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Change readiness and the mediating role of general-dispositional internal structures

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CHANGE READINESS AND THE MEDIATING ROLE

OF GENERAL-DISPOSITIONAL INTERNAL STRUCTURES

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, Administration and Policy

by

Genevieve Joy Clark

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Christopher Lund, Ed.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

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under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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DEDICATION

Earning a doctorate degree is hard for anyone, but it is particularly difficult for us women, mothers, wives, sisters, relationship builders, and support-system designers to choose the isolation of research and writing over our communities, our friends, our families, over decorating for the holidays, over planning for birthdays and bridal showers, and over weekend getaways and romantic dinners. It is a labor of love and loathing, challenging a choice for discipline overindulgence. While I learned much about my topic of study, I learned more about the patience and resilience of my family, who openly acknowledged my absence from our living room but still championed my completion. I learned to let my network of friends develop into a support network, to identify myself as one of the fold, loved and unashamed to admit my fear of this task and of losing tight control over my routine and a clean household. I learned that what I think about my work and myself is more important that what you think.

For all these things and more, I dedicate this dissertation to my family—Danny, Brandon, Mariah, and Emily. You are mine, my own, my ones, my loves. I dedicate it to my champions. I am grateful for your companionship, encouragement, mentorship, wisdom, love, and gifts of wine and laughter. I dedicate it to the educators who believe every child deserves the opportunity to live the life they choose and not one that society has decided for them, a life dedicated to the passionate pursuit of open doors. I dedicate it to the leaders of public education; no matter what seat you find yourself in, innovation is the heart of realizing a better future.

VITA

GENEVIEVE JOY CLARK

EDUCATION

Master of Arts in Education (2006) Chapman University, Orange, CA

Bachelor of Arts in English (2003) California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo, CA

Associate of Arts (2000) Allan Hancock College, Santa Maria, CA

CERTIFICATION

Professional Clear Administrative Services Credential

Professional Clear Single-Subject Credential in English

Certificate of Compliance, Highly Qualified Teacher

Cross-Cultural Language Acquisition Development (CLAD)

Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2019 – Current	Assistant Principal, Mission Vista High School Vista Unified School District
2018 – 2019	Instructional Support Officer, School Innovation San Diego Unified School District
2016 – 2018	Director, Secondary Teaching and Learning San Diego Unified School District
2013 – 2016	Program Specialist – Community, College, Career Development & Secondary Common Core Literacy Oceanside School District
2010 – 2013	District Department Chairperson for English Language Arts South Monterey County School District
2011 – 2013	District CELDT Testing Coordinator South Monterey County School District
2003 – 2013	Teacher – English (Grades 9 – 12, AP, ERWC, Strategic Intervention) King City High School

DISTRICT PROGRAM INNOVATION

- Developed, and currently directing, the first multi-year rollout of an 8-site pilot for the Enhanced Mathematics Sequence Initiative which includes standards-based grading and assessment, a community engagement plan, and a co-constructed board referendum on grading practices set for adoption in June 2020 and based on data from the pilot.
  - *Funding sources in progress through Title IV Block Grant, 2 Gates Foundation Grants, Noyce Grant Application, UCSD CREATE, 6-year Gear Up Grant*

- Directed the effort to leverage S & Z bond funds with CTEIG funds to develop cognitively engaging classroom spaces TK – 12 in partnership with LEGO Education, Project Lead the Way, and sponsored by local industries
  - *High School: Education to Employment Laboratory*
  - *Middle School: 8 Makerspaces*
  - *Elementary: STEAM Tinkerspaces*

- Directed the development of guaranteed viable curriculum in the 4 core content areas at the high school level with embedded instructional techniques and assessments to cultivate an environment where all children feel safe, wanted, and successful and every student gets what they need when they need it in the way they need it.

- Executed a vision for all middle school students to earn digital badges associated with field experience in off-campus work-based learning opportunities tied to their strengths, interests, and values. Marketing for district CCTE pathways was personalized for students with digital badges in areas of interest.
  - *Funding included Sally Ride Scholarships through UCSD Extension, CCTE, and CTEIG*

- Directed the development and coordination of the SDUSD *Unlocking the Genius Initiative* for students in the 8th and 10th grades to explore their strengths, interests, and values through a series of strengths assessments and alignment to possible careers of interest resulting in a personalized secondary and post-secondary plan to support the development of each student's genius.

- Coordinated efforts to transform Clairemont High School into a Linked Learning demonstration school, including community communication, academy-specific project based learning, and coaching cycles to strengthen tier I instruction in all academies.
  - *Funding sources include Moxie Foundation and district in-king match*

- Facilitated a partnership with Equal Opportunity Schools (EOS) to increase the number of underrepresented student groups enrolled in Advanced Studies courses and leading to the development of AP PLCs and in increase in test takers and pass rates.

- Directed the redevelopment of the 5 innovation centers serving the 5 priority high schools in SDUSD to expand the number of students enrolled in credit recovery and leading to an increased graduation rate.

- Directed and coordinated the first annual SDUSD African American Achievement Summit which gathered over 700 junior and senior students for a day of post-secondary inspiration and near-peer mentorship resulting in the largest survey in California history

of adolescent African American students and increased enrollment in San Diego Community Colleges.

- Developed a district partnership with the San Diego Maritime Alliance and San Diego Workforce Partnership to create the first Tk-12 BlueTech Pipeline in the Mission Bay Cluster in anticipation of the future workforce necessary for an expanding ocean economy.

- Formulated and facilitated the first *Oceanside Promise Initiative* college-and-career collaborative action network resulting in MOU-bound partnerships with local higher education institutions, identified metrics, shared data and agreed-upon short and long-term goals.

- Designed a 5-year wall-to-wall integrated career pathway matrix and coordinated Oceanside Unified's first efforts toward a k–12 system of Linked Learning pathways aligned with the San Diego region's 5 priority industry sectors.

- Secured funding and expert training for all Oceanside Unified's executive and cabinet-level administration, site-based administration, master schedule counselors, and teacher leaders for stage one implementation of the 5-year integration matrix for pathway implementation.

- Coordinator in charge of fundraising and securing grants for program development including CCPT, CTEIG, and site-based programs including AVID, AP, Moxie grants for CTE, Educational Synergy Alliance and Linked Learning.

- Conducted South Monterey County School District's first endeavor to identify homeless students and served as a liaison between district officials, parents, counselors, child protective services, and homeless students to promote equal opportunity for future social and academic success. Original data collected and used as part of a sic sigma effort propelling future action to support homeless and foster youth.

- Developed secondary teacher leader teams in English, history, and science and facilitated the collaborative construction of Common Core aligned curriculum maps emphasizing the district's LCAP priority of "Literacy for All" and specifying instructional strategies appropriate for integrated ELD. Course outlines were rewritten and approved by UCOP to meet the UC/CSU A-G requirement.
  - Resulting in an increase of 28% of students meeting or exceeding standards as measured by the SBA.

- Coordinated efforts to increase successful student transitions to post-secondary education and career through the creation of dual enrollment and articulated course sequences in conjunction with higher education partners and local industry leaders, and the facilitation of FAFSA workshops for parents through site-based informational seminars.

- Collaboratively co-authored and coordinated all secondary district-delivered Common Core aligned performance task assessments and facilitated all scoring and data collection for the purpose of running predictive analytics and increasing equitable quality instruction in the core subject areas.

- Represented the district as the lead project consultant in a 4-district national design innovation of Watson for Education, an IBM-constructed platform for predictive and prescriptive analytics.

SCHOOL SITE LEADERSHIP/ CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

- Planned and delivered professional development for Tk-12 principals and site leadership to construct annual *Strategic Plans for School Improvement* using Ca Dashboard data, School Profile Comparison Reports, and root cause analysis. Strategic Plans indicate an annual focus, staff key learnings, measurable outcomes, comprehensive assessment plans, and professional development plans in consideration of Title I, Title II, LCFF, and Title I Supplemental Improvement funding.

- Co-led collaborative efforts, in conjunction with the Monterey County Office of Education and California State University Monterey Bay, to introduce the Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum as the foundation of senior college preparatory English and to eliminate all curriculum not meeting the A – G college entrance requirements.

- Led the South Monterey Joint Union High School District in the effort to update classroom technology including SMART boards and successfully lobbied school site council for funding to provide for student accountability platforms such as turnitin.com, an effort which ultimately resulted in school board policy for student devices designed to support a global approach to curriculum development and increase parent communication.

- Elected to the California Teachers Association executive board in South Monterey Joint Union High School District, serving as secretary. Responsible for taking minutes in school board and executive board meetings, preparing and managing correspondence between the District and the Association, organizing documentation and drafting grievances and unfair labor disputes.

- Led the Association in collective bargaining and contract management as the first woman elected to the King City Joint Union High School District Teachers' Association negotiation team. Drafted and signed a three-year-contract with the newly appointed state administrator though CSEA reached impasse.

- Chaired mock WASC panels, reviewing and editing WASC reports, conducting mock interviews, participating in classroom observations, and guiding the school's teachers, administrators, and community members to a greater understanding of their strengths and weaknesses based on qualitative and quantitative data analysis.

- Initiated the first vertically aligned advanced placement program and secured district and grant funding for two week-long AP summer institutes for sophomore, junior, and senior advanced placement teachers, and led the department in completing the AP audit in order to secure accreditation.

- Facilitated the inclusion of students with disabilities into mainstream classes and created a network of shared-practices platform for the successful support of special education

students that resource specialists can access to view lesson plans, teaching techniques, power points, and print materials.

MEMBERSHIPS & COMMITTEES

- Vista Unified Class of 2020 Graduation – Chairperson
- SDUSD Education-to-Employment Laboratory – steering committee
- SDUSD Assessment Committee – steering committee
- SDUSD Interdivisional Instructional Committee – chairperson
- Linked Learning Demonstration School – steering committee
- SDUSD/ SDCCD CCAP & college coursework – partnership coordinator
- SDUSD MTSS – steering committee
- Oceanside Promise Foundation – executive board member
- OUSD LCAP – district design committee leader
- CTE North County Council – coordinator membership
- San Diego regional CCPT, pathway workgroup member

ABSTRACT

This case study offers insight toward the impact of the general-dispositional, internal structures on a planned organizational change in the field of education. The process used and the findings of this may be applicable to a variety of fields. Stones' strong structuration (2005) served as the theoretical framework guiding this study, though Chater and Loewenstein's (2016) model of sensemaking offers supplementary consideration.

The context for study was the shift to virtual learning because of the COVID-19 global pandemic and subsequent closure of schools beginning in March 2020. This empirical study examined agents-in-situ's response to the change, including the structuring interactions between external and internal structures leading to active agency. Data were collected in 2 stages through semi-structured interviews and proffered documents first with change managers and second with teachers. Data collection and analysis followed the recommended methodological bracketing approach suggested in the strong structuration framework (Stones, 2005).

Broadly, this study examined (a) how several interdependent contextual structures within the organization interact with each agents' internal structures, and (b) how agents interact with each other in the presence of these contextual structures to influence conduct or the response to change. Stage One interviews revealed six contextual features as contributing to agents' response to change. Stage Two interviews were designed to understand agent conduct, which surfaced four general-dispositional, internal structures and six conjucturally-specific internal structures. All ten internal structures interacted with the contextual features, which provoked active agency and individual response to change. General-dispositional structures are those deeply held beliefs and general worldviews that would continue to influence agents' response to change regardless of the context, whereas conjucturally-specific internal structures are specific to knowledge of the people and role responsibilities within the organization. The structuring

interactions between the (a) external contextual features of the organization and the change,

and (b) general-dispositional and conjuncturally-specific internal structures resulted in active

agency and agents' response to change within both the change process and a redefinition of

professional values.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The ability to respond quickly and positively to change is a crucial component in the identity of a learning organization. Indeed, leaders of the largest and most competitive organizations, including the U.S. Army, acknowledge success in part hinges on accelerating the advancement of the organizational learning quotient (De Meuse et al., 2010; Hess, 2014). The technological advances of the last 50 years have revolutionized communication and allowed for industrial expansion on a global scale, increasing the complexity of trade and requiring "organizations to rapidly change themselves in order to survive" (Gordon et al., 2000, as cited in Rafferty et al., 2013, p. 110). Rising awareness pertaining to the importance of organizational learning and much of the recent research surrounding the topic explore specifically the theme of change (Bergey et al., 1999; Burke & Biggart, 1997; Burnes & Jackson, 2011; Maurer, 1996). In general, efforts toward change may be sensitive in nature and approached gradually, or they may require drastic, dramatic, and immediate action. Regardless of the approach, research suggests as much as 70% of all major change efforts in organizations fail (Keller & Aiken, 2009). U.S. public education is no exception, bearing a long list of failed federal reform efforts.

Historically, U.S. public education has revealed itself as averse to change initiatives, and researchers have argued that "educational reformers are fighting a battle that is not 'winnable'" (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 22; see also Fullan, 1993). Powerful, longstanding unions protect employment contracts stipulating teacher tenure and reinforcing traditional approaches to education. The concept of change, however, continues to interest contemporary educational researchers who explore elements like change strategy, resistance, systems change, change agents, stage of adoption, the change process, and environment for change (Ellsworth, 2000).

Two Types of Change

In a meta-analysis conducted to identify statistically significant leadership behaviors contributing to student-specific and overall organizational achievement, Marzano et al. (2005)

discussed two types of change. First-order change is the more easily achievable of the two and consists of modifying recognizable organizational processes and procedures. It implies incremental change over time and may be qualified as "the next most obvious step to take in a school" (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 66) to address well-defined problems that may or may not have a reasonable and apparent solution. Regrettably, even these seemingly straightforward changes are too commonly unsuccessful (Bergey et al., 1999; Burke & Biggart, 1997; Burnes, 2009, 2011; Maurer, 1996).

Beyond first-order change, which typically challenges an organization to increase its efficiency and effectiveness, second-order change challenges the organization's identity in relationship to an espoused value system. It presents a "dramatic [departure] from the expected" way of conducting business (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 66). For success with second-order change the beliefs and ideals of the change must be maintained despite staff members' expressed frustration. Organizations incubating second-order change can be characterized by high emotion resulting in an atmosphere of temporary friction. Fullan (2007) aptly described the disruptive nature of second-order change as "creative breakthroughs [that] are always preceded by periods of cloudy thinking, confusion, exploration, trial and stress" (p. 17). Indeed, individuals in the organization experiencing the change "are likely to experience intense mixed emotions that are anticipatory in nature, such as excitement and fear…it is likely that affective reactions to change may be particularly powerful drivers of change outcomes" (Rafferty et al., 2013, p. 127). Clearly, any organization desiring to develop and maintain itself as a learning organization, whereby change is commonplace as the cycle of improvement rotates, must first focus on those most heavily impacted by a change and their willingness to engage in the transformation.

