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Pragmatic Holism in Practice: Autoethnographic and Ethical Reflections on Becoming an Educative Leader in Diverse Contexts

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Bio Reynold Macpherson earned his PhD from Monash University and held academic leadership roles in Australia, New Zealand, and the UAE. He served as CEO of Waiariki Institute of Technology and as Foundational Chancellor and CEO of Abu Dhabi University. He has published 17 books, 90 research papers, and led international consultancies.

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Abstract: This paper offers an autoethnographic and ethical analysis of becoming an educative leader through six higher education roles and experience as a system policy advisor. Educative leadership is defined by its educative intent and outcomes and evaluated against both teleological and deontological criteria. Using an interpretivist methodology, autobiographical data were analysed to construct a practical theory of educative leadership that spans philosophy-in-action, strategy, politics, culture, management, and evaluation. The study identifies the application of diverse moral philosophies in practice, including Kantian deontology, rational consequentialism, pragmatism, relational ethics, social contract theory, and teleological ethics. Findings suggest that effective educative leadership benefits from integrating multiple ethical frameworks, enabling principled yet context-responsive decision-making across varied domains of practice. Pragmatic holism is highlighted as a particularly flexible and adaptive ethical foundation, allowing leaders to balance competing principles while remaining sensitive to institutional constraints, cultural diversity, and real-world complexities. Reflective practice emerges as essential for navigating tensions between moral commitments, practical outcomes, and relational responsibilities. While self-reporting limits generalisability, this study contributes to the development of ethical leadership frameworks and underscores the importance of ongoing research to refine and adapt moral philosophy for diverse educational contexts.

Keywords: Higher education; Autoethnography; Moral philosophy; Educative leadership



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1. Introduction

Teleological and deontological moral criteria represent two fundamentally different approaches to ethical decision-making. Teleological ethics, also known as consequentialism, focuses on the outcomes or consequences of actions to determine their morality. In contrast, deontological ethics emphasizes duties and rules, judging actions by their adherence to these principles regardless of the consequences.

Teleological ethics, exemplified by utilitarianism, holds that the morality of an action is determined by its results. The central tenet is that an action is right if it leads to the greatest overall good or the least harm. John Stuart Mill's utilitarianism, for instance, proposes that actions are morally right if they promote happiness and wrong if they produce the opposite of happiness (Mill, 1863). Teleological theories are flexible and context-dependent, allowing for the assessment of specific situations to maximize beneficial outcomes.

In contrast, deontological ethics, associated with Immanuel Kant, asserts that morality is grounded in adherence to duty, rules, or obligations, irrespective of the outcomes. Kantian deontology emphasizes that actions are morally right if they are performed out of duty and conform to universal moral laws, such as the categorical imperative, which demands that one should act only according to maxims that can be universally applied (Kant, 1785). Deontological ethics is characterized by its rule-based structure, prioritizing the inherent morality of actions over their consequences.

This paper assumes that an ethical critique of becoming an educative leader in higher education and system reforms has to identify the presence of deontological (purpose-based duties), teleological (outcomes or consequences), and other criteria to help refine a personal moral philosophy.

To begin, the context clarified in the next section includes the general purposes of education and higher education leadership (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2019), and models of value and policy processes intended to obtain preferable outcomes (Hodgkinson, 1991). The following section explains the interpretivist paradigm used to present and analyse autobiographical data of leadership services (Macpherson, 2025). Findings are then reported as reflections on educative leadership

service as philosophy-in-action, strategic planning, political, cultural, and managerial activity, and evaluation (Hodgkinson, 1991; Barnett, 2020).

2. Theoretical Context

Purposes of Education

Since ancient times, education has been recognized as serving three overarching purposes: aesthetic, economic, and ideological (Hodgkinson, 1991, pp. 17-27). Aesthetic purposes focus on self-actualization and enjoyment, beginning with foundational literacy and numeracy and extending to the liberal arts, humanities, adult education, sports, and entertainment. Economic purposes address vocational training and professional development, equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for economic participation. Ideological purposes involve transmitting the culture and worldview of the host society, including its religious, civic, and moral ideals.

These purposes find resonance in the works of notable educational theorists. For example, Dewey (1938) emphasizes education's role in fostering personal growth and social efficiency, aligning with both aesthetic and economic purposes. Additionally, Dewey underscores the significance of education in promoting democratic values, which corresponds with ideological purposes. Similarly, Noddings (2005) advocates for education that nurtures care and moral development, reflecting the ideological purpose while also acknowledging intellectual and aesthetic growth.

Contrasting perspectives on education's fundamental aims further enrich the discourse. Some theorists prioritize economic purposes, emphasizing education's role in preparing individuals for the labor market. This perspective is evident in policies emphasizing STEM education and skills development to enhance economic competitiveness (Levin, 2001). Conversely, other theorists prioritize social justice and equity, challenging traditional economic and ideological purposes. Freire (1970), for instance, advocates for education that empowers marginalized communities and fosters critical consciousness, diverging from conventional ideological frameworks.

These purposes are variously integrated and emphasized across different educational organizations, such as preschools, primary and secondary schools, colleges, polytechnics, universities, and public and

private training institutions. Despite their diversity, these institutions aim to fulfill distinctly educational objectives derived from human desires, values, and challenges. Education is seen as servicing a broad range of goods, including security, health, the common good, state interests, profit, wealth, religion, and ideology. As with structuration in society (Giddens, 1984), educational values are both a medium and an outcome of education. They commonly prioritize three outcomes: humanizing individuals through an aesthetic code for living with others, providing practical means for livelihood, and offering authoritative accounts of the world and morality. Educative leadership, therefore, reflects a commitment to achieving these educational purposes and desirable outcomes (Smith & Thomas, 2023).

