A developmental perspective on organizing for social responsibility: A task for higher education organizations and scholars.

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Abstract

An ongoing critique of the present state of theory in organization studies is that contemporary organizational problems largely reflect issues of global human welfare, but the theories tend not to. This relative omission, or minimally an under-emphasis, is particularly problematic given that organizations and organizing processes are increasingly being tasked with the responsibility to respond to, alleviate, or solve issues of social justice, inequity, and institutionalized oppression. Nowhere are these dynamics more evident than in the case of higher education.

Higher education institutional rhetoric is explicit in its social aims, employing missions that aspire to produce citizens who can "be people of integrity possessed of a sense of responsibility to society …[with] a sense of humanity as well as a commitment to the common good with a conviction that there is something more important than oneself" (Thomas, 2002, p. 30). Efforts to generate these outcomes are intended to be reflected in formal structures and subtle cultures of institutions. Furthermore, higher education institutions are intentional in their activities so that the cumulative effect of a student's university experience is that one has developed the capacity to be individually successful, socially responsible, and even socially just.

The field of higher education has become ever explicit about its socially responsible aims, and intended outcomes, codified in the Association of American Colleges & Universities partnership with the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research issuing its *Declaration on Higher Education and Democratic Culture* (2006), signalling that there is a field of organizations which displays little hesitation in communicating their humanitarian values and related outcomes. Thus, the developmental path for higher education institutions becoming socially-responsible actors warrants considerable scholarly attention.

Our manuscript presents the major components in building a developmental model of organizing that proceeds along an increasingly more socially just and therefore responsible path. We argue that the individual developmental process toward socially responsible, just, and altruistic outcomes are possible at the organizational level. More specifically, our paper addresses the following questions: (a) What developmental theories lead one to greater competence in socially responsible interactions and engagement in society? (b) How is social responsibility conceptualized as a developmental outcome and construct? and (c) What evidence suggests that organizations possess the parallel developmental potentials as individuals? We conclude by offering a new conceptual framework and a series of research propositions that we invite organizational scholars to pursue.

Keywords

Organizational development, social responsibility, organizational change

Introduction and overview

Increasingly, higher education institutional rhetoric is explicit in its social aims, employing missions that aspire to produce citizens who can "be people of integrity possessed of a sense of responsibility to society . . .. [with] a sense of humanity as well as a commitment to the common good with a conviction that there is something more important than oneself" (Thomas, 2002, p. 30). Efforts to generate these outcomes are intended to be reflected in their formal structures and subtle cultures of institutions, from building learning communities, to providing advising and student success services, health services, recreation, opportunities for spiritual activities, and obviously through stimulating courses (King, 1997). Higher education institutions are intentional in their activities so that the cumulative effect of a student's university experience is that one has developed the capacity to be individually successful, socially responsible, and even socially just. Additionally, postsecondary institutions are expected to be socially-responsible actors, whether it is displayed through the ethics of research (Slaughter, Thomas, Johnson, & Barringer, 2014), fair-trade or labor policies (Einwohner & Spencer, 2005), or in response to endowment investments or fulfilling donor's wishes (Osei-Kofi, 2010). With multiple institutional aims research on higher education has evolved in distinctive pathways. There are bifurcated domains of research with one that generally emphasizes individual-level human development and learning in postsecondary education, and another strand that focuses on organizational behaviour and administrative management of higher education. These two bodies of scholarship seldom intersect in a theoretical manner, and yet their practical intersections are salient in thinking about how we might live in and live with higher education organizations.