Resistance to Change

The construct of resistance to change, particularly in relation to organizational learning and initiative implementation, is one topic of study. Recently, however, an increasing number of

researchers have narrowed their focus on change to concentrate on the theme of individual resistance (Cummings & Worley, 2001; Judge et al., 1999; Pardo del Val & Martinez Fuentes, 2003; Piderit, 2000; Waddell & Sohal, 1998). Some of the empirical research conducted in these contemporary studies has been particularly attentive to the antecedents of individuals' change attitudes, including studies of personal need (Miller et al., 1994) and dispositional resistance to change (Hon et al., 2014). The primitive understanding of resistance as simply intentional defiance is evolving as studies continue to challenge both the negative connotation associated with resistance and the definition itself. In fact, the word "resistance" has been contested as inaccurately describing many change recipients' hesitations to engage in a change (Piderit, 2000). However, research has pointed to individual resistance as the "little recognized but critically important contributor" (Maurer, 1996, p. 56) to a statistically significant ratio of failed change efforts, and organizational change literature continues to recognize the individuals within the organization as the primary drivers of change (Armenakis et al., 1993).

Readiness for Change

Individuals within an organization are essential to the success of any change effort (Bernerth, 2004; Rowden, 2001). Change readiness has been defined as an individual's "beliefs, attitudes, and intentions regarding the extent to which changes are needed and the organization's capacity to successfully undertake those changes" (Armenakis et al., 1993, p. 681). In other words, an individual is said to be ready for change when they: (a) see the need for change, (b) accept the proposed change as appropriate, (c) believe the individuals in the organization have the necessary competence and level of interaction to undertake the challenge, (d) are convinced of the organization's willingness and capacity to resource the change, and (e) agree the change will provide personal benefits (Rafferty et al., 2013). Current research pertaining to attitude theory supports the consideration of both an individual's cognition and emotional response as relevant to the construction of attitude (Weiss, 2002), where

attitudes may be defined as "evaluative summary judgments" based on the individual's beliefs and affect (i.e., emotions; Crites et al., 1994, p. 621). The affective aspect of change readiness is "broadly acknowledged [as] an important component of the change readiness construct" (Rafferty et al., 2013, p. 114).

This chapter reviews the problem and purpose of this qualitative study, which conducts a multilevel examination of change readiness and the mediating role of the general-dispositional internal structures of those who will be most significantly impacted by one school district's planned organizational change. There is a brief discussion of the proposed change in order to provide the critical context for this study. The theory of strong structuration is then discussed and served as the theoretical framework by which individuals' predispositions toward change may be more deductively captured. The chapter then provides the study's guiding research question and proposes case study methodology as the most suitable approach for the proposed research. The chapter closes with the limitations and delimitations of the study and assumptions.

Problem Statement

Currently, the U.S. public education system is experiencing unprecedented seismic shifts in expectations for student achievement by promoting 21st century skills and equitable access to curriculum and instruction while simultaneous legislation has reconstructed the way school districts will fund the necessary changes. The new common core state standards (CCSS) for literacy and mathematics, the next generation science standards (NGSS), English language development (ELD) standards, and the career technical education (CTE) standards all required newly developed frameworks and instructional approaches which have limited alignment with existing teacher resources. To measure students' mastery over the standards, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) constructed performance-based summative assessments, departing from the multiple-choice standardized tests of the past. In

response, the College Board, an organization sponsoring the advanced placement (AP) courses and exams, as well as the PSAT, NMSQT, and SAT assessments, were commensurately changed to reflect the new paradigm of skill-based mastery equal to subject matter, knowledge-based mastery. With the adoption of the California State Dashboard, California schools, too, were expected to engage in a new multiple measures accountability system beginning in the 2017–2018 school year. All of this, in addition to the ongoing global pandemic, forced teachers to reimagine their curriculum and instruction as presented virtually. Clearly, the U.S. educational system is engaged in both long-term systemic change as well as the changes associated with the relatively short-term impact of virtual learning. Nevertheless, while much has been done to study organizational change (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Meaney & Pung, 2008; Miller et al., 1994; Probst & Raisch, 2005), particularly by researchers in the areas of social science (Ford & Ford, 1994; Pettigrew et al., 2001; Van de Ven & Poole, 1995) including micro and mesolevel change readiness studies (Bouckenooghe, 2010), research pertaining to the affective component of change readiness is limited. In a multilevel review of change readiness, Rafferty et al. (2013) cited "limited data and the lack of consistent measurement of change readiness [as making it] difficult to draw firm conclusions concerning the antecedents of change readiness based on the change readiness literature alone" (p. 121). Therefore, a need exists to study how an individual's internal structures contribute to change readiness.

In the most recent turn of events, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced change on nearly every aspect of human life and has irrevocably altered U.S. education for the foreseeable future. Teachers, administrators, and support staff were required to vacate their traditional face-to-face methods of education in favor of the safer virtual model. Students and educators alike have struggled with the shift, and the current climate presents an unexpected opportunity to study change readiness in-situ.

Purpose Statement

While much has been done to study the cognitive component undergirding change readiness (Armenakis et al., 2007), the emotional component commonly recognized as an individual's affect (Crites et al., 1994), otherwise referred to as "habitus" (Bourdieu, 1972, 1979, 1990) and most recently "general-dispositional internal structures" (Stones, 2005), remains largely unexplored. Indeed, the prevailing attitudes associated with readiness and resistance to change have been given considerable attention, but Boukenooghe (2010) estimated that less than 10% of this research has attempted to address the affective aspect. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand the relationship between an individual's general-dispositional internal structures, as presented through strong structuration theory (Stones, 2005), and the individual's readiness to engage in a planned organizational change in one secondary school in Southern California.

Importance of Study

General dispositions influence human response to change, and change is commonplace in the modern global economy. Fuller (1981) outlined a premise called the "knowledge-doubling curve" which asserts that humankind's collective knowledge may accelerate to the point of doubling every 12 hours as early as the year 2025 (p. 41). Few would challenge that we are living in an era of unprecedented change, and yet U.S. public education has done little to restructure the original industrial era school model, which was designed to prepare children to assume the role of compliant factory worker. The ambition of early 20th century education was to prepare workers for the repetition of clearly prescribed tasks on assembly lines. Under this model, children simply needed to "be trained to comprehend and accept instructions, and then to implement them conscientiously" (Reich, 1989, p. 97). Considering only 83.5% of the class of 2018 in California public schools' cohort earned a diploma, and of those graduates only 49.9% completed the courses required for admission to a University of California (UC) and/or California

entrepreneurial skill set including creativity, communication, collaboration, mentorship, and networking. Even elementary teachers must mindfully develop students' social-emotional, metacognitive, and interpersonal skills such that these students are prepared to earn advanced certification through rigorous career technical education pathways, engage in dual and concurrent enrollment opportunities, participate in work-based learning challenges, and accept industry-specific internships while in high school.

Definition of Terms

- *Affect*. "The manner in which one is inclined or disposed" (Dictionary.com, n.d.).

- *Agent*. An individual with the power to act (Dictionary.com, n.d.).

- *Change readiness*. An individual's "beliefs, attitudes, and intentions regarding the extent to which changes are needed and the organization's capacity to successfully undertake those changes" (Armenakis et al., 1993, p. 681).

- *Conjuncturally-specific*. Knowledge formed over time as the agent is situated within his or her role within the organization and experiences other agents in context (Jack & Kholief, 2007).

- *Culture*. A system of shared meanings with common "beliefs, values, customs, structures, norms, rules, traditions" (Smollan & Sayers, 2009).

- *Etic perspective*. From the perspective of the observer.

- *Emic perspective*. From the perspective of the participant.

- *External structures*. The particular factors external to the agent that present the conditions of a single action (Stones, 2005).

- *General dispositions*. Internal structures the agent draws on subconsciously to inform action (Stones, 2005).

- *Mesolevel*. The intermediate-level power structure within the organization typified by small teams (Schwandt, 2008).

- *Ontology*. What is known about the relationship between the principles and causes of being (Busse et al., 2015).

- *Ontology-in-situ*. When phenomena are observed in a natural place or circumstance (Busse et al., 2015).

- *Planned organizational change*. A deliberate restructuring of an institution's organizational processes and procedures in order to achieve outcomes specified in advance of the change.

Theoretical Framework

In the publication *Structuration Theory: Traditions in Social Theory* (2005), Stones reimagines Giddens' (1989) original construction of the theory of structuration. Drawing largely from the critiques of other social theorists, Stones sought to develop the largely undefined precepts for empirical research missing from Giddens' portrayal of the theory. In Stones' depiction, six key themes presented themselves as pillars of the now strong structuration theory (Stones, 2005, p. 189). Stones titled these themes:

- The distinction between ontology-in-general and ontology-in-situ. Ontology-in-general can be described as what is theoretically known about the nature of existence, whereas ontology-in-situ is the study of what is known about existence in circumstance.

- The quadripartite cycle of structuration. The fluid interaction between the external circumstances that create conditions of action for the agent-in-focus and the internal structures that prompt an action leading to either change or preservation of the social system.

- Systematic attention to epistemology and methodology. The relationship between what is known about social structures and how researchers will know more.

- The mesolevel of ontological abstraction. What is known about the small groups that comprise the social structure of an organization.

- The mesolevel of ontological scale. What is known about the small groups that comprise the social structure of an organization, from the general composition and characteristics of the group down to the details of each individual member.

- The conceptualization of "independent causal forces" and "irresistible causal forces" (pp. 189–190): The divide between those circumstantial conditions the agent genuinely has no physical power over and those the agent feels phenomenological pressure with which to comply.

In both Giddens' (1989) original presentation of the theory and Stones' (2005) strong structuration theory, the term *ontology*—defined as the study of relationships between varying categories within a subject area—is of primary importance; however, whereas Giddens preferred a generalized philosophical consideration of ontology-in-general, Stones presented "ontology-in-situ" (p. 75) in a more epistemological presentation. Though some application of structuration theory to the area of psychoanalysis has been conducted (Groarke, 2002; Willmott, 1986), Stones coaxed researchers to enhance the theory through further studies conducted in context, or in-situ, with particular deference to "emotions" (Stones, 2005, p. 190). Stones' strong structuration offers a methodology for studying the essential nature of social phenomena in-situ "through understanding the dispositions and practices of agents" (Jack & Kholief, 2007, p. 211). Most distinctly, Stones restructured Giddens' central tenet, the duality of structure, as a "quadripartite cycle of structuration" illustrated in Figure 1, whereby I found grounds for studying the relationship between general-dispositional internal structures and change readiness at both the micro and macrolevels.

Figure 1

Strong Structuration Theory: The Quadripartite Nature of Structuration

(1) External Structures	(2) Internal Structures		(3) Active Agency/ Agent's Practice	(4) Outcomes
	(a) Conjuncturally- specific knowledge of external structures	(b) General dispositions or habitus		
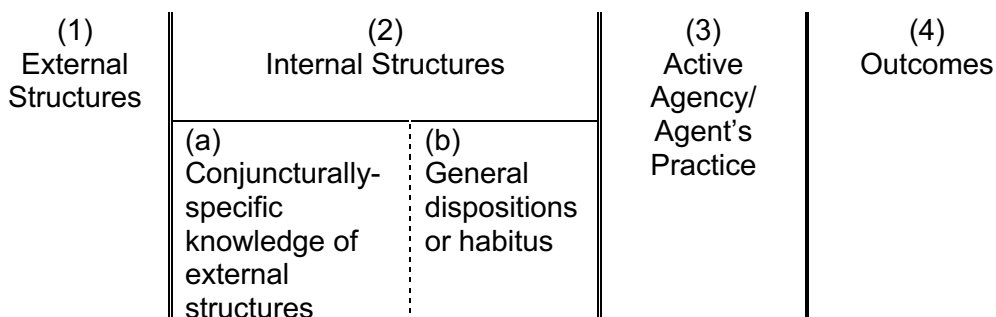
Note: Adapted from *Structuration Theory* (p 85), by R. Stones, Macmillan International High Education. Copyright 2005 by Macmillian International Higher Education.

Quadripartite Nature of Structuration

There are four distinct components within this quadripartite structure. This more specific iteration of Giddens' (1989) original duality of structure allows for an advancement in thinking about the power of the agent's "ability to do otherwise" (Stones, 2005, p. 75) in a given context, and it provides for a closer look at the degrees of difference between agents and their respective internal structures. The strength of the theory lies in its more tangible examination of agents and the structures they access to produce outcomes (Coad et al., 2015; Greenhalgh & Stones, 2010). The four aspects of the quadripartite nature of structure include (Stones, 2005):

- External structures specific to a given context and prompting consideration. Stones referred to these structures as "conditions of action" (p. 84) and included all contributing external forces that make up the situation in focus.

- Internal structures, distinctly separated for purposes of empirical study and termed conjuncturally-specific knowledge of external structures and general-dispositional internal structures.

- Active agency, the moment at which an agent invokes their internal structures, always resulting in one or more outcomes, though these outcomes may not include

an externally registered action.

- Outcomes, which may impact the internal and/or external structures and events.

Stones (2005) used the term conjunctures to reference the intersect of crucial events and/or circumstances that impact the structure-agency relationship. Conjunctures occur when the agent-in-focus accesses available resources in any of the first three dimensions of structure as they recognize the: (1) external structures for potential or required active agency and consider the resources available to influence an outcome, consciously or unconsciously considers (2a) their context-specific knowledge of the other relevant agents in the situation, consciously or unconsciously draws on (2b) generalizable internal structures, developed over time, which inform their determination in how to proceed, and executes (3) active agency, or at the point of interaction (Stones, 2005).

Strong structuration theory elucidates the nature of agency (Coad et al., 2015), especially as it relates to an agent's power to choose to accept or reject change and influence other agents in the social system. Interpretations of the social structure, conscious and subconscious, inform the actor's agency. Strong structuration is further detailed in chapter 2.

Research Question

This study explored the area of active agency, particularly as agents prereflectively draw upon their general-dispositional, internal structures in order to inform their action (Stones, 2005). Action always results in outcome, as illustrated in Figure 1, though an agent's action may produce "change and elaboration or reproduction and preservation" (Stones, 2005, p. 85) of the stimulating extant structure. Therefore, as an organization prepares for a planned change, the actors within the organization will experience their external structures "as conditions of action" beginning the cycle of structuration (Stones, 2005, pp. 84-85). Within the actor's internal structures, they will draw on both their conjuncturally-specific knowledge of external structures and the general-dispositional structures in order to engage in active agency.

The primary research question for this study is as follows:

- RQ. How do teachers' general-dispositional, internal structures influence their response to a planned organizational change?

Limitations and Delimitations

This case study examined how stakeholders' multidimensional response to change is fashioned through external and internal structures. The targeted organization of study was one large, urban, public school district located in Southern California. Further details pertaining to both the organization as a whole and the research site in particular are provided in chapter 4.

Using a series of dialectical tools (Arbnor & Bjerke, 1997), the goal of this research was to understand how internal structures influence participants' reality in light of the external structures associated with a specific situational context—in this case, how teachers' internal structures, specifically their general dispositions, impacted their readiness for the planned organizational change.