The purposes of higher education are multifaceted and have evolved over time to address diverse societal needs. Newman (2008) argued that the primary purpose of higher education is the cultivation of the intellect and the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. His view emphasizes liberal education and the development of well-rounded individuals. As a major architect of the modern American university, Kerr (2001) introduced the idea of the "multiversity," emphasizing the multifaceted roles of universities, including research, teaching, and public service. According to Altbach, Reisberg, and Rumbley (2019), higher education institutions play a critical role in developing a workforce capable of adapting to the demands of a rapidly changing global economy. This encompasses not only specialized knowledge but also critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills.

Another significant purpose is fostering research and innovation. Higher education institutions serve as centers for scientific discovery and technological advancement, contributing to new knowledge through research activities and collaborations with industry and government (Benneworth et al., 2021). Such outputs drive economic growth and address complex societal challenges.

Higher education also promotes social mobility and equity by providing access to education and reducing social inequalities. Marginson (2018) notes that higher education can act as a 'social elevator,' offering opportunities for upward mobility, particularly for disadvantaged groups. Additionally, higher education

fosters civic engagement and democratic participation, encouraging students to become informed and active citizens who contribute to the public good. This includes addressing social issues, engaging in democratic processes, and promoting social justice (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2016).

Finally, higher education supports personal development by offering students opportunities for self-discovery, personal growth, and the development of a sense of identity and purpose. This holistic development is essential for individuals to lead fulfilling and meaningful lives (Barnett, 2020).

In summary, education and higher education serve as vital instruments for achieving a wide spectrum of human and societal objectives, ranging from individual self-actualization and economic advancement to fostering equitable, democratic, and innovative societies. This integration of purposes underscores the centrality of educative leadership in navigating and harmonizing these goals across diverse contexts.

The Concept of Value

The concept of value refers to the principles, standards, or qualities considered worthwhile or desirable in a given context. Values guide behaviour and decision-making, shaping an individual's or society's perceptions of what is important, ethical, and meaningful. They can be personal, such as honesty and kindness, or collective, such as justice and freedom, and are often influenced by cultural, social, and individual factors (Schwartz, 2022).

In the context of moral philosophy, Flew (1984, p. 365) theorized that the central problem is the relation between the moral rightness of certain actions, such as telling the truth, and the non-moral state of certain states, such as happiness. According to Flew, for the teleologist, actions are right if and only if they are a means to some admitted non-moral good, whereas for the deontologist, they are valuable in themselves. This perspective highlights a fundamental divide between teleological and deontological ethics.

Alternative views in moral philosophy offer different approaches to understanding the moral rightness of actions and their relationship to non-moral states. For instance, virtue ethics, as espoused by Aristotle, emphasizes the development of good character traits (virtues) and living a life in accordance with reason, rather than focusing solely on the consequences of

actions (teleology) or adherence to rules (deontology). According to Aristotle (2004), the right action is one that a virtuous person would do in the same circumstances, thereby integrating moral and non-moral states through the cultivation of virtues.

Another alternative is found in the work of care ethicists like Carol Gilligan, who argue that moral decision-making is grounded in the context of relationships and care rather than abstract principles or consequences. Gilligan (1982) suggests that an ethics of care prioritizes empathy, compassion, and the maintenance of relationships, which contrasts with both teleological and deontological approaches by emphasizing the importance of context and interpersonal connections.

Furthermore, existentialist philosophers such as Jean-Paul Sartre propose a different framework altogether. Sartre (1946) contends that individuals are free to create their own values and meaning through their choices, emphasizing personal responsibility and the subjective nature of moral decision-making. This existentialist perspective challenges the fixed nature of moral rules or predefined non-moral goods, focusing instead on individual autonomy and authenticity.

These alternative views illustrate the diversity of thought in moral philosophy, highlighting the limitations of a strict dichotomy between teleology and deontology and suggesting that moral rightness can be understood through various lenses, including virtue ethics, care ethics, and existentialism.

Christopher Hodgkinson's analytical model of the value concept that follows was designed to classify values, to help with the arbitration of competing values

in a given educational context and to better understand the nature of value conflicts with a view to resolution. It starts with Immanuel Kant's (1909, 1956) distinction between the 'desirable' and the 'desired'. Desirable refers to the deontological 'right' or what is proper, a duty or what ought to be. Knowledge of the desirable appears to require a sense of morality, or collective responsibility, or a conscience, perhaps a 'super ego' that arbitrates competing values. Desired refers to the axiological 'good' or preference, that is, what is enjoyable, pleasurable and likeable. Knowledge of what is desired is an instantly available product of our impulses, our feelings or our culture.

Hodgkinson's unique contribution was to:

- Identify the four apparently universal methods of justifying value judgements on Kant's rightness-to-goodness scale — principles, consequences, consensus and preference.
- Associate justifications in principle to conation, the psychological ability to apply intellectual energy to a task to achieve its completion or reach a solution.
- Associated justifications grounded in consequences and consensus with the psychology of cognition, the self-directed mental process that humans use to think, read, learn, remember, reason, pay attention, and, ultimately, comprehend information and turn it into knowledge used in decision making and taking action.
- Associate justifications grounded in preferences with each person's underlying psychological experience of feelings, emotions, attachments, or moods. From there it was a short step to identifying corresponding philosophies and three types of values.

