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Enhancing Cultural Awareness Policy and Pedagogy at a Bilingual Nursery School

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Abstract

Globalization and migration have impacted the cultural demographics at educational settings worldwide. Families with young children relocating to new countries experience distress and a sense of cultural loss, in terms of language, beliefs, and values. Grounded in the social constructivist worldview, this organizational improvement plan proposes how to support cross-cultural kids and their families during the periods of transition and adaptation, at an international nursery school located in the Middle East. Influenced by the cross-cultural adaptation theory and a multidimensional ethical framework, the problem of practice addresses the need to develop a relevant policy and to enhance culturally responsive practices. The appreciative inquiry approach and the change path model are the chosen models to guide the change. A hybrid solution to the problem focuses on improving the organization from a macro- and meso- standpoint. Aligned with the relational and culturally responsive leadership approaches, the involvement of parents, teachers, and other stakeholders in the policy creation is recommended (macro-level). Additionally, by engaging in collaborative inquiry sessions, teachers can improve their responsive practices to cater to the needs of the children (meso-level). The Plan-Do-Study-Act framework for monitoring and evaluation, along with a three-stage communication plan are discussed to support the organization in minimizing the gap between the current and future desired state at the nursery school.

Key words: appreciative inquiry, family migration, cross-culture kids, relational leadership, culturally responsive leadership, policy development, collaborative inquiry, globalization.

Executive Summary

Olive Tree Nursery (OTN, a pseudonym) is a bilingual nursery school in the Middle East, established in 2008. It caters to babies and children between the ages of four months to four years old. Over the last few years, due to globalization and family migration, OTN has seen a drastic cultural shift in enrollment. As a private, international nursery school, OTN's current cultural demographics are very diverse, with 95% of the children being considered cross-cultured and only 5% are host nationals. Cross cultured kids (CCK) and their families struggle during the transition and adaptation period, and there are visible opportunities for OTN to better support these families. As OTN's nursery director, the problem of practice (PoP) that has been identified is the need to address the gap in cultural awareness policies and to enhance the culturally relevant practices, to cater to the cultural needs of the CCK and their families. This organizational improvement plan (OIP) consists of three chapters, that uses theory and practical evidence, to address the problem and to propose a change implementation plan to create promising change for the CCK and their families.

Positioned in the interpretivist paradigm, Chapter 1 introduces the cross-cultural adaptation (CCA) theory (Kim, 2001) and aligns it with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model (1979) and Vygotsky's social cultural theory (1978), which is used as OTN's theoretical framework to guide the development of this OIP. Embedded in the interpretivist paradigm, my leadership positionality is situated in the social constructivist worldview (Creswell, 2014) as it emphasizes collaborative practices and acknowledges the social cultures of others during interactions. Moreover, this chapter explores how the OTN's context is shaped by internal and external political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal factors, that ultimately frame the PoP. A gap analysis, using Nadler and Tushman's congruence model (1989), is conducted to identify the gaps between the current reality and the future desired state at OTN. Based on the key literature and the gap

analysis three guiding questions underlying the PoP are raised: (1) how are culturally relevant practices and cultural awareness defined, and what do they look like in practice? (2) how can power and privilege be mitigated during the change implementation? (3) why does OTN's current policies not consider the adaptation periods of CCK and their families? Accordingly, the change vision of enhancing the cultural policy and enriching the support provided to CCK and their families was established. The chapter concludes by assessing the readiness for change from a multi-leveled perspective (Vakola, 2013) using Deszca et al.'s (2019) organizational readiness for change questionnaire, which indicates that OTN staff are somewhat open to change, scoring +28 (out of a scale that ranges from -25 to +50).

Chapter 2 revolves around the planning and development of the changes required to minimize the gap identified by the congruence model (Nadler & Tushman, 1989). Building on the congruence model from Chapter 1, this chapter considers the six possible interrelated congruence pairings between people, work, formal organizations, and informal organizations. It also delves into the relational (Cunliffe & Erikson, 2011) and culturally responsive leadership (Khalifa et al., 2016) approaches that are used to further propel the change. OTN's culture is outlined using Hofstede's cultural dimensions model (1983), which indicates that OTN is a collectivist, feminine culture, that tends to avoid uncertainty. Consistent with OTN's culture, the leadership's positionality, and the CCA theory (Kim, 2001), the chosen models to implement change are described by aligning the five stages of the appreciative inquiry (AI) approach (Cooperrider et al., 2008) with the five stages of the change path model (Deszca et al., 2019). Moreover, three possible solutions to tackle the PoP are suggested, including the development of a cultural awareness policy, providing the staff with professional development opportunities to enhance their culturally responsive pedagogy, and appointing a parent relations officer to support CCK and their families. After assessing the resources required for each of the solutions, a hybrid solution, combining the policy and

professional development, was chosen as the optimal approach to address the PoP. The chapter concludes by discussing ethics, equity, and social justice within the context of the PoP. Starratt's (2012) multidimensional ethical framework, consisting of the ethics of care, of justice, and of critique, is outlined to ensure that the proposed change considers and involves all stakeholders' voices, needs, and interests.

Using the combined hybrid solution from the previous chapter, Chapter 3 discusses the relationship between policy development and professional development through collaborative inquiry from a macro- and micro- change management perspective (Kang, 2015). Next, the change implementation plan is outlined by describing the foci for each of the AI framework's five stages (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Lewis et al., 2016). Several challenges and limitations, such as teacher turnover, competing priorities, COVID-19 restrictions, and whether the policy development committee can be a true representation of OTN's community, are addressed. A monitoring and evaluation framework, using the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017), along with Markiewicz & Patrick's (2016) evaluation questions, and Starvos et al. (2003) Strengths-Opportunities-Aspirations-Results (SOAR) model, is outlined. The last portion of the chapter presents a communications plan to build awareness for change, communicate the path for change, and to celebrate milestones, using Deszca et al.'s (2019) communication strategy.

The OIP concludes by considering the future direction of the work presented. Three possible next steps are proposed. First, to extend the change implementation to OTN's sister nursery schools, as the cultural diversity exists in all of these educational settings. Second, to continue working closely with the policy development committee, and to involve them in future policy reviews and enhancements. Lastly, to sustain and build upon the collaborative inquiry and AI skills amongst the OTN staff for future potential change plans.

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Acronyms

AI   Appreciative Inquiry (approach)

CCA   Cross-Cultural Adaptation

CCK   Cross Culture Kid

CP   Change Path (model)

IELS   International Early Learning Study

MOE   Ministry of Education

OECD   Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OGSM   Objectives, Goals, Strategies, and Measures

OIP   Organizational Improvement Plan

ORCQ   Organization's Readiness for Change Questionnaire

OTN   Olive Tree Nursery (a pseudonym)

PDSA   Plan-Do-Study-Act

PESTEL   Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal

PLC   Professional Learning Community

PoP   Problem of Practice

PRE   Parent Relations Executive

QR   Quick Response

SMART   Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-based

SOAR   Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results

SWOT   Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

TCK   Third Culture Kid

ZPD   Zone of Proximal Development

Definitions

Agency: The authority, power, and capacity of an individual in making decisions and guiding change.

Appreciative inquiry (AI): an approach to guide organizational change, using the 5-D cycle of definition, discovery, dream, design, and destiny. This approach considers change from a positive, collaborative standpoint (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Lewis et al., 2016).

Collaborative inquiry: a form of professional development, where members of the learning community meet frequently to reflect on their educational practices. The stages of collaborative inquiry include setting professional learning goals, planning, enacting learning strategies, monitoring, and adjusting practices (Butler & Schnellert, 2012).

Cross cultural kid (CCK): "a person who is living/has lived in – or meaningfully interacted with – two or more cultural environments for a significant period of time during the first eighteen years of life" (Pollock et al., 2017, p. 43). This terminology includes children who are from mixed-cultural backgrounds, are adopted, are considered cultural minorities, or speak multiple languages at home.

Culturally responsive (leadership or pedagogy): educational leadership and pedagogy that take into account the children's cultural background, beliefs, values, and other contexts when providing care and support. These cultural factors additionally inform the content of the curriculum.

Holistic development: supporting and catering to all of the child's unique needs. This includes the emotional, cultural, social, intellectual, physical, and cognitive development.

Meaning-making: aligned within the social constructivist paradigm, meaning-making is the process where individuals understand the world around them through social interactions, collaborations, and negotiations (Vygotsky, 1989).

Parent company: the company that owns Olive Tree Nursery, along with other nursery schools. The term parent company was chosen, rather than mother company, to ensure that inclusivity is portrayed in all aspects of this OIP. The term sister nurseries is used in this OIP as it defined as "when more than one [nursery school] is under the management of a single company (a Parent company); they will be called as sister [nurseries]" (Corporate Cases, 2014203789).

Power: The potential to influence others in accepting one's goals, ideas, and/or plans (Deszca eta l., 2019).

Relational leadership: a leadership approach that values the interactions and relationships with others. Such leaders participate in relational dialogues with others to understand their perspectives, and uses these reflections when making decisions (Cunliffe & Erikson, 2011).

Voice: the capacity to which an individual's perspectives and ideas are used when making decisions.

Well-being: the positive state of an individual. Well-being incorporates the individual's emotional, mental, physical, and social contexts.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem

The UN International Migration Report (2020) states that approximately 281 million people currently reside in cities outside their home country or place of birth. This growth in migration has resulted in continuous shifts in demographics at many educational centers worldwide. Although the expatriate community enroll their children in educational settings that use an international curricula, or a multilingual approach (Cambridge & Thompson, 2004), there appears to be a deficiency in cultural awareness amongst teachers, and some centers are unable to support students in maintaining a balance between their home and the host country's cultures (Bates, 2013). The organizational improvement plan (OIP) aims to highlight the concerns surrounding the lack of cultural awareness at an international, bilingual nursery located in the Middle East using a sociocultural lens, and suggests a plan of action that will minimize the gap between current practices and the envisioned future state.

This chapter introduces the organizational context, including information surrounding the organizational structure and leadership frameworks that will be embedded throughout the OIP. Next, it illustrates the leadership positionality, agency and lens that are used when addressing the problem of practice and change plan. Then, the problem of practice is described and framed using broader contextual factors. The leadership vision for change is later outlined, highlighting the gap between the current and desired future state. Finally, the organizational change readiness is assessed using a multilevel approach.

Organizational Context

The OIP focuses on a private, for-profit international nursery school that is located in a metropolitan city in the Middle East, that is owned by a company that has multiple nurseries across Asia and Europe. The nursery was established in 2013 and has predominantly served the expatriate community who have relocated to the city for work

opportunities. In recent years, there has been an increase in relocated families who are escaping crisis, corruption, or disasters in their home countries.

Organization's Cultural, Social, Political and Economic Contexts

Olive Tree Nursery (OTN, a pseudonym) is a bilingual nursery, that is licensed by the local Ministry of Education (MOE). Its curriculum and approach are influenced by western educational values. Following an American state curriculum, OTN offers either an English or a French emergent program. Inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach, OTN has embraced a variety of Reggio philosophies, including the image of a competent child, the role of the adult in co-constructing knowledge and the importance of acknowledging the environment as a third teacher (Rinaldi, 2006). Although the Reggio approach cannot be executed fully in institutions outside of the city of Reggio Emilia, Italy (Baker, 2015), the philosophies adopted heavily influence OTN's vision, mission, and core values.

OTN's vision is to nurture and educate the child holistically. By following a holistic approach, children are provided with collaborative experiences to discover and enhance their talents and abilities across various areas, including social, emotional, cultural, language, cognitive, and physical development. OTN's core values include empowerment, understanding, and knowledge sharing. OTN's mission is to support children in becoming lifelong learners by developing self-assurance and independence.

The cultural diversity at OTN has grown significantly over the years. When it was first established, it predominantly catered to children who spoke French as a first language at home. Since then, many families that do not speak French and/or English have chosen to enroll their children at OTN to ensure that they acquire an additional language from an early age. This has changed the social culture drastically at the nursery school. This academic year, OTN has enrolled over 150 children, ranging from four months to four years old. The children come from approximately 20 different countries, with the biggest percentages

coming from Lebanon (35%) and France (30%). Less than 1% of the children are considered host nationals (OTN, 2021). Pollock et al. (2017) posits the notion of third culture kids (TCK) which was initially introduced by Useem and Downie (1976), by coining the term cross-cultural kids (CCK). CCK encompasses children from multicultural families, those who are adopted, have mixed heritages, as well as those who have migrated outside their home country. According to this definition, at present, almost 98% of the children at OTN can be classified as CCK.

When considering tuition fees, OTN is slightly more expensive than other nursery schools found in the area. The reason for this is because of the successful emergent language program that is recognized and recommended by many neighboring primary schools. Most families pay for their children's education without receiving any financial aid, and a small percentage of parents work at multinational companies that cover the cost of the tuition fees. Due to the everchanging nature of the parents' work, there are families that join and leave OTN during the academic year, which additionally impacts the demographics of the nursery. About 90% of the children come from families with both parents working, and 75% of the families have hired nannies and/or drivers to further support them with their children. This is mainly because migrating families lost the childcare support that they had received from their extended family members, such as grandparents, uncles or aunts, when they moved to the new city.

There are some political factors influencing the nursery. On a macro level, the MOE provides guidelines to which the nursery school has to adhere to. Since the onset of COVID-19 and the reopening of nursery schools in October 2020, inspections by the MOE, local municipality, and health authority have taken place on a regular basis. Occasionally, these inspections interrupt the daily operations of the nursery and the learning happening in the classrooms. Prior to COVID-19, the inspections by the authorities were conducted annually.

Furthermore, a compliance director has been appointed by the parent company to create policies for all nurseries in the region, which are then cascaded down to the nurseries. Some of these policies are insufficient as they do not consider the unique characteristics of the individual nursery schools, and therefore, additional policies are created on a nursery level to address any gaps.

Overall, there are a variety of cultural, social, economic, and political factors that play a significant role in the daily operations at OTN. These factors additionally have an impact on the wellbeing of the CCK and their families, which will be further discussed within this chapter. The next section considers how the organizational structure and leadership at OTN influence the organization, especially when decision-making.

Organizational Structure and Leadership

For the 2021-2022 academic year, there are 35 faculty members, including a nursery director, language coordinators, teachers, teaching assistants and administrative staff. Similar to the cultural diversity of the families at OTN, the academic team is very diverse, with ten staff members coming from French-speaking countries (e.g., France, Lebanon, Tunisia) and the remaining are from countries that speak English either as a first or second language (e.g., Canada, Italy, Philippines). Since there are multiple OTN branches in the region, an area director has been appointed to ensure that the quality of services is maintained across the nursery schools. The area director occasionally acts as a buffer between the parent company and the OTN branches. The overall relationship between OTN and the parent company is a relatively good one. OTN's leadership team can access resources from the parent company, including a graphic and web designer who supports in creating informative materials for OTN families and staff, and a compliance director who provides guidance on updated policies and recommendations from the MOE and other authorities. Figure 1 presents the

organizational structure and the leadership hierarchies within one particular OTN branch in relation to the parent company.

Figure 1

OTN Organizational Chart
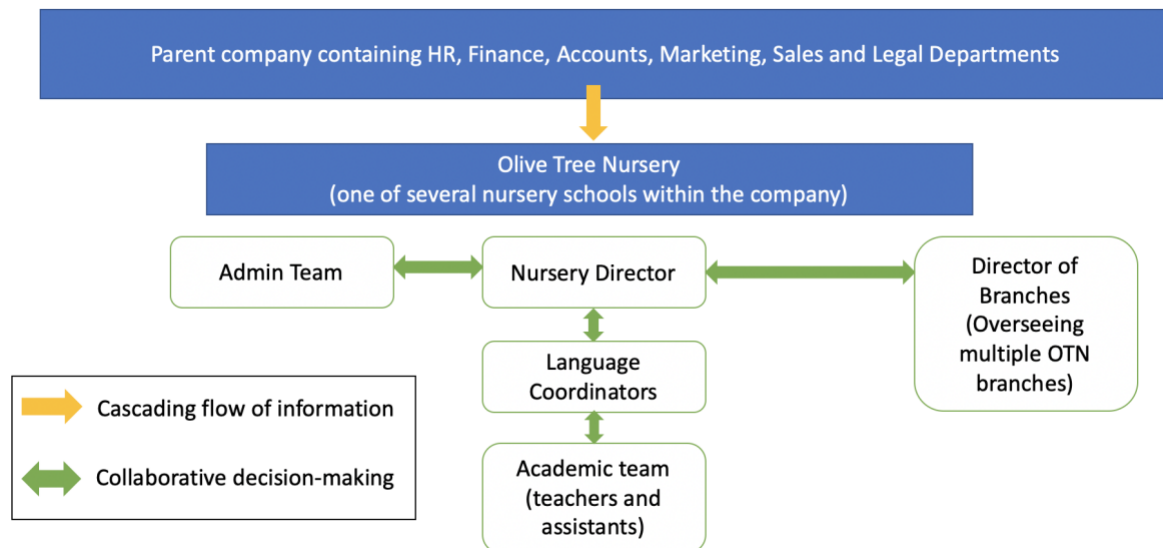
Note. Organizational chart showing the hierarchical structure and the top-down approach from the parent company. Collaborative decision-making takes place within the nursery community.

The parent company has several departments, such as finance, compliance, marketing, and human resources, that work together to create strategic decisions, including policies and budgets, that are cascaded down to the nursery. The parent company has a direct impact on OTN's budget allocations and target settings. The parent company tends to use a top-down approach when disseminating information. OTN, on the other hand, values collaborative practices amongst the team, especially with regards to sharing knowledge (Aubrey et al., 2012). This is done through formal regular meetings with the academic team and an informal WhatsApp group were ideas and suggestions are collated and discussed. The nursery team use a more constructive approach in their daily operations and appreciate the meaning-making opportunities that arise when working collaboratively.

Organizational and Leadership Framework

Reflecting on the dynamic cultural demographics present at the nursery school, and the high percentage of CCK enrolled, the cross-cultural adaptation (CCA) theory (Kim, 2001) is used to explore the gap in cultural awareness policy at OTN. Additionally, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems model are used to further enhance the CCA theory. Their frameworks align with the collaborative and constructive approach valued at OTN, the interpretivist epistemology, and the cyclical meaning-making practices (Mack, 2010). Figure 2 provides an illustration of how the CCA theory is related to and influenced by the works of Vygotsky and Bronfenbrenner.

Figure 2

Cross Cultural Adaptation Framework
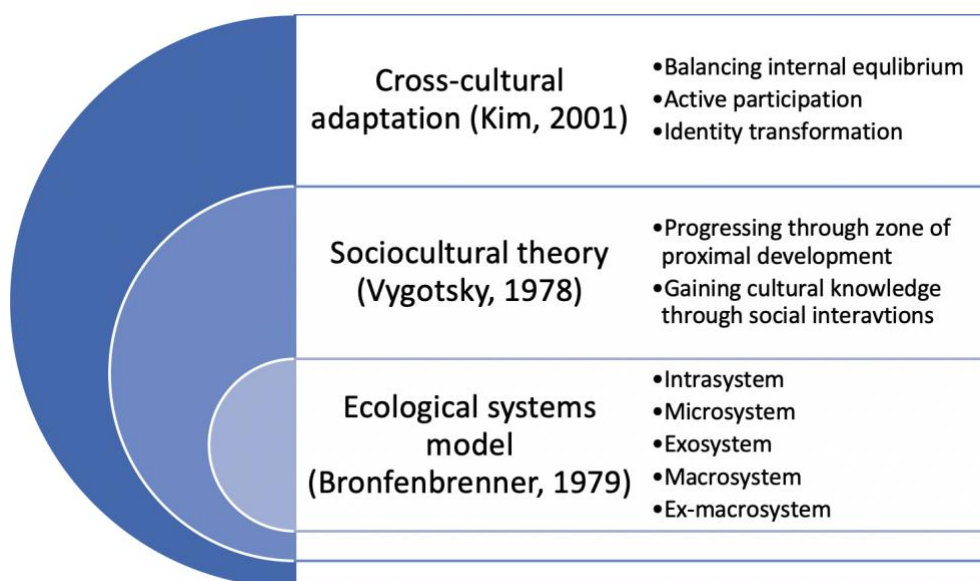
Note. An enhanced framework illustrating Kim's (2001) overarching cross-cultural adaptation theory and the way it relates to the work of Vygotsky (1978) and Bronfenbrenner (1979).

Aligned with Vygotsky's and Bronfenbrenner's work, Kim (2001) breaks down the CCA theory by describing how individuals adapt to novel host cultures through three distinct methods which when put together supports the individual in achieving a more balanced

internal equilibrium. First, when an individual moves to a new and unfamiliar host country, their ethnic and personal dispositions support (or hinder) them in maintaining their internal equilibrium as they begin the process of adaptation. This process parallels Bronfenbrenner's *intrasystem* (Christensen, 2010) and *microsystem* (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model explains how the systems surrounding the children can directly or indirectly impact their development. In addition to the five interrelated systems that Bronfenbrenner (1979) has outlined, Christensen (2010) presents two further systems that influence the child's development that have not been included in Bronfenbrenner's original model. These systems are the individual's *intrasystem* that consider their resiliency towards change, such as migrating to a new country, and the *ex-macrosystem* that represents globalization and the ways in which it influences other systems within the model, which ultimately impacts the individual.

Next, the CCA theory indicates that active participation and communication by the individual with the host community is essential for appreciating the customs and practices of the local culture. This process aligns with the notion of external adaptation and internal integration that are recognized by Schein (2017). Correspondingly, the sociocultural theory explains how children learn in collaborative settings. Vygotsky viewed educational environments as spaces where children enrich their cultural understanding, as they interact with others (Moll, 2011). Therefore, when considering Vygotsky's idea of the zones of proximal development (ZPD) and given the rich demographics at the nursery, the children can improve their cultural knowledge, as well as other areas of their development, when interacting with others who are more knowledgeable.

Lastly, the CCA theory explains that individuals unconsciously undergo an incremental identity transformation as they begin to develop their intercultural understanding. Kim (2001) argues that a person's prior identity is not substituted but is adjusted to integrate

new aspects from the host culture. This leads to acceptance, tolerance and openness to change. This idea of identity transformation resembles Pollock et al. (2017) notion that CCK construct *hybrid* identities influenced by the different cultures they encounter.

In summary, the processes for adaptation – balancing internal equilibrium, active participation, and identity transformation – that are outlined by the CCA theory are used as a foundation in the development of this OIP. With this cross-cultural adaptation framework in mind, the next section situates the leader within the organization, by addressing the leadership's positionality, lens, and agency.

Leadership Position and Lens

Within the scope of inquiry, a researcher's ontology and epistemology reveal the methodology that they should adopt (Scott, 2012). Comparably, a scholar-practitioner's worldview directs their beliefs and assumptions, which in turn inspires their decisions and actions (Creswell, 2014). To understand one's positionality, it is recommended to consider the various paradigms and assumptions that guide the way in which one views social reality and knowledge, or their worldview (Mack, 2010). Reflecting on the different paradigms that may be used to create change at OTN, the social constructivist lens is the one that aligns best with my worldviews. This is especially due to the collaborative nature where groups of individuals co-create meaning as they interact with the world that surrounds them (Crotty, 1998), such as moving to a new country. Social constructivism considers the individuals' social and historical backgrounds, and thus their languages, identities and culture are recognized and respected. Furthermore, it acknowledges the subjective experiences, interpretations and perceptions that individuals have (Ernest, 1994), and requires the research-practitioner to consider the situation by directly interacting with others (Mack, 2010), allowing for a more empathetic approach when addressing the problem and developing the change plan.