This single-site case study was limited to the collection of qualitative research for the purposes of understanding those general-dispositional structures impeding or contributing to the phenomenon of change readiness. Qualitative research is the most appropriate methodology for gathering "high quality and valuable evidence regarding…attitude" (Barends et al., 2014, p. 51) and can be argued to be similarly appropriate for studying emotion. This study did not seek to quantify the level of readiness pertaining to the planned organizational change of the research sites, nor did it propose to study the success of the change after it had been implemented. Additionally, while much has been done to study change efforts at large, and more recently resistance to change, this research was limited to the study of an agent's readiness for change and confined to the study of the general-dispositional structures contributing to active agency. This research focused on mesolevel external structures only in as much as they prompt microlevel active agency pertaining to the topic of change.

Assumptions

       I assumed that all responses to the interview questions posed were truthful. I am a recognized person in the district but am not an employee of the district; therefore, I assumed participants would communicate all responses honestly and that there was no social threat to construct validity (Trochim, 2006).

Organization of the Study

       This research is presented in five chapters. This chapter provides an overview of the concept of change, an individual's internal structures as antecedents to change, and an introductory outline of the proposed study. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature, which includes a brief history of educational reform efforts driven by legislation promoting equity and is followed by an analysis of the theoretical framework. Chapter 3 outlines the research strategy for this study, including instrumentation and data collection techniques. Chapter 4 presents the study's findings and offers a detailed analysis of the themes that emerged from the data. Chapter 5 concludes the study with a summary of the findings, implications, and recommendations for additional research.

Chapter 2: Review of Relevant Literature

This chapter synthesizes and critiques the relevant historical, theoretical, and empirical literature related to an individual's response to a planned organizational change. The chapter also provides an in-depth examination of the theoretical framework and examines contemporary scholarly discussions pertaining to the major concepts and constructs relating to the context of the study.

Literature Search Strategies

The bank of literature contained in this review was constructed principally through access to Pepperdine University's online library of databases. Searches were primarily conducted using ERIC, ProQuest Dissertation and Thesis Global, and Psychological Abstracts. Google Scholar, Google Books, and WorldCat were also used to locate articles and other texts pertaining to the theoretical framework and supporting topics. The most prevalent search terms included:

- change: organizational change, resistance, change readiness, leading change, second-order change, planned change, emotional response to change, evaluating change, change assessment, change recipients' beliefs
- strong structuration theory: internal structures, external structures, duality of structure, agency/ agent, general-dispositional, habitus

To be included in this review, studies had to be grounded in empirical evidence, though the authors need not have conducted the research personally. Additional texts were identified through a combination of the above search terms. Authors specializing in the areas of focus were also identified during the literature review, and their work was researched more fully.

Nature and Organization of Literature

This study seeks to understand how a teacher's response to one planned organizational change was influenced by their general-dispositional, internal structures, as elucidated through

Stones' (2005) strong structuration theory. A review of the literature examined what is already known about strong structuration, agent response to change, and the structures contributing to the acceptance or rejection of the planned change. The first section provides a broad overview of the history of change in U.S. education primarily through the influence of legislative action. The second section offers a contemporary definition of change and expands on the need for progressive educational structures. The next section examines the original version of the theoretical framework including action, context, structure, and critiques. In the final section an evolution of the framework is discussed particularly as it relates to the agent's response to a planned organizational change.

Evolution of the U.S. Education System

Possibly, the following recount of the evolution of U.S. education can be seen as a bilateral struggle between two groups of influence—those committed to the design of a country whose strength is, in part, based on increasing intergenerational socioeconomic mobility, and those who believe the masses must be provided for and strictly governed by an elite few. Originally built on a philosophy that a society can only be great when its people serve as part of the collective national identity, public education emerged in service of only the wealthiest and brightest who were destined to lead the people. By 1900, however, the U.S. government revised their position on mass education and extended a limited education to the general public but only to the end that the people were adequately prepared to perform prescribed tasks on assembly lines in a flourishing network of factories. The real decision making was still limited to a privileged few. Even the prevailing social philosophy, behaviorism, recommended physical punishment or reward as a basis for operant conditioning and viewed students as passive learners, blank slates upon which teachers could write the prescribed lessons.

The later half of the 20th century, though, issued in educator and philosopher, John Dewey, who challenged behaviorism as errant and instead promoted a theory of

constructivism—recognizing the power of critical thinking as essential to the democracy. President Lincoln articulated it as a "government of the people, for the people, and by the people." Dewey argued that education should allow each child the freedom to design a future of their choice and should not be exclusively available to the upper class. However, constructivism ebbed during the Progressive Era as a result of systemic inconsistency of standards and limited training to stabilize teacher methodology. Constructivism was quickly replaced by a fear-driven "back to basics" refrain, and formal curriculum was born.

Not all of Dewey's philosophy was abandoned, however. Educational legislation during the last half of the 20th century was decidedly in favor of socioeconomic progress, and pedagogical approaches promoted a wider acceptance of diversity. It is the legislation of this era that conditioned the soil for the growth of an equity-based educational philosophy during the 21st century, though implementation and strict regulation under No Child Left Behind would challenge many educators early in the century (Commission on No Child Left Behind, 2007).

The following section explores the historical foundations, philosophical underpinnings, and pivotal legislation responsible for the systems and structures of U.S. education in as much as they forecast future education reform movements seeking higher levels of equity, teacher efficacy, and standardization of curriculum and assessment, all of which would provoke educators to alter their classroom practice, collegial relationships, and belief systems about teaching and learning.

The Emergence of Public Schooling

Greek philosopher Plato's theories were evident in the emerging U.S. educational system and were threaded through factory model education. Plato's writings largely advocated for the subjugation of an individual's personal desires to the needs of society, whereby education is principally tasked with the placement of people into a social caste based on aptitude in order to "perform the different functions for which they are naturally suited" (O'Hear,

2004, p. 237). According to Plato, social harmony is only possible when society's youth are first given equal opportunity to reveal their true nature as aligned with one of three social classes: lovers of wisdom who have the right to rule; lovers of honor who have the duty to serve in the military; and lovers of money who generate the economics of the country as merchants and tradesmen. Secondly, when each member of society has achieved excellence in the station for which they show the greatest aptitude, society enjoys balance and productivity. Like ancient Greece, the United States placed a high value on education as the key to economic stability and were the first to establish universal primary education in 1782 (Krugman, 2012). As a secondary similarity, U.S. education echoed Plato's model of stratification as it encouraged public educators of this period to award opportunity primarily to only the most competent students, ensuring rigorous competition and elitism.

The elitism of the early U.S. education system, under the leadership of Thomas Jefferson, sanctioned only 20 of the most intelligent males for receipt of a decade of publicly subsidized education (Jefferson & Shuffelton, 1999). Even then, only 10 might be awarded a postsecondary opportunity. Those promoted to subsequent educational opportunities were afforded the rights and responsibilities of the ruling class while the others joined the ranks of the working class. As time passed, however, access to free public education expanded as a result of the bifurcated desire to advance economic stability through trade and to maintain Puritan ideology (Friedman, 2011). In 1827, Massachusetts guaranteed free public school for all primary-age children. By 1851, education in Massachusetts was compulsory, and by 1918, the rest of the country had mandatory attendance laws. These legislative attempts to break from Plato's education model, however, were offset by the precedent-setting Supreme Court decision of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), which legitimized racial segregation in public schools. This decision predominantly reinforced Plato's view of justice in society, whereby "members of the lowest class should be 'enslaved' to members of the highest" (Klosko, 1991, p. 7).

       The Role of Teacher and Student in an Emergent System. "As late as 1870... only about 10 percent of the labor force were employed in an occupation that typically required an education beyond the elementary school years, whereas the other 90 percent were employed in jobs that did not" (Goldin & Katz, 2009, p. 167). However, between 1871 and 1900, as a result of the burgeoning belief that education enhanced the opportunity for personal financial stability, the number of schools tripled (Pulliam & Van Patten, 1991). Consequently, fewer than half of the teachers in classrooms had formal pedagogical training and many were young women with little more education than the students seated in front of them (Friedman, 2011). The reality prompted then U.S. Commissioner of Education Henry Barnard to express his frustration to the *Boston Examiner* on July 13, 1867. He stated:

       Too many of those we have entrusted to guide and guard our nation's youth have little

       knowledge beyond that which they are attempting to impart…Not only is the depth and

       breadth of their knowledge of the curriculum matter a subject of concern, but where

       knowledge is possessed, there exists most often an absence of any training in

       pedagogy. (as cited in Friedman, 2011, p. 13).

As a result, the need to formalize teacher training and legitimize the profession surfaced.

       The factory model of education of the Industrial Era, however, reinforced the teachers' tacit responsibility to rank students according to their adherence to a systematized standard of behavior and performance and did little to expand pedagogical practice (DuFour et al., 2008). Teachers were expected to act in a primarily supervisory capacity and were only vaguely familiar with widely disparate curriculum. Variance of instructional strategies was loosely practiced since students were expected to "passively [receive] whatever was doled out... [while] inspectors tried to weed out the defects," (Reich, 1989, p. 100). Since education was limited to the primary grades for all but the brightest students, the curriculum disseminated was equally

limited and prized reading, writing, and arithmetic above all else—the basic education necessary for a factory worker (Leland & Kasten, 2002).

Students of this educational model were trained to be low-skill factory workers, obedient, and demure, not critical thinkers or problem solvers. The primary function of education was to prepare workers for the repetition of clearly prescribed tasks on assembly lines; therefore, people simply "had to be trained to comprehend and accept instructions, and then to implement them conscientiously. Discipline and reliability were the core virtues'' (Reich, 1989, p. 97). For students, any hope of escaping the rote work of the factory, then, was placed in excelling in school and outperforming the rest. Sharing ideas was counterproductive, and there was much more to gain through excellence reached independently instead of collaboratively (Leland & Kasten, 2002).

Philosophical Underpinnings of an Emergent System. Launched by Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) in an 1897 publication on an experiment in conditioning dogs, behaviorism would become the guiding learning philosophy of the age. Behaviorism refers to a psychological approach favoring stimulation-induced observable responses. In their respective publication portfolios, keystone behaviorists Pavlov and B.F. Skinner (1904-1990) reflect a shared conclusion that all behavior is developed through a process labeled operant conditioning, where environmental circumstances, including the reward of positive behavior and the punishment of less desirable behavior resulted in a preferred outcome (Learning Theories Knowledgebase, 2012). Children educated under the guiding precepts of this learning philosophy were grouped homogeneously by age and subject to narrowly constructed curriculum focused on developing the simplistic skill set required for factory work (Leland & Kasten, 2002). Instruction was text-based and delivered directly. Students failing to grasp the material were often issued physical and punitive consequences, as operant conditioning prescribes. They were expected to be passive learners—blank slates upon which the instructor might write the lesson of the day.

Parents were required to follow the dictates of the school without intervening in the process, and both teachers and school administrators functioned as supervisors rather than active participants in co-learning.

While the study of change itself, as a social or personal construct, would not ripen as a research field for another generation, Van Gennep argued that cultures around the world experience significant transitions from one social state to another similarly. Events of significance such as birth, marriage, or death, prompt a period of "social limbo" where the individual experiences a cycle of separation, transition, and finally reintegration (Bridges, 1980). While Van Gennep's work is now more closely correlated to organizational change and not directly related to an individual's general dispositions toward change; his publication did prompt further change research.

The Demand for a More Skilled Workforce Advances Education for All. Critics of industrial model education highlighted the flawed logic that subjugated the majority population situated in the lower social class to a simple, rudimentary education, while elevating those wealthy, numbered few to economic advancement through higher-level education (Dewey, 1916). Furthermore, as technology advanced U.S. industry, and those in the population with an education leading to non-routine work demonstrated significant pecuniary returns and advanced national economic security, the demand for a more skilled workforce grew (Goldin & Katz, 2009). As a result, by the end of World War II, "the high school movement" had emerged as a key strategy for increasing wide-scale social and economic mobility (Goldin et al., 1998; Goldin & Katz, 2009). In close proximity, the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938) was a legislative prequalifier to the movement reaching full momentum as it established a "minimum age for working in non-agricultural jobs and limits the number of hours and types of employment for older children" ("American Educational History," 2019). Prior to this legislation, public high

schools were rarely seen outside of large urban cities where the need for agricultural work was high (Goldin & Katz, 2009).

          Constructivism Challenges the Traditional Model at the Turn of the Century. Those who recognized the development of critical thinking as necessary to the advancement of a skilled workforce aligned themselves with the learning philosophy of constructivism rather than the traditional industrial model education (Dewey, 1916; Reich, 1989). Dewey (1916) contested that children should not be viewed as "raw products" and shaped to fill whatever gap was economically prudent (Kliebard, 1971, p. 75). Dewey, regarded as the leading educator of his day, stood in rigid opposition to industrial model schools, suggesting that learning should be regarded as the primary goal of education instead of narrow-minded careerism (Dewey, 1933). Dewey argued that education should be "determined in large part by the interests of the students, and learning [should be] experiential and social rather than rote" (as cited in DuFour et al., 2008, p. 33). Schools themselves should function as genuine social communities (Archambault, 1964). Radical in his day, Dewey's philosophy of education offered children the option to determine their own future while offering teachers the freedom to construct curriculum in support of individualized education.

          The constructivist learning theory itself "is a description of learning that can be turned about and used to guide teaching" (Driver, 1989). The theory implies that students use prior knowledge to construct new knowledge, where the interpretation of that new knowledge is facilitated through discourse. Children are viewed as active, long-term learners, and learning is the cognitive process of building a framework for understanding new concepts (Leland & Kasten, 2002). Based on the philosophy of fallibilism, which ascertains that all knowledge is incomplete and lacking comprehensiveness, constructivism holds that individuals can never know how closely aligned their existing knowledge is to reality (Cobern, 1993). By viewing new knowledge through the lens of old knowledge, they can experience a more complete reality;

therefore, learning is making sense of new experiences as they confirm or alter an individual's understanding of old experiences. Dewey (1916, 1933) is commonly acknowledged as the father of this approach. Bruner (1990) and Piaget (1972) are considered significant contributors to cognitive constructivist theories, while Vygotsky and Cole (1978) are widely seen as the founding theorists among the social constructivists ("Becoming a Better," 2017). A pendulum swing away from Pavlov and Skinner's theory of behaviorism, constructivism posits that learners actively construct subjective responses to an objective reality; simplistically, people connect new knowledge to old knowledge and revise their current paradigms accordingly (Weaver, 1994). Using constructivism as the guiding learning model, curriculum is designed to elicit critical thinking and praise creative solutions to complex problems where assessment is both authentic and diverse (Leland & Kasten, 2002). Of course, this requires the teacher to be a co-learner, constantly adapting their instructional methods to meet the needs of the evolving learner. Parents and administrators, too, must become partners in the decision-making process, but ultimately, it is the student who directs their own learning.