The scholarship in the field of higher education is incredibly interdisciplinary, born from psychology, sociology, economics, public administration and policy, management, among others. Typically, interdisciplinarity brings a healthy diversity of viewpoints and intellectual complexity, which can aid theoretical progress (Scott, 2004). However, interdisciplinarity can also create theoretical cleavages within a field that can stand as barriers to innovative thinking. In this vain, MacArthur (2015) asks scholars to reflect on the proposition that the research community itself might impose "artificial distance and harmful separations" (p.2) by maintaining problematic binary formulations of social phenomenon. Binaries can reinforce a de facto privileging of ideas and ways of knowing that may be antithetical to locating social-justice in our scholarship. As such, we seek to undo taken-for-granted scholarly habits by contemplating how the study of individual learning and development within the field of higher education might actually spark thinking about how we study and understand the organizational processes of postsecondary institutions. In so doing, we hope that merging two domains with rich and diverse theoretical influences may encourage universities towards not only educating people to be socially just and responsible, but towards operating as mindful organizations whose conduct and operations reinforce social justice and responsibility as well.

Our ambition to reconsider the theories of higher education organizations is motivated in part by Walsh, Meyer, & Schoonhoven's suggestion that organizational scholars need to reorient their analytical approach to look at the processes of organizing in the context of "some of the world's more urgent problems" (pp. 666-667). These authors stress that contemporary organizational problems largely reflect issues of global human welfare, but organizational theories tend not to. This relative omission, or minimally an under-emphasis, is particularly problematic given that organizations and organizing processes are increasingly being tasked with the responsibility to respond to alleviate or solve issues of social justice, inequity, and institutionalized oppression. Nowhere is the call to remedy oppression and inequity more pressing than in the context of higher education, where higher education must prepare individuals to be learned and of exceptional character, while simultaneously being organizations that indiscriminately fuel the course of human progress and prosperity through their research and service.

If postsecondary education is going to acquire a greater capacity to resolve society's most urgent problems and educate generations of individuals with orientations for justice and inclusion – it is incumbent on scholars of higher education to explore questions that work to seam together the process of organizing with the individual processes of learning and development. When the social institution of higher education offers the promise of being a site for advancing social justice, equal opportunity, and inclusion, we as scholars must work to decipher the organizational dynamics that allow campuses to do these things, to keep doing these things across time and contexts, and to become better at pursuing justice and equity. Therefore, guiding questions are: Is there a developmental path for organizations? Can organizations evolve over time in an iterative, epigenetic, or cumulative fashion – like individuals – such that they acquire increased competence and capacities for engaging in practices and routines that affirm and support the causes of social justice and social responsibility? With these questions we aim to move past the constraints of binary formulations that MacArthur cites as problematic, and shed the idea that organizations are purely objective static entities.

General systems as a foundational framework

In this essay we present a set of major components necessary for building a developmental model of organizing that might allow for organizations to proceed on along an increasingly socially just and responsible path. We draw on Boulding's (1956) general systems theory which contends that universal attributes exist, and that systems are characterized by "a hierarchy of complexity, roughly corresponding to the complexity of 'individuals'" (p. 202). In relying on Boulding's conception we create room for the possibility that the individual developmental processes that move people towards socially responsible, just, and altruistic outcomes are also possible at the organizational level. We describe a set of college student developmental theories that explicate individual-level processes characteristic of higher order reasoning, moral reasoning, and wisdom. We subsequently offer evidence that wisdom is an important link between individuals and organizations. Finally, we offer insights that like individuals, there is evidence that organizations hold the capacity to engage in modes of reasoning, and express differential subjective interpretive capacities. Through this essay, we hope to stimulate the field's collective theorizing in ways that will overcome the neoliberal pressure to view postsecondary educational reform efforts as comprised of simple identification of efficient organizational processes and structures (Katz, 2012); (divorced from any collective meaning construction or the subjective influence of organizational culture and context) as the tools of equitable and inclusive systemic transformation. Instead, we issue a challenge to do better, to strive to understand the core developmental capacities of higher education, as a novel social institution, and one that holds the potential to mutually meet the needs of individuals and to offer society a model of organizing for equity.

