
Authenticity in leadership: an emerging perspective

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leadership

Patrick A. Duignan

Australian Catholic University, Strathfield, Australia and

Narottam Bhindi

University of New England, Armidale, Australia

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Introduction

The social sciences are undergoing a major shift away from a dogmatic positivism that relegates ethics and morality to a stereotyped realm of personal preferences, prejudices, and tastes insupportable by scientific argument, toward an acknowledgment of organizational and public life as a legitimate arena of moral striving and human fulfilment (Starratt, 1991, p. 185).

Starratt (1991) supports his contention by drawing on a variety of evidence from the social science literature, with special emphasis on the literature in educational administration. In the intervening period, the calls for an injection of values and a concern for ethics and morality into organizational life, especially into the behaviour of managers and leaders, have gained momentum (Badaracco and Ellsworth, 1989; Bogue, 1994; Covey, 1992; Duignan and Macpherson, 1992; Fullan, 1993; Hodgkinson, 1991; Kouzes and Posner, 1987, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1992; Starratt, 1993a, 1993b, 1994).

In numerous research studies over a number of years in a variety of cultures (Duignan *et al.* 1985; Kouzes and Posner, 1987, 1993; Selvarajah *et al.*, 1995) where managers and others were asked to nominate the key characteristics of effective managers, such qualities as honesty, integrity, credibility, being fair-minded, straightforward and dependable head the list. In a major research study on the characteristics of superior leaders, Kouzes and Posner (1987) asked 1,500 managers what personal traits or characteristics they admired most in their superiors. They report that the most frequent responses, in order of mention, were:

integrity (is truthful, is trustworthy, has character, has convictions), (2) competence (is capable, is productive, is efficient), and (3) leadership (is inspiring, is decisive, provides direction).

These authors conclude from their research results that, taken together, these characteristics in a manager or leader give him or her credibility. Bogue (1994, p. 71) similarly defines credibility in terms of "candour" which he says is "an instrument for reconciling competence and conscience". He defines candour as "...a disposition toward a compassionate conveyance of the truth. Truth is the foundation for trust. And trust is the principal building and bonding force of all organizations..."

Block (1993, p. 9) concludes from his research and experiences of leadership that credibility hinges mostly on trustworthiness. He states:

The fire and intensity of self-interest seem to burn all around us. We search, so often in vain, to find leaders we can have faith in. Our doubts are not about our leaders' talents, but about their trustworthiness. We are unsure whether they are serving their institutions or themselves.

Given this emphasis on and concern for credibility, believability, trustworthiness, ethics and morality in the behaviour of leaders, managers and their followers, the authors in this paper present a conceptual framework for the study of authenticity in leadership in organization. The elements of the framework are derived from a number of sources, including literature, research findings, and numerous discussions in workshop situations with practising administrators.

The elements making up the framework are:

- (1) the current context of cynicism about the quality and integrity of many of our leaders;
- (2) the culture of "artifice" prevailing in many of our organizations;
- (3) the place of "self" in authentic leadership;
- (4) the centrality of authentic relationships to effective leadership;
- (5) the need in organizations for conditions for authentic learning;
- (6) the way in which governance and organization can facilitate or inhibit authentic self, relationships and learning; and
- (7) the implications of all these for those who wish to be authentic leaders.

This framework is currently being used by the authors for a research study into the nature and characteristics of authentic leadership in our modern organizations.

Cynicism about leaders and leadership

Why is it that there is widespread doubt in the community about the credibility of many so-called leaders in our organizations and in public life? Already many of the reasons have been canvassed in the introduction. Starratt (1993a, pp. 102-3) blames this cynicism on widespread distrust by the general public of almost all leaders. He suggests that cynicism is a dominating theme in postmodern life and is summed up in a series of "do nots". Do not trust the government. Do not trust the banks. Do not trust salespeople. Do not trust the police. Do not trust your emotions or, for that matter, your reason. Do not trust language. And most disturbing of all, do not trust yourself.

