



Maastricht University

*Leading
in Learning!*

Reinforcing Pillars for Quality Culture Development

(Bendermacher, G., oude Egbrink, M., Wolfhagen, I. & Dolmans, D. 2017)

Maastricht University / Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences
Institute for Education / Dept. of Educational Research & Development





SHE School of
Health Professions
Education

Outline

1. Introduction to quality culture
2. Realist review on quality culture
3. Path analytic model of quality culture
4. Conclusions and 'take home' messages

1. Introducing quality culture

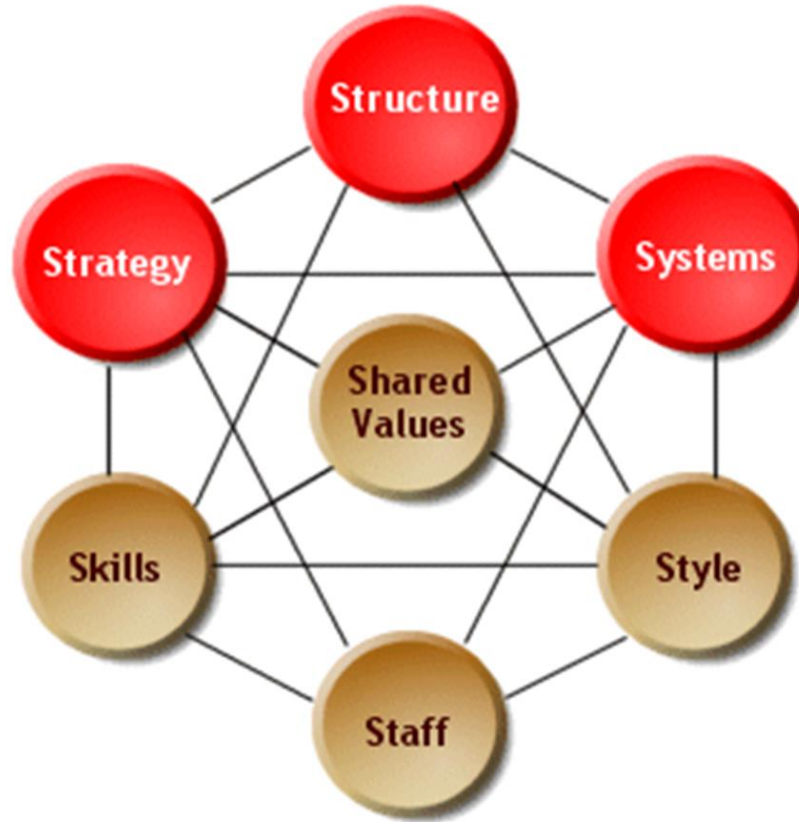
Why is (research on) the topic important?

- Systems, processes and instruments do not always fit-in with staff values and preferences (Davies, Douglas & Douglas, 2007; EUA, 2012)
- Practices are becoming more alike, yet differences are reported on the experienced effectiveness of these practices.
 - Due to the presence or absence of a 'quality culture'?

Why is (research on) the topic important?

- Shift from control, accountability and regulation to autonomy and credibility
- Most empirical research concentrates on 'hard, directly observable' quality culture elements

“Hard” and “soft” (7S –McKinsey model)



Quality culture definition

“An **organisational culture** that intends to enhance quality permanently

- **A cultural/psychological element** of shared values, beliefs, expectations and commitment towards quality, and
- **A structural/managerial element** with defined processes that enhance quality and aim at coordinating individual efforts” (EUA, 2006).

Research aims

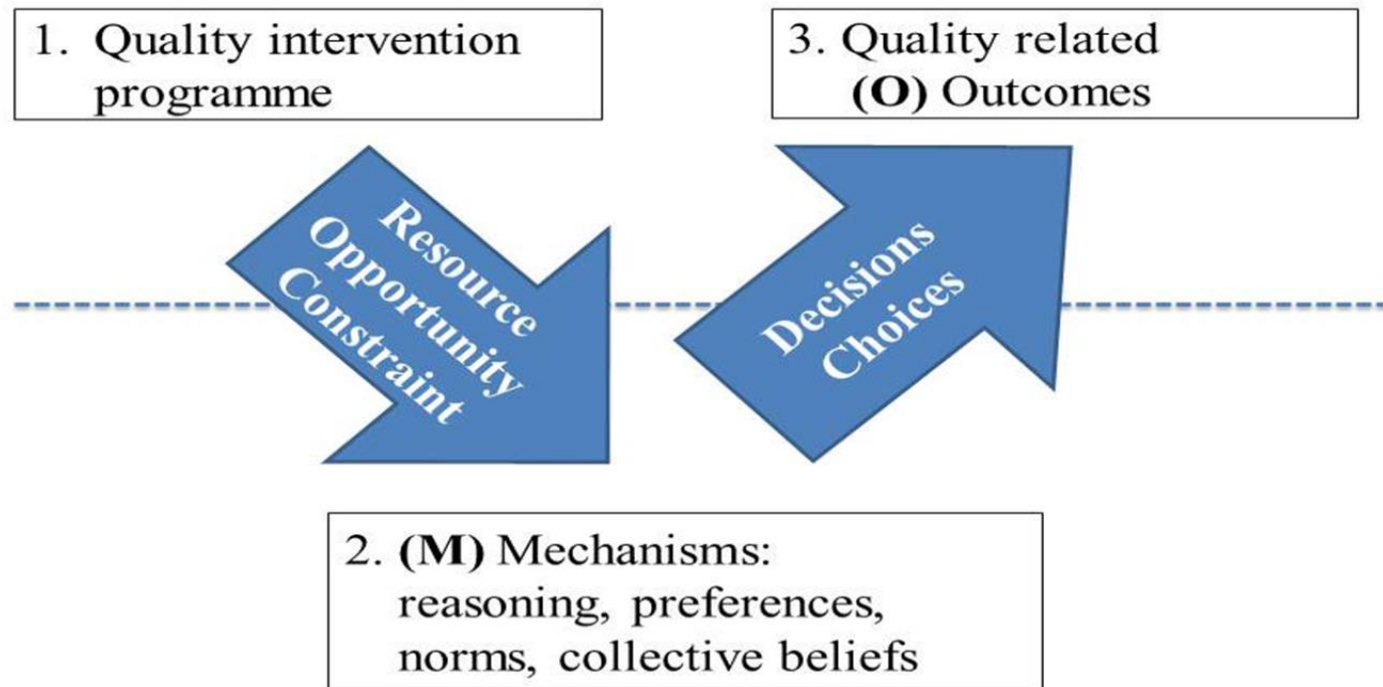
- What exactly is a quality culture? Which elements contribute to it?
- How and why does it work?

2. Realist review on quality culture

- A **systematic, theory-driven approach** with the purpose to examine the relationship between the **Context (C), Mechanisms (M) and Outcomes (O)** of social intervention programmes (Pawson et al., 2005).

Quality culture

(C) Context



(Wong et al., 2013)

Systematic search

Key concept 1	Key concept 2	Key concept 3	Key concept 4
Quality Culture	Quality Management	Higher Education	Improve*
culture*	quality system*	HEI*	<u>organi*ation*</u> effective*
subculture*	quality management system*	Higher education <u>institut*</u>	enhance*
<u>organi*ation*</u> subculture	Total Quality Management	<u>universit*</u>	perform*
corporate culture*	TQM	college*	effective*
corporate climate	quality assurance	universities & colleges	perform* effective*
<u>organi*ation*</u> culture	quality control	campus	<u>innovat*</u>
<u>organi*ation*</u> climate	quality dimension*	tertiary education institute*	education* improve*
<u>institut*</u> culture*	quality assessment	post-secondary	education* effective*