Defining development

In the individual-focused college student literature, learning and development are understood as meaning making born of cognitive-structural and sociocultural processes. Individuals possess prevailing modes of interpreting events, information, feelings, and interactions based on their prior life experiences, characteristics, and contexts (Baxter Magolda, 2004; Baxter Magolda & King, 2004; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; King & Kitchener, 1994; Perry, 1970, 1981). This literature is specific about characterizing campus contexts as being intentionally constructed by college and university educators so that the environment and culture impart students with opportunities to contemplate their commitments to socially responsible conduct and democratic participation (Thorton & Jaeger, 2007). As development progresses individuals adopt increasingly more complex and integrative schemas for interpreting information, social relationships, and environmental cues. The advanced stages of development which are characterized by integrative sophistication correspond to greater sensitivity towards issues of diversity and moral reasoning, and world views that emphasize the well-being of others in addition to one's self (Edicott, Bock, & Narvaez, 2003; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; King & Shuford, 1996; Perry, 1970, 1981).

King and Baxter Magolda's (1996) integrated learning perspective model unites individuals' cognitive and affective dimensions of development. The intersection of these domains prompts individuals toward higher levels of thinking and knowledge construction. This integrated learning perspective views the college experience as a developmentally rich context that stimulates students' intellectual growth to provide increasingly more advanced ways of constructing meaning in their worlds. Perry (1970) also provides a cognitive structural developmental scheme with three basic stages: *dualism, relativism,* and *commitment to relativism*. Perry's scheme with cognitive and psychosocial dimensions neatly complements the integrated learning perspective model. Similar to this model and Perry's scheme, King and Kitchener's (1994) reflective judgment model specifies seven modes that are increasingly developmentally complex that individuals employ in order to reason about and ultimately resolve ill-structured problems, or those matters/issues without clear or straightforward answers. Ill-structured problems require one navigating across context, meaning, symbolism, and multiple and competing priorities.

Socially desirable outcomes: Wise and moral action

Among the range of holistic developmental theories of college student development, self-authorship characterizes the acquisition of wise citizenship in individuals. Self-authorship is a status an individual acquires such that one understands one's self subjectively and objectively at the same time, and can hold and react to these potentially disparate perspectives simultaneously. King and Baxter Magolda (2005) emphasize self-authorship as "multi-dimensional and consisting of a range of attributes, including understanding (the cognitive dimension), sensitivity to others (the interpersonal dimension), and a sense of oneself that enables one to listen and to learn from others (the intrapersonal dimension)" (p.574). The cognitive dimension addresses the manner in which knowledge is gained, constructed, and understood; the intrapersonal dimension addresses personal identity characteristics such as beliefs, values, sense of self; and the interpersonal dimension addresses an individual's views and interpretations of relationships "to and with other people" (p.574). Self-authorship is contemplative, and allows individuals to navigate self- and collective- interests in all matters, which is why it is a foundation for wise action.

In addition to self-authorship, the reflective judgment model is tied to one's moral reasoning and wisdom (King & Kitchener, 1994; Kitchener & Brenner, 1990). Moral reasoning and reflective judgment tend to be complementary constructs since moral matters are often complex and ill-structured by nature. Moral reasoning is distinctive however, because it is shaped by the added dimension of social values, or collective notions about "how humans ought to act in relationship to each other in order to further human welfare" (King & Kitchener, p.206). King and Kitchener suggest that the development of wisdom requires reflective judgment, but one's judgment does not necessarily capture all of the elements of wisdom. In particular, wisdom assumes not only the socially relevancy of moral reasoning, but the capacity to employ reflective assessments to thorny problems by using effective communication and individual motives that transcend one's "egotistical motives and perspectives" (King & Kitchener, p.220). When King and Kitchener considered moral development and the acquisition of wisdom relative to reflective judgment, they found that the intellectual flexibility that characterizes higher stages of reflective judgment provide individuals a greater array of options to attend to ill-structured problems. Using a self-authorship lens, King & Baxter Magolda (2005) argue mature interpersonal development is characterized by intercultural effectiveness, in that students express a “heightened awareness and capacity to engage in intercultural interactions that are interdependent, respectful, informed by cultural understanding, and mutually negotiated …[interactions] are experienced as enhancing one’s identity and role as a member of society” (p.580). Further, according to King and Baxter Magolda, the acquisition of interpersonal self-authored maturity requires moral development.