As a leader at the nursery, I have adopted a social constructivist lens in my everyday practice. To better support the families, I encourage them to share their thoughts about their recent moves, and I work collaboratively with them when finding solutions to problems that their children are facing. This approach allows for stronger bonds between the families and the nursery, which could support the trust-building process that parents undergo, especially since their affective needs are being addressed (Adams et al., 2009).

My intentions for creating change at OTN were twofold. First, there is a clear gap in the teachers' cultural awareness pedagogy and knowledge, and a lack in cultural enhancement policies at the organization that needs to be addressed. Secondly, in addition to the CCK currently present at OTN, I also consider myself as a CCK (or cross-cultural adult) since I belong to a bilingual, bicultural family, that has lived in three host countries outside my home country for over 30 years. Therefore, I strongly empathize with the nursery families who are raising their young children in unfamiliar cities, of whom some do not speak a common language with the nursery. Hence, as the nursery director, I have the obligation to create a welcoming, nurturing, and collaborative environment for the children and families, while supporting the teaching team in enhancing their cultural awareness (Ladson-Billings, 2014). As the nursery director, the majority of the decisions within the nursery, especially those that do not need any additional financial approvals, can be made without any intervention from the parent company. Therefore, creating and implementing a change plan to address the visible gap is in the realm of my responsibility as a leader.

Despite the collaborative nature of the nursery, the question regarding who the dominant decision makers are, and how do their voices impact the various stakeholder groups need to be reflected on (Barrera-Osorio et al., 2009). In fact, it can be argued that personal biases and prior assumptions may impact their decision-making (Donnelly & Linn, 2019). The teaching team can contribute and provide an input to this discussion. Yet, OTN's

leadership team, which consists of the area director and the nursery director, is usually the final decision-makers. The privilege of being able to consciously plan the change is not an assurance that my biases will not interfere in the process. I acknowledge that all children are different and that their support needs to be individualized to cater to their personalized requirements. Nevertheless, I worry that miscommunication with parents, due to language barriers, may cause challenges when making decisions. Therefore, repeating certain phrases in various ways, asking for clarifications, or using a translator can support this process.

Moreover, my position provides agency and gives me access to the leadership team of other nurseries that belong to the parent company. Through monthly collaborative meetings, the leadership team share ideas and suggest ways in which practices can be enhanced. The leadership team are aware of my concerns regarding the gap in cultural awareness practices currently used when supporting CCK and their families. Following a learning conversation protocol (Katz et al., 2018) that I had completed with some of my colleagues from the doctorate program, I began to appreciate the acts of learning and thinking, rather than jumping into the act of doing. This process gave me a chance to feel uncomfortable with parts of the discussion and allowed me to admit to myself (and others) that there are areas that are still under development. As I strengthen my growth mindset, I am now "tolerating [the] discomfort in the process" (Katz et al., 2018, p. 133), and I have initiated some learning conversations following the seven steps protocol with other leaders from sister nurseries to support myself in the planning process and to mitigate any cultural or personal biases that may arise. My engagement in critical reflexivity has allowed me to understand the processes of intentional learning, active listening, and purposeful speaking (Katz et al., 2018; Andreotti & de Souza, 2008). These strategies support my position as a leader, particularly when creating meaningful co-constructive changes at OTN.

Leadership Lens

Aligned with a social constructivist paradigm and the cultural philosophy of organizational change (Smith & Graetz, 2011), where the change at OTN is agreed upon by the collective values, beliefs, and ideas of the community, I approach leadership from a relational lens. The role of the leader, in the relational leadership approach, is co-created and often re-created with others to complement the goals of the organization (Clarke, 2018). Moreover, the idea of leadership is socially constructed, and therefore the formal, or traditional hierarchy that exists within a setting can be disputed to incorporate other actors, such as teachers, children, and their families.

In fact, the relational leadership approach ignores the typical binary classifications of the in-group versus out-group, and instead acknowledges that the relationship quality between leaders and followers lie on a continuum, so that a follower can advance through the continuum, moving from the stages of stranger to acquaintance to partner. Relational leadership can be viewed as a process where dialogue systems and practices are co-constructed (Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011; Giles, 2018). According to Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, relationships between the family and the nursery can directly impact the child. Additionally, reflecting on the CCA theory, it is favorable that individuals actively participate and contribute to the community, as it supports them in establishing a sense of belonging (Kim, 2001). Thus, as outlined by the relational leadership approach, any stakeholder at the nursery, including teachers and parents, could successfully transition through the continuum to becoming partners, when loyalty, liking and respect (Liden & Maslyn, 1998) are mutually established. This in turn will have added benefits to the children's experience at the nursery school.

Role in Change Process

In accordance to the relational leadership approach, my role within the organizational change process at OTN is twofold. I am the change initiator and the change facilitator (Deszca et al., 2019). As the change initiator, I have identified the gaps by observing the current practices and pedagogy used inside and outside of the classroom by the teaching and administrative staff, and by listening to the parent feedback. Therefore, as an initiator, in addition to these observations, I will gather the common values that are highlighted and the suggested ideas that are developed through the process of sense-making (Jappinen, 2017) to voice a shared vision (Siraj & Hallet, 2014) that can be used as the primary driver of change. Next, as the change facilitator, by acknowledging that change can be viewed in a negative way by some of the change recipients (Bailey & Raelin, 2015), I will guide and scaffold the stakeholders in all stages of the change process. As intended by the relational leadership approach, when the relationships between myself and others enhance, and trust is gained amongst the change recipients, the partnership that is built can be used to resolve problems and provide guidance.

My social-constructivist worldview and relational leadership approach recognizes the subjective experiences of the CCK and their families at OTN. Through this lens, I will use my influence as a leader to co-create change, by empowering the voices of those unheard, when addressing the problem of practice that is outlined in the next section.

Leadership Problem of Practice

Due to globalization, many families with young children move to unfamiliar countries, away from their homeland (Aderson-Levitt, 2003). Appadurai (1994) explains the flow of culture worldwide using five distinctive dimensions. The dimension that aligns with the current problem at OTN is ethnoscapes, or the relocation of people. For this academic year, there are approximately 25% of families who have relocated to the city and joined

OTN. This percentage has increased over the last couple of years due to disasters and crises in other Middle Eastern countries. Despite the richness in culture within the nursery's community, there is currently very minimal guidance provided to the children and families who are in the process of cultural adaptation. In fact, teachers often struggle when supporting CCK as they are unable to find a balance between the home and host cultures and identities (Bates, 2013), and are therefore inadequately supporting the multiple cultures, or favoring one culture over the others in their practices. Therefore, the aim of the OIP is to create sustainable change in the current practices at OTN.

An ongoing challenge at early childhood settings in the Middle East has been the increasing number of family migration, resulting in more CCK joining bilingual, or international nursery schools in new cities. Children and their families struggle with the transition and period of adaptation, especially when trying to align themselves within a new community. An in-depth study, exploring the demographics of children at nurseries in a Middle Eastern city found that almost 95% of the registered children were considered expatriates (Bennet, 2009). These findings are consistent with data from a bilingual nursery that indicates that annually an average of 98% of the children being enrolled are expatriates, with less that 2% of the children are host-nationals. Although the cultural demographics of the nursery is ever-changing, the organization's policies and practices surrounding culturally relevant pedagogy remains minimal (Ladson-Billings, 2014) and constrained to particular cultural events that occur over a week every academic year. Nurseries are social sites that support families with their children's development (Nutbrown & Clough, 2014). Yet, teachers often struggle when supporting children in the process of transition and adaptation. This can be attributed to a lack of cultural awareness training offered to academic and administrative staff. Moreover, the current policies, from the local MOE also neglect to provide teachers and administrators the appropriate guidance to tackle this issue. The

leadership team and nursery staff are committed to a shared vision of children success through collaborative practices between all stakeholders; however, with the changing dynamics of expatriate families joining the nursery, they do not always have the appropriate training or resources to best support the CCK and their families during their period of adaptation. Therefore, the problem of practice (PoP) that will be addressed is the need to address the gap in the cultural awareness policy and program in a nursery school that has a large expatriate community.

Framing the Problem of Practice

The PoP was developed as a result of the current state of OTN. Although OTN was always a bilingual nursery, the majority of the children were from similar cultural backgrounds. However, since its inception eight years ago, the cultural demographics of the children and their families have enhanced on an annual basis, and the number of newly migrated families have increased. To a large majority of the children, OTN is the place where their families drop them off, so that they can move into their new homes and unbox their belongings without their children's interruptions. OTN is one of the first transitions that the children have to face and overcome. Yet, the academic staff are ill-prepared in supporting the children with their cultural adaptations, especially since no formal training have been provided to them (Bates, 2013). Children and their families who relocate are prone to stress due to cultural and environmental changes that they face (Casado et al., 2010). This is especially due to the potential exposure to changes such as language, values, and social support, in comparison to their home country (Eisenbruch, 1991). A PESTEL analysis is presented to delve further into the factors that are causing this problem.

PESTEL Analysis

To situate the PoP within broader contexts, a PESTEL analysis is used. The acronym PESTEL considers political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal

factors that impact the organization (Deszca et al., 2019). Using PESTEL, the external or macro influences, as well as the internal or micro impacts within the organization can be brought to light and assessed to ensure that all factors are considered when framing and addressing the PoP (Vitkienè, 2009).

Political Factors

On a macro-level, given that OTN is a private, for-profit nursery, the shareholders and owners influence major decisions that impact the policies and procedures at OTN. This is achieved through annual objectives, goals, strategies and measurements (OGSM) meetings and guidelines. Policies are provided using a top-down approach, after being created by the compliance director. Nevertheless, on a micro-level the leadership team at OTN can amend or create new policies to cater for the unique needs of the nursery.

The MOE that license educational settings are facing additional neoliberal pressures from global actors (Moss, 2017), particularly the OECD who release frequent publications regarding the early childhood education and care sectors globally, such as their Starting Strong series (OECD, 2017). As a result, the MOE has recently enhanced their standards when monitoring and assessing early childhood settings within the country. Although the intentions to place more accountability on the settings are created to monitor the quality in terms of student outcomes and achievements, some of their guidelines do not align with the philosophies of the nursery. For instance, the MOE focus heavily on academics to ensure that the children are ready for primary school, whereas the project-based, Reggio-inspired approach emphasizes the development of children's soft skills, such as communication, critical thinking, questioning, and perseverance (Rinaldi, 2006). Moreover, the OECD recently piloted their International Early Learning Study (IELS) that examines and compares the cognitive and social-emotional skills of 5-year-olds, resulting in more policy reforms within the early years sector to match the neoliberal agendas (Auld & Morris, 2019).

As for the changing demographics and increase in CCK at OTN, the devastating explosion that occurred in Beirut, Lebanon in August 2020, followed by an economic crisis caused a large number of Lebanese families to migrate to other cities in the Middle East (UNICEF, 2021) and enroll their children at international nurseries.

Environmental (and Legal) Factors

On a macro-level, the COVID-19 pandemic was one of the biggest environmental factors causing major changes within the educational sector. The OTN campus was closed for eight months, from March to October 2020, creating a shift from face-to-face to online classes. Furthermore, the MOE introduced reopening guidelines for nursery schools to revise and recreate policies, to ensure the implementation of precautionary pandemic measures (Formosinho, 2021). OTN experienced strict inspections from the MOE prior to reopening and continue to face frequent inspections from the local municipality to confirm that all measures being adhered to. On a micro-level, these recurrent inspections cause disruptions in the children's learning and adaptation, especially when inspectors insist on entering the classrooms to ensure that social distancing between children are taking place. Children learn through play and require the social interaction and collaboration with others in order to develop optimally (Rinaldi, 2006), and hence, requesting children to separate from each other is an unnatural process.

Economic Factors

As a private nursery, OTN does not receive any financial support from the government, therefore, it is essential that it sustains itself and generates annual profits. Due to this, there are additional pressures from the parent company to reach targets. On a micro-level, the role of the nursery director becomes flexible (Anderson & Herr, 2015), to ensure that the sales and marketing of the services provided by the nursery are properly conducted and that the allocated revenues and targets are achieved.

Furthermore, decisions regarding staff recruitment, purchasing resources and upgrading the facilities are raised by the nursery team, but must be approved by the parent company before any actions take place. This is a time-consuming process, that often compromises the services offered at the nursery. For instance, a new staff member can only be recruited once a certain number of children register at the nursery. However, as the enrollments steadily increase, the ideal candidate may no longer be available.

On a macro-level, considering the economic aspects impacting the families at OTN, the pandemic created tensions surrounding finances, as there were many parents who lost their jobs or received salary reductions when the country declared a lockdown. When the educational sector reopened, parents asked for discounts or reduced the number of days that their children attended the nursery, creating more tensions regarding revenues and targets.

Social (and Technological) Factors

As a consequence of the pandemic, social interactions became limited. According to the MOE guidelines, children who are grouped together can only interact with each other, and family members cannot enter the classrooms. Parents drop off their children to the teacher in an allocated space in the nursery garden. Such guidelines hindered the collaborative practices that took place at OTN and previously resulted in the temporary closure of the parents' lounge. Considering the CCA theory, it is necessary for individuals to socialize in order to gain cultural knowledge and build upon their identities (Kim, 2001). Yet, the pandemic has created very limited opportunities for social integration and active participation within the community. To mitigate some of these effects, OTN have integrated technological strategies to enhance the collaborations with families, through virtual meetings, daily communication applications, and weekly emails.

Social Justice Context

Social justice should not be embedded solely within the vision of the nursery, but also in the everyday practices and within the curriculum (Caper, 2018; Berman, 2011). This, ultimately, will enhance the culture of the classroom and will scaffold opportunities for culturally responsive pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 2014). Given the large percentage of CCK present at OTN, it is essential to focus on the wellbeing of the families and children by supporting them as they adapt within the new environment, while also protecting and respecting their home identities and cultures. Nevertheless, the families' demographics are constantly changing and there are several children that are multicultural, therefore, challenges may arise as staff try to find a balance to continue developing the children's multiple identities as they support them. Steinberg (2022) insists that through radical love and fundamental listening, educational leaders and teachers can create positive human relationships with children and their families, creating more socially just spaces for them within the nursery school. In essence, educators and leaders must introspect, evaluate their own biases, and assess ways in which they are contributing to injustices before truly creating socially just environments for others (Agarwal-Rangnath et al., 2022).

Moreover, providing stakeholders with empowerment and voice are the initial steps towards social justice (Berman, 2011). Berman (2011) argues that there are two crucial skills required to achieve social justice. The first is to listen to and understand the perspectives of others, and the second is to find common ground when addressing competing perspectives. Several considerations surrounding the notions of power and voice that need to be addressed in this OIP. Current literature on ethical leadership portray power dynamics between leaders and followers as being neutral, however, that is not always the case (Liu, 2017). Nevertheless, a significant benefit to the relational leadership approach is that it values the *relationships* that are fostered between the leader and other stakeholders. These relationships

are based on mutual trust and respect (Brower et al., 2000; Giles, 2018). Therefore, since it is defined as a relationship, it is acknowledged that although the level of power between the leader and the families or staff may never reach a constant equilibrium, there are various opportunities for the members to exert their voice and power (Liu, 2017), creating a more socially just environment for all stakeholders. From a social constructionist perspective, this means that the relational leader has an ethical obligation to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in aspects concerning the children's development (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012), and particularly in identifying ways to support them through their adaptation process. This can be accomplished by promoting radical love and fundamental listening amongst all (Steinberg, 2022).

After considering the political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal factors that contributed to the development of the PoP, and discussing the roles of socially just leaders and educators, the next section presents a conceptual framework to summarize the issues impacting the PoP.

An Interrelated Conceptual Framework

To summarize the PESTEL analysis, focusing on macro- and micro- factors that have been identified as being influential within the organization, an interrelated conceptual framework was developed. The conceptual framework, illustrated in Figure 3, that is created from a sociocultural perspective portrays the interdependent factors that promote the well-being of CCK and their families, particularly during periods of transition and adaptation. The four interrelated factors within the conceptual framework are parental engagement, policy development, culturally relevant pedagogy, and relational leadership.

Figure 3

Enhancing Cultural Awareness and Support: The Conceptual Framework
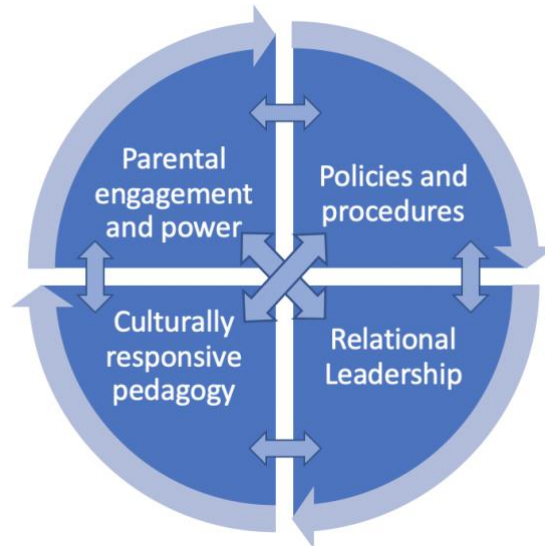
Note. A conceptual framework to support the well-being of the child and family, especially during the adaptation process.

At the policies and procedures phase, there is an urgency to develop a cultural awareness policy that will guide practices. The second part of the framework focuses on the relational leadership approach (Clarke, 2018), aligning with the values of collaborative practices and meaning-making amongst all stakeholders. The third portion presents the culturally responsive practices (Ladson-Billings, 2014) that guide the cultural awareness and support provided to the families. The final component of the framework focuses on the quality of parental engagement, the connections between the nursery school and home, as well as respecting the parents' power and voice (Steinberg, 2022; Giles, 2018).

After conducting a PESTEL analysis to situate the PoP within the broader organizational context, then by considering the PoP from a from a social justice standpoint, and finally by framing the ideas that emerged into a conceptual framework, a variety questions have surfaced. These lines of inquiries are presented in the next section.

Guiding Questions from the Problem of Practice

After framing and understanding the organizational factors that are shaping the PoP, it is clear that the PoP is a complex problem that impacts the wellbeing of many stakeholders, including the children, their families and the nursery staff. Therefore, several guiding questions emerge that may indicate the way in which the change plan will be created. The lines of inquiry that underly the PoP are:

1. How are cultural awareness and cultural pedagogy defined, and what do they look like in practice?

2. How do we mitigate the power and privilege that the leaders, or the final decision-makers, have in shaping the change implementation plan, particularly surrounding the development of policies?

3. Why do OTN's internal policies not take into account the adaptation period that CCK and their families commonly face?

These questions illustrate the lines of inquiry that have to be addressed as I navigate through the PoP. The first question regarding the terminology has emerged from the tensions in the current literature that claim that there is room for subjective interpretations when defining key concepts. When addressing the contexts in which cultural perspectives are described within the field of education, there appears to be many concepts that are open to interpretations or are defined in a number of ways (Parsons & Wall, 2010). Ladson-Billings (1995) argues that for pedagogy to be described as culturally relevant, three elements should be achieved. These include the high academic achievements of all children, the development of cultural competence, and critical social consciousness of the children and staff. The teacher education programs do not always prepare teachers for the impact of globalization and cultural diversity present in the classrooms. Wang et al. (2011) argues that when teacher education programs are developed from a critical resistance perspective, it supports teachers

in developing their abilities to create changes in their "culturally and linguistically complex classrooms using their critical personal and professional knowledge along with the knowledge that they gain from their students" (p. 116). Nevertheless, the classroom demographics are evolving, and teachers are faced with the challenge of enhancing their understanding of ways in which they can support the children (Cushner, 2015).

The second question highlights the notions of voice, power, and privilege that should be addressed to ensure that social justice is considered. Leadership at educational settings must evaluate the broader context of the problem from the social, cultural and historical perspective prior to making decisions (Theoharis, 2010). This allows the evaluation of constructs such as power and subjectivity from the lens of serving the diverse community (Keddie & Niesche, 2018). It additionally ensures that the agendas of all stakeholders are taken into account (Marshall, 2011; Diem and Young, 2015). Marshall (2011) warns about the ease in which a policy's agenda can become instrumental, by shifting its focus from being for the CCK into becoming about the future economy, for instance.

The final question explores the reasons to why an elaborative policy regarding supporting CCK and their families during their transition has not been created yet at OTN, especially since it is a concern amongst all staff at the organization. Although effective pedagogy and a collaborative approach are highly valued, there is a gap in culturally relevant practices that must be addressed. Considering that OTN is an emergent bilingual nursery, there are also no internal policies about the children's language development either. The only policy that merely scratches the surface of this complex issue is the nursery's equal opportunities policy that was developed by the parent company's compliance director. Moreover, the MOE policies and guidelines are situated in human capital ideologies, where their objectives are to ensure high quality education for all students in the country, to receive a high investment rate in return (Karaman, 2011). The MOE policies do not address cultural

enhancement for the purpose of supporting the children in developing their multiple cultural identities as they transition and adapt into their new environments. These three guiding questions will set considerations and boundaries for the planning and development that is presented in Chapter 2. The next section of this OIP discusses the leadership vision for change by reflecting on a gap analysis conducted using Nadler and Tushman's (1989) congruence model.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

The purpose of the OIP is to create a sustainable change in the current practices at the organization. In line with OTN's mission of supporting children in holistically developing their social, emotional, cultural, language, and cognitive skills, along with OTN's core values of empowerment, understanding and knowledge sharing, the leadership's vision is to provide CCK and their families with better support. Despite the cultural richness within OTN's community, there is currently very limited support provided to the children and families undergoing the process of cultural adaptation. The vision for change is to enhance and sustain cultural awareness practices amongst staff, support families with their adaptation, and create an environment that allows CCK to express their multiple identities whilst developing their cultural understanding. This gap identified is present in all nurseries associated with the parent company and has been highlighted by the leadership team during meetings. Therefore, the change within OTN is regarded as a pilot for other nurseries within the company.

Gap Analysis Between the Current and the Future

In addition to the PESTEL analysis presented earlier in this chapter situating the PoP within broader contexts, Nadler and Tushman's (1989) congruence model (Figure 4) is used as an additional tool to analyze the gap between the present and the envisioned future state at OTN. The gap analysis considers the inputs, transformation process and the outputs within the congruence model. Moreover, to enhance this gap analysis further, Bolman and Deal's (2017)

organizational reframing theory is discussed and embedded within the congruence model discourse. The analysis is conducted by considering the gaps that are currently present within OTN's formal organization, informal organization, people, and work.