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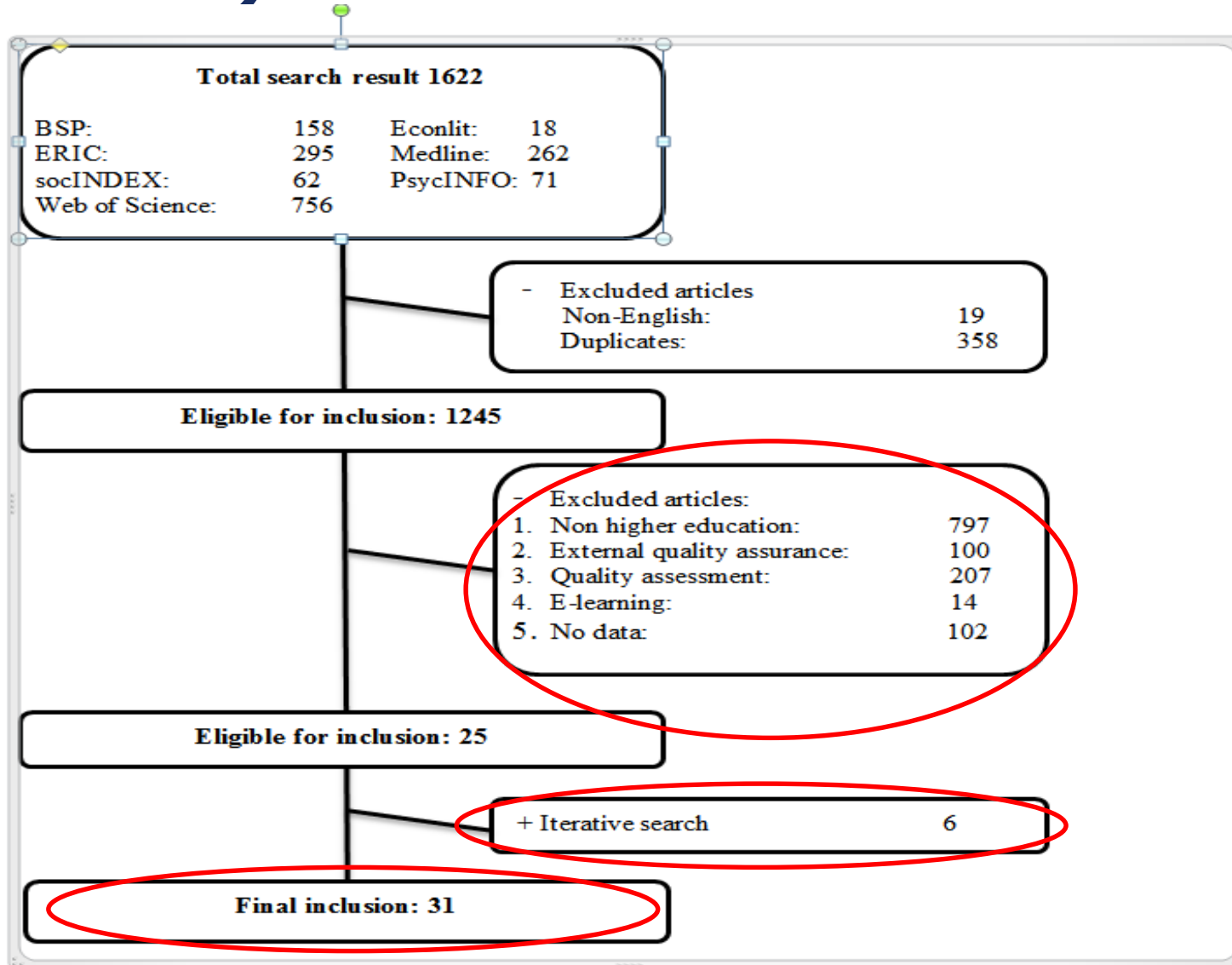
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(search) Results



Results Context (1)

(promoting elements)

Organisational structure/managerial elements

(inhibiting elements)

- Strategy of continuous improvement
- Quality management systems
- Staff and student involvement in organisational decision making
- Taking into account evolving student demands
- Clear policies, procedures, systems responsibilities

- Hierarchical structure /structural division
- Lack of staff and student involvement in organisational decision making
- Neglect of evolving student demands
- Lack of policies, procedures, systems, responsibilities
- Lack of resources
- Top-down (managerial) approaches to quality management implementation
- Research focus

Results Context (2)

+ Organisational subculture/psychological elements	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Flexible, people oriented cultures▪ Presence of various cultures▪ Shared (educational) quality values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Rigid, control oriented cultures▪ Presence of strong disciplinary cultures▪ Research culture/undervaluing education

Results Context (3)

Leadership elements

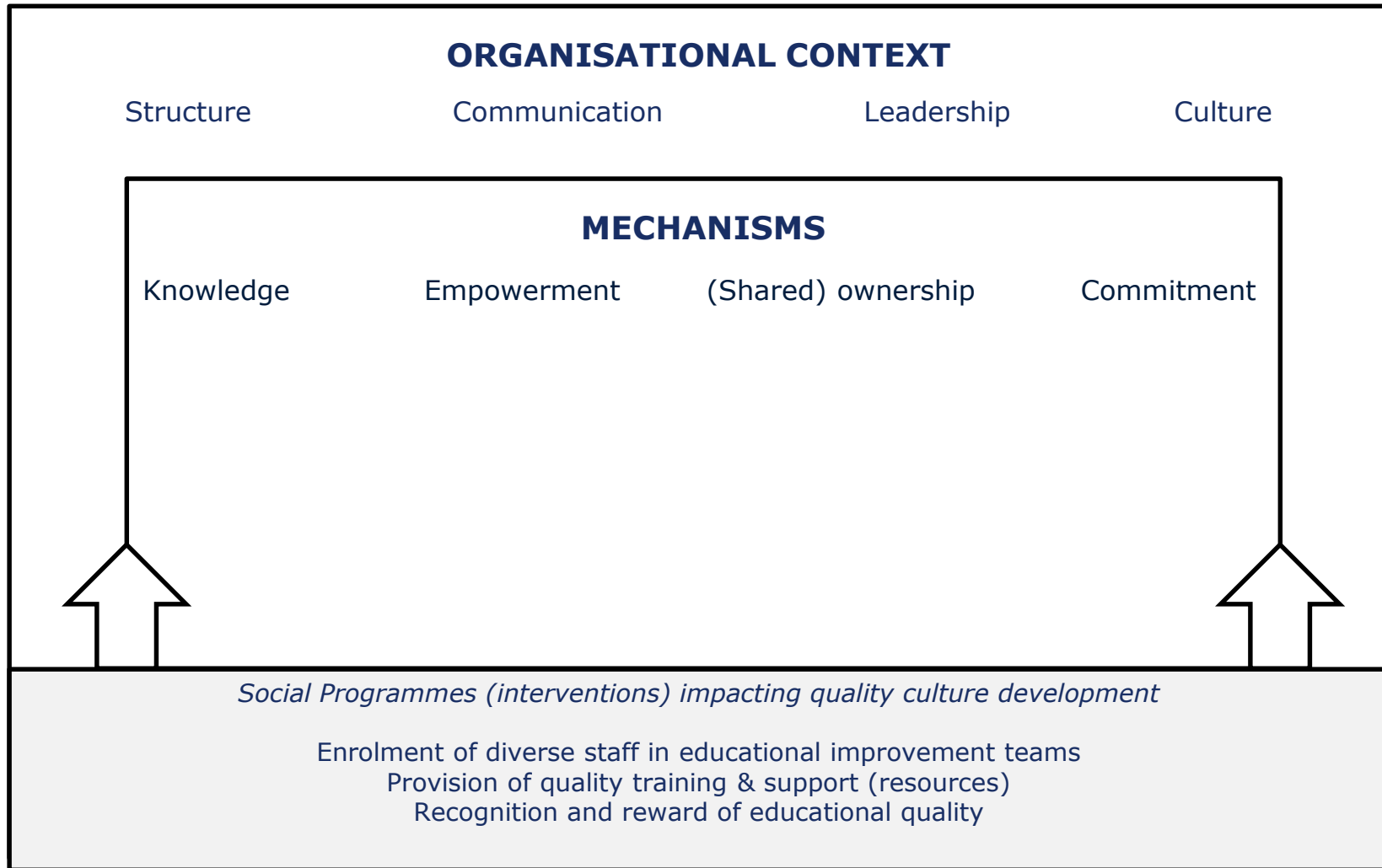
- Leadership commitment and skills
 - Allocate resources
 - Create partnerships, influence people management
 - Create climate of trust and shared understanding
 - Ability to perform multiple roles
 - Setting and communicating policies

- Lack of leadership commitment and skills
 - Focus on inspection and control
 - Acting as communication gatekeepers

