# Some Dilemmas in Human Service Administration The Case of Child Welfare*

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"Hands on", "know the customer", "stick to the knitting" – these are the key attributes of excellent organization; so is the message of a recent best selling text in management practice.[1] Successful organizations specialize we are told. They do not produce "manufactures", rather they produce particular manufactured products; hamburgers or microcomputers. When we turn to the human services, however, we note an increasing tendency to view tham as services, suigeneris, evoking a sense that we have pinned down a slice of reality about which we can think generically for purposes of policy and service provision. This view can be maintained only be asserting that there are no important differences in people's situations, by the use of bulk terms such as "children", and "families" and by the simultaneous assertion that the important policy issues are organizational and managerial. That there are concepts that cut across categories is a reminder that there are, indeed, similarities between human beings and that we share a common culture but it is the real differences between target populations which provide anchorage for differential policies, programs and practice, rather than the similarities alone.

The choice of child welfare to illustrate the dilemmas of human service administration (popularly understood as the field of child neglect and of acting out adolescents) is determined by three factors. It is a field with which I am familiar and it is a field where there has been no great advance in the quality of service despite the frequency of government inquiries and extensive management changes. Also, I believe it is appropriate to ring some alarm bells about the future quality of child welfare services because of the tendency to incorporate child welfare into larger organizational systems covering services for the developmentally and physically disabled. From a distance this kind of incorporation may seem unproblematic taking into account that it will probably occur in a divisional form. The risks stem from the fact that the services associated with the developmentally disabled have been able to develop core professional technologies with intrinsic criteria of what constitutes good service. The child and youth welfare field has not achieved this state of affairs and consequently it could easily become a Cinderella system alongside the more high profile services.

The policy problem with which we are presented is, why is it that child and youth welfare services do not appear to benefit despite continued re-organisation, restructuring, introduction of new management strategies and public enquiries? I would identify three sources which work against improvement.

- inadequate information for policy development.
- misunderstanding about the nature of the existing service system.
- undue reliance upon external criteria for determining program quality which in turn, dictates a particular approach to policy and management which inhibits the development of new criteria.

## INFORMATION FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT

In the absence of information the accepted wisdom is to use community consultation processes. Observation of these processes suggests, however, that the end result is scramble information with the consultative processes providing an arena where spokespersons struggle with each other to advance their interests. Nigel Parton has documented, for England, the way in which what becomes politically important in child welfare depends upon a scant informational base, providing a justification for pre-existing conceptions of social life.[2]

It would take no great effort to undertake a similar analysis for Australia or, at least, for Victoria where I am reasonably familiar with the politics of child and youth welfare. Despite the parochial scale of action there are similarities with English politics. We have an inherited slow moving service system defined by its critics as "traditional". The present most influential reformers have defined a second perspective which may be designated as "communitarian". This gives two perspectives with characteristics which at their surface appear to be in opposition,

| "traditional" | "communitarian" |
|---|---|
| case oriented | territory oriented |
| unplanned | planned |
| non-participatory | participatory |
| professional | de-professionalized |

The traditional agencies are identifiable although they would describe themselves in different terms. Neither perspective sufficiently includes the role of government although there is competition for government patronage. Neither perspective proceeds from new understandings of the families and their connections and as will be argued, the professional/de-professional dichotomy cannot be maintained. Planning is a complex matter which if it is to rise above the mere implementation of procedures would require substantial policy change while the difference between participation as a management concept and as a practice concept has not been articulated. In fact, most of the distinction asserted, except for the "terriroty" distinction turn out to be no distinction at all. The real differences that emerge are different conceptions of the role of management and management style.

Could different information lead us to policies which were different in substance and not merely different in nomenclature and style? I believe this is possible although it is extremely unlikely that the requisite information could be produced by the public inquiry process. Information of the following kind would seem to be essential if service is to change.

(i) how does the present service system actually work?

(ii) what are the results of its operations?

(iii) how are we to understand the situations of the children and families who are in touch with the service system, including those children who are in touch but who receive little or no service?

It is a feature of the existing service system that it does not generate this kind of information, hence it is not surprising that reviews and re-organizations lack both direction and impact. Although not system wide, my own research and that of my research students provides information on each of the above dimensions.[3] Despite its limitations, this data is comprehensive enough to raise serious questions about both traditional and populist definitions of the child welfare task.

