Complexity and change in Waldorf schools: a narrative study into perceptions of decision-making processes

Fabio Bento

Rudolf Steiner University College, Oslo, Norway

ABSTRACT. The objective of this article is to contribute to the debate about organizational changes in Waldorf schools by analysing narratives of decision-making processes in one Norwegian school. The present study departs from an organizational perspective to investigate perceptions of decision-making processes in Waldorf schools in Norway. Both educational policy reforms in Norway and internal perceptions of limitations of a once established decision-making model based on principles of professional authority and consensual decision-making raise a debate about organizational changes in Waldorf schools. I contribute to this debate by articulating a frame of reference on deriving complexity in organizations in a way that provides a conceptual framework to investigate decision-making processes. One way of grasping the temporal dimension of processes of change is to focus on narratives that people express about their experience in work environments. Such stories are important forms of communication and knowledge sharing in organizations. The findings here present a multi-layered process related to decision-making in which the logics of rationality, appropriateness and symbolism co-exist. The analysis of such multi-layered reality questions simplistic notions equating, on one hand flat decisional structures with democracy and participation, and on the other, the implementation of more hierarchical structures with control and exclusion.

Keywords: Decision-making, Waldorf schools, organizational change, complexity, education, emergence

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG. Dieser Artikel ist ein Beitrag zur Debatte der Organisationsveränderungen in Waldorfschulen und analysiert die Schilderungen von Beschlussprozesse in einer norwegischen Schule. Die vorliegende Studie geht von einer organisatorischen Perspektive aus um die Wahrnehmung der Beschlussprozesse in dieser Schule zu untersuchen. Sowohl Reformen im Regelwerk für den Unterricht als auch die interne Wahrnehmung der Begrenzungen von bewährten Modellen für die Beschlussfindung, die ihre Grundlage in Fachkompetenz und Konsensentscheidungen haben, wecken eine Debatte über organisatorische Veränderungen in Waldorfschulen. Ich trage zu dieser Debatte mit der Formulierung eines Referenzrahmens bei, der erlaubt, der Komplexität von Organisationen einen begrifflichen Rahmen zu geben, und der ermöglicht, die Beschlussprozesse zu untersuchen. Eine Art, die zeitliche Dimension von Veränderungsprozessen zu erfassen, sind Schilderungen, in denen Menschen Erfahrungen aus ihrem Arbeitsumfeld ausdrücken. Solche Geschichten sind bedeutsame Formen von Kommunikation und Erfahrungsaustausch in Organisationen. Meine Untersuchungsresultate weisen auf einen komplexen Prozess im Zusammenhang mit Beschlussfindungen hin, in dem Vernunftslogik, Zweckmäßigkeit und Symbolik nebeneinander existieren. Die Analyse einer so komplexen Wirklichkeit hinterfragt eine vereinfachte Auffassung, die einerseits flache Entscheidungsstrukturen mit Demokratie und Mitbestimmung gleichsetzen, anderseits die Einführung von hierarchischen Strukturen mit Kontrolle und Ausgeschlossen-Sein verbinden.

Stichworte: Beschlussfindung, Waldorfschule, Organisationsveränderung, Komplexität

1. Introduction: leadership in Waldorf Schools

The present study explores narratives of decision-making processes in one Norwegian Waldorf school. This study was conducted in a historical context characterized by the implementation of policy reforms in the educational sector in most parts of the world that increasingly emphasize system efficiency and accountability (Bush, 2011). The implementation of such reforms usually requires changes from the traditional model of school governance model based on professional authority and consensual decision-making to more centralized structures of governance with the objective of enhancing schools' capacity to answer more efficiently to social and economical demands. Increasing state control and standardization are important characteristics of such waves of policy reforms. However, such context is not free of dilemmas as schools in most parts of the world operate in complex environments characterized by different streams of demands and often conflicting internal and external values usually expressed by dominant political discourses.

In this context, Waldorf schools which present a challenging pedagogical alternative in relation to public schools, also face pressures to reform their governance structures and decision-making processes (Rawson, 2011). The traditional decision-making model of Waldorf schools has its roots in understandings of the social and political activity of its founder Rudolf Steiner in the aftermath of the First World in War in Germany and his theory of social threefolding (Eriksen, 2008). In this model, school members who are connected by a perception of shared values make decisions in a collegial manner. The central argument supporting this model is described by Rawson (2011) in the following terms: "the requirement for continuous striving towards a shared vision and ongoing quality development through the research drive the need for autonomy and collegial structures that are necessary to enhance individual and collective responsibility and participation" (p. 10). It is assumed that in such flat organizational structures, there is the space for the creativity and initiative of free individuals to flourish out of a sense of moral responsibility for the collectivity. Traditionally, Waldorf schools did not have a school head or director as in public schools, but a flat structure in which decisions were taken expectedly through consensus building. Waldorf schools in most parts of the world have faced the challenge to address not only increasingly complex external demands, but also internal perceptions of limitations of this decision-making model.

The overall research question that I address in this study is the following: how do narratives of organizational change in one Waldorf school describe decision-making processes? Decision-making processes constitute an important field of research in organizational studies (Cunliffe, 2008). As I present in the next section, most of the theoretical development of this field has been motivated by a recognition of limitations of the rational decision-making model that dominated early approaches and that focused mostly on the activity of individual in management positions (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006). More recent approaches discuss the limitations of these once dominating perspectives by pointing out to ambiguities and uncertainties of organizational life.

In this study, decisions are seen as important features of organizational life and stories told about such processes illustrate structures of power beyond formal organizational structures.

2. Decision-making in Waldorf schools

The leadership model suggested by Rudolf Steiner was permeated by his understanding of two relationships (Rawson, 2011). First, there is the relation between the school and the state. Second, the relation between the individual and society. The social threefolding presented by Steiner proposes interdependence but autonomy of three spheres of society: economical, political and cultural. Society is thus seen as holistic threefold organism that needs a balance between the three autonomous spheres. Education is seen as part of the cultural sphere of activity and school governance must be a manifestation of its pedagogy (Gill, 2010). Therefore, Steiner claims for the autonomy of all educational institutions based on the argument that society needs an education that fosters individual self-development not determined by the economy or the state. Steiner's ideal of Waldorf school leadership assumes that such autonomous institutions should be in the hands of individuals who are primarily responsible for teaching activities (Steiner, 1996). The following

passage from Steiner (1996) at the founding of the first Waldorf school in 1919 in Stuttgart illustrates this model of school governance:

> Therefore, we will organize the school not bureaucratically, but collegially, and will administer it in a republican way. In a true teachers' republic we will not have the comfort of receiving directions from the Board of Education. Rather, we must bring to our work what gives each of us the possibility and the full responsibility for what we have to do. Each one of us must be completely responsible. (p. 30)

It is clear from this passage that the principle of collegiality is central in the school leadership model proposed by Steiner and represents the foundations for decision-making processes. In collegial structures, decision-making is shared among different individuals who are expected to contribute with a holistic understanding of the school and thereby taking place in processes leading to consensus-building. There is a strong focus on the professional authority of the teacher and his/her participation in college meetings.

