

Engaging Team Interventions in Organizations: A Complexity Approach to Change

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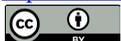
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Abstract

The purpose of the paper is to examine how organizational development and change (ODC) consultants engage in complex processes of facilitating and implementing team interventions in organizational contexts. The notion of high-performing teams in organizational contexts needs to be re-examined and reinterpreted beyond the team building, developmental and training strategies. Complexity issues such as organizational cultural and political realities impact teams and teamwork effectiveness or lack of it. The qualitative methodology integrates ODC methodologies in examining the challenges and opportunities experienced in facilitating change related to tasks and roles required in the diagnosis and implementation of team intervention. The case study of team intervention in a business school depicted capacity improvements in team building and training outcomes which demonstrated its success. However, the organizational cultural and political factors remained the team's challenge. Since these complexities were not solved the team eventually collapsed.

Keywords

Complexity Perspective Model, Multiple Levels Analysis, Team Interventions in Organizations, Team Intervention Strategies, Organizational Development and Change

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Teams and teamwork are valuable assets in organizations. Organizational teams depict a variety of types such as work teams, parallel teams, project teams, and management teams (Cohen & Bailey, 1997). Team interventions are used to

support team-building processes and training strategies toward improving team performance and organizational effectiveness. They are constructed from understanding and interpreting the structural, developmental, cultural, and political systems. The author suggests an approach for engaging team interventions from a complex perspective model (CPM) captured from his experiences as an organizational consultant in a team context in Switzerland. The CPM starts from the assumption that engaging in effective team interventions requires understanding levels of analysis and dynamics of the team and organizational factors. Engaging team interventions from the complex perspective approach, rather than one simplistic approach illuminates better the challenges, processes, and learning that confront external consultants collaborating with clients to improve team intervention effectiveness. The article draws from the field of organizational psychology and its identification of various levels of analysis to any problem such as the global environment, organizational environment, physical environment, social environment, and internal environment (Doyle, 2003: p. 27).

1.2. Key Tasks of Team Intervention Consultants

The key tasks of consultants and managers collaborating with teams require the need to diagnose the impacts of team building, training, cultural and political as multiple levels of analysis and interdependent processes that impact teams. Teams do not emerge from quick-fix implemented designs. On the contrary, they require coordination and intervention sensibilities to achieve complex tasks within their situated contexts and organizational analysis levels (Salas et al., 2008; Weick & Quinn, 1999). Designing organizational development and change interventions (ODC interventions) also requires the need to analyze and interpret organizational cultural and political contexts impacting teamwork operations. The role of ODC interventions is used to investigate human process interventions, structural interventions, human resources management interventions, and strategic interventions (Cummings & Worley, 2009; Hodges, 2017; McLean, 2006; Massarik & Pei-Carpenter, 2002).

1.3. Research Questions

The research questions for this study are:

- 1) To understand and capture critical team intervention factors that could enable or hinder team intervention practitioners who work to support teams in organizational contexts.
- 2) To explore the contribution of qualitative methods in management research and ODC interventions in creating useful approaches to engaging the case context of the studied team.
- 3) To examine the complex perspective model on teams and ways it could enable team practitioners to engage intervention solutions on all relevant multiple levels impacting teams.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The contribution of this research focuses on creating awareness of practical knowledge of team contexts and team intervention skills in organizational contexts and in OCD interventions of practitioners. The study makes a research contribution in the following approaches.

Team intervention research: The study suggests that team intervention takes a multiple-system approach by focusing on teams and teamwork as embedded within organizational contexts. In this study team interventions are reviewed from three levels of considerations: 1) structural considerations; 2) developmental considerations; 3) complexity theorizing and contextualization considerations. The author argues that the complex and contextual approach is useful for analyzing and understanding multiple levels of team impacts that go beyond the mere application of team building and training strategies. Less examined are organizational cultural and political strategies that also impact team survival and its effectiveness.

Theory and Practical Implications: The results of the research advance the significance of understanding team interventions within contexts and more important recommends team intervention practitioners and researchers to consider the implications of complexity perspectives when collaborating with teams in diverse organizational contexts. A complex approach to change is a suggested model for OCD practitioners as a pathway to identify and facilitate required team action and intervention strategies that may easily be ignored. These considerations will guide team practitioners with greater sensitivity and capacity building in diagnosing team environments while also empowering teams with multi-skills to manage various organizational cultural and political issues.

1.5. Paper Outline

Introduction: The focus of the paper is introduced with background study context, a theoretical framework for the proposed study, research questions to be investigated, and the significance of the study outlined.

Review of the literature: The review underscores the theory and research literature perspectives specific to team interventions in organizations and discusses various contributed knowledge. This provides a summary of what is known and unknown about teamwork interventions. The contribution of the study highlights new considerations and gaps to be addressed in teamwork literature and teamwork interventions.

Design/methodology/approach: The description of the research strategy and methods is outlined. It draws from qualitative research and a contextual understanding of team research theory and practice by integrating structural, developmental, and complexity approaches. A case study methodology of a team at a business school is conducted using an organizational development and change analysis and intervention method.

Findings: The key findings of this research are that team interventions in or-

organizations require an understanding of all levels of team and contextual impact factors. The complexity perspective model (CPM) analysis applied in this study revealed multiple team phenomenon factors. The case study revealed four key levels of strategies as examples of engaging teams in organizations such as contextual level strategy, team level strategy, cultural level strategy, and political level strategy.

Discussion: The implications of the research are discussed in terms of knowledge creation considerations for organizational and management consulting and sensemaking of their professional practice is highlighted. Future research implications are also outlined.

Conclusions: Conclusions are drawn based on the findings and alternative explanations for the findings are suggested. The impact of the study outlined key lessons learned. The limitations of the study were also cited.

Recommendations for Practitioners: Highlighted the CPM as a helpful learning perspective by which team interventions in organizations can be examined and outlined implications for ODC practitioners.

Recommendations for Researchers: The paper outlines key features for engaging teams in organizations drawing from a theorizing complexity perspective and recommends future theorizing and methodological possibilities ahead.

Summary of the research contribution: This paper raises important considerations for team intervention practitioners by examining team interventions that incorporate structural, developmental, and contextual considerations. By introducing the complexity perspective model, this research offers scholars and practitioners a richer and more integrated approach, through which team intervention can better be diagnosed and implemented that addresses the contextual, situational, and multiple complexities of organizational teams.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Organizational Development and Change Interventions

Drawing from the literature, ODC interventions combine interventions at the individual, team, and organizational levels (Rashford & Coghlan, 1994; Hodges, 2017; Viljoen, 2015). This study goes further to suggest that teams and teamwork in organizations emerge from the complexities of understanding how domains of levels impact teams' constraints or success. For example, ODC team change agents collaborating with cliental organizations need to adopt and understand a complex approach towards designing effective team interventions.