## THE EXISTING SERVICE SYSTEM

The existing service system consists mainly of dispositions for children: residential care in its various forms, foster care, adoption and hostels. These dispositions are staffed by personnel who typically have a vey narrow scope of responsibility with respect to the child and the child's family. They are often engaged in processes without being informed of future goals. The dispositions, themselves, may be managed by more than one organization. There are some home based dispositions – various forms of probation and supervision orders. In recent times there has been an expansion of some largely unmonitored services such as family refuges and family aides, however they retain similar features to older models of service.

There are two features of this model of service which call for attention.

(i) It is a dispositional model, that is, the question being asked and answered is "What can be done with this child who is being neglected, who is exhibiting unmanageable behaviour, who is not wanted by its parents and so on..." As a model it it child focused but lacking a developmental perspective. Built in features of

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the model of service are a lack of future orientation, a lack of continuity of service and reliance upon extrinsic criteria for evaluation.

(ii) It is a model where management is dominant. From a management perspective the dispositions are the services. This carries with it a belief that control can be exercised by such measures as program budgeting, equitable dispersal of the dispositions according to population and geographic criteria and control of access and throughout improvements in administrative and judicial procedures. There is nothing new in these beliefs as for more than a century a powerful stream of thought has equated improved service in child welfare with procedural change. At the moment, we are witnessing a resurgence of "proceduralism" whereby administrators armed with rules such as deinstitutionalization, normalization and localization have a sense of changed mission. These rules are not new in child and youth welfare and their renewed emphasis gives a sense of repeating history rather than creating it.

The concept that the dispositions are services, in themselves, is a bureaucratic version of service. The dispositions can in fact be viewed differently. They can be used in the pursuit of different goals. Even now, more resourceful families can impress their purposes on the service system to achieve results which do not flow naturally. However, it should not be left to the more resourceful families to extract constructive purposes from the service system. Further, it should be clearly understood that it is not possible to arbitrarily switch the goals of child welfare within a bureaucratic framework of service. New goals require management policies, understanding and skills which themselves are new, that is, policies and practices which can only be implemented over time and which call for some kind of long term vision.

**BUREAUCRATIC RATIONALITY: Some Issues in Service**

A main defect of the bureaucratic – dispositional model of service and its associated administrative behaviours is that it proceeds by a different logic from family and everyday social life. The resulting interactions lead to some curious processes and even more curious rationalizations as management attempts to report the exchanges in a language implying that each form of social organization proceeds by the same rules and world views. This dysjuction between management and the client population is nicely demonstrated around the issue of how to engage clients in service. Practitioners in child and youth welfare identify as the most problematic aspect of practice – the engagement and assessment processes. Engagement means no more than a coming together to work jointly on a solution to a problem. It is usually the necessary preliminary to assessing what needs to be done. Without engagement there is no committment to shared goals; without assessment there is no direction to service. Writing of social work practice in general Abraham Alcabes and James Jones suggest that in only a minority of instances is this engagement process successfully negotiated.[4] In public child welfare and youth services unresolved problems of engagement and assessment are omnipresent, constituting an important part of social reality and tending to define the behaviour of the service system as it seeks to promote rational procedures where there is limited reciprocity.

In the absence of engagement and assessment it is still possible to operate a social programme. Whether it is efficient or effective is another matter. The characteristics of such programmes are variable but include such agency responses as:

* ignoring family members or engaging only with those who demonstrate some interest – the problem with this strategy is that the important people may be ignored.

* selectivity of service provision to co-operative persons – this is the strategy of "creaming" whereby those with the most severe difficulties are excluded. The creaming strategy is often subtle, for example, a token service, to the many as contrasted with a more expansive service to the resourceful few. Agencies are often unaware that they proceed in this manner.

* making pseudo-contracts or even what Brett Seabury calls "corrupt contracts" with family members, that is, securing written or verbal agreements which each party knows will not be honoured.[5]

* making "empty" contracts, that is, stating the contracted goals in broad terms without regard for implementation issues.

It may surprise policy analysts or managerial personnel that engaging and contracting might be identified as central issues in child and youth welfare services. It is however, a phenomenon also experienced by educators where a child's apparent lack of engagement in the learning process leads to bewilderment and defeat of the educator. The issue merely looms larger in child welfare. The sources of the difficulty are, at least, partly understood. One source relates to the unit of attention. Alcabes and Jones note that service to be effective has to be sanctioned or legitimated by whoever has influence upon the parties concerned.[6] These sanctioning agents are not restricted to a parent(s) and child. It may include relatives, friends officials and even strangers, not necessarily located in close proximity to each other. Part of the engagement process requires a search for these legitimating agents to seek their support. One of the reasons why voluntary access to service sometimes leads to good results is that the legitimating agents prompted the request for service. Another source of the difficulty relates to the functionality of the households. These may include long standing crises, roles and relationships may be confused and illicit behaviours may be present. The engaging and contracting process has to include an effort to untangle this confusion. Gaining access to legitimating agents in such instances is a severe test of abilities of the practitioners.