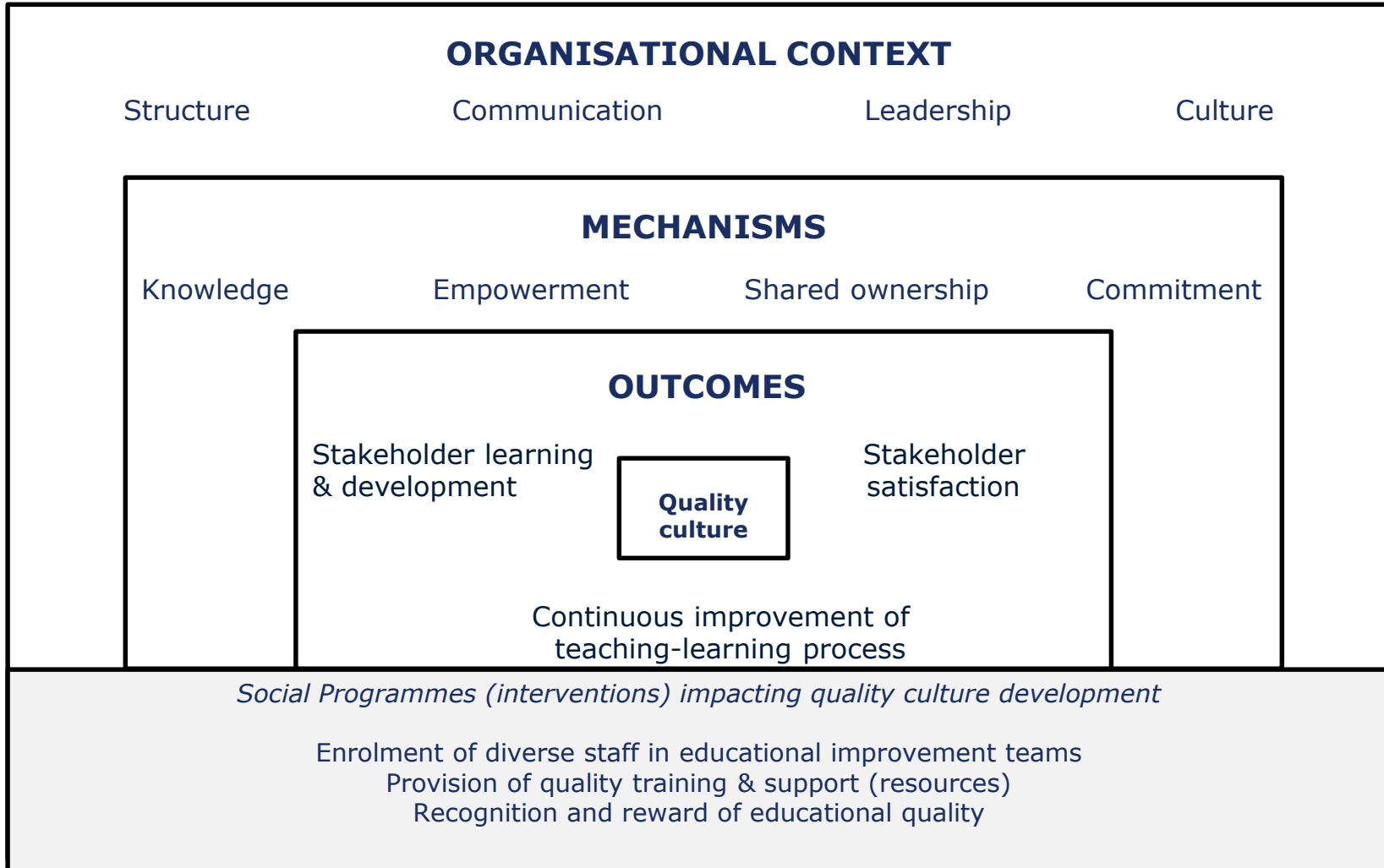
Communication elements

- Communication/information for quality
 - Provide information on strategies and policies
 - Clear tasks requirements and responsibilities

- Lacking communication/information for quality
 - Lack of sharing best practices across the organisation
 - Lack of appropriate communication channels



Results (3) Outcomes



Based on this (first) study (Bendermacher et al. 2016)

- Good overview of elements contributing to quality culture development as well as promoting and hampering factors
- Further (empirical) underpinning of the theory and value of quality culture development



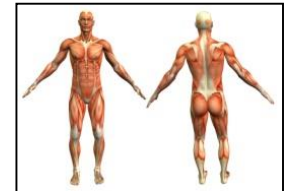


2. Path analytic model of quality culture

- Investigate interrelationships between quality culture elements and their impact on quality enhancement practices.
- Path Analysis to test hypothesis based on previous research



- Medicine (incl. ITM)
- Health Sciences
- Biomedical Sciences
- European Public Health



Problem-Based Learning



- Thematic courses of several weeks
- Tutorial groups of ~10 students and one tutor
- Courses are organised around problems
- Integration of basic and clinical sciences
- Planning groups with members from different departments

Course coordinators

- Responsible for quality monitoring and enhancement of their respective course
- Report to the programme management and translate strategic decisions of the management to educational practices
- Population: N=123, responses 89 (72% response rate)

Survey development

- Combining subscales of existing, well-validated questionnaires
- Incorporation of original questionnaires into new scales
- Item/scale development by the authors

Pilot test and principal component analysis

→ 62 items



Definition of research variables

Organisational culture:

“the **collective, mutually shaping pattern** of norms, values, practices, beliefs and assumptions **that guide the behaviour** of groups in an HEI and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and actions on and off campus” (Kuh & Whitt, 1988).

However.....

- Employees are part of and are influenced by multiple coinciding cultures
- Organisations can identify with and strive for different values at the same time:
 - To be structured and stable
 - To be a collaborative community
 - To be proactive and innovative
 - To be goal oriented and efficient

Flexibility

HUMAN RELATIONS MODEL

Means: dedication, cohesion, morale

Ends: participation, openness, involvement, human resource development

OPEN SYSTEM MODEL

Means: flexibility, readiness to change, innovation

Ends: growth, external support, resource acquisition

Internal

Output Quality

External

Means: information management, communication, measurement

Ends: stability/continuity, control

Means: planning, goal setting, decision

Ends: productivity, efficiency, profit

INTERNAL PROCESS MODEL

Control

RATIONAL GOAL MODEL

Definition of research variables

- **Organisational (competing) values**
- **Communication:** content and way of communicating
 - 'Motivates and stimulates an enthusiasm for meeting the study programmes' goals
- **Leadership:** transformational and transactional
 - 'Highly values clear agreements' (transactional)
 - 'Has a vision and imagination on the future of the study programme' (transformational)

Definition of research variables

mechanisms

Work – related psychological attitudes



Definition of research variables

- **Commitment:** 'affective'
 - 'I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected to make the study programme successful'
- **Ownership:** experienced 'possession' and feeling 'accountable'
 - 'I did not hesitate to tell colleagues in the module/cluster if I saw something that was done wrong'
- **Empowerment:** experienced control and competence
 - 'As a coordinator, I had a great deal of control over what happened in the course'