2.2. Complex Theory and Practice

In this study, a complex approach is defined as the ability to analyze and interpret the contextual, cultural, and political factors impacting teams in organizations. Moreover, in advocating the importance of teams in organizations theory and practice perspectives have ignored discussing the complex factors that con-

front team evolutions and realities in organizational contexts. On the contrary, the debates of teams in organizations have tended to project them as created from automatic, successful, simplistic, and formulaic processes. This is not to undermine past and recent literature contributions on effective teams and teamwork in organizations (West & Hirst, 2003; Sundstrom et al., 1990; Mathieu et al., 2017; O'Neill & Salas, 2017). What has often been less discussed in the literature and empirical research are the practical influences and implications of teamwork to highlight the contextual, cultural, and political factors, not just as hindrances but also enablers towards contributing insights in designing effective team interventions. Teams and teamwork have become popular terms in business and organizational practices. However, what is taken for granted is that creating team interventions for organizational change is a complex task. It requires the need to understand and cultivate cultural sensibilities and contextual factors impacting teams and teamwork realities. Therefore, the CPM approach is designed to address the challenges and opportunities of applying team intervention activities and tasks drawn from a case organization that reflects complexities identified and key lessons learned. The study also reflects my journey and consultant intervention role activities and functions in the case organization and related global contexts of my practice.

Therefore, based on engaging context, lived experience, and conducting qualitative research (Lincoln, 2005) within the case organization, this article addresses the need for a theoretical and practical approach to engaging team interventions which I have conceptualized as a complexity perspective model of change (CPM). To conceptualize the study findings, I draw from the work of Lincoln with emphasis on how knowledge is created and understood, and its implications on the development of theory and practice. The contribution of the study reflects four major goals: 1) to discuss approaches to managing teams and teamwork and the complexities of the practice of team interventions in organizations; 2) to develop a theoretical explanation for the current practice of team interventions as applied in varieties of organizational contexts; 3) to discuss implications of CMS intervention model using a case organization; 4) to provide practitioners with effective learning strategies to assist organizational change agents intending to engage team intervention situations in organizations.

2.3. Structural Considerations and Team Models of Interventions

Previous research has seen an increase in studies primarily focused on team building considerations areas such as team effectiveness, conflict management towards improving team effectiveness, and approaches towards managing culturally diverse teams. For example, literature perspectives on work teams and teamwork have underscored the importance of work team effectiveness and suggested team purpose, composition, interaction, and structural contexts as key factors (Harvey & Droplet, 1994; Buelens et al., 2006; Mathieu et al., 2017). The mention of teams and teamwork has become another buzzword of fashion fads

meant to woo management consultants and organizational managers with idealist versions of the immediacy fast track perceptions obsessed with work team definitions and practices. According to [Sundstrom et al. \(1990: p. 125\)](#), work teams are constructed from structural considerations reflecting types of models such as advice, production, project, and action teams nested within their organizational environment. This structural consideration of team functions is elaborated by [\(Caldwell, 2003\)](#) who suggests that teams adopt multiple roles of function within strategic, operational, task, and process levels guided by managers, and internal or external consultants. Similarly, theorists and researchers [\(Achua & Lussier, 2013; Buelens et al., 2006\)](#) suggest varieties of methods for improving teams and teamwork such as quality circles; virtual teams; self-managed teams; functional teams; and cross-functionalism teams.

While this study is not occupied with definitions and role functions of the above team models, it seeks to highlight that team interventions in organizational contexts are constructed from multiple perspectives of understanding contextual, cultural, and political dynamics designed to contribute to teamwork success and organizational productivity. While it cannot be denied that diverse types of teamwork practices contribute to vital organizational knowledge and learning, the theory and practice of teams and teamwork intervention will be more enriched or enlightened when organizational researchers and practitioners reflect on knowledge creation drawn from multiple perspectives and dimensions. For example, 35 years ago I worked in a cross-cultural team context on the beautiful island of Cyprus and our team experienced multiple levels of contextual, cultural, and political dynamics that impacted the team structures and functions of our team. [Salas et al. \(1995\)](#) suggested five critical measurements that are related to team situation awareness and performance as characterized by; 1) team situation awareness goals; 2) information processing functions; 3) team processes; 4) pre-existing knowledge; 5) task interdependence and characteristics (p. 131). They argued that the assessment of the above behaviors enabled the designing training measurement of the case organization studied. Another example drawn from the literature on managing culturally diverse teams' [\(Adler, 1997\)](#) suggested structural considerations as maximizing team effectiveness that fosters recognition of differences, equal power, and mutual respect. The importance of teamwork skills and knowledge are imperative for a learning organization [\(Gordon, 1999; Buelens et al., 2006, Achua & Lussier, 2013\)](#).

As evidenced by the literature teams contribute valuable knowledge for organizational success. Despite the emphasis on the importance of teams and associated perspectives, it is important to underscore that teams are embedded within cultural and political dimensions that impact team structures and their effectiveness. [Harris and Beyerlein \(2003\)](#) argue that focusing on the team is not enough and suggest team-based organizing as an alternative approach that enhances, adaptability, continuous improvement, and creative structures to support team accountability and work (p. 188). They describe team-based organiz-

ing (TBO) as a new type of organization designed to support teams both from a dual focus on the team and a larger organizational context of the team (Mohrman et al., 1995). One noted criticism of TBO is their implied notion of teams as an end. Moreover, from my view, I support the TBO approach from the perspective of not viewing teams as an isolated practice. This is influenced by my understanding that teams belong to organizations.

2.4. Developmental Considerations and Team Effectiveness Interventions

Group developmental models of work teams take different priorities. For example, the theory of group development and processes has been widely used in organizational behavior literature in assessing group or team development progress (Tuckman, 1965). Drawn from a group therapy approach, the Tuckman classic model suggested that group developmental processes occurred in stages of forming, storming, norming, and performing. The model highlights knowledge sensibilities both reflecting individual and group issues that emerge when teams are formed. Team interventions using the above model focus on the life cycle of the team identified within the team evolution developmental processes. However, due to the diverse types of teams and their complexities, including contextual and cultural factors of teams, it can be argued that team processes and learning do not develop sequentially from one stage to another. Additionally, it must be noted that the Tuckman group development model was developed from a contextual group therapy model and therefore cannot be assumed to apply universally to all team development processes. As already argued, the behavior and actions of teams cannot be finalized due to diverse contextual factors that teams encounter within their business and organizational contexts.

Gersick (1988) argues for a new model of group development that proposes that teams develop from the effects of roles and patterns of interactivity of change that emerge from dynamic relations within their contexts. The research findings of Gersick suggest team development is influenced by developmental-linked changes between a group and its contexts, which are cited as three points: 1) the initial meeting with a focus on group interactivity linked to its purpose; 2) transitions while members adjust to contextual requirements; 3) interaction with an environment shaping adaptation within the systems life cycles of multiple relationships influencing the team (p. 37). The proposed Gersick model approach to team development contrasts the traditional paradigm that views group development as formed from Tuckman's stage processes. Moreover, the conceptualized model (Gersick, 1988) shares similarities with research complexity context (Pfadenhauer et al., 2017) which argues that three dimensions that impact interventions are context, implementation, and setting. Context refers to numerous factors such as ethical, legal, and political issues that interact, influence, constrain and modify intervention efforts. Whereas settings refer to the physical location, where intervention is practiced and interacts with context

and implementation. Finally, implementation examines planned and deliberate efforts to work with implementation agents, theory, and strategy (p. 17). It can be concluded that team development emerges not only emerge from team-focused behavioral and task activities of team building and training but also from the impacts of the interface of contextual, setting, and intervention complexities.