Challenges to Constructivism During the Progressive Era. For the next half-century, constructivism flushed education with sanguinity and innovation (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). Forming the basis for the Progressive Movement, constructivist teachers and students had the time and flexibility to explore their subject matter freely. Teachers experimented with alternative instructional methods as education leaned away from the industrial model (Heller, 1989). However, the widespread implementation of progressive practices was strangled by the fear it was overly time-consuming and disrupted existing routine. Some teachers resisted progressive instructional techniques because of the expense of cultivating new practices. Objections were also rooted in a fear that doing something out of the ordinary would lead to anarchy in the classroom and isolation from the teacher's colleagues. Lastly, no empirical evidence had ever been provided that solidified the viability of such radical change. Ultimately, though pedagogy

expanded as a result of constructivism, education was still very solidly teacher centered. As a result of the inconsistency in standards for curriculum and instruction as well as the vast and often contradictory interpretation of quality education the public recognized the inequity in the system and rallied for reform.

Expanding Civil Rights in the 1950s. In the decade following World War II, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, also known as the G.I. Bill, enabled a broad expansion of the public university system and inspired 7.8 million veterans to pursue advanced education (Bound & Turner, 2002). While the G.I. Bill significantly contributed to U.S. economic growth in the long-term, the programs were largely governed by White men, so the bill expanded the income disparity between Whites and servicemen of color (Kotz, 2005). To illustrate this point, only 100 of the 67,000 mortgages insured by the bill in New York and New Jersey were awarded to non-Whites (Katznelson, 2006). Inequities of this caliber were challenged through legislation advancing civil rights over the next 10 years, including *Brown v. Board of Education* (Warren, 1954) and the Civil Rights Act of 1957.

While the nation negotiated the term equality within its borders, the U.S. was falling behind technologically on a global scale, and in 1957 the launch of Sputnik signified a historic turning point in U.S. education, sparking the space race and turning the country's attention toward the cultivation of math and science curriculum (Bybee, 1997). To fund advances in these subject areas and foreign languages, the National Defense Education Act was passed in 1958.

The Space Race Changes Curriculum. Supporters of the industrial model, also known as traditionalists, blamed a lenient educational system for Russia's scientific and technological superiority. Calling for a return to fundamental industrial model principles like "drill and kill," a phrase coined by Bestor in his 1985 publication, prominent critics of Dewey's progressive educational model argued for the restoration of critical skill building for U.S. students (as cited in Ravitch, 1983). As progressive education folded, the "Golden Age" of science and mathematics

emerged touting the mantra "back to basics" (Bybee, 1997). However, the suggested reforms were anything but basic as reformists called for more stringent academic standards (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). Post-Sputnik tremors resulted in an increased emphasis on language instruction and higher academic standards (Ravitch, 1983). Prior to Sputnik, the National Science Foundation had largely ignored school curriculum, but in the wake of the Soviet orb their role in secondary school reform intensified. Their agenda extended from math and chemistry to biology and social science. Thousands of educators, teachers specifically, participated in summer seminars and various trainings in order to learn the new curriculum. The favored methodology for delivering the new material to students borrowed from the purity of progressivism and encouraged students to use inquiry and deductive reasoning to solve complex problems.

One understated outcome of the more stringent requirements was the birth of an industry devoted to the development of instructional materials designed to help teachers expedite learning (Bybee, 1997). Teachers were often reluctant to rely on the resources, however, when the programs varied by company, and they lacked the support necessary to implement the content effectively. Rather, many teachers isolated themselves inside their classrooms, delivering traditional curriculum to their students in seclusion (Dow, 1991). The Civil Rights movement formally encouraged teacher collaboration as educators worked together to help their students make sense of integration.

Expanding Equity and Access Through Educational Legislation

The legislation of the 1960s and 1970s continued to reflect the nation's growing commitment to equity for both education and society at large (Jennings, 2012). Advocates for minority children, economically disadvantaged children, and English learners argued against educational discrimination, and several federal laws were enacted to protect the civil rights of these groups. Back-to-back legislation partnered the Civil Rights Act in 1964, which outlawed

racial discrimination, with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), which funded extra educational services for low-income students. The Immigration Act of 1965 resulted in more diverse classrooms, and Title IX was established in 1972 to prohibit gender discrimination. In 1975, children with disabilities benefitted from another law ensuring them a free and appropriate education. Later, the law would be renamed Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) (Pugach et al, 2011). The categorical aid programs of this period are currently still in use and ensure that minority students, females, and economically disadvantaged students are given access to equitable education. Additionally, students with disabilities are mostly educated in mainstream classrooms.

In education, several critical concepts advancing personalized learning emerged during this period, including Vygotsky's (1962) zone of proximal development, Bruner's (1990) cognitive learning theory, and Piaget's learning cycle model, which introduced discovery-based learning methods. All three continued to promote constructivist learning environments characterized by contextualized, real-world tasks with multiple representations of reality where students were encouraged to reflect deeply on their experiences as they collaborate to construct knowledge through "social negotiation, not competition among [other] learners" (Wang, 2011, p. 526). While not officially labeled "culturally responsive teaching" the pedagogical approaches suggested by Vygotsky, Bruner, and Piaget did provide broader access to learning for minority and low-income students during this era.

Accountability Through Measurement in the 1980s. The publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 sped up the rotation of educational change beginning with the "Excellence Movement" (DuFour et al., 2008). Pinning an economic decline and compromised national security on public education, *A Nation at Risk* challenged the educational community to shake off the "rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and as a people" (DuFour et al., 2008, p. 5). This reform, different from all those that preceded it, called not for

another pendulum swing between behaviorism and constructivism but for an increased number of academic standards, a longer school day and school year, and an increased pace for expected learning. Despite the increased level of effort exhibited by all, standardized measurements revealed only minimal increases in student achievement (Alsalam & Ogle, 1990).

Within the Excellence Movement, industrial model concepts continued to be rewrapped in contemporary rhetoric and regifted to each generation as the last bastion for future U.S. economic security (DuFour et al., 2008). Yet, no empirical evidence exists to substantiate its claim to excellence (Ravitch, 2016). Still, teachers and students alike endured rigorously paced curriculum maps prizing breadth over depth in a race toward standardized accountability (Oliver, 1976, p. 18). Unique to the excellence movement, teachers joined their students as targets for measured excellence. Mirroring the original industrial learning model's call for efficiency, a teacher's efficacy was formally judged based on student achievement as measured by once-yearly standardized state exams (Ravitch, 1983).

Changes to Public School Structures in the 1990s. From the emergence of public education in the U.S. through the 1980s, reform efforts and subsequent legislation were largely focused on expansion, equality, equity, and access. After the publication of *A Nation at Risk*, the public refocused its attention on measurable student achievement, and as students failed to meet specified levels of achievement on standardized tests, school reform seemed a less probable solution for nonperformance. Harvard professor and author Elmore (1990) acknowledged the public's discontent as "a fragile consensus that public schools, as they are presently constituted, are not capable of meeting society's expectations for the education of young people" (p. 1). Thus, the Restructuring Movement was born as a "means [of] significant change in the pattern of school governance" (Papagiannis et al., 1992, p. 2). Within established

schools, teachers were offered greater autonomy in pedagogical methods, materials selection, and the learning environment itself.

Signed into law on March 31, 1994, the most significant educational legislation of the era, *Goals 2000*, was initiated by then President George H. W. Bush. The act relaxed the strict rules of the Excellence Movement but maintained a high expectation of quality advocated for in the Restructuring Movement (Ravitch, 2016). It focused on establishing national goals for student achievement but left the autonomy for reaching these goals to the school site. Hoping to empower educators through site-based decision making while ensuring the support for continued professional development, *Goals 2000* promised to promote partnerships between schools, families, and communities through the encouragement of parent involvement (DuFour et al., 2008). The Restructuring Movement was the first to attempt a compromise between the high academic standards of the industrial way and the consideration of a child's social-emotional growth for which Dewey advocated.

Among the many changes to the traditional structure of public education in the 1990s, the dialogue between community, parents, and legislators during the restructuring movement also laid the foundation for charter schools. Legislation supporting the development of charter schools during this period included the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (Witte et al., 1992), the Massachusetts Education Reform Act (1993), and the Improving America's Schools Act (United States, 2008). Nestled among passage of these laws, City Academy High School in St. Paul Minnesota opened its doors in 1992 as first charter school in the U.S. Toward the end of the movement *Goals 2000* proved problematic. Practitioners focused too much attention on minor changes that did not directly lead to an increase in student learning. Consequently, the Restructuring Movement collapsed (Newmann & Wehlage, 1995), but the charter school movement was only just beginning.

Fear of Economic Mediocrity Provokes Change. Though the rhetoric of *A Nation at Risk* predicted dire consequences for the U.S. economy if public school children did not perform at a higher standard, the *Goals 2000* legislation failed to secure increases in student achievement. Funding for the act finally ceased as a result of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) legislation of 2002. In direct opposition to *Goals 2000*, however, NCLB mandated strict sanctions in response to schools' performance inadequacies. As the most ambitious initiative in the history of U.S. education, nearly every facet of schooling was impacted by the statute, including the restructuring of curriculum, assessment, teacher requirements, and funding (Commission on No Child Left Behind, 2007). Leaning heavily on "technical calculations of student progress targets and achievement gaps" (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009, p. 29) in aversion to addressing the complexities of cultivating a "shared social responsibility," NCLB was the reincarnation of the industrial learning model (Ravitch, 2016). Technocratic proponents of the law relied on quantitative data in making curricular choices while inadvertently disregarding the qualitative opinions of stakeholders.

The law itself was officially titled, "An act to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind," and rendered effective January 8, 2002. The essential aim was to raise student achievement through increased accountability. NCLB was rooted in the standards-based education reform, which maintained that all students could achieve a high standard of learning if goals are clearly articulated and the extent to which those goals are achieved can be measured. It required all states to independently determine a basic skill set for each grade level and then construct a standardized assessment to quantify whether each child reached the basic level of achievement.

The overall impact of NCLB changed the tone of dialogue about U.S. education (DuFour et al., 2008). While the law did not abdicate fundamental conversations regarding student learning, it did redirect educators' attention toward penalties for noncompliance, with regard for

closing the achievement gap. Conversations were concentrated on standardized assessments, crucial learning, and proficiency levels for subgroups. It is likely that NCLB elicited an increase in discussion regarding the achievement of disadvantaged groups more than in any other reform era previously (DuFour et al., 2008). Epstein (2018) noted that in poverty-stricken communities laden with apathy toward academic excellence, the only way to highlight the importance of educational achievement as measured by standardized tests is to heighten public awareness through the creation of parent, community, and school partnerships. As NCLB mandated proficiency for all subgroups, where an entire school might be deemed failing because one subgroup failed to meet its target, conversations about closing the achievement gap were more common during this educational movement than in any other (Jennings & Rentner, 2006).

      No Child Left Behind Changed Teacher Practice. NCLB required every teacher to earn a "highly qualified" certification, and reports on school performance and teacher quality were made available to the public. This transparency created a high-pressure environment for teachers to perform. On a list of 75 recommendations for improvement made by the Commission on NCLB in 2007, teachers were targeted for improvement through sanction. Those who fell into the bottom quartile for their state would be deemed low performers and forced to undergo extended requisite professional development. If these teachers still performed unsatisfactorily, they would be barred from teaching in any school receiving Title I funds. Though many teachers had long lobbied for equity in the educational system, particularly as it applied to underrepresented minorities, placing the responsibility for closing the achievement gap solely on the shoulders of teachers created a culture of desperation (Jennings, 2012). Additionally, while many teachers acknowledge the benefits of standardized tests, the number of curricular objectives coupled with a limited amount of time to teach them frustrated many (DuFour et al., 2008).

NCLB failed to address the degree to which states varied in their expectations for student proficiency. In response to the concern, national Common Core State Standards (CCSS) were developed to "establish clear and consistent goals for learning that will prepare [all of] America's children for success in college and work" (National Governor's Association, 2010). In other words, the children in California schools will be responsible for demonstrating learning for the same educational standards as the children in all states adopting the standards. Likewise, the learning of all children in government-run schools will be assessed using the same national standardized test. Additionally, the CCSS were designed to promote mastery over skills that would position all U.S. students to compete in a global economy. Creating common academic expectations increased the attention paid to narrowing the achievement gap (Jennings, 2012).

A Brief History of the Study of Change

Over the last century, change research has developed into a multifaceted collection of theoretical and philosophical frameworks yielding an accumulation of empirical studies on a variety of change-related topics including but not limited to the role of the change agent, change readiness, resistance to change, the importance of environment, and the change process itself. Yet, practitioners are still challenged to find a whole-system strategy for the successful implementation of a planned organizational change (Ellsworth, 2000). Nonetheless, the research is advancing. The following is a brief history of the most influential change theorists and theories as they provide context for the rationale behind my study.

Organizational Change Theorists

The French ethnographer and cultural anthropologist, Van Gennep, posed one of the earliest change theories. Van Gennep discovered that individuals around the world experienced change similarly during periods of transition from one social state to another, such as birth, marriage, or death. Fifty years later change research matured toward the development of theory

with social psychologist Kurt Lewin. The most simplistic and most influential of all subsequent

theories presented in this review, Lewin's (1947) theory posited the success of a planned

organizational change is increased when leaders engage in the following three steps:

1. Build trust with individuals by communicating the rationale for the change and

   collectively seeking solutions with those most impacted by the change.

2. Encourage movement toward change through dialogue with employees regarding

   the proposed change and the benefits associated with the change.

3. Establish new patterns of employee behavior as well as new policies and procedures

   to memorialize the change once it has been implemented.

The theory characterizes change as a shift from the status quo, through "unfreezing" existing

patterns, to a period of movement toward a new way of being, and then refreezing in an ideal

state. Ultimately, the theory was criticized for neglecting to address institutional politics and

power, assuming a continuous and stable trajectory through the steps, and manipulating

employee compliance with the illusion of influence over the change (Burnes, 2004).

Later in the decade, Lippitt et al. (1958), a U.S. social psychologist, expanded Lewin's

(1947) earlier work with phases of change theory, which contended seven phases of change

that focused more circumspectly on the role of the change agent within each phase. The phases

include: (a) naming the challenge, (b) assessing organizational and individual capacity for

change, (c) individual motivation to engage in the change process, (d) charting the change

process, (e) defining each individual's role in the change process, (f) stabilizing the change, and

(g) dissolving the need for guidance through change as the culture of the organization adapts to

the change (Lippitt et al., 1958). The theory contributed a more authentic attempt to value the

input of those most impacted by the change as well as more concrete structures for managing

the change including timelines for achieving measurable outcomes and the establishment of

formal feedback loops (Lehman, 2008).