- **Quality enhancement**

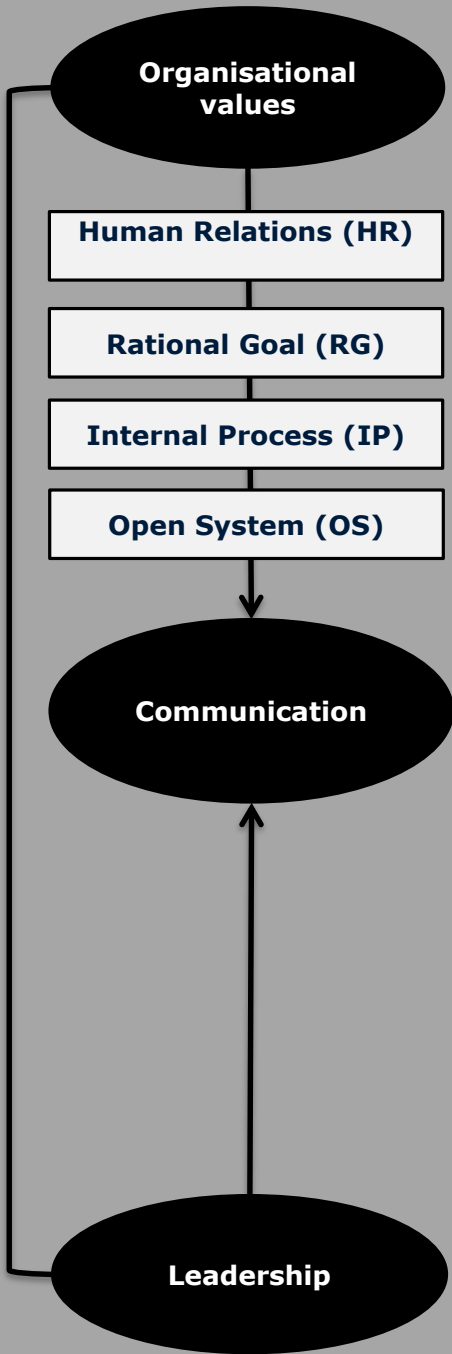
- 'Student evaluations were used to take concrete measures for improvement before the next running phase of the course'

Hypotheses on interactions

Leadership

Culture

'How leaders perceive the organisation greatly affects what they believe are the best ways to influence it' (Bland et al, 1999, 1228)



Organisational values

Human Relations (HR)

Rational Goal (RG)

Internal Process (IP)

Open System (OS)