Interestingly, Steiner was himself the leader in the first Waldorf school which had an organizational structure based on dialogue between himself and a collegiate of teachers (Resell, 2011). However, the traditional governance model that has historically been implemented is based on the interpretation that flat organizational structures provide conditions for individual creativity and initiative to develop permeated by a sense of moral responsibility for the collectivity. The development of the Waldorf movement around the world has been historically characterized by the decentralization of decision-making at the school level without a school head as in most other schools. Decision-making takes place in a consensual manner in a number of groups responsible for different kinds of activities. The name of such groups varies in each school but in most institutions, there is a college of teachers responsible for pedagogical issues. Teaching is not seen as dissociated from leadership and governance. Teachers are seen here as co-leaders collectively responsible for the administration of the school (Woods & Woods, 2006). In some schools, there is also a board of trustees responsible for legal and financial issues.

2.1 Schools seen as social organisms

Much of the more recent literature about governance in Waldorf schools departs from the assumptions that organizations are dynamic living organisms that have the capacity to learn (Gill, 2011; Heijne & Buck, 2013). One of the influential perspectives in the anthroposophical impulse in organizational development is the work by Bernard Lievegoed and associates. This perspective sees organizations as living beings with a cultural and spiritual dimension changing in a manner that resembles phases of human development (Glasl & Lievegoed, 1997). The first stage of this development is called the pioneering phase in which there is flexibility, informality and shared values rather than clear policies. This is the stage when identity starts to become more evident and usually symbolized by the charismatic character of a leader that represents engagement for central values and ideals. As the organization grows, there is a movement towards the second phase labelled as differentiation or diversification. In this phase, there is a perceived need for more planning and rationalized patterns of behaviour which Glasl and Lievegoed (1997) associate with arguments pro-scientific management. According to the authors, this is a period marked by conflicts and resistance to change. The shared values that existed in the prior phase need to be more explicit and formalized. If this period of identity crisis is overcome, there is a move towards the integrative and mature phase of development in which the organization is independent and flexible by combining what are regarded as positive elements of the first and second phase. Glasl and Lievegoed (1997) claim that in this integrated phase, the organization develops into a learning system in which there is the entity-like organization is held together by a common perception of values and a shared vision of how common goals are to be achieved.

These are ideas that derive from attempts to apply main ideas from the Waldorf movement to understand organizations in a broader perspective. However, it is possible to trace many similarities of the social organism perspective seeing organizations as living thing with the "learning organization" school (Senge, 2006) which is an influential in mainstream organizational theory. However, seeing organizations as living entities (Gill, 2011) implies in a system perspective that is different from the understanding of complexity that constitutes the frame of reference that I apply in this research project. The empirical findings here provide material to

reflect upon the limitations of living organism metaphor in enabling an understanding of organizational processes.

2.2. Issues in Waldorf schools in Norway

There are today thirty-one Waldorf schools in Norway (Steinerskoleforbundet, 2015). They represent an important share of the private schools in Norway although being largely state-funded. The traditional leadership model of decision-making in Norwegian Waldorf schools have been a matter of debate motivated by both internal perceptions of limitations of this model and changes in policy-making that demanded a further formalization of decision-making structures. As Resell (2012) points out, criticism towards Waldorf schools in Norway as organizations has been manifested in different forms, but the core interpretation is that there is insufficient and inadequate administrative follow-up, and limited communication coupled with little development in terms of internal critical reflection. The study conducted by Eriksen (2008) described that although there was a high level of parent satisfaction in relation to the pedagogical approach of Waldorf schools, most parents assumed a critical instance in relation to leadership in such schools. This is expressed in terms of lack of transparency in decision-making and the existence of hidden power structures that restricted the capacity to answer to external demands. This is part of an international context in Waldorf schools in the early 2000s during which criticism of the governance and decision-making model pointed out to several challenges (Woods & Woods, 2006):

> Many teachers, in our view, are too dependent on following the guidance and ideas of Steiner as if they were 'sacred' directions. Not all teachers necessarily achieve the very demanding level of responsibility and creativity that Steiner set out. The collegiate system does not work perfectly. Perceived problems in some schools include slowness and inefficiency, unfair distribution of responsibilities and internal power differences and personality clashes, though Steiner schools are working to improve the system. (p. 323)

Since the 1990s, different waves of policy reforms brought challenges to Norwegian Waldorf schools. The policy environment since the early 2000s has been marked by a consensus among main parties "on the primacy of economic values (at the level of ideas), management by output control, explicit standards, a test system (implemented at the policy level) and an accountability system (implemented at the policy level)" (Solhaug, 2011, p. 267). The School Reform of 1994 was particularly decisive for decision-making in Norwegian school as it required the appointment of a head-teacher in order to schools to have access to public funding. Most of the narratives of decision-making processes analysed here identify this period as a turning point in their experiences as members of Waldorf schools. Norwegian Waldorf schools have responded in different ways to such challenges. Some schools have implemented externally designed organizational development programs in attempts to combine their traditional forms of decision-making with more defined streams of responsibility and follow-up (Erlandsen, 2012). Some initiatives suggested by consultants in the Waldorf movement represent attempts to revitalize traditional collegial decision-making by redefining the whole of the school board in quality-assuring decisions made teachers rather than making its own decisions (Kollstrøm, 2010; Brodal, Rosenvinge, & Kollstrøm (2009). In other schools such as the one in which I conduct this study, changes took place without the participation of external consultants but emerged from a complex interaction between internal contradictions and external demands.

In the next section, I review literature about decision-making with the goal of contextualizing challenges faced by Waldorf schools in a broader organizational debate and presenting concepts used in my analysis and discussion of findings.

2.3. Conceptualizing the problem: decision-making as an area of study

The study of decision-making in organizations has is origins over one hundred years ago with the rise of large organizations in which centralized decision-making structures were implemented based on the assumption that the managers' role was to gather differences sources of objective information supporting rational and therefore effective decisions (Malone, 2003). It is assumed that decision-makers have a set of alternatives

for actions and it makes possible to have a probabilistic distribution of consequences. The rational model places emphasis on the role of managers in defining lines of action focusing on pre-determined outcomes. Historically, the claim for centralized decision-making has produced a broad literature focusing on "decision quality" presenting models for leadership behaviour and rational decision-making procedures. As claimed by Stacey (2010), such assumptions still embed much of the contemporary studies into organizations.