The problem of engagement and assessment has been used here as illustrative of one pervasive dilemma in the child and youth welfare field. To this dilemma we tend to bring concepts which have a good sound but do not solve anything. The concept of "consumer" does not go very far. Certainly, if beneficial outcomes are to occur, there must be exchange processes. Under our current approach to service, however, service can be disbursed without exchanges occurring. Similarly, the standard bureacratic and legalistic case contracts do not fit partly because non rational interests are involved but also because the law of persons cannot easily be adapted to the units of attention involved in service. There is a tendency for these standard procedures to protect management rather than service users. Failure to engage and

to form beneficial exchanges is associated with a phenomenon called "welfare drift" which, incidentally, is often well entrenched prior to involvement of the official child welfare system. Because of the special position of children and of young persons it is sometimes necessary to act ahead of engagement but inspection of practice in child and youth welfare reveals again and again that the engagement and contracting process has never been seriously attempted.

The issues outlined in the foregoing fall short of being a comprehensive list but they are widely recognized at the practitioner if not at the policy and managerial levels in child and youth welfare. The tendency so far is to see solutions in the form of administrative mechanism such as formal case management meetings and change in court procedures. Such proposals do not address the quality of service questions and to a considerable extent misuse scarce resources. An overwhelming case can be made that child and youth welfare should be subject to quality assurance procedures. Case planning meetings as they exist in Victoria do not serve this purpose and it is exasperating that matters are so little understood that a recent model Child Welfare Bill (Victoria 1985) seeks to set this procedure in concrete.[7]

## PRACTICE ISSUES AND ORGANIZATIONAL CONTROL

The differences between bureaucratic rationality and family rationality are not the only issues in the provision of service. There is the issue of choosing the most satisfying definition of the problems to be addressed. In addition there are peculiarities of practice in human services which tend to isolate practice from managerial surveillance. The latter peculiarities exist partly because service depends upon interactions between service providers and service users. In this sense services are not delivered but are outcomes of complex motivations, situations and abilities. Contingency factors of imprecise dimensions are alway present. In Hasenfeld's words when we have service situations where "...clients are variable and unstable, knowledge is incomplete, and the pattern of interaction (as) requiring mutual participation, then the service tasks are likely to be viewed as non-routine and unpredictable and their consequences viewed as uncertain ..."[8] In these service situations which have come to be known as "loosely coupled" systems, the organization has special problems of control because much of the practice is invisible to managers and the reliability of the information collated from practice sources is not easily tested.

Hasenfeld is unworried by the phenomenon of loose coupling – that is the way practice is and although there are problems of control this does not exclude the possibility of creativity. At the same time neither does it exclude the possibility of stagnation and incompetence. Whichever outcome is realized depends upon the way in which policy makers and management approach the problem of control.

Managers and policy planners have choices in deciding how they deal with loose coupling. One choice is to acknowledge that this is a vexed area and to make little attempt at organizational control. A measure of accountability can be maintained with reference to a few external criteria such as committee structures, funding procedures and compliance with health and safety rules. A suitable rhetoric can be found to defend this strategy and it can cetainly provide generically trained managers with guides to action which accord with their training and experience.

This managerial and policy stance has been a deliberate policy choice in child and youth welfare for long periods in history but it can be criticized on two grounds. It is a stance taken within the bureaucratic dispositional model of service and carries with it whatever weaknesses that model possesses. In addition, the avoidance of intrinsic criteria for measuring programme quality (that is, the lack of interest in child and family development) is no longer defensible. Further, sceptics might note that a stance which chooses to maintain innocence about what is happening at the coal face carries too many advantages for senior personnel as results, particularly failures, can be attributed to staff and service users rather than to policies and management.