Another team management model (Belbin, 2011) argues that making teams effective is guided by understanding and implementing eight roles that people play in teams. Central to Belbin's theory is the assumption that successful teams need to utilize all distinct team role types. The nine roles are identified as the implementer, sharper, completer-finisher, specialist, monitor evaluator, plant, resource investigator, team worker, and coordinator. Belbin's perspective suggests that effective teams require the following characteristics; 1) The critical role of the chairperson or leader role to enable the team to reach its goals; 2) A person who generates creative and original solutions (plant); 3) Team members to utilize team roles to which they are suited personality and abilities wise (p. 66). Although the Belbin method has been well theorized and become extremely popular in measuring team effectiveness in business and management practice, it lacks contingent and contextual considerations in the application. Therefore, it is questionable if this model can be applied to all team types (e.g., self-managing teams, work teams, management teams, task teams, and cross-functional teams).

2.5. Empirical Review of Teamwork Interventions

Since contextual awareness is important in understanding teamwork interventions in organizations it is critical to developing complex perspective sensibilities. Many authors concur that team interventions in organizations are characterized by complex issues at levels of analysis (O'Neill & Salas, 2017; Harrison & Shirom, 1999; Ancona et al., 2009). Emerging complex concerns and issues in team interventions have been outlined such as:

- Complexity in team structure, operations, and dynamics taking place between teams and their environments (Barner, 2006; Harvey & Drolet, 1994; Buelens et al., 2006; Mathieu et al., 2019).
- Team boundaries and multi-team functioning and recognition of diversity (Adler, 1997; Ancona & Caldwell, 1992; Sundstrom et al., 1990; Harvey et al., 2014).
- Team building and improving teamwork and strategy in the workplace (Arrey, 2014; Fapohunda, 2013; Lacerenza et al., 2018; Lencioni, 2005; Gast et al., 2017).
- Team development interventions in organizations using team training, team building, team tasks, and structures (Shuffler et al., 2011; Lunenburg, 2010; Millward, 2005; McEwan et al., 2017).
- Multiteam systems of team interventions with an emphasis on compositional, linkage, and developmental attributes (Zaccaro et al., 2012).

Designing team interventions in organizations reflect various aspects of en-

gements. Primarily the approaches include teams' performance tasks under the rubrics of team development, team psychometrics, and inter-team interventions (Hodges, 2017). Having reviewed several examples of team intervention literature on organizational work teams, some observations are noted. Overall, the primary focus of the team interventions literature addresses the functional, structural, and developmental, interpersonal concerns of teams. For example, drawing from team development interventions (Lacerenza et al., 2018), two types of interventions are outlined. Training intervention is used to improve leadership capabilities and team competencies. Process interventions are used to improve interpersonal and team processes (p. 520). Additionally, team building teams (Fapohunda, 2013) also take a developmental approach by proposing effective leadership, training, and development, self-development, and positive communication as ways of improving team performance. Despite the valuable contributions from the authors above, the research by (Harris & Beyerlein, 2003) argued that teams fail to achieve their success due to context contradicts that undermine team functioning. The proposed model below and its theoretical underpinnings of contextualization seek to address some context constraints and suggest multiple strategies for engaging team interventions in organizations.

2.6. Complexity Theory and Contextualization of Team Interventions

Conceptualizing ways of facilitating team interventions in organizations using a complexity perspective model (CPM) is drawn from the theory of the complex adaptive system of organizational change (Dooley, 1997). In this section, a brief overview of complex adaptive systems of team intervention is discussed. Dooley developed the concept of complexity from a systematic inquiry as an approach to understanding multivalent, multilevel, and multidisciplinary representations of reality. For this study, I will only focus on the two contributions of multivalent and multilevel aspects. Although there is greater scope to argue that the complexities of team interventions are different for example in teams working, e.g., in fields of geography, chemistry, political science, or sociology reflect the multidisciplinary approach. The reason I focus on the above two aspects is to add an extended understanding of team intervention that addresses context contradictions as part of enhancing team effectiveness. For example, in literature contributions on teams and teamwork, the common and traditional definition of team building is conceptualized as improving the internal functioning of work teams. Despite the popularity of the definition, it takes for granted that context contradictions factors like cultural and political environments of the organizational contexts contribute toward teams' failure or success.

System Theory on Team Intervention

The summary perspectives of the main characteristics of systems described by complex adaptive systems are: 1) systems theory reflects patterns within their

complexity; 2) systems theory allows analysis of the organizational systems from a holistic view which includes multilevel and multivalent inquiries (Dooley, 1997: p. 76). Moreover, system theory and system thinking (Senge, 2006) define a system as a boundary that contains systems from its environment. Interdependency is the result of what happens in any subsystem impacting other systems. Relevant to this study, team intervention exams both the internal dynamic processes and external processes of organizational political impacts on teams and teamwork. What is considered critical in engaging teams in organizations and how they function is the need to focus attention on analyzing and interpreting the above dynamic changes and impacts on teams. These dynamic changes might be conceptualized as contextualization considerations of team evolutions informed by two paradigms of management theory: 1) systems theory as awareness of contingent factors in the environment (Dooley, 1997: p. 71); 2) complex adaptive systems as analysis of team systems from holistic points of view (Dooley, 1997: p. 77). As shown in the above theory models' complexity in team intervention takes many forms. For example, the research conducted by (Essens et al., 2009) discusses the military command teams as shaped by complex settings of their unique operations, training scenarios, and field dynamics.

The empirical research in the field of teams and teamwork interventions in organizations has gained increasing popularity with an emphasis on methods that focuses on improving team building effectiveness, team compositional, team structural, and team developmental approaches (Mathieu et al., 2017). As vital as the above methods have contributed to varieties of knowledge creation for team effectiveness, these contributions do not fully address the cultural and political domains that impact teams. The aim of this paper is to advance the dissemination of the complexity theory by addressing the relevance of the above two domain factors by examining the theoretical and practical challenges of engaging and facilitating team interventions in organizational contexts. The practical relevance of cultural and political strategies is identified as strategic knowledge useful to researchers and team practitioners. Therefore, teamwork effectiveness cannot be assumed to be complete without a critical reflection on the theoretical and practical considerations of team multi-level analysis as key strategies for facilitating team management interventions. The presented case in a business context also illustrates how team intervention processes can draw rigorous and contextual awareness knowledge on many levels for team practitioners. Hence this research is designed to contribute a team research development drawn from the organizational change and development approach by suggesting team interventions from multiple perspectives which also incorporate understanding and interpretation of how cultural and political dimensions in organizations impact teams.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

A case study research method was applied in this study of team intervention in

the context of understanding how to improve the team's internal and external dimensions. The research design is focused on exploring how ODC team change agents or practitioners facilitate team interventions in organizational contexts. The research techniques included personal interviews, focus group discussions, and observations with members of the team. The purpose of the study was to diagnose the teamwork task and relational environment.