Together these developmental and holistic theories characterize variations in the cognitive-structural and social-interpretive frameworks individuals draws on while thinking about dilemmas, and how their knowledge, values, and the meaning of life and social responsibilities intersect with life. Individuals move from a simplistic categorical view of the world to a realization of the contingent nature of knowledge, relative values, and the formation and affirmation of their own commitments. These aforementioned models of development have been explicitly tied to the desired outcomes of higher education, on account of development corresponding to an improved aptitude for attending to individual and community needs towards the promotion a more just, peaceful, and equitable society.

Wisdom’s Intersections

In the individual literature, wisdom is described as what emerges from the integration of multiple dimensions of the self, including the epistemological, ego, psychosocial, and communication facets one develops (Baxter Magolda & King, 2004; Kegan, 1994; King & Kitchener, 1994; Kitchener & Brenner, 1990). The concept of wisdom more broadly however specifies and requires interconnections between individuals and organizations. Thomas (2002) writes, “reliable wisdom comes in communities” (p.31), and further notes that educating for wisdom is a process that situates individuals in the context of their social identities such as race, ethnicity, class, religion, or gender. In order to educate for wisdom, Thomas emphasizes that doing so must be understood as an institutional process, not just an outcome, and she recommends policies, practices, pedagogies, programs, and environmental adaptations that educational institutions can exercise in order to foster wisdom. Sternberg (2004) has devoted considerable scholarship to the topic of wisdom and has defined it as:

> The application of intelligence and experience as mediated by values toward the achievement of a common good through a balance among (1) intrapersonal, (2) interpersonal, and (3) extrapersonal interests, over the (1) short and (2) long terms, to achieve a balance among (1) adaptation to existing environments, (2) shaping of existing environments, and (3) selection of new environments. (p.165)

The multidimensionality and the holistic interactions between the self and multiple environments are reminiscent of the developmental literature, and particularly consistent with the self-authorship dimensions.

Pascual-Leone (2000) echoes Sternberg’s definition and explicitly points to the quality of mental attention as a critical component and requisite facet of cognition to foster one’s overall capacity for wisdom. Pascual-Leone describes the three paths for developing wisdom as *external, life experience*, or *internal* respectively. There are physiological changes associated in the brain’s attention mechanisms that are associated with both wisdom and aging. That is, the system itself improves such that there are noticeable shifts in attention, processing, and affect result in, “the emergence of new forms of conscious reasoning: dialectical operations and transcendental operations” (p.248). Pascual-Leone demonstrates that the practice of meditation can train the brain to automatically assume the neuropsychological functional modes of wisdom, so that they are more accessible for regular deployment. Pascual-Leone argues that the transcendentally wise position is the optimal level of development and that a claim to its virtue is in its prevalence across cultures and it neuropsychological basis. He offers a cognitive structural representation of the cognitive-affective interpretive ideas that are similar to the integrated learning perspective (King & Baxter Magolda, 1996) and Perry’s schemes.

Organizational wisdom

Wisdom is seldom discussed directly in the context of organizations; it is more often presented as we have, describing it as having a mutual relationship between the individual’s development and the individual’s interpretation of the organizational or social context (such as schools, life experiences, communities, religious institutions, etc.). Nevertheless, there is a modest body of literature which considers the concept of organizational wisdom. Courtney, Haynes and Paradice’s (2005) work considered organizational wisdom as an alternative outcome of inquiring organizations that has traditionally focused on knowledge management.