Bogue (1994, pp. 6-7) in a "call to honour" in leadership in collegiate settings decries the fact that most college administrators "stand for nothing" and are frequently "architects of their own demise" because of their "...disappointing displays of ignorance, irresponsibility, and insensitivity" and because they "derail" their careers through abandoning their integrity. He argues from his review of research and literature and from his own experience that the disappointing record of many college leaders can be traced to:

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- flawed sense of role – a condition of empty vision;
 - contempt for ideas – a condition of empty mind;
 - neglect of constructive values – a condition of empty heart;
 - retreat from servant ideals – a condition of empty spirit;
 - violation of cultural norms – a condition of empty sensitivity;
 - sacrifice of honour – a condition of empty character.

In a damning indictment of the quality and effectiveness of many college leaders in the USA, he states:

There are academic cheerleaders, looking for the parade so that they can get in front. There are status fondlers worrying only about the appearance of their calling card. There are information wizards inundated with computer reports and electronic mail addresses. There are educational firemen occupied with crises of their own making. There are trivia worshipers checking forms in stock and occupying their time and energy with the minutiae of their unit or campus, enamored of technique but devoid of vision. There are academic mannequins venerated in status but empty of passion and caring. And there are leadership amateurs attempting to guide a precious enterprise with fluffy and empty notions about the content of their work.

While this may seem to be an extraordinarily severe critique of college leaders, it is worth noting that concerns with issues directly related to authentic leadership (e.g. empty heart, spirit, sensitivity, character and a lack of passion and caring) predominate.

It is also of note that despite a new rhetoric of paradigm shifts based on post-positivist views of the world and claims for an improved morality and ethics in management behaviour, it would seem that leadership and management practices, especially at the top levels, often belie this rhetoric.

There seem to be a number of reasons for this sad state of affairs. It appears that most leaders have insufficient understanding of the dynamics and complexity of organizations and cling to a fixed mind set, viewing them as linear, deterministic, and mechanistic systems. This causes them to adopt views of management that are based on hierarchical structures and “power over” people approaches to relationships. As Starratt (1993a, p. 64) points out, structures of “domination” prevail in our organizations which produce “...unjust and depersonalising relationships among individuals and among groups”. The dominant individuals or groups assume an entitlement to ownership of ideas, processes, and property and an entitlement to be served by and receive deference from others.

Adding to these, the promotion of corporate-managerialist philosophies and practices supports and encourages competitive and individualistic corporate cultures that, too frequently, reward naked ambition, manipulation, and emphasize self-serving practices and the saliency of role and structure over ethical and authentic behaviour.

It is argued here that there is a great need for issues of authority, use of power, and the nature of organizational relationships to come under close

scrutiny and critique with a view to a reinterpretation from within. In reflecting on this suggestion, it is recognized that there are innumerable critiques by a variety of organizational and management critics in the literature for at least two decades on such issues, but their effects on practice seem to have been minimal. Many at the coal-face project feelings of great frustration, even anger, at current constraints on their ability to be authentic and to “belong” and to feel valued in their organization. Some feel betrayed, neglected, even “wounded”.

Many openly question the morality of current corporate managerialist policies and practices – morality in the sense of “the active search for individual worth” (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 130) and/or the sense of “making a difference” (after Fullan, 1993, p. 80). Recently, in research and consultancies in a number of public-sector organizations, the authors have witnessed managers agonizing on the ethics of management practice, and on the absence of meaning and purpose in their work lives. There is an increasing use of the concept of “spirituality” by managers and leaders, not in any narrow religious sense of the term but more in a sense of questioning as to the deeper purpose or meaning of their actions in the light of such values as trust, honesty in relationships, and social conscience and justice in their dealings. We interpret this concern for spirituality to, at least partly, reflect an attempt to understand the “connectedness” of their work, their relationships, indeed their life, to something beyond self and to something that demonstrates to them that they do, in fact, make a difference.

The need for, or search for, spirituality is a theme popular in recent literature (Block, 1993; Bogue, 1994; Starratt, 1993a). Bogue (1994, p. 22) proposes a spiritual dimension to his concept of “stewardship” when he explains that “...the spiritual meaning of stewardship [is] to honour what has been given to us, to use power with a sense of grace, and to pursue purposes that transcend short-term self-interest”.