Table 1: Analytical Model of the Value Concept (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 97)

←-----Deontological-Nomothetic-Discipline-Dimension) -----→				
	Grounding	Psychological Correspondences	Philosophical Correspondences	Types of Value
“Right” ↑	Principle	Conative -----	Religionism Existentialism ----- Ideologism	I Transrational
Value 	Consequences (IIa)	Cognitive -----	Humanism Pragmatism -----	II Rational
↓	Consensus (IIb)		Utilitarianism	
“Good”	Preference	Affective -----	Logical Positivism Behaviourism ----- Hedonism	III Subrational
←-----Axiological-Idiographic-Indulgence-Dimension) -----→				

Hodgkinson's model of value has several strengths. It provides a thorough classification of values by distinguishing between the 'desirable' (deontological, related to duty and morality) and the 'desired' (axiological, related to pleasure and preference). This dual approach allows for a nuanced understanding of the different types of values that influence behaviour and decision-making (Hodgkinson, 1991). Additionally, by associating value judgments with specific psychological processes and philosophical correspondences, Hodgkinson's model bridges the gap between psychology and philosophy, offering a holistic view of how values operate at various levels of human functioning (Hodgkinson, 1996).

However, Hodgkinson's model of value also has limitations. It is developed from Kantian deontological ethics with lesser attention to teleological ethics, exemplified by consequentialist utilitarianism. The model's complexity and abstract nature can make it difficult to apply in practical settings. The distinctions between transrational, rational, and sub rational types of values may be challenging for practitioners to grasp and implement effectively (Begley, 2001). Moreover, while the theoretical framework is robust, the model's attempt to classify universal methods of justifying value judgments might lead to overgeneralization, ignoring cultural and contextual differences that influence value systems. This limitation can reduce the model's effectiveness in diverse settings (Sergiovanni,

1992). Finally, there is limited empirical research validating the specific classifications and processes outlined in Hodgkinson's model. This lack of empirical support can hinder its acceptance and utilization in broader academic and professional communities (Starratt, 1996). Further, this paper could trigger follow up research that will gather and report more empirical evidence of educative leadership practices.

Nevertheless, by embedding his concept of value in his model of the policy cycle, Hodgkinson (1991) provides valuable insights into how values influence policy decisions. This integration demonstrates the potential practical applicability of his policy cycle in real-world contexts, particularly in educative leadership and policymaking and implementation, as exemplified below.

The Policy Cycle

Aristotle advised leaders to engage in three modes of knowing and acting: *theoria* (theory), *techné* (technique and technology), and *praxis* (critical reflection on action to identify values served and to be served) (Elliott, 2012). These modes are all explicit in Hodgkinson's (1981) six-phase taxonomy of the policy-making and policy-implementation cycle, presented in Table 2. Philosophical reviews and strategic planning are conducted in the realm of ideas. Political and motivational action are conducted in the realm of people. Management and evaluation mechanisms happen in the realm of material things.

Table 2: Hodgkinson's (1981) Taxonomy of the Administrative Process

Policy Making Activity	Policy Implementation Activity	Archetypes	Value Type	Reality	English Terms, reversed in North America
Philosophy		Idea Generators Synthesizers	Transrational - principle	Ideas	Administration
Planning		Researchers Information Compilers	Rational - consequences	Ideas	Administration
Politics		Explainers Salespersons Diplomats	Rational - consensus	People	<i>Transition</i>
	Mobilizing	Communicators Organizers Leaders	Rational - consensus	People	<i>Transition</i>
	Managing	Group Organizers Effectors	Rational - consequences	Things	Management
	Monitoring	Detectives Reactors Evaluators	Transrational - principle	Things	Management

Hodgkinson's 3P3M model of the policy cycle offers several advantages. It provides a structured framework

for understanding the complex processes involved in policy making and implementation. By delineating

distinct stages and roles, the model captures the dynamic interplay between philosophical, planning, political, mobilizing, managing, and monitoring activities (Hodgkinson, 1991). Each stage is associated with specific archetypes and value types, which provides a nuanced view of how educational policies are conceived, developed, and enacted (Hodgkinson, 1996). This comprehensive approach allows for a clearer understanding of the multifaceted nature of policy processes and the various factors that influence decision-making.

However, Hodgkinson's taxonomy also has limitations. One significant limitation is the model's potential for overgeneralization. By attempting to classify universal methods of justifying value judgments and stages of the policy cycle, the model might overlook important cultural and contextual differences that influence policy processes, thus reducing its effectiveness in diverse settings (Sergiovanni, 1992). The model's complexity can make it challenging to apply in practice. The detailed distinctions between different stages and roles may be difficult for practitioners to grasp and implement effectively, potentially limiting its utility in real-world settings (Begley, 2001).

Additionally, while the model offers a robust theoretical framework, there is limited empirical research validating the specific classifications and processes outlined in Hodgkinson's taxonomy. This lack of empirical support can hinder its acceptance and application in broader academic and professional communities (Starratt, 1996). Nonetheless, its potential utility can be indicated by snapshots from my own experiences.

3. Methodology

Interpretivism, as a case study methodology in researching leadership in higher education, focuses on understanding the meanings and experiences of individuals within their social contexts. This approach emphasizes the subjective interpretation of social phenomena, recognizing that reality is constructed through human interactions and experiences (Greenfield, 1975; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Interpretivist case studies involve in-depth exploration of leadership practices, values, and beliefs, often through qualitative methods such as interviews,

participative observations, and document analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Self-reported case studies, in particular, rely on autobiographical reflection as a primary source of data, offering firsthand insights into leadership identity formation, ethical reasoning, and decision-making in professional contexts (Bruner, 2004; Ellis et al., 2011).