The rational choice model is in many ways a simple and linear form of looking into decisions. Such dominant perspective has been challenged by diverse streams of reactions in different historical periods motivated by understandings of limitations of seeing decisions as intendedly rational choices. March and Olsen's (1986) garbage can model identifies limitation of the rational choice model by emphasizing uncertainty and ambiguity in organization. March and Olsen claim that decisions more often emerge from a relatively random convergence between identified problems, expected solutions, individuals and choice opportunities. Decisions may reflect solutions available and engagement of participants in a particular moment and therefore such solutions might not be applied to issues that they can solve. The concept emphasizes the existence of different interest groups with little knowledge of the organization as whole. This is in many ways a very anarchistic way of looking at organizations as it challenges the dominant view that decisions follow an orderly and linear process from problems to solution. Instead, decisions are related to different processes in organizations that might otherwise be seen as unrelated. March also highlights the limitations in our capacity in establishing linear relations of causality between causes and future effects as there are "informational and computational limits on human choice" (March, 1991, p. 98). This challenges two assumptions of the rational choice model: first, a direct correlation between means and ends, causes and effects, and, second; seeing organizations in of control exercised by higher hierarchical levels. March (1991) describes organizational life in the following manner:

> Such portrayals seem, however, to underestimate the confusion and complexity surrounding actual decision making. The observations are familiar. Many things happening at once; technologies are changing and poorly understood; alliances, preferences, and perceptions are changing, problems, solutions, opportunities, ideas, people, and outcomes are mixed together in ways that make their interpretation uncertain and their connections unclear; action in one part of an organization appear to be only loosely coupled to action in another; solutions seem to have only modest connection to problems; policies are implemented; decision makers seem to wander in and out of decision arenas. (pp. 107-108)

The recognition of ambiguities by March resonates with the view of complexity in organizations that will be articulated in the next section. Rather than linear processes, decisions seem involve the co-existence of three different dimensions: rational choices, rule-based action and artefacts (March, 1991). The rational choice dimension is well illustrated by dominant perspectives in organizational studies. It involves an anticipatory and consequential logic aiming at finding out what leads to desired results. On the other hand, ruled-based action derives from a logic of appropriateness marked by professional standards, institutional aspects and cultural values and thereby matches situations with identities. Here, the main question is: "What is appropriate in relation to my position and situation as a member?" The third dimension demands seeing decision as artefacts assuming a ritualistic character, representing symbols and identities rather than causal orders between actions and consequences. Ironically, in this dimension decision-making processes might not particularly be concerned with making decisions but construction of meanings, interpretations of current situations and interrelations.

The recognition of the often co-existence of such dimensions is the first element of complexity that permeates this study. The next section presents a view of complexity that problematizes the top-down/ bottom up discussion in organizational studies.

2.4. A complexity takes on the top-down/bottom-up discussion

Initial studies in decision-making focused on individual holding formal leadership positions and their capacity in deciding organizational objectives and strategies. On the other hand, different arguments claiming for decision-making processes with a less hierarchical character and more participatory have flourished and become

influential in organizational studies. Such claims have often been implemented in organizations as described by Malone (2003): "more employees find themselves with increased responsibilities, and more managers act like coaches who help employees to solve problem, rather than decision-makers who issue commands and monitor compliance" (p. 52). Claims for participatory decision-making have been put forward from different perspectives. One argument assumes a highly instrumental connotation by establishing a relation between participation and the quality of the decision. Yukl (2010) expresses this claim in the following manner: "involving other people in making a decision is likely to increase the quality of the decision when participants have information and knowledge lacked by the leader and are willing to cooperate in finding a good solution to a decision problem" (p. 89). In some environments, the argument for flat organizations an instrumental character with the claim that the traditional hierarchical organization is not designed to meet the demands of uncertain and ever changing global economies. The usually presented solution to this problem is to move decision-making process from the top to flat environments closer to where market challenges can be identified. From another perspective, there is a claim for workplace empowerment and democratization. The claim for decentralization and empowerment is usually in terms of strategies aiming at materializing shared visions (Johannessen, 2009). It is argued that a culture of consensual decision-making and common values binds the organization together and brings coherence to established goals. The concept of distributed leadership is an important expression of this development in the educational debate (Gronn, 2009).

The study of decision-making has been profoundly influenced by the tension between claims for centralized or decentralized processes. Much of this discussion assumes a normative character by often prescribing forms of organizational development which become themselves discourses in different historical moments. The conceptual framework that I apply in this study presents several elements that point out to the limitations of both arguments and paves the way for a different understanding of decision-making process focusing on diversity, differences and paradoxes. Johannessen (2009) presents a compelling argument of the challenges of complexity to the top-down and bottom-up claims:

> It seems that in both cases, however, the paradoxical nature of organizational life tends to be overlooked. A criticism against the proponents of a top–down approach is that they idealize the leader and turn leadership of organizations into a question of leader's visions, values and strategic objectives. The conflictual nature of social life is masked. Much of the same criticism could actually also be raised against the bottom–up approach. Its harmonious consensus view tends to cover over experiences of conflict and diversity. It has an undertone of manipulation, because clever individuals can execute significant control over large groups by mastering the dynamics of group behavior. (pp. 216-217)

From an ontological perspective, one might assume that complexity has always been part of our reality. However, the rise of a complex globalized society highlight the interest in processes that cannot be understood in a non-linear process and outcomes are the result of the interaction of many different factors. Byrne and Callaghan (2014) claim that although complexity has always been qualitatively present, it is certainly more quantitatively present in our days. In his description of the information society, Qvortrup (2003) claims that our reality is increasingly based on decisions rather than on pre-determined rules for action. Nevertheless, what does complexity tell us about decision-making in organizations?

2.5 Decision-making and complexity

The theoretical perspective from which I depart from in this study articulates central concepts of complexity such as temporality, emergence and uncertainty to suggest a framework to investigate and discuss decision-making processes in organizations. Complexity offers a frame of reference that derives from a wide range of areas of science and has been understood in various and often conflicting ways (Byrne & Callaghan, 2014; Richardson, 2011). It would be beyond the scope of this article to present a full of review of the diversity of approaches to complexity in social sciences. My goal in this section is rather to present a critical realist approach to complexity and how it embeds my choice of methods and discussion of findings. One way to start a presentation of this understanding of complexity is in fact presenting what it is not. The distinction between restricted and general complexity made by Morin (2006) is a helpful one:

> Restricted complexity made possible important advances in formalization, in the possibilities of modelling, which themselves favor interdisciplinarity. But one still remains within the epistemology of classical science. When one searches for 'laws of complexity', one still attaches complexity as kind of wagon behind the truth locomotive, that which produces laws. A hybrid was formed between the principles of traditional science and the advances towards is hereafter. Actually, one avoids the fundamental question of complexity which is epistemological, cognitive, paradigmatic. To some extent, one recognizes complexity, but by decomplexifying it (…) In opposition to reduction, (general) complexity requires that one tries to comprehend the relations of the whole and the parts. The knowledge of the whole as a whole is not enough, if one ignores its parts. Thus the principle of reduction is substituted by a principle that conceives the relation of the whole-part mutual implication (p. 6)

The restricted view usually presents complexity exclusively in terms of the emergence of outcomes from multiple local patterns of interaction in a rather unpredictable manner. From this perspective, emergence is investigated as wholes that are constituted of interactions between vast numbers of components. A decision-making model based exclusively on such understanding of complexity would assume a similar instance as in the rational decision-model school with focus on the role of the leader in an external position gathering and analysing as much information as possible about interactions between different members and thereby making rational decisions based on a principle of system efficiency. However, as explored in the previous section, such perspective to decision-making represents only one out of different dimensions involving decisions. Therefore, there is a need for a deeper understanding of complexity.