A culture of artifice

Unfortunately, the reality in many organizations is that truth, honesty, and spiritual experiences are the exception. Too many believe that the path to success needs to be camouflaged in untruth, even deception. Some managers wear a mask of authenticity, a façade of respectability, rarely revealing their true selves. Some are so used to the dramaturgical performance that they would hardly be able to recognize their “true self”.

Others behave as “political animals” who tend to see every challenge as a power struggle where coalitions need to be built and numbers counted. These are the “Political Trojan Horses” who often lull us into complacency beneath their façade of warmth and sincerity but when least expected they show their true colours.

These masters of deception and stratagem conspire against the world where opponents are regarded as fodder, or grist for their conspiracy mill – everyone is seen as having potential use. Often their pseudo-authenticity is sustained through the creation of the artifice. Many ambitious people proclaim “conversions” to causes they are known to despise (e.g. quality assurance,

enterprise bargaining, self-managed teams). Such “conversions of convenience” or “sham posturing” remind one of the tale of Chaucer’s Knight who, while appearing to be authentic, had another darker side.

A historical deconstruction by Jones (1980) portrays a disturbing image of the “chivalrous” knight. Far from being authentic and honourable, many of the medieval knights were mercenaries, adventurers and opportunists essentially advancing economic and political gains rather than the interest of Christianity. Jones reminds us that many claims to glorious victories mentioned by Chaucer’s Knight were no better than wholesale massacres of innocent people, excessive and unnecessary, in the pursuit of greed and booty rather than for Christian converts or for the defence of Christendom.

The lesson to be learned is that no matter how long it takes, artifice is discovered and when it is people feel betrayed and cheated.

Also, many people in our organizations feel pressured to conform to the latest fad or to the favoured pet projects of “The Boss”. It reminds one of Toad’s temporary conformity in *Wind of the Willows* after Badger requests him to proclaim his “new-leaf” image to Rat, Mole and friends:

“No!” he said a little sullenly, but stoutly; “I’m not sorry”

...“What?” cried the Badger, greatly scandalised. “You backsliding animal, didn’t you tell me just now, in there –”

“O, yes, yes, in *there*,” said the Toad impatiently. “I’d have said anything in *there*. You’re so eloquent, dear Badger, and so moving, and so convincing, and put all your points so frightfully well – you can do what you like with me in *there*, and you know it. But I’ve been searching my mind since, and going over everything in it, and I find that I am not a bit sorry or repentant really, so it’s no earthly good saying I am; now, is it?”

Well, at least poor Toad had the courage to speak his mind! How many of us dare do so?

Some managers allow their perceived role to submerge the self and work hard to project a rarefied version of themselves. Hodgkinson (1991, p. 59) suggests that some administrators or leaders are prone to “image manipulation”. He argues that “a pathology exists when dramaturgical performances are substituted on a regular basis for authentic and substantive administrative work.”

He concludes, somewhat negatively, but perhaps realistically, that there is no *prima facie* ground for assuming that leaders are honourable men and women. Given Lord Acton’s dictum, he claims that it may be safer to treat all leaders as suspect until proven otherwise. He says that the problem of leader character has to be regarded as fundamental to any study of leadership (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 60).

Authentic self

In order to become an authentic leader, it is important to know where one stands on important moral and professional issues and then act accordingly. How can anyone presume to lead others forward towards “a vision” if he/she is unsure of where he/she stands on important educational and moral issues? Morality is

considered here as it applies to the conduct of human affairs and not to any one religious definition of it.

The wisdom of the ages is replete with exhortations on knowing and being true to self – “know thyself”, “an unexamined life is not worth living”, “To thine own self be true”. What is expected is an alignment of key values (e.g. honesty and integrity) and action, and a recognition of the need to develop a moral and ethical platform for life and work

This entails acknowledging our flawed self, the dark self, the mask we sometimes wear to protect our fragile self. Starratt (1993a, p. 105) urges us to acknowledge and come to terms with the darker side of our nature – “...the warrior, the killer, the aggressor, the calculator, the manipulator, the thief, the exploiter – in a word, our vices”. We must also use our emotional strengths and not try to bury them for the sake of conformity or because we want to “look good”. We must recognize and accept the *whole* self.