One of the strengths of interpretivism is its ability to provide rich, detailed insights into the complex and nuanced nature of leadership. By capturing the perspectives of different leaders and stakeholders, it can offer a comprehensive understanding of how leadership is practiced and perceived within specific institutional contexts (Yin, 2018; Stake, 1995). This depth of understanding contributes to theory development and practical applications in leadership practice, particularly when exploring the ethical dimensions of leadership in dynamic, culturally diverse environments (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Autobiographical case studies, in particular, can provide valuable internal perspectives on leadership dilemmas, moral conflicts, and adaptive decision-making (Bolton, 2014; Brookfield, 2017).

However, interpretivism—and self-reported case studies in particular—has notable limitations. The subjective nature of self-reported data raises concerns about reliability, bias, and generalizability (Bryman, 2016; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Findings from such studies are often context-specific, making it difficult to apply them to broader institutional settings or to draw universal conclusions (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Moreover, autobiographical accounts are inherently filtered through memory, retrospection, and personal perspective, meaning that selective recall, self-perception, and reflexivity shape the narrative (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2017). While narrative inquiry and autoethnography provide frameworks for self-situated analysis, they also require critical self-awareness to mitigate over-personalization and anecdotalism (Chang, 2008; Ellis et al., 2011).

Additionally, researcher positionality influences the interpretation of qualitative data. Since the researcher is also the subject of analysis, their own assumptions, experiences, and epistemological stance inevitably shape the study's conclusions (Cunliffe, 2016; MacLure, 2013). This implies that the findings now reported from an autobiographical source (Macpherson, 2025) must be regarded as provisional and indicative

rather than definitive, though they are complemented by earlier and contemporary publications that offer corroborative perspectives. While self-reflection in leadership research contributes insightful, practice-based knowledge, its limitations necessitate cautious interpretation and, where possible, triangulation with external data sources (Tracy, 2010; Van Maanen, 2011).

4. Results

Educative Leadership as Philosophy-in-Action

The first stage in policymaking, according to Hodgkinson's model, involves determining what is right through philosophical means: imagination, intuition, speculation, hypothesis, argument, dialectic, logic, rhetoric, value analysis, and clarification. Those engaged in generating and synthesizing new policies use overarching moral principles derived from their ideologies, the fundamental purposes of host organizations or systems, and critical reflection on past policies, actions, and outcomes.

My first experience in developing institutional policy, as a designated responsibility with professional accountability, was at the University of Tasmania from 1992 to 1997. Appointed as an Associate Professor and Director of Research Development, I was asked to review research development and management policy for the Education Faculty on the Newnham and Hobart campuses.

Consistent with the norms of an academic culture, we used a collaborative approach, through consultations and workshops with colleagues on both campuses, to brainstorm, draft, edit and endorse a new research development policy, with valuable input from senior research professors in related disciplines. The process gradually gained cautious support from colleagues. We established a Faculty Higher Research Degrees Student Database, a Research Newsletter, a Research Seminar Series, and weekend workshops for writing research grant applications. My office was dominated by a large oval table used for near-constant team meetings planning, managing, and reporting the results of personal and team research projects.

A team from the Schools of Education, Health Sciences, and Humanities and Social Sciences in Launceston jointly established the Launceston Social Science Research Laboratory with an Australian Research Council equipment grant. This facility was

crucial for designing and validating survey instruments and analysing quantitative and qualitative data. The progress achieved in research development at the Newnham Campus was soon evidenced by accelerating publication rates and the ARC grant.

In late 1992, the Dean of Education appointed me Head of the Department of Education at Launceston. I led retreats where colleagues collaboratively developed new purposes, strategies, structures, workloads, services, and resource allocations to integrate teaching, research, and community services. As with the research development policy process, it was essential first to clarify the right purposes in everyone's minds.

The deliberate use of highly interactive workshops enabled colleagues to suspend judgment, entertain possibilities, debate priorities, and gradually reach a consensus on the value of research in education and their roles in serving the interests of students and schools. Values in the philosophical process of policymaking stemmed from three main sources: moral imperatives from educational ideologies, the *raison d'être* of the University and Tasmania's school education systems, and critical reflection by colleagues on past policies, practices, and outcomes. This example demonstrates that the first phase of educative policymaking was philosophy-in-action, cohering with contemporary reports (Macpherson, 1992a; 1992b; 1993a).

In sum, the nature of educative leadership clarified in this section was evident in the collaborative and reflective process used to develop institutional policies, aimed at enhancing research development and integrating teaching, research, and community services. The moral philosophies evident include a commitment to democratic participation, the application of overarching moral principles derived from educational philosophies, the institution's fundamental purposes, and critical reflection on past actions and outcomes.

Educative Leadership as Strategic Planning

According to Hodgkinson's 3P3M model, the second stage of policymaking, still in the realm of ideas, is planning. Strategic planning utilizes research, evidence, and rational consequentialism to determine the significance of new policies. The purpose is to relate them to the situation and available resources to determine strategies consistent with agreed policies, colloquially referred to as the 'direction of travel.'