In the late 1960s Beckhard (1969) explored how organizations navigated the changes needed to develop a healthy internal culture. Widely acknowledged as the "architect of planned change theory and practice" (Hampton, 1997, p. 126), Beckhard defined organization development as "an effort [that is] (1) planned, (2) organization-wide, and (3) managed from the top, to (4) increase organization effectiveness and health through (5) planned interventions in the organization's processes, using behavior-science knowledge" (Beckhard, 1969, p. 9). Beckhard asserted major change takes place at a group level instead of at the individual level, where one goal for organizational change should always be to increase collaboration in and among groups. Goals should be clearly defined and measurable. Healthy organizations, Beckhard insisted, consistently seek to increase the effectiveness of communication, trust, and confidence among all employees. Additionally, the locus of decision-making should take place where information is generated as opposed to rigid managerial hierarchy because people support and protect what they design and build together.

With the introduction of the personal computer and the digital age fast emerging by the 1980s, organizational change became an important topic of study and a variety of change models emerged as a result. The most germane to this study on the relationship between an individual's internal structures and their response to change are those of Bridges (1991), Havelock (1995), and Kotter (2012), though Leavitt and Bahrami (1988), and Reddin (1989) should also be acknowledged as offering significantly to the study of change. An analysis of their work will not be included as it pertains more to the management of individuals within change rather than the individual for whom the change most discretely impacts.

Bridges (1991) sought to understand the transitions individuals experience as they move through a planned change. Bridges studied the change in an individual's internal structures as they transition from one understanding or behavior to another. While a planned change within an organization is often time bound and measurable, an individual's acceptance of the change

such that it becomes the new status quo is often much slower. Bridges outlined three phases of transition toward change acceptance that people will experience, where the length of each phase is calculated by each individual. Individuals in the first stage of transition will experience emotions on the continuum of discomfort. From fear of the change to sadness over the loss of the status quo, individuals in this stage are challenged to relinquish old patterns to make room for new expectations. Bridges cautioned leaders of change to acknowledge individuals' emotions or risk prolonged resistance. Individuals in the second stage of transition are at risk of anxiety and resentment as they learn how to do their old work in a new way or do new work entirely. Organizations with many individuals in this stage may see a drop in overall morale as a result of the tension. In the final stage, as individual skill with the change is advanced and people begin to experience success, the organization's culture is revitalized and refreshed.

Like Lippitt et al. (1958), Havelock's (1995) contribution to the study of change stems from Lewin's (1947) original three-step theory but expands the theory to six phases of change, emphasizing the notion of relationship as pivotal to the success of any planned organizational change (Lane, 1992). Precursory to any formal action toward change, Havelock exercised Lewin's original first stage of "building trust" to include the development of a committee that will study the problem and recommend evidence-based practices needed to implement and sustain the change. Havelock further recommended small-scale implementation initially and a heightened sensitivity to the supports for people during change, including training, communication, and acknowledgements (as cited in Lehman, 2008). Again, like Lippitt et al., Havelock's final phase focuses on the need to solidify the change by constructing new pillars of practice, policy and procedure.

On the heels of Havelock's (1995) six-phase change theory, Kotter (2012) shared eight critical steps for leaders of change to consider in planning for organizational transformation. Kotter acknowledged people's preference for the status quo, which must be disrupted through

targeted action designed to increase a sense of urgency at the individual and institutional levels. In agreement with Havelock, Kotter's model also recommends committee formation, though Kotter suggested the committee function primarily to enroll those who are resistant to the change (Kotter, 1999), and like Lippitt et al., Kotter endorsed a clear plan to and through change to encourage broad adoption of the change within the organization. Consistent communication of the change issued broadly alongside leaders' strategic focus on providing the time, training, and resources also support change adoption. Lastly, Kotter's (1999) research suggests that praise and reward for shifts in practice that align with the desired change decrease resistance.

Related Behavioral Change Models and Theories

Most simply put, behavioral change models and the theories they are based on attempt to explain how and/or why people choose to adjust or revise their behavior. Most behavioral change theories are grounded in psychology or sociology and attempt to explain the source of an individual's behavior (Morris et al., 2012). Those who plan and carry out programs to generate behavioral change are called "interventionists" (Glanz et al., 1990, p. 17). An understanding of the most prevalent behavioral change theories is necessary for interventionists as they seek success in the implementation of the intervention (Glanz et al., 1990). The following section explores the three most prevalent behavioral change theories as they can provide insight into an individual's response to change as informed by internal structures.

Rogers' (1962) diffusion of innovation theory was born in the social science field and sought to explain how ideas or behaviors diffuse or spread over time through large social systems leading to broad adoption. To be considered an innovation, people must view the idea or behavior as a departure from the status quo and choose independently to adapt their current practice and conform to change. Rogers (1962) acknowledged, though, that people will adopt the innovation at different rates and qualified five groups of adopters based on shared characteristics.

The following description of each group is based on Rogers' (1962) original work.

- "Innovators" are the first to adopt an innovation. They could be characterized as curious, creative, and adventurous. This group of people is not afraid to take risks, and leaders will need to do little to motivate this group to adopt the innovation.

- "Early adopters" are aware a change needs to take place and can lead the change if provided useful implementation resources.

- Those in the "early majority" look for evidence the innovation can solve the problem appropriately before they are willing to adopt it.

- Those in the "late majority" are not easily convinced the innovation is sound and are only willing to adopt it as a result of evidence of success and critical mass adoption.

- "Laggards" are the most resistant to change and commonly adopt the innovation only after pressure has been applied.

While the theory is perhaps most helpful for leaders strategizing for a planned organizational change, in the case of this proposed study it establishes that readiness for change is informed by one's preexisting internal structures.

The theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977), later dubbed the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991), is useful in that it focuses more categorically on individual control over behavior, most notably one's intention to engage in specific behavior aligned to a planned change. The theory asserts that attitude, as an internal structure, influences an individual's intention to engage in behavior leading to the adoption of a planned change. However, the intention to engage in a behavior to bring about a desired outcome must be combined with the ability to execute the behavior. The theory has been used successfully to explain a variety of health-related behaviors including "smoking, drinking, health services utilization, breastfeeding, and substance abuse" (Boston University School of Public Health, 2019).

This theory outlines five constructs governing a person's behavior (Hardeman et al., 2002; Nisbet & Gick, 2008; Webb et al., 2010), which they will consider interchangeably when deciding to engage in the behavior. The first two address the individual's attitude and motivation, which are based on the belief that the behavior will lead to a desired outcome. The third construct addresses the individual's sensitivity to subjective norms, whether those in positions of political or social power will condone the behavior. Next is the degree to which the behavior will adhere to or defy existing cultural norms. In the fifth construct the individual considers the level of power they have over the resources needed to actualize the behavior successfully. In later years, researchers suggested a sixth construct should be added as evidence showed individuals considering the difficulty of performing the behavior (Bandura, 1997; Terry et al., 1993). The addition of this last construct resulted in renaming the theory.

Both the theory of reasoned action and the more recent theory of planned behavior fall short as a viable framework for this study in that they primarily explore an individual's conscious decision to engage in the behavior needed to bring about a planned change and not the subconscious internal structures influencing the decision. Originally labeled "social learning theory" when it was published in the 1960s by Bandura (1971), the theory postulates that learning is a dynamic process where behavior is developed through observation and imitation in a social context. The model is illustrated through a triangulation between wanted or unwanted behavior, internal forces, and situational factors; however, the theory proposes that behavior is driven primarily by situational factors as opposed to internal forces (Bandura, 1986). In other words, given the right context, behavior can be predicted if not compelled. Examples of the internal forces influencing behavior might include instinct and attitude, as well as conscious and unconscious character traits. Other variables influencing behavior change include one's belief in: (a) an ability to successfully engage in the behavior, (b) the desirability of the consequences of the behavior, (c) an ability to sustain the behavior, (d) the quality of rewards or penalties to

reinforce the behavior, (e) the emotional stability of the individual engaged in the behavior, and (f) the ability to learn from others engaged in the same behavior (Bandura, 1986). Because this theory focuses on producing desired behaviors, it is not the most appropriate foundational theory for a study attempting to understand the relationship between one's internal structures and their readiness to engage in change. Rather, this study strongly advocates for the external rewards or punishments to stabilize the desired behavior.

Like the theory of reasoned action, the stages of change model assumes a cognitive approach when explaining behavior and attempts to explain in five categories an individual's "level of motivational readiness" (Heimlich & Ardoin, 2008, p. 279). The five stages are precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance. The theory was originally developed through research conducted to understand why some smokers were able to stop smoking of their own volition and some were not. Findings ultimately led researchers to conclude the critical nature of "change readiness," where change of habitual behavior occurs through a cyclical process and not instantaneously (Morris et al., 2012). Individuals at the same level of readiness are thought to benefit from the same interventions (Nisbet & Gick, 2008). Individuals who: (a) believe they have the requisite skills and knowledge to move to the next level, and (b) believe that the benefits of movement outweigh the cost will progress toward freedom from addiction (Armitage et al., 2004).

Practitioners rather than researchers favor the stages of change model because of a lack of conceptual understanding regarding the degree with which some individuals change and some do not (Morris et al., 2012). Furthermore, the model largely ignores the environmental and societal elements influencing change readiness. In relation to this study, I acknowledge the limitations of a model attempting to explain change readiness as it pertains to addiction. Since this study aimed to understand the extent to which an individual's internal structures impact

response to change in a planned organizational change, and not how to change an individual's existing unwanted behavior, this model is not compatible.

Change Readiness

In 1982, futurist Fuller coined the phrase "knowledge doubling curve" to explain the phenomena associated with the pace at which human knowledge grows. To summarize, until 1900 knowledge doubled every 100 years. By 2013, however, knowledge was doubling, on average, every 13 months (Schilling, 2013). The growth of this knowledge led to technological advances in communication which dramatically changed commerce on a global scale and provided for the development of previously unexplored trade relationships (De Meuse et al., 2010; Gordon et al., 2000). As entirely new industries emerged, businesses realized the critical need to maximize operational excellence while accelerating innovation in order to remain competitive (Hess, 2014). Employees of these companies, then, must be adaptive. They must communicate efficiently and effectively, and they must use data to out-ideate, out-innovate, and out-plan in order to out-perform the competition (Hess, 2014).

In response, bodies of research in an array of fields were born from the need for organizations to expedite the change process in light of the exponential expansion of knowledge. While researchers have historically studied the external structures associated with change efforts, only recently have studies been conducted to identify the role of individuals within the organization—more specifically, the behaviors hindering or contributing to the successful implementation of the change (Choi & Ruona, 2011). Findings from these studies suggest that sustainable change is, in large part, dependent upon employees' positive attitude toward the change and subsequent favorable behavior toward the change. In related studies researchers attempted to understand how an employee's attitude toward change can be altered through external factors including organizational support, extrinsic reward, and the change process itself (Holt et al., 2007; Herold et al., 2007; Jones et al., 2008; Shum et al., 2008). For

the purposes of this study, it is important to focus this section of the literature review on the research conducted around an individual's readiness for change and, more explicitly, the research around individuals within the field of education.

Individual Change Readiness is Precursory to Successful Change Efforts. An individual's readiness for change has surfaced in the research as a necessary antecedent to the success of organizational change efforts (Merovich & Pung, 2007; Shea & Howell, 1998). Defined as one's "beliefs, attitudes, and intentions regarding the extent to which changes are needed and the organization's capacity to successfully undertake those changes" seminal researchers Armenakis et al. (1993, p. 681) found individual change readiness was a "cognitive precursor to…[a] change effort" (p. 298). In other words, the way an individual thinks and feels about the change will inform their behavior, which directly impacts the success of the effort (Oreg et al., 2011). Where failure rates for organizational change are commonly cited at upward of 70%, it is critical to acknowledge each individual's attitude toward change and the impact it may have on the change effort (Decker et al., 2012; McKay et al., 2013; Mourier et al., 2002).

Attitude Contributes to Individual Change Readiness. The success of organizational change hinges on the behavior of the individuals involved in the change. A variety of empirical studies demonstrate that attitude has the power to predict behavior (Fazio & Zanna, 1981; Millar & Tesser, 1989; Schuman & Johnson, 1976). Therefore, it is important to understand the extent to which attitude contributes to change readiness. While there is no universally agreed upon definition for attitude (Miller & Tesser, 1989), it can be described as "a predisposition or a tendency to respond positively or negatively toward a certain idea, object, person, or situation. Attitude influences an individual's choice of action, and responses to challenges, incentives, and rewards (together called stimuli)." (Pressley, 2013, p. 1). Four major components of attitude are: (a) affective: emotions or feelings, (b) cognitive: belief or opinions held consciously, (c) conative: inclination for action, and (d) evaluative: positive or negative response to stimuli.

By the late 1980s research had established the mediating role of thought on the relationship between attitude and behavior, but the level of predictive power thought had over behavior was still in dispute (Fazio et al., 1982; Scheier & Carver, 1981; Wilson et al., 1989). In a study conducted by Wilson et al., findings suggested that people who attempt to explain the thinking behind their behavior are often only presenting a biased subset of reasons—those most salient to them and thus highly subjective. When participants consciously express a rationale for their behavior, the behavior becomes more predictable. Ultimately, however, as individuals become less reflective, the affective response will resurface. In other words, subconscious emotions associated with the activity will guide behavior as opposed to thinking. Therefore, the higher an individual's self-awareness, the more attitude should predict behavior (Scheier et al., 1978; Snyder & Swann, 1976). Studies of this period suggested there was still much to understand about the effect of the specific components of attitude on behavior, namely the effective and cognitive.

Millar and Tesser (1989) tested whether the predictability of attitude on behavior could be strengthened if participants knew whether they were engaging in a cognitive-focus procedure or an affective-focus procedure. Put differently, attitude-behavior relation was highly correlative in previous studies only when what the procedure participants were engaged in was appropriately aligned to an assessment of either the cognitive aspect of attitude or the affective aspect of attitude. If, for example, the test prompted participants to engage in consummatory behavior, then an assessment of the affective component of attitude was a better predictor of behavior than an assessment of the cognitive component of attitude. Millar and Tesser's study confirmed their hypothesis.

Empirical Studies of Change Readiness. The accelerated pace of knowledge growth in the 21st century suggests that the success of any organization will be largely dependent on a developing identity as a learning organization, one comfortable with constant change (Cascio,

1995; Howard, 1995; Vales, 2007), educational organizations notwithstanding. While the body

of research around organizational change has long since existed (Coch & French, 1948), it has

been dominantly conducted outside of the field of education until recently. In this analysis of

empirical research, change readiness was studied at the organizational and individual levels,

firstly outside of the field of education and then within it.

Studies of Organizational and Individual Change Readiness Outside of Education.

