(Virtual) Organisations in a Dynamic Context

Assignment 1: Article abstract and reflection
This assignment contains the abstract and reflection of the following article:
‘How to learn to be adaptive?’ An analytical framework for organizational adaptivity and its application to a fish producers organization in Portugal

Wiki link:

Source:
http://www.researchgate.net/publication/259147655_'How_to_learn_to_be_adaptive'_An_analytical_framework_for_organizational_adaptivity_and_its_application_to_a_fish_producers_organization_in_Portugal/file/e0b4952a0b0480f1c5.pdf

Abstract from author’s of article:
This paper analyses and illustrates the ways in which organizational adaptivity is important to the resilience of socio-ecological systems (SESs). Resilience and organizational literature are used as theoretical contributions to help understand the nature of adaptive organizations and how changes in external structure and in organizational practices may reinforce each other. Building on this literature review, we elaborate an analytical framework for studying organizational adaptivity. We apply the framework to a case study of the ArtesanalPesca fish producers organization from Sesimbra in Portugal in order to empirically explore the relative weight of the factors contained in the framework and the relations between them. The case outlined contains lessons on how adaptivity may help an organization to move towards a sustainable business model and how it may be an essential part of such a model.

Abstract from student of article:
Karadic et al. (2013) have reviewed literature to understand why it is important for organizations to be adaptable. They have elaborated on both organizational and resilience literature to create an analytical framework for studying organizational adaptivity. This framework uses dimensions that have multiple factors to look for within an organization and suggests ways to measure/consider them. Karadic et al. (2013) have applied this framework to a case study of the ArtesanalPesca fish producers organization from Sesimbra in Portugal to empirically find the weight of the different factors within the dimensions and find relations between them. The case shows that for ArtesanalPesca it has been successful to be adaptive and has led to a market leading position. The case study overall shows that adaptivity may help organization to become more resilient.
Reflection of article:
This article is relevant because it discusses adaptivity, the adaptive cycle and panarchy. The author’s explain why the adaptivity of organizations is important to be resilient. Like discussed by both Holling and Gunderson (2002) and Abcouwer and Parson (2007) an organization will inevitably encounter a crisis and will need to change or else it will not recover from this crisis. They will need to find a way to get back from chaos to stability and prepare for the next chaos.

The Article discusses the crisis’s the fishermen faced in Portugal. However this is a common crisis organizations face. The problem of ongoing resource depletion is something that many organizations suffer from. This problem will create a need for organizations to realize a response to external shocks and restore balance while learning from the experience. The organization needs to successfully go thru the adaptive cycle.

Karadic et al. (2013) take the principles of the multi-level nested framework for analyzing socio-ecological systems of Ostrom (2009) as a point of departure and expand on them to build a framework in which to analyze organizational adaptivity as a key condition for resilience in a SES (socio-ecological system). They have applied this framework, which among others is based on “the adaptive cycle”, with a case study about the ArtesanalPesca fish producers organization from Sesimbra in Portugal. They recognize, like Holling and Gunderson (2002), that the organization is part of a social ecological system. They use the case study to show that the adaptivity of ArtesanalPesca has led to organizational success.

It has shown that the way people choose how to deal with crisis either increases or decreases their own resilience and the resilience of the socio-ecological system they are part of. Many organizations reach for familiar, official rules and past solutions. This could be seen as, during the lectures discussed, ‘normal’ manager behavior. Figure 1 shows the table that shows what ‘normal’ manager behavior can lead to. Karadic et al. (2013) show that this behavior makes the organizations static and vulnerable to crisis. Overall the case study shows how the adaptivity of an organization can lead to a success story.

![Figure 1. What 'normal' manager behavior can lead to.](image-url)
References.