Biesta and Osberg (2007) present a similar view when they differentiate between weak and strong emergences. They assume that systemic behaviour is the emergent outcome of multiple chains of interactions representing bifurcation points from which change and innovation emerge. However, strong emergence points to the epistemological questions as in the general complexity. For Morin, (2006), a general complexity requires an epistemological rethinking, which is a reflection about the organization of knowledge. That is a broad philosophical question which can be "brought up" into the discussion about decision-making in the following terms: if a purely rationalistic approach searching for laws to decision-making presents inherent limitations, what approach can contribute to our understanding of decision-making and inform practice? In this respect, Byrne and Callaghan's (2014) critical realist account of complexity represents a promising track:

> It is ontological because it asserts that system are both real in that they exist simultaneously (particular social systems) have a reality which is constituted by our in defining them actions. It is epistemological because it asserts that we know systems in terms of boundaries but that reality has a voice in setting those boundaries and constrains our definition (p. 33).

There is then a recognition of human agency but one that is forming and being formed by social structures. It differs from a positivist in the sense that our accounts of social reality are social constructions. On the other hand, it poses a challenge to post-modernism by recognizing that our accounts derive from and are shaped by reality. Such complex realist position presents a view on causality that brings important implications for decision-making: causality is seen as "contingent, complex and multiple" (Byrne, 2011, p. 133). By local, the author means that causality is largely depending on surrounding environments. It is complex in the sense that involves an interplay of many different causes. It is multiple as the same outcome might be understood in terms of different causal combinations. This view on causality is an expression of a view on knowledge as local, contextual and specific in time and space (Byrne & Callaghan, 2014). It is in such contexts that decisions happen.

Analysing organizations through the lens of complexity means that we look at them as networks of interactions among interdependent agents who bounded together in one social structure (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006; Liang, 2010). Such structures are often called systems and they interact with their overall environments. It is often implied that adaptation to external changes demands matching the complexity of its surrounding environment (Sandaker, 2009). In organizational settings that requires variation with the potential to present solutions demanded in an ever changing environment and a "web of influence" (Sandaker, 2009, p. 277) across units and hierarchical levels. The narratives analysed here provide an opportunity to reflect upon the implications of this assertion to the organizational context of Waldorf schools.

We usually discuss decisions in terms of decision-making and the gerund in this expression implies in a movement over time. One form of grasping such temporal perspective is to look at the construction of stories retrospectively looking for processes and interactions.

3. A narrative approach to decision-making

In this study, I analyse a collection of stories regarding decision-making in one Norwegian Waldorf school. I examine the trajectory of the school through narratives told by six participants. The main contribution of this approach is the emphasis on contextuality, reflexivity, temporal sensitivity, and expression of purposes and motives (Tsoukas & Hatch, 2006). The stories of decision-making processes told by two formal leaders and four teachers in one Norwegian Waldorf school provide expressions of individuals meanings, interaction and how they are related to an experienced whole which is the school itself. The choice of methods in this study departs from two interrelated assumptions: stories are an integral part of our lives and show important patterns of how we organize the world around us (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007; Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007; Polkinghorne, 1988; Riessman, 2008).

3.1 Narratives and organizational studies

Organizational narratives are often the most visible form of knowing and communicating in organizations (Czarniawska, 2007). Boje's (1991) understanding of narrative illustrates such assumption: "storytelling is the preferred sensemaking currency of human relationships among internal and external stakeholder. People engage in a dynamic process of incremental refinement of their stories of new events as well as on-going interpretations of culturally sacred story lines" (p. 385). We shape and make sense of the world largely through stories. As Riessman (2008) claims, the most common understanding of narratives in social sciences implied in a flow of events consequentially is connected to the meanings that the narrator wants the listener to take away from the story.

In terms of ontology, it can be said that the narrative approach shares the constructivist assumption of a social reality that is constructed, dynamic and diverse. However, by highlighting the importance of stories in our lives, it goes further in seeing social life in terms of individual and collective stories and how such stories shape our worldviews and behaviours (Spector-Mersel, 2010). Analysing stories from the perspective of complexity recognizes the importance of social meaning but are also expressions of how such meaning emerges in the context of structural factors. The conception of knowledge presented by Cilliers (1998) as contingent, contextual and temporal-related illustrates my approach to narratives in this study:

> Local narratives only make sense in terms of their contrasts and differences to surrounding narratives. What we have is a self-organizing process in which meaning is generated through a dynamic process, and not through the passive reflection of an autonomous agent that can make 'anything go'. (p. 116)

In the next section, I present information related to the research process such as data gathering, choice of school, ethical dimensions and analysis.

3.2 Data gathering and analysis

In most qualitative studies in organizations, interviews are conducted aiming at grasping experiences and understandings of organizational life. In such interviews, participants often tell stories that illustrate their experiences. However, in narrative studies such stories become the main data. Therefore, non-structured interviews with the goal of producing stories are the data gathering method in narrative studies. This data-gathering implies in an important aspect of co-creation reflecting a methodological assumption regarding the relation between the researcher and the phenomenon. Rather than the classical interview procedure in which the researcher asks questions to a respondent in a structured manner, there is a narrative situation in which a conversation flourishes developing a narrative account (Riessman, 2008). Creating situations

for storytelling demands changes not only in practice, but also in attitudes and expectations from the side of the researcher. To some extent, it requires that the researcher loses control of the interview situation if compared to structured and semi-structured interviews providing a high level of uncertainty to the interview situation. Although it is an aspect of the narrative approach that might constitute a source of anxiety, the recognition of uncertainty rather an attempt to eliminate it can be seen as potential if it is seen from the frame of reference of complexity. The main ethical implication of this study consisted in anonymizing the school and participants.

The school in which the six narrative interviews were conducted is known in the Waldorf movement in Norway as a well-functioning school with a stable flow of students. The school underwent processes of organizational change in its history and the appointment of a school head in the late 1990 is considered a major turning in decision-making. The interviews described both internal and external pressure to change although the balance between the two was expressed in different ways with some giving more emphasis to the educational policy environment, while others highlighting internal perceptions of exhaustion of a once established model. The changes in this school took place without the participation of external consultants as in other Norwegian Waldorf schools.

