we need to make it easier for the educators to loosen control, moving beyond teaching being a private matter and helping them share their experiences. The Portal – can be a place where they share and become a learning community.* However, when

Tina suggests that one should just talk to other educators at the other study branches about RPL, I feel a déjà vu related to the first workshop.

I recognize the pattern of talking about RPL and wanting to move away from connecting RPL to the Portal. I intervene; I want her to include the Portal in her considerations. Otherwise, the Portal and the digitalization of RPL becomes irrelevant – again. Tina listens and suggests introducing cross-sectorial groups with shared learning interests. Inez supplements, linking to Tina's suggestion; *cross-sectorial groups could help spread the word that the stories are learning generic – not fitted for just one study branch. We need to supplement the generic stories with more adhocratic perspectives, something lighter and free, e.g., using the comment section. But we need to tell people about it face-to-face.* I try to gesticulate my socio-technical perspective with ∞-shaped waiving in the air while stating; *I agree that you need to spread the word of RPL face-to-face. However, if you want the Portal to succeed – you need to connect these people to the Portal. Otherwise, it's just RPL –* I begin to hear myself on repeat. Scott saves me by suggesting; *a few co-workers and I nurture a digital culture with webinars. We actually create cross-sectorial groups with presenters from all types of study branches. There are about 130 educators connected.* Megan tells about their successful process of establishing webinars over the past few months and promoting; *them as news on the intranet, which catches the educators' attention.*

Shifting from my visualization of their vision for the Digital Portal (Figure 9), Megan shares her screen to show how they promote their webinars using faces and small video clips on their posts; *because we can relate to people through the interface design. We can do the same to promote the Portal and at the same time do statistics on the Portal users.* Megan is behind many of the numbers and KPI's (key performance indicators) at HLI, and I compliment her; *your eye for Market values of specific improvements in practice can be useful. If you want to brand the Portal, the number of unique visitors is an important selling point.* I see Inez moving a bit closer to her screen. She nods and smiles when Megan shares information about unique users, when and how they use the intranet. Numbers can be mesmerizing. Megan offers; *I can set up the webinars and send out invites. I can also monitor the users. I will do the technical part.*

Scott takes the lead towards the illustrative story; *I really want to know the human behind the Portal. Who are the people writing the articles? If they see the person in a webinar, they might be inspired to visit the Portal and comment on the articles.* I snatch my absolute favorite example; *Inez, you used one of the Portal articles – from a total opposite study branch - in your teaching; You can do a webinar of your experience, and you would be one human behind the Portal.* They have all unmuted their microphone and bounce on each other's whims. The inspiration is bubbling; I cross my fingers, hoping they keep strategizing and act on their ideas. Megan reads my mind and foresees future tripwires; *now we know what we want to do. This work is not done for free. Is it Liza, or are we moving to our Vice-rector Bill to get the money?* I speedy reply; *Yes, do that, you need to reel him in, and you should refer to the strategy of 2021 where RPL is mentioned several times.* They all laugh. I know my statement is executed with a smile on my lip, but there is truth behind the smile. I involve them; *with Bill on board, you can push the agenda of digitalizing RPL.*

I sum up; *the Portal is about making the educators reflect on their educator practice, then they teach the students to become reflective practitioners.* I hesitate just a bit; *I am not sure, though, if we established a new vision?* Megan has a clear vision; *we show the human behind the Portal.* Scott smiles and laughs; *that's a Hollywood production.* All of us burst into laughs. The Editorial Team supports Inez, and I hope it revitalizes her care for the Portal. As I click on the red button for leaving the Microsoft Teams meeting, I feel our learning will make a real difference for the Portal and the HLI.

Making a difference

On May 6, 2021, Inez and Liza evaluate my writing of this action research ethnography, and I ask them what they have learned. Inez replies; *I have come to care for the Portal. When you entered the HLI, my purpose was to write articles on RPL. I didn't care where the articles were published - a newsletter, the Digital Portal, or even a children's book. I cared for RPL. You really opened my eyes, helped me see how technology - the Portal - can support my work and spread the word of RPL and not just be an annoying technological bump on the way.* Right at this moment is where action research

shows its potential - making a difference in practice by focusing on a real-world problem. With my interventions, using the adjusted OCAI, our collaboration, and the reading of my writing Inez have come to care for the technology supporting RPL.