The search for “authentic self” is powerfully portrayed in Hermann Hesse’s classic *Siddhartha*. From the desperate and often dejected young “seeker of the truth” to the self-serving Samana, from the indulgent lover to the compulsive materialist, every encounter in Siddhartha’s life signifies the quest for authentic self, the refinement of his understanding of himself and of human nature, and the maturing of his relationships with others. His formal awakening and liberation as the ferryman provides trustworthy witness to the power of authentic self:

From that hour Siddhartha ceased to fight against his destiny. There shone in his face the serenity of knowledge, of one who is no longer confronted with conflict of desires, who has found salvation, who is in harmony with the stream of events, with the stream of life, full of sympathy and compassion, surrendering himself to the stream, belonging to the unity of all things (p. 108).

However, some may be reluctant to search for authentic self or recognize or accept it if they found it. Buoyed by a veneer of certitude and rampant egotism, they may become arrogant, convinced of the “rightness” of their stance or cause and the correctness of their path. They may believe that they can achieve what we want to achieve by themselves.

The authors believe, however, that “authentic relationships” are not only desirable but necessary for authentic leadership. Mutuality of experiences provides a context for understanding the place of self in the “overall scheme of things”. It helps ground the “synthetic self”, often displayed in organizational settings, in an interconnected and interdependent framework for meaningful interaction. Taylor (1991, p. 33) argues that “no one acquires the languages needed for self-definition on their own. Using Mead’s concept of “significant others”, Taylor suggests that “the genesis of the human mind is ... not ‘monological,’ not something each accomplishes on his or her own, but dialogical”. Our identity is, at least partly, formed by our dialogue with the people we love. Taylor believes that “if some of the things I value most are accessible to me only in relation to the person I love, then she becomes internal to my identity”.

If the search for the authentic self is to be more than a self-centred, self-indulgent, narcissistic process, then Taylor suggests that authentic self and the values that support or drive it, need to be chosen or selected from our “horizons of significance” (p. 39). He states:

Which issues are significant, I do not determine. If I did, no issue would be significant. But then the very issue of self-choosing *as a moral ideal* would be impossible.

So the ideal of self-choice supposes that there are *other* issues of significance beyond self-choice. The ideal couldn't stand alone, because it requires a horizon of issues of importance, which help define the respects in which self-making is significant.

Taylor (pp. 39-40) rejects Nietzschean self-referential, soft relativism and argues that one couldn't claim to be a self chooser “and deploy a whole Nietzschean vocabulary of self-making just because I choose steak and fries over poutine for lunch.” Further, he argues that “following Nietzsche, I am truly a great philosopher if I remake the Table of values. But this means redefining values concerning important questions, not redesigning the menu at McDonald's, or next year's casual fashion”.

The self can also be shaped or submerged, too often detrimentally, by organizational structures, processes and by some ritualistic trappings that constrain creativity and initiative. In his personal, spiritual odyssey, Hesse's *Siddhartha* rejects the world of ritual and regimen, doctrine and dogma in favour of an internal search for authentic self in a holistic environment:

But where was this Self, this innermost? It was not flesh and bone, it was not thought or consciousness. That was what the wise men taught. Where then was it? To press towards the Self, towards Atman – was there another way that was worth seeking? Nobody showed the way, nobody knew it – neither his father, nor the teachers and wise men, nor the holy songs. The Brahmins and their holy books knew everything, everything: they have gone into everything – the creation of the world, the origin of speech, food, inhalation, exhalation, the arrangement of the sense, the acts of the gods. They know a tremendous number of things – but was it worth while knowing all these things if they did not know the one important thing, the only important thing? (pp. 5-6)

Authentic relationships

Authenticity is not only a quality of the leader but it is also a product of relationships and interrelationships. The quality of the relationships greatly influences everything else that happens in organizations, including the quality of leadership. Trusting and caring relationships are identified in many studies as central to the development of a culture or climate where values relating to honesty, integrity, fair-mindedness, loyalty, justice, equity, freedom and autonomy are internalized and find expression through everyday practices and procedures.