Figure 4

Adaptation of Nadler and Tushman's (1989) Congruence Model
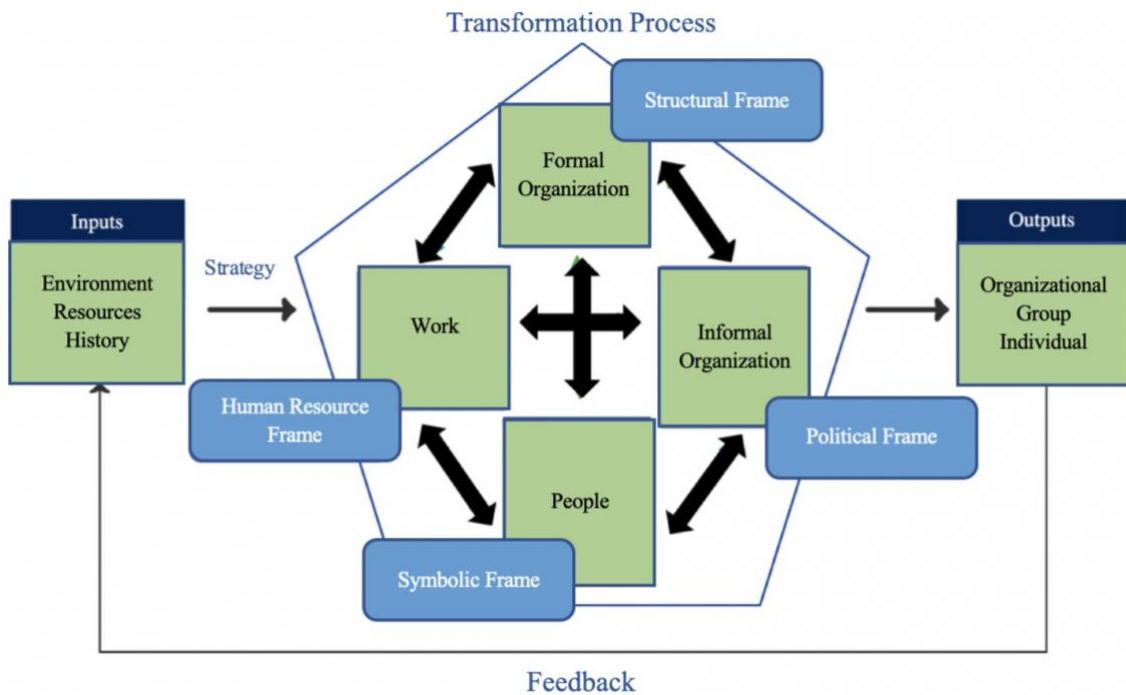
Note. Bolman and Deal's (2017) reframing theory is embedded within the congruence model to enhance the gap analysis conducted. Adapted from "Organizational Frame Bending: Principles for Managing Reorientation" by D. A. Nadler and M. L. Tushman, 1989, *The Academy of Management Executive, III*(3), p. 195. Copyright 1989 by The Academy of Management Executive.

Formal Organization

One of the main gaps between the current and the envisioned state is the lack of policy regarding supporting expatriate families with their migration and cultural adaptation. Bolman and Deal (2017) use the structural frame to argue that organizations can achieve goals by introducing and implementing effective formal processes, such as policies. Moreover, Braun et al. (2011) claim that the contextual dimensions within policies are crucial

for their optimal implementation. Therefore, not having an external guideline from the MOE
or internal policies from the parent company or from OTN, to provide guidance for the
teachers is problematic, and can be identified as a priority for change.

Informal Organization

Alasuutari (2010) categorizes partnership with parents using either a vertical or a
horizontal frame. Due to the COVID restricted protocols that OTN has faced over the last
couple of years, some conversations with families have been unidirectional or incomplete,
which can have a negative impact on the adaptation process of the family. Bolman and Deal
(2017) use the political frame to explain how some members within the organization begin to
form groups due to shared interests and illustrate how some individuals and/or groups tend to
have more power when decision-making. Therefore, despite the collaborative approach
within OTN, there are power imbalances when communicating with the parents and when
making decisions. The desired state would include empowering the community to participate
in decision-making and policy development, which could also support in strengthening the
community feel that OTN aspires to have.

People

As CCK and their families join OTN, they face a period of adaptation. According to
the CCA theory (Kim, 2001), this is when the individuals undergo the process of finding
internal equilibrium. Frequently, the reason for the delay in achieving this state of balance is
due to symbolic factors, including the difference in languages, values, or cultural practices
(Eisenbruch, 1991). Bolman and Deal (2017) describes reframing organizations through
symbolic frames by focusing on the cultures, life experiences and meaning-making that
people go through. Drury (2013) explains some of the symptoms presented by children and
parents when joining educational settings that do not share a common language with the
family. For instance, children could become frustrated, have tantrums, or undergo silent

periods. Therefore, the future state should consider ways in which the languages of the CCK and their families are embedded in the nursery, especially when communicating with the teaching staff and the administration.

Work

Another gap that arises from the analysis is the lack in culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 2014) and culturally responsive leadership (Khalifa et al., 2016). For instance, OTN currently uses traditional methods when teaching languages (Gorter & Cenoz, 2016), where each language is taught in isolation, instead of valuing the richness of communication that can occur if languages were intertwined. Furthermore, it is recommended that children under the age of six continue to receive support in developing their home language, especially when acquiring new languages (Espinosa, 2010). Bolman and Deal (2017) describe the human resource frame that values the mutual benefits and success that individuals and organizations can have when working together. Therefore, providing staff with professional development opportunities to enhance their cultural awareness and responsive pedagogy will benefit the CCK and the organization.

Priorities for Change

Following the gap analysis conducted using the congruence model, several priorities for change are identified. The first priority for change is to implement an in-depth policy that can be used as a framework by members of the OTN team. Next, is the need to enhance the communication strategies with the families to better understand ways in which the nursery team can support them in their adaptation (Alasuutari, 2010). This will ensure that a more collaborative culture is adopted at OTN. Additionally, the pedagogies used by the team should be addressed and reflected upon to strengthen the culturally responsive practices found at OTN. Another priority for change includes the need to develop a high level of trust between the CCK's families and the team. Trust is an essential component for successfully

implementing change (Bennett et al., 2003), and ensures that a balance of interest between the stakeholders and the organization is maintained. The final change priority is the need to meet the vision and mission of OTN of supporting the children in developing holistically, by additionally addressing their cultural needs.

Drivers for Change

Change drivers are the behaviors or events that influence the development and implementation of change within an organization (Deszca et al., 2019). The organizational change proposed is categorized as adaptive, or evolutionary (Burke, 2018), meaning that it does not intend to transform the deep structure of the organization, instead it plans to focus on a particular system within the organization, mainly cultural enhancement practices and policies. Following the congruence model and the PESTEL analysis, three main change drivers have been identified, including the leadership team and the expatriate teaching team as the internal divers of change, and CCK and their families as the external drivers of change.

The leadership at OTN can provide input on the policy development and can drive its implementation. Arafeh (2014) argues that educational leaders should be politically literate to support, participate in, and influence the policies developed for the students under their care. Therefore, the leadership team can internally drive the change by initiating, planning, and guiding its implementation (Grogan & Fullan, 2013). Similarly, the expatriate teachers at OTN are internal drivers of change. Yet, their role differs from that of the leadership team, as it involves the development of curricula and enhancement of pedagogy to cater for both the national students (Vonderlind, 2015) and the CCK (Ladson-Billings, 2014).

As for the external drivers of change, the change in demographics and the influx of CCK at OTN has resulted in challenges when settling children at the nursery. Families and their children have displayed various acts of frustrations and struggles as they undergo the stress of transition and grievances due to the symbolic losses (Casado et al., 2010;

Eisenbruch, 1991) that was described earlier in this chapter. Therefore, they are the external drivers of change that have inspired the work and research surrounding this OIP.

Role of Equity and Social Justice in Vision for Change

Capper (2018) critiques that although Bolman and Deal's (2017) human resources and symbolic frames are aligned with the interpretivist epistemology, they do not take into considerations the social justice components of organizational change. She also argues that despite identifying with the interpretivist approach by being a facilitator and a collaborator at educational settings, such leaders fall short when working with equity. Instead, it is recommended that for socially just changes to occur at the organization, the values of the leader, team, students and the overall community must be in line with a socially just vision. Capper (2018), therefore, suggests the reformation of a socially just identity across various levels, including the leader, staff, students, community, and organization.

Reflecting on the current state at OTN, there are several factors that should be reassessed to ensure that equity and social justice play a role in the change vision, including focusing on the richness of the cultural diversity present with the organization, understanding that children who are viewed as disadvantaged is not a natural phenomenon but a socially constructed one, and therefore can be changed, and ensuring that all stakeholders participate in active listening and are provided with agency to voice themselves (Smyth, 2013). When creating change, organizations like OTN should envision a future desired state where safe and supportive dialogical spaces are created for children and families to share their experiences, ideas, fears, hopes, and frustrations (Smyth, 2011). Furthermore, OTN should strengthen its focus on the emotional well-being of the children by understanding their "emotional geographies" (Kenway & Youdell, 2011, p. 131), instead of merely focusing on their social integration and adaptation into the community. Hence, equity and social justice play a significant role in OTN's vision for change.

The main takeaway from the gap analysis of OTN's envisioned future state through Nadler and Tushman's (1989) congruence model are the significance of the multicultural demographic contexts, and the lack of supporting policy and pedagogy in place to address the needs of the CCK and their families. The absence of guidance from the MOE and OTN raises questions regarding the notion of equity and justice that should be addressed. Further organizational analysis is conducted in the readiness for change section that follows to identify the potential strengths and limitations within the organization. This will guide the planning and implementation of the OIP in the following chapters.

Organizational Change Readiness

For the effective implementation of the change plan, the organization must be psychologically and behaviorally ready for change (Weiner, 2009). Higgs and Rowland (2011) argue that readiness to change begins with the leader. They found that when leaders are more involved and have a significant role within the change plan, the more enabling the group is in supporting the implementation. This finding corresponds to Judge and Douglas' (2009) eight dimensions of readiness that also highlights the importance of having a trusting relationship between the leaders and followers, which is highly valued within the relational leadership approach. Nevertheless, other researchers argue for a multilevel approach when assessing readiness (Rafferty et al., 2013; Vakola, 2013), rather than focusing solely on the leader. For a successful organizational change, the individual (micro), group (meso), and organization (macro) should have the appropriate cognitive beliefs and affective responses to ensure that they are ready for the change (Rafferty et al., 2013; Vakola, 2013).

Armenakis and Harris (2002) claim that when announcing a change plan to the team, the leader's change message must include five components, or beliefs, in order to be successful. First, the change message must create a sense of urgency, that the change is necessary. Second, the proposed plan should be appropriate for the change intended. Third,

the change message must create a sense of efficacy, or belief that the individual or team are capable of implementing the change plan. Fourth, the individuals should feel a sense of support from their colleagues and/or managers when implementing the change. Finally, the change message should outline the costs and benefits of the change on an individual, group and organizational level.

Multilevel Approach to Readiness

Using the macro-, meso-, and micro- levels for assessing readiness can provide a better understanding of the readiness dynamics that take place in an organization (Rafferty et al., 2013; Vakola, 2013; Holt and Vardaman 2013). One particular reason for exploring the various levels simultaneously is to identify whether there is lack in readiness, and at which level. This can support the change initiator in finding appropriate methods to target the low levels of readiness.

Furthermore, the multilevel approach explains the way in which readiness at one level can have an impact at another level (Vakola, 2013). For example, when an organization has many individual employees (micro level) with high readiness for change, this will cascade onto other members of the group (meso level) especially if the members of the group identify well with the team. As a result, the group (meso level) and the organization (macro level) will also have high levels of readiness and low levels of resistance.

Organizational Readiness Assessment Tool

Organizational readiness can be assessed using quantitative and qualitative tools (Holt et al., 2007). OTN's team readiness for change is assessed using Deszca et al. (2019) organization's readiness for change questionnaire (ORCQ), which has been adapted from several readiness scales including Stewart (1994), Holt (2002) and Judge and Douglas (2009; as cited in Deszca et al., 2019). The reason for choosing this questionnaire is because it considers change readiness from the macro and meso levels, focusing on factors influencing

both the leadership and the team. These factors include the team's previous change experience and the leadership's credibility, for example. Nevertheless, Deszca et al.'s ORCQ does not assess readiness from the micro, or the individual's level.

The ORCQ considers six categories, including previous change experience, executive support, credible leadership and change champions, openness to change, rewards for change, and measures for change and accountability, as presented in Table 1. These categories correspond with five essential beliefs that Armenakis and Harris (2002) urge leaders to include in their change messages.

Table 1

Organizational Readiness for Change Questionnaire

Readiness dimension	Description	OTN's score	Max score possible
Previous change experience	Assessing the previous experience that OTN had with change, and how the mood of the organization is currently	+2	+4
Executive support	Assessing the level of support provided by the leadership team	+4	+7
Credible leadership and change champions	Assessing how credible and trusted the leadership is at OTN is	+7	+11
Openness to change	Assessing the culture, communication, and conflict resolution strategies at OTN	+10	+22
Rewards for change	Assessing the reward system and exploring whether failure is acceptable	+1	+2
Measures for change and accountability	Assessing whether OTN has measures in place to monitor and evaluate the change, and whether feedback from stakeholders (families, staff) will be collected	+4	+4

Note. Adapted from Deszca et al. (2019) "Organization's Readiness for Change" questionnaire.

According to Deszca et al., the scale can produce scores ranging from -25 to +50; and organizations who score below +10 points are not ready for change. Table 1 provides a description of the six categories on the questionnaire and lists OTN's readiness score for each category. The data was collected using input from the staff and was scored by the nursery director. The total score for OTN is +28, indicating that the nursery is ready for the change. Nevertheless, another purpose for this tool is to raise awareness for areas where readiness can be improved further. For instance, the maximum points possible for the "openness to change" dimension is +22, yet OTN scored +10. This indicates that there is potential for improvement, especially in terms of dealing with and resolving conflict amongst the team members. Reflecting on the change vision, it is clear that OTN tends to monitor the changes made and addresses the feedback provided by stakeholders effectively. This finding implies that parents are confident that the changes they suggest will be implemented, and therefore, are more likely to contribute to the discourse regarding cultural awareness enhancements. Additionally, this questionnaire brought to light the importance of creating a reward system for the team, to ensure that small wins are continuously celebrated.

Internal and External Factors Impacting Change Readiness

In addition to the affective responses and the cognitive beliefs that impact change readiness across the three levels within the multilevel approach, Oreg et al. (2011) describe a number of antecedents that influence readiness. Some of the internal factors include the individual's traits, such as their coping styles; and the internal contexts of the organization, such as its culture and level of trust within the organization. Moreover, Judge (2011) delves into such antecedents by illustrating eight dimensions that are essential for organizational change. The first of which is having trustworthy leadership, which can be defined as someone who is trusted by all stakeholders within the organization and is capable of driving change whilst acting in the best interest of all individuals involved. Similarly, the second dimension

discussed is having trusting followers who are optimistic, open to change, and willing to trust the process. In essence, trust is an internal force that should be reciprocal (Oreg et al., 2011) to ensure that the organization is ready for change.

Next, the third dimension highlighted by Judge (2011) is having capable champions. As change tends to be a lengthy, and often exhausting, process, the change drivers must be capable to endure the challenges and keep colleagues motivated. The fourth dimension considers the essential involvement of middle management, or the language coordinators in OTN's case, who are able to establish lateral leadership and provide effective guidance to the team without having the stigma of an authoritative figure. These individuals can also offer more principal support if required by the team (Armenakis & Harris, 2002). Systems thinking is the fifth dimension, where OTN is viewed as a complex living system with interconnected processes, rather than individual units. Understanding the interrelated nature of the organization is crucial when driving changes. Likewise, the sixth dimension is the communications system which need to be put in place to maintain effective communication throughout the change process. This is described further in the communication plan presented in Chapter 3. Furthermore, having an accountable culture at OTN is the seventh dimension described, where actions are implemented based on the success or failure of specific outcomes. This relates closely with the monitoring and evaluation plan that is explored in Chapter 3. Finally, having an innovative culture is the eighth dimension presented, which involves having a growth mindset to face challenges and persist even in times of failures.

Chapter 1 Conclusion

Over the last few years, there has been a tremendous increase in the number of CCK and their families relocating to new cities and joining international educational settings. The drive to enhance cultural awareness amongst staff members and to improve culturally relevant practices at a bilingual nursery is at the core of all the sections within this chapter.

By being a relational leader that values the collaborative partnerships with families, this chapter discusses the ways in which cross-cultural adaptation theory can be used to support the children and their families. The PoP, being the need to address the gap in the cultural awareness policy and program at the nursery, which is situated in the social constructivist paradigm, was introduced and framed using a PESTEL analysis. Moreover, the Nadler and Tushman's (1989) congruence model, along with Bolman and Deal (2017) framework provide an analysis to illustrate the gap between the current and future envisioned state. The chapter concluded with the leadership's vision for change and a discussion surrounding the importance of assessing organizational readiness from a multilevel approach.

The next section of the OIP delves further into the relational leadership approach and introduces the change path model and appreciative inquiry approach that will guide the planning and development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation plans which will be addressed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

Chapter 2: Planning and Development

The first chapter of this OIP presented the organizational context of OTN, described the PoP, and addressed the gap between the current and future desired state of the organization using PESTEL and the congruence model. It also introduced the leader's positionality and lens which is situated in the social constructivist standpoint. This chapter extends the leader's worldview and relational leadership approach by considering the corresponding leadership approaches and outlining a framework for leading the change process. This chapter also presents some possible solutions to address the PoP and highlights some ethical issues and social justice challenges that are faced within the organization.

Leadership Approaches to Change

Research has demonstrated that an effective leader cannot rely on one single type of leadership approach (Hargreaves, 2011). For a leader to succeed, it is recommended that they adopt a flexible or adaptable approach (Yukl & Mahsud, 2010), especially if the situation requires innovative strategies or acquiring new skills. In line with the PoP described in Chapter 1, which is the need to address the gap in the cultural awareness policy and program at a nursery school with a large expatriate community, this section will consider two types of leadership approaches. These approaches are the relational leadership approach (Uhl-Bien, 2006; Cunliffe & Erikson, 2011; Giles, 2018) and the culturally responsive leadership approach (Khalifa et al., 2016; Marshall & Khalifa, 2018; Campos-Moreira et al., 2020). Although the two approaches can be applied in parallel, and have some common features, they will be discussed as separate entities. To ensure that the change implementation is successful, these leadership approaches will have to be integrated together to address the complexity of the issue, including balancing various stakeholder needs and minimizing gaps between policy and practice.

Relational Leadership

The relational leadership approach can be organized along a continuum, from an entity viewpoint, where the emphasis is on the individual dimensions of the leadership approach, to a more constructionist perspective that focuses on the collective nature of leadership (Nicholson & Kurucz, 2019). Aligned with the worldview of achieving excellence by collaborating, co-constructing with others, and considering other's subjective experiences (Crotty, 1998), the leadership approach adopted lies on the latter part of the spectrum, where the collective nature is valued. Relational leadership can be viewed as a *way of being* rather than an approach that is adopted from certain situations (Giles, 2018). This particular approach differs from other leadership approaches because it rejects the standpoint that individuals are discrete, independent beings, and instead focuses on the fact that humans are social beings whose actions impact each other, and thus, the relational approach values the process of relationships and interactions (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

Moreover, Drath (2001) urges leaders to shift away from the traditional leadership standpoints to embrace a leadership approach that emphasizes relational dialogue. Relational dialogue occurs when community members co-construct knowledge together and engage in meaningful interactions when meaning-making. This process of relational dialogue also supports with understanding and accomplishing tasks of various complexity levels. Reflecting on Judge's (2011) dimensions of organizational capacity for change, addressed in Chapter 1, having effective communication systems in place is an essential component of change readiness. Therefore, to implement change within a community-based organization such as OTN, especially when confronting the PoP, it is essential that all stakeholders are considered and involved in the dialogue. Rather than using methods of persuasion or instruction, a relational leader creates continuous opportunities for open dialogue, recognizing varying opinions, and diverse voices (Cunliffe & Erikson, 2011). This creates a

culture for innovation (Judge, 2011), as stakeholders have an opportunity to meaning-make and find solutions collaboratively to problems that may arise. It is, therefore, the relational leader's responsibility to maintain a strength-based dialogue with all stakeholders, which should result in enhanced motivation to achieve shared goal (Giles, 2018). Another main element within the relational approach is the leader's authenticity (Giles, 2018). This means, that instead of instructing others to do certain tasks, a relational leader would model what they expect from others, which would support in the change implementation process.

Culturally Responsive Leadership Approach

Since relational leaders are required to guide others by modelling the actions that others are expected to display, the leadership team at OTN should model culturally responsive leadership and pedagogy (Khalifa et al., 2016). Khalifa et al. (2016) explain that culturally responsive leaders should transform their organizations to match the cultural needs of the stakeholders. In order to do so, leaders must understand the existing organizational culture and the way in which it resembles or contradicts the cultures of the stakeholders prior to making changes (Cummings & Worley, 2009). Culture can be a contested term, however, for the purpose of this OIP, culture will be defined as "individual and collective ways of thinking, believing, and knowing" (Tillman, 2002, p. 4). It is the individual's and group's core values, beliefs, needs, customs, and hopes (Deal & Peterson, 2016). Therefore, as a culturally responsive leader, it is crucial to be flexible and responsive to the changing demographics and cultures that are present at the organization (Campos-Moreira et al., 2020).

Campos-Moreira et al. (2020) disregard culturally responsive leadership as a strategy. Instead, they propose it as a framework to support leaders in making culturally responsive decisions and change implementations. Their framework is comprised of three interlinking components. The first part of their framework involves understanding the organizational context, which was discussed in Chapter 1. This component considers the social, cultural,

political, and historical contexts of the organization. The second portion is identifying and incorporating the leadership style. The leadership approaches that resonates with OTN's leadership include the relational, the flexible and the culturally responsive leadership approaches. The final element of the framework is embracing cultural humility and cultural competence, which in turn encourages cultural fluency and understanding. Combined, these three components support the organization in meeting the changing needs and requirements of the children and their families.

Moreover, studies have found that culturally responsive pedagogy and leadership could be implemented by mid-level managers or teachers, even when the top leadership did not show competency or interest (Marshall & Khalifa, 2018). This notion aligns with the involved middle managers dimension of organizational capacity for change, which further supports organizational readiness (Judge, 2011). This implies that culturally responsive practices do not have to be presented using a top-down, or a bottom-up approach. Instead, it could be introduced and implemented by any staff member who is competent and knowledgeable, such as the language coordinators at OTN. Through modelling and by establishing lateral leadership, the staff at OTN can gradually engage and enhance their culturally responsive practices to ensure that positive changes in pedagogy is occurring.

Propelling Change

Aligned with the notion of minimizing the gap in the cultural awareness policy and program at OTN, one of the most crucial features found in both the relational and the culturally responsive leadership approaches, is trust. Having trustworthy leaders and trusting stakeholders is another dimension recommended by Judge (2011) which enhances organizational readiness for change, and ensures that the community's interests are supported by the change vision. When trust, honesty, and transparency are present between the leader and the stakeholders, leaders will consider any ethical or moral issues that may arise which

could positively or negatively impact the community (Brower et al., 2000). Moreover, to connect with the children and their families at OTN, the staff have a moral responsibility to understand and respect their cultures through openness, authenticity, and dialogue (Deal & Peterson, 2016). As a flexible, relational, and culturally responsible leader and team, it is essential to build a cohesive community for the children and the families by creating bonds that extend past OTN's campus.