The conceptual components of wisdom at the individual and the organizational level do not differ dramatically (Jones, 2005; Limas & Hansson, 2004; Sternberg, 2004). In their study that considered how elements of wisdom manifested on the cultural level, Limas and Hansson concluded that their “findings are consistent with a developmental formulation that considers connections to post-formal thought” (p.100). Specifically, one is reminded of the developmental claims of self-authorship and wisdom, particularly with reference to the interpersonal dimension of self-authorship which King & Baxter Magolda (2005) characterize as being intimately connected with affirming diverse perspectives, respectful intercultural understandings, and an acute sensitivity to the dynamics of social roles and contracts. It makes sense that an organizational conception of wisdom has the most similarities with wise development along the interpersonal dimension because the interpersonal aspect of development is explicitly focused on how wisdom manifests relative to the interaction between one's self and others. The cultural dimension that Limas and Hansson discuss appears to have ties to the intrapersonal dimension in that they demonstrate that organizational beliefs and values operate to guide actions in the same manner that intrapersonal identity awareness guides an individual's conduct.

Weick and Putnam's (2006) examine the concept of mindfulness and link it directly to the enactment of organizational wisdom. These authors argue that mindfulness has imminent impermanence and "involves ongoing mental action" (p.283). As such, researchers must attend to the subtle emergence of a wise and mindful process, rather privileging the discrete content of moments where "transformative organizational change" (p.285) occurred. Weick and Putnam stress that understanding how groups mindfully organize for wise action should be approached as problem of process, not content, and they remark that, "too little effort is invested in observing the ways in which the conceptualization of content is itself the problem" (p.285). Essentially, these authors contend that it is possible for organizations to *develop* a mindful organizational process that nurtures wise action. Like Pascual-Leone (2000), Weick and Putnam emphasize internal processes over external content, and extend their argument to suggest that high-reliability organizations exemplify one organizational form that has meditative and internally interpretive properties. Fiedlen (2005) also speaks of mindfulness as necessary for wise action and organizational wisdom. Fiedlen's articulation of mindfulness and the associated wisdom that can come from organizations that conduct themselves mindfully suggests that, like Limas and Hansson, wisdom is reflected in inclusive practices, conscientious interactions, and a balancing of policies and procedures with sensitivity to power and values. Jones (2005) presents a view of wisdom that merges individually- and organizationally-oriented descriptions synthesizing their "component activities" (p.365) that are hallmarks for detecting wisdom. Effectively Jones offers a battery of characteristics that he found to culturally characterize wisdom that is consistent with the interpretative and attentional characteristics previously described as aspects of individual and organizational wisdom.

Organizational interpretative capacities

The literature concerning wisdom depicts it as manifesting on a trajectory where early or pre-wise interpretive schemas and processes are externally derived and favor objective interpretations of social phenomenon, whereas wise interpretive schemes are formulated with attention to the subjective internal experiences of the social phenomenon. Both external and internal schemes utilize content; but what differentiates the wise from pre-wise (or unwise) outcome are the variations in interpretative processes: a) effortful/mindful attention, b) cognitions, c) culture, d) higher-order consciousness, and e) the integration or balance of multilevels and/or dimensions.

Culture as interpretive lens

It is well established that an organization's culture impresses a dominant mode of interpreting issues and information (Schein, 1992). Schein characterizes culture as having different aspects – artifacts, values, and basic assumptions – with varying levels of visibility. He argues that through the organization's founding members, the stage is set for basic assumptions, or the implicit and taken-for-granted perspectives held in common across the organization that "actually guide behavior, that tell group members how to perceive, think about, and feel about things" (p.22). Schein contends that these guiding assumptions provide cognitive stability and manifest in practices, interactions, interpretations, and how a group chooses to deal with problems.

Clegg, Kornberger & Rhoades (2005) offer a different perspective on culture and remark that the organizational literature has naively assumed that organizational culture, and its corresponding activities, and practices, are often the products of individual actors/managers. They suggest that the stable and static view of culture, or "organization-as-object," presents the organization as a fixed entity, rather than something that is capable of learning or becoming. Their argument is consistent with the wisdom construct in recognizing a possibility for change. They further argue that organizations must move through existing practices and frames created by previously constructed barriers to develop new and transient taken-for-granted orders or assumptions in the organization. Their conception implies a developmental view of organizing in the sense that it views organizing as an ongoing process (like Weick and Putnam, 2006) and that practices and interpretations can be reconceived.