For example, I was appointed Professor and Director

of the Centre for Professional Development (CPD) at the University of Auckland in April 1997. I inherited a budget of about \$1 million, and 16 full-time and about 50 part-time staff delivering a wide range of professional development opportunities to academic and general staff through 13 separate programmes.

To initiate a strategic review, I interviewed all programme coordinators using Rogerian counselling probes (i.e., without judgment) to allow them to clarify their values and commitments related to the programmes they were managing (Rogers, 1961). I converted what I heard at each interview into draft programme plans, added budgets, and then used them in a second round of interviews to propose programme purposes, objectives, and achievable key performance indicators (KPIs).

Once agreement had been reached regarding each programme, I synthesized a CPD policy statement to gain unit and institutional sign-off and to serve as the basis for annual evaluations and further strategic development.

Why? First, I wanted to encourage each person to take responsibility for evaluating and further developing the services they provided annually using data directly relevant to their KPIs collected from clients. I felt it was important for us to practice what we preached (Macpherson, 1997; 1999a).

Second, my line manager, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), required the CPD to contribute to institutional policy research aimed at improving the quality of teaching—to complement the UoA's international reputation for research and to boost its contribution to nation-building (Macpherson, 1999b). She had oversight of institutional policy projects concerned with effective pedagogy, human resource development and academic promotions, protocols for the formative evaluation of teaching, and the assessment of student learning. The net effects of her policy reforms were (a) to boost and normalize pedagogical and curricular research projects alongside staff and team research programmes within disciplines, and (b) to progressively improve the CPD's programme plans. My role was to facilitate the strategic development of the CPD to identify significant improvements in the professional development of academic and general staff at the UoA.

In sum, the nature of educative leadership reported

in this section involved strategic planning to align professional development programs with institutional goals, using evidence-based methods and participative feedback to create actionable policies and performance indicators. The moral philosophies evident include rational consequentialism, valuing individual responsibility and continuous improvement, and the pursuit of enhancing the quality of teaching and contributing to the institution's broader mission of nation-building.

Educative Leadership as Political Activity

The third phase of policymaking moves to the realm of people in the form of political leadership, aimed at achieving policy consensus prior to implementation. This phase realigns social reality by notifying, consulting, and persuading those with the leverage or resources to adopt, improve, promote, or resist new policy and strategy.

When I was appointed Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Waiariki Institute of Technology (*Whare Takiura o Waiariki*) in January 2002, I became responsible for about 500 part- and full-time staff (330 equivalent full-time staff (EFTEs)), a \$30 million budget, and delivering appropriate learning programmes to about 9,500 students (2,834 EFTS) on seven campuses. There was no time to breathe.

My Personal Assistant was deluged with threats when my appointment was announced. A queue of local businessmen formed outside my office, each with much the same brutal message: if Waiariki's debts with them, totalling about \$1 million, were not settled promptly, legal action would follow. Members of the Council and Te Mana Matauranga (the Māori policy advisory committee) were mobilized and made influential phone calls to assist with negotiations. Hence, we were able to persuade our debtors to accept time-payment agreements to keep Waiariki open so that we could trade our way back from the brink.

As soon as I could meet with Directors and Heads of Schools, a provisional budget was created and then imposed to keep the doors open. Some were discomfited by the unfamiliar discipline to the point where some separated from the polytech. The management and information systems had to be reconfigured so we could map and control cash flows.

As the dust of the financial crisis started to settle, the Council, Te Mana Matauranga, and my Senior

Management Team (SMT, comprising the Academic Director, the *Kaumātua* (senior Māori leader), and the Directors) agreed to focus on four practical priorities for 2002: governance reform, management systems reform, settling debts, and achieving a financial turnaround. Together, these priorities comprised a risk management and growth strategy.

Thus, the members of the SMT and I worked with the Heads of Schools to develop new programmes and fresh methods of reconciling academic quality with course and programme viability. Between us, we led 27 improvement projects. All debts, including some discovered liabilities, were cleared in 2002, although unexpected variances in two schools resulted in a \$700K deficit. An audited surplus was achieved in 2003 and in 2004 and was forecasted for 2005.

The turnaround was therefore due in no small part to inclusionary consultations and concerted educative leadership at school, corporate, and governance levels that stressed learning about leadership services, including MBA units being taught after work on the main campus by the University of Waikato's School of Management.

In sum, the nature of educative leadership reported in this section involves political activity to achieve policy consensus and realign social reality in the polytechnic through consultation, persuasion, and negotiation, particularly as crisis management and institutional turnaround. The moral philosophies evident include pragmatism, responsibility, and collaborative problem-solving, aimed at stabilizing the institution financially and improving governance, management systems, and academic quality.

Educative Leadership as Cultural Activity

The fourth phase of Hodgkinson's policy cycle also occurs in the realm of people, taking the form of cultural leadership. As the first phase of policy implementation, it deliberately employs cultural action to start implementing the policy consensus. In this phase, leaders communicate the policy and activate networks and resources, leading to the legitimation and mobilization of changed practices.

In mid-2005, I flew to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to assist with the development of a new private university sponsored by Abu Dhabi's Royal Family. Institutional policy on purposes had been determined on June 25, 2003: the vision was to become a premier

university in the region and its mission was to provide higher education needed for human, social, and economic development in the area.

My six strategic objectives, as Foundational Chancellor and CEO, were set by the owner and estimated to take about three academic years (2005-2006, 2006-2007, and 2007-2008):

1. Establish effective strategic planning and strategic leadership in the University.
2. Further develop the scope, quality, and productivity of the University's academic program.
3. Further develop appropriate, effective, and efficient service and support systems.
4. Initiate a University community engagement strategy involving higher education, government and private sectors, community, staff, and students.
5. Initiate a University internationalization strategy.
6. Coordinate University development with the Holding Company's initiatives.