Relational and Culturally Responsive Leadership Approaches: The Best Fit

For change to occur successfully, the chosen leadership approaches must align with the context of the problem (Hargreaves, 2011). Although other leadership approaches, such as the situational leadership approach (Hersey et al., 1996), may support in the implementation of change at an organization like OTN, by providing the leader with a range of behaviors to choose from depending on the individual team member's competency and commitment levels towards the change; it does not consider the demographic and cultural characteristics of the organization. Hence, the combination of the relational and culturally responsive leadership approaches is regarded as the best fit approach for the context of the PoP. The two chosen approaches complement and complete one another, ensuring that all factors are accounted for. For example, the relational leadership approach drives the collaborative and welcoming community within the organization (Nicholson & Kurucz, 2019), whereas the culturally responsive leadership approach strives to acknowledge and meet the individual needs of all stakeholders within the community (Khalifa et al., 2016). Since the identified problem is to minimize the gap in policies and practices surrounding cultural awareness at OTN, the ideal leadership approaches should be a blended one, including both the relational and culturally responsive leadership approaches.

Framework for Leading the Change Process

When considering change within an organization, there are several philosophies that present possible approaches to change depending on the situation (Smith & Graetz, 2011). The *cultural philosophy* of organizational change is the viewpoint that fits best with OTN's rich demographical context. Primarily, when considering the change framework, the leader must consider the collective views and interpretations of the community and target the tensions that arise between the stakeholders' competing values and beliefs. Moreover, Nadler and Tushman (1989) present a model to categorize organizational change, based on two dimensions – first, whether the change is continuous or discontinuous and second, whether the change is anticipated or reactive. Accordingly, they place the change in four varying compartments, including change as tuning, change as an adaptation, change as reorientation, and change as re-creation. If change is regarded as a process of tuning or an adaptation, then the change process follows an incremental path. On the other hand, if the change is perceived as one that requires reorientation or re-creation, then the change process requires a more strategic path (Nadler & Tushman, 1989). To further classify the type of change, Nadler and Tushman (1989) recommend understanding the purpose for the change, and examine whether the change was anticipated or expected, or whether the change is required in response to or as a reaction to internal or external factors. According to their categorization of change, the change outlined by the PoP is *adaptive* since the change is being made in response to the continuously changing demographics at OTN and because the focus of the change is on a particular component within the organization that can be addressed by the leadership team within the nursery, with minimal interference from the parent company.

Considering Culture

Several change frameworks are culturally bound and cannot be optimally implemented in certain cultures (Gutterman, 2019). Therefore, the cross-cultural adaptability

of an organizational change intervention needs to be considered for a multicultural organization like OTN. Using the four dimensions within the Hofstede model (Hofstede, 1983), the areas to consider are the power discrepancy between the leader and followers, the level of avoiding uncertainty, the gender traits that the culture adopts, and the level of individualism or collectivism preferred by the culture. Although some critics claim that Hofstede's categories are outdated, and that the definition of culture has evolved due to globalization (Slater, 2013), this model is used in this OIP as it is still applicable and relatable for the culture at OTN. Moreover, several well renowned studies in the field of cultural leadership, including the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) project have considered Hofstede's cultural dimensions as a foundation to their study (House et al., 2004; Gutterman, 2019), which is why these factors were chosen when assessing OTN's current culture. Table 2 presents the cultural preferences of OTN based on Hofstede's four dimensions. According to the descriptions provided for each dimension, OTN's culture was rated across the four dimensions. It was concluded that OTN's culture follows:

- Low-to-mid power distance since parents are viewed as partners and can voice suggestions that are then used when implementing new processes at OTN.

- Mid-to-high uncertainty avoidance because although the team at OTN are accepting of change, tensions arise when issues are not clearly communicated or when situations seem ambiguous.

- High femininity since the culture at OTN is a highly collaborative, focusing on the learning and development of the OTN children

- Mid-to-high collectivism since OTN emphasizes community development, and the teachers work collaboratively on curriculum development.

Table 2

Exploring OTN's Culture using the Hofstede Model

Cultural dimension	Description	OTN's culture
Power distance	The degree to which the power is shared within the culture. The higher the power distance, the less power sharing between the leader and the follower.	Low to mid power distance
Uncertainty avoidance	The degree to which uncertainty is avoided or not tolerated within the culture. The lower the uncertainty avoidance, the more likely change will be accepted.	Mid to high uncertainty avoidance
Masculinity/Femininity	Using stereotypical gender traits, Hofstede defined cultures as masculine or feminine. Feminine cultures appreciate collaboration and human development, whereas masculine cultures are more competitive, materialistic and focus on achievement.	Feminine culture
Individualism/collectivism	Certain cultures value the group, whereas others focus on the individual. The collective cultures are able to work well in teams and value the contributions of others. Individualistic cultures focus on the performance and outcomes of the individuals.	Mid to high collectivism

Note. Adapted from "The Cultural Relativity of Organizational Practices and Theories," by

G. Hofstede, 1983, *Journal of International Business Studies*, Fall, p. 78

(https://www.jstor.org/stable/222593). Copyright 1983 by Palgrave Macmillan Journals.

According to the findings from the Hofstede model, the organizational change

framework chosen should correspond with these dimensions. Therefore, the next section of

the OIP introduces the Appreciative Inquiry and Change Path model as the selected

frameworks due to their alignment with OTN's identified cultural dimensions.

Appreciative Inquiry and the Change Path Model

Considering OTN's cultural dimensions, along with the need to address the gap in the

cultural awareness policy at OTN, and to ensure that the chosen organizational framework

fits well with the CCA theory (Kim, 2001) and the social constructivist paradigm, the

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach (Cooperrider et al., 2008) and the Change Path (CP)

model (Deszca et al., 2019) will be used. The main reason for choosing the AI approach is

because of the collaborative nature that is valued, which align with the *feminine* and

collectivist cultural dimensions, derived from the Hofstede model. The CP model was chosen

because it carefully considers and combines the strengths of other change models, such as

Kotter's Eight-Stage process and Lewin's Stage theory. Both these frameworks could also be

applied in cultures with low-to-mid power distance. Although OTN's community tend to

avoid uncertainty, having a relational leader supporting them within the collaborative process

of change could mitigate the sense of uncertainty, doubt, or insecurity that they face. Several

other change frameworks were considered but rejected due to ill alignments with OTN's

organizational context. For instance, Lewin's (1951) three stage theory of change appears to

be highly simplified and does not account for the team's essence in comparison to the AI

approach.

Unlike other change frameworks, the AI approach perceives change in a positive

manner. It focuses on the what the organizations strengths are and uses that as a starting point

when implementing change (Dickerson & Helm-Stevens, 2011). The AI approach is

consisted of a five-stage process, often referred to as the five-D's that correspond to the

definition, discovery, dream, design, and destiny stages (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney et

al., 2010). These steps align with those of the four stages of the CP model (Figure 5).

Figure 5

Alignment of the Appreciative Inquiry 5-D Stages with the Change Path Model
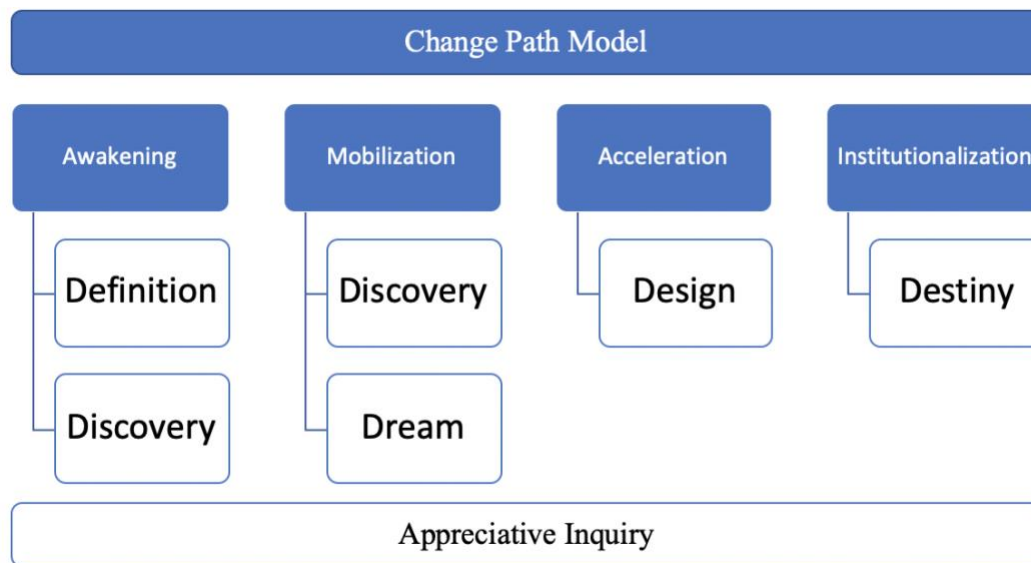
Note. The Appreciative Inquiry approach (Cooperrider et al., 2008) and the Change Path model (Deszca et al., 2019) as a combined framework to lead the change process.

The first step of definition is where the stakeholders meet to set a direction to what should be achieved through the change, similar to the awakening process within the CP model. During this stage, the PoP will be shared with the OTN team, to set direction, and to develop common understanding and a shared vision. Next, during the discovery stage, positive examples and experiences describing ways to support CCK and their families during their adaptation period will be shared. This step of the process is essential as it appreciates and values the work of everyone involved and motivates them to continue working positively towards the change. The discovery phase begins in the awakening stage of the CP model and continues to take place throughout the mobilization process. Dream is the third stage. During this stage, all participants are inspired to co-create a future vision without taking into account any limitations or challenges. The dream stage also corresponds to the mobilization phase of the CP model. Fourth, the design stage focuses on the individual voices, regardless of their power status. During this stage, everyone is encouraged to suggest innovative ideas that could

be implemented to fulfill the shared vision. Similar to the acceleration process of the CP

model, this is where the planning for change occurs. Finally, the implementation and

reflection processes take place during the destiny stage (Whitney et al., 2010), which is

closely related to the CP's institutionalization process.

Appreciative Inquiry Principles

There are eight staple principles that reinforce the AI approach (Whitney et al., 2010;

Lewis, 2016), and are aligned with the epistemology that guide the relational and culturally

responsive leadership approaches. These principles include the 'constructionist principle'

which claims that reality is subjective and socially constructed, the 'simultaneity principle'

which views inquiry as a process of intervention that cannot be isolated from the process of

change, and the 'poetic principle' that claims that there is continuous learning and discovery

within organizations and that the organization itself is a stimulus for creativity and

inspiration. Other principles include the 'anticipatory principle' that demonstrates the

importance of sharing a co-constructed vision, especially that a more optimistic vision for the

future results in more positive actions in the present, the 'positive principle' that emphasizes

the importance of fostering joy by asking positive questions leading to positive changes, and

the 'wholeness principle' that cherishes the inclusion of all stakeholders within the process to

achieve optimal creativity and build collective capacity. Finally, the principles also include

the 'enactment principle' that encourages individuals to act out the ideal future in order to

achieve positive change, and the 'free choice principle' that allows individuals to choose how

they would like to contribute to the change process (Whitney et al., 2010).

Key Assumptions

This OIP relies on several assumptions. First, it assumes that the staff at OTN can

identify strengths and will welcome the change as a positive experience. Next, it assumes that

by late 2022 or early 2023, the restrictions that were caused by the COVID-19 pandemic will

ease, and that the families of the children enrolled at OTN will be granted (re)-access into the nursery campus. Finally, it also assumes that if the change implementation was successful, other nurseries within the group will adopt similar strategies to minimize the cultural awareness gaps present in their organizations.

The eight principles of the AI approach correspond to my worldview and can be supported by the leadership approaches that are implemented at OTN. Since it is encouraged by the AI approach to view organizations as living systems (Lewis, 2016), this reinforces the relational culture at OTN. When organizations are perceived in this lens, our beliefs regarding organizational change differs and is approached from a positive standpoint. Lewis (2016) highlight several of these beliefs that align with the relational leadership approach including the power that appreciation has on promoting growth within the team, the belief that through inquiry and collaboration, the team will be more successful in creating and sustaining change, and the value that conversation and dialogue have in supporting the stakeholders and in finding innovative ideas to target challenges (Drath, 2001; Lewis, 2016). Thus, having an organization that focuses on relational, meaning-making practices amongst all stakeholder aligns well with the AI approach. The next section provides a critical analysis of OTN and identifies the changes that are required to minimize the gap between the current and the envisioned state, by focusing on the actions required to enhance cultural awareness policy and practices at OTN.

Critical Organizational Analysis

For successful organizational improvement, it is essential for the leaders to understand how an organization operates, what factors needs to be changed, and how this change can be implemented (Deszca et al., 2019; Lewis, 2019). The previous section considered *how* the change will take place. This section addresses *what* needs to be changed. This OIP will assess the *what* using Nadler and Tushman's congruence model (1989).

Following the CP model and the AI approach, Chapter 1 lies on the initial stages of the

models, specifically, within the *definition, discovery* and *awakening* portions of the cycle.

This section delves deeper into the *discovery* and *awakening* phases by identifying the

internal or external forces that have led to the development of the PoP, and the

incongruencies that are impacting the organization.

The Congruence Model

Nadler and Tushman's congruence model (1989), initially introduced in Chapter 1, is

a comprehensive model that specifies the inputs, throughputs, and outputs to support

organizational leaders in identifying gaps, or areas of concern within an organization (Sabir,

2018). As the model's name implies, this method focuses on diagnosing a lack of

congruency, or compatibility within the various systems of an organization (Nadler &

Tushman, 1989). There are several reasons for choosing this diagnostic tool for the critical

organizational analysis section of the OIP. Firstly, it is because the model assumes that the

organization is an open social system, which aligns with the AI approach notion of viewing

OTN as a living system (Lewis, 2016). This means that is not isolated from but interacts with

the surrounding environment (Deszca et al., 2019). Furthermore, it assumes that

organizations are comprised of a number of multifaceted, interdependent components that

interact with and influence each other (Eiser & Eiser, 1996; Deszca et al., 2019). This implies

that it can holistically analyze all factors influencing the organization, internal and/or

external, to ultimately identify the root cause of the problem (Sabir, 2018). Aligned with this

assumption, OTN's leadership also values the interactions and influences that occur between

the various operating systems, regardless of whether they are categorized as formal or

informal, which is also accounted for in this model. Additionally, the congruence model takes

into account the organizational behaviors that occur at the individual, the group, and the

systems level (Sabir, 2018), providing a multileveled approach to the change analysis.

Moreover, following a cross-analysis approach, the model accounts for the inter-leveled interactions that are present within the organization. Next, depending on the data available, the congruence model allows for the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data (Eiser & Eiser, 1996). This ensures that no data is rejected or eliminated during the process. Finally, Fullan (2006) argues that the "notion [of] *school or district culture*" (p. 4) should be considered when identifying what to change. This model allows for this consideration by ensuring that the concept of culture is embedded in the model's *input*.

Nevertheless, there are some limitations to the congruence model. One limitation is that although the model supports organizational leaders in identifying the gaps, or areas of low congruency, the model does not offer any explanations on how these gaps can be fixed (Eiser & Eiser, 1996). Secondly, due to the interdependence or cross-level approach within the different components and levels in the organization, as highlighted in the model, an undesirable experience in one part of the model could negatively impact other aspects of the model (Deszca et al., 2019).

The congruence model is based on the principle that there are four fundamental elements supporting an organization's performance. These four components –work, people, formal organization, and informal organization – are interconnected and have an impact on one another (Nadler & Tushman, 1989). Therefore, the level of congruency between these components has a direct impact on the organization's outcomes. If the compatibility between the elements is high, then the organization's performance will be more effective (Deszca et al., 2019). A description of the four elements was introduced in Chapter 1, hence, in this section, an analysis is conducted to identify the gaps or level of congruence, between the following six pairings:

- people and work

- people and formal organization

- people and informal organization

- work and formal organization

- work and informal organization

- formal organization and informal organization

Congruence Between People and Work

As identified in Chapter 1, a major challenge for the CCK and their families that are joining OTN is the initial adaptation period. Several studies found that this phase is a difficult one for the children and the parents (Drury, 2013; Casado et al., 2010; Eisenbruch, 1991). Therefore, they are in need of support from the nursery staff, yet the pedagogical approach implemented is not always suitable. Teachers inconsistently use culturally relevant pedagogy, resulting in children having tantrums or parents getting frustrated. During the settling in period at OTN for example, children are provided with a staggered schedule that increases gradually to support them as they transition into the nursery routine. This however may not be suitable for all families. Some families prefer using strategies that are more common in their own cultures, resulting in the question of who's perspective is more suitable for the child's well-being?

Congruence Between People and Formal Organizations

Although the importance of having strong partnerships with parents and encouraging them to participate in community-wide events at or outside OTN is acknowledged, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on such opportunities, hindering the chances of creating meaningful relationship with parents. Guidelines from the local municipality and the MOE in 2020-2021, restricted parents from entering educational settings. This has resulted in parents often complaining that they felt uninvolved with their children's learning and development when at the nursery school. Reflecting on Alasuutari's (2010) definition of parental partnership, it is clear that during this period the relationship between the nursery

team and the parents shifted from a mutual and dynamic horizontal frame, to a more vertical frame where parents are expected to follow the rules that have been imposed on them, creating a power-imbalance. For this academic year, 2021-2022, as the authorities' guidelines are slowly being lifted, and parents are permitted into the nursery garden for a maximum of ten minutes, the relationships between the families and staff members have been stabilizing and the power levels are equalizing.

Congruence Between People and Informal Organizations

Despite being a bilingual French/English nursery, in an Arabic speaking country, the main language of formal communication from the nursery's administration is English. All the policies, along with the nursery's website and admissions procedures are also in English. Nevertheless, the team's informal daily communications with the children and their families take place in English, French, Arabic, Spanish, and Italian. As for the children's daily updates on the parent mobile application, the teachers tend to write in their classroom's language of instruction, irrespective of the families' language fluency. There are only a couple of teachers who are confident to write daily reports in both English and French. One of the key philosophies of the Reggio-Emilia approach that is valued by OTN is the role of the adults in guiding the children's development (Rinaldi, 2006). The term adult refers to both the teachers, parents and family members who have direct interactions with the children. Yet, in order to have a positive and effective partnership with the multilingual families, the communication should be consistent, and it is recommended that key information is translated into the families' home languages (Freeman & Freeman, 2001).

Congruence Between Work and Formal Organization

OTN has developed several policies to support the children's overall well-being, such as an inclusion policy, a positive behavior management policy, and a settling in policy. Nevertheless, the organization does not have any policy that considers the children's cultural

adaptation and the ways in which the staff can support them as they transition from their home country into the new city and nursery school. For instance, currently the children are encouraged to communicate in either English or French, depending on the classroom's language of instruction, despite the fact that many studies have shown benefits of utilizing the children's home languages when acquiring new languages (Espinosa, 2010; Gorter & Cenoz, 2016). In fact, it can be argued that teachers need to support children in expressing themselves in a variety of ways, using multiple languages and encouraging code-switching when necessary to develop their language skills and cultural identities (Ladson-Billings, 2014; Saskia & Cummins, 2013). Furthermore, with regards to the informal (verbal) and formal (written) communications between the administration and the families, the informal communications are multilingual, yet the formal communications are solely in English. Overall, a multicultural perspective when communicating with parents (Cummins, 1999) appears to be lacking at OTN.

Congruence Between Work and Informal Organization

As illustrated in Chapter 1, the mission of OTN is to support the children in their holistic development. Moreover, OTN follow the philosophies of the Reggio-Emilia approach, including the image of the child as a capable, co-constructor of knowledge (Rinaldi, 2006). The rights of the child are respected and celebrated. However, there is a gap in cultural awareness and culturally responsive pedagogy. Currently, the children's home cultures are only acknowledged a few times per year. Initially, at the beginning of the academic year, when children learn about who they are and where they come from. Then, their cultures and nationalities are celebrated and displayed at the annual nursery-wide international day. This implies that although OTN wants to guide children in their holistic development, there is a clear lack of attention given to the cultural and intercultural development. Cummins (1996) recommends that schools adopt an intercultural orientation

that embeds the children's cultures and beliefs into the curriculum, and involve all families in this process.

Congruence Between Formal Organization and Informal Organization

Although this chapter has highlighted the importance of the culturally responsive leadership practices, the current dominant leadership approach at OTN is highly relational, and the former leadership approach is lacking. OTN's nursery director acknowledges that there are CCK who have recently relocated and joined the nursery, yet there is no effective system in place to ensure that the children and their families are successfully integrating into the nursery and the city. If the family is moving from abroad, the director meets the family virtually to answer any questions and to provide them with more information about OTN. Once the family relocates, a nursery visit is arranged where the parents and child meet the team and see the facilities. The family is encouraged to sit with the child's teachers and share information regarding the child's development and routines. Occasionally, parents may teach the teachers some words in the child's home language, if the child does not speak English or French. This technique is also supported by research that found that reinforcing the children's home language is regarded as beneficial for their overall development (Castro et al., 2011). Once the child has settled into the classroom, and stops crying, there are no processes in place to continue the cultural adaptation processes of the CCK and their families.

To summarize, this gap analysis has been conducted on the interactions between the four major systems presented by the congruence model: (a) the work, (b) the people, (c) the formal organization, and (d) the informal organization (Nadler & Tushman, 1989). From the analysis, it is clear that when considering the way various systems are working together to support the CCK and their families in their cultural adaptation, there appears to be many incongruencies. This strengthens the PoP's urgency in enhancing the cultural awareness

policy and practices at OTN. Using the findings from the gap analysis, the next section will suggest some solutions to address the PoP.

Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

With the gap analysis in mind, there are three solutions proposed in this section that explore different ways in which the incongruency in the organization can be mitigated (Figure 6). The three suggested solutions are:

- Macro-level policy development,
- Meso-level teacher professional development,
- Meso-level community and communication development.