A second choice for managers and policy makers is to make energetic efforts to impose a system of "tight coupling" upon loosely coupled practice. Because of the nature of practice this can never be entirely successful but the effort can be made. Tight coupling within the bureaucratic dispositional model relies upon external criteria just as is the case with the laissez-faire approach, however the criteria tend to be more numerous and pursued with greater zeal. Demonstrable external criteria which may be pursued are new buildings, new locations for access, throughput, new procedures, new organizational structures and so on. A second feature of the effort to secure tight coupling is the greater vigor applied in implementing the bureaucratic dispositional model of service. More refined attention is given to breaking up practice into narrow tasks with specifically trained operatives performing the tasks. This gives management more control by limiting staff discretion but at the expense of the users of service receiving assistance with complex needs. It may also be at the expense of alienating staff by reducing job satisfaction. The laissez-faire strategy and the tight coupling stategy, are not alternatives. They coexist, it is merely a matter of how much emphasis is given to each strategy at any one time.

The choice of strategies about loose coupling is crucial in child and youth welfare. It involves prior assumption about problem definition, the complexity of tasks and the availability of answers. All that we know about child and youth welfare informs us that the problems are complex. This complexity ought, but does not, sap confidence in the bureaucratic dispositional model and its reliance upon external criteria. To cite Henry Mintzberg "...the fact is that complex work cannot be effectively performed unless it comes under the control of the operator who does it..."[9] Mintzberg regards as dysfunctional the belief that external controls can solve the problems of poor practice, they merely serve to discourage the competent and license the incompetent "...the controls merely remove the responsibility for service from the professional and place it in its administrative structure where it is of no use to the client. Mintzberg also makes the point that it is not "governments" "school systems" as such that teach students or deliver babies nor "welfare departments" that assist distraught families..." "These things are done by the individual professional. If that professional is incompetent, no plan or rule fashioned in the techno structure, no order from an administrator can ever make him competent".[10]

A derivate of the foregoing perspective is that it should be policy to encourage much higher levels of professional service and higher levels of professional training than presently prevail. There is a clear need for a generally experimental attitude to service and to problem definition itself. The low level of professionalism in child and youth welfare services has been documents for Western Austalia and for New South Wales.[11] There is no reason to believe that the situation is different in other parts of Australia. Despite the evidence of low levels of professionalism one still hears complaints that service is excessively professionalized and that it ought to be deprofessionalized. The logic of this kind of belief leads to demands for increases in the amount of loose coupling which is in conflict with another widespread belief that there ought to be more accountability for service. Without research it is difficult to comprehend how low level professionalism comes to be regarded as excessive professionalism. My own speculations would be that the inadequacies of the bureaucratic model of service are displaced on to the professionalism partly because of the personnel in child and youth welfare services usually have a degree of professional training.

A mere degree of professional training is insufficient to guarantee that quality professional service will be offered. Professional service implies span and scope in knowledge and skill. It also requires appropriate structural support. These conditions appear to be absent in Australia. In her report, The Well-Being of the People 1984, Jan Carter illustrates the bureaucratic containment of professionalism in child and youth welfare services in Western Australia and notes the absence of span and scope "...At present the Department offers practice specialities in substitute care and child protection but there is no equivalent speciality of child and family preventative work..."[12] What

Carter is indirectly describing is the administered dispositional model of child and youth services. Her suggestions for moving to a more professional model of service are, however, relatively low key, relying mainly upon staff development. This does not deal with the issue of the quality of social work education itself.

All professional education depends upon a compact between educators, educational institutions and community agencies. Social work education suffers, at present, for the want of any adequate community compact. As social work is the key profession in child and youth welfare service, it is anomalous that "reforms" in this field are proposed without addressing the issue of how social work education might contribute to improved service. The opportunities for doing this exist through the state government Post Secondary Education Committees but, to date, the work of the Victorian Committee is unpromising to say the least. The mistake that could be made is for government, through such agencies as the Post Secondary Education Committees, to command rather than collaborate, seeking to redefine social work education within a bureaucratic framework of ideas. Loose coupling in practice is inevitable. For this reason, if no other, it is not in the interest of the community to reduce professional education to operative status but with increasing government powers with respect to tertiary education the potential for government to do this has risen. Twenty years ago Ian Turner explored the likelihood that Universities, particularly in the professional faculties, might become mere adjuncts of government and industry and, in the course of this, divest themselves of their research functions and their capacity for original thinking, no longer. "...examing the principles of things and the basis of doctines" At that time he was reasonably confident that the academic ethos could counter such pressure.[13] Perhaps Turner is correct but it is unlikely that he was thinking of social work and teaching when referring to the professions. Both fields require higher levels of professionalism and both are vulnerable to external demands not necessarily enlivened by a search for truth as is the case with the more established professions of law and medicine.