Cognition, culture, effortful attention

DiMaggio (1997) positions culture and cognition as the sociological and psychological bridges that mediate collective logics of action. DiMaggio underscores the importance of understanding the cultural forces that prompt deliberative cognition. In his presentation of deliberative cognition at the organizational level, he regards the benefit of such effortful cognition as being on par with the benefits of meditative, reflective, or transcendent mindfulness specified in the developmental and wisdom literatures. DiMaggio points to collective instances of reflection and internal contemplation through work on social movement agenda-building, which has "noted the effectiveness as an organizing device of reframing issues in ways that call attention to problems salient to movement participants" (p.271).

More broadly, DiMaggio (1997) uses the idea of logics of actions, as a term for a dominant mode of interpreting collective experiences. DiMaggio notes how interpretive consistency can be observed across a group because "rituals and stimuli interact with internal mental structures to generate routine behavior" (p.277). DiMaggio refers to the same phenomenon as Clegg, et al., (2005) and notes the difficulties that emerge by shifting the traditional view of culture, meaning that it is no longer perceived as "coherent across groups and situations" (p.264) and instead possessing much more fragmentation. This fragmentation versus coherence dilemma requires that university leaders understand how the campus culture manifests in what ways, and for whom. Researchers must resolve the tension of observing a coherent culture that exists external to individuals, and yet also observe a "supra-individual" collective identity of group organization members that is a "shared representation of [that] collectivity" (p.274). Therefore, culture may be adopted as "individual identities reflect elaborated group-identity schemata" based on their group affiliations (p.275). Even though DiMaggio's views on the interactions between culture and cognition demonstrate an integrative mode of interpretation for collectives, using the logics of action concept, his views are by no means entirely unique. Sewell (1992) also conceives of organizational structure as being intimately tied to interpretive schema but rather he emphasizes the role of cultural schemas acting alongside actors to empower or constrain social action. He reminds us that "structure is an unavoidable epistemic metaphor in the social sciences" (p.27).

McAdam and Scott (2005) offer a similar conception of collective logics of action. They regard framing and institutional logics as similar manifestations of a common phenomenon; "both refer to ideas and belief systems, and recognize the role they play in providing direction, motivation, meaning, and coherence" (p.16). Logics and frames point to assumptions, perspectives, and ideas that undergird organizational, individual, and field-level activities and interpretations of social phenomenon. McAdam and Scott view the scholarship on these two areas as reflecting different ends of a continuum where ideas and collective cognitive concepts are the fuel for stimulating social change; which like cognitive development logics/frames may be construed as an collective process that is equivalent to transcendental (Pascual-Leone, 2000; Weick & Putnam, 2006) thinking in the sense that the ill-structured problem caused the group to reframe (like DiMaggio, 1997 proposes).

Higher-order consciousness

Daft and Weick (1984) present a four stage model (enacting, discovering, undirected viewing, and conditioned viewing) of organizational interpretation that carefully distinguishes between internal and external information processing and assumptions about knowledge. This model assumes organizations respond to their environments with individuals having a role in formulating the overall organizational interpretation, but organizations "have cognitive systems and memories… which preserve knowledge, behaviors, mental maps, norms, and values over time" (p.285). Daft and Weick's model perceives organizations as fundamental interpretive systems because they are constituted as mechanisms to "provide meaning and direction for participants" (p. 293).

Although Daft and Weick (1984) do not make any claims about the quality or level of sophistication of the interpretive modes they present, or the likely outcomes from enacting each of the different interpretive modes, there are noteworthy parallels to the individual developmental stages of interpretation that lead to wisdom. These include 1) whether information can be analyzed (delineating different knowledge assumptions according to the degree of equivocality and whether legitimate information emanates from external or internal sources); and 2) whether organization behaviors take on active or passive characteristics which are associated with organizational beliefs about its relative capacity and approach to shaping the environment (Sternberg, 2004). Unlike the interpretive characteristics of wisdom, Daft and Weick omit discussing the role of organizational values and assumptions about responsibilities to society in their model; however, the model is important because it provides a view of organizations as possessing interpretive variation that is congruent with the meaning making process.