With purposes and strategy predetermined, and hierarchical governance limiting the need for political activity, my primary task was to develop consensus among academic and general staff, largely using cultural means.

I inherited an Academic Court comprising the Provost and Heads of Schools. To improve relationships and coordination between academic and general staff, I introduced a more inclusive University Council. With a few exceptions, the quality of academic and corporate leadership at Abu Dhabi University was high and improved steadily despite the high annual turnover.

By late 2005, I had developed a preliminary understanding of stakeholders and their diverse priorities, the limits of my powers, and culturally acceptable implementation methods. I engaged stakeholders and colleagues iteratively by progressively building a large display of perceptions of the university's purposes on a wall in the library using postcards. The display elicited feedback from academic and general staff, generated deeper understanding by me, and fostered greater unity of thought among academic and general staff regarding purposes and strategy.

There were, however, many intense organisational challenges because our academic staff primarily came from the US and Britain, which have different higher education administrative traditions, cultures and

structures, and from institutions that used unique and often unexamined administrative and management concepts.

The academic staff held over 300 PhD and master's degrees between them, with 82 percent having PhDs and 19 percent holding master's degrees. Over 90 percent were research-driven scientists who had graduated from leading Western universities, most with a list of peer-refereed publications. They were also comparatively young, with 30 percent under 35 years old, 52 percent aged 36 to 50, and 18 percent over 50. The research-based curricula they designed in teams, in consultation with leading international specialists, were quickly accredited by local and American agencies.

Nevertheless, most were initially disinclined to learn about being better organized, preferring to use culturally diverse and conceptually idiosyncratic language to describe what was right and significant about how their school (faculty) and university should operate. It became clear that I would have to provide standardized concepts of policymaking and implementation to realign the culture of the University Council to legitimate and mobilize focussed progress toward achieving the institution's vision and mission.

An important turning point occurred on May 30, 2006. I facilitated a workshop for all members of the University Council at the Al Ain Campus to ensure that I had everyone's undivided attention for the day. The workshop comprised interactive learning sessions intended to justify and activate a new culture of strategic planning in all units. The common definitions and mandatory requirements presented in English and Arabic were:

- Strategic planning is planning for sustainable success.
- The key parts of a strategic plan are:
 - Vision – a word picture of the future
 - Mission – why we exist
 - Values – guiding principles
 - Strategy – activities that make us competitive
 - Objectives – what we must do well to implement our strategy (using financial, customer, internal process, and employee learning and growth perspectives)
 - Measures – indicators and methods used to evaluate and communicate outcomes
 - Targets – outcomes expected
 - Owner – the person responsible for the achievement

of a target

- Using group work, which initially startled participants because they were more accustomed to didactic presentations by the powerful, I gradually elicited responses that demonstrated that collective understandings in academic and corporate teams must be created by group processes to generate common language and cultural norms.

- Understandings must take account of organizational realities, such as strategy and objectives, and should be created using internal and external analyses by experts and then group processes that generate commitment and mobilize leadership.

- Understandings about action, such as measures, targets, and ownership, must be created through operational planning by the delivery teams.

- The follow-up assignment for each academic and corporate unit was to develop their own operational plans collectively, with all of the components above, to be presented to the University Council for endorsement.

All unit leaders subsequently reported intensely philosophical, strategic and political discussions in their teams, each more or less culminating in a working consensus with intercultural perspectives. These operational plans subsequently became the basis for annual evaluation and planning to make further improvements and to enhance the university's contributions to the UAE (Macpherson, et al., 2007).

To summarise, the nature of educative leadership reported in this section involves cultural leadership, aimed at achieving policy implementation by engaging stakeholders, fostering consensus, and creating a unified understanding of institutional goals and strategies. The moral philosophies evident include collaborative engagement, intercultural sensitivity, and a commitment to shared organizational values and principles, facilitating the legitimation and mobilization of change towards the institution's vision and mission.

Educative Leadership as Management

The second phase of policy implementation, according to Hodgkinson, involves managerial activity aimed at achieving intended outcomes within the limits of available resources. This form of educative leadership focuses on achieving specific consequences—planned learning outcomes at learner, teacher, and organizational levels.

In November 1987, I returned home to New Zealand

for six months on study leave to continue five years of research into the politics of education. At Prime Minister David Lange's direction, I was contracted by the State Services Commission to help provide advice to the Picot Taskforce on school governance and management structures and practices for the administration of education at all levels.

The policy advisory space was crowded, noisy and contested (Macpherson, 1993a, pp. 253-254): Treasury recommended market liberalism, the Department of Education reiterated a Benthamite logic for continuing with a centralized bureaucracy, many academics called for state schools to implement socially critical priorities, Māori lobby groups demanded emancipation from a neo-colonial hegemony, and the teachers' unions campaigned for more power to balance the Department's controls. But they were all at odds with bipartisan support in Parliament for radical structuralism to devolve power to school communities in search of qualitative improvements.