Gender was one criterion for selection of participants by selecting an equal number of men and women. I interviewed two people in formal management positions (the school head and the pedagogical coordinator) and four teachers. Beyond that, the selection of participants assumed a rather random character. All participants had been working in the school for at least twenty years and two held teaching positions since the foundation of the school. It is possible that a different set of participants would have provided different narratives of processes and changed in decision-making. However, the collection of narratives told by participants represent valuable indications of the "context, agency and temporality" (Byrne & Callaghan, 2014, p. 257) in a complex and multi-layered reality in which they interact with each other. The analysis followed a thematic character focusing on the content and sequence of events of the narratives rather than on linguistic aspects (Riessman, 2008). Instead of coding and categorizing extracts of data as in most qualitative studies, in narratives studies the flow of events is kept for interpretive purposes. In the next section, I present findings in a temporal perspective using passages of individual narratives that illustrate experiences of decision-making processes.

4. Presentation of findings

I start my presentation of findings introducing two initial observations. Initially, my main goal was to collect stories of decision-making processes in different moments. First, stories about how decision-making processes have changed during the period in which the participants worked in this Waldorf school. Second, narratives describing how decisions are made now. Participants told narratives that described both changes over time and how they experience decision-making process in their present organizational setting. However, such could not be easily distinguished as stories of the present were most often told in comparison to the stories of the period before the appointment a school head in the late 1990s. The narratives presented here described this period as a major turning point in their experiences of decision-making process and in the history of the school. Participants presented narratives of current decision-making processes often in comparison to past experiences expressing their experiences of mechanisms of participation, inclusion/exclusion and responsibilities. There is a temporality here but a nonlinear one.

Another important observation is that most participants would more readily remember and spontaneous present their narrative about decision-making processes rather than what was actually decided. This suggest that decisions were often experienced and expressed as important elements of their professional identities and could not be discussed only in terms of objective outcomes but also as expression and as a logic of appropriateness. Such narratives illustrate important aspects of how participants experience different mechanisms of their everyday interactions related to a system (or structure) that they experience as real. These observations will be discussed in deeper in the next section. In this section, I articulate a "narrative of narratives" or a collection of narratives by presenting in a temporal dimensions the main stories told

by my participants. It is not an attempt to find common patterns or to define a final metanarrative of the school, but to uncover a multilayered social reality of decision-making in which different mechanisms are interwoven. My presentation of findings starts with an introduction of the six participants.

4.1 The participants

The presentation of each of the six participants is follow by themes which are not codes or categories as in most qualitative studies. These are rather themes that were recurrent in each narrative and/or representative of my interpretation of the main message provided by the sequence of events articulated by each participant. The presentation of narratives in a temporal perspective in section 4.2 presents fragments of data that represent such recurrent themes.

Participant A was a male teacher who had worked in the school since its foundation and who has recently retired. His narrative provides the beginning of the plot analysed here by presenting a decision-making model in the first years of the school that he labelled as a "democracy, but maybe an aristocratic democracy". He also describes changes towards the centralized model that exists today. He expressed positive views on changes but also presented fears related to how far such changes could go. He was particularly concerned with the risk of appointing individuals to management roles who do not know enough about Waldorf education or education in general: "I've seen that in other schools". Key themes: participation, aristocracy, need to change, risks.

Participant B was a male teacher who started his activities in the school in the late 1970s. He initially describes a period when authorities were little interested in how the school was administered. His narrative describes a decision-making model in which teachers felt responsible for the school that he contrasts in a rather pessimistic way with a present in which "teachers now are not responsible for administration anymore, we don't decide things together anymore". Key themes: resistance, ownership, responsibility.

Participant C was a male who worked as a teacher from the early 1980s and was appointed as a school head in 2013. He describes a whole context of uncertainty and personal frustration related to his new position, but that he contrasts with a once consolidated decision-making model that he recounts in the following terms: "when I look back, I would say, it was very irresponsible". Key themes: rationality, responsibility, uncertainty.

Participant D is a female teacher who has been in the school for over twenty years and currently holds the position of pedagogical coordinator. Her narratives illustrated mostly the uncertainties of decision-making processes and the challenges of working with contradictions, conflicts and misunderstandings. Key themes: plurality, ambiguities, conflicts.

Participant E was a female teacher that had been in the school for over twenty years and whose narrative has a starting point in the period when decisions were taken based on "consensus that was not really a consensus because there were some strong men with a lot of authority". Her narrative describes everyday mechanisms of inclusion/exclusion of the past and of the present. Key themes: conflicts, inclusion/exclusion, authority.

Participant F is a female teacher who had been in the school for about fifteen years. She described herself as relatively absent from decision-making processes, but at the same time, expressed a positive view on changes. According to her, the school has become more transparent and democratic when compared to when she started. Key themes: conflicts, hidden power structures, transparency.

4.2 Narratives of decision-making processes

I present the empirical findings of this study in a temporal perspective describing the collection of narratives told by the six participants. However, such temporal dimension is not a linear one as the narratives presented move back and forth constantly contrasting the present with the past. Participant A is the only one that was present in the first year of the school when it had only six teachers. He highlighted the role of two

teachers who had worked in Steiner schools in other countries and who were highly respected by other staff members. Although there were no formal leadership positions, these two individuals had a particularly relevant position of respect as he describes:

> We made the decisions that were wisest and the most reasonable guided by two oldest who knew how a Waldorf school should be like. They knew what was wise and we had respect for them. It was a democracy but an aristocratic one. (Participant A)

With the growth of the school, the consolidation of the collegiate of teacher that would meet weekly when most decision-making processes used to take place. Part of such meetings was dedicated to delegate responsibilities and appoint committees that were in charge of different administrative tasks. At this point, the narrative of participant A moves ahead in time to the appointment of the school head. He compares the new centralized model with a past in which decision-making processes had rather unclear lines of responsibility and a highly emotional character:

> I am very glad that all those committees and all this back and forth disappeared here. It was irresponsible. There was too much talk and little humbleness. We were strong teachers and had opinions about everything but that destroyed many decision-making processes. It polarized processes. We got rid of something old that didn't work anymore. (…) It was more democratic but more tyrannical and emotional. (Participant A)

Participant A's narrative focused on the same period when participant B started his activities in the school as a class teacher. His narrative starts with a description of decision-making process in the collegiate of teachers. However, his narrative indicates a different perception of how decisions were made in this period that contrasts with the narrative of the participant A. His narrative describes an environment of shared responsibility and commitment with the school in which decisions were made by those who had professional authority and knew the school:

> I think this was a good model because we delegated responsibilities and teachers felt that they carried the school. You can say that it was a collective leadership. It had its challenges but on the other hand, it had many positive sides and those that knew the school decided things and no one else. (Participant B)

For him, such model was not controversial then. His narrative presents several episodes in which the school had to interact with local and national authorities. The beginning of his narrative presents a historical period when policy-makers were little interested in the school management. In this period, negotiations with the city level for a new school building were rather unproblematic. As he describes, this situation started to change in the 1990s when the Waldorf school engaged in a long and difficult negotiation with national authorities for the accreditation of their secondary education program. The main message of his narrative of this period is that there was an environment of commitment and responsibility for school affairs that enabled the school to resist external demands. This is the moment when his narrative presents a turning point with the appointment of a school head making the school more managerial and less pedagogical:

> This fight (for the accreditation of secondary school program) shows a lot about consciousness. We stood for what we believed. We wanted to have our own evaluation criteria and did not give up. But now we just accept everything without resistance. I think this is because the teachers do not carry the school anymore. Waldorf schools have become bureaucratized. Responsibility has been pulverized. It is not there anymore. (Participant B)

His narrative carried a very symbolic connotation attaching a meaning to consensual decision-making. His narratives do not deepen his account of challenges of the collegiate of teachers' model, but claims that the solutions to organizational problems can be found in the very writings of Rudolf Steiner. He says that he has been absent from decision-making processes in recent years.