Prior to the early 1980s change research largely revolved around organizational actions, namely

the study of effective change processes and procedures (Delbecq & Van de Ven, 1971; Hage &

Aiken, 1970; Judge et al., 1999; Van de Ven, 1980). The assumption was that change was

formulaic in nature; it was simply a matter of identifying the correct algorithm and applying it

appropriately in context. But, as the Reagan era broadened the highway of innovation by means

of large-scale federal deregulation, the pace of business quickened, and researchers began to

explore the human side of change. One such initial study sought to understand how managers

facilitated change initiatives within organizations (Isabella, 1990). In this inductive study, Isabella

constructed a model for managers' interpretation of change in situ resulting in the identification

of 4 major stages of change and the cognitive external triggers leading managers to shift from

one to another along the continuum. While the study did not outrightly acknowledge the

influence of both cognition and attitudes on the change initiative, findings did grant that

"personalized experiencing of and affective reaction to triggering events [kept] the movement

going [and] Van de Ven (1980) suggested that personal crisis initiates cognition" (Isabella, 1990,

p. 27). In other words, the desire for change prompts the behaviors associated with change.

Isabella's study persuaded future researchers to consider the relationship between action,

cognition, and affective reactions in the presence of change.

Armenakis et al. (1993) developed an initial instrument to measure change readiness

within an organization at the individual employee level, irrespective of managerial title. This

mixed-methods study involved 900 participants from two organizations at various stages within the study and was predicated on the fact that the acceptance of any planned organizational change is a direct result of each employee taking the necessary steps to implement said change. The resulting analysis yielded a multidimensional framework that explored employee beliefs regarding the change in five specific dimensions: discrepancy, efficacy, organizational valence, management support, and personal valence. The degree of the employee's confidence within each dimension was correlative to the success of the change. This study was one of the first to openly acknowledge the individual's psychological predisposition toward change as a factor in the success or failure of a change initiative.

Change research in the early 2000s expanded significantly toward measuring change readiness at the individual level, more specifically the extent to which internal and external factors influenced change readiness. In one such qualitative study, Cunningham et al. (2002) examined psychological, work, and the environmental factors of homelife as they contributed to readiness for healthcare organizational change. Six hundred and fifty-four employees were randomly selected to complete a questionnaire resulting in the following findings:

- Domestic factors influenced readiness for change only inasmuch as those with small children were less able to participate in the design process.

- Job insecurity did not significantly impact change readiness.

- Change readiness was not increased as a result of potential benefits of the change.

- Workers who assumed a greater responsibility for solving problems on the job and those with greater self-efficacy in job mobility had higher levels of change readiness.

- Workers with higher percentages of participation in redesign activities also contributed at high rates to the change implementation.

- Workers with higher decision-making capital contributed at a greater rate to all activities associated with the change initiative.

- Workers with higher social capital reported rates of lower emotional exhaustion, though this did not directly contribute to their readiness for change.

Rashid et al. (2003) introduced one of the first studies to quantify the relationship between organizational culture and change readiness at the individual level. While previous research suggested that change must be considered from the technological, organizational, and personal perspectives (Linstone & Mitroff, 1994), companies had largely focused on the technological and organizational levels because of the complexity associated with workers' attitudes toward change, where attitude comprises cognitive, affective, and behavioral components (Dunham, 1984; Dunham et al., 1989). This study employed two instruments in the form of questionnaires mailed to the managers of 1,964 Malaysian companies. I received 284 questionnaires back, and subsequent analysis revealed a stronger predisposition toward change when an organizational culture exhibited a "single-minded dedication to the organization's mission and goals, quick response to changes in the environment, and an unwillingness to accept poor performance" (Rashid et al., 2004, p. 176). While this study was not conducted in the United States nor in an educational environment it does offer statistically significant evidence that culture is intrinsically important in the speed of change (Lorenzo, 1998; Pool, 2000).

Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) conducted one of the earliest studies designed to understand the relationship between commitment and individual behaviors necessary to bring about organizational change. In a previously published article, Meyer and Allen (1991) developed a three-component model of organizational commitment, defining *affective commitment* as the employee's desire to remain in the organization. This component of commitment resulted in the strongest level of dependability. Those employees with *normative commitment* could be described as obligated to perform as a result of their employment. The relationship between this employee and the organization is transactional in nature. The final

component, *continuance commitment*, is the weakest commitment. Employees with this level of commitment feel obligated to remain, but absent the desire to stay. Ultimately, the results of Meyer and Allen's study demonstrate that an employee's commitment to a planned organizational change itself predicts behaviors desirable to bringing about the change more than a commitment to the organization itself. In a similar study, Conner (1992) confirmed these findings and connected organizational purpose for change to individual commitment. The strength of this relationship increases the likelihood of behavioral change in support of the organizational change while simultaneously reducing the individual's desire to find alternative employment.

Perhaps more directly connected to the focus of this proposed study is the research conducted by Rune Lines (2005), which proposed a more comprehensive theoretical framework to explain both an individual's negative and positive reactions to a planned organizational change. Building on the research conducted by Armenakis et al. (1993) and Isabella (1990), Lines (2005) was one of the first to explore the internal structures or general dispositions that reinforce *attitudinal perseverance* (p. 11). In context, individuals are more likely to consciously or subconsciously seek evidence to reinforce an existing attitude that influences the retention of new information (Festinger, 1957; Hymes, 1986; Read & Rosson, 1982) related to the proposed change. Additionally, *attitude ambivalence* is included in the framework and defined as two or more competing attitudes toward a stimuli (Lines, p. 13). This ambivalence leads the individual into deeper contemplation of the change and a desire to settle on a single attitude. Individuals with attitude ambivalence are more open to suggestion and competing viewpoints to stabilize their ambivalence.

Lines' (2005) framework propelsthe theory that an individual's attitude toward any change is based on how discretely the change will impact them and challenge or reinforce existing values and beliefs. As part of a larger collective, individuals are susceptible to peer

influence, as well. Micro and mesolevel social interactions, particularly, may sway attitudes formation toward the collective interpretation (Rice & Aydin, 1991). From a management standpoint, attitude theory (Lines, 2005) proposes that it is far easier to influence individuals toward change prior to attitude formation. Therefore, the most critical time in any change initiative is the earliest stage, and managers should be strategic in addressing issues that will most directly impact the individuals; otherwise, the power of emotions and beliefs will influence the formation of an attitude leading to behaviors not conducive to the change.

In a more recent study conducted with faculty at one public university, 88 participants completed a survey based on Herscovitch and Meyer's (2002) scale measuring affective commitment to change (Neves, 2009). This research used the five principal components of organizational change (i.e., discrepancy, principal support, self-efficacy, appropriateness, and personal valence) identified by Armenakis & Bedeian (1999) as the foundation for understanding what contributes to an individual's desire to adopt a change. The following hypotheses were tested:

- There is a positive relationship between an individual's belief that the proposed change is the best course of action to lead the organization to the desired end state and a desire to participate in the change.

- There is a positive relationship between the individual's capacity to successfully deal with the change and a desire to participate in the change.

The first hypothesis was found to be true, while data from the second hypothesis did not result in a positive conclusion. In other words, just because an individual can cope with the change, does not increase the desire to participate in it (Neves, 2009). Regardless, the study lends more substantive empirical research to Armenakis & Bedeian (1999) supposition that change readiness is multidimensional and "creating readiness for change does influence individual's behavioral intentions" (p. 225).

Factors Influencing Change Readiness in Education. To begin, change readiness research conducted in educational environments is a newly evolving field. In fact, while a variety of instruments have been published to measure attitudes associated with change readiness (Holt et al., 2007), an exhaustive study of 106 peer-reviewed articles published in the last 20 years revealed only 6% were conducted in educational environments (Weiner et al., 2008). Regardless, the most salient of the few studies conducted around change readiness in educational environments, particularly as they relate to internal structures influencing individual change readiness, are discussed in the following section.

Research has already established that individual behavior change is the foundation of successful organizational change (Cockburn, 2005; Hallinger & Bryant, 2013), and attitudes inform behavior (Lines, 2005). However, most research conducted in an educational environment at the individual level so far has been leader centric (Amis & Aïssaou 2013). Kondakci et al. (2017) sought to address the gap in educational change readiness research parallel to the research conducted teachers' attitudes about change and change readiness (Clegg & Walsh, 2004; Cockburn, 2005). This study is important in that constituent ownership of a change is more critical to the success of a change effort within a school environment than it is in other professional environments (Chow, 2013), and change leaders are more likely to succeed when they have a "broader temporal and contextual understanding rather than demonstrating limited interventions during times of change" (Kondakci et al., 2017, p. 176). Therefore, change leaders cannot simply have a plan for implementing change. They must also be aware of teachers' existing attitudes toward the change and plan to maximize positive attitudes as early as possible (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999).

In Kondakci et al.'s (2017) predictive correlational study, 1,649 elementary and secondary school teachers in Turkey volunteered to participate, and researchers employed a multipart data collection instrument designed to measure the predictive value of context,

process, and outcome variables related to change readiness. These variables were assigned as a result of the research conducted by Armenakis and Bedeian (1999), which suggests the variables are strongly associated with positive attitudes toward change. Findings indicate that both personal and work-related variables (experience, school size, and student-teacher ratio) showed little power in predicting change readiness, and these results correlate with existing literature (Shah, 2010). Job satisfaction, however, was predictive of cognitive, emotional, and intentional readiness for change, and workload was valuable in predicting both emotional and intentional readiness. Trust among administrators and teachers was a strong predictor for intentional readiness but not emotional readiness.

Structuration Theory

In structuration theory, Giddens' (1989) argues for a blend of structure and agency and is comprised of three separate yet interdependent concepts of structure that clearly presuppose a human's actions. The subsequent consequences of those actions can only be understood within the frame of the relationship between the external conditions necessitating the action and the individual's interpretation of those conditions (p. 49). In tacit agreement, Fuchs (2001) argued against any approach dividing structure and agency, though the divide between structure and agency remains ubiquitous for many social scientists (e.g., Archer, 2000; King, 1999).

Giddens (1989) presented the previously divided objectivist and subjectivist categories of social theory as codependent. Objectivist theories present social reality as independent of people's actions. Furthermore, objectivist theorists maintain people's actions are largely defined and determined by this social reality. In contrast, subjectivist theorists believe an individual's social reality is a construct of their own interpretation. Giddens' theory held strongly to a duality of structure (see Figure 1) where an individual experiences both a very real external social construct that is also colored by their hermeneutical understanding of that construct. It is this

duality of structure, indelibly comprised of both schemas and resources that predict the

individual's actions and, in turn, affect the nature of the structure in the future. Giddens (1989)

summarized the process as:

> Every social system, no matter how small or ephemeral, or large-scale and
>
> permanent, gains its systematic qualities only through regularities of social
>
> reproduction. The ways in which such regularities – which consist of social practices
>
> are organized in and through the behavior of contextually located actors have to be
>
> subjected to empirical investigation. (p. 300)

In this light, structures are "continuously reproducing or transforming" (Sewell, 1992, p. 4). They

are, by definition, dynamic and "must be regarded as a process, not a steady state" (Sewell,

1992, p. 4) because of the constant inputs of the actors within them.

Action, Context, and Structure

Structuration theory hinges on a comprehension of three key terms: action, context, and

the social facts that constitute structure. *Action* or *agency*, whereby an individual is

consequently deemed the "actor" or "agent," is defined as a continuous flow of behavior in

consideration of a situational context and not as a series of singularly independent choices

irrespective of that context. Furthermore, action is predicated on the actor's interpretive

schemas which are rooted in the actors' memory structures of domination, signification, and

legitimation. The experiences the actor has with these structures are acknowledged as the

foundation for their microlevel perceptions within a context. The actor then decides on actions

conforming or defying these perceptions in what has been called the "history-producing power

of agency" (Parker, 2000, p. 10). In short, actors draw on these three structures as they

negotiate for and exercise power through surface-level interaction. When this happens, actors

are operational agents engaged in the process of producing and/or reproducing social systems;

therefore, the theory of structuration presents social structure as a dynamic and fluidly evolving

ecosystem of interaction, whereby agents' "memory traces," or past experiences inform their ability to navigate their current circumstances (Stones, 2005, p. 17).

Situational context, too, includes the actor's perception of the actions of others as well as the limitations and opportunities presented within a particular social construct, which can be expressed through the relationship between "the patterning of interaction as implying relations between actors or groups; and the continuity of interaction in time" (Giddens, 1979, p. 62). Therefore, structure itself is comprised of social facts at the macrolevel including, but not limited to, ethnicity and gender roles, socioeconomic status, geographical location, and organizational hierarchies (Musolf, 2003, p. 1). The heart of structuration theory, though, is found at the mesolevel and illustrated every time an actor invokes a social structure during interaction in order to produce and reproduce it. With each action memory traces are accessed, and the actor may choose to conform or defy convention. This exchange, then, produces a new memory trace for the actor and all positional relations within the exchange to draw from in the future. It is the social action of people that create structures (Stones, 2005).

In summary, Giddens (1989) developed structuration theory as a vibrant process involving the origination and evolution of social structures erected by actors, human beings whose actions in context will be largely defined by their preconceived perceptions of the world and the individuals in it; therefore, both actors and structures are mutually constitutive. Implicit in this process is the role of time as a mediator for change where the actor is liable to reconstruct their perceptions of the context based on the ebb and flow of interaction between other actors and/or the structure itself (Sewell, 1992, p. 4).

Critiques

The critiques of Giddens' (1989) structuration theory have been numerous and pointed primarily to the negligent construct of a methodology suitable such that empirical research might be conducted. Thompson (1989) issued sharp reproval regarding a need for a more

conventional notion of social structure and the ambiguity with which structuration theory draws

on structures in general. Left vague are the definitions and defining characteristics of

differentiating rules of structure and their varying degrees of importance (Stones, 2005, p. 47).

Additionally, Mouzelis (1991, as cited in Parker, 2000) have challenged Giddens' primary

principle—the duality of structure—and many have contested the theory as underdeveloped

(Jack & Kholeif, 2007; Stones, 2005). However, Giddens acknowledged the theory as "abstract

and generalized" (Giddens & Pierson, 1998, p. 295) and did not promote the practical

application of the theory (Stones, 2005). Therefore, structuration was considered highly

circumspect by critics such as "Baumann, Thrift, Gregson and others who see Giddens as a

meta-theorist" (Jack & Kholeif, 2007, p. 209). Left without defining characteristics, the theory

fails to address several critical issues, including:

- how "structure enters into the constitution of the agent" (Stones, 2005, p. 5)

- how the structure translates to "the practices that this agent produces" (Stones, 2005, p. 44)

- what process agents engage in to frame the meaning within which external structures are determined as accurate or inaccurate

- which outcomes stemming from the duality of structure are intended and which are unintended

Nonetheless, the theory still incites a considerable level of contemplation, and some have

attempted to apply it in empirical studies (Stones, 2005; Whittington, 1992), recently, and most

notably, due to the refinement of Giddens' original theory through the work of Stones (2005, as

cited in Jack & Kholeif, 2007).