The Picot Taskforce recommended, and Prime Minister David Lange's Labour Government endorsed in *Tomorrow's Schools*, the devolution of governance to school communities. From October 1, 1989, each school elected a board of trustees that had to negotiate a Charter of Objectives to reflect local needs within national guidelines. The Charter had to be approved by a new Ministry before it became the basis for program budgeting and accrual accounting, as each school had to manage its own finances. I reported (*loc cit.*, p. 254) the dramatically changed management outcomes centrally and locally, including:

- An Education Review Office was established, replacing the Department's school inspectorate, to provide multi-skilled teams to make transparent how well each school was using its funds to achieve chartered objectives.
- The ten provinces' Education Boards were replaced by school support centres intended to provide contracted services to schools.
- *Ad hoc* policy taskforces were eventually preferred to a national education policy council.
- A relatively slim Ministry of Education then provided policy advice, administered property, moved funds, and provided guidelines on personnel, administrative, governance, and curricular matters.

There were, nevertheless, major problems with role

loss and discovery, disturbed bargaining relationships, the supply of expertise, the loss of trust in the portfolio, and fears about managerial technicism displacing educative leadership.

Overall, there was evidence at all levels in the New Zealand public school education system that the meta-value of the Picot reforms had been installed in management activity—the equalization of power between the clients and providers of state education within the limits of available resources. Whether or not the planned learning outcomes at learner, teacher, and organizational levels were sustained by educative leadership is a question that will have to be settled in empirical and historical terms.

In sum, the nature of educative leadership described in this section involved managerial activity aimed at decentralizing governance and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of school management to achieve planned learning outcomes at various levels. The moral philosophies evident include democratic empowerment, resource-based pragmatism, and the equalization of power between school communities and state education providers, reflecting a commitment to localized control and accountability within the constraints of available resources.

Educative Leadership as Evaluation

The third phase of implementation, and the final and sixth phase of the policy cycle proposed by Hodgkinson, involves monitoring, including supervision, auditing, accounting, reporting, and evaluation. This phase determines the extent to which outcomes match objectives and identifies the need to revise the policy in the first philosophical phase of the next policy cycle.

In January 1989, I was seconded for five months to assist with Dr. Brian Scott's management review of the New South Wales state education portfolio. Dr. Scott and his PA, Helen Adam, spent most of a year collecting information on how the Department of Education of NSW supervised, audited, accounted for, reported on, and evaluated its state schools. Almost all of these evaluation processes were provided by an all-powerful inspectorate whose industrial body was known as The Institute. Years later I was commissioned to write the history of the Institute (Macpherson, 2015).

Scott submitted a briefing paper to the Minister of Education, Dr. Terry Metherell, in June 1989, which

was approved without reservation. He then proposed sweeping reforms in *School-centred Education: Building a More Responsive State School System* in March 1990.

My immediate reflections on the Scott Report used the metaphors of surgical and genetic engineering to explain the immediate and longer-term reform processes it triggered (Macpherson, 1993). The surgical interventions, explicitly radical structuralism, were intended to convert a centralized bureaucracy into a school-centred system of state education supported by cluster directorates. In later research (Macpherson, 2015, pp. 283-4), I confirmed that Scott's *Schools Renewal* strategy was intended to 'boost capacity building in schools' and led to the abolition of the inspectorate on April 30, 1990. The implementation of the new management system with fresh values was achieved by:

Reconstructing the Department without an inspectorate, devolving responsibilities and some power to school principals, with support for school operations delivered by clusters. [Minister] Metherell strongly supported dezoning catchments to introduce competition between schools, opened specialist and selective high schools to increase parental choice, proposed improving rural provisions and strengthening school governance, and reducing curriculum requirements and regulations for registering and accrediting schools. He campaigned for greater choice by parents and pupils and for competition between schools using market signals. Members of the Institute had no option but to assist with radical restructuring at all levels.

The genetic intervention involved shifting the power to determine each school's future from the Department's inspectorate to school communities. I concluded (*loc cit.*, p. 233) that:

Scott's agency, therefore, intervened at the fundamental level of cultural values. In addition to locating new appointees into new roles, Scott attempted to provide new determining values for the "new" DoE. Embedded in role specifications, for example, were expectations that administrators would provide educative conditions and encourage the development of new competencies. The partial redistribution of power, for example, was also intended to provide an incentive

regime for educators to learn how to learn about responsiveness, how to seek and use negative feedback, and how to sustain an intelligent, self-questioning, and creative critique.

Finally, Scott's *Schools Renewal* strategy recommended how schools and their services were to be monitored to (a) inform their communities about the extent to which learning outcomes matched objectives, and (b) provide trustworthy information for the philosophical phase of the next policy cycle.

In sum, the nature of educative leadership in this context involved evaluative activities aimed at monitoring and assessing the alignment between outcomes and objectives, thereby informing necessary policy revisions. The moral philosophies evident include a utilitarian approach to accountability, transparency, and a commitment to continuous improvement and responsiveness, empowering school communities and fostering a culture of reflective practice and adaptability.

5. Discussion

The apparent strengths of Hodgkinson's concept of value include that it captures the diverse principles and qualities that guide behaviour and decision-making, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding personal and collective ethics. The model is particularly robust, offering a nuanced classification that distinguishes between Kantian moral duty and personal preference while aligning value judgments with corresponding psychological and philosophical bases.

On the other hand, the model's complexity might limit its accessibility and practical application, especially for those without a graduate background in philosophy or psychology. Additionally, the categorization into transrational, rational, and sub rational values might oversimplify the fluid and overlapping nature of real-world values and ethical considerations.

In sum, there appear to be at least four strengths of Hodgkinson's 3P3M model:

1. **Comprehensive Structure:** The model's segmentation into different activities (philosophy, planning, politics, etc.) ensures a comprehensive approach to policy making and implementation. It highlights the multifaceted nature of the policy process, recognizing that it involves diverse activities in different realms and

actors with varied responsibilities and expertise.