Participants A and B share a concern with a rising bureaucratization of the education sector and identify the risk of having a leader with strong managerial skills but little knowledge of Waldorf education. This is not the case in this case as the recently appointed school head had experience of about twenty-six years before assuming this position. The main turning point in Participant C's narrative is his own appointment as a school head. He describes his initial experience in the collegiate of teachers in the 1980s as valuable as it was expected that even young staff members like him had a say in the running of the school and not only as a teacher. However, his narrative assumes a critical perspective towards this model:

> For me as a very young and curious person, it was very interesting. I was given a lot of responsibility. I was learning a lot with this. But now when I look back I would say it was irresponsible. The problem was that everybody had a say and everybody had a veto. If I said "No, I don't agree", then the process stopped. There was no referendum and everything had to be consensual. So if one person was against it, the process stopped and often just forgot about it when time was over. That was not a very efficient way of running the school. Also in terms of communicating with the outside world, we had no obligation of communicating with the authorities… now I can tell it was really a mess. It's incredible that it was possible to keep the school running for so many years this way. We had an accountant doing his things and now I see that he actually made a lot of decisions and did these things to take care of the economy but we didn't realize what was going on. He managed to keep us from bankruptcy. (Participant C)

His narratives then turn to events that took place in the 1990s when internal perceptions of problems of this decision-making model became more articulated. He also highlighted problems in meeting external demands particularly those of parents. He describes a process of increasing rationalization of decision-making process both addressing external and internal demands. In many passages, he uses the word "efficiency" which was not present in the narratives of participants A and B.

> Now it's very easy to describe how it is done. There is a law which brings us funding from the state. There is a board elected by the parents and the teachers. There are four representatives elected by the teachers and three by the parents. And then the board appoints the principal, the person who is in charge for running the school. And it's me now for running the school. That's my task which has been given by the board. (Participant C)

> To put it short, when I think about it, I get astonished of how we were allowed to run the school in the way we did for so many years. In my opinion, we were irresponsible. We were playing and were allowed but we had a lot of enthusiasm and that's what saved us. So when people say that in the good old days when teachers had influence in the process… I'm sure you will hear this when you interview people… I disagree totally. It was chaos, irresponsible chaos. (Participant C)

He explains that the most important decisions that he made since his appointment was the recruitment of new teachers. He describes that such decisions are made in dialogue with colleagues but the final say is his and "there is no doubt about it". The same can be said about decisions regarding school building maintenance, economy and marketing of the school. He describes a situation in which consensus was reached but others in which he had to step in and make a decision of his own. He claimed that most of his activities consisted of daily administrative matters and an increasing rationalization of organizational processes. That means sharing of information among teachers and formal mechanism to address parents' demands and to meet educational policy requirements. However, his description of an increasing rationalization of such process is paradoxically followed by a recognition of organizational uncertainty and a feeling of not being in control that he expresses in the following manner:

> Of course it is a very hard job to teach. You have to prepare yourself and spend a lot of time with books but when you are in the classroom, at least that's my experience, you get something back from the pupils which maintains your energy and enthusiasm. It's not like that in this job. When I come here in the morning, I never know what is going to happen. I'm never in control in the same way as when you are a teacher. My experience is that as a teacher you are very much in control of the situation. You have your classroom, a defined classroom and you have to define the lesson. All the limits are well defined. So that's a good thing of being a teacher. You are in control or you have good opportunities to be in control. But in this job, the telephone is ringing, you get about forty emails a day, people are knocking on my door constantly… parents, colleagues, salesmen, pupils… And they are all very, very important. So you have to handle this but also to think ahead, strategically. It's a lot of administrative work and a tiny bit of strategic. But now I've been here for nine months and I think that maybe in a year-time I will tackle this job and maybe even like it, but right now it's not very enjoyable. I have to be honest. It is not. (Participant C)

The narrative of participant D also highlights an increasing professionalization of decision-making processes. She presents her own appointment as pedagogical coordinator as part of this process of professionalization. She narrates the movement from a structure that was regarded as flat in which teachers met weekly to share administrative tasks. However, she describes how such meetings were highly influenced by a group of individuals and often resulted in unfair distribution of tasks.

> There were people that held the truth. In reality, it wasn't a flat structure. It was chaos in some ways. Well, maybe it was a flat structure because no one really knew about what we were supposed to do. There was a lot to learn and a lot do. I might take it a bit extreme now but you could be in in the finance group without knowing what to do. And it was rotating all the time. You didn't have five years to become good in finance. (Participant D)

In her narrative, she balances her initially negative views of this model with description of a sense of voluntarism that existed then and that has disappeared. However, she does not deepen her narrative on that and moves to a past using in many ways the word "professional" to describe how decisions are made now. She presented many narratives describing how leaders made decisions before presenting to teachers or to the school board. In many cases, such decisions were accepted by the teachers with little or no objections. In other situations, conflicts between different groups in the school.

> Sometimes we have heated discussions and it can become very emotional. There is a group that has a conservative attitude to the school and how things were done thirty years ago when Waldorf schools were in their golden age and they were very radical. It was something new. The essence of the Waldorf movement was there. "We have lost so much on the way. We lost our identity". Then there is another group that says that we are now in 2014 and we have to meet needs of today. It can become very emotional. They love the Waldorf school: the art, the colors, etc. There are also the unwritten rules: how are you supposed to dress? What is right? There is a "truth" in what they say. The other group is more logical, more rational and not so emotional and wants a way forward. (Participant D)

Her narratives describes not only what she regards as a more rational decision-making model but also the conflicts between different interest groups and what it happens when this model meets a consolidated set of values and unwritten rules of behaviour. She narrates that although such clashes do not result in any specific decision, they have an importance in making people heard and providing an overview of the different attitudes in the school.

> Sometimes nothing is decided but that is something that has to be clarified so that we have a common picture of who we are. This is the objective. It is not that each group will stay aside with its own truth, right? (Participant D)

The narratives of participants E and F present many common points in describing mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion related to decision-making. The narrative of participants E describes a paradoxical movement into which the formal centralization of decision-making with the appointment of a school head opened spheres of contestation and disagreements that were not manifested in the previous flat model. Her narrative is marked by the word transparency that she uses to differentiate the current from the previous model.