Liza shares her learning journey; *It's important that the Portal is used, and we can talk about it. We need to make it come to life by integrating the Digital Portal when we represent and present RPL. I just held a seminar, where I used an article from the Portal. I was quite sure they hadn't visited the Portal.* We laugh, Inez, Liza, and I, because we know it's true, even though not wanting it to be. Liza moves on; *I made the educators read the article to point to the RPL ground principles present in the article. When they were finished, I presented them to the Portal and the article. In the Portal, they found that the work they had just done was already present in the Portal article. Then we spend time reflecting on their initial answers related to the article answers – and then relating once again to the ground principles.* I enjoy Liza's story. I don't know if she did this because I have been interfering and pointing to the importance of integrating the Portal with RPL, or if she would have done this either way. I am just thrilled Liza intertwines the Portal and RPL, hoping I made a small difference. That is the beauty of organizational learning – not being able to point out where it starts and ends – it is formed in the present inquiry, influenced by past experiences while pointing towards a vision for the future.

Discussion

Doing action research of digitalizing organizational learning with ethnographic sensitivities towards competing values is a promising area of research. Using visualizations as symbolic artifacts to understand micro and macro organizational learning issues informed my actions for this study's two key contributions to research.

Ethnographic sensitivity to question questionnaires and establish symbolic artifacts

Sometimes researchers, unreflectively use questionnaires to establish validity and reliability because they claim that measurements can provide consistent, relevant, and accurate information (Scherbaum & Meade, 2009). Even Cameron and Quinn (2006), who developed the Competing Values Framework and OCAI, claim validity and reliability when using OCAI to measure important aspects of organizational culture. They base this claim on using OCAI for more than 20 years to accommodate and incorporate critique as part of their book. I would say I tend to agree with Cameron and Quinn that they have demonstrated the usefulness of OCAI. Nonetheless, in this study, an adjustment was necessary to study competing values in digitalizing organizational learning. As a result, I moved beyond a standardized questionnaire to uncover how OCAI's questions could be changed (Appendix A) and interpreted using careful ethnographic sensitivity to understand the organizational context at the HLI and their Digital Portal to Reflective Practice-based Learning. With this, I

claim that adjusting OCAI, with reference to (Einola & Alvesson, 2021) in questioning questionnaires, helped move past a well-defined measurement instrument and unravel the competing values attributed in the HLI's Digital Portal. Following OCAI's score system and plotting in a coordinate system helped establish symbolic artifacts (Schembri & Boyle, 2013) as an object for interpreting the Digital Portal. The Digital Portal was visualized, not as an interface on an intranet, but through these symbolic artifacts showing its competing values, which helped create new insights and interpretations. Action and knowledge co-construct over time (Argote, 2011; Elkjaer & Simpson, 2011), as shown when symbolic artifacts form through ethnographic sensitivity and construct a visualization of competing values attributed to technology. This symbolic artifact forms what Elkjaer and Simpson call a real-time experience when socialization intertwines with creative practice (2011).

New technologies are likely to change organizational learning (Argote et al., 2021) and tools, like the investigated Portal, facilitate the exploitation of existing knowledge (Hayes, 2011; Kane & Alavi, 2007). Like the original strategic intention at HLI, the Digital Portal allows educators to find generically useful RPL articles. However, Csaszar suggests that reducing hierarchy can promote exploration (2013). This study put hierarchy values on the agenda by using OCAI's symbolic artifact, not necessarily to reduce hierarchy but to explore the digitalization of organizational learning. The visualizations made the individual and collective wish for moving away from stable hierarchy values towards the more free adhocracy values more tangible. A symbolic artifact, in this way, established a way to deliberate on how to facilitate the digitalization of organizational learning.

Digitalizing for individual and organizational learning

Higher learning organizations, external government bodies, or internal executive boards may promote high-level and sometimes far-reaching digitalization strategies that can be difficult for the employees to grasp and put into practice (Munro, 2018). Launching the Digital Portal was a part of HLI's executive board strategic goal to digitalize their reflective practice-based learning philosophy, leaving the digitalization part in a development team with very different value perspectives of what the Portal is and should be in 5 years. Gaining a deeper understanding of individual values may provide a better understanding of values placed on objects (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998); here, the Digital Portal. However, *the failure rate of planned organizational change initiatives is dramatic* (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 1). This study shows that adjusting and using OCAI to unfold the participants' individual competing values, and assemble a collective perspective to concretize a vision for the Digital Portal, supported the team to grasp HLI's strategic goal of digitalizing reflective practice-based learning.