Communication

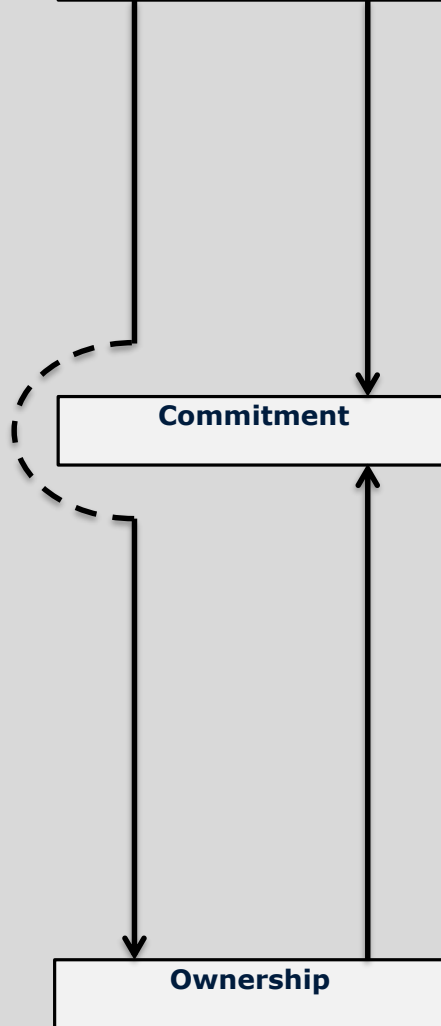
Leadership

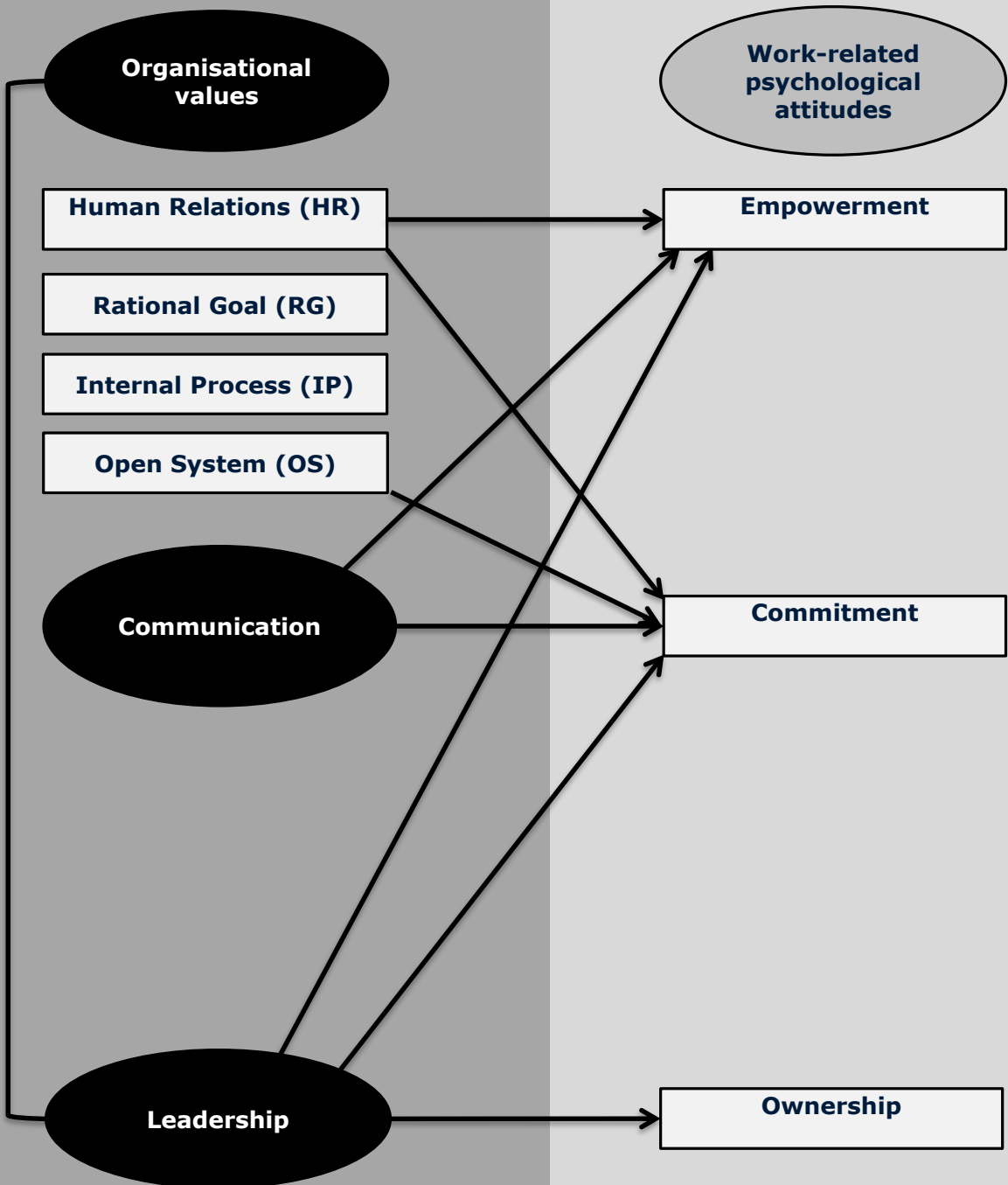
Work-related psychological attitudes

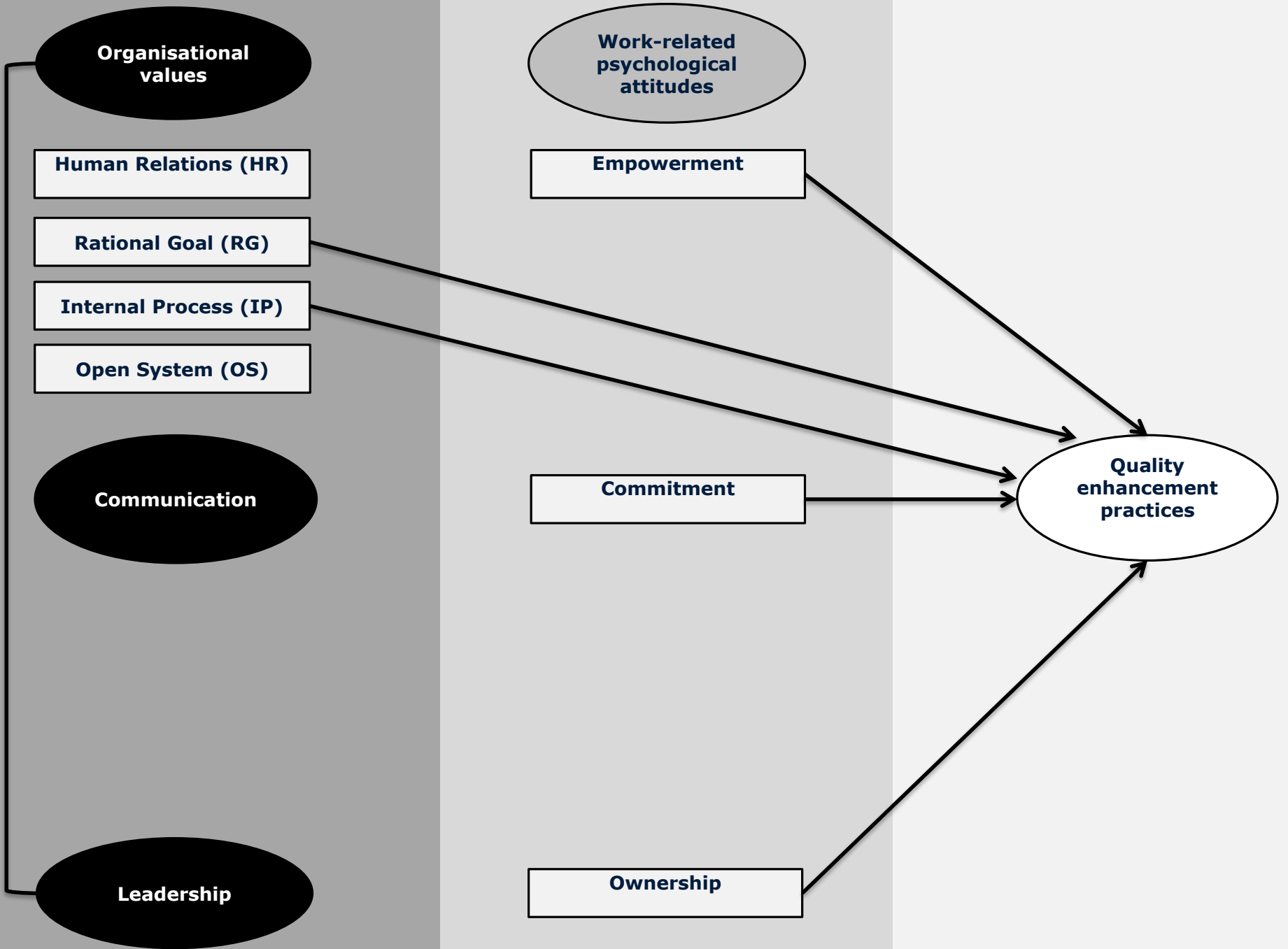
Empowerment

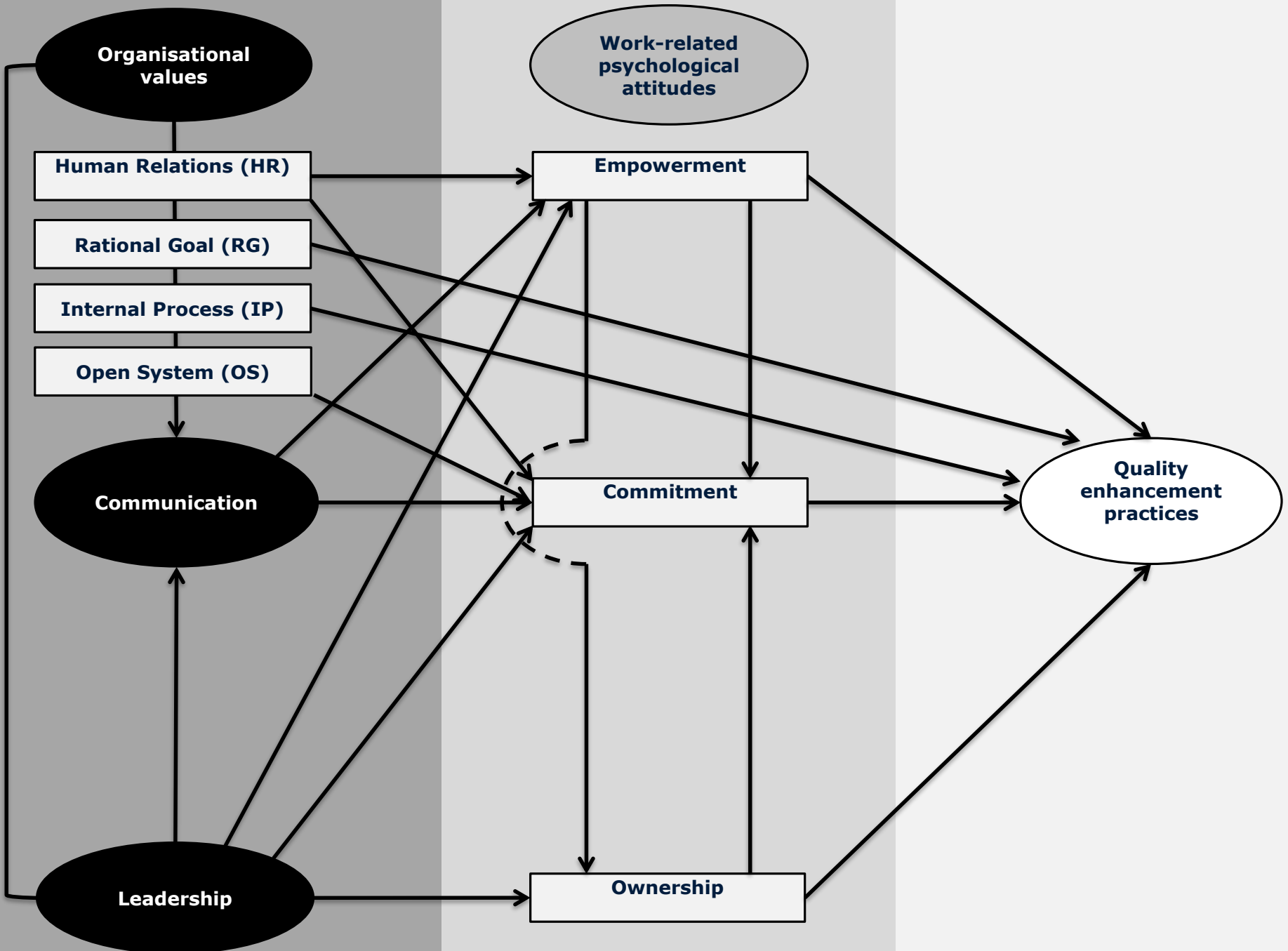
Commitment

Ownership





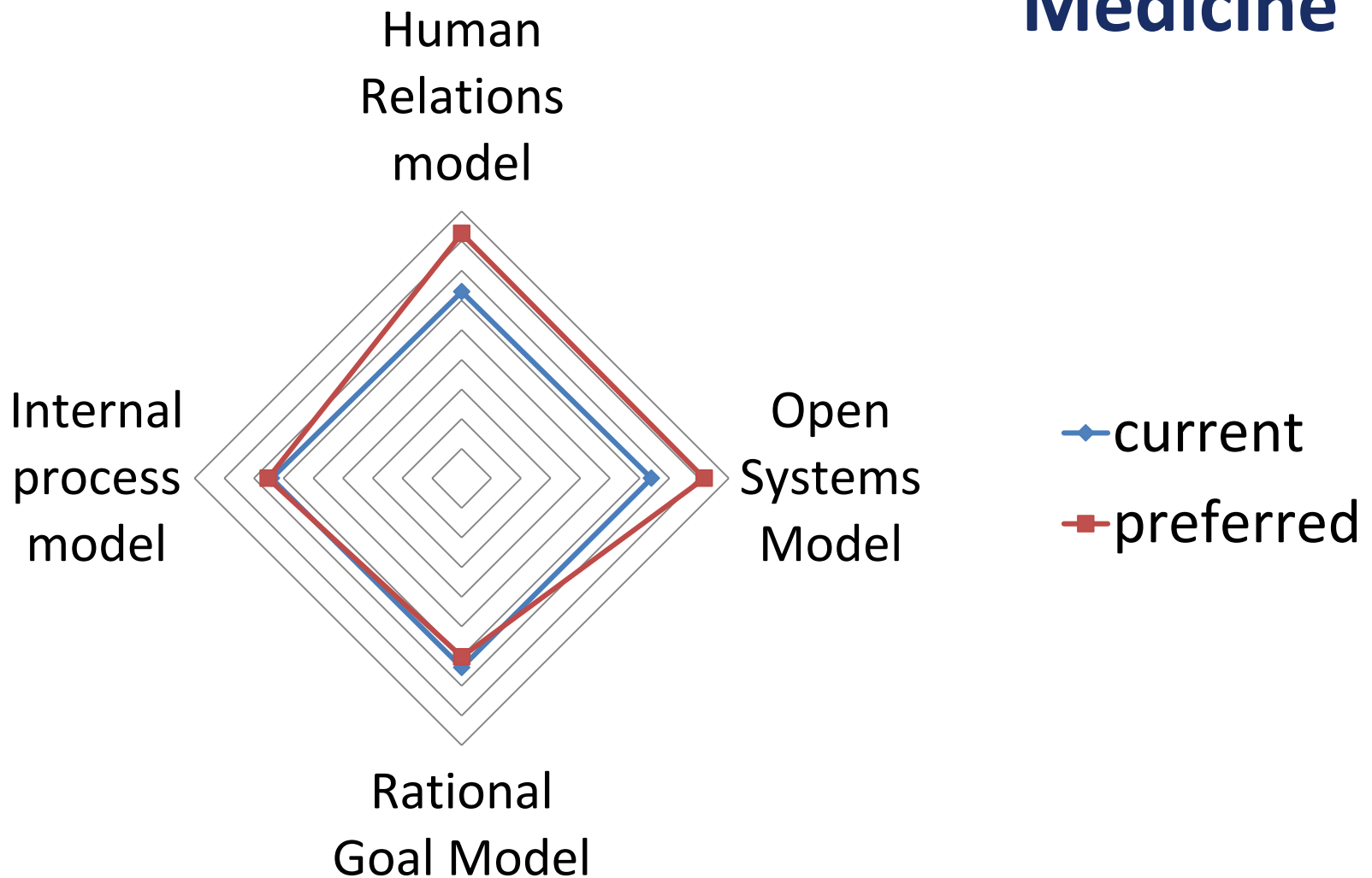




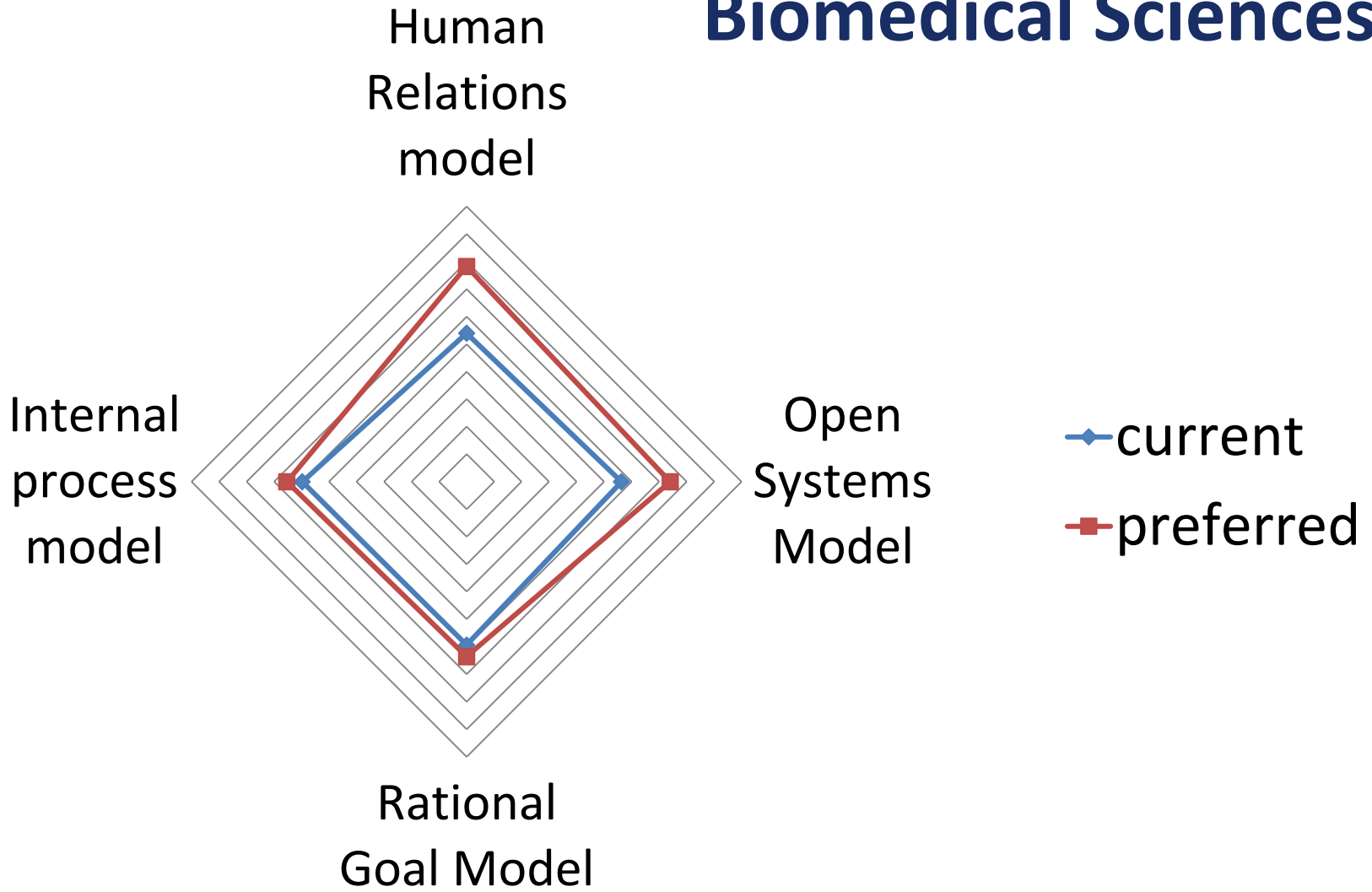
Results: descriptive statistics, correlations & alpha

	M ^o	SD	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Human Relations	2.87	.62	86	(.79)									
2. Internal Process	3.16	.54	86	.17	(.73)								
3. Rational Goal	3.18	.52	86	.09	.41**	(.72)							
4. Open Systems	2.90	.56	86	.63**	.04	.21*	(.74)						
5. Leadership	3.19	.60	87	.56**	.32**	.02	.38**	(.83)					
6. Communication	3.05	.73	89	.59**	.26*	.05	.43**	.65**	(.84)				
7. Empowerment	3.99	.65	89	.24*	-.2	-.07	.18	-.05	.06	(.87)			
8. Commitment	3.66	.65	87	.51**	.19	-.05	.25*	.34**	.44**	.22*	(.87)		
9. Ownership	4.14	.45	89	.01	.05	.03	.03	.06	.07	.32**	.22*	(.76)	
10. Quality enhancement	3.85	.51	89	.15	.06	.26*	.16	-.07	.12	.23*	.19	.39**	(.76)