3.2. Participants' Involvement and Procedures

All participants in the study were members of the Career Development Centre (CDC) team which comprised ten members, two white male members (Leader, 57 years, and a team member of thirty plus years). The rest of the team members were all white females in their thirties, including a middle woman in her early fifties. To maximize a broader study of participants' views and experiences of team intervention issues of experiences, in discussion with the team leader, and consultation with team members the consensus was reached to use both one-to-one interviews and focus groups. Within the qualitative tradition, both interviews and group discussions are used to elicit personalized and elaborated contextual data (Barbour, 2007). The purpose of the individual interviews sought to gain an understanding of the current state of the team and how the team members interact with one another. The advantage of conducting such interviews was that it allowed participants to offer their own viewpoints and interpretations of any issues of concern they perceived about the team dynamics or behavioral issues. The interviews followed a semi-structured in-depth interview which was used and were scheduled to last for 30 mins. The interviews were conducted at the organizational premises.

The group discussions sought to find out how team members perceived each other's roles and contributions on how they used their roles to facilitate effective team working. An avenue for exploring the above roles used team roles. The team members were asked to reflect on and report a particular teamwork experience using a self-perception inventory for team building and identifying team roles based on the work of Belbin (Belbin, 2011). This type of team-building component aims to capture insights into how teams apply their various roles in teamwork. The following questions were used to stimulate the discussions: 1) What do I believe I can contribute to a team; 2) If I have a shortcoming in a team, it could be that; 3) When involved in a project with other people, I tend to act in which role; 4) The most characteristic approach to teamwork is that; 5) How do I react to the problems when working in teams? The group discussion was conducted for two hours and at the end team members were asked to pair in twos and compare their team role identities. This was such a productive exercise for team building and provided insight for the consultant about the ways the team functioned and the types of interventions to facilitate the next processes. To conduct an intervention ODC practitioners navigate different processes, interpretations, and methods. As shown in Table two, general intervention strate-

gies and correlated actions were outlined as goals for implementing workable solutions for team improvements.

3.3. Methodological Reflections

Methodologically the study provides a case example of a complex perspective analysis of team intervention method to illustrate the importance of levels of analysis and impacts that influence teams' cultural and political developments taking into consideration organizational contexts enabling or hindering teams' flourishing. [Mohrman et al. \(1995\)](#) argue that understanding team contexts is critical for a team's success in accomplishing its goals. The OCD intervention method was employed and the analysis of data from team assessment included observation, individual and group interviews, and secondary data. Using the OCD intervention approach provided insightful perspectives in researching and understanding team interventions as uniquely embedded within organizational contexts. The typical approach applied to engaging teams in organizations leans towards interventions that focus on stages of development as outlined in the Tuckman model ([Tuckman, 1965](#)). As a point of departure, this research draws from the interventionist activities and strategies as proposed in the Argyris model ([Argyris, 1970](#)) with its emphasis to explore multivalent and multilevel representations of team levels of complexities in addressing teamwork in organizational contexts. The research was conducted using a small-scale qualitative case study in a Suisse business school context. The qualitative method was useful for identifying content analysis themes that emerged from diagnosing the case team interventions of this study. [Schein \(1988\)](#) has outlined organizational role intervention activities in organizational systems as tasks aimed at improving: communication, member roles, and functions, group norms and processes, leadership and authority, intergroup cooperation, and competition.

Drawing from the above role intervention possibilities, the main research question focuses on: what are complex factors that impact team interventions in an organizational context? To answer the question the research analyses three sub-questions. First, what types of management consultant intervention roles have been utilized that embrace a complex view of team interventions? Second, what types of knowledge are created that improve teams and teamwork in an organization? Third, what types of impact emerge that demonstrate team and organizational learning implications? To explore these questions, a conceptual diagram is illustrated below as part of understanding the complexities of ODC team intervention perspectives in an organizational context. It draws from the methodology of organizational change in understanding the complexities of teams and changes in organizational contexts ([Todnem By et al., 2018](#)). Drawing from this methodology, four types of team intervention strategies are shown in [Table 1](#) below. The outlined strategies are discussed as knowledge created for improving team interventions in organizations.

Table 1. ODC Team intervention strategies and organizational level context.

Selected strategies	Intervention focus
Team training strategies	Designed to identify task analysis and performance and situated learning that empowers team roles and competencies.
Team building/development strategies	Designed to improve interpersonal relations, and clarify goals and objectives; roles and responsibilities, and policies and procedures of team's work methods.
Team organizational culture strategies	Designed to foster artifacts, norms, values, and assumptions of stakeholders of the organization in which the team resides.
Team organizational political strategies	Designed to assess the environmental and political influences of organizational factors impacting the team.

Source: Designed by the author.

3.4. The Case Study: A Team Intervention in a Business School

3.4.1. Descriptive Case Analysis

This section describes the case organization where the author applied the complex intervention approach to illustrate the methodology and data collection methods highlighting team intervention role analysis and strategies applied. The role of organizational development and change (ODC) engages change interventions within organizations (Caldwell, 2003; Hodges, 2017; Cummings & Worley, 2009). The research was conducted in a cliental single organization operating in a business school called Ellem and located in the central region of Switzerland. The organization has enacted several structuring processes that have expanded its work and educational programs locally and globally. These organizational structural dynamics had a significant impact on the team outlined below. Since change agents' consultants are contracted to work with cliental organizations, it becomes imperative to understand the impact of multiple internal and external changes of complexities on teams working in organizations. However, most team interventions have neglected the team's external and contextual issues that impact teams.

Ellem is a market leader in international business management education and its Career Development Centre (CDC) provided advice, support, and training opportunities leading to the development of career strategies for the trainees that added value to the business and educational institution. Taking the role of external consultant with the CDC team the consultant role sought to apply the use of organizational development and change interventions (ODC interventions) to support team building among all members of the team. Before engaging in this new team intervention assignment, I had contributed to the successful implementation of the CDC professional developmental project for the master's program. In this new project, the manager was also keen that I help him assess the current state of his departmental team and make recommendations. As Jerrell

and Jerrell (1981) noted, organizational consultation in schools requires the consultant need to understand both the micro perspective and macro perspective of an organization. While the intervention conducted in this study sought to improve team development change and learning for the CDC team, it was also important to understand the team opportunities and constraints as influenced by the complex systems of the organizational contexts.