Strong Structuration Theory

Stones' (2005) development of Giddens' (1989) original theory resulted in strong

structuration theory. This more detailed version of the theory may serve as a framework for

understanding how organizations are developed over time as perpetually iterative institutions of interaction rather than rigid environments unyielding to the will of the agents (Thompson, 1989). The use of the structures of signification, domination, and legitimation employed in microlevel horizontal and hierarchical interactions between agents within the organization shape the culture (Giddens, 1979). It is important to distinguish social systems, which make up the culture and exist only as a result or outcome of social practices, as separate from the internal structures agents draw upon reflexively to produce recursive practices that form social systems (Stones, 2005). These external structures may be thought of as the outcome of action, or "the agent-in-focus's context of action" (p. 95), and they are comprised of the "rules, resources, and the relations between a particular practice and the network of practices to which it relates" (Grin et al., 2010, p. 276). It is only within the second dimension of Stones' quadripartite cycle of structuration that the agent mediates this first dimension and determines all future action (Stones, 2009).

The agent's internal structures, mediated by context-specific external structures, inform and guide the action itself, which results in an outcome (Stones, 2005). As was previously stated, this outcome may only be a reflexive consideration of the agent's own internal structures and not an outwardly observable behavior or practice. Giddens' (1989) structuration theory, criticized as being largely inapplicable to empirical research, failed to provide the guidelines necessary for examining the subtleties between structure and agency. Stones' strong structuration theory "delimits the action-horizons of agents in situ in order to establish what [the researcher] and/or the agents regard as the line between external and internal structures, as well as structure and agency" (p. 84). Furthermore, Stones suggested internal structures must be considered bilaterally as: (a) general-dispositional and (b) conjuncturally-specific in order for any conduct analysis to occur.

Figure 2 presents a continuum illustrating a more widely recognizable separation between structure and agency within an agent's conjuncturally-specific internal structures, which require a conscious, if not critical, awareness of the external structures specific to the conjuncture.

Figure 2

Structure and Agency Continuum

Difference between Structure and Agency is Unrecognizable	General-Dispositional Internal Structures		Conjuncturally-Specific Internal Structures	Recognizable Difference between Structure and Agency Unrecognizable

Habitual or Routinely Performed Action				Critical Awareness or Strategic Monitoring of Action
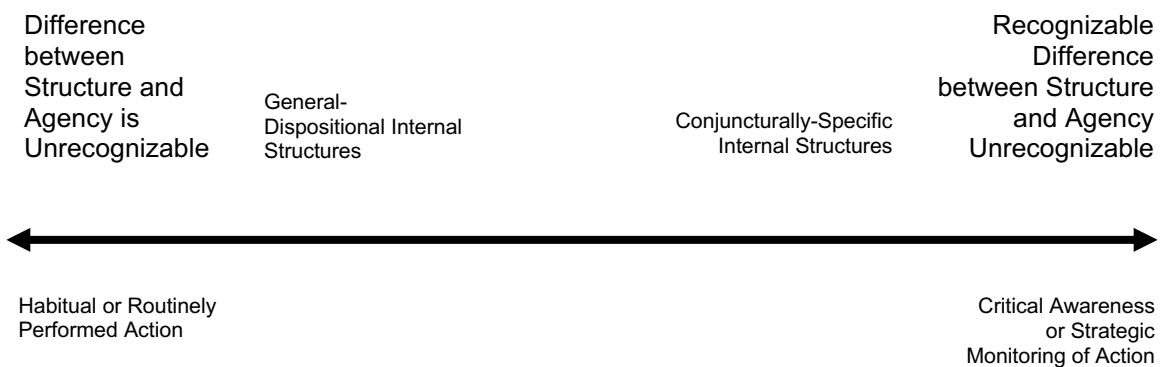
General-dispositional Internal Structures

These structures were first termed habitus by social theorist Bourdieu (1979), and though Stones (2005) used the two terms interchangeably Stones warned researchers that Bourdieu's habitus is "perhaps too much associated with practical action to be able also to signify enough of the feeling of a general world-view incorporating dimensions of culture" (Stones, 2005, p. 87). In Stones' estimation, general-dispositional internal structures are the embodiment of:

> Transposable skills and dispositions, including generalized world-views and cultural schemas, classifications, typifications of things, people and networks, principles or action, typified recipes of action, deep binary frameworks of signification, associative chains and connotations of discourse, habits of speech and gesture, and

methodologies for adapting this generalized knowledge to a range of particular

practices in particular locations in time and space. (p. 88)

Furthermore, agents are commonly only perfunctorily aware of the cultural contributories to the

predispositions for thinking and feeling, drawing on them naturally rather than intentionally or

reflectively to perform routine tasks (Mouzelis, 2016). They may only become aware of their

general-dispositional internal structures when actively challenged to consider the why and/or

how of their responses or when a drastically different environment prompts comparison. These

structures are formed at the macro and meso levels through acculturation and suggest to the

actor culturally accepted ways of being and/or responding to context-specific stimuli (Bourdieu,

2005).

The Difference Between Habitus and General-dispositional Internal Structures

Habit has been expressed as "broad, generalized, orienting predispositions that act as a

filter for interpreting meaning of experience" (Mezirow, 2000, p. 17). The term habit originated

from the more formal term "habitus" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), though in its earliest form,

the concept of habitus was termed "hexis" by Greek philosopher, Aristotle (Wacquant, 2007).

From this ancient construct Bourdieu (1990) further defined the construct as habitus:

The conditioning associated with a particular class of conditions of existence…systems

of durable, transposable dispositions…principles which generate and organize practices

and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without

presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operation

necessary to attain them. (p. 53)

In short, an individual is subconsciously influenced to give a predictable response in a situation

based on the conditioning and interpretation of their previous experiences. In this way the

individual is both shaped by social conditions and shaping social conditions simultaneously

(Bourdieu, 1979).

Reeves (2016), in a study of prison inmates' experiences, presented habitus as a static concept when compared to Stones' (2005) reinterpretation, which was renamed general-dispositional internal structures and reimagined as a more reflexive and malleable construct. Reeves presented coping mechanisms for change as emanating from habitus when the inmates drew from existing knowledge in order to frame their responses to the current circumstance. However, when an inmate was able to adapt their habitus to accommodate and even thrive in current circumstances, habitus evolved to the more sophisticated general-dispositional. In similar research, Mann (2012) distinguished between habitus and general-dispositional structures. The habitus, Mann contended, is:

> An existing set of beliefs and values, which allows [inmates] to take part in the prison regime, whilst others are able to adjust to the situation by adapting their general-dispositional internal structures. These men embrace the regime's slower pace of life and the ontological security it provides. (p. 62)

Both Reeves and Mann distinguished between Bourdieu's habitus and Stones' general-dispositional structures, painting habitus as largely unconscious and inflexible to adaptation.

As has been suggested, early childhood experiences contribute to an individual's foundational habitus (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). As early as 1934, social scientist Mead constructed a framework for studying the impact social environments had on the construction of an individual's self. As a result of Mead's research and other more recent seminal research (Bandura, 2001; Bluth, 1982; Clark & Chalmers, 1998), it can be concluded that understanding an individual's personal history is necessary in the study of their general-dispositional internal structures.

Many social scientists have criticized the concept of habitus as incomplete for ignorantly assuming the agent's inability to detour from the established dispositions of past generations (Reay, 2004; Shilling, 2004; Stones, 2015). First, Archer & Archer (1995) and then Stones

(2005) challenged the concept, arguing on behalf of the agent's decision to comply or reject past practice, especially when the practice was deemed oppressive. This decision-making process termed "ordering of concerns" (Archer & Archer, 1995), or "hierarchy of purposes" (Stones, 2005), "is essentially an internal conversation, which takes into account the priorities, which the agent has, in order to decide whether the general dispositional should be adapted," (Mann, 2012, p. 18). Bourdieu's (2005) original presentation of habitus limits the active agency in the realm of change (Hills, 2006).

Conjuncturally-specific Internal Structures

This final component of the second dimension of the quadripartite nature of structuration theory can be précised as the agent-in-focus' contextualized knowledge of relevant external structures including knowledge of other positional agents and their power to interpret, communicate, and influence or constrain outcomes (Stones, 2005, 2009). Conjuncturally-specific internal structures are specific to in-the-moment decision making where knowledge is processed while being simultaneously shaped by the agent's general-dispositional structures to generate a lens through which the agent will view "how she can act within and upon the world to sustain or to change it" (Stones, 2009, p. 85). Separate from general-dispositional structures, conjuncturally-specific knowledge is not generalizable; rather, it is specific to a singular moment in time which is distinguished by the particular details. It is knowledge relevant for behaving within a time-and-place situated context (Stones, 2005). These internal structures are not the focus of this study and will only be referenced to the extent they impact the discussion pertaining to general-dispositional internal structures.

In conclusion, change research is relatively new, only having evolved largely over the last 100 years in the social sciences field. Most change-specific theorists during this time have spent much of their efforts developing multipronged approaches for change management, beginning with Lewin's *Three-Step Change Theory* (1947), then Lippitt et al.'s *Phases of*

Change Theory (1958), Havelock's (1995) six phases of change, and Kotter's (1999) eight steps for leaders of change. Indirectly related theories on change include Roger's (1962) *Diffusion of Innovation Theory* and Ajzen's (1991) *Theory of Planned Behavior*, both of which expand what is known about an individual's conscious and subconscious control over their own behavior contributing to change success.

Perhaps more useful, though, are the distinct concepts within these theories that promote additional research in a broader variety of contexts, including leaders of change, cultural and individual change readiness, resistance and/or acceptance of change, managing change, learning organizations, and the roles of trust, attitude, or behavior on macro, meso, and microlevel change efforts. Individual change readiness, for example, has only recently been identified as statistically significant to the success of a change effort. In fact, an individual's desire for change subconsciously prompts the behaviors associated with a successful change effort. Indeed, if an organization does not spend time addressing each change participant's affect toward the desired change, the change is less likely to succeed, even if the participant is cognitively in favor of the change. Furthermore, change participants subconsciously edit their experiences in favor of evidence to reinforce an existing paradigm, even if that paradigm is not favored. In fact, a participant's attitude toward the change is highly influenced by the extent to which it challenges or reinforces the participant's existing system of beliefs.

Change research in the field of education has been largely centered on the change leader and/or the process of change with a limited lens on the extent to which teachers' internal structures impact a change effort. This dissertation sought to understand how a teacher's general dispositions influence a planned organizational change.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This qualitative research sought to understand how an individual's response to change is influenced by their internal structures and the external structures associated with a planned organizational change. A naturalistic approach is most appropriate for the purpose of studying a bounded phenomenon, and this study intends to construct the lived experiences of the key "units of analysis" (Yin, 2009, p. 29), with particular interest in the cross-section between: (a) the behaviors, beliefs, and emotions of the individual, their internal structures, and (b) the situational context of the planned organizational change, otherwise referred to as external structures.

The proposed methodology to be used in this instrumental case study benefits the researcher through an enhanced understanding of the phenomenon and its relationship to the situational context (Yin, 2003). In other words, the case itself presents the opportunity to learn more about the interaction between an agent's internal structures in the presence of one planned organizational change. This chapter begins by outlining specifically the design approach and alignment to the theoretical underpinnings of the study. The chapter continues with a description of the setting, sampling protocol, and instrumentation. In order to establish the credibility of this case study, the chapter will conclude with a clear description of the phased procedure for answering the research question, including data collection, management, analysis, and study trustworthiness (Yin, 2009). The study design addresses four criteria for establishing trustworthiness in qualitative data: truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). All documents included were studied with particular attention paid to the contribution each made toward revealing "a complex description and interpretation of the problem" (Creswell, 2007, p. 37).

Research Paradigm

Qualitative studies are designed to provide insight into the contextualized reality of the participants from a social constructivist position (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). These studies assume a participant's reality is based on everyone's subjective interpretation, and as such, certain methods of study lead to "greater clarity about the nature of the phenomenon to be explored" (Holloway & Todres, 2003, p. 347). Qualitative researchers explore opportunities to observe and record phenomenon using a range of data sources, and often through "the close collaboration between the researcher and the participant, while enabling participants to tell their stories" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 544). Furthermore, it is the duty and privilege of the qualitative researcher to capture a participant's interpretative reality in relationship to the phenomenon and represent the expressed experience authentically (Crabtree & Miller, 1999; Creswell, 2013).

Of the major qualitative research designs, I elected to use a case study design for two reasons. Firstly, Yin (2003) recommended case studies as specifically appropriate when the following four criteria are met:

- The researcher is examining a how or why question.

- The researcher is not able to interfere with the behavior of the participants.

- Context is a critical component of the phenomenon under study.

- The boundaries between phenomenon and context are indistinct.

Secondly, the theoretical framework for this study was grounded in a social constructivist worldview, holding individuals as the sole creators of a relative truth (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009) which is defined by a situational context (Creswell, 2013). A case study providing for an empirical exploration of ontological relativity is the most appropriate platform. Lastly, the author of the study's foundational theoretical framework—strong structuration—points to case study as the preferred method when conducting empirical research (Stones, 2005).

Thomas (2011) described "a case study as having two elements: (a) A 'practical, historical unity,' which is the *subject* of the case study, and (b) an analytical or theoretical frame, which is the *object* of the study" (p. 512). The subject of this case study was a planned change to the daily instructional routine of those working at and attending the primary research sites. The objective of this study was to understand how an individual's subjective response to a planned organizational change is influenced by their internal structures while simultaneously being informed by the external structures associated with the change, as suggested by strong structuration theory (Stones, 2005).

Research Strategy

This study addressed a single research question:

- RQ. How do teachers' general-dispositional internal structures influence their response to a planned organizational change?

The research question was designed to further a collective understanding of the extent to which an agent's internal structures impact their response to a planned organizational change. The question was examined in two distinctly separate stages so that I could first fully understand the external structures presented in context in the initial stage, provoking an etic perspective of the object of the study. The second stage attended to the social interactions provoked by the critical elements identified in the first stage of the study and the internal structures of each participant—in other words, an emic perspective of the object of the study (Stones, 2005). The data collection and analysis were similarly structured in two separate stages using the methodological bracketing approach of strong structuration theory (Stones, 2005).

Bracketing the data is necessary for two reasons:

1. Bracketing allows the researcher to separate the etic perspective, what the researcher gains from external documents, and observations of the organizational

conditions of the change in order to surface the critical contextual elements

prompting contextual analysis. It is necessary for understanding the ontology-in-situ.

2. Bracketing provides the researcher the emic perspective of each agent interviewed

   in consideration of their existing knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about the

   organization, their role within the organization, and the critical elements of the

   planned organizational change surfaced in the first stage (Coad & Herbert, 2009;

   Stones, 2005).

More explicitly, bracketing offers guidelines directing the researcher toward discrete aspects of

a social object. To this end brackets serve to increase "reflexivity about what precisely is

involved in a particular knowledge claim" (Stones, 2005, p. 120). Bracketing sharpens the

researcher's focus on the issue of which ontological concepts are most relevant to a piece of

research (Stones, 2005, p. 120).