Figure 6

Possible Solutions Using Nadler and Tushman's (1989) Congruence Model
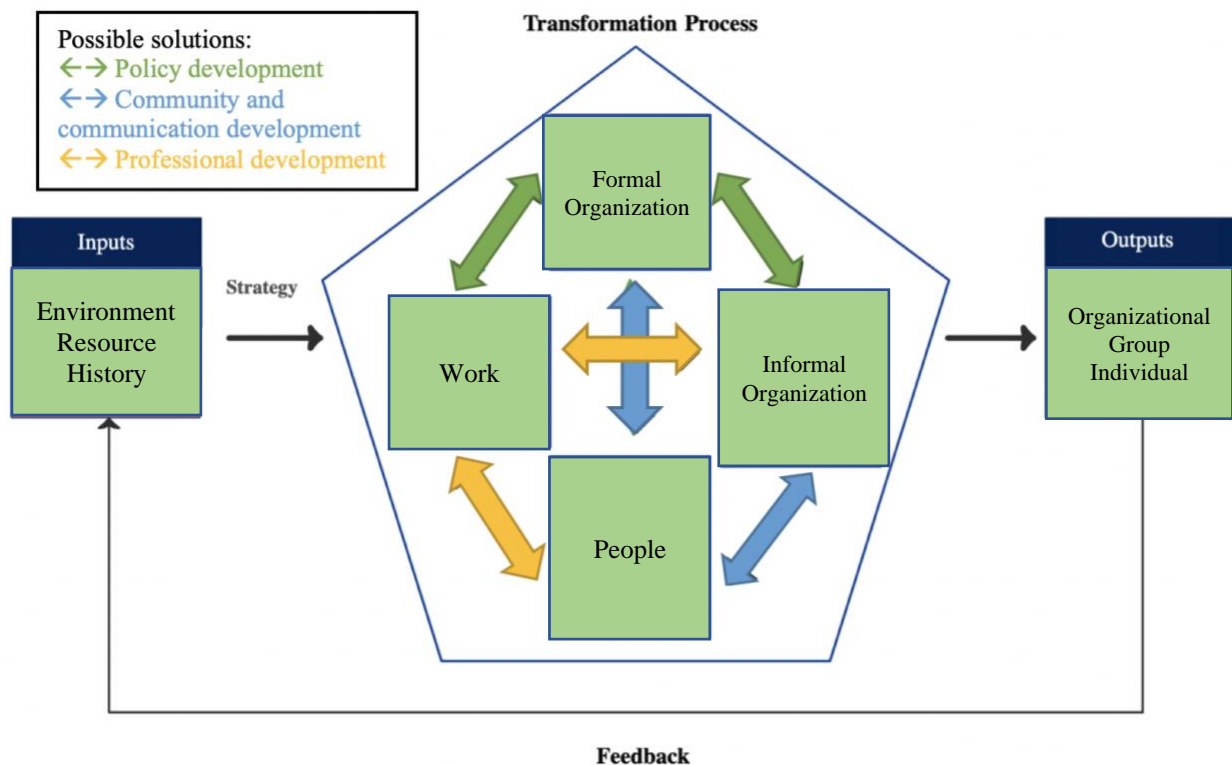
Note. The colored arrows indicate the way in which the possible solutions are aligned within the congruence model. Adapted from "Organizational Frame Bending: Principles for Managing Reorientation" by D. A. Nadler and M. L. Tushman, 1989, *The Academy of*

Management Executive, III(3), p. 195. Copyright 1989 by The Academy of Management

Executive.

The colored arrows portrayed within the congruence model, as illustrated in Figure 6,

shows the organizational areas that will be addressed by implementing the corresponding

solution. The discussion of each proposed solution is presented next.

Proposed Solution 1: Macro-level Policy Development

Educational settings are dynamic and complex, and a major purpose of a policy is to

provide "information and guidance to understand and act within that complexity" (Dumas &

Anderson, 2014, p. 9). Hence, the first proposed solution is to develop an internal policy to

guide the staff and parents with their roles and responsibilities, and to ensure that the cultural

dimensions of the children are welcomed and embedded within the curriculum and

classroom. Cultural awareness policy development could be addressed as a large-scale,

national-level reform, if the local ministry of education chooses to implement change across

all educational organizations in the country, given that the percentages of CCK at nursery

schools tend to be relatively high (Bennet, 2009). Nevertheless, for the purpose of this OIP,

policy development is considered from an organizational standpoint, or from the macro-level.

As previously described in Chapter 1, a compliance director who works for the parent

company that oversees OTN creates policies that are shared with the nursery directors. These

policies are developed using a top-down approach, with occasional suggestions from the

leadership team. Nevertheless, additional policies that are more nursery specific can be

developed by the team at OTN. In line with the collaborative, sociocultural perspective at

OTN, the suggested policy should be co-developed using a bottom-up approach, to ensure

that the voices of all stakeholders are considered. This could be completed using the AI

approach. Therefore, a policy development committee (hereafter referred to as the

Committee) should be established, consisting of OTN's families and staff, who would like to

contribute to the discourse. These individuals are viewed as the entrepreneurs or the policy
advocates (Ball et al., 2011).

Arafeh (2014) suggests using the commonly used policy cycle model, consisting of
five stages, as a guide to develop and implement policy. This model could be implemented
using the AI approach (Figure 7), as they are both cyclical in nature.

Figure 7

Policy Development Using the AI Approach
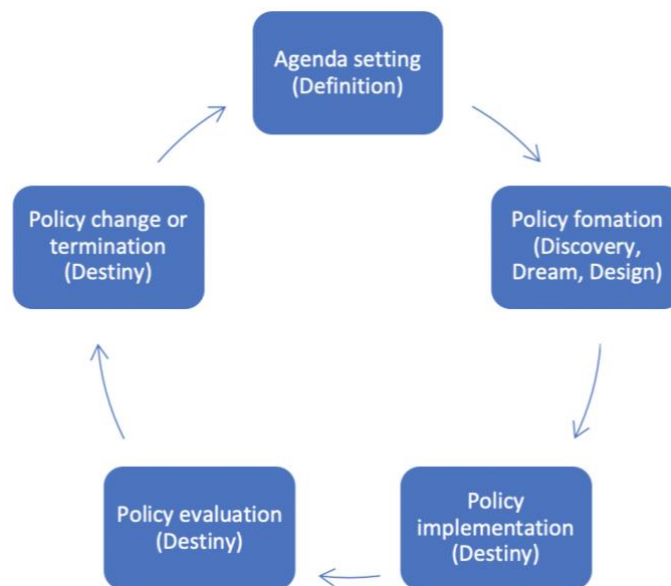
Note. Policy development is a cyclical process, starting with agenda setting. Adapted from
"Orienting Education Leaders to Education Policy" by S. Arafeh, 2014, *Educational
Leadership: Perspectives on Preparation and Practice*, p. 12. Copyright 2014 by ProQuest
Ebook Central.

The first stage of the policy development cycle is agenda setting, where policy actors
propose the particular issues for discussion. This aligns with the definition stage of the AI
approach, where the area of concern is defined. Next, the second stage is the policy
formation, where contributors are invited to describe and document solutions to the policy
problem. This stage of the cycle corresponds to three out of the five phases of the AI
approach – the discover, the dream, and the design phases, in which the group share positive

examples, create a common vision, and suggest ideas contributing to the creation of the policy. Arafeh's third stage is policy implementation, where the policies are acted upon and implemented in practice. The fourth stage is policy evaluation, where critical monitoring and review are conducted, which is followed by the final stage of policy change or termination. The third, fourth, and fifth stages of the policy development cycle align with the destiny phase of the AI approach.

Aligned with the AI approach, when creating policies, it is recommended to identify and assess alternative policies (Patton et al., 2013) that may be relevant to the PoP. The positive characteristics of these policies can guide the discourse with ways in which cultural awareness can be enhanced at OTN. Moreover, by establishing the Committee consisting of stakeholders with varying values and perspectives, the AI approach can provide opportunities for democratic participation (Moss, 2007) and recognizing the competing voices of the stakeholders (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Lac & Mansfield, 2018).

Resources required

Human, time, information, and technological resources will be required for the implementation of this solution.

Human as a Resource. The Committee, consisting of teachers, teaching assistants, administrative staff, local parents, and parents of CCK will be established. All stakeholders are welcome to participate and join the Committee. Ensuring that the Committee includes the competing voices from various stakeholder groups reinforces the partnership and sense of community (Rinaldi, 2016), and encourages relational dialogue (Drath, 2001).

Time as a Resource. The Committee will be required to dedicate a number of hours for the policy development meetings. These meetings will continue to take place after the policy implementation, to ensure that the policy is reviewed, evaluated and amended

accordingly. This will strengthen the accountability culture (Judge, 2011), ensuring that change is propelled and sustained.

Information as a Resource. Information such as similar policies, either from OTN, or from other educational organizations can provide a starting point to the policy development (Patton et al., 2013). Additionally, following the AI approach, positive experiences that are shared by the stakeholders is highly valued and reflected upon in the dream and design stages of the cycle.

Technology as a Resource. Laptops and tablets will be used to collect the suggestions during the definition, discovery, dream, and design stages. They will also be used when drafting and amending the policy. Additionally, the meetings may be recorded if the Committee provide consent. This is to ensure that all ideas are considered.

Benefits and Consequences

The most significant benefit for this solution is providing all stakeholders with the opportunity to channel their ideas, thoughts, suggestions, and concerns. This process in itself can model ways in which cultural awareness can be enhanced at OTN. The policy is socially constructed according to the needs of the community, within the broader organizational contexts (Diem & Young, 2015). A potential challenge, however, is that such a committee has never been formed in the past, and as a consequence, tensions could arise if the meetings are not designed successfully. Additionally, regardless of the group size of the Committee, it could be argued that it is never a true representation of OTN, but rather a narrow cross-section of the wider community. Moreover, policy developed tends to be subjective (Dumas & Anderson, 2014), and may not be applicable in other educational organizations, or when the demographics at OTN change.

Proposed Solution 2: Meso-level Professional Development

Reflecting on the meso-level of the organization, the second proposed solution focuses on the professional development of the staff, including the teachers, teaching assistants, and administrative team through collaborative inquiry (Butler & Schnellert, 2012), to ensure that they gain awareness of adaptation strategies and methods to integrate more culturally relevant practices in their classrooms. By working with this group of stakeholders, the OTN staff can become the drivers of change (Deszca et al., 2019). Ladson-Billings (2014) argues that educational staff should be "cultural[ly] competent" (Ladson-Billings, 2014, p. 74) by appreciating, understanding, and welcoming the cultures of the CCK and their families. These continuous professional development sessions will be conducted by on a monthly basis to ensure that the enhancement of culturally relevant pedagogy is ongoing.

Through observation of classroom practices, it is clear that one of the collaborative inquiry sessions should begin by focusing on the benefits of integrating the children's home languages into the classrooms (Hélot, 2011), and the ways in which plurilingual awareness can be enhanced (Kirwan, 2013). Moreover, the image and power of specific languages should be assessed and mitigated (Auger, 2013). Other sessions should delve into how parents and families can contribute to culturally relevant pedagogy in the classrooms, and how to support the CCK and their families with their move into a new city. According to Hofstede's model (1983), the cultural differences that people have could potentially impact the way they view and deal with change. Thus, a CCK moving from an individualist community may not have the same experiences as a CCK leaving a collectivist community.

The AI approach will be used during the collaborative inquiry professional development sessions to ensure continuous staff engagement and to support the staff in viewing change from a positive perspective.

Resources required

Human, time, information, and financial resources will be required for the implementation of this solution.

Human as a Resource. For professional development, no additional recruitment is required. However, some of the collaborative inquiry sessions could include external experts and providers, such as university professors or cultural community leaders.

Time as a Resource. The staff will have scheduled time during their work week to participate in the collaborative inquiry sessions. Unlike other training sessions, to support the enhancement of cultural awareness, the training sessions will be ongoing for several months (Butler & Schnellert, 2012). This additionally allows OTN to monitor the progress and supports with the cyclical implementation of the AI approach, and the cycle of professional development.

Information as a Resource. Information, such as past experiences and examples of culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy is a requirement. The work of several researchers should be shared with the team for a better comprehension of certain concepts such as cultural adaptations (Vedder & Horenczyk, 2006; Valeriu, 2017), cross-cultural adaptation (Kim, 2001), culturally responsive pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 2014; Gorter & Cenoz, 2016), and plurilingual awareness (Kirwan, 2013).

Financial Resource. Some of the externally provided training sessions will require additional financing. Although there is a current budget for training and professional development, additional money may be requested to ensure that there is a sufficient amount for ongoing collaborative inquiry sessions.

Benefits and Consequences

One of the benefits of having continuous professional development conducted with the whole team is that everyone will be aware of the way in which the changes can be

implemented. If these sessions are conducted using an AI approach and a portion of the time is dedicated to reflecting on positive experiences regarding cultural enhancements in the classroom, then the change can be visualized by the team, which will reinforce their learning (Siraj & Hallet, 2014). An open and honest dialogue promotes self-awareness and guide reflective practices (Mazutis & Slawinski, 2008), which empowers the staff to take ownership of their learning and progression as they enhance their culturally relevant practices. Nevertheless, this ongoing AI approach could be viewed as a repetitive process and time consuming by some of the staff members. Therefore, the benefits and effectiveness of the AI approach will be explained to the team.

Proposed Solution 3: Meso-level Community and Communication Enhancement

The third and final proposed solution is the enhancement of communication channels and community-building at OTN, on a meso-level. This is to ensure that there is a level of continuity and understanding between home and nursery, to support the children with the process of transition and adaptation. Colegrove (2019) argues that given the diverse demographics at schools today, parental involvement should be reframed to include culturally and linguistically diverse families. This can be done by welcoming the diverse voices and positioning the families as critical agents in conversations about their children's learning and development (Doucet, 2011). A longitudinal study, exploring children's development from the start of nursery school till the end of primary school, found that children who had consistencies when transitioning from home to the educational settings and a positive learning environment at home, had better educational outcomes in primary school (Sylva et al., 2008). Therefore, effective communications between the organization and the families, along with community support will bridge the cultural borders and mitigate some of the challenges that the CCK may face. According to the communication methods presented by Klein (1996), face-to-face communications are the optimal strategy due to the immediate

mutual interactions. Since the COVID-19 pandemic has temporarily restricted some of the face-to-face interactions, virtual "face-to-face" calls have been introduced to compensate for this.

Resources required

Human, financial, time, information, and technological resources will be required for the implementation of this solution.

Human as a Resource. The recruitment of a parent relations executive (PRE) could support with the community-building at OTN. This additional staff member can support the CCK and their families during their adaptation period and can monitor their well-being. Additionally, this team member can guide the families in learning more about the new city that they are living in.

Financial Resource. The recruitment of an additional staff member, the PRE, at OTN requires a budget approval from the parent company. As this is a new position that is not typically found at a nursery school, it will have to be justified and supported with evidence.

Time as a Resource. The teachers will have to allocate time, in addition to the drop-off and pick-up, to have virtual video calls with the families. The organization of these calls, including scheduling and sharing links will have to be conducted by the teachers.

Information as a Resource. The PRE and the teachers should be knowledgeable and have the information to guide the CCK and their families when necessary. For instance, if a multilingual family is worried about their child's additional language acquisition, or if a family is concerned with the project-based approach that is adopted by OTN.

Technological Resources. Laptops, tablets, or other technological device that allows virtual "face-to-face" calls, along with high-speed Internet connection are required for the enhancement of communication and community building during the pandemic.

Benefits and Consequences

By recruiting a PRE whose sole responsibility is to support the CCK and their families with their transition and cross-cultural adaptation, the parents may feel more reassured that they belong to the community at OTN, and that there is someone who they can speak to if they are facing any challenges. Nevertheless, it could be difficult to justify the need to recruit an additional staff member when getting approval from the parent company, especially since such a position is not typically found locally in nursery settings. As for the communication enhancements, scheduling frequent virtual calls with their children's teachers will also ensure that the parents' ideas and suggestions regarding their children's learning and development is listened to. A challenge to this approach, however, is that the team need to be familiar with the culturally relevant pedagogy, which is required for the reinforcement of the collaborative communications. Therefore, prior to using this solution, the staff should undergo the professional development, as suggested in an earlier proposed solution.

Selected Solution

From the three proposed solutions, a hybrid approach is recommended by combining two solutions, the macro-level policy development, alongside the meso-level professional development sessions. The reason for choosing this hybrid solution is because policy creation can be viewed as the starting point that will bring together all other culturally responsive approaches (Colegrove, 2019; Doucet, 2019), and policy implementation can be further strengthened when the staff are simultaneously undergo continuous professional development through collaborative inquiry. Furthermore, the Committee working on the policy consist of all stakeholder representatives, therefore the voices of the families and the staff are considered (Lac & Mansfield, 2018). Moreover, aligned with the leadership's chosen framework for organizational change, both the solutions can be simultaneously implemented using the AI approach, as presented in Figure 8. This will allow holistic reflective practices,

where the discussions occurring in the *destiny* phase of the cycle can trigger additional enhancements in either of the cycles.

As illustrated in Figure 8, both cycles will begin at the definition stage, where the policy agenda setting, and the professional development and learning goals are outlined. Once this is established, the discovery, dream, and design phases of the AI approach will begin. In terms of policy development, these stages involve policy formation through collaborative discussions with the Committee. As for the professional development, these stages of the AI approach involve planning the strategies based on what was discussed during the collaborative inquiry sessions. The next stage of the AI approach is destiny. Within the policy development cycle, this phase involves policy implementation, evaluation, and change or termination. As for the professional development cycle, this phase involves enacting learning strategies, monitoring, and adjusting practices. According to the outcomes of the policy development and the professional development cycles, reflections from both processes will inform the definition stage of both cycles, ensuring that what is learned guides the enhancement of both the policy and professional development cycles.

Figure 8

Using AI Approach for Simultaneous Policy and Professional Development
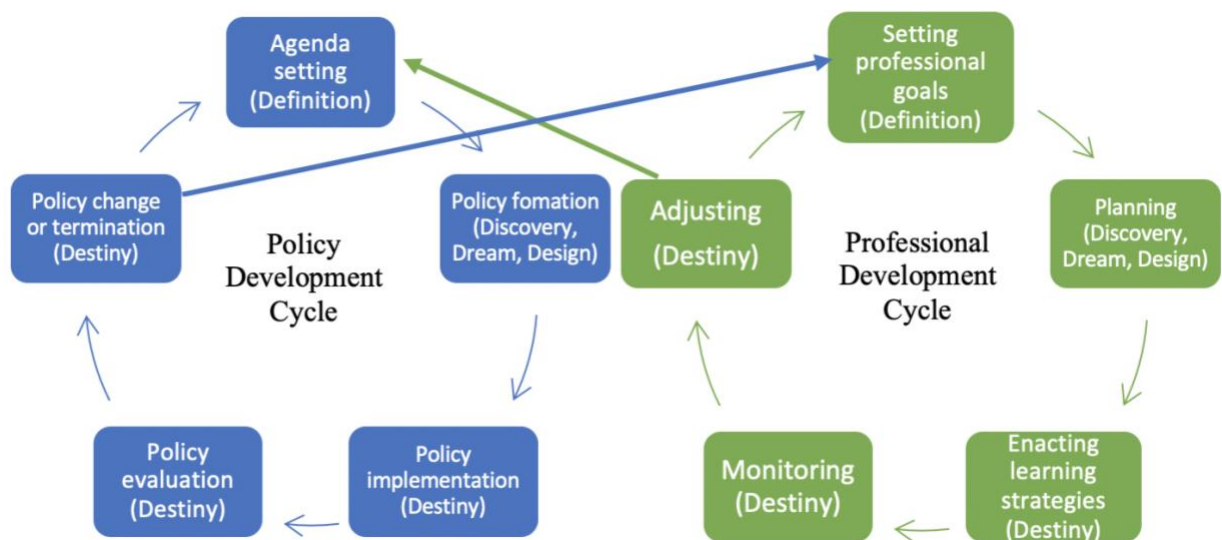
Note. Policy development and professional development are cyclical processes conducted simultaneously using the AI approach. This supports a holistic reflective approach and overlapping improvements (Cooperrider, 2008; Mazutis & Slawinski, 2008; Siraj & Hallet, 2014).

Reflecting on the three guiding questions described in Chapter 1, this hybrid solution addresses all lines of inquiries. The establishment of the Committee supports with mitigating the power that leaders tend to have when developing policies, and it considers the adaptation period that CCK and their families frequently face by allowing all stakeholders to contribute to the discussion through the process of reflective dialogue (Giles, 2018; Drath, 2011; Cunliffe & Erikson, 2018). Furthermore, through collaborative inquiry, the team at OTN can enhance their culturally responsive pedagogy, as they become more culturally aware. Their interactions with the CCK and their families will become more differentiated depending on the cultural needs of each child (Ladson-Billings, 2014). Equity, ethics, and social justice are essential components in addressing the PoP. Some of the challenges faced by OTN are described in the next section.

Leadership Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice Challenges in Organizational Change

The purpose of this OIP is to enhance the cultural adaptation strategies that are faced by CCK and their families, and to raise awareness of ways in which the nursery team can support with this process. This section discusses the ethics, equity, and social justice challenges that are faced by OTN, and the mitigation methods that can be applied across the various levels of the organization. It is clear from the proposed solutions that there are areas for improvement when considering the level of equity in supporting CCK and their families as they transition into the nursery school.

Considering Different Lenses

There is a distinction when looking at diversity from a mainstream lens versus a social justice lens (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). Applying an ethical or social justice perspective into any education leadership approach supports the leader in critically understanding where the children and their families come from. It also encourages the leader to be self-aware and reflective, which is a requirement for building collaborative relationships with the stakeholders (McDaniels & Magno, 2014). For instance, although it could be argued that the more diverse a social group is, the greater the social group's collective ability to consider various perspectives (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). Nevertheless, as the policy committee is being established, it is beneficial to reconsider Hofstede's cultural difference model (1983) and identify the cultural dimensions of each stakeholder. Questions about whether the individual families come from a collectivist or an individualistic culture could support or hinder their participation, and ability to portray their perspective on the PoP.

Ethical Leadership as Relational

Liu (2017) applies a critical lens to ethical leadership and contests some of the assumptions that are typically made in the literature. She argues that the current literature present power dynamics as a concept that can balance out and become neutral, however, that is not always the case. Liu also calls into question the notion that leadership is intrinsically ethical, when in reality the leader focuses on the *heroic* aspect of their role. She instead presents ethical leadership in three ways – as relational, as contextual, and as political. Aligned with my leadership approach, the relational approach, as discussed in Chapter 1, the focus will be on *ethical leadership as relational*.

Liu claims that leadership involves negotiations and interactions between various stakeholders in an organization. Therefore, ethical leadership is not a linear process, but a dynamic multidirectional process involving the leader and the followers. This is recognized

by the social cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), that values the collaborative process individuals undergo when meaning-making. Similarly, a significant benefit to the relational leadership approach is that it appreciates the relationship between the leader and the stakeholders involved, which is based on mutual trust and respect (Brower et al., 2000; Giles, 2018). Since it is defined as a relationship, it is acknowledged that although the level of power between the leader and the families or staff may never reach a constant equilibrium, there are various opportunities for the members to exert their voice and power (Liu, 2017). In other words, from a social cultural perspective, part of the ethical obligations of a relational leader is to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the meaning-making process (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012).

As the nursery director at OTN, it is important to acknowledge that the demographics of the children and their families are ever-changing, and that there are many complex factors that play a role in ensuring equity, equality, and social justice. It is also crucial to understand how our positions and privileges play a role in the possible construction of inequalities (McDaniels & Magno, 2014). Nevertheless, this could be mitigated when engaging in the AI approach with the stakeholders, or when having formal or informal conversations with the parents, by following these suggestions presented by Sensoy and DiAngelo (2017):

- Build tolerance for listening when others are speaking.

- Self-monitor your participation to ensure that you are not dominating the discussion.

- Invite others to contribute to the discussion.

- Engage in dialogue instead of a debate.

- Consider what is being said from the collective perspective, instead of the individual level.

- Understand that although you may be involved in the same conversation, others may not be experiencing it in the same way.

Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice in the Context of the PoP

At OTN, many CCK and their families feel a sense of isolation as they relocate to a new city and begin to navigate their cross-cultural adaptation. Therefore, there is a responsibility on the nursery leader and team to ensure that the CCK and their families are supported in this process. Having empathy, understanding, care, and justice (Starratt, 2012) are essential components to guide this process. Starratt (2012) proposes a multidimensional ethical framework consisting of three major components – the ethics of care, the ethics of justice, and the ethics of critique – that can be used to guide the policies, practices, and decisions that are made by the leaders and staff at OTN.