> My point is that it was supposed to be based on consensus but then we had these strong persons who had their wills through. We were discussing but it wasn't a real discussion, if you understand what I mean. It meant to be consensus but I don't think it was only me who didn't really say anything. (…). Now there is more space to disagree. Before if you said something against those men, you were criticizing them personally. It wasn't supposed to be a hierarchy but it was. It has become more democratic. We have more skilled leaders and they are more open to criticism. (Participant E)

Her account has many common arguments with the narrative of participant F that also uses the word transparency to mark the shift from the flat model to the appointment of a school head. She presents different stories describing how hidden power dynamics excluded individuals from decision-making processes and how the increasing professionalization of their organizational structures made processes more transparent.

> I think it is more democratic now that we know clearly who decides than in the past flat structure when we didn't know who decided. The ones who had most will and most power were the ones who influenced most. There was a lot of corridor politics "you have to vote for that, then I vote for you the next time". (…) I'm very happy to know who is responsible for what and that we have competent people in different positions who are accountable, listen and work for the best of the school. (Participant F)

At a first glance, it might seem that most narratives analysed here present the same "hard facts" in relation to a process of change from a flat structure to a process of organizational stratification. However, analyzing narratives demands going beyond such "hard facts" by focusing on messages related to personal experiences expressed by the sequence of events presented by participants. In other words, it requires looking at differences

in terms of subjective experiences of participants and how their narratives construct the multilayered social reality of organizations. In the next section, I present the main lessons of this study by reflecting upon two topics. First, I discuss the limitations of the living organism metaphor in understanding organizational reality. Furthermore, I present a reflection about the need to move from simplistic notions implied by centralization and decentralization discourses.

5. Discussion

The discussion of findings is permeated by the assumption that understanding processes of changes demands going beyond formal structures being those hierarchical or not, but focusing on the intricate web of interactions that participants describe. Another central assumption is that narratives told by agents in such processes shape and are shaped by the social structure (i.e. the school) that they experience as real.

5.1 A plurality of meanings: a reflection of the limits of the living organism metaphor

The overall research question of this project asks how narratives of organizational change in Waldorf schools describe decision-making processes. All narratives describe the same organizational change process. However, the first step to answer the research question is to observe that they do not describe this process in the same way. In my theoretical framework, I present the three logics of decision-making as discussed by March (1991) as an initial recognition of what we mean by complexity in organizations. In different degrees, it is possible to identify the logics of rationality, appropriateness and symbolism in the narratives. As stated earlier, most narratives tended to recount the decision-making processes rather decisions themselves. By placing the processes in central position in relation to the decisions themselves, most narratives focused on meanings and changes in mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. That was particularly the case for participants A, E and F. On the other hand, the narratives of participants occupying formal management positions (C and D) emphasized a rational logic of decision-making focusing on efficiency and consequential acts. In some narratives, such as A and B, the rule-based logic of appropriateness was more present as narratives focused on responsibility and ownership, which seemed to be permeated by a concern with "what is the right thing to do in relation to our position as Waldorf teachers".

Presenting my narratives in that way may incur in some kind of simplification as expressions of each of three logics overlap in most narratives. However, the most significant here is to observe that the three logics exist *at the same time* in the very tension that the participants establish between the past and the present. This raises a reflection towards the limitations of the living organism metaphor that is often used to understand the organizational reality of Waldorf schools. It is relatively common to use metaphors in science to make aspects of our reality intelligible. However, that requires a reflection about the limitations of the metaphors that we use. As Morgan (1997) reminds us, metaphors are ways of seeing, but are at the same time ways of not seeing. As in living organisms, interdependent parts compose organizations. However, the interactions between agents in human organizations present levels of complexity that might not be identifiable when we look at those using the metaphor of phases of human development. Changes in patterns of behaviour emerge from conflict and debate in the web of influences that organizations are. Another risk is that the metaphor becomes a discourse representing limits in understanding how the web of interactions operates.

5.2 Narratives and changes in decision-making model

Most narratives analysed here describe experiences of such web of influence and how the appointment of a school head changed patterns of behaviour in ways that challenged previous power relations that were perceived by some as limit participation. The narratives – which are themselves forms of communication and knowledge sharing in organizations - do not indicate a linear causality between the individual behaviour of the leader and such changes. However, most narratives describe how the appointment of the school

head challenged existing mechanisms of exclusion. This is present in the narratives of participants A, D, E and F. The narratives of participants E and F describe experiencing more space for disagreeing voices now than in the past when decision-making processes demanded an image of consensus. Words such as professionalization were often related to transparency and openness in communication. It is interesting to notice the recognition of uncertainty was in many ways articulated in the narratives of the school head and the pedagogical coordinator as they described the increasing rationalization of their decision-making process.

The narratives of changes of decision-making processes analysed are sense-making currencies of their organizational reality of six individuals. Departing from the assumption that such stories are shaped by and shape organizations reality, the findings represent the opportunity to question simplistic notions related to the decentralization/decentralization debate. Such simplistic claim usually equates in one side, formally flat structures with participation and democracy, and on the other side, centralized structures with control and uniformity. The systems perspective to organizational changes assumes that an adaptive organization is one that matches the complexity of its environment. In order for adaptation to take place, there is a need for variation and interaction allowing for the emergence of new patterns of behaviour and meaning. This is an important contribution of complexity theory but its implications for organizational settings need to be further discussed by moving away from the linear argument that formally decentralized structures implicitly allow for participation and adaptation to external changes.

6. Conclusion

The narratives of decision-making analysed here describe a non-linear process of change in which the logics of rationality, appropriateness and symbolism co-existed. Instead of providing one metanarrative of decision-making processes in the school, the analysis of narratives portraits a variety of meanings in which different participants highlight rationality (and its limits), appropriateness (and changes) and symbolic aspects (and power differentials). Therefore, any organizational change initiative in Waldorf schools might need to depart from the recognition of those three logics. Waldorf schools present a challenging pedagogical alternative that plays an important role in a historical period when dominant political discourses emphasize standardization and measurable results.

In recent years, different organizational change programs have aimed at combining elements of the past and of the present and thereby presenting a re-contextualization and rationalization of the collegial model of decision-making in Norwegian Waldorf schools. Readers of organizational studies often expect knowledge that can inform practice. In this respect, practitioners will certainly be interested in new knowledge that can inform how they can structure Waldorf schools in order to cope with external changes in active rather than passive ways and thereby preserve all the beautiful aspects of their pedagogical approach.

One common argument in complexity sciences is that systems need to match the complexity of its environment in order to survive. This study presents material to reflect upon the meaning of this claim to the context of organizations. Often this assertion is interpreted in a rather normative way recommending formal decentralization of organizational structures. However, the findings here suggest that matching the complexity of the environment involves above all, open communication and exploration of new meaning. Understanding how it happens in organizations demands looking beyond formal organizational structures.

The main massage of complexity sciences and its conceptualization of decisions as local, conceptual and specific in time is that there might not be any "one-size-fits-all" solution for all organizations. However, opening for a genuine and transparent communication among the different agents, sensing and articulating emerging themes in the school setting seems to be a promising start.