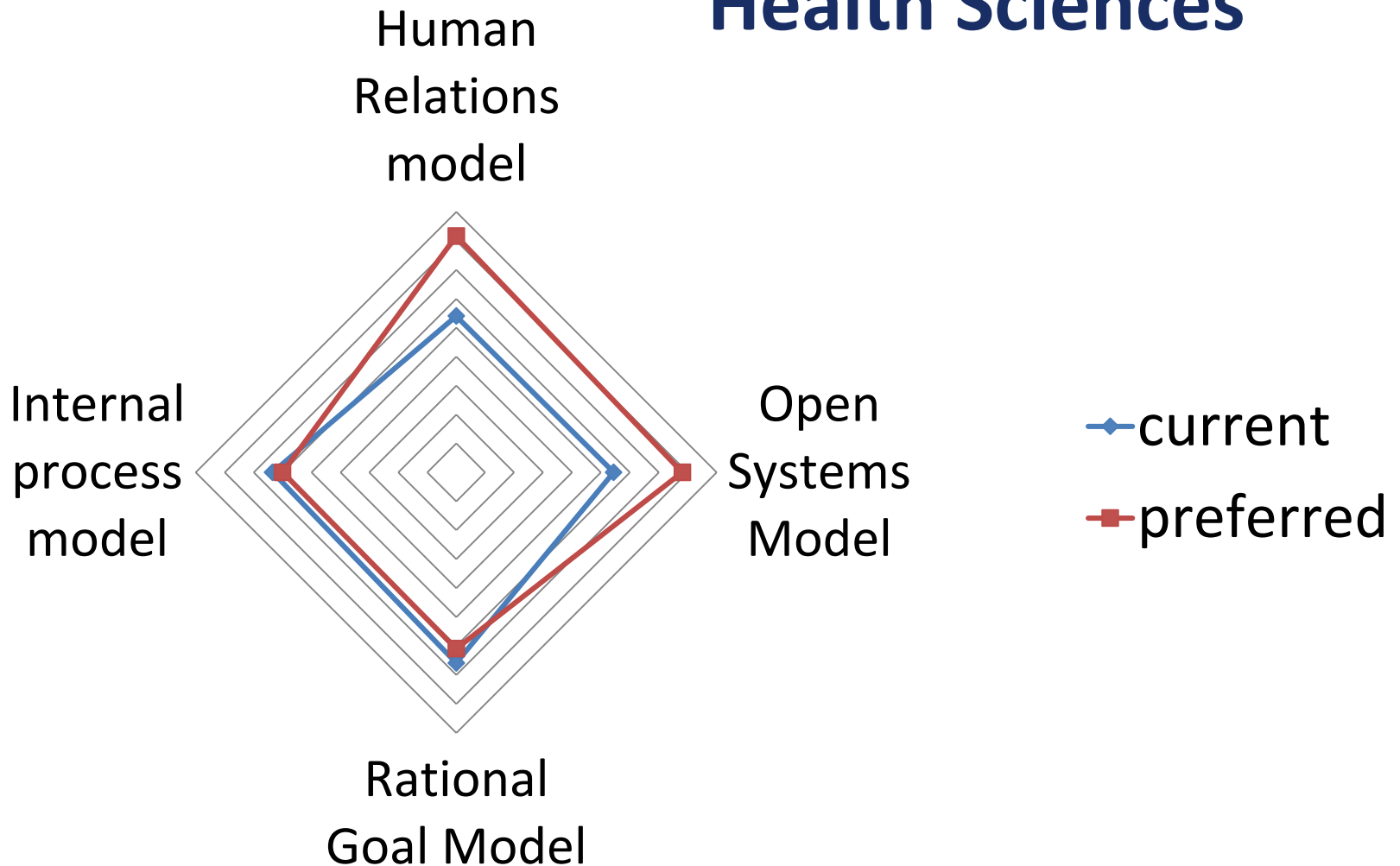
Medicine



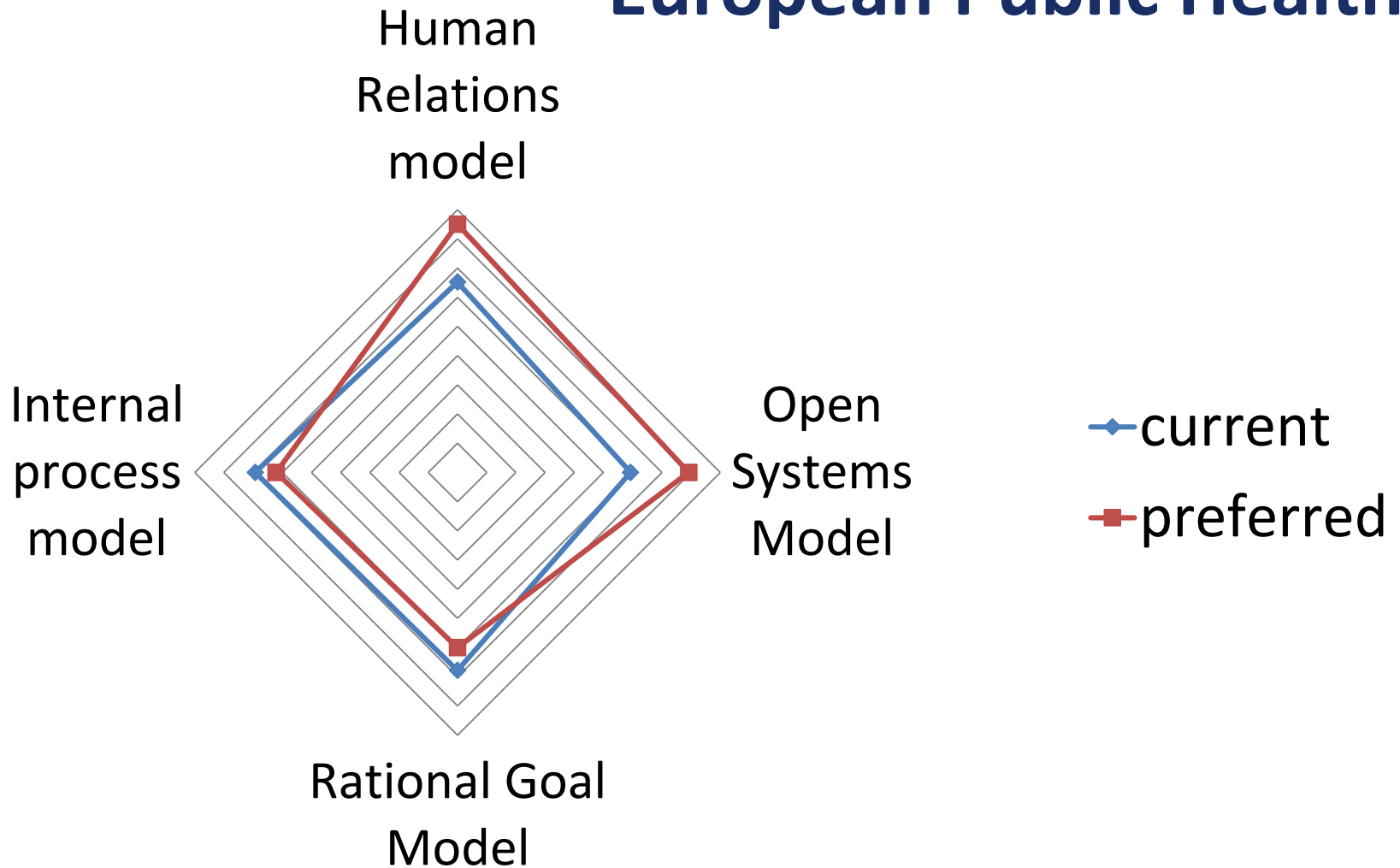
Biomedical Sciences

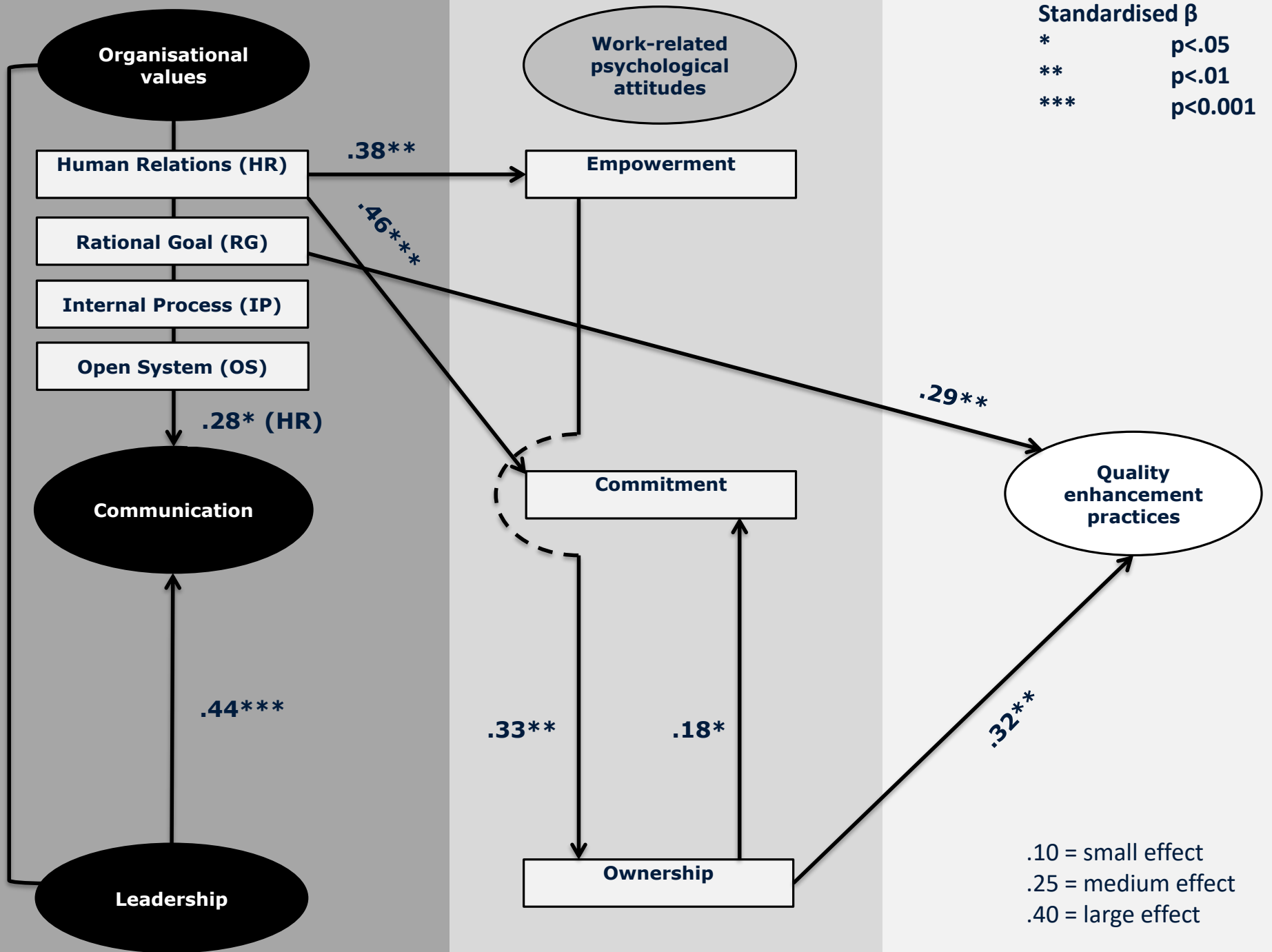


Health Sciences



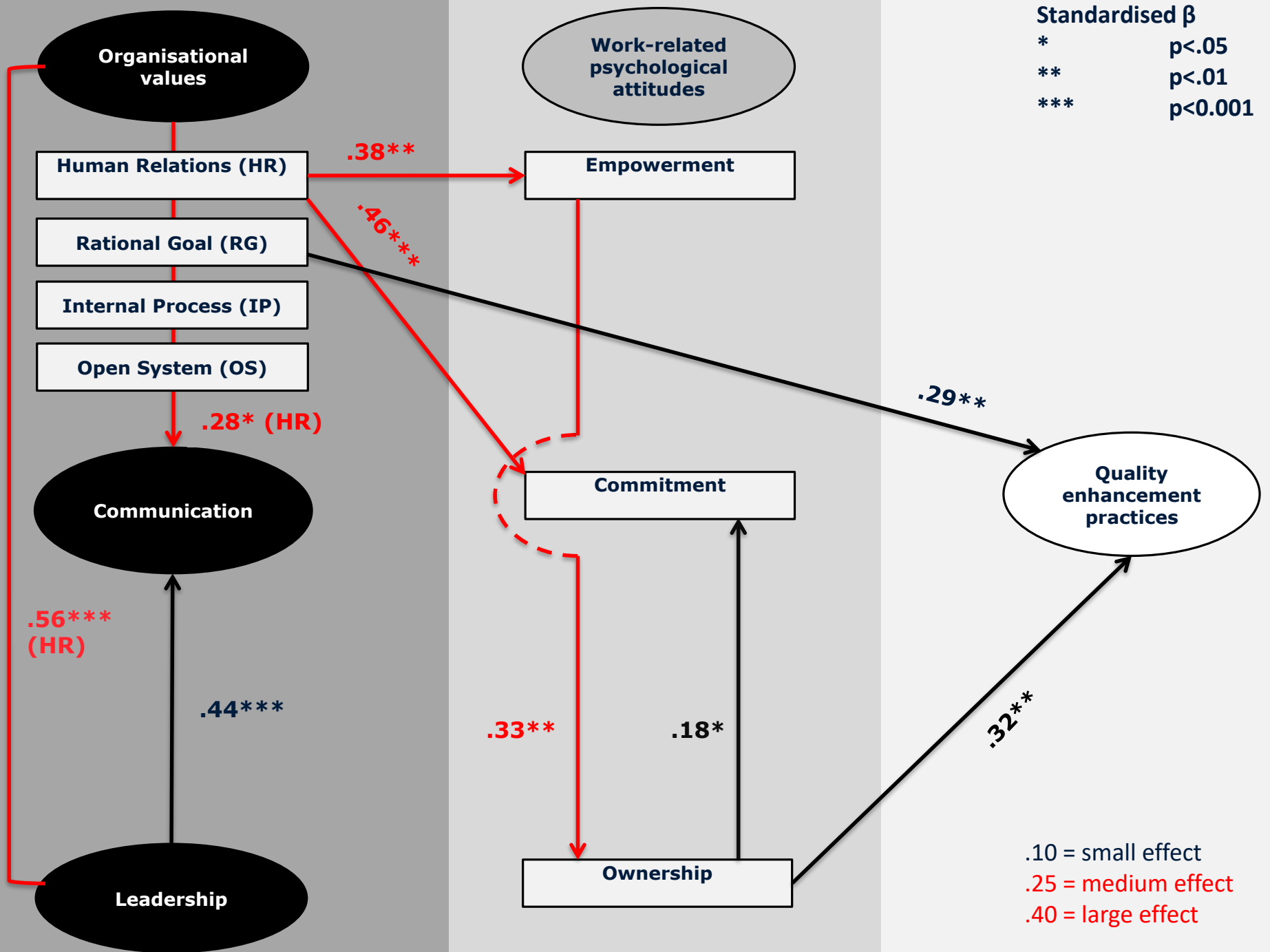
European Public Health





4. Main conclusions

- Leadership and communication form important binding elements between the structural/managerial dimension and cultural/psychological dimension
 - and are likely easier to address!?! –
- Leadership and communication, did not have a significant influence on work-related psychological attitudes
- The promotion of 'human relation values' in HEI will specifically prove worthwhile



4. Main conclusions

- Ownership and rational goal values are most important (in this organisation) for quality enhancement practices (direct impact)
- Address structural/managerial and cultural/psychological elements simultaneously
(Bendermacher et al. 2017)



Limitations

- Other factors inevitably play a role in the explanation of variance (e.g. resources, external quality assurance processes)
- Enhancement practices measured instead of actual improvement (e.g. better organisation of courses, student learning)
- Research was conducted in 1 Higher Education Institution and is context-specific

Future studies

- Qualitative.....

A few (critical) quotes of teaching coordinators

- 'To an important degree, you can decide yourself how you do your work. **There are however many organisational and bureaucratic obstacles for 'good work''**
- '**Due to different factors** (mainly a lack of resources), it was sometimes hard/impossible to take the control aspired for'
- 'The fine-tuning of activities to improve education always costs a lot of time, especially in these multidisciplinary courses. It would be a good idea to more regularly organise meetings with other course coordinators **from the same and other programmes to share best practices.**
- '**The student evaluations are too standardised.** Of course student evaluations are important, but they **should not be leading in change decisions'**

Future studies

- Qualitative
- Inter-institutional
- Different stakeholders



Towards developing intervention(s)

Key messages

- I. Implement **formal and informal, longitudinal faculty development initiatives**, which incorporate attention to staff's motivation for teaching, values, professional identities and development
- II. Increase **involvement of staff in the design of quality evaluation** and improvement measures
- III. Foster **shared ownership and decision making** (mutual support, reinforcement of the teacher identity)
- IV. Strategic emphasis on human resources, cohesion and **leaders in the role of facilitators and mentors**



Thanks for your attention!

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Model fit

- Chi-square/*df* = 1.085
- Normed fit index = .943
- Comparative fit index = .994
- Root mean square error of app. = .031

Variance explained

	Estimate
Communication	.497
Empowerment	.102
Ownership	.110
Commitment	.358
Quality_Management	.253