Relationships can be closely linked with such concepts as *interrelationships*, *interdependency* and *mutuality of interests*. The use of teams, networks, collaborative planning, and shared action are often promoted as meaningful processes in trying to achieve effective relationships in organization. Concepts such as “a communion of values and interests” and “a shared consciousness based on spirituality” are emerging as ways of bringing people together in

harmonious relationships in pursuit of a shared vision. The ethic of caring and the concept of the “caring community” are also often mentioned as crucial to the development of authentic relationships.

From the responses so far in this study we believe that authentic relationships are fundamental to the development of a framework for authentic learning, organization, and leadership.

Authentic education and learning

Hodgkinson (1991, p. 23) argues that education has about it:

...an idealistic and humanistic quality which renders it distinctive and special among the occupations and callings... . No other subset of human activity and organization possesses quite the same degree of commitment to the totality of purposes of mankind.

He claims that “education must ultimately be defined in terms of its ends, its purposes. These constitute its imperatives. They shape and dictate its means”. He also sees education as “...a pursuit of the verities (truth, beauty, goodness, justice, happiness, self-fulfilment) ... that is to say its aim is aesthetic” (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 17). He urges that in the midst of the current instrumental, utilitarian, economically rationalist view of education we must not lose sight of its noble ends.

Authentic education is not, according to Hodgkinson, the mere acquisition of knowledge or the transmission of facts. Neither is it the mere conditioning or programming of the learner. Education and learning processes are value-based, indeed value-driven, and should reflect what society and culture deem to be significant and right. To him, “education is the art of calling others to seek the truth as to what it means to be human, to explore the essence of their being; to discover the spiritual chemistry of relationships; to make judgments about significance, rightness, wrongness”. This holds whether one is referring to leaders as learners, teachers as learners, or students as learners.

Through education “we acquire our moral dimension”. It can be an uplifting, humanizing, even sanctifying force. While a vocational, pragmatic, economic rationalist approach to education may ensure our survival as a species, education, as a moral force, will ensure that the struggle for survival is worth while as it provides purpose and meaning to our existence (Hodgkinson, 1991).

Over the years, debate has been fierce as to the relationship of knowledge to the conception of what constitutes learning and education. Murphy (1995, p. 9) argues that many now claim that knowledge is internal and subjective, and is mediated by the values of the learner and the context within which such learning takes place. From a review of recent relevant literature, Murphy (1995, pp. 9-10) proposes that knowledge is not something that a teacher passes on to a student but is mutually constructed by teacher and student. Knowledge is a personal, human creation that is partly fashioned by the social and cultural context. He also suggests that the traditional emphasis on acquiring information is being replaced by a focus on learning to learn and on the ability to use knowledge. This places the teacher more in the role of reflective practitioner and less as technician (Murphy, 1995, p. 11) Learning is seen as

“meaning making” and “meaningful understanding” and teaching facilitates the construction of this meaning. Students are then the producers of knowledge and teachers act as managers of their learning experiences.

Hargreaves (1995, p. 8) sees classroom learning as a complex mix of student-teacher efforts and processes. He states that:

...teachers start with knowledge and feelings about their students, with their intuitive understanding about what is likely to excite and engage those students, and with their own passions and enthusiasm about ideas, topics, materials and methods that they can picture working with their classes.

Hargreaves (1995, p. 1) believes that the quality of the relationships within a school and within classrooms is central to effective teaching and learning. He concludes that how teachers work with teachers affects how well they work with their students. He points to a need for teachers “to collaborate with each other, with trust, candour, openness, risk-taking, and commitment to continuous improvement” (1995, p. 1).

Fullan (1993, p. 46), supporting this same theme, states that:

you cannot have students as continuous learners and effective collaborators, without teachers having these same characteristics... . It is simply not possible to realise the moral purpose of teaching – making a difference in the lives of students – without similar developments in teachers.