Methodologically, mesolevel studies provide a variety of planes for contextualization,

and they encourage a focused study "on a restricted number of germane points" (Stones, 2005,

p. 82) wherein the researcher finds the latitude to explore more thoroughly patterns, systems,

and structures.

Context Analysis

The first stage of this study focused on an analysis of the external structures associated

with the change as conditions of agency. Stake (1995) underscored the importance of

identifying issues pertaining to the context of the case and claimed "issues are not simple and

clean, but intricately wired to political, social, historical, and especially personal contexts. All

these are important in studying cases" (p. 17). This stage of research is designed to understand

the macro and mesolevel constituent aspects of the environment, or issues, as they constrain or

influence agency. As Jack and Kholeif (2007) posited, "External structures constitute

acknowledged and unacknowledged conditions of action and 'may be the basis for unintended

consequences of action' (Stones, 2005, p. 109)" (p. 214). In this way, an analysis of external structures to include agent opinion of the organizational environment and their "networked others" (Stones, 2005, p. 123) may provide a rationale for the observed outcomes of the study. Additionally, it is critical to analyze participants' level of contextual awareness pertaining to the change. However, as Jack and Kholeif allowed, external structures may go unacknowledged by the agent in focus. In such cases, I allowed my own appraisal of the context to be included, given my expanded view of various independent causal factors (Stones, 2005).

Conduct Analysis

The second stage of this study will focus on the internal structures of each agent as they relate to change. Internal structures are divided into two constituent components, "conjuncturally-specific internal structures" and "general-disposition structures" (Stones, 2005, p. 85). Over the time they have served in their position within the organization, agents acting with conjuncturally-specific knowledge have consciously constructed "knowledge of interpretative schemes, power capacities, and normative expectations and principles of the agents within context" (p. 91). These structures are more likely to evolve over time as the agent garners more experience is their role within the organization and evaluates those experiences in support or refute of their existing conjuncturally-specific knowledge. General-dispositional structures, on the other hand, are unconsciously adopted "transposable skills and dispositions, including generalized world-views and cultural schemas, classifications, typifications of things, peoples and networks, principles of action, typified recipes of action, deep binary frameworks of signification" (p. 88). In appreciation of Stones' recommendation, this stage began by identifying the internal structures of each participant, beginning with their general-dispositional structures and concluding with the conjuncturally-specific internal structures.

The Role of the Researcher

I used ethnography as the foundation of inquiry through observation, historical data, and interviews (Yin, 2003) in order to construct an accurate narrative of the context of the planned organizational change and the subsequent response of the participants as surfaced through social interactions. I was substantially considerate of my own context and approach for interpreting the relevance of participant responses while conducting fieldwork. I maintained a heightened sensitivity to "the dangers of privileging certain voices" (Jack & Kholeif, 2007, p. 211) in the analysis of participant responses and the "subtle manifestations of the persuasive urge" (Gordon, 1975, p. 328) when probing for deeper responses. In order to protect against wording bias (Malhotra et al., 2006), I limited my responses to the respondents' answers. Furthermore, I protected against respondent bias in the forms of social desirability bias (Dodou & De Winter, 2014), habituation bias (Vaney et al., 2008), and sponsor bias (Malhotra et al., 2006) by respectively showing unconditional esteem for the respondent, ensuring precomposed interview questions were stylistically and syntactically varied, and safeguarding my identity.

Stones' (2005) suggested method for conduct and context analysis through bracketing provides the researcher with a refined structure for objectively qualifying participant responses and avoiding researcher bias. Additional information pertaining to my objectivity is addressed in the subsequent section.

Trustworthiness

Establishing the trustworthiness of a qualitative study begins with the diligent and disciplined search for accuracy and alternative explanations using various strategies to establish both validity and reliability (Creswell, 2013; Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Maxwell, 2012; Stake, 1995). More simply, validity pertains to the degree of confidence the researcher has that the data fairly characterizes each participant's "truth or reality" (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009, p. 180). To "gain the needed confirmation, to increase credence in the interpretation, [and] to demonstrate

commonality of an assertion" (Stake, 1995, p. 112) I addressed Guba and Lincoln's (1981) four

criteria of rigor in evaluating the trustworthiness of a qualitative study using the following

triangulation protocols originally identified by Denzin (1984).

1. Source triangulation: I went through all available opportunities and investigated

    whether the data collected pertaining to the organizational change could be

    recreated under different circumstances.

2. Investigator triangulation: I submitted my observations, with and without

    interpretations, to multiple unconnected colleagues to discuss alternative

    interpretations. These interpretations provided additional data for the study.

3. Theory triangulation: Because I sought only to establish investigator triangulation

    with reviewing colleagues who had written dissertations using alternative theoretical

    viewpoints, any extent to which my colleagues and I similarly interpreted the

    phenomenon qualifies as partially triangulated (Stake, 1995, p. 113).

Researchers such as Russ-Eft and Preskill (2009), Krefting (1990), and Guba (1981)

recommended time in the field sufficient enough to "build trust and rapport with participants so

they are more likely to provide valid information" (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009, p. 174). I was in the

unique position of having previously worked in the district and so trust and rapport with the

participants is already partially established.

Setting

In response to the large-scale closure of U.S. public schools as a result of the spread of

the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19, this planned organizational change is occurring

within one mid-sized, urban, public-school district in southern California across all 29 schools in

the district, including 15 elementary, five middle-level, and three comprehensive high schools,

as well as two alternative schools, one adult school, one blended-learning school, and two

preschools. Like many districts wrestling with the challenges of opening a new school year in

the midst of a global pandemic, choice has been paramount. During the 2020 – 2021 academic year, this district elected to offer its students and families the option of distance learning or classical in-person learning at their school site, dependent upon the most current public health orders. Families needed to choose one option for the duration of the term. Teachers, then, were required to deliver instruction both virtually and in-person. This planned organizational change was prompted by safety requirements of the state and county; however, each district was permitted to structure their approach dependent upon the needs of their district community.

For this research, it is critical to bind the study in the selection of one complex environment experiencing a planned organizational change large enough to noticeably impact all individuals' work experience, roles, and procedures. Binding this research to a single comprehensive high-school site allowed me to explore more deeply the teachers' responses to change through the lens of the theory of strong structuration. In other words, this setting allowed me to study: (a) how the change in external circumstances impacted each teacher's perspective on both their own role within their designative subject matter department and the school as a whole; and (b) how that perspective, additionally informed by general personal predispositions, served to promote an action leading to acceptance or rejection of the change.

Site Entry

This district has no formal process for review and approval of research projects outside of site approval; therefore, I proposed the study to the principal of the flagship comprehensive high school. He granted permission to conduct the study at the launch of the 2020–2021 school year. Upon completion I submitted a copy of the study to the site principal and district for publication to the district website.

Population, Sample, and Sampling Procedures

Stage one of this research was intended to gather information pertaining to the context of the change—those external structures that constrain or influence agency (Stones, 2005).

Data collection included site and district documents pertaining to the planned organizational

change. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants in support roles

for whom the change inadvertently impacts. Documents included memos, graphics clarifying

relationships between participants and curriculum implementation, Microsoft PowerPoints,

Board presentations, and emails that provided insight in the context of the change initiative.

Interview participants included site administrators who responded to questions aimed at

developing a macrolevel understanding of the ontology-in-situ. The focus on this first stage of

research was primarily to extract information pertaining to the external structures associated

with the planned organizational change. See Figure 3 based on Wood and Bandura (1989) and

Stones (2005) and published by Sapio (2012).

Figure 3

Model of Reciprocal Determinism (Wood & Bandura, 1989), overlaid with the elements of strong structuration theory (Stones, 2005)
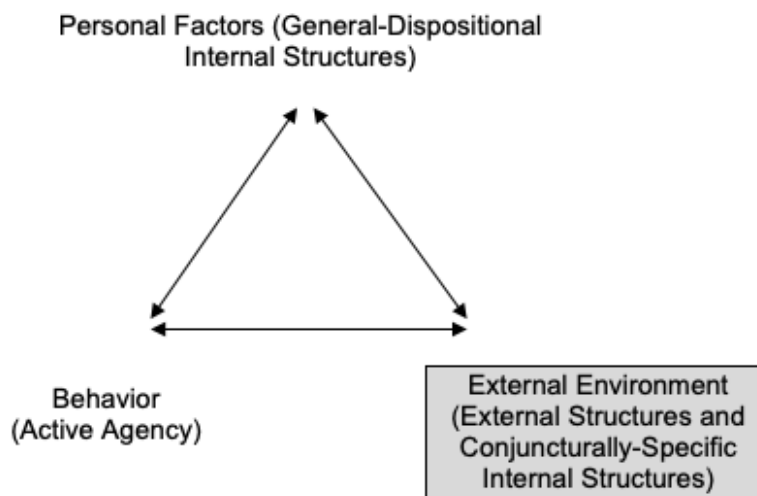
Note. From "*The structuration of goals in a healthcare setting: a case study examining the social structuring interactions between organizational context and knowledgeable agents,*" N. A. Sapio, 2012, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

Stage two of this research was focused on conduct analysis—understanding how an agent's internal structures inform their response to the planned organizational change. Teachers were the principal participants in this stage of semi-structured interviews because they were the most strongly impacted by the change, other than the students themselves. Student perspectives were not included in this study in order to focus more closely on the extent to which an agent's internal structures are likely to impact a planned organizational change. While students are also considered agents in this setting, their level of influence over the success or failure of a planned organizational change is less significant than teachers'. The sample population consisted of teachers currently engaging in virtual learning.

Human Subject Considerations

This research adhered to all Internal Review Board (IRB) standards in compliance with the requirements for Pepperdine University and the Part 46 of the Protection of Human Subjects in the Code of Federal Regulations (National Archives, 2018). Considerable initial attention was devoted to the ethics of research as a study design element of paramount importance. For purposes of this study, interviewees were asked to provide their personal experiences pertaining to the internal and external structures associated with the planned organizational change. Additionally, each interviewee was informed of the organization's access to all subsequent findings pertaining to the change initiative as experienced by members of the organization.

Informed Consent

To address the ethics of research (Lichtman, 2010) I firstly focused on participant protections including informed consent and privacy. In order to minimize any risk associated with providing honest responses to the questions posed in any interview session, I remained mindful of any potential threat to participants' welfare, values, and dignity (Robson, 1997). More specifically, and prior to the commencement of all interviews, each participant was provided an

auditory reminder of: (a) the purpose of the research, (b) the research process, and (c) the informed consent form in Appendix A, of which each participant received a physical or digital copy when requested. The process for protecting the participants' identities is explained in the next section. Finally, all participants were offered both the opportunity to ask questions in order to ensure clarity and the option to withdraw from the study at any time.

Protecting Privacy

To ensure trust and confidentiality, all data are stored in password-protected computer files in an off-site location. All hard copies of notes taken and digital imaging of interviewee responses will be destroyed immediately following the publication of the study. To preserve the physical safety of each participant, I conducted interviews over freeconferencecall.com, saving each interview to the cloud to be automatically transcribed through freeconferencecall.com. These cloud recordings are password protected and only available to me. Each interview was renamed with the participant's pseudonym.

Risk/Benefits to Participation

Participants were not expected to experience any physical risks associated with the study; however, they may have experienced psychological risk and elevated stress levels related to designing and implementing a new curriculum. These risks were beyond the control of the researcher, in that this study is predicated on an existing organizational change already underway and not initiated by the researcher.

While I did not initiate the current changes in the environment, the potential subjects may have been concerned with how their participation could affect their employment. Firstly, I made every effort to protect the anonymity of the participants from myself as well as my anonymity from the participants so that we did not recognize each other in the future. No identifying information was published in the study including gender, age, length of time employed by the district, or affiliated subject-matter department. Those who elected to participate in the study

selected their own interview time via anonymous Doodlepoll and dialed the free conference call number when it was time for their interview. They were not asked to identify themselves prior or during the interview. With these precautions in place, it was not possible for me to share a list of participants with site-level or district-level administrators. These reassurances were outlined within both the recruitment materials as well as the informed consent form. There were no social, economic, or legal risks posed by the study.

Securely maintaining the privacy of the participants though careful guardianship of all linking materials also minimized the risk of participation in this study. Each semi-structured interview was recorded through freeconferencecall.com and transcribed for data analysis according to the methodological bracketing technique associated with strong structuration (Stones, 2005).

Participants, including the district, may benefit from the study by learning the extent to which conjuncturally-specific internal structures contribute to change readiness, particularly as it relates to early adopters. Additionally, while virtual learning itself is not directly under review, the study may reveal the contexts in which it is most successful.

Instrumentation

Case study designs benefit from multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2011, p. 10). Of the six common categories of nonnumerical evidence collected for qualitative research purposes (Yin, 2011), this study focused on two: document review and semi-structured interviews. The purpose of this study was to understand how the external and internal structures presented in Stones' (2005) strong structuration theory impact an agent's response to a planned organizational change. To fulfill the study's purpose, I adhered to the protocol for case study as outlined by Yin (2003) and modified an instrument for a semi-structured interview published by Fjellstedt (2015). This instrument can be seen in Appendix B and Appendix C.

When the issue is the primary focus of the research and not the case itself, the case study is classified as *instrumental* (Stake, 1995, p. 18). In this instrumental case study, preliminary document reviews were conducted to aid in the refinement of the stage one interview questions and support in the necessary contextual analysis of the external structures associated with the organizational change.

Interviews "reveal how case study participants construct reality and think about situations…insights gain even further value if the participants are key persons in the organizations, communities, or small groups being studied" (Yin, 2011, p. 12). Each interviewee was assumed to have had a unique experience with the change process (Stake, 1995). Since the purpose of this study was to understand how teachers' internal structures influenced their response to change, a short list of issue-based interview questions was developed, allowing for participants to offer a rich explanations of their experience surrounding the change (Seidman, 2013). During the interview, I was careful not to detour the direction of the conversation when asking for clarification or enriched explanation; however, since "non-respondents can distort the final results of any research project" (Williamson, 1981) and compromise the validity of the study, I provided question prompts as needed to spur interviewee responses.

Methodologically, the semi-structured interview is "well suited for the exploration of the perceptions and opinions of respondents regarding complex and sometimes sensitive issues and enable probing for more information and clarification of answers" (Barriball & White, 1994, p. 330). This was selected as the appropriate interview method because of the participant sensitivities inspired by organizational change of any nature. The semi-structured interview, too, presents the highest form of validity and reliability because the interviewer may change the words within the questions to capture a response toward the intent of the question (Denzin, 1989; Nay-Brock, 1984). The validity and reliability of these interviews are dependent upon a high level of confidence in the equivalence of meaning as opposed to the repeated use of the

same words (Denzin, 1989). Furthermore, because this study employed an established and proven instrument for conducting semi-structured interviews (Fjellstedt, 2015), all internal reