Ethical and Educative Leadership of Reorganizations

Reynold J.S. Macpherson

Abstract

This paper reviews an educative leadership model for reorganizing educational systems and institutions that was proposed in Australia during the 1990s. It compares this model to contemporary and international research findings. The analysis acknowledges the complexity of reorganization, considering the dynamics of systems and societies that impose changes on institutions. The study examines reorganization as an opportunity for educative leadership in local contexts, focusing on how leaders can facilitate these changes. The moral philosophies in recent reorganization theories are shown to include utilitarian, deontological, virtue, caring, communitarian, and socially critical ethics, all of which reflect a foundational epistemology. The paper proposes a constructivist, non-foundational and ethical approach using pragmatic holism for theory building about educative leadership practice when reorganizing educational systems and institutions.

Keywords: *educative leadership, reorganization, constructivism, pragmatic holism, ethics*

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Introduction

This paper reviews the ethics of reorganising the delivery of educational services by institutions, a challenge increasingly faced by the leaders of institutions and systems. It reviews the educative approach proposed by David Pettit and Ian Hind (*et.al*., 1992) in association with Maureen Boyle, Patrick Duignan, Reynold Macpherson, Margaret Mitchell, Wal Payne and Therese Reilly. The group, commissioned by the New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory and Victoria's state education systems, comprised researchers and practitioners that have considerable experience in reorganising educational institutions and systems in Australasian settings. The major aspects of the approach they recommended are reviewed in the light of traditional organisational theories and recent international research. The extent to which transformational, instructional, distributed and ethical leadership theories are evident in contemporary reorganizational theories is clarified, along with the embedded moral philosophies, to explore an approach using pragmatic holism.

Background: The Reorganisation of Educational Institutions and Systems as a Complex International Problem

The first problem for leaders recognized by Pettit & Hind (*et al*. 1992) is that they are expected to represent the interests of both a learning community or system and the state. The reorganisation of a school, college, or agency can potentially seek improvements to governance and management, realign purposes and structures, implement curricular and pedagogical reforms, and reflect significant changes to external relationships and resources, all intended to boost effectiveness (Duignan, 1986). The state can seek reorganisation as a solution to policy problems caused by demographic and technological changes, industrial and labour market dynamics, and educational or administrative research findings.

Noting that the voluminous literature on reorganisation mainly comprises diverse case studies, Pettit & Hind (*et al*. 1992) proceed by assuming that organisations are open learning systems (Schon, 1973) capable of facing problems, inventing solutions involving reorganisation, implementing solutions and evaluating outcomes, discovering new problems, and remaining open to external influences through the process. Hence, they first take "a 'distanced', analytical, somewhat technical and management view of reorganisation," and then, secondly, conduct "an analysis of the local and institutional issues in management of change" (p. 107).

Hence, Pettit & Hind (*et al*. 1992) hypothesize that educative leadership and 'double-loop learning' (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Argyris, 1077) are central to understanding and managing reorganization in conceptual and human terms. Double-loop learning entails the modification of goals or decision-making rules in the light of experience. The first loop uses the goals or decision-making rules, the second loop enables their modification. Both have to be achieved if an educational organisation or a system is to be reorganized to the scale and depth required by governance. Earlier and wider conceptions of reorganization are now considered to contextualize such thinking.

Context: A Brief History of Reorganization Theories

Institutional and system reorganization is a complex field of study that employs various theoretical frameworks. Each of these frameworks provides unique insights into the dynamics of organizational change and restructuring.

Institutional theory examines how institutions—comprising rules, norms, and routines—influence organizational behaviour. Central to this theory is the concept of legitimacy, where organizations conform to institutional pressures to gain social acceptance and credibility. Isomorphism, another key concept, describes the process by which organizations in similar environments tend to become more alike over time. Institutional logics provide a framework for understanding how cultural beliefs and rules shape organizational structures and practices (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2008).

Contingency theory asserts that there is no single best way to organize; instead, the most effective organizational structure depends on various internal and external contingencies. This theory emphasizes the importance of achieving a fit between organizational structure and environmental factors. Adaptation to the context is crucial for organizational effectiveness, as organizations must align their structures with the demands of their environment (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Donaldson, 2001).

Resource dependence theory focuses on how organizations manage dependencies on external resources. The concept of power is central to this theory, as organizations seek to control critical resources to reduce uncertainty and enhance their autonomy. Strategic alliances are often formed as a means of managing resource dependencies and gaining access to essential resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

Systems theory views organizations as complex systems with interrelated parts. This theory highlights the importance of feedback loops, where outputs are fed back into the system as inputs, contributing to homeostasis and system stability. System dynamics are crucial for understanding how changes in one part of the system can affect the whole, emphasizing the interconnected nature of organizational components (Katz & Kahn, 1978; von Bertalanffy, 1968).

Complexity theory considers organizations as complex adaptive systems characterized by non-linearity, emergence, and self-organization. Emergence refers to the spontaneous creation of order from local interactions. Adaptation is key, as organizations continuously evolve in response to changes in their environment. The non-linear nature of complex systems means that small changes can have disproportionately large effects (Stacey, 2001; Anderson, 1999).

Change management theory explores the processes, tools, and techniques for managing organizational change. The role of change agents, who drive and support change initiatives, is critical. This theory also addresses resistance to change, a common challenge in organizational transformation. Understanding the stages of change, such as unfreezing, changing, and refreezing, is considered essential for effective change management (Kotter, 1996; Lewin, 1951).

Network theory analyses the patterns of relationships among entities within an organization or system. The concepts of nodes (individual entities) and ties (relationships between entities) are fundamental. Network centrality, which indicates the importance of a node within the network,

and social capital, the benefits gained from network connections, are key elements of this theory (Granovetter, 1973; Burt, 2005).

It is notable that the framework that Pettit & Hind (*et al*. 1992) use involves a blend of institutional, systems, and resource dependence theories, with less emphasis on network theory, yet with strong weight given to contingency, complexity, and change management theories. In part this blend reflects the Australasian setting of their research and experience, as verified by Boyd's (1983a) comparative research.

More recent international research has significantly modified theories of reorganization in education by emphasizing the importance of contextual adaptability, the integration of equity and inclusivity principles, and the impact of global influences on local educational reforms. Each of these strands are now elaborated:

1. Contextual Adaptability**:** Contemporary research underscores the importance of tailoring educational reforms to local contexts rather than applying a one-size-fits-all approach. Theories of reorganization now stress the need for flexibility and adaptability to local cultural, economic, and social conditions. To illustrate, Harris and Jones (2018) highlight that successful educational reforms are those that consider the unique challenges and opportunities within specific contexts, advocating for a more nuanced understanding of how global educational policies are adapted locally.

2. Equity and Inclusivity: Theories of reorganization have increasingly integrated principles of equity and inclusivity, focusing on creating educational systems that serve all students effectively. According to research by Ainscow (2020), there is a growing recognition that reorganization efforts must address systemic inequalities and ensure that marginalized groups have access to high-quality education. This involves rethinking resource allocation, curriculum design, and support services to promote inclusivity.

3. Global Influences on Local Reforms: The impact of globalization on education has led to a greater emphasis on understanding how international trends influence local educational practices. Sahlberg (2016) discusses the concept of "global education reform movement" (GERM), which refers to the widespread adoption of similar policies across different countries, such as standardization, accountability measures, and market-based reforms. This research suggests that while global influences can drive innovation, they must be critically examined and adapted to fit local needs and contexts to avoid unintended negative consequences.

4. Collaboration and Networked Learning: Recent theories also highlight the importance of collaboration and networked learning in the reorganization of educational services. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) emphasize the role of professional learning communities and networks in fostering continuous improvement and innovation within educational systems. Their research indicates that collaborative approaches can enhance professional development and lead to more sustainable and effective reforms.

5. Technological Integration: The integration of technology in education has been a focal point of recent research, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Selwyn (2021) argues that theories of reorganization must account for the digital transformation of education, considering both the opportunities and challenges it presents. This includes

addressing issues such as digital equity, teacher training, and the development of digital pedagogies that enhance learning outcomes.

These strands illustrate the evolving nature of educational reorganization theories, reflecting a more holistic and context-sensitive approach informed by recent international research. This general trend is illustrated even more broadly in recent reviews of educational leadership and management models, and their application to policy and practice, that touch on the reorganisation of educational systems and institutions (Bush, 2020).

Context: Reorganization of Services as an Expression of Public Policy Changes

Pettit and Hind (*et al.,* 1992) view institutional and system reorganization as a consequence of public policy making, which is influenced by competing ideologies, demands for new services, and the review of existing policies. Their approach to administrative policy analysis involves identifying current practices, reasons behind them, and their effects.

According to Pettit and Hind, the politics of policy creation, though partially explained by systems theory, are deeply influenced by the political environment. They emphasize understanding the dynamics of decision-making, especially the roles of professionals and bureaucrats, which are rarely neat, orderly, logical, or linear. Politicians and policymakers can initiate and generate change, setting contexts to which institutions must respond. Systems thinking sometimes overlooks the human impact of sudden policy or bureaucratic changes (p. 108).

Pettit and Hind propose four political theories to explain the role of bureaucrats in promoting change in Australasian settings:

1. Pluralist or Liberal Democratic Theory: Policies reflect preferences of various groups, with power widely distributed.
2. Elitism: Policies are influenced by a few well-organized pressure groups.
3. Marxism: State policies reflect the dominance of a particular class, such as using education to address social and economic disadvantages.
4. Corporatist or Galbraithian Perspective: Policies aim to change the economic structure and balance public versus private interests in education.

In Australasia, educational reorganization often results from complex political and economic relations involving professionals, bureaucrats, and parents as interest groups. This is evident in reforms following the Picot Report in New Zealand and the Scott Report in New South Wales (Macpherson, 1989; 1992; 1993a; 1993b). Effective planning and management of reorganizations aim to minimize conflict.

Strategies such as rational planning ("Plan") and participatory engagement ("Agree") are crucial for successful reorganizations (Boyd, 1983a, 1983b, 1983c). The Plan component involves comprehensive planning, including situational data analysis and anticipating implementation challenges. Critical tasks include assessing bureaucratic reputation, community consultations, and participation dynamics. The Agree component focuses on local engagement to

lower resistance and foster informed support. Participation in decision-making, however, assumes equal power among participants, which is rarely the case.

Participation and consultation can raise expectations and potentially increase conflict. Educative leaders need strategies to manage inevitable conflicts stemming from policy decisions and the distribution of public goods. Quality decision-making balances equity of outcomes and personal/group advantage. Leaders should consider incrementalism, minimalism, and multi-issue/multi-party negotiations for effective reorganization (Pettit & Hind, 1992).

Recent research on educational service reorganization as public policy changes highlights five main trends:

1. Decentralization and Autonomy: Local entities are given more control to meet community needs, improving educational outcomes (Gurría, 2019a: 2019b).
2. Market-Based Reforms: Competition-driven reforms like school choice and voucher programs aim to enhance standards but may increase inequalities (Lubienski, 2017a; 2017b).
3. Inclusive Education Policies: Policies focus on equity for all students, requiring systemic changes and sustained political will (Dyson et al., 2020).
4. Technological Integration: Technology in education enhances learning but requires digital equity and robust infrastructure (Selwyn, 2021).
5. Professional Development and Teacher Support: Ongoing professional development improves teaching practices and student outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

These trends illustrate the complexity of educational reorganization in response to public policy changes. The implications for educative leaders locally are now explored.

Findings: Educative Leadership in Local Contexts

Pettit & Hind (*et al*. 1992) note that the scope of institutional reorganisation can be determined by pressure for macro-change from different sources such as:

- External Intervention: A crisis precipitated by outside events, such as falling enrolments, rising costs, rezoning, declining youth labour market.
- Internal Intervention: A crisis arising within an organisation that is too small to deliver an acceptable/ adequate curriculum, or a major change in student preferences.
- System Intervention: A crisis deliberately created to destabilise an over-conservative, unresponsive system.

The common feature of these interventions is that they cannot be addressed with single loop learning, such as a minor adaptation of current structures and services. Each crisis is often compounded by contemporaneous and related policy shifts that require substantial alterations in purposes, personnel, operations, facilities, assumptions and relationships. Their net effect is to violate institutional values and goals. They require people to learn outside the confines of their existing mindset and organizational norms. Educative leaders can no longer rely on managing incremental change by enabling information flows and presiding over or delegating the process of gradual adaptation.

Reorganization involves an additional loop and means questioning underlying values, assumptions, policies and goals, stated and unstated, all exposed by pressure for macro-change. The cultural processes involved include unfreezing and developing new values and norms, especially the framework of assumptions around professional practices such as pedagogy and curriculum development.

Pettit & Hind (*et al*. 1992) use a pragmatic and holist approach when they argue that educative leaders must create and maintain the conditions for such 'double loop learning', particularly

- Philosophical Leadership: Advancing a new set of governing values and norms that endure resistance by others.
- Evaluation Criteria: Helping those involved to produce data that demonstrate the scope of the required change and key indicators of achievement.
- Emotional Leadership: Knowing that relationships will be disrupted, and that this will be accompanied by anger, loss and conflict.
- Coping with Uncertainty: Supporting others while managing change towards a dimly perceived intended outcome.
- Reinforcing Relationships: Understanding the significance of 'invisible' assumptions about relationships, behaviour and ethos disturbed by the change.
- Supportive Feedback: Mobilising support from within and outside the organisation to map the process and offer distanced, more objective feedback views in what is, from time to time, a highly charged atmosphere.