Hargreaves (1995, p. 7) strongly advocates that teachers are still crucial to the learning process and there is a need “to probe deeper into the heart of what teaching is, and into what moves teachers to do their work well”. Quoting the research findings of Nias (cited in Hargreaves, 1995), he reports that primary teachers spoke of their relationships to the children they taught in terms of “care, affection and even love”. We must be careful in today’s world of economic imperatives not to elevate competences and cognition above caring and relationship. Otherwise, as Hargreaves points out, care for persons, things, and even ideas, becomes marginalized (1995, p. 7).

In discussing the teacher’s role in educating the young, Hodgkinson (1991, p. 18) argues that the teacher is still “...invested with a moral charge or aura [and] he or she is in some way an exemplar, or at least the guardian of, a special set of values”.

The authors argue that the values that underpin the processes and content of authentic education, teaching and learning apply equally to the development of authentic relationships, to authentic governance and organization, and to authentic leadership. However, before discussing the concepts of authentic governance and organization, we wish to explore some of the ideas of Fullan (1993) which help highlight the interconnectedness of all the elements of the framework for authentic leadership presented in this paper.

Fullan (1993, p. 490) draws an interesting connection between effective learning and effective reform of education and teaching when he argues that:

...the hardest core to crack [in bringing about change or reform in teaching and in education] is the learning core – changes in instructional practices and in the culture of teaching toward

greater collaborative relationships among students, teachers and other potential partners. Stated differently, to restructure is not to reculture – a lesson increasingly echoed in other attempts at reform. Changing formal structures is not the same as changing norms, habits, skills and beliefs.

Fullan (1993, p. 80) advocates that effective teachers of the future will “make their commitment to moral purpose – making a difference in the lives of children – more prominent, more active, more visible, more problematic”. They will also need to be aware of the links between this moral purpose and larger issues of education policy and societal development.

Fullan (p. 138) concludes that “...you can’t have a learning society without learning students and you can’t have learning students without learning teachers. We agree. Likewise, we believe that the elements of the framework for authentic leadership are interconnected and interdependent. We believe that you cannot have one without the others.

Fullan’s concepts of “inner learning” and “outer learning” are also very relevant to our discussion of authentic self, authentic relationships and authentic learning. He points out that the very best place to begin our learning is within ourselves. He argues that we must look within in order to “work out *our* meaning” because “subjective experience is not just one of the dimensions of life, it is life itself”. As importantly, Fullan posits the notion of “outer learning” which he says “...is about connectedness”. He sees growth and learning as being heavily dependent on the ability “to build ever more connections in a varied world”. He quotes the work of Land and Jarman (1992, in Fullan, 1993, p. 141) to support his views:

Growth, change, and ultimately evolution occur as individuals, organizations, and society increase the depth of their relationships by continually broadening and strengthening their interdependent connections.

Another of Fullan’s messages related to “outer learning” is that “...our connections must be more balanced, *more authentic*, more to the total person” [our emphasis].

Authentic governance and organization

Many members of organizations experience frustrations with governance and organizational structures and processes acting as “blockers” or “negative forces” in their attempts to achieve more open and trusting relationships in their systems and organizations. Governance obstacles include those related to political interference, policy formation and its implementation, and system restructuring. Block’s (1993) work would appear to be instructive on this issue. While recognizing the influences of organization and management in shaping leadership responses in organization, he singles out the concept of “governance” as more meaningful in understanding the behavioural context for managers and leaders. He states:

Using a term like *governance* recognises the political nature of our lives and our workplace. Hope for genuine organizational reform resides in reshaping the politics of our work lives, namely how we each define purpose, hold power, and balance wealth (p. 5).

He argues that the governance of many systems and organizations is based on "...sovereignty and a form of intimate colonialism". These are strong terms but they are essentially accurate. We govern our organizations by valuing, above all else, consistency, control, and predictability" (Block, 1993, p. 7).

Recent examples of political interference and domination by governance control mechanisms are legion in educational systems in a number of countries. There is a view that unless there is a reform of governance to reflect democratic principles it will be difficult to attain the openness and trust necessary for the emergence and expression of a valued self, the development of quality relationships, the generation of authentic learning, and the design of authentic organization.