This study focuses on identifying complexities impacting team interventions in organizations, the data presented will focus on changes and learning impacting teams within the organization and suggestions for making sense in the context and implementation of team interventions. Whereas team interventions in organizations reflect varieties of strategies (Lacerenza et al., 2018), the case analysis of this study also sought to examine the key primary intervention role activities and processes conducted towards the team intervention. While organizational development interventions support team building and team training strategies, the goal of this study further explores the role of cultural and political strategies as vital team interventions in organizational contexts. As argued by (Golembiewski, 1993) the intervenor's world is created from selected intervention strategies outlined as primary tasks of roles consultants play. These constitute diagnostic, facilitative, gatekeeping, architectural, and mobilizing roles (p. 375). In a similar perspective (Armenakis & Feild, 1993) outline intervention as a schema used by consultants to interpret meanings of observed objects, actions, and behaviors for processing information. As shown in the table below the use of schema demonstrates how the application of the various roles was employed to interpret team intervention activities. Understandably, the use of schema would differ in different team intervention contexts.

This case organization study has some limitations in the sense that team complexities addressed in this study may not be the same in all organizational contexts. Moreover, from a complex approach perspective, there is a greater scope to conduct and expand empirical case study research on teams to investigate how diverse complexities and intervention strategies are identified and implemented in multiple environmental contexts. A case study of team interventions is useful to understand team issues experienced in organizational contexts. Moreover, relevant to this study and research, the process of team intervention using the complexity perspective model provided an understanding of team and organizational levels of intervention strategies and action enacted. Moreover, it must be stated that not all team interventions would adopt similar processes. The specific aims of the CDC team interventions were facilitated through knowledge creation that included diagnostic, facilitative, gatekeeping, architectural, and mobilizing strategies adopted. The focus of the study and research reflects the journey of my own practice as an organizational consultant and how I facilitated the team intervention learning of a CDC team in a business school context. Reflecting on this experience draws an understanding of the team intervention skills such as selected role strategies, activi-

ties, and actions that were facilitated. Therefore, the importance of diagnosis and intervention skills on all organizational multilevel areas impacting teams is part of the consultative process.

The complex designed model as shown in **Table 2**, outlines the five-step intervention strategy and the distinct roles, conditions, and complexities encountered by the interventionist. The complexity of roles adopted was associated with identifying multiple issues inside and outside of the levels of the case team study intervention. The inside issues were associated with micro perspectives such as team dynamics of tasks, behaviors, and performance identified in team training and team development domains. The outside-level issues reflected macro perspectives of organizational culture, politics, and power factors that impact the team and are located within the cultural and political areas of the organization.

Table 2. Some consultant roles & associated activities used in CDC team intervention.

General Intervention strategies	Team Intervention Activities & Actions
Diagnostic role	The diagnostic method included observation of teamwork in context; individual and group discussions were conducted, and secondary data was obtained. This entry phase was important to gather and identify factual data about the history, and team practices related to their functional tasks and situational needs.
Facilitative role	The appreciative inquiry method included development sessions and feedback sessions in the analysis of different team members' strengths using the appreciative inquiry model (focus more on what is working well within teams) rather than what is problematic.
Gatekeeping role	The coaching method involved feedback sessions that discussed team members' abilities to address their developmental needs rather than relying only on consultant intervention recommendations. Workshops and training sessions and discussions were organized, and members shared stress challenges coming from organizational complexities.
Architectural role	The consultant discovered that the team demonstrated experiences of important levels of conflicts and tensions with top management. This role engagement demonstrated political complexity. The implication impacts of this are further discussed by the author in the finding section.
Mobilizing role	Team role awareness demonstrated team members' appreciation of their role tasks and skills at CDC. Using the mobilizing role, the consultant supported the team's ability to manage (the internal pressure) of its work. Moreover, helping the team manage (the outside pressure) related to the architectural dynamics was also beyond the consultant intervention role. This complexity is discussed in the finding section of this article.

Source: (Golembiewski, 1993: p. 376).

3.4.2. Data Collection and Analysis

Despite the challenges of conducting qualitative research in organizations (Lincoln, 2005), the inquiries sought to investigate how knowledge is created, understanding and impact, and development of theory are employed in facilitating team intervention for the CDC team. Drawing from the descriptive case study (Yin, 2009) and exploratory research analysis (Zikmund, 2003), interventions were aimed at investigating the external and internal processes through diagnosing situational issues, inquiring about alternatives, and discovering innovative ideas impacting the case team. Using a change interventionist role: diagnostic, facilitative, gatekeeping, architectural, and mobilizing (Golembiewski, 1993) were employed as team intervention strategies in the case organization study. Golembiewski suggests the role of the intervenor tasks is that of helping the client system understand itself and its environment (p. 373). Referring to them as intervention styles (Cockman et al., 1992) proposed intervention styles employed by the consultants as acceptant, catalytic, confrontational, and prescriptive ways of engaging cliental issues of concern. Data collection methods included participant observation, and individual and group interviews (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Specifically, the analysis draws from four proposed generalizations relevant to intervention as primary tasks of intervention; qualities needed by interventionists; conditions faced by interventionists, and some roles consultants use as ways of coping (Argyris, 1970: pp. 128-176). All the above interventions were engaged in the business venue during the tenure of my consultation. However, all names and sensitive information concerning the organization and names of team participants in the study were protected through pseudonyms.

4. Research Findings

The research answers the research question of the study: what are complex factors that impact team interventions in an organizational context? Using a complexity perspective approach, the study sought to make sense of the team intervention complexities as experienced in the CDC team and to highlight challenges teams encounter in organizational contexts. The case is presented using intervention-level sections (Rashford & Coghlan, 1994; Cummings & Worley, 2009) that represent individual, group, intergroup, and organizational as the interpretive outlook of team intervention development processes and learning. As already suggested my goal was to provide multivalent and multilevel descriptions (Dooley, 1997), to enable organizational and management consultants as well as readers to draw related experiences and learn to interpret challenges and complexities of engaging team interventions in organizations. As shown in **Table 1**, the facilitative role activity in improving team building or team development used the appreciative inquiry method, a commonly used organizational change approach towards the managing of the personal, team, and organizational issues by creating change that focuses on learning from success than looking

at what is wrong. Appreciative inquiry (AI) argues that to guide a team process or organizational team interventions the focus of inquiry needs to capture the positive life-giving forces to create new futures that are innovative (Watkins & Mohr, 2001). AI approaches to organizational change draw from social constructionism, complexity theory, and self-organizing systems as different in each situation (p. 37). Using team training strategy (Shuffler et al., 2011) at CDC included knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) as a strategy to improve cross-training and teamwork skills in the work environment to support team ways of engaging their diverse roles. Reflecting on the description of the case of the CDC team, it appeared to me all the above interventions contributed to vital learning of the team's internal outcomes. But it also became clearer to me that its critical challenge and survival were the results of the cultural-political dynamics and conflicting views between top management and the CDC team that resulted in conflict pollutants. Harvey and Drolet (1994) describes pollutants as choking the climate for effective conflict management and further suggests the urgent need to engage the conflict before it becomes too toxic to resolve.