A third approach to the unchanging definition of problems and to the realities of loose coupling has not been tried and it would require drastic reforms in policy and management for this to happen. When faced with puzzling problems each of which has the potential for destructive consequences for individuals it would seem to be a sine qua non that policy makers and managers should seek to create a working environment which facilitated staff learning and not just staff operations. This strategy has not been on the agenda of reform in Australia nor, it appears, in those countries which have similar histories to us. Asking to what extent child welfare agencies promoted staff learning in the United States, a leading social work educator commented (1984) "...Given the reality of contemporary practice it is not an exaggeration to say that most Child Welfare workers work in an environment that does not enhance their growth, satisfaction, or development of competence."[14] In the United Kingdom, the esteemed Bleddyn Davis recently asked the question why declared policies in the personal social services did not result in new practices. Bleddyn Davis concluded that this was due to a misplaced faith that new practices would derive from administrative mechanisms, notably those assigned the task of co-ordination. He noted that co-ordinative capacity appeared to be absent.[15] This observation offers strong indirect support for the third approach of upgrading staff qualities, creating learning environments and achieving co-ordination from the beginning by avoiding that fragmentation which is the hallmark of the present model of service.

## POLICIES FOR THE FUTURE

The overall thrust of this paper is that progress in child and youth welfare services is minimal because of the discountinuities between policy, management and service. So deep is the entrenchment of the bureaucratic model that other possibilities are scarcely canvassed. So persistent is this model that failure to produce results is not regarded as a failure of the model, but rather failure is thought to be responsive to adjustment of the model – hence the interest in restructuring new procedures and new managerial styles. So taken for granted is this long term strategy that it is easy to overlook that policies of "debureaucratization" are merely alternative versions of the bureaucratic model itself. At various points in history this bureaucratic approach to service has been challenged largely in terms of the unsuitability of government departments to provide required levels of sensitivity. Suggested alternatives today are to relocate the services under voluntary district committees of management. This does not, however, of itself, change the method or philosphy of service. Oscillations between tight and loose coupling has been viewed solely as a matter of procedure without the practice issues being addressed. Alongside this there is an increasing popularization of the view that the courts, ombudsmen and the rights industry can have a much expanded role in overseeing practice. This serves as a reinforcement to the ethos of proceduralism without doing anything to improve service.

While the discontinuities between policy, management and service are real enough this is not to suggest that each of these domains enjoys automony or parity. The key to understanding why this field remains ineffective is found in the observation that for more than 120 years there has been policy and managerial dominance with respect to problem definition, service and criteria of success. The real differences in outlook between practitioners and managers with respect to problem definition, service and criteria of success lack avenues for expression. W.R. Scott has emphasized how in fact differences between managers and practitioners are resolved. Managers "...attempt to define the work as predicatable and respond to complexity by differentiation (which result in the deskilling of individual performers). Whose task conceptions prevail – whether performers or administrators – is more likely to be determined by power than by rational discourse..."[16]

There are a number of reasons why this hierarchial model of power ought to be challenged in the field of child and youth welfare. Not the least is the antique character of the model. It has had more than a century to prove its stuff. Further, as it stands it is unable to absorb developments in theory and practice and unable to conduct either evaluative or needs studies. It is obsessed with that I have elsewhere called "pseudo-problems" – the so-called "lost in the system", "child in limbo" and "case fragmentation" problems. These are pseudo-problems in the sense that while they are thought to be amenable to solution by new administrative or judicial mechanisms, they are, in fact, inherent and integral to current child welfare policy and practice.[17] At least two other reasons are suggested for challenging the bureaucratic model of service – the first has to do with the consequences of giving low status to practice and the second with the inappropriate models of management which are part and parcel of the bureaucratic model.

One consequence of giving low status to practice or service is that the realities of loose coupling and difficulties of engagement are never seriously confronted by policy and management groups except through the advocacy of more external judicial or administrative controls. It is not understood that when there is a combinatin of poorly qualified staff with or without low morale, and loose coupling, that most of the material recorded in the record systems is inaccurate, incomplete and misleading. This makes nonsense of the rhetoric of accountability – to clients, the community and the organizations. Similarly, it is not possible to operate anything which could be called programme theory or to subject whatever is practiced to tests of validity.