Nursery schools are often referred to as places that provide education and care to children and their families (Osgood, 2006). Starratt (2012) insists on placing the ethics of care as the primary component to his framework since it is a human need. People flourish and strive when they are in caring relationships, and therefore, when organizations provide the stakeholders with ethics of care, they are realizing the individual's value, dignity, and worth. Moreover, when engaging in the ethics of care, educators and leaders understand that it is the individual's right to be their authentic self (Hollway, 2006), and therefore, to accept for who they are. At OTN, the ethics of care is displayed within its core values, by attending to the community with care, and by valuing cooperation and teamwork (Starratt, 2012). Therefore, the team at OTN do not view the CCK and their families as an obligation to attend to, instead, they form strong relationships through care and individualized attention. To further enhance the ethics of care at OTN, the team will be engaging in continuous collaborative inquiry sessions surrounding the notion of culturally responsive pedagogy (Khalifa et al., 2016). This will ensure that the care that is provided for the CCK and their families is aligned with their home country's beliefs and values (Pollok et al., 2017).

The second component of Starratt's framework is the ethics of justice. He differentiates between the ethics of care and the ethics of justice by stating that "caring is the ethics that binds communities together in sociality. Justice is the ethic that binds people together in the demands that accrue their rights as citizens and as individual human beings" (Starratt, 2012, p. 38). At a nursery school level, there are two types of justice that need to be accounted for. The first is the individual's choice to act justly, and the second, is the school community's choice to govern justly. Therefore, OTN does not solely provide care to the children, they are additionally required to effectively implement policies and procedures to guide the just treatment of all children and stakeholders. This standard of justice must be applied uniformly to all, regardless of their cultural or social backgrounds. Additionally, through social interactions and by living within the community, children learn about morals and justice. Hence, a multicultural education, focusing on the present social conditions of various cultural groups, and how their lives can be improved when treated with just (Starratt, 2012), should be part of the educational program for the children. For instance, projects surrounding the diverse cultures in the classrooms can support the children in understanding that they share humanity and common feelings with other children who do not share the same language (Pollock et al., 2017). Such conversations should also guide the policy development discussions with the Committee.

The final component of Starratt's (2012) ethics framework is the ethics of critique. Influenced by the work of critical theorists, the ethics of critique is the process of assessing the operations and performance of the nursery school from a justice standpoint. Although Starratt (2012) argues that social arrangements can never be fully neutral, it is OTN's responsibility to create arrangements that are suitable and responsive to all its stakeholders. Therefore, by having the Committee working together in policy development can mitigate some of the tensions that arise regarding power and voice. However, it is important to

recognize that such policies may never be value-free, or completely unbiased (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017), since they will be developed by stakeholders with various intentions. Nevertheless, by implementing the cyclical process of AI, and ensuring that the policy is being reviewed and reflected upon, this can bring to light any injustices that are present. Similarly, during the professional development of the team, ongoing reflective practices is recommended to ensure that any biases are being acknowledged and eliminated.

Chapter 2 Conclusion

The perception that stakeholders have on change can impact its implementation. Therefore, having appropriate frameworks that shed positive light on the process can support them with embracing the change. This chapter introduces the appreciative inquiry approach, both as a combined framework with the change path model, and as an approach to implement the solutions. After critically analyzing the context at OTN, three solutions were proposed to address the PoP. The selected solution is a hybrid one comprised of policy and professional development. This chapter concluded by considering how ethics, equity, and social justice can be approached and embedded in the change plan at OTN. The next chapter will delve further into the change implementation and address ways in which the change process will be monitored and evaluated.

Chapter 3: Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication

Within OTN's organizational context, Chapter 1 presented the problem of practice that has been used to guide the development of the remaining chapters of this OIP. Focusing on the strengths of the leadership, and by embracing the collaborative nature of OTN's community, the five phases of the AI approach were introduced in Chapter 2. The AI approach will continue to guide the change implementation plan, the monitoring and evaluation, and the communication strategies in this chapter. Using a multi-leveled approach to change management, the hybrid solution from Chapter 2 will be addressed in the change implementation plan. This chapter concludes by considering the next steps and the potential future of the work created throughout this OIP.

Change Implementation Plan

Kang (2015) argues that current literature surrounding change management tends to combine the notions of the change plan or strategy with the change guidelines or tactics, without making any clear distinctions between them. Instead, Kang recommends using the term *macro change management* to describe the transformative changes that take place on a strategic level, and using the term *micro change management* to address the specific guidelines or tactics. Within this OIP, the change implementation plan will address the *macro* by describing change management using theory, then focus on the *micro* by proposing what needs to be implemented in practice. As illustrated in Figure 9, together, the macro and the micro change management work together to provide a reasonable way to enhance culturally relevant pedagogy, practices, and policies at OTN.

As presented in Figure 9, from an organizational level, the macro change management considers the leadership approach (the organizational structure) and the AI approach to develop a cultural awareness policy (the organizational strategy), while the micro change

management focuses on the process of improving and implementing culturally responsive

practices at OTN using collaborative inquiry (see Appendix A).

Figure 9

Relationship Between Macro and Micro Change Management

Note. Both macro and micro change management are addressed to ensure successful change

implementation. Adapted from "Change Management: Term Confusion and New

Classification," by P. Kang, 2015, *Performance Improvement, 54*(3), p. 27

(https://doi.or/10.1002/pfi.21466). Copyright 2015 by Wiley Online Library.

Using Blake and McCanse's leadership grid (1991), Gaubatz and Ensminger (2017)

differentiate between people-focused leadership and task-focused leadership. They emphasize

the importance of balancing both people- and task-related behaviors to ensure organizational

success, whilst assuring that the stakeholders flourish. They define this equilibrium as the

constructivist quadrant, where the emphasis on the growth of the organization (the macro)

and the flourishing of the individual (the micro) are equally valued and addressed. Similarly,

the relational (Uhl-Bien, 2006; Cunliffe & Erikson, 2011; Giles, 2018) and culturally

responsive leadership (Khalifa et al., 2016; Marshall & Khalifa, 2018; Campos-Moreira et al.,

2020) approaches both encourage collaborative experiences and open dialogues to continue

improving the culture of the organization to match the needs of the stakeholders. The next

section unravels the macro- and micro- levels from through the lens of equity and social justice.

Unlearn and Relearn on Macro- and Micro-levels for Equity and Social Justice

To implement culturally responsive practices and pedagogies at OTN, the approach of improving OTN's cultural awareness policies, while simultaneously supporting the staff members in engaging in collaborative inquiries during professional development sessions was proposed as the optimal hybrid solution in Chapter 2. Despite implementing change in the midst of a global pandemic, Fernandes and Gattolin (2021) urge educational leaders to view the COVID-19 pandemic as an invitation to "rethink, reevaluate, and reorganize our beliefs and our priorities […] in terms of knowledge, practices, experiences and critical reflections" (p. 531). They touch upon the notion of learning, unlearning, and relearning for the purpose of organizational improvement. Moreover, Azmi (2008), from a strategic management lens, presents the learn-unlearn-relearn model that is required for an organization's successful change. He highlights the benefits of collaborative learning that outweigh individual learning, and the importance of being open-minded and flexible to accept change in knowledge. Emphasis was also placed on reflections and introspections to ensure that relearning is successfully achieved. This closely corresponds to the destiny stage of the AI approach. Similarly, on a micro level, Andreotti and de Souza (2008) propose the use of four learnings to ensure that culturally responsive practices are achieved at educational settings. These four learnings include learning to unlearn, learning to listen, learning to learn, and learning to reach out. During the learning to unlearn process, the individuals reflect on the construction of their own identities, beliefs, and knowledge. Next, the process of learning to listen involves assessing how others are perceived and to what extent is this perception based on one's cultural baggage. Then, learning to learn encourages crossing the comfort zone to accept and engage with the new or the unfamiliar. Finally, the process of learning to

reach out involves the engagement with others through acceptance and respect. This creates a relational and cultural space where knowledge and power are negotiated and shared. From an equity standpoint, Andreotti and de Souza's (2008) four learnings can be used as a guide by the OTN team to address the gap in cultural awareness policies and practices, as identified by the PoP.

Change Implementation Using the AI Approach

The AI approach (Cooperrider et al., 2008), outlined in Chapter 2, will guide the implementation strategy, especially when Andreotti and de Souza's (2008) four learnings are applied to the teachers' collaborative inquiry and the policy development cycles, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3

A Comparison Between the AI Approach *and Andreotti and De Souza's (2008) Four Learnings and its Application to Policy Development and Collaborative Inquiry*

Appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider et al., 2008)	Four learnings (Andreotti & de Souza, 2008)	Policy development (Arafeh, 2014)	Collaborative inquiry (Butler & Schnellert, 2012)
Definition – what do we want to change?		Agenda setting	Setting professional learning and development goals
Discovery – what do we do well?	Learning to unlearn	Policy formation	Planning
Dream – endless possibilities	Learning to listen	Policy formation	Planning
Design – how do we make it happen?	Learning to learn	Policy formation	Planning
Destiny – attempt and reflect	Learning to reach out	Policy implementation, evaluation, change or termination	Enacting learning strategies, monitoring, adjusting

Note. The short-, medium-, and long-term goals will be implemented using the AI approach. Policy formation (for policy development) and planning (for collaborative inquiry) are addressed in three out of the five phases of the AI cycle (Cooperrider et al., 2008).

The definition, discovery, dream, and design phases of the AI approach will be discussed as part of the change implementation, while the destiny phase of the AI cycle will be explored in the monitoring and evaluation section of this chapter (see Appendix B).

Definition and discovery

The definition and discovery phases will take place between September to December 2022 (Year 1, Term 1). This aligns with the awakening stage of the change path (CP) model (Deszca et al., 2019). During this phase, the change plan will focus on (a) ensuring stakeholders understand the need for change, (b) sharing the intended change plan with OTN's upper management (parent company) by articulating the gap between the current and future envisioned state, (c) setting the agenda in terms of the shared vision and goals, (d) communicating the vision for change with stakeholders, and (e) assembling the policy development committee. Gaubatz and Ensminger (2017) recommend that the shared vision be established by addressing the current situation and supporting others in viewing it from alternative standpoints, for instance from the perspective of the child, or the family members. On a macro level, the Committee, that was introduced in Chapter 2, will convene to address the discovery question of "what does OTN currently do well in terms of culturally relevant policies and practices?". On a micro level, the OTN staff, will begin the process of monthly collaborative inquiry from September 2022 to March 2021 (Year 1, Term 1-2), guided by Andreotti and de Souza's (2008) four learnings to enhance culturally responsive pedagogy, starting with the process of learning to unlearn.

Stakeholder Selection for Cultural Change. For successful implementation, the selection of change agents is an essential part of the process (Lewis, 2019). Therefore,

choosing the right change agents to support in the policy development and to promote the collaborative inquiry process will involve understanding the needs of the CCK and their families, along with the vision and goals of the change plan. Some traits that can support with the selection of the stakeholders include their determination and commitment to improvement, their collaborative and interpersonal skills, and their compassion and ethical values (Raelin, 2003).

Creating the Committee, and a professional learning community (PLC) can empower stakeholders in taking ownership in achieving the envisioned change. The Committee will consist of stakeholders from various backgrounds, including leadership, staff, and parents, to ensure that a multitude of voices, values, and perspectives are considered when developing the policy (Ball et al., 201; Moss, 2007). From a social justice perspective, and particularly in line with the ethics of critique (Starratt, 2012), participation in the Committee mitigates any power imbalance and supports in capacity building, especially by allowing stakeholders a level of control that may not have access to otherwise (House & Howe, 2000). Any stakeholder interested in creating positive cultural changes on a strategic, policy-level is welcome to join the Committee. The Committee will meet in small groups of up to ten people to ensure that everyone is provided with opportunities to contribute to the discussions. Multiple meetings will be held if there are more stakeholders interested in voicing their perspectives. Moreover, Siraj and Hallet (2014) highlight the positive effect that teachers can have on change when working together as a learning community. Benefits such as exchanging ideas, knowledge, and expertise, and co-finding solutions to similar problems are some of the ways in which PLCs can support teachers (Hopkins & Levin, 2000; Prenger et al., 2017). The teachers' collaborative inquiries can lead to meaningful improvements in pedagogy, especially when teachers collectively reflect on their practices (Butler & Schnellert, 2012; Horn & Little, 2010).

Dream

The dream phase which is aligned with the mobilization stage of the CP model will focus on (a) understanding the stakeholders' perception or vision to change, (b) celebrating the excitement for change, and (c) addressing any resistance to change. This phase will begin during the change implementation and continue throughout the processes of monitoring and evaluation.

Understanding Stakeholder Reactions to Change. Understanding and responding to the reactions to change is a complex task. As illustrated in Chapter 1, change readiness should be addressed using a multi-leveled approach to ensure that the readiness is consistent and achieved at an individual level, the group level, and on an organizational level (Rafferty et al., 2013; Vakola, 2013; Holt and Vardaman 2013). Moreover, there is a clear distinction between those involved in the change implementation process and those who are merely the change recipients (Gaubatz & Ensminger, 2017), and therefore, the change process may cause a variety of responses from the different stakeholders. Deszca et al. (2019) claims that not all stakeholders view change as negative and argues that in most cases individuals resist change because they believe that the costs of the change outweigh the benefits. The reactions to change may occur due to four types of contextually constructed barriers including social, cultural, psychological, and/or organizational (Gaubatz & Ensminger, 2017). To mitigate this, it is recommended that effective communications from the leadership team should voice the need for change, the appropriateness of the plan, the support that the stakeholders will receive, along with the change efficacy, and the benefits that the change will have on the stakeholders (Armenakis & Harris, 2002). The process of effective communication will be explored further in the communications plan, presented later in this chapter.

Design

The design phase of the AI approach aligns with the acceleration stage of the CP model. This phase will focus on (a) cocreating the policy development and professional development plans, (b) empowering others to take ownership of the shared change implementation, (c) providing support to those who require additional knowledge and/or skills to accelerate the change implementation, and (d) celebrating the short-term goals or milestones that are achieved along the path of change.

Aligning Goals with Strategic Goal and Change Vision. As discussed in Chapter 1, OTN's strategic goal is to use the stakeholders' collaborative potentials to enhance the overall well-being of all children and their families. Therefore, the change vision is for the leadership and academic team to work together in promoting cultural relevant practices. Aligned with this strategic goal and change vision are three short-term goals, two medium-term goals, and two long-term goals (see Appendix C) that will be used as a guide in the implementation process. These goals are a fluid construct and may be altered when the implementation plan is put into action, especially when the change plan is shared with the stakeholders, who will also play a significant role in defining the goals (Lewis, 2019).

Additional Support and Resources.

A main resource needed for change implementation is time. Time will have to be allocated for the monthly collaborative inquiry sessions, as well as the Committee meetings. The updated teachers' schedules will reflect the time allocation for both (Bulter & Schnellert, 2012). Other resources include space allocation or technological support to conduct face-to-face, or virtual meetings, depending on COVID restrictions. Some financial resources may be required to outsource the initial training for teachers on the AI approach, to ensure that it is implemented effectively for the purpose of the change plan. This monetary amount will be included in the annual budgets, which requires approval from the financial department of

OTN's parent company. Furthermore, exploring policies and literature that address cultural awareness and culturally responsive pedagogy will be used. The societal and organizational cultures present in these borrowed informational resources will be considered (Dimmock & Walker, 2000) to ensure that they are applicable for OTN's context.

Potential Implementation Issues, Limitations and their Solutions

As part of the change implementation planning, it is beneficial for the leader to anticipate potential challenges and find ways to mitigate them (Deszca et al., 2019). Some of the issues that could arise include viewing the Committee as a true representation of OTN's culture, teacher turnover, competing priorities, support from the parent company, and COVID-19 restrictions.

The Committee: A True Representation?

Although the Committee will be an open invitation for any stakeholder to join, it is a narrow representation of the wider community at OTN. Some parents may want to contribute but are unable to due to competing circumstances, such as work and family commitments. Therefore, with consent from the Committee members, a summary of the meetings minutes will be shared with the parent and teacher community in the leader's monthly newsletters. Family members who wish to contribute to the discourse will be invited to respond to the email. This process mitigates the silent "white spaces" (Diem & Young, 2015, p. 842) ensuring that all stakeholders' voices are heard.

Teacher Turnover

The change implementation plan is intended to last for two years. Although 80% of the teachers have been working at OTN for five or more years, there is an annual turnover of approximately 5-10%. Every year, OTN welcomes at least two new staff members. This could cause a disruption in the implementation plan, especially in terms of the collaborative inquiry process. To mitigate the impact, the recruiting process will involve looking for

candidates who have skills and experience in collaborative inquiry. Moreover, the induction period of the newly hired teachers will include information about the change plan, by sharing the vision, strategy, and goals (Deszca et al., 2019).

Competing Priorities

Along with implementing this change plan over the next few years, there may be other competing priorities to attend to. Nevertheless, this can be mitigated by rescheduling time and re-communicating the urgency of the plan. As the implementation involves monthly committee meetings and collaborative inquiry sessions, the allocated dates could be shifted to a more convenient one during the month. To ensure that the change vision remains a priority, a reminder about how the change plan goals are aligned with OTN's strategy and change vision can be reshared with the stakeholders.

Lack of Support from the Parent Company

Despite the encouragement provided by the parent company throughout the development of this OIP, there may be lack of support offered if OTN's change vision is not aligned with the parent company's vision and mission. Additionally, if the financial resources requested for the implementation of the plan does not fit with the parent company's budgets, resistance could be faced. To mitigate any reluctancy from the parent company, transparency and effective communication need to be at the forefront of the interactions between OTN and the parent company (Johansson & Heide, 2008). Moreover, members from the parent company will be invited to join the Committee if they would like to contribute to the discourse and learn more about the importance of supporting CCK and their families with their transitions (Lewis, 2019). As the parent company joins the change vision, they will be more likely to support with any finances, if necessary.

COVID-19 Restrictions

Since the onset of the pandemic, our views towards COVID-19 has shifted from one of fear to one of an invitation to unlearn and relearn (Fernandes & Gattolin, 2021), with the aim of making positive changes. Therefore, although there may be some uncertainties due to COVID-19 during the change process, this should not be a factor preventing the implementation. Should restrictions arise, the scheduled meetings will continue remotely until the restrictions are lifted.

In summary, this component of the change implementation plan is one of three sections. This portion describes the various foci that will be addressed under each of the AI approach stages, by considering each phase's alignment to the CP model. The relationship between the change plan's goals and OTN's strategic and change vision was also shared. This section concludes by describing the potential issues that may arise during the implementation process and suggests mitigation strategies to ensure that plan remains uninterrupted. The next section will consider the monitoring and evaluation tools needed to reinforce the change implementation plan.

Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure progress within the change plan, a monitoring and evaluation framework is required (Sanetti & Collier-Meek, 2019). Having a clear strategy before initiating the change process can support with the sustainability of its implementation (Adelman & Taylor, 2007). Markiewicz and Patrick (2016) claim that monitoring and evaluation are crucial components of the change process. The main purpose of monitoring is to continuously track the change implementation and record the progress. Evaluation, by contrast, utilizes the information collected during the monitoring process and periodically forms judgements by assessing the achievements of outcomes and the overall impact of the change (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Together, they support the organization's decision-making, promote organizational

learning and improvement, and ensure accountability when implementing change. Stepping away from viewing monitoring and evaluation as two separate entities, Markiewicz and Patrick argue that monitoring should be addressed as a component within the evaluation process. Considering the processes of monitoring and evaluation as complimentary to one another, there are five distinctive relationships that researchers have identified that could define the connection between the two processes, including sequential, hierarchical, and integrative (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Nielsen & Ejler, 2008). The relationship that supports the change plan within this OIP is the integrative approach, which will be further discussed using a multileveled lens.

This section, focusing on the process of monitoring and evaluation, is the second of three components within the change plan. In this section, the final stage of the AI approach (Cooperrider et al., 2008) – destiny – will be described in detail. This section will also introduce the PDSA cycle (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017) that will be used as a strategic tool for monitoring and evaluating purposes.

Multileveled Focus: An Integrative Approach

Bamberger et al. (2012) illustrate that programs typically involve multiple projects occurring simultaneously to achieve shorter- and longer- term outcomes. This multileveled focus on monitoring and evaluation applies to the concurrent macro-level policy development and micro-level professional development. Hence, the information collected on the systems (macro) level will also feed into the data collected on the micro level. Data, for the purpose of monitoring and evaluation, will be collected using several methods, including parent and staff satisfaction surveys, classroom observations, teachers' reflective journals, and the Committee's meeting minutes. Figure 10 demonstrates the interconnection within the multileveled monitoring and evaluation, and its impact on the change vision and goals.

Figure 10

Multileveled Monitoring and Evaluation Process
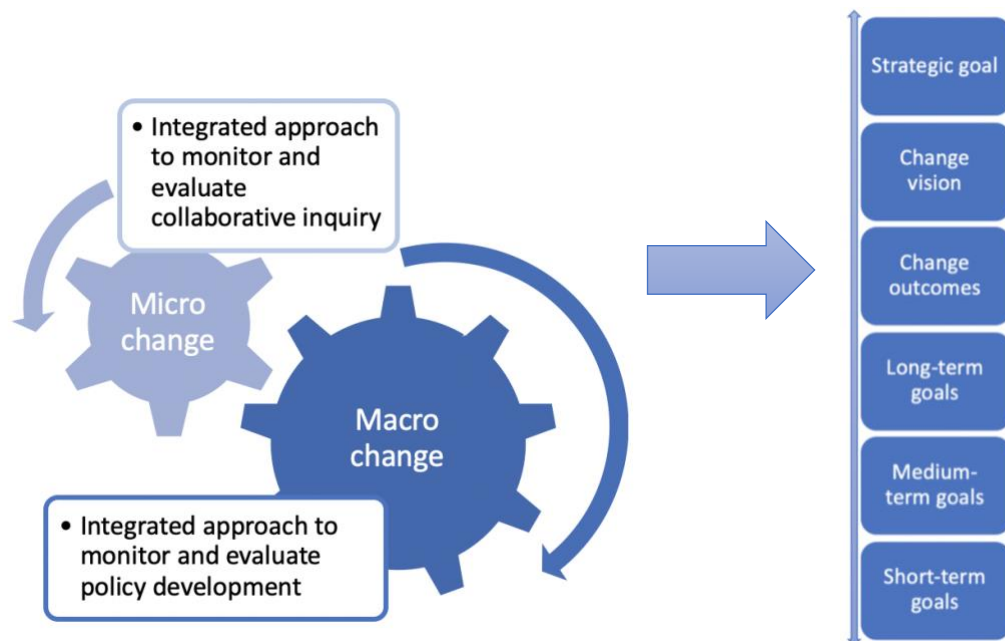
Note. The process of monitoring and evaluation is required at all levels to ensure the achievement of the strategic goal, change vision, and long-, medium-, and short-term goals, as indicated by the yellow arrow. Adapted from "Change Management: Term Confusion and New Classification," by P. Kang, 2015, *Performance Improvement, 54*(3), p. 27 (https://doi.or/10.1002/pfi.21466). Copyright 2015 by Wiley Online Library.