Given these ends, system bureaucracies are often seen in negative terms, unable to deliver what school communities want during reorganizations — resources, information and support. Some bureaucrats appear to believe that reorganization is a purely technical process that can be implemented by planning alone. As originally conceived as an ideal type of organisation (Weber, 1947), bureaucratic effectiveness relies principally on coherent structures and functions, without much emphasis on the quality of relationships and importance of professional norms in an educational organisation. Such assumptions appearing to drive fundamental change in how educational institutions should be reorganized can evoke hostility, emotional resistance and conflict, and might be better understood as a symbolizing a reactive defense of a valued and valuable culture.

Pettit & Hind (*et al*. 1992) describe the nature and implications of the cultural destabilization involved as:

- A critical break in the pattern of relationships between people, which in turn;
- Threatening the structure and continuity of meanings, the interpretation of experience and taken-for-granted assumptions; and
- Accompanied by people experiencing a deep personal loss and wishing to revert to the familiar or to search for new sense of balance and professional well-being ....
- This crucial transition is a necessary part of substantial personal change required for effective double loop learning … [and]
- Educative leaders need to understand and facilitate this transition.

Radical reorganisation can be experienced as personal loss accompanied by bereavement that embraces all members of a learning community, in grief and mourning, albeit in different degrees. The loss of a personal and professional self during reorganisation can be devastating, especially for those reshaping their lives in middle age (O'Connor, 1981).

Hence, Pettit & Hind (*et al.* 1992, p, 121) recommend "a supportive setting for open communication has to be provided as a way of legitimating the changes and creating a framework for new relationships, meanings and experiences." In this way, educative leaders can anticipate and tolerate forms of conflict, grief and dynamic conservatism as their community moves through a 'zone of disruption' to a new state of relative stability.

Deflection techniques intended to delay or frustrate change (Schon, 1973) in the zone of disruption can be anticipated and include:

- Ignore: Give selective inattention to the promoters and proposals for rationalisation.
- Counter-Attack, Preventative Attack or Denial: Claim that the "the facts are wrong", "there are smarter options", or "we are doing well".
- Containment/ Isolation: Compartmentalise the issue to a subset of the organisation.
- Co-option: Involve or coopt others to defuse or dilute the problem.
- Nominal or Token Change: Minimal compliance to resist implementation.

Pettit & Hind (*et al.* 1992) note relatively common stages to many reorganizations of systems and institutions, and suggest key roles for educative leaders:

1. The problem and need for change are presented in general terms, with inevitable ambiguity and confusion, triggering preliminary resistance. Educative leaders can act as a catalyst by picking the right time and appropriate mechanisms to define the problem in the policy context and identify key influencers and groups with interests and the capacity to contribute.
2. The political stage is set through initial negotiations, clarifying purposes and objectives, and formalising degrees of participation. Educative leaders can help clarify the perceptions and dimensions of problems and goals, the authority and powers of participants, and assess needs, time scales, generate early compromises and stimulate creative solutions.
3. The negotiation process is legitimated by engagement within the agreed framework. Educative leaders can help clarify the scope and feasibility of emergent proposals, encourage consensus before seeking public affirmation, and create confidence that the system will ratify, resource and otherwise deliver on the agreement.
4. Implementation to achieve the objectives of each phase and embed new norms. Educative leaders can help determine phases and timescale, objectives for each phase, identify early indicators, and refine the role of the implementation team.

Pettit & Hind advise against searching for quick solutions, opting for early symbolic wins, and having the powerful impose resolutions. Limiting the period of disruption may lessen the immediate conflict and the effects of bereavement but at cost to the commitment of those who have to implement change in the longer term. Participants can sometimes make different and

changing rates of progress. Attempts to manipulate processes can result in conflict later or trigger unnegotiated executive action.

To summarise this section concerned with educative leadership in local contexts addresses the complexities of institutional reorganisation driven by various crises. These crises can stem from external factors (e.g., declining enrolments, rising costs), internal challenges (e.g., inadequate curriculum delivery), or system-level interventions designed to disrupt stagnant practices. Such crises necessitate "double loop learning," which involves questioning and altering fundamental values, assumptions, and relationships within the institution, beyond minor adjustments.

Educative leaders can play a crucial role in fostering this deep learning and adaptation by establishing and advocating for new governing values and norms, helping stakeholders generate data to illustrate the need for change and criteria for evaluation, and managing the emotional fallout from disrupted relationships and fostering support. Three other valuable leadership services are guiding others through the uncertainties of the change process, addressing invisible assumptions about relationships and ethos, and providing internal and external feedback to navigate the highly charged atmosphere.

Reorganization inevitably involves cultural destabilization, threatens existing relationships and meanings, and causes a deep sense of loss among community members. Educative leaders must create supportive environments to manage this transition, encouraging open communication and understanding of the stages of reorganization, from problem identification to implementation. They must avoid quick fixes and power plays, fostering a participatory process to ensure long-term commitment and effective change.

Findings: Educative Leadership of an Institution being Reorganised

Pettit & Hind (*et al*. 1992) note the tension for institutional leaders between organisational maintenance and a proactive, visionary role. The former role is typically fragmented attention to multiple aspects of policy implementation, such as meetings, sporadic conversations, responding to official correspondence and *ad hoc* data gathering. The latter involves challenging dynamic conservatism with directed reviews and planning, identifying new long-term goals and strategies, and consulting with different interest groups that may not, initially, see the need for fundamental changes.

An educative leader must, therefore, both sustain the current organisation and its norms and values, while simultaneously managing the philosophical review of institutional purposes and devising fresh strategies by engaging diverse stakeholders, colleagues and clients. This is no easy task for leaders who have been protected by a Departmental culture of maintenance, and who are then exposed to changing systemic expectations, and moreover, expected to endure role loneliness while constructing a new professional self as they facilitate the transformation of other professionals. 'Their' school can be central to their self-concept and closely associated with public status. If security of tenure is threatened, this can add an additional challenge to all involved. It may be necessary to boost the institution's human resource development and management capacities.

It is not unusual for leaders to be expected by the system and the community to act ethically in support of the interests of students, although they may not be clear in the short or long term.

Parents tend to act in the best interests of their children, as they perceive them, and educative leaders would be well advised to challenge unreasonable perceptions that are at odds with the rationale for the reorganization or its anticipated outcomes. While the Ministry or Department may have prior democratic legitimacy regarding reorganization policy, this can initially place a leader at odds with the local community and interest groups within the institution.

It is morally responsible for the leader of an institution to keep system leaders aware of the diverse and changing views of local interest groups, and conversely, to ensure that local interest groups are aware of the legitimate interests and perspectives of central and other local groups. While the complexity and conflict inherit in the situation is inevitable, an institutional leader has the opportunity to offer creative, proactive, critical and educative leadership. Pettit & Hind (*et al.* 1992, 127-8) advise on options:

> Given the present economic and demographic realities, reorganization is unavoidable. Double loop learning is essential for positive adaptive change and personal growth in institutions affected by reorganization. Reorganization poses a threat to the self-concept of professionals and offers a temptation to opt out, to withdraw or resist change on behalf of the institution and self.

A positive response by an educative leader requires a mature appreciation of one's understandings, skills and style, a capacity to delegate to mobilize support, and an ability to remain detached and reflective to see oneself in action and to appreciate the personalities and process phases involved. A key factor is the educative leader's ability to manage complex situations and gradually achieve desirable outcomes without becoming disorientated or embroiled.

Another key factor is an educative leader's willingness to mobilize personal support. They need early strategic information from 'outside' the institution, such as what is considered negotiable and non-negotiable, to inform awareness-raising with influencers and early adopters. They need an informal peer support group to act as confidantes, expert advisors and reliable envoys. They need customized professional development to acquire understandings, skills and attitudes. They need resources to mount an information campaign, fund meetings and publications, and enable consultations.

A third key factor is to plan an implementation process that appeals to colleagues' professional values, such as significant curriculum and pedagogical reforms, and publicity that generates understanding and satisfaction in the community.

While institutional leaders have to accept that although reorganization imposed from 'outside' tends to destabilize an institution and delegitimate its leadership, it also offers an opportunity to construct fresh, creative, shared and educative purposes. System bureaucrats, legitimated by political and administrative conditions, tend to gather data, plan, and expect the implementation of their rational and technocratic solutions. Colleagues in institutions can react emotionally due to the threat to their professional self-esteem and default to dynamic conservatism and deflection.

An institutional leader has to reconcile the disconnections between the rationality of reorganization and emotional reactions to proposals over time. An educative leader helps colleagues move through the 'zone of disruption' that commonly exhibits the stages of grief:

shock, denial, anger, bargaining, depression, testing, and acceptance of a reconstructed professional self and culture. It has been shown that educative leadership can help a school community learn how to cope with trauma, come to terms with loss and negotiate a new stable state, having experienced extremes of emotion and a collapse of confidence and professional legitimacy (Macpherson & Vann, 1996).

Another common disconnection relates to the dual roles of institutional leaders: maintaining organizational stability while pursuing visionary changes. As noted above, maintenance involves routine tasks such as meetings and policy implementation, while a visionary role requires challenging the *status quo*, setting new long-term goals, and engaging stakeholders and colleagues who will be deeply invested in the existing situation. Educative leaders must balance sustaining current norms and values with conducting philosophical reviews and developing new strategies. This is challenging, especially for leaders accustomed to a culture of maintenance, who face changing expectations and possible role loneliness while transforming their professional identities.

Leaders must also act ethically in the interests of students, managing perceptions and expectations of parents and communities. They can communicate diverse local views to system leaders and explain central policies to local groups, offering creative, proactive leadership despite inherent conflicts. Double loop learning is crucial for positive change, as reorganization threatens professionals' self-concept, tempting resistance or withdrawal.

Successful leaders must understand the limits of their skills, delegate effectively, and maintain detachment to navigate complexities. They need strategic external information, peer support, and professional development, along with resources for communication and consultation. Planning implementation processes that align with colleagues' professional values and garner community satisfaction are essential. Ultimately, educative leaders guide institutions through disruption stages, consulting stakeholders to redefine purposes, strategies, and institutional culture. Consultations with all legitimate stakeholders can gradually manufacture fresh purposes, revise strategies, mobilize support, and in so doing, adjust the culture, the management and the evaluation practices of the institution (Macpherson, 1987).

Discussion: Moral Philosophies Embedded in Educative Leadership of Reorganizations

Contemporary theories of reorganization in educational systems and institutions often incorporate aspects of transformational, instructional, distributed, and ethical leadership theories. These leadership approaches each offer unique contributions to the process of reorganization while being derived from different moral philosophies.

Transformational leadership focuses on inspiring and motivating staff to achieve higher levels of performance and commitment. This approach is evident in reorganization efforts where leaders aim to foster a shared vision, encourage innovation, and drive systemic change. Research shows that transformational leaders can effectively navigate the complexities of reorganization by building strong relationships and creating a culture of continuous improvement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006).

Transformative leadership emphasizes inspiring and motivating followers to achieve their full potential and exceed expectations. It aligns with virtue ethics by focusing on the character and

values of the leader, such as integrity, empathy, and courage. Leaders are expected to model ethical behaviour and foster an environment where virtues are cultivated.

Instructional leadership emphasizes the importance of leaders focusing on teaching and learning processes. In the context of reorganization, instructional leaders work to align organizational changes with educational goals, ensuring that instructional quality remains at the forefront. This approach is particularly relevant in restructuring efforts that aim to enhance student outcomes by improving instructional practices and supporting teacher development (Hallinger, 2005).

Instructional leadership focuses on improving teaching and learning outcomes. It often aligns with utilitarianism by aiming to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number of students. The decisions made by instructional leaders are typically based on maximizing positive educational outcomes and improving overall student performance.

Distributed leadership involves the sharing of leadership responsibilities across various stakeholders within the organization. This approach is evident in reorganization strategies that seek to harness the collective expertise and collaborative efforts of teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders. Distributed leadership facilitates a more inclusive and participatory process of change, allowing for diverse perspectives and shared ownership of the reorganization efforts (Gronn, 2002; Harris, 2008).

Distributed leadership involves sharing leadership responsibilities among various stakeholders within an organization. This approach is often linked to the ethics of contractarianism, which emphasizes mutual agreements and cooperation among stakeholders. Leaders in a distributed model work collaboratively and are accountable to the shared norms and agreements of the team.

Ethical leadership centres on principles of fairness, integrity, and respect for individuals. In the context of educational reorganization, ethical leaders prioritize the well-being of all stakeholders, ensuring that decisions are made transparently and justly. Ethical leadership is crucial in addressing the moral and ethical implications of reorganization, particularly in managing the impacts on students, staff, and the broader community (Brown & Treviño, 2006).

Ethical leadership is rooted in adherence to moral principles and duties. It is closely associated with deontological ethics, which emphasize the importance of following moral rules and fulfilling ethical obligations. Ethical leaders prioritize doing what is right based on established principles, regardless of the outcomes.

These examples illustrate how contemporary reorganization theories in education integrate various leadership approaches to manage change and improve educational outcomes. Notably, they all employ a foundational epistemology, defined as a theory of knowledge that asserts that certain basic beliefs or principles serve as the ultimate foundation for all other knowledge. These foundational beliefs are self-evident, infallible, or otherwise undeniable, providing a secure base upon which other beliefs can be built and justified. This approach contrasts with non-foundational epistemologies, which reject the idea of an ultimate, unshakeable foundation for knowledge, instead viewing beliefs as part of an interconnected web.

Constructivist leadership utilizes a non-foundational epistemology, focusing on the idea that knowledge and understanding are constructed and reconstructed through social interactions and experiences to form a "web of belief" (Quine & Ullian, 1978). Constructivist leadership aligns with relativism, recognizing that moral perspectives and values can vary among individuals and

cultures. Leaders in this framework are sensitive to diverse viewpoints and adapt their approaches based on contextual factors.

The "web of belief" concept serves as a compelling metaphor for understanding knowledge and beliefs in a non-foundational epistemological framework. In such frameworks, decision-making is informed by several key aspects of the web of belief (Evers & Lakomski, 1991).

First, the interconnectedness of beliefs is central to the leader's web of belief. This notion emphasizes that knowledge is not constructed upon a single, unshakeable foundation. Instead, it is a network of interrelated beliefs, each supporting and being supported by others. In decision-making, this interconnectedness allows leaders to recognize that their decisions are grounded in a complex network of interdependent beliefs, rather than a singular, absolute truth. This recognition fosters a more flexible and context-sensitive approach to decision-making.

Second, the web of belief's interconnected nature allows for flexibility and adaptability. Since changing one belief can necessitate adjustments in related beliefs, this interconnectedness supports the ability to adapt as new information, or perspectives emerge. For educative leaders, this adaptability is crucial in dynamic and complex environments, enabling them to modify strategies and decisions responsively as circumstances evolve.

Third, the holistic perspective encouraged by the web of belief ensures that the broader implications of changes are considered. By viewing the network of beliefs as a whole rather than isolating individual beliefs, educative leaders can ensure that their decisions account for the wider impact on the educational system. This holistic consideration is essential for understanding how changes in one area might affect other interconnected areas.

Fourth, in a non-foundational framework, the justification of beliefs is based on their coherence within the web rather than on an external, foundational belief. This coherence-based justification implies that beliefs are considered justified if they fit well within the entire network of beliefs. For leaders, this means that decisions are justified by their alignment with the existing network of policies, values, and practices within the educational context. Decisions are seen as sound if they integrate well with the broader system of beliefs and values.

Finally, the web of belief supports a pragmatic approach to knowledge and decision-making, emphasizing practical effectiveness and outcomes. This pragmatic stance prioritizes decisions that lead to successful and beneficial outcomes for students and educators, even if such decisions challenge traditional foundational beliefs.

For example, when an educative leader is tasked with reorganizing an entire educational system, they must consider various interrelated factors such as policy changes, resource allocation, teacher training, and community needs. The decision to implement a system-wide reorganization is justified not by a single foundational principle but by its coherence with the existing network of educational goals and practices, ensuring that the changes support the overall improvement of the system.

Similarly, in the context of reorganizing a school, a principal might need to restructure the school's administrative team, adjust teaching methodologies, and revamp student support services. The decision to reorganize the school is justified by how well these changes fit within and enhance the existing web of beliefs and practices at the school. The principal ensures that the reorganization aligns with the school's values, improves educational outcomes, and addresses the specific needs of the school community.

In summary, the web of belief in non-foundational accounts of decision-making provides a flexible, adaptive, and holistic approach, emphasizing coherence, interconnectedness, and practical effectiveness over rigid adherence to foundational principles. This approach allows educative leaders to make decisions that are sensitive to the complexities and nuances of their specific contexts.

Conclusion

A range of embedded moral philosophies were evident in contemporary theories of institutional and system reorganizations in education that have immediate implications for educative leaders:

- Utilitarianism: This philosophy emphasizes the greatest good for the greatest number. Educative leaders must consider the broader benefits of reorganization, balancing state interests and the needs of the learning community to ensure that outcomes maximize overall well-being. Leaders must also mitigate conflicts and distribute resources equitably, which aligns with the utilitarian principle of maximizing positive outcomes (Mill, 1863).

- Deontological Ethics: This moral framework is centred on the adherence to rules and duties. Leaders are expected to uphold their ethical duties to both the state and the learning community. This involves following rational planning procedures (Plan) and encouraging engagement (Agree) to ensure decisions are made responsibly and transparently, reflecting a commitment to duty and ethical standards (Kant, 1785).

- Virtue Ethics: This philosophy focuses on the character and virtues of the leader. This paper emphasizes the importance of qualities such as integrity, courage, and empathy. Educative leaders must manage emotional fallout, support their communities through change, and demonstrate resilience and moral fortitude, embodying the virtues necessary to navigate complex reorganization processes (Aristotle, 350 B.C.E.).

- Ethic of Care: Highlighted through the need for emotional leadership and supportive feedback, this philosophy stresses the importance of relationships and caring for individuals affected by reorganization. Educative leaders must recognize and address the personal and emotional impacts of change, fostering a supportive environment that prioritizes the well-being of all stakeholders (Gilligan, 1982).

- Communitarian Ethics: This perspective emphasizes the importance of community and collective well-being. Educative leaders are tasked with involving the community in decision-making processes, ensuring that local interests are considered and balanced against broader policy goals. This participatory approach fosters a sense of community ownership and shared responsibility for the outcomes of reorganization (MacIntyre, 1981).

- Socially Critical Theory: The analysis incorporates elements of critical theory, particularly in recognizing the power dynamics and potential conflicts between different interest groups. Leaders must navigate these complexities, advocating for marginalized voices and ensuring that reorganization efforts do not disproportionately disadvantage any group (Habermas, 1984).

This range of moral philosophies underpinning contemporary theories of reorganisation suggests that it would be naïve, pre-emptive and potentially culturally offensive to impose any one moral philosophy on all situations. The evidence above also highlights the unique nature of moral complexities and practical challenges in each reorganisation project, the need for a customised and ethical blend of moral philosophies and a non-foundational epistemology to generate a fresh web of belief to serve as an administrative policy.

The approach commended to educative leaders is to adopt holistic pragmatism as a means of creating knowledge and processes appropriate to the reorganization of each institution or system (Hodgkinson, 1981; Walker *et al.*, 1992, p. 68). The first phase recommended is reflective practice and strategic appraisal in the realm of ideas, prior to political and cultural agency to alter the assumptions and experiences of people in the organisation, and prior to managerial and evaluative agency in the realm of material things to achieve and verify desirable outcomes.

In greater detail, the pragmatic holistic approach recommended would comprise five phases:

a. Situational and Philosophical Analysis: What do relevant and legitimate stakeholders, participants and leaders consider to be the challenges and appropriate solutions to the organisation of an institution/ system? Their perceptions, observable settled practices, and the moral culture that defines rightness and significance in organisational policies can each be related to the core values of organisational effectiveness and efficiency.

b. Strategic Analysis. Given their explicit or implicit understanding of what their problems are, how do stakeholders, participants and leaders see their options for dealing with them? How are these related to their theories and values, their views of organisational learning and knowledge? What do they think are available and practicable solutions to their problems?

c. Internal Coherence. Analyse the accounts of perceived problems and solutions within the organisation as theories of the situation to assess their degree of internal coherence. Identify inconsistencies and loose internal connections. The greater the coherence, the greater the practical efficacy of the account.

d. External Coherence. Analyse the different problems-solutions frameworks of stakeholders, participants and leaders in the situation, to determine the degree of mutual coherence available. Where is there overlap (touchstone) and where is their conflict (theory competition)? What are the origins of these differences in philosophical, strategic, political and cultural terms, and the potential for their reconciliation in practical terms?

e. Negotiate Options: Work out what options may be available, either derived from or negotiated through touchstone, to tackling the shared and unshared problems of the stakeholders, participants and leaders in the situation. To maximise touchstone, it is possible that, through further learning and negotiations, some may come to see hitherto unperceived solutions to their problems or revise their ideas of what their problems are. If so, competition and touchstone will have been reconstructed.

Overall, by recognising the complex mix of moral philosophies appropriate in specific reorganisations of institutions and systems, educative leaders can navigate the intricacies of reorganization ethically and effectively using holistic pragmatism, ensuring that both the

interests of the learning community and the state are adequately balanced and reconciled with the interests of learners.

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