A second consequence of depressing practice is that ineffective models for improving sevice are pursued. There is an excessive reliance upon heroic public inquiries or equally heroic management changes. Because of the weak informational systems these change efforts have very limited reach. Apart from public inquiries and management changes, the field has also been episodically, riven with programme ideas promulgated by committed, naive enthusiasts. The bureaucratic manager tends to be confused by the proponents of such ideas because there is little theoretic defense of the bureaucratic model of service. The overwhelming ten-

dency is, however, to claim as improved services, those changes which do not disturb the bureaucratic model of service and control.

At issue also is that under the present model of service experience itself is not used (or usable) as a source of improving service. Organizations ought to be structured and policies ought to be conceptualized which will promote changes from within the organizations. John Tropman has recently stated a case for organizations to be formed in such a way as to generate a supply of policy ideas from within – what he describes as "policy management" as contrasted with policy analysis.[18] This is possible if the service is subject to persistent and consistent development. Support from this perspective comes from the work Karl Weick who surveyed a number of organizations to find that significant improvements in practice and in the reformulation of problems tended to come not from the occasional big change but rather from an accretion of relatively small changes. Indeed, Wieck suggests, that large scale attacks on social problems can stall innovative actions because "the limits of bounded rationality are exceeded."[19]

In a general way the most serious consequence of the present approaches to the task of the practioner is that it produces operatives who cannot engage with families as a whole. There is a great deal of very general community, policy and professional support for what I refer to as the family development model of child welfare practice or what others call the ecological model of practice. Given the way in which the bureaucratic model of service is administered and the way in which staff are trained and deployed, the family development or ecological models of practice will remain as airy metaphors rather than representing new problem definitions providing new models of practice.

Are there solutions to this inherited states of affairs? There are obviously no rapid solutions because of the scale of resources invested in historical perceptions and practices. The first and most crucial step is for policy makers and opinion leaders to recognize the nature of the present system and to call a halt to its further expansion. This is not likely to happen unless there is a greater openess to critical examination of "services" than past attitudes have revealed. The second step is to acknowledge that there are credible alternatives to the administered dispositional model of service and then to ask what stands in the way of moving the model of service in new directions.

The third and most daunting step requires drastic revision of current administrative theory and practice as exhibited in child and youth welfare in Australia. Managers in the human service field in Australia do not appear to be aware of developments in understanding human service organizations. In this paper the phenomena of loose coupling and engagement have been used to illustrate two of the special features of human service organizations. The ability of bureaucratic management to behave rationally or creatively in the presence of such phenomena has been questioned. What is most starkly missing in the present system is leadership with respect to practice. This function is not easily fulfilled by the typical generalist manager. Broskowski, who recently reviewed studies relating organizational control and leadership found that successful leaders have typically been persons who began as specialists and who developed as exhaustive knowledge of technology, service and service users before they become generalists "...Essentially" concludes Broskowski "...the leader must understand the 'core technology' of the system in order to assess the validity of the key indicators to be used..."[20] Leadership with respect to practice should not be thought of merely as developing the creativity of practitioners within existing problem definitions – it opens up the organization to new information and influences because of the expected changed interactions with client groups. This is an offset to the too easy (often covert) access enjoyed by powerful interest groups.

Practice leadership is unlikely to emerge from the bureaucratic model of service and organizational control. This is, of course, the general message of the literature on the peculiarities of human service organizations. Are there promising alternatives? Kouzes and Mico have suggested a model which is attracting great interest and which has a promising logic. These two researchers designate the dominant paradigm in modern complex organizations as characterized "...by its focus on management as the rationalizing force..." using a technology comprised of MBO, PPBS, MIS and related techniques. Great emphasis is given by such managers to resource planning techniques with little attention to problem definitions or to outcomes for clients as contrasted with outcomes for the organization. Research findings indicate that this management paradigm does not fit human service organizations. Kouzes and Mico believe that this is because these organizations are comprised of three distinct domains – the Policy Domain, the Management Domain, and the Service Domain, each functioning according to different principles, different criteria and different work modes – each with an important and legitimate role.[21]

The implication of Domain Theory is that unless each domain is developed, then each of the other domains are flawed. Admittedly there are tensions between domains if they operate upon different principles but norms of collaboration can be evolved. The customary way of dealing with these tensions in child and youth welfare has been by the formation of a coalition between management and policy makers to so simplify the service task as to suppress the claims of service providers to different normative criteria. In the process, however, it has shed the more complex and, I would suggest, the more important dimensions of service – those that might encompass child and family development.



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