Since both levels of the change plan are being addressed at the same time, with the intention of achieving the mutual change vision and goals (Appendix C), an integrated approach to the monitoring and evaluation process is applied. This means that in addition to the monitoring tools used, there is an alignment in the set of evaluation questions that both processes will address (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Such an integrated approach ensures harmony within the multileveled change plan.

Conversation: The Heart of the AI Approach

In congruence with the social constructivist view, monitoring and evaluation will rely on the participation of and conversations with stakeholders (Patton, 2008). Rooted in the

constructivist worldview, having meaningful, honest, and heartfelt conversations can lead to positive changes within the organization (Lewis et al., 2016). A main component within any conversation is the act of listening (Stone et al., 1999). Conversations are at the heart of the AI approach because every stage of the cycle requires discussions and interactions with others. Therefore, being present, curious, and attentive are needed when listening to the stakeholders' reflections and suggestions. The act of listening and participating in the conversations is a monitoring and evaluative tool in itself (Lewis, 2019). Moreover, flourishing is another key element within the AI approach (Lewis et al., 2016), both on an individual level, and on an organizational level. Therefore, aligned with the multidimensional ethical framework (Starratt, 2012) presented in Chapter 2, the positive values that underpin the AI approach, along with the organization's strategic goal of enhancing the overall well-being of the children, family members, and staff will remain at the forefront of the change, particularly during the monitoring and evaluation process.

Markiewicz and Patrick (2016) claim that evaluative questions are required within the monitoring and evaluation framework to better understand what needs to be monitored and evaluated, and to ensure that the data collection tools used are effective for their purpose. These evaluative questions will guide the conversations that take place within the destiny stage of the AI approach (Appendix D).

Destiny

Destiny, the final piece of the cyclical AI approach, is aligned with the institutionalization stage of the CP model. This phase of the process will continuously occur over the intended two-year change plan, particularly towards the end of every academic term – in December, March, and June of 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. The foci of this stage are to (a) communicate the progress, success, and challenges with the various stakeholders, (b) encourage the Committee and the teachers to reflect on the process and progress

(monitoring), (c) track the changes periodically (evaluation), and (d) make changes to the plan according to the stakeholders' reflections and the managements' change tracking. This could result in the repetition of the AI cycles presented in Chapter 2, starting with definition and discovery.

Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle

Adapted by the work of Walter A. Shewart and made popular by William E. Deming, the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle is used as a framework to monitor and evaluate the change process (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017). Aligned with the social constructivist theory, and the collaborative nature of the AI approach, the PDSA cycle is used to continuously monitor and periodically evaluate the various stages of the change implementation plan, as demonstrated in Figure 11.

Figure 11

Monitoring and Evaluation Using the PDSA Cycle
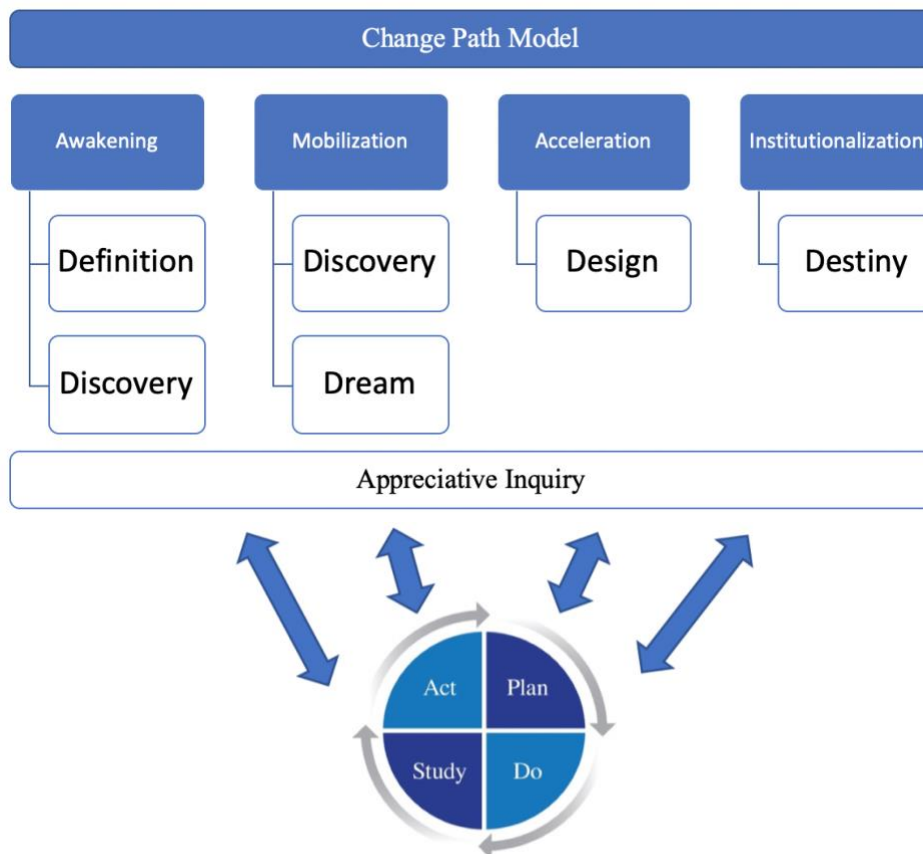
Note. The PDSA cycle (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017) is carried out at every stage of the change implementation plan – which consists of an alignment between the AI approach (Cooperrider et al., 2008) and the CP model (Deszca et al., 2019) – to ensure that appropriate monitoring and evaluation is occurring.

Reed and Card (2016) describe the PDSA cycle as a "structured experimental learning approach" (p. 147), implying that it can be used as an investigative tool to adapt and adjust strategies according to the changes desired. This tool is also chosen due to its continuous cyclical process that complement and resemble the repeated nature of the AI approach. In addition to being an efficient tool for monitoring and evaluation purposes (Donnelly & Kirk, 2015), the PDSA cycle is also perceived as an instrument to sustain the quality and momentum for change after its initiation (Laverentz & Kumm, 2017).

As a continuous quality improvement tool, the PDSA cycle encourages organizations to improve their procedures and practices through four stages. First, by *planning* the changes they aspire to achieve, followed by *doing* or implementing the actions that would lead to the change, then by *studying* the quantitative and/or qualitative data to assess the changes, and finally, by *acting* accordingly to sustain the changes or to identify areas for improvements and next steps (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017; Laverentz & Kumm, 2017). Each stage of the cycle is individually explored.

Plan Stage

Although the P in PDSA generally stands for the concept of planning, Leis and Shojania (2017) extend this by claiming that it also refers to the notion of prediction. Therefore, during this stage of the cycle, in addition to planning the small steps of change – or the individual foci presented under each stage of the AI approach stages – it may be useful to predict or anticipate the outcomes of each of the small steps, to support the continuous monitoring process. Typically, during the planning stage, the strengths, weaknesses,

opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis is conducted (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017). Moving

away from the SWOT model, Lewis et al. (2016) suggests using the SOAR framework

alongside the AI approach, as it shines a more positive light when assessing the vision,

mission, strategies, and plans of the organization, which is in line with the constructive

philosophy behind the AI approach. The SOAR framework, originally developed by Starvos

et al. (2003), ensures that the negativity of discussing weaknesses and threat, is replaced by

having conversations about aspirations and results. Therefore, the SOAR framework

considers the strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results of the organizational change.

When combined with the AI approach, the SOAR framework accelerates the strategic plans

of the organization by solely focusing on the components that provide optimistic visions for

change (Lewis et al., 2016). Thus, the SOAR framework further enhances the conversations

occurring amongst the stakeholders when planning and predicting the impact of the change

and supports stakeholders in creating more constructive, small goals that are SMART

(specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-based) (Doran, 1981). Thus, in

summary, this stage focuses on how, where, when, and who will implement the plan, and the

reasons for why the implementation is necessary.

Do Stage

During this stage, the planned steps for change are implemented (Laverentz & Kumm,

2017). For the purpose of this OIP, the planned steps are outlined in the change

implementation action plan (Appendix B). It is important that data is collected and

documented accurately. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected, as presented

in Table 4.

Table 4

Data Collection Methods for Monitoring and Evaluation

Data Collection Method	Type	Purpose	Frequency
Parent satisfaction surveys	Qualitative and quantitative	Monitoring and Evaluation	Once a term
Staff classroom observations	Qualitative	Monitoring	Once a month
Committee meeting minutes	Qualitative	Monitoring	At every meeting (monthly)
Teachers' surveys	Qualitative and quantitative	Evaluation	Once a year
Teachers' reflective journals following collaborative inquiry sessions	Qualitative	Monitoring	Once a month

Note. The frequency of each data collection method for monitoring purposes is subject to change, depending on the achievement of goals.

The reason for choosing a mixed-method approach (Dumas & Anderson, 2014), is that although this OIP is situated within the interpretivist worldview, having some quantitative data can further assist in understanding the complexities of the change process by potentially providing percentages when calculating progress (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Moreover, the change initiatives could occasionally lead to unintended outcomes, which should also be considered when monitoring and documenting the effects of the change (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017).

Reflecting on the monitoring and evaluation tools, the parent and teacher satisfaction surveys that are administered termly (for parents) and annually (for teachers) can indicate the areas that are regarded as strengths, opportunities, and aspirations at OTN, and can be embedded within the SOAR framework (Starvos et al., 2003). As these surveys are anonymous, they additionally provide a voice for stakeholders who may not feel comfortable

in contributing to the committee meetings. Next, OTN teachers are encouraged to reflect on their practices and keep a journal, which promotes a reflective learning culture (Siraj & Hallet, 2016) as they engage in their monthly collaborative inquiry session. Monitoring these journals can indicate the progress that the OTN team have made since the onset of implementing the plan. Similarly, by providing constructive feedback following classroom observations, and by encouraging peer-to-peer observations, the culturally responsive pedagogies and practices can be further enhanced. Finally, monitoring will also take place in the form of analyzing the committee meeting minutes, to assess the progress of the policy development.

Study Stage

The third stage of the cycle is dedicated to studying the achievements and improvements that have been made thus far by analyzing the data that has been collected in the previous stage (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017). In other words, the two previous stages focused on the implementation and monitoring of change, and this stage is concerned with the evaluation of change. Therefore, during this stage, stakeholders will consider the five areas of evaluation including the appropriateness, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the macro and micro change projects (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Appendix D provides a sample of the questions discussed and analyzed for each of the five evaluation areas.

Act Stage

Since improvements may not always occur during the first PDSA cycle (Leis & Shojania, 2017), this stage of the cycle develops an action plan addressing further enhancements. It considers potential intervention strategies based on the evaluation questions (see Appendix D) and the results of the data analysis that took place in the previous stage (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017). This stage resembles the final stage of the AI approach, where

according to the monitoring and evaluation that occurs in the destiny phase, new changes are introduced to the definition and discovery phases, which leads to the initiation of a new cycle (Cooperrider et al., 2008). If a new cycle is required, the SOAR framework will additionally guide the process by identifying the strengths and opportunities, imagining the optimal paths to accelerate the change, and creating innovative action-oriented plans to achieve the desired results (Lewis et al., 2016).

In summary, monitoring and evaluation is the second of three sections within the overall change implementation plan. This section describes how an integrated approach can be used when monitoring and evaluating change that is occurring on multiple levels within the organization. It also presents the foci of the final stage of AI approach, and explores how the PDSA cycle will be used to ensure that the change process in continuously being monitored, reflected upon and adapted. The SOAR framework is also used alongside the AI approach to reinforce the constructive and positive vision, throughout the change plan. This process will support the organization in reaching their strategic goals and achieving their change vision. The next section discusses the importance of having effective communication during the change process and outlines a communication plan that will be used to address the PoP.

Communicating the Need for Change and the Change Process

Communication is the third, and final component of the complex change plan. There is a very intricate relationship between communication and organizational change (Johansson & Heide, 2008; Lewis, 2019). In fact, the success of an organizational change process is strongly impacted by the communication strategies that are formulated between the change leader and the change agents. Although there are many other factors required for successful implementation, such as financial support, ethical understanding, and physical resources,

communicative processes tend to mediate and promote these issues to ensure that such resources are available throughout the change process (Lewis, 2019).

In line with the interpretivist worldview, communication is viewed as tool for meaning-making (Johansson & Heide, 2008; Lewis, 2019). It is a socially constructed process, where the words, symbols, and actions used within the communication can result in a social transformation (Francis, 2007). Therefore, this section of the change plan will not only focus on the messages conveyed to the stakeholders at different stages of the change plan, but will also consider the potential dynamic, and multi-layered conversations that will support stakeholders in constructing their understanding and knowledge towards the organizational change (Johansson & Heide, 2008). Depending on the stakeholders' views, values, and beliefs, some stakeholders may make sense of certain communications differently, and interacting with others may further impact their understanding of the change process (Beech & Johnson, 2005). Bias-free communication is a priority at OTN, as it allows for the development of a shared language and deeper understanding of the communication. For this reason, in addition to the regular and ongoing communication plan, an open line of communication will be available, throughout the change process, to support those who would like to better understand or contribute to the discourse of the intended change.

There are four essential stages within a change communication plan (Deszca et al., 2019) including the pre-change approval, developing the need for change, celebrating small milestones and outlining midstream changes, and finally confirming and celebrating the achievement of change. This section will first discuss how an awareness for the change will be created. It will explain how the communications will be framed using Armenakis and Harris's (2002) five beliefs. Next, a knowledge mobilization plan will be presented to illustrate how and what communications will be shared with each of the stakeholder groups, including OTN's parent company (for pre-change approval), OTN's staff, and OTN's parent

community (Appendix E). Finally, this section will conclude by exploring how celebrations, milestones, and achievement of goals will be communicated.

Reflecting on the five stages of the AI approach, communication is required within each phase, to ensure the successful progression of the change process, and to inform the appropriate stakeholders about the ongoing change expectations at each stage (Lewis, 2019) (Appendix B and E). During the definition and discovery phase, communications will revolve around building awareness for the change, sharing the change plan with OTN's parent company, and defining the vision for change with all stakeholders. This process confirms that approval for the change implementation is granted, and that the stakeholders are aware of the upcoming change and the desired future state of OTN. During the dream phase, communications will include celebrating the excitement for change, and addressing any resistance to change. By doing so, any resistance to change can be addressed and mitigated, to ensure that they do not become a barrier at a later stage of the change process. During the design phase, communications will be dedicated to celebrating the short-term goals and the milestones that have been achieved. Such celebrations will provide additional motivation and reassurance regarding the change process. Finally, during the destiny phase, the communications will target the progress, the success, and the challenges of the change. This will guide the future steps of the change plan.

Building Awareness for Change

Building awareness of the need for change is the second step of the communication plan, after approval from the top management is granted. It will take place during the definition phase of the AI approach, in September 2022. Lewis (2019) argues that until stakeholders recognize that change is necessary, the change plan cannot proceed. Therefore, communicating the rationale for the change is an essential component in this initial step. Moreover, the language that is used when communicating needs to be considered. Although it

is important for stakeholders to recognize the urgency for the change (Kotter, 2012), this needs to be communicated in a way that is relatable and manageable. The two stakeholder groups that will be addressed are OTN's academic staff, and OTN's parent community. Reflecting on the demographics of OTN, where the large majority of the staff, children and families are considered to be expatriates or third culture, it is crucial that the initial communications highlight OTN's strategic goal of enhancing the children and their families' overall wellbeing, by ensuring that culturally relevant practices and policies are introduced at the nursery school. This is supported by the work of Klein (1996) who claims that if the information provided is personally relevant, stakeholders tend to understand its meaning and intended impact more effectively.

Weick (1995) describes the process of enactment, where stakeholders enact or construct their knowledge through the process of social interactions. They tend to understand what is happening around them by communicating and meaning-making with others. Hence, providing stakeholders with opportunities to socialize within the community and discuss the need for change could be viewed as a positive strategy to recognize and onboard change agents (Whittle et al., 2010). This tool can be used as an advantage as there are currently several close-knit parent groups within OTN's community and many parents view the teachers as credible sources of information (Lewis, 2019). Thus, it is important to consider the order in which stakeholder groups will be informed about the urgency of the change. First, the need for change will be communicated to the group of academic staff members. The reason for doing this is to ensure that the teachers are well aware of the intended changes, especially in terms of the desired end result. The steps of the change process using the AI approach will be clarified, and they will be reassured that the resources required for the change implementation, including training on the approach, will be available (Pratt, 2004). This communication will take place face to face, as suggested by Klein (1996). Once

excitement for change has been achieved in the teachers' group, the urgency for change will be communicated to the OTN parent group, where an invitation to join the policy development committee will be extended.

Ethical Responsibilities and Considerations

In efforts to target the problem of practice from the onset of the change plan, all communications related to this change will be done in English, French, and Arabic to ensure that it is well understood by OTN's teacher and parent community (Nemeth, 2012). Stakeholders will also be encouraged to ask questions and request clarifications, if they choose to do so. If required, having a translator present for parents to communicate in their first language is also welcomed. Currently, formal communications from the nursery management are primarily done in English. A change in this practice is the first step to support and foster the culturally relevant and responsive pedagogical practices.

Framing Issues for Various Audiences

Despite having three types of audiences – OTN's parent company, OTN's academic staff, and OTN's parent community – when communicating, the principles for framing the issues are similar. Armenakis and Harris's (2002) five beliefs are key components when framing issues surrounding change. These are the belief that change is necessary (discrepancy), the belief that the change can be successfully achieved (efficacy), the belief that the change implementation plan is appropriate for the achievement of the desired state (appropriateness), the belief that the leadership team are committed to and will support with the change (principal support), and the belief that there are positive outcomes and benefits to the stakeholder (valence). Therefore, these five beliefs will be used as a template when creating the communications required for all four phases of the communication plan (Lewis, 2019; Deszca et al., 2019). Appendix F outlines the way the change will be framed for each of the stakeholder groups using these five beliefs.

Anticipated Questions and Answers

After communicating the need for change to the three stakeholder groups using Armenakis and Harris's (2002) five beliefs, there will be opportunities for questions and answers. Although the exact questions asked cannot be predicted, there are several anticipated questions that could be asked by each of the groups.

OTN's Parent Company. Some questions that are anticipated from the parent company include: What type of support is required from the parent company? Considering that external training would be ideal to introduce the team to the AI approach, some financial support will be needed. Additionally, if any of the staff from the parent company would like to contribute to the discourse, they are welcome to join and attend the monthly meetings with the policy development committee (Fleming & Spicer, 2008). How much time is required for staff training in the AI approach, and will any staff members be resistant to the change process? The initial training for the AI approach should be completed within a month, with one training session held per week. Each training session will focus on one of the five phases of the AI cycle. To tackle any resistance to change, it is important to identify of what type of resistance exists and the reason why this resistance is present. According to whether the resistance is cognitive, emotional, or behavioral (Piderit, 2000), the actions taken by the leadership to support this will differ.

Academic team. Some questions anticipated from the academic team include: How much time commitment is required from the academic team for collaborative inquiry? The change is an ongoing process that will be worked on continuously and reflected upon. The collaborative inquiry sessions take place on a monthly basis, for approximately two to three hours each session. Additionally, teachers are also invited to join the policy development committee to further support the enhancement of culturally relevant practices. This will also take place on a monthly basis.

Parent Community. Some questions anticipated from the parent community include: Can we contribute to the discourse even if our child is graduating, or even if we will be relocating to a new country soon? The purpose of the change is to improve the overall policies and practices at OTN. Every child will benefit from the change, despite the length of time they will be staying at the nursery. Even within a short duration, the efforts that the team will make in consciously interacting with and responding to the children using culturally responsive practices will add value to the children's cultural awareness and enhancement (Khalifa et al., 2016; Cummings & Worley, 2009). Do we have to do anything at home to further enhance cultural awareness? Parallel practices at home and the nursery will add benefits to the children (Sylva et al., 2008). Therefore, parents can use the discourse within the policy development sessions as a guide or reflection on how to implement practices at home, or when interacting with others outside the nursery school.

Knowledge Mobilization Plan

The purpose of knowledge mobilization is to reciprocally disseminate and receive meaningful research knowledge between the researchers and the knowledge users (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, 2019). This process ensures the enhancement of practices, that are supported by academic research. Therefore, as the change initiator and facilitator, and as the leader at OTN, the knowledge learned through the process of the OIP should be shared with the stakeholders. As such, a communication plan is required to ensure that the information is clear and persuasive, addressing the three stakeholder groups. Following the knowledge transfer and practical applications, according to the change implementation plan discussed in this chapter, collaborative reflections and co-productions of further knowledge will be made. It is anticipated that this OIP becomes a pilot to support family migration outside the walls of OTN. Figure 12 illustrates the projected impact of knowledge mobilization with regards to addressing the PoP.

Figure 12

Impact of Knowledge Mobilization
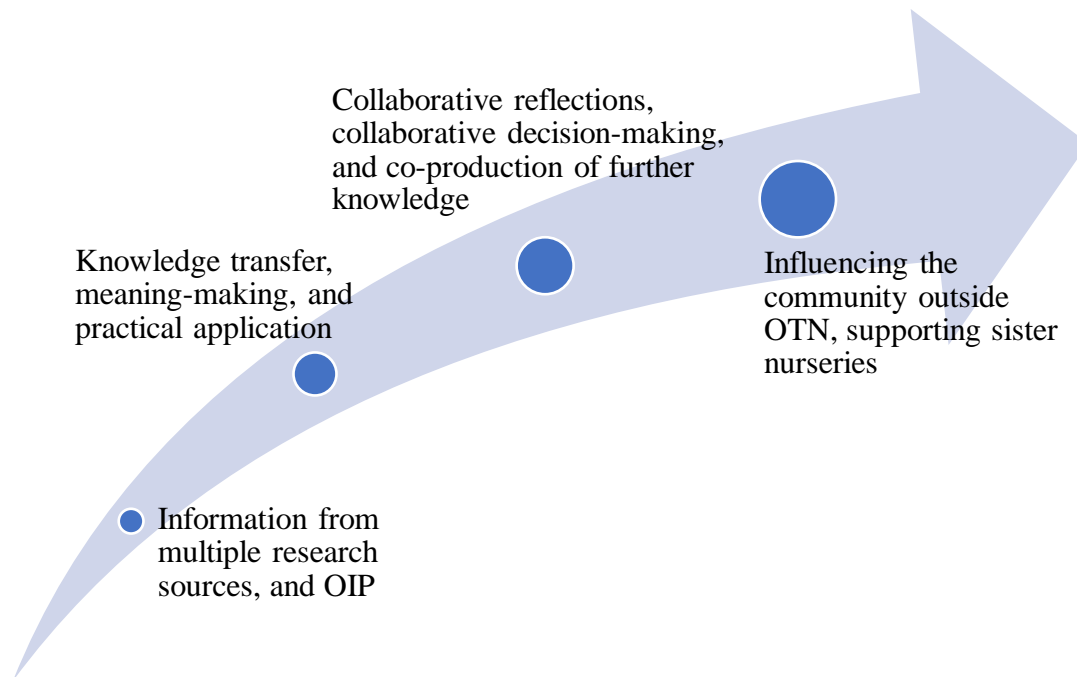
Note. The knowledge mobilization that begins by sharing the research conducted within this OIP is anticipated to reach the broader community, as represented by the gradual increasing circle sizes, and will eventually guide sister nurseries in supporting their CCK.