In a general sense, the principal focus of improving team environmental issues is to ensure that change agents (O'Neill & Salas, 2017) address team processes and developmental issues. Lacerenza et al. (2018) identified team development interventions as primarily focused on two types of interventions that promote: training interventions and process interventions. Similarly, research on team development interventions (Shuffler et al., 2011) used team building to address team breakdowns, whereas team training for providing the knowledge and skills for teamwork (p. 371). The above two examples illustrate similarities in that the application of team developmental interventions is oriented towards improving internal team environmental issues. The teams and teamwork literature does not offer a theoretical framework that integrates team internal factors and external team factors such as cultural and political factors as significant for improving effective team interventions in organizations. Through this study, I have learned the importance of addressing both processes of team internal dynamics and external team factors to demonstrate how team intervention complexities are addressed.

Although the implementation of the CDC team's internal intervention seemed to indicate success for the team, the organizational environmental influences which in this study I have identified as cultural and political interventions undermined the overall team's success. Moreover, as illustrated in the case analysis, intervention strategies were also required to address cultural and political dimensional issues. The team intervention strategies and impact on organizational interactions are identified as the art to manage organizational politics impacting the power and functions of the team (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992). The findings in this study suggest that team interventions primarily focus on teams' effectiveness using team-building methods. The team building definitions as outlined in the literature suggest it as a process intervention aimed at helping individuals and

groups improve behavior and relationships (Shuffler et al., 2011; Lacerenza et al., 2018). For example, my team interventions at CDC also sought to improve individual and team behavior and relationships. Whilst this intervention contributed to effective improvements in various team issues, the CDC team continued to experience heavy burdens of stress and frustration. The frustrations that the team experienced were perceived by the manager and team members as a lack of overall support from top management toward this team.

Comments made by individual team members during interviews and team building sessions suggested they were major differences in how the CDC team and top management perceived the team's function and future direction. From my observations, these differences were the major causes and contributions towards the team's challenges and eventually its dissolution. Within the conceptual diagram, the team complexity challenge was identified in the architectural and mobilizing role activities of my intervention. It was not surprising that communication breakdowns increased between the team and organizational managers. In trying to solve these tensions the CDC departmental manager met with organizational leaders and suggestions were made about finding a consultant to mediate the issues. While the CDC manager preferred, I take that role, the organizational managers felt that I was already too close to the team to act in such a mediation role. After I completed my consulting team intervention assignments per scope and completion agreements, I left Ellem. Sadly, on my next visit after several months, I was confronted with the shocking news that the whole CDC team had been dissolved and the manager and the team members were all dismissed. This stark reality illustrates that teams in organizations are not isolated but are nested within the organizational cultural and political factors that influence their survival and success.

5. Discussions

The experience of intervening in the team systems of organization of the case organization formed the foundations of this study. Williams et al. (2002) outline learners' intervention as outcomes of experience in context and methods of learning employed. Additional reviewing of the literature on teamwork in organizations confirmed team building and team training strategies have been identified as contributing to team development in areas of behavioral and task factors (Arrey, 2014; Salas et al., 1995; Lacerenza et al., 2018; O'Neill & Salas, 2017). While theoretical literature perspectives underpinning team building and team training strategies have dominated the field, less explored have been cultural and political strategies as also vital strategies in exploring and understanding teamwork in organizations.

Team interventions in changing environments are marked by diverse and dynamic contextual needs. From my observations, the success of my team building, and training strategies was easier facilitated from the diagnostic, facilitative, and gatekeeping roles. These activities related to team interventions conducted

within internal team tasks and behavioral tasks analysis at team levels interactions and relationally dynamics. In contrast to the internal team task and behavioral outcomes, my greatest challenges related to the implementation of the gatekeeping and architectural roles. [Harvey and Drolet \(1994\)](#) suggest scenario analysis as one approach to address organizational complexity. From my observations, the CDC's complexity demonstrated the need to extend the cultural and political interventionist roles to address the team challenges emerging from the organizational cultural and political influences. Therefore, to address the complexity in the context of team interventions in organizations, there is a need to integrate multiple strategies: team building, team training, cultural, contextualization, and political management. [Barner \(2006\)](#) argued that organizational development practitioners experience field intervention failures due to the application of the team model out of context and the team-building approach not applying to complex performance issues (p. 44). For example, [\(Grieves, 2010\)](#) argues that the multiple constituencies perspective enables better analysis of stakeholder interests that reflects dynamic interests in which people take actions to engage in activities maximizing their interests (p. 21). Therefore, change agents' or consultants engaged in team interventions in organizations need to understand the four critical issues that impact teams; 1) team building issues; 2) team training issues; 3) organizational culture issues; 4) political power issues.

This study suggests that research about team building, and training issues has been much researched. On the contrary, research using the complex approach requires further examination to create a richer understanding of cultural and political impacts on teams and teamwork in organizations. [Mathieu et al. \(2017\)](#) noted that future research on work teams needs to demonstrate dynamic team relationships that include team processes and emergent states that reflect multiple interactions for team effectiveness. The study has also highlighted the relevance of complexity theory and its contribution to understanding team intervention changes as illustrated in the CDC case of the Suisse context.

5.1. Organizational and Management Consulting Implications

Emerging from the exploration and lessons learned in the team intervention case study is the notion of understanding multiple strategies that can be used to enhance awareness and new ways of engaging team interventions in organizations. It is important to understand that engaging team interventions in organizations reveal multiple complexities. Equally important are the roles played by OCD interventionists and management change agents working in complex situations. In the case of the CDC example, the complexity of the team was the cultural and political layers of the organizational context that impacted team outcomes and eventually its closure. To fully engage team interventions in organizations, require a contextual and complex understanding of teams including selected strategies to address emerging problem issues. As outlined in [Table 2](#), the purpose of diagnosis or intervention was intended to identify actions that will im-

prove the CDC team functioning. Based on my interventions with the case study team, I have identified four strategies to be considered by those working to engage in team interventions in organizations. Therefore, this research has proposed four levels of strategies: contextual level strategy; team level strategy; cultural level strategy, and political level strategy. The proposed strategies cannot be viewed as universally relevant to all team contexts. Moreover, the findings proposed within the CPM's four levels of strategy provide useful considerations for ODC practitioners and management change agents that address team domain and organizational domain intervention issues.

5.1.1. The Contribution of Context-Level Strategy in Teams' Intervention

Teams and teamwork in organizations represent diverse contexts. Intervening to support or improve their effectiveness require important levels of contextual sensibilities. This perspective is shared by (Sundstrom et al., 1990) who suggested work teams reflect types of functions, and purposes guided by organizational context. While teams in workplaces are projected as over-hyped and exaggerated outcomes interventionist practitioners need to locate solutions for their success within their internal dynamics as well as from analysis and interpretation of organizational contexts such as cultural, political, and structural support systems. Drawing from the multiteam system (Zaccaro et al., 2012) the main problematic issue at the CDC team could be resolved or improved using linkage attributes of interdependence, hierarchy, and communication networks (p. 14). Using the linkage attributes would minimize CDC's negative organizational stress while also improving its accountability to the organizational demands. Moreover, the linkage attributes were never implemented, and that resulted in the team being dissolved. Future research needs to demonstrate how team intervention reflects an understanding of context levels of strategies examined from contexts linkage attributes strategies.

