

Course Description

MEDD8929 Organisational Theory in Educational Research and Practice

Course description		
<p>Whether you aspire to be a scholar in education policy, management, leadership, or comparative education research, or a professional in educational administration and leadership, this course will enhance your understanding of how individuals and organisations behave, operate, and make decisions in educational settings. Equipped with analytical tools grounded in organisational theories, you will gain insights crucial for navigating and improving educational organisations. This course is designed to enhance students' understanding of organisational theory and its practical applications within the educational sector. It offers an in-depth examination of fundamental organisational theories, highlighting their significance in both educational research and practice. A range of pedagogical methods—including lectures, World Café discussions, poster presentations, self-directed study, and practical projects—are utilised to develop students' analytical skills. These skills are essential for critically evaluating and applying these theories to organisational analysis in educational contexts. The course provides a basic overview of organisational theory, explores prevalent phenomena within educational organisations, and introduces modern organisational theories. A major emphasis of the course is the practical application of these theories in real-world scenarios, culminating in an organisational analysis project tailored to the educational sector. This project aims to integrate theory and practice, enabling students to use theoretical insights to address practical challenges in educational organisations.</p>		
Course objectives		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To elucidate the explanatory power of popular organisational theories for students. 2. To empower students with the capacity to select and utilise organisational theories effectively in deciphering educational research phenomena. 3. To augment students' problem-solving competencies within the domains of leadership, management, organisational transformation, and innovation in educational settings, drawing upon organisational theory insights. 		
Course learning outcomes (CLOs)		Aligned programme learning outcomes (PLOs)
1. Understand the significance of organisational theory in interpreting the decisions and behaviours of individuals and organisations.		PLO 1
2. Achieve a thorough understanding of key organisational theories.		PLO 1
3. Identify and understand the distinctive features of educational organisations.		PLOs 2, 4
4. Effectively employ relevant organisational theories to examine and address organisational challenges within educational settings.		PLOs 2, 3, 5
Course assessment methods		
Assessment method	Weighting (%)	Aligned course learning outcome(s)
Group project	50	CLOs 1-4
Learning Diary	40	CLOs 1-3
Classroom participation	10	CLOs 1-3
Course content and topics		
<p>Week 1: Introduction to Organisational Theory</p> <p>Week 2: Typical Organisational Phenomena in Educational Contexts</p> <p>Week 3: Bounded Rationality and the Garbage Model: Concepts and Examples</p> <p>Week 4: Institutional Theory and Resource Dependency Theory: Concepts and Examples</p> <p>Week 5: Social Capital and Social Network Theory: Concepts and Examples</p> <p>Week 6: Exercise in Diagnosing Organisational Problems in Educational Settings</p> <p>Week 7: Project Work Planning workshop</p> <p>Week 8: Poster Presentations of Project Work Planning</p>		