Lavis et al. (2003) outline five questions that should be considered when creating a knowledge mobilization plan (Appendix E). These questions include:

1. How should the message be delivered? (Tactic)

2. Who will be delivering the message? (Tactic)

3. Who is the target audience, or the stakeholder group being addressed? (Audience)

4. What is the message that needs to be transferred? (Key messages)

5. How will the effect of the message be evaluated? (Measurement of success)

In addition to the questions above, within the knowledge mobilization plan, there are three phases – pre-launch, launch, and post-launch – that are considered, each targeting a different stage of the change implementation, or the AI cycle. Most of the communications will take place either through email or face-to-face meetings (Klein, 1996). Additionally,

other forms of communications will also be developed, such as monthly e-newsletters, and WhatsApp groups for each of the policy development committee and for the teachers' reflection sharing. These have not been included in the knowledge mobilization plan since their content, or message, will be dependent on the Committee's monthly meetings and therefore, cannot be predetermined. All of the communications will be delivered by the leadership team at OTN's, including the language coordinators, especially since the communications will be delivered in English, Arabic, and French (Nemeth, 2012).

Although the key messages will differ for each group, as presented in Appendix E, it is recommended that the key messages are communicated in a way that is innovative, rather than providing general information, which could be misleading or misunderstood (Birshin et al., 2012). To ensure that the messages are innovative, experimental exercises and data that can be manipulated will be provided during the face-to-face meetings to demonstrate the degree of diversity present at OTN. Perhaps providing the stakeholders with a world map and some colored stickers to indicate where they were born, where they come from, and the countries that they have lived in, can be used as an introduction to raise awareness to the current lives of the CCK at OTN. The main key message that will be communicated to all stakeholder groups is the ethical responsibility that we have, as educators and parents, to enhance the children's cultural development (Starratt, 2012).

Knowledge mobilization is a bidirectional process (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, 2019), that also involves constructive evaluation from the knowledge users. The rational for this process is to maximize the power of the research, communicate the research's impact more widely, and to provide feedback to the researchers, or the scholar practitioners. Although this reciprocal process is acknowledged, it is not illustrated in the knowledge mobilization plan, as its content is dependent on the stakeholders' choices of what and how they choose to communicate their input.

Communicating the Path of Change and Celebrating Milestones

After building the sense of urgency, it is essential to share the strategic goal, the change vision and the path of change with all stakeholders. Moreover, to maintain the momentum within the change process, achievements of milestones should be celebrated (McGonigal, 2017). Lewis (2019) differentiate between formal and informal communication, and claims that informal communications tend to play a larger role in supporting the change process, especially since it permits stakeholders to ask for clarifications regarding their interpretations, provides them with a channel to voice their ideas and opinions, encourages the sharing of stories or reflections, and provides a personal touch when celebrating wins. Therefore, when distributing the information and celebrating milestones and wins, OTN will use email, e-newsletters, and visual posters, as formal channels of communications. WhatsApp groups, and face-to-face chats will be used as informal methods of communications.

Email Communications and e-Newsletters

OTN will formally communicate the change vision and path of change through email. Information regarding both the policy development and the collaborative inquiry session will be sent to all academic staff members, whereas the parents will only receive information regarding the policy development. The achievement of milestones will also be communicated through email to both parents and teachers on a regular basis, whenever a goal is achieved. As for the e-newsletters, these will be sent on a monthly basis and will include a summary of the discourse from the monthly policy development meeting, along with images and reflections from parents and teachers. Additionally, a specific section of the newsletter will be dedicated to celebrating wins, which will include details of the milestones met, and the objectives to be worked towards next (McGonigal, 2017). The e-newsletter will invite other parents to contribute to the discussion by responding to the email. Both the emails and

newsletters will be written in English, French, and Arabic. The open rates of the email and e-newsletters will be monitored to evaluate whether the stakeholders are engaging with the shared content.

Visual Posters

Visual printed posters will be placed on the parents' and teachers' information boards at OTN. In addition to the eye-catching pictures and key messages, these posters will contain an image of a Quick Response (QR) code, which when scanned using a phone's camera, stakeholders can access a more detailed change plan, and the updated e-newsletters. Scanning the QR codes can provide information regarding the reach and rate of engagement from the stakeholders.

WhatsApp Groups

There are two types of groups that can be created using the WhatsApp application (Urien et al., 2019). The first is a general group, where the person creating the group is listed as an admin and can invite others to join the group. Individuals within the general group can share information by typing words, sending images, creating voice notes, and sharing weblinks. All members of the group can see and interact with the content that is shared. Additionally, all members of the group have access to all members' contact numbers. The second type of group, on the other hand, is a broadcast group, where the admin (or creator of the group) is the only one who has access to the contact details of the other group members and can disseminate information. Although each type of group has its benefits and limitations (Aharony & Tali, 2016), having an interactive group, where everyone can contribute to the discussion and can share information regarding the change process and the milestones that have been achieved is more aligned with the AI and collaborative nature of the change. Moreover, studies have found that interactive WhatsApp groups provide social support (Aharony & Tali, 2016), which could strengthen the community feel at OTN. Nevertheless,

consent from the stakeholders will be required prior to creating an interactive group. In addition to monitoring whether group members are sharing content with others, WhatsApp provides information regarding whether messages were opened, and thus, can support with measuring the engagement rate of stakeholders (Urien et al., 2019).

Face-to-Face Communications

Klein (1996) argues that face-to-face communications are most effective as they provide genuine two-way communications and encourages stakeholders to contribute when meaning-making. Therefore, following the formal methods of communication regarding disseminating information about the change plan and the celebrations of milestones, informal chats with the parents and teachers will continuously take place.

Ultimately, all communication mediums, whether formal or informal, will provide stakeholders with the necessary information regarding the need for change, the change vision and plan, and the achievement of milestones and wins (McGonigal, 2017; Lewis, 2019).

In summary, the communication plan is the final component within the overall change implementation plan. This section describes how the urgency for change will be communicated to the stakeholders and addresses the types of messages that will be conveyed to each of the stakeholder groups using Armenakis and Harris's (2002) five beliefs as a framework. Next, the organization's knowledge mobilization plan is shared, by considering the key messages that will be communicated at various stages within the change cycle. Finally, this section concludes by addressing the formal and informal ways for communicating the change plan and celebrating milestones. The final section of this OIP will address the next steps and future considerations of the organizational improvement plan.

Chapter 3 Conclusion

Using the proposed solutions from Chapter 2 – policy development committee and collaborative inquiry sessions – a change implementation plan using the AI approach, a

monitoring and evaluation framework using the PDSA cycle, and a strategic communication plan using formal and informal communication channels were presented in this chapter. Expanding on the notions of macro- and micro- change management (Kang, 2015), for successful implementation and institutionalization of change, it is necessary to address change using a multileveled approach. To answer Chapter 1's question regarding what needs to be changed, first, the creation of a currently non-existent policy on a strategic level (macro) and second, the implementation of the new culturally responsive practices in the classrooms (micro) are both equally required to mitigate the effects of the problem of practice. To answer Chapter 2's question regarding how to create this change, a multilevel approach is adopted again. The collaborative and co-constructive nature of the Committee and the professional development sessions (macro) will support the individual stakeholders in enhancing their daily practices (micro). Yet, although it may appear that the macro-levels provide a gateway to the micro-level, the reality is that both levels need to be addressed and reflected upon simultaneously. Learnings from both the macro- and micro-levels will support in the continuous AI and PDSA cycles, to guarantee that the desired change is truly achieved.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

This OIP aims to enhance the cultural awareness policies and practices at a highly diverse international nursery school, using collaborative approaches to design policies and to support staff in their professional development. The PoP that was identified in this OIP is a common problem at many educational settings in the country. Therefore, there are two possible next steps that should be considered. The first next step is to view OTN's change implementation as a pilot study which can inform changes at other educational settings with similar multicultural demographics. The second next step is to celebrate the skills gained throughout the change implementation, during the processes of collaborative inquiry and the policy development committee, and to utilize these skills to address future changes.

Since OTN is one of several international nursery schools belonging to the parent company, the change implementation can be viewed as a pilot project, by providing insight on how to address and tackle the change at the sister nursery schools, by sharing best practices and positive outcomes. Both the AI approach (Cooperrider et al., 2008) and the PDSA cycle (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017) offer opportunities for reflective practices that can guide this process. The cultural awareness policy developed specifically for OTN during the change process can also be used as an exemplar, that will have to be adapted to fit each organization's culture (Dimmock & Walker, 2000). Nevertheless, the consistency in the change implementation across the sister nursery schools may need to be monitored. Lewis et al. (2016) differentiate between the concepts of training and coaching, by claiming that although there are some similarities between the two roles, a coach is seen as someone who guides the process by asking questions, whereas a trainer is viewed as an individual who communicates definitive answers. Therefore, an appreciative coaching model (Clancy & Binkert, 2016), which is based on the five stages of the AI approach, could be used to ensure that the other nursery schools are being adequately guided throughout the change process. As a volunteered appreciative coach, my role will be to support the other nursery directors in using their strengths and successes to create the desired change within their own organization.

As for the next steps within OTN, the long-term goal of acquiring skills for collaborative inquiry is one that should be maintained and continuously developed (Hopkins & Levin, 2000; Pregner et al., 2017). Currently, most of the professional development sessions that the academic team attends are ones that follow a more traditional format, where an instructor provides the team with necessary information, and designs some interactive activities for the team to work on. Once the training session is complete, there is minimal monitoring regarding the implementations of the newly learned strategies in the classroom,

and thus, most of what was learned is forgotten. Therefore, moving forward, all professional development session will be designed following the collaborative inquiry model (Butler & Schnellert, 2012), where the team will be empowered to take ownership of their own learning, by engaging in the five steps of setting professional and learning goals, planning, enacting learning strategies, monitoring, and adjusting.

Finally, the Committee that was initially established for developing the cultural awareness policy will continue to work on OTN's strategic goal of supporting the well-being of children and their families, by enhancing other areas that are identified as needing improvement in the parents' and teachers' annual surveys.

To conclude, although the initial purpose of this OIP is to create change for the CCK and their families by enhancing the culturally responsive policies, pedagogies, and practices at OTN, this OIP is also a starting point to the many future changes at OTN. The skills, knowledge, and attitudes acquired through the processes of collaborative inquires, AI approach, and by working closely with families will continue to grow and intensify with every ethical change created for the children of OTN.

Epilogue – Culturally Sustainable Change

The completion of this organizational improvement plan is not the end of the journey. It is merely the beginning. Over the last three years of intensive learning, unlearning, and relearning (Fernandes & Gattolin, 2021), I have relearned the importance empowering children, especially cross-cultural kids, in taking ownership of their multiple cultural identities. While searching for academic literature on third culture and cross-cultural kids in nursery schools, it became evident that there is a worrying gap in the research. A very minimal amount of research addressed cross-cultural kids in their nursery or pre-school years.

Family migration impacts the whole family, including the youngest children. Cross-cultural kids and their families should be provided with the opportunities to voice their fears

and frustrations, and the educators must be equipped with the knowledge of how to support

them. The optimal strategies to enhance the wellbeing of a highly cultural community are to:

1. Ensure that the nursery school's vision embeds the moral responsibility to support all
    stakeholders

2. Develop a cultural awareness policy that emphasizes the importance of providing
    culturally relevant practices

3. Guide educators in implementing culturally responsive pedagogy in their classrooms.

My intention, through this organization improvement plan, is to voice the concerns of

many expatriate families through my humble words. My hopes are that other educational

leaders view this work as a starting point in making culturally sustainable change at their

educational organizations.

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Appendix A: Hybrid-Solution: Macro and Micro Change Management

	Macro change management	Micro change management
Definition	Strategic structure: cultural awareness policy	Practice and pedagogy: culturally responsive pedagogy
Change level	Nursery vision: strategic level	Classroom: task and individual level
Change agents	OTN leadership, policy development committee (staff, parents)	OTN leadership, admin, teachers (through collaborative inquiry)
Timing	Implementation: September to December 2022 (Year 1, Term 1)	Implementation: September 2022 to March 2023 (Year 1, Term 1-2)
	Monitoring: January to June 2023 (Year 1, Term 2-3)	Monitoring: Ongoing monthly from January 2023 to June 2024 (Year 1-2, Term 2-3)
	Evaluation: September to December 2023 (Year 2, Term 1)	Evaluation: Monthly meetings, end of year appraisals (Year 1-2, Term 2-3)

Note. Adapted from "Change Management: Term Confusion and New Classification," by P. Kang, 2015, *Performance Improvement, 54*(3), p. 27 (https://doi.or/10.1002/pfi.21466).

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Appendix B: Action Plan Using AI Approach

AI approach	Foci of each stage	Timeline	CIP	ME	CMP
Definition and discovery	(a) Ensure stakeholders understand the need for change	Y1: T1			X
	(b) Share change plan with upper management (OTN's parent company)	Y1: T1			X
	(c) Set agenda, create shared vision and goals	Y1: T1	X		
	(d) Communicate vision for change with stakeholders	Y1: T1			X
	(e) Assemble the Committee	Y1: T1	X		
Dream	(a) Understand stakeholders' vision to change	Y1: T1, 2, 3	X		
	(b) Celebrate excitement for change	Y1: T1, 2, 3	X		X
	(c) Address resistance to change	Y1: T1, 2, 3	X		X
Design	(a) Cocreate policy development and professional development plan	Y1: T1, 2	X		
	(b) Empower others to take ownership of shared change implementation plan	Y1: T1, 2, 3	X		
	(c) Provide support to those who require additional skills and/or knowledge	Y1: T1, 2, 3	X		
	(d) Celebrate short-term goals and milestones	Y1: T1, 2, 3	X		X
Destiny	(a) Communicate progress, success, and challenges	Y1: T3			X
	(b) Encourage reflections	Y1, 2: T1, 2, 3	X	X	
	(c) Track change periodically	Y1, 2: T1, 2, 3		X	
	(d) Make changes according to reflections and change tracking	Y1, 2: T1, 2, 3	X	X	

Note. AI = Appreciative inquiry; CIP = change implementation plan; ME = monitoring and evaluation; CMP = communication plan; Y = year;

T = term.

Appendix C: Alignment of Goals with OTN Strategic Goal and Change Vision

Strategic goal	• Using OTN's collaborative potentials to enhance the overall well-being of all children and families at OTN
Change vision	• OTN leadership and academic team to work collaboratively to promote cultural relevant practices for all
Change outcomes	(1) The Committee co-construct ideas, knowledge, and new learning to create and implement cultural awareness policy (2) OTN team engage in collaborative inquiry during process of professional development (3) OTN team collectively reflect and improve practices to cater for everchanging demographics
Long-term goals	(1) Effectively promote cultural awareness policy at other nurseries within the group (2) Develop skills and expertise in collaborative inquiry
Medium-term goals	(1) Effectively use the AI cycle in team meetings (at least once per month) (2) Increase parent satisfaction regarding children transitioning from home to new environment, and/or moving to new city
Short-term goals	(1) Identify and support the current needs of children and families, using culturally responsive pedagogy (2) Implement a more flexible language program in the classrooms (3) Translate newsletters, children's report, and nursery policies to meet the language needs of the families

Note. The double-sided arrow represents the bi-directional relationship between the strategic goals, change vision, and the short-, medium-, and long-term goals.

Appendix D: Evaluation Questions for the Study Stage of the PDSA Cycle

A Sample of the Evaluation Questions Discussed During the Study Stage of the PDSA Cycle

Area of evaluation	Definition	Sample of evaluation questions
Appropriateness	Assesses the suitability of the change plan design and the extent in which the design meets the priorities, vision and change goals	To what extent was the design of the policy development committee and/or collaborative inquiry sessions suitable in meeting the needs of the problem of practice?
Efficiency	Assesses the efficiency of the change plan implementation by reflecting on the inputs and outputs	To what extent was the policy development committee and/or collaborative inquiry sessions implemented in an efficient manner?
Effectiveness	Assesses the quality and value of the change plan in achieving desired goals	To what extent was the policy development committee and/or collaborative inquiry sessions effective in achieving the outlines short-, medium-, and long-term goals?
Impact	Assesses the change that is created as a result of the change plan	What results, expected and unexpected, were produced due to the implementation of the policy development committee and/or the collaborative inquiry sessions?
Sustainability	Assesses the continuation and sustainability of the change	To what degree is there an indication of ongoing benefit(s) as a result of the change implementation?

Note. Adapted from "Developing Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks," by A.

Markiewicz, & I. Patrick, 2016, pp. 105-106. Copyright 2016 by Sage Publications.

Appendix E: Stages of the Communication Plan

Table E1

Summary of OTN's Communication Plan

AI Approach (Cooperrider et al., 2008)	Communication stages (Deszca et al., 2019)	Purpose for Communication
Definition and discovery	Pre-change approval Developing the need for change	Communications will revolve around building awareness for the change, sharing the change plan with OTN's parent company, and defining the vision for change with all stakeholders.
Dream	Celebrating small milestones and outlining midstream changes	Celebrating the excitement for change, and addressing any resistance to change
Design	Celebrating small milestones and outlining midstream changes	Celebrating the short-term goals and the milestones that have been achieved
Destiny	Confirming and celebrating the achievement of change	Communications will target the progress, the success, and the challenges of the change

Note. The frequency and purpose of communication are subject to change, depending on the change implementation. Adapted from "Organizational Change: An Action-Oriented Toolkit" by G. Deszca, C. Inglos, & T. F. Cawsey, 2019, p. 350. Copyright 2019 by Sage Publications.

Table E2

Knowledge Mobilization Plan: Pre-launch Communications – Definition and Discovery Stage

Tactic	Date	Audience	Key messages	Measurement of success
Leadership email to parent company – Change is coming. Sent by: OTN director	September 1, 2022	CEO Compliance director Senior leadership team	What is the change? (Based on research) How will the change provide OTN an advantage over other neighboring schools? Invite to attend an in-depth introduction regarding change.	Open rate – 80%
Face-to-face meeting with leadership Hosted by: OTN director	September 7, 2022	CEO Compliance director Senior leadership team	Presentation with detailed change plan (in visuals), alignment of change with parent company's vision and mission. Questions and answers.	Attendance rate – 90%
Employee email – Change is coming Sent by: OTN director	September 19, 2022	Academic staff	What is the change? (Based on research) How will the change provide benefits to the teachers in their classrooms? Invite to attend an in-depth introduction regarding change.	Open rate – 80%
Face-to-face meeting with employees Hosted by: OTN director	September 21, 2022	Academic staff	Presentation with detailed change plan (in visuals), emphasis on teachers' own demographics and need for cultural enhancement. Questions and answers.	Attendance rate – 90%

Table E3

Knowledge Mobilization Plan: Launch Communications – Dream and Design Stage

Tactic	Date	Audience	Key messages	Measurement of success
Leadership email to parents – Invitation to join change movement Sent by: OTN director	September 26, 2022	Parent community	What is the change and the benefits for the children? Invitation to join the policy development committee	Open rate – 80% Joining committee rate – 30%
Leadership email to parent company – We see the change Sent by: OTN director	End of Term 1, 2, and 3, in the first year of implementation	CEO Compliance director Senior leadership team	Celebrations of short-term goals Observable benefits to the growth of OTN	Open rate – 80%
Employee email – We see the change Sent by: OTN director	End of Term 1, 2, and 3, in the first year of implementation	Academic staff	Celebrations of short-term goals Positive reflections from teachers and parents Next steps (if any) regarding collaborative inquiries	Open rate – 80%
Parent email – We see the change Sent by: OTN director	End of Term 1, 2, and 3, in the first year of implementation	Parent community	Celebrations of short-term goals Positive reflections from teachers, parents, and children Next steps (if any) regarding policy development committee	Open rate – 80% Joining committee rate increases to 40%

Table E4

Knowledge Mobilization Plan: Post-launch Communications – Destiny Stage

Tactic	Date	Audience	Key messages	Measurement of success
Leadership email to parent company – Change updates Sent by: OTN director	End of Year 1	CEO Compliance director Senior leadership team	The goals that have been achieved, the challenges that were faced and the action plan to overcome the challenges in Year 2.	Open rate – 80%
Leadership email to parent and teachers – Change updates Sent by: OTN director	End of Year 1	Academic staff Parent community	Thanks for their input in the collaborative inquiries and the policy development committee. Goals achieved, challenges, and ways to overcome challenges in Year 2.	Open rate – 80%
Survey Sent by: OTN director	End of Year 1	Academic staff Parent community	Satisfaction, comments, and suggestions regarding the changes	Completed rate – 80%
Survey results email Sent by: OTN director	Beginning of Year 2	Academic staff Parent community	"You said, we did…" to highlight the changes that were made from the survey results	Open rate – 80%
E-newsletter to all stakeholders Sent by: OTN director	End of Year 2	CEO, compliance director, senior leadership team, staff, parent community	Celebrations of achieving the desired state. Reflections of learning. Photographic evidence and testimonials from staff and parents.	Open rate – 80%

Appendix F: Framing Change for Various Stakeholder Groups

Stakeholder Group	Discrepancy	Efficacy	Appropriateness	Principal Support	Valence
OTN's Parent Company	The change is in line with the vision and mission of the company, and will result in an increase in enrolment rate and word of mouth.	Detailed plan considering various factors have been created. Monitoring and evaluation tools are in place to track progress and accountability.	OTN's strengths were considered when designing the change plan. Relational leadership, AI approach, and an overall positive outlook on change.	Very minimal financial support is required from the parent company. The compliance director could be included in the change process (policy development).	Competitive advantage over other schools in the neighborhood. Pilot at OTN and can be implemented at other nursery schools belonging to parent company.
Academic Staff	Teachers are currently struggling with the initial adaptation process when children relocate to the new city. The children and their families feel a loss of connection from their home country.	The design for the change process is a cyclical one, that allows for reflection and evaluation to ensure that the change is successful.	Teachers are empowered to enhance their practices through collaborative inquiry. This acknowledges the competencies that the teachers have in guiding the change and the leader's trust in the process.	Training for AI approach will be provided prior to the initiation of the change process. Leader will attend, contribute, and reflect during collaborative inquiry sessions.	Overtime, teachers will begin to better understand how to support children and families who relocate and transition to OTN.

Stakeholder Group	Discrepancy	Efficacy	Appropriateness	Principal Support	Valence
Parents (The Committee)	Although the children are living in a new country, it is important for them to create a sense of identity with their home culture.	The design for the change process is a cyclical one, that allows for reflection and evaluation to ensure that the change is successful.	Parents' voices will be heard and used in designing the cultural awareness policy.	Monthly meetings for policy development have been scheduled and the leadership team, along with the teachers will be present to support the parents in highlighting what they value and want their children to receive in terms of classroom practices.	Children and families will receive more culturally responsive practices from the team at OTN. This will support parents in raising children who are more empathetic and knowledgeable about the world.

Note. The change issues are framed using Armenakis and Harris's (2002) five beliefs. Adapted from "Crafting a Change Message to Create Transformational Readiness" by A. A. Armenakis & S. G. Harris, 2002, *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 15*, pp. 170-171.

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