Obstacles to authentic leadership are also prevalent at the organizational level. Starratt (1993a, p. 63) argues that many of our organizations are "flawed" inasmuch as they contain systems or structures that "...debilitate, coerce, and frustrate the activity of people inside and outside the organization". Hodgkinson (1991, p. 57) sees a certain bureaupathology (illness of bureaucracy) in our organizations. As it appears to the man in the street, bureaucracy often seems ... "irrational, malevolent, inefficient, ineffective and inequitable". Leader and manager incompetence and insecurity are often protected by the irrational use of veto power. He reminds us that Lord Acton's dictum "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely" is followed in the second part by "Great men are almost always bad" (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 59). He claims that pseudo-authority is often used to compensate for technical ignorance. Many petty officials find comfort in superficiality and their "business" serves to persuade them of their worth for which the organization rewards them (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 58).

Another debilitating tension working against the emergence of authentic leadership and a challenge for leaders is one of reconciling the interests of the individual with those of the organization. Hodgkinson (1991, p. 70) states that because of the often poor fit between personality and role in our organizations, the degree of "authentic engagement" of the personality with the formal role is an open question and a continuing concern for leaders who may have good reason to be curious about followers' values, satisfaction, motives. In discussing morality in an organizational context, he notes that:

It can be argued that formal organizations and bureaucracy are in certain critical aspects antagonistic to ordinary morality ... because of the organizational value of rationality and the nomothetic principle of depersonalisation. Rational organizations tend to deal with partial people (sets of skills, role incumbents) whereas morality is a "function" of total personality (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 123).

Also some leaders compromise their own values and morality by acting solely as the agent of the organization. In discussing "leader as agent of the organization", Hodgkinson accepts that the leader "...is not an author of acts but an agent, one who does things in the name of others" and is therefore "...not personally or morally responsible for the acts which are under the authority or authorship of the collectivity" (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 123). However, he believes

that the leader, as agent, cannot deny some responsibility to alter the moral climate and moral destination of an organization (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 125).

It would appear that, at the organization level, there is a great need to develop, support and sustain structures and processes that encourage and celebrate moral and ethical behaviours and relationships and that value the concepts and practicalities of interconnectedness, interrelationships and interdependency. If there is a genuine desire for co-operation, collaboration and sharing in a spirit of honesty, integrity, equity and justice, then there is a need to match the rhetoric with action. Structures and processes should be encouraged that facilitate these desirable values and practices. Otherwise, the result is a schizophrenic organization – no match between rhetoric and actions. Self-managed teams, where there is true sharing of authority and responsibility is part of authentic organization. Policy, communication, and decision structures that truly involve people are also authentic.

Authentic leadership

The concept of authentic leadership impels a radical shift in our mindset about the principles and functions of leadership and the efficacy of our leadership practice. Here the concepts of “servant leadership” (Greenleaf, 1977) and “stewardship” (Block, 1993) are pertinent.

Both Greenleaf and Block question how traditionally power and authority have been wielded and legitimized in organizations. Both challenge the conventional leadership paradigm based on self-interest, coercion, manipulation, dominance and patriarchal dependency. Greenleaf advocates a movement away from “people using” paradigm to “people-building” leadership. Block suggests authentic service encapsulating a balance between dominance and compliance, genuine worker empowerment in culture building and decision making, and equitable distribution of rewards.

Authentic leaders earn the allegiance of others not by coercion or manipulation but by building *trusting* relationships. Authentic leaders are aware of their own limitations, are tolerant of imperfection in others, and help others learn, grow, mature and succeed. The touchstone of their leadership assessment is: Do those who work with them grow as persons? Do they become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to see leadership as service (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 13)?

Block, too, suggests a form of leadership that informs authentic leadership. According to Block (1993), the search for an alternative to traditional approaches to leadership must begin by questioning the adequacy of the values and assumptions on which conventional leadership thrives: control, direction and dominance. He suggests “stewardship” as a replacement. Stewardship is “something held in trust for another” where stewards are accountable for the use of their power in extending the overall interest of the organization and the individual.