Required / recommended readings and online materials
<p>Overview of Organisational Theories</p> <p>Scott, W. R. (2003). Organizations: Rational, natural, and open systems (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall. Chapters 1-5</p> <p>Shafritz, J. M., Ott, J. S., & Jang, Y. S. (2011). <i>Classics of organization theory</i> (7th ed.). Wadsworth Cengage Learning.</p> <p>Institutional theory</p> <p>Manning, K. (2013). Organizational theory in higher education. New York and London: Routledge.</p> <p>Chance, P. (2013). <i>Introduction to educational leadership and organizational behavior: theory into practice</i> (2nd ed.). Routledge.</p> <p>Bounded Rationality and the Garbage Can Model</p> <p>March, J. G. (1978). Bounded Rationality, Ambiguity, and the Engineering of Choice. <i>The Rand journal of economics</i>, 9(2), 587.</p> <p>Cohen, M. D., March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. (1972). A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice. <i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i>, 17(1), 1-25. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2392088</p> <p>Tamir, E., & Grabarski, M. K. (2018). Under Pressure: Why School Managements Use Garbage Can Model of Decision? <i>Research in Educational Administration and Leadership</i>, 3(1), 1-28. https://doi.org/10.30828/real/2018.1.1</p> <p>Institutional Theory</p> <p>Meyer, J. W. (1977). The effects of education as an institution. <i>American Journal of Sociology</i>, 83(1), 53-77.</p> <p>Meyer, J. W., & Rowan, B. (1977). Institutionalized organizations: formal structure as myths and ceremony. <i>American Journal of Sociology</i>, 83(2), 340-363.</p> <p>Meyer, J. W., & Rowan, B. (1977). Institutionalized organizations: formal structure as myths and ceremony. <i>American Journal of Sociology</i>, 83(2), 340-363.</p> <p>Battilana, J., Leca, B., & Boxenbaum, E. (2009). How Actors Change Institutions: Towards a Theory of Institutional Entrepreneurship. <i>The Academy of Management Annals</i>, 3(1), 65-107. https://doi.org/10.1080/19416520903053598</p> <p>Thornton, P. H., Ocasio, W., & Lounsbury, M. (2012). <i>The institutional logics perspective : a new approach to culture, structure and process</i>. Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Cai, Y., & Mehari, J. (2015). The use of institutional theory in higher education research. In J. Huisman & M. Tight (Eds.), <i>Theory and Method in Higher Education Research III</i> (pp. 1-25). Emerald.</p> <p>Cai, Y., & Mountford, N. (2022). Institutional logics analysis in higher education research. <i>Studies in Higher Education</i>, 47(8), 1627-1651. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2021.1946032</p> <p>Cai, Y. (2023). Policy isomorphism: a lens for understanding the influence of globalization on national education policymaking. In R. J. Tierney, F. Rizvi, & K. Erkican (Eds.), <i>International Encyclopedia of Education (Fourth Edition)</i> (pp. 271-279). Elsevier. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-818630-5.01041-1</p> <p>Resource Dependency Theory</p> <p>Pfeffer, J., & Salancik, G. R. (1978). <i>The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective</i>. Harper & Row.</p> <p>Davis, G. F., & Adam Cobb, J. (2010). Chapter 2 Resource dependence theory: Past and future. In C. Bird Schoonhoven & F. Dobbin (Eds.), <i>Stanford's Organization Theory Renaissance, 1970–2000</i> (Vol. 28, pp. 21-42). Emerald Group Publishing Limited. https://doi.org/10.1108/S0733-558X(2010)0000028006</p> <p>Tolbert, P. S. (1985). Institutional Environments and Resource Dependence: Sources of Administrative Structure in Institutions of Higher Education. <i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i>, 30(1), 1. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2392808</p> <p>Connolly, M., & James, C. (2006). Collaboration for School Improvement: A Resource Dependency and</p>

Institutional Framework of Analysis. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 34(1), 69-87.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143206059540>

Social Network Theory

Granovetter, M. S. (1983). The Strength of Weak Ties: A network theory revisited. *Sociological Theory*, 1, 201-233.

Granovetter, M. (1985). Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness. *American Journal of Sociology*, 91(3), 481-510. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2780199>

Burt, R. S. (2001). Structural Holes versus Network Closure as Social Capital. In N. Lin, K. Cook, & R. Burt (Eds.), *Social Capital: Theory and Research*. Aldine de Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315129457-2>

Moolenaar, N. M. (2012). A Social Network Perspective on Teacher Collaboration in Schools: Theory, Methodology, and Applications. *American Journal of Education*, 119(1), 7-39. <https://doi.org/10.1086/667715>

Daly, A. J., & Little, J. W. (2010). *Social Network Theory and Educational Change*. Harvard Education Press.

Biancani, S., & McFarland, D. A. (2013). Social Networks Research in Higher Education. In M. B. Paulsen (Ed.), *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research: Volume 28* (pp. 151-215). Springer Netherlands.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-5836-0_4

Online materials

Peking-Tampere Lecture series on Organisation and Management in Higher Education

<https://research.tuni.fi/sferc/peking-tampere-lecture-series-on-organisation-and-management-in-higher-education/>

Other additional course information

Nil