Integration of levels and dimensions

Levitt and March (1988) suggest that an organization's meta-cultural context may actually limit the acquisition of higher order interpretative frames from permeating an organization's dominant meaning making paradigm. The effect of the multilevels may be the suppression of interpretive frames that are conducive for the acquisition of wisdom. Moreover, it is imperative that scholars enhance their methodological talents for assessing the influence of the various levels to better understand issues of integrating interpretive dimensions or organizations. One notable empirical example showcased the reciprocal effects of interpretive meanings across levels; Oswick, Anthony, Grant, Keenoy, and Mangham (1999) used the process of a dialogical intervention to demonstrate how individual cognition and organizational action function in tandem towards transcending the organizational dilemma at hand. Effectively, Oswick et al. have offered an organizational pedagogical intervention that serves the group in the same manner that Pascual-Leone's (2000) life experiences or Baxter Magolda and King's (2004) strategies for promoting self-authorship facilitate internally focused emergent forms of wisdom.

Conclusion and future directions

The evidence suggests interpretive modes are reflected in various observable patterns and routines of organizations, similar to individuals. Regardless of whether these patterns and routines are cognitive schemes (DiMaggio, 1997; McAdam & Scott, 2005) or behavioral conduct (Daft & Weick, 1984), the organizations engage in repeated forms. These patterns offer insights to the underlying assumptions that operate tacitly when organizations make interpretations of ill-structured circumstances, such as an approach to social responsibility or social justice. Becker (2004) notes that routines are conceived of as both cognitive and behavioral phenomena, and suggests that routines are path-dependent and change incrementally through each new enactment. This view is consistent with Weick and Putnam's (2006) call to focus on the process of attention over the content of attention, for the purpose of understanding mindful patterns that leads to organizational wisdom. How can we spot moments of effortful attention and mindful patterning of information within educational organizations? These are the tasks before us, perhaps further delineating processes and trajectories of organizational wisdom are tools for understanding how institutions become more inclusive, equitable, and just.

Measurement

It is likely that difficulties with measurement may have inhibited research which allows developmental features and multidimensional aspects of wisdom to emerge in organizational scholarship. In particular, Jepperson and Swidler (1994) note the difficulties in considering complex and multi-layer organizational phenomena. The authors discuss the accompanying methodological challenges that are inherent in the quasi-hierarchical structure. Nevertheless, they argue that it is not so much that the challenge of measuring the structure of culture that has forestalled the empirical study of interpretative features of organizational culture, as much as it has been the field's narrow conceptions of it. Jepperson and Swidler also add that culture is often conceptualized as unitary (Schein, 1992) rather than multidimensional (Clegg et al., 2005); this multidimensionality requires that researchers apply methodologies that preserve the orthogonality of the dimensions so as to best understand the unique effects of the intersection and presence of dimensions.

Mohr (1998) recommends a series of measurement alternatives that he believes address the goal of effectively measuring cultural meanings in organizations. He proposed that culture be assessed in a more authentic manner through measuring the *subjective similarities* of cognitive judgments; *attribute similarity* of symbols, artifacts, or common representations within a cultural system; *relational similarities* "by looking for the presence of absence of various types of social relationships that link cultural objects together" (p.354); and *similarity of structural function* or "the extent to which they [actors in a system] filled the same institutional function" (p.356). Mohr advises scholars about employing techniques such as – multidimensional scaling and clustering, network analysis, Boolean algebra, sequence analysis, correspondence analysis, lattice analysis, and hierarchical classification models – to successfully tap into cultural interpretations and corresponding structures need for understanding processual analysis of organizational meaning-making.

Finally, if we are to pursue a path that allows higher education, and the organizations that comprise it, to become socially just, we must help lead the field towards a science of wise organizational action. As scholars and researchers we must explicate theories, measures, and a roadmap to guide the work that higher education organizations are called to pursue. Here, we offer a beginning for the trip, gathering the materials for the pavement to offer a foundation for exploring the open and abundant road.

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