According to Block, “Stewardship is a way to use power to serve through the practice of partnership and empowerment”. This is the alternative to the

conventional notions of “strong leadership”. For him service rather than control is “everything”. Service is aimed at customers and subordinates (pp. 65-6). It is the steward’s task to engage in “authentic reforms” of the governance processes and structure of service, trust, empowerment and partnership.

Authentic leadership is also centrally concerned with ethics and morality and with deciding what is significant (to humanity) and what is right (Duignan and Macpherson, 1992). Hodgkinson’s ideas on *Educational Leadership: The Moral Art* (1991) are most instructive here. Hodgkinson (1991, p. 50) sees the leader as a philosopher as much as a person of action. He argues that leadership is a moral art which elevates the actions of the leader above mere pragmatics or expediency. In promoting the concept of leadership praxis (a union between ethics and action), he proposes that such praxis be considered, a priori, in advance of action because “in the realm of morals it is not enough to proceed backwards into the future, forever seeking to remedy the ill effects of our actions after the event”.

The concept of leadership as a “moral art form” is also proposed by Bogue (1994, p. 13). He sees leadership as “...a holistic and integrating venture where we make meaning from puzzle pieces”. He equates moral leadership with “a call to honour”:

Honour is first a vision of what constitutes right action. More importantly, honour involves the will to act on the basis of that vision. It is a first principle, the first ideal of leadership by design.

He argues, like Hodgkinson, that leadership is “...a venture in moral philosophy” comprising the design ideals of “...honour, dignity, curiosity, candour, compassion, courage, excellence, service...” He further contends that:

These design ideals will find their highest promise in the lives of those leadership artisans who have spiritual scars and calluses on their characters, the evidence of their having struggled with difficult moral issues, weighed contending moral calls that defy neat solution, agonised over the conflict between their own conscience and the judgment of an opposing majority, and struggled to know what it means to answer the call of honour.

Hodgkinson (1991, p. 130) asserts that the central intent of his argument is “... in the ethical necessity of raising the private consciousness of value – with the end of advancing authenticity among administrators.” He defines authenticity “...as being true to one’s own set of values, whatever they may be. Authenticity, then, is the submission to the discipline of “whatever morality exists within”. He believes that heightened self-consciousness is “good” and it will lead to the “right”. This self-consciousness of value, he suggests, “...implies, even entails, the self-critique of values” which leads to “...an active search for individual worth”. He states, “In my view, the authenticity of the leader stems first from the quality of private commitment to a personal set of values ... and second from the relating of these values to the followership ... by human and humane intercourse.... The leader’s relationship to the led must be at all times authentic” (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 133).

In promoting the promise of leadership as an antidote to the often cynical and dehumanizing behaviour of managers, Starratt (1993a, p. 84), suggests that “the cure rests with human beings deciding to recapture their life-world as a humanly fulfilling journey”. He believes that humans can be the authors of “their own story, even though the plot may not be to their liking” (1993a, p. 85). As Bogue (1994, p. 136) so elegantly states, we desperately need in our organizations, leaders with “...concepts in their heads, caring in their hands, and conviction in their hearts”.

Starratt (1993a, p. 136) puts the case for authenticity strongly when he states:

Leadership in the postmodern world is desperately needed. It must be a new kind of leadership, however, a leadership grounded in the sober understandings and memories gained at such a cost in human lives and suffering. We need a leadership, therefore, able to critique the shortcomings, and the myths that support, the status quo. It has to be a leadership grounded in a new anthropology, an understanding of the human condition as both feminine and masculine, as multicultural, as both crazy and heroic, violent and saintly, and as embedded in and responsible to nature.

The framework for authentic leadership presented in this paper is an attempt to respond to Starratt’s plea for a new kind of leadership. The emerging paradigm of authentic leadership, as leadership praxis linking theory, practice and ethics of leadership, responds to many of the concerns about the lack of honesty and integrity in leadership and is an antidote to the artifice and deception prevalent in leadership in many modern organizations.

Authentic leadership links assumptions, beliefs about, and actions related to, authentic self, relationships, learning, governance and organization, through significant human values, to leadership and management practices that are ethically and morally uplifting.

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