Acknowledgment:

References:

Biesta, G., & Osberg, D. (2007). Beyond presence: epistemological and ontological implications of 'strong emergence'. *Interchange*, 38(1), 31-51. doi: 10.1007/s10780-007-9014-3

Boje, D. (1991). The story-telling organization: a study of story performance in an office-supply firm. *Administration Science Quarterly*, 36(1), 106-126. doi: 10.2307/2393432

Brodal, H., Rosenvinge, H., & Kallstrøm, F. (2009, Spring). Den sosiale impulsen med vekt på selvforvaltning i steinerskoler og helsepedagogiske virksomheter [The sosial impulse with emphasis on self-management in Waldorf schools and health-pedagogical activities]. *Landsbyliv, 18*. Retrieved from http://www.camphill.no/fileadmin/camphill/landsbyliv/LBL_nr_18.pdf

Byrne, D. (2011). Exploring organizational effectiveness: the value of complex realism as a frame of reference and systemic comparison as a method. In S. Maguire, P. Allen & B. McKelvey (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of complexity and management* (pp. 131-141). London, UK: Sage.

Byrne, D., & Callaghan, G. (2014). *Complexity theory and the social sciences: the state of art*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Bush, T. (2011). *Theories of educational management and leadership*. London, UK: Sage.

Clandinin, J., & Rosiek, J. (2007). Mapping a landscape of narrative inquiry: borderland spaces and tensions. In J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: mapping a methodology* (pp. 35-75). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Czarniawska, B. (2007). Narrative inquiry in and about organizations. In J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: mapping a methodology* (pp. 383-404). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cunliffe, A. (2008). *Organization theory*. London, UK: Sage

Eriksen, G. (2008). *Mellom ideal og virkelighet: sosiale konflikter ved Steinerskolen*. [Between ideal and reality: social conflicts in the Waldorf school] (Master thesis). Retrieved from DUO, University of Oslo. https://www.duo.uio.no/handle/10852/15710

Erlandsen, T. (2013). *Fra flat struktur til verdibasert ledelse: en kvalitativ studie av et verdibasert organisasjonsutviklingsprogram implementering og virkning ved en norsk Steinerskole.* [From flat structure to value-based leadership: a qualitative study of a value-based organizational development program and its implementation and effects]. (Unpublished master thesis). Rudolf Steiner University College. Oslo, Norway.

Gill, R. (2010). *A school as a living thing*. (Master thesis). Retrieved from Antioch University New England. http://www.antiochne.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/projectGill_unlinked.pdf

Glasl, F., & Lievegoed, B. (1997). *Udviklingsledelse – fra pionervirksomhed til netværksorganisation* [Development Management - from pioneer activity to network organization] Århus, Denmark: Forlaget Ankerhus.

Gronn, P. (2009). Hybrid leadership. In K. Leithwood, B. Mascall, & T. Strauss (Eds.), *Distributed leadership according to the evidence* (pp.269-282). New York, NY: Routledge.

Hatch, M., & Cunliffe, A. (2006). *Organization theory: Modern, symbolic and postmodern perspectives*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Heijne, S., & Buck, J. (2013). Effective and inclusive decision-making and governance: the example of Steiner schools. *Social Sciences Directory*, 2(5), 26-46. doi:10.7563/SSD_02_05_02

Qvortrup, L. (2003). *The hypercomplex society*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Johannessen, S. (2009). The complexity turn in studies of organization and leadership: relevance and implications. *International Journal of Learning and Change*. 3(3), 214-229. doi:10.1504/IJLC.2009.024689

Liang, T. (2010). Innovative sustainability and highly intelligent human organizations (iCAS): the new management and leadership perspective. *International Journal of Complexity in Leadership and Management*, 1(1), 83-101. doi: 10.1504/IJCLM.2010.035791

Malone, T. (2003). Is empowerment just a fad? Control, decision making, and IT. In T, Malone, R. Laubacher & M. Morton (Eds.), *Inventing the Organizations of the 21st Century* (pp. 49-69). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

March, J. (1991). How decisions happen in organizations. *Human-Computer Interaction,* 6(2), 95-117.
    doi: 10.1207/s15327051hci0602_1

March, J., & Olsen, J. (1986). Garbage can models of decision making in organizations.
    In J. March & R. Weissinger-Baylon (Eds.), *Ambiguity and command* (pp. 11-35). Cambridge, MA: Balinger.

Morin, E. (2006, June). Restricted complexity, general complexity. Presented at the Colloquium
    "Intelligence de la complexité: épistemologie et pragmatique", Cerisy-La-Salle, France. Retrieved from
    http://cogprints.org/5217/1/Morin.pdf

Morgan, G. (1997). *Images of organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pinnegar, S., & Daynes, G. (2007). Locating narrative inquiry historically: thematics in the turn to narrative.
    In J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: mapping a methodology* (pp. 3-34). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Polkinghorne, D. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. New York, NY:
    State University of New York Press.

Rawson, M. (2011). Democratic leadership in Waldorf schools. *Research on Steiner Education*, 2(1), 1-15.

Resell, H. (2012). Organisasjon og ledelse i Steinerskolen: Steinerskolens selvforvaltning sett i lys av
    organisasjonsteori. (Unpublished master thesis). Rudolf Steiner University College, Oslo, Norway.

Richardson, K. (2011). Complexity and management: a pluralistic view. In P. Allen, S. Maguire &
    B. McKelvey (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of complexity and management* (pp. 366-382). London, UK: Sage.

Riessman, C. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sandaker, I. (2009). A selectionist perspective on systemic and behavioral change in organizations.
    Journal of Organizational Behavior Management, 29(3-4), 276-239. doi: 10.1080/01608060903092128

Senge, P. (2006). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

Solhaug, T. (2011). New public management in educational reform in Norway.
    Policy Futures in Education, 9(2), 267-279. doi:10.2304/pfie.2011.9.2.267

Spector-Mersel, G. (2010). Narrative research. Time for a new paradigm. *Narrative Inquiry,* 20(1), 204-224.
doi:10.1075/ni.20.1.10spe

Stacey, R. (2010). *Complexity and organizational reality: Uncertainty and the need to rethink management after the
    collapse of investment capitalism*. London, UK: Routledge.

Steiner, R. (1996). *The foundations of human understanding*. Hudson, NY: Anthroposophic Press.

Steinerskoleforbundet (2015). Retrieved from http://www.steinerskole.no

Tsoukas, H., & Hatch, M. (2006). Complex thinking, complex practice: The case for a narrative approach
    to organizational complexity. In R. MacIntosh, D. MacLean, R. Stacey, & D. Griffin (Eds.),
    Complexity and organizations. Readings and conversations (pp. 247-276). London, UK: Routledge.

Woods, P., & Woods, G. (2006). In harmony with the child: the Steiner teacher as co-leader in a
    pedagogical community. *Forum, 48*(3), 317-328.

Yukl, G. (2010). *Leadership in organizations*. London, UK: Pearson.