5.1.2. The Contribution of Team-Level Strategy in Teams' Intervention

As already outlined the focus of my team development interventions utilized training and process interventions (Arrey, 2014; Lacerenza et al., 2018). Reflecting on the team development intervention applied at CDC demonstrated notions of situational awareness of team processes and task interdependence (Salas et al., 1995) and team training objectives focused on building team skills such as cross-cultural training strategies and content strategies such as team skills and competencies (Shuffler et al., 2011). While the contribution of team-level intervention has demonstrated successful outcomes in team research as illustrated in the above literature, effective teams and teamwork also reflect developmental interventions. With an emphasis on the developmental intervention of teams (Senge, 2006) proposes team learning as involving practices of dialogue and discussion that contribute to learning organizations. The complementary perspective (Hodges, 2017) proposes developmental interventions as functional roles best enacted by ODC consultants. Drawing from Hodges's explanation team lev-

el strategy could be facilitated by applying team building level strategy and team training strategies either by OCD internal or external change agents. However, from my perspective team level strategy cannot be viewed as only successful as it addresses team building, training strategies, and team learning. The ODC change agent agents also need to engage in team interventions that develop and transform the team in cultural and political awareness of the organizational culture impacts.

5.1.3. The Contribution of Cultural Level Strategy in Teams' Intervention

The importance of cultural perspective intervention is critical as it enables the norms and values of the organization in which the team operates. The case of the CDC illustrates how not to ignore the significant role cultural linkages contribute towards the function and development of teams in organizations. [Ancona et al. \(2009\)](#) advocate that teams are linked to their organizations and suggest the critical need of managing team interconnections in several dimensions of influence, task, and information (p. 8). Complexities associated with culture change ([Massarik & Pei-Carpenter, 2002](#)) focus on improving interrelations between corporate cultures and professional cultures (p. 76). As noted, ([Schein, 2017](#)) practitioners working as culture analysts need to develop cultural strategies to support the systemic thinking of team intervention as cultural skills that will enable the team's survival (p. 344).

5.1.4. The Contribution of Political-Level Strategy in Team Intervention

Since organizational power and politics impact teams in organizations, organizational change agents must learn to manage political impacts affecting teams. Understandably, external consultants may have limitations to the extent they can exert political power. Moreover, they can leverage political power in team interventions by collaborating with organizational managers to improve team and organizational relations. [Jones \(2013\)](#) provides guidelines for identifying forces for change and resistance to change using force field analysis for managing organizational political forces by identifying forces for change and resistance to change. According to the force-field theory of organizational change, two sets of opposing forces are examined to understand how the change will take place. The ODC consultant in collaboration with management support would need to analyze the organizational political environment to identify forces for change. Using a political strategy enables teams to negotiate their survival and success with key organizational stakeholders external to the team. This would lead to designing an appropriate political strategy that would improve teams and their functions in organizations.

Overall, the findings from this research suggest the importance of engaging all relevant and multiple levels in team interventions and draw similar findings with research conducted on the professional development of teams in higher education ([Gast et al., 2017](#)). As argued by ([Ancona et al., 2009](#)) team operations are the product of the context where the team is located. I have argued in this re-

search that team interventions in organizations need to be understood from multiple complex perspectives as highlighted by the outlined by the four-level context considerations. As argued by (Tannenbaum & Salas, 2021), effective teams in organizations require action improvements at all levels of individual, dyad, team, and organizational context. A limitation of external ODC consultants is their ability to analyze and interpret organizational political complexities impacting teams. Moreover, these challenges could be improved to the degree that organizational and management practitioners work closely to develop the cultural and political skills required for understanding and managing political and cultural systems that impact teams. Shepard (2005) reflects on his own role as a change agent. He notes that working in organizational cliental systems can be complex and suggests the importance of understanding cliental unique situations and their cultural systems (p. 336). Although teamwork complexities can be identified on many multiple levels, Doyle (2003) proposed multiple levels of teamwork analysis as located within the environments of the global, organizational, physical, social, and internal domains (p. 27). The multiplicity of teamwork analysis as suggested by Doyle provides a useful model for understanding the diverse types of team interventions and their complexities. The CDC case study illustrated the four key team intervention considerations and factors contributing to team situational contexts within its organizational work environment.

6. Conclusion

Engaging team interventions in organizations requires moving beyond analyzing internal group dynamics of task and maintenance functions of teams identified within team training and team building strategies. The author conceptualized a multi-level model for analyzing team contexts. This type of analysis enables a better diagnostic of the larger environment of corporate realities that influence teams that I outline as culture and political strategies. Due to the increased complexities experienced by teams, there is an urgent need for ODC change agents to consider the importance of the above outlined strategies especially the cultural and political levels of strategies that tends to be neglected. As noted by Shaw (1997), consulting from a complexity perspective reveals unexpected paradoxes and tensions between the legitimate and shadow systems of working in cliental multiple contexts. I also experienced challenges of complexity that confronted me while engaging in team intervention in the CDC team context. A critical reflection of ways of engaging and making sense of intervention practices exposes awareness of uncertainty, complexity, uniqueness, and value conflict (Schön, 1983).

A case example of team intervention used in the study was typically based on a particular case and therefore conclusions cannot be presumed in all team and organizational contexts. Moreover, I believe that reflecting on the case experiences and complexities underpinned in the study provided several insights that can further stimulate organizational and management consultants' innovative

ideas of engaging team interventions in complex contexts. Firstly, the constructed strategies ODC practitioners employ will always differ. Moreover, there is an urgent need to extend team interventions in organizations beyond the training and process interventions and include cultural and political intervention strategies as critical processes for enhancing team effectiveness. Secondly, contributions from a complex approach to team intervention analysis will enable practitioners with new and extended approaches to implementing team projects that reflect contextual and complex issues at hand. Thirdly, team intervention situations will differ in different organizational cultural, and political environmental contexts. Team intervention consultants and management change agents could employ cultural and political tactical analysis to improve team cultural climates and political interlevel dynamics in organizational contexts. Drawing from (Alcover et al., 2021) team learning intervention challenges are described as creating conditions and contexts that address 1) empowering interventions identified in the diagnosis challenges and 2) restorative interventions as a follow-up to address the challenges of the diagnosis intervention strategy (p. 10). Designing team interventions from the outlined recommended strategies will stimulate practitioners and researchers with innovative team intervention approaches that integrate practice and theory dimensions that will address context, cultural, and politically sensitive issues. Recent research on teamwork and teams in organizations (Langan-Fox, 2005), suggests that internal and external demands faced by organizational teams are better managed through awareness of organizational contexts, environmental contexts, physical context, and cultural contexts.