2. **Role Identification:** By identifying specific roles (e.g., idea generators, researchers, diplomats), the model clarifies who is involved at each stage of the policy cycle. This helps in understanding the contributions of different stakeholders, promoting collaboration and accountability.

3. **Value Types:** The inclusion of value types (transrational- principle, rational-consequences, rational-consensus) adds depth to the model. It acknowledges that policy decisions are driven by different kinds of rationalities and values, reflecting the complexity of real-world decision-making in education.

4. **Practical Application:** For practitioners, the model serves as a practical guide. It aids administrators and policymakers in identifying which stages of the process need more focus and what kinds of expertise are required at each point, potentially facilitating more effective and coherent policy development and implementation.

Nevertheless, there appear to be limitations to Hodgkinson's 3P3M model:

1. **Static Representation:** While the model's structured approach is a strength, it can also be a limitation. Real-world policy processes are often non-linear and dynamic, with feedback loops and iterations that are not easily captured in a static model. The rigid categorization may oversimplify the fluid nature of policy making and implementation.

2. **Overemphasis on Rationality:** The model predominantly frames the policy process in terms of rational decision-making. While this is important, it may underrepresent the role of emotional, cultural, and contextual factors that significantly influence policy outcomes in education. This highlights the need for sophisticated facilitation and engagement practices and multiple feedback loops.

3. **Limited Contextual Flexibility:** Hodgkinson's model may not fully account for the varying contexts of different educational systems. The specific roles and activities may not translate directly across different cultural or political environments, limiting its universal applicability.

4. **Complexity in Implementation:** While the model is theoretically comprehensive, its practical application can be complex. Implementing a structured approach in a real-world setting with numerous stakeholders,

limited resources, and varying priorities can be challenging, potentially hindering its effectiveness.

Overall, Hodgkinson's model of the policy cycle offers a detailed and structured framework for understanding the policy making and implementation processes in education, emphasizing realms, roles, activities, and values. However, its static nature, rationality bias, relative inattention to consequentialism, contextual limitations, and practical complexity pose challenges that must be addressed to fully leverage its strengths in diverse educational settings.

Conclusions

The main moral philosophies tentatively identified in a small and opportunistic sample of my experiences of educative leadership during policy making and implementation in higher education and policy advisory consultancies include:

1. Kantian deontological ethics in philosophy-in-action, emphasizing duty and moral principles.
2. Rational consequentialism in strategic planning, focusing on the outcomes and greatest good for learners, teachers, institutions and systems.
3. Pragmatism and responsibility in political activity, valuing practical outcomes and effective problem-solving.
4. Relational ethics in cultural leadership, highlighting the importance of relationships and mutual respect.
5. Social contract theory and resource-based pragmatism in managerial activity, stressing collective decision-making and practical resource use.
6. Utilitarianism in evaluation, aiming to maximize overall utility and benefit for stakeholders.

The plurality of moral philosophies evident in diverse leadership settings underscores the necessity for reflective and context-sensitive practices in higher education leadership. Leaders in this domain should strive to integrate ethical frameworks into their decision-making processes, ensuring that actions are not only grounded in principles, such as those espoused by Kantian deontology, but also remain adaptive to situational demands as informed by pragmatic problem-solving. This balance requires acknowledging and navigating tensions between duty, outcomes, and relationships to achieve equitable and context-specific solutions. Furthermore, fostering relational leadership that prioritizes mutual respect and inclusivity is

particularly significant in multicultural and diverse academic environments, where trust and collaboration are paramount. Resource-based pragmatism, emphasizing the effective and equitable distribution of resources, is equally essential in addressing institutional constraints while advancing broader educational goals.

The preliminary findings from this initial exploration highlight the importance of a comprehensive theoretical framework that accommodates multiple moral philosophies. Pragmatic holism, as proposed by Evers (1992), emerges as a compelling epistemology for such a synthesis, offering the flexibility to integrate diverse ethical principles while remaining sensitive to the specific contexts of institutions. Expanding theoretical models of educative leadership to incorporate moral pluralism would ensure leaders are better equipped to navigate the complexities of ethical decision-making. Further theoretical refinement should examine the dynamic interplay between macro-level ethical principles, such as those grounded in social contract theory, and micro-level considerations, including the relational ethics essential to daily institutional interactions.

The imperative for further research is evident. Broader empirical studies of practice are required to validate and expand upon these findings across diverse institutional contexts. Cross-cultural investigations would provide critical insights into how moral philosophies interact with varying cultural norms and values, particularly in the increasingly globalized sphere of higher education. Research should also focus on sector-specific applications, exploring how moral philosophies may need to be customized for different types of institutions, such as liberal arts colleges, technical universities, and research-intensive institutions. Additionally, studies of real-time decision-making processes could illuminate how leaders manage competing ethical considerations in practice, while evaluations of the impact of these philosophies on institutional outcomes would help clarify their practical significance in fostering student success, faculty development, and stakeholder satisfaction.

The recognition of moral pluralism within leadership practices in higher education underscores the appropriateness of pragmatic holism as a theoretical approach to ethical and educative leadership. By accommodating complexity and situational variability,

this approach ensures that ethical decision-making remains both relevant and practical. The development of leadership frameworks informed by this perspective promises to support leaders in addressing contemporary challenges while maintaining ethical integrity and promoting educational excellence.

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