Organizational learning research addresses individual and collective learning processes related to the organizational context (Basten & Haamann, 2018; Wang & Ahmed, 2003). In this research, there is a risk of creating a ‘micro-macro’ dualism between individual (micro) and collective (macro) levels of learning instead of transactional organizational learning (Lorino, 2020). This study shows a novel approach to embracing individual and collective learning perspectives in digitalizing organizational learning by transacting individual and collective competing values. It takes several iterations with ethnographic sensitivity before the action researcher and participants in joint deliberation or, according to Lorino, use text, the written part analysis, to situate interaction between organizational agents (2020) to create an awareness of the need to move away from the individual perspective. Even in the first workshop during collaborative dialogs, as advocated in (Ripamonti et al., 2016), we tend to focus on the visualizations of each individual. Therefore, the action researcher in the second workshop only uses the visualizations of their average scores. Thus, ethnographic sensitivity in the action research allowed transaction (Elkjaer & Simpson, 2011; Lorino, 2020) to embrace the individual and collective levels in organizational learning.

Concluding remark

This paper's action research ethnography shows how the digitalization of organizational learning inherently has competing values that can be investigated by adjusting Cameron and Quinn's (2006) assessment instrument to an organization and digital technology. Organizational ethnographers may find inspiration in this approach to increase our knowledge about the digital transformation of organizational learning cultures. At the same time, action researchers may adapt the approach to create practical knowledge and facilitate organizational learning about the demands and opportunities of digitalization.

Data availability statement

The datasets generated and analyzed during the current study are not publicly available due to an agreement between the participants and the author. My participants requested pseudonymity for me to conduct research in their organizational context and only focus on them - a small and easily recognizable team. However, diary notes, excel sheets with collected scores, and workshop power points presentations are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request. Several participants read the article, and their feedback has been integrated into the article on their request. This procedure ensures respondent validity when they recognize themselves in the analysis and have several iterations regarding empirical gatherings.

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Appendix A: OCAI from (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 26-28) and adjusted for the Digital Portal

1. Dominant Characteristics The organization is a very	1. Characteristics of the Digital Portal The Digital Portal is characterized as being
A) personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of themselves.	A) an inclusive and social network.
B) dynamic and entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks.	B) inspiring and dynamic.
C) results-oriented. A major concern is with getting the job done. People are very competitive and achievement-oriented.	C) useful in practice and better than other alternatives.
D) controlled and structured place. Formal procedures generally govern what people do.	D) structured, trustworthy, and guiding.
2. Organizational Leadership The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify	2. Vision for the Digital Portal The vision for the Digital Portal is to support
A) mentoring, facilitating, or nurturing.	A) staff well-being and development.
B) entrepreneurship, innovation, or risk-taking.	B) creativity and innovation.
C) a no-nonsense, aggressive, results-oriented focus.	C) specific improvements in practice.
D) coordinating, organizing, or smooth-running efficiency.	D) simplification and predictability.
3. Management of Employees The management style in the organization is characterized by	3. Managing the use of the Digital Portal The Digital Portal should be used for
A) teamwork, consensus, and participation.	A) cooperation and community development.
B) individual risk-taking, innovation, freedom, and uniqueness.	B) inspiration and new initiatives.
C) hard-driving competitiveness, high demands, and achievement.	C) the benefit of professional practice.
D) security of employment, conformity, predictability, and stability in relationships.	D) clarifying work tasks.
4. Organization Glue The glue that holds the organization together is	4. Basic structure of the Digital Portal The structure of the Digital Portal reflects
A) loyalty and mutual trust. Commitment to this organization runs high.	A) trust and shared responsibility.
B) commitment to innovation and development. There is an emphasis on being on the cutting edge.	B) inventiveness and creativity.
C) the emphasis on achievement and goal accomplishment.	C) a practical orientation and professionalism.
D) formal rules and policies. Maintaining a smooth-running organization is important.	D) usefulness and effectiveness.
5. Strategic Emphases The organization emphasizes	5. Strategy for the Digital Portal The Digital Portal emphasizes
A) human development. High trust, openness, and participation persist.	A) continues employee involvement and mutual trust.
B) acquiring new resources and creating new challenges. Trying new things and prospecting for opportunities are valued.	B) acquiring new competencies and risk-taking.
C) competitive actions and achievement. Hitting stretch targets and winning in the marketplace are dominant.	C) process improvements addressing expectations from practice.
D) permanence and stability. Efficiency, control, and smooth operations are important.	D) accountability and operational stability.
6. Criteria of Success The organization defines success on the basis of	6. Success criteria for the Digital Portal The Digital Portal is successful on the basis of
A) the development of human resources, teamwork, employee commitment, and concern for people.	A) cooperation, knowledge sharing, and solidarity.
B) having the most unique or newest products. It is a product leader and innovator.	B) creativity, novelty, and inspiration.
C) winning in the marketplace and outpacing the competition. Competitive market leadership is key.	C) improvement and being outstanding in practice.
D) efficiency. Dependable delivery, smooth scheduling, and low-cost production are critical.	D) efficiency, usefulness, and reliability.