Finally, the author of this research contributes to team interventions in organizations and management explored from the context and lived experiences of teams and teamwork conducted from qualitative research methods drawn from organizational behavior and organizational psychology approaches. Ongoing research focusing on team intervention case studies is needed that display complex multiple realities not only of team building and training tasks but also reflecting team cultural and political tasks and strategies that are linked to business and organizational systems. This type of field research will advance team research interventions in complex organizational situations (Salas et al., 2009). Additionally, it is also my hope that this type of research will also extend the team interventions that navigate contextual complexities and reflect evidence-based foundations, actionable processes, and evidence-based intervention approaches (Mohammed & Schillinger, 2021) that reflect the methodological contributions of context and lived experiences (Lincoln, 2005) in team research in organizations. Moreover, in terms of generalizability, the research implications and limitations depict teamwork intervention factors contingent on the team and organizational realities of the CDC case. However, drawing from a case study research four general strategies that characterize case understanding was employed in the case study analysis such as: 1) relying on theoretical propositions; 2) de-

veloping a case description; 3) use of integrated qualitative data methods; 4) rival explanations of the case (Yin, 2009). The overall outcome of the case study provided an example of a case study concerned with the complexity of implementing team interventions in a school business context. The descriptive approach was used to identify a) embedded units of team analysis domain areas; b) overall patterns of opportunities and complexities encountered by the author in his role as ODC team interventionist; c) to suggest theoretical and practical learning insights relevant to the study. This single-case study was selected as a revelatory case of studying team intervention in the context of a real-life situation. It is hoped that it can be used as an exemplary case study from which other single or multiple cases would be replicated in other team contexts to demonstrate extended theoretical and practical models of team interventions. Williams & Hummel (2010) argued that studying cases as complex systems opens possibilities for using new methods for description such as causal analysis, systems dynamics, and social network analysis.

7. Recommendations: CPM as a Learning Perspective

This research has argued that advancing a multiple-team intervention approach is navigated through engaging complex issues unique to the team contexts as illustrated in the organizational intervention case example cited in this research. The outlined CPM team intervention strategies were proposed as key considerations for understanding and managing team research and practice in organizations. This paper contributes a CPM approach as contextualization awareness practice in engaging team interventions in organizations and implicational considerations were outlined for organizational and management consultants and future research.

7.1. Implications for Practitioners

Future teamwork practitioners would also need to reflect diverse multiple intervention perspectives contingent to team contextual issues in addressing team adaptations and suggested processes in complex environments (Burke et al., 2008; Krokos et al., 2009). The CPM model suggests that ODC team practitioners need to be aware that teams are part of interdependent network systems that integrates domains of the team's organizational cultural and political relational constructs. The empirical research outcomes from the literature review reflect interventions with teams that have developed team building and development interventions that assess team behavior and training dynamics in real-life work settings (Alcover et al., 2021). The above types of intervention may be considered a strategic approach, which is acknowledged as a vital intervention as it seeks to improve the internal team's situational needs. However, the strategic approach aimed only at solving team internal issues not a complete picture as it ignores some cultural and political impacts that could be barriers to effective team management. The implication for practice requires practitioners to design

team interventions that centre on cultural and political environment impacts on teams. Ancona et al. (2009: p. 10) suggest two approaches to team interventions in organizations as analysis and managing the external environment. The first approach drawn from a political perspective enables teams to identify key stakeholders external to the team that may support the survival of the team. The use of this type of intervention enables teams to assess the environmental influence on teams. Secondly, the cultural perspective enables the team to analyze the organizational values in which the team resides so that it acts according to cultural norms shaping the organization. The author recommends that organizational or team practitioners helping teams to improve team building, training, and development strategies, need to simultaneously assess the relevance of the cultural and political impacts on teams (see **Table 1**). Therefore, in seeking to enact team changes in particular organizational contexts and aspired results, the OCD consultant practitioners a) need to be aware of the many interacting variables and layers impacting teams; b) need to consider the team strategic positioning while supporting teams with cultural and political positioning of managing their effectiveness. This viewpoint argues against team interventions of any kind that ignores cultural and political perspectives. The author suggests that practitioners need to consider a multiple-level analysis to achieve the basic goals of team intervention efforts.

7.2. Implications for Future Research

Future researchers should also consider the merits of various qualitative or quantitative or mixed methodologies to design new and innovative field-based and contextual research aimed at elucidating types of teams and varieties of complexities that challenge teams and teamwork in organizations. More critically, to advance team research methodology, organizational practitioners and change agent interventionists could integrate varieties of case study methodology and complexity theory to describe interconnections of the team's contexts, tasks, and cultural and political systems. Drawing from a complexity perspective model (CPM) the research findings of the study is structured around four levels of strategies identified and considered important in team interventions in organizational settings (context-level strategy, team-level strategy, cultural-level strategy, and political-level strategy). While the CPM approach does not exhaust the range of current and future team interventions, it adds value for scholars and researchers to further expand team research in organizational contexts as opportunities to generate new intervention perspectives that reflect multi-level approaches. According to (Tannenbaum & Salas, 2021: p. 197) theoretical and methodological team research challenges and interventions need to address different layers of individual, dyad, team, and organizational contextual issues.

Building up from the conceptualization of the complexity perspective model, further research opportunities for organizational and management researchers are encouraged that demonstrate such integrations. The complexities of the

theoretical multiple perspectives as well as insights from the case study confirm the need for future research agendas that would go beyond studying only the internal team intervention domains but also address the cultural and political levels of the organizational environment and its impact on teams. It is my hope that the complex theory and contextualization of team research as discussed in this research will stimulate further exploration of team interventions in organizations.

Another theoretical research approach (Vasileiadou, 2012) conceptualizes research teams as complex systems that need to be understood as emerging from interactions between agents and integrated dynamics of the local level dynamics, global level dynamics, and contextual level dynamics. Vasileiadou suggests that management researchers need to further examine how knowledge management at one level influences related levels to gain collaborative outcomes (p. 19). Future possibilities of team intervention research could also be examined from various theory integrations and methodological approaches. For example, a complex adaptive system could be used to demonstrate how teams develop certain knowledge skills (Lotrecchiano & Misra, 2018). While knowledge management theory and practice (Dalkir, 2005) could be used to draw an understanding of the cultural transformations of teams and types of knowledge outcomes. The author also proposes that future research could be conceptualized around theory and empirical case study efforts that integrate multi-level theory and practice (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000) to develop integrated methodological approaches for understanding contexts of team research in organizations. Since teams are in organizational multilevel systems, an investigation of their contextual, temporal, and emergent processes would contribute varieties of team knowledge outcomes. Another example could draw from qualitative discourse analysis to construct questions aimed at understanding processes of how teams are working at contextual, cultural, and political levels within their organizational domains. The outcome of these research tasks would provide an interpretivism understanding of the management of teams in their organizational worlds.

This paper has argued that the complexity perspective model and multi-level analysis of teams can provide the foundations on which future team research and interventions in organizations could further be expanded to understand the complexities of teams in organizational contexts. As illustrated in the study the CPM synthesized results from the case study which indicated the importance of understanding team impacts and variables at levels of contextual, team, cultural, and political domains. It is hoped that the theory and methods described in this paper serve as the foundation to stimulate future efforts to improve teamwork research and practice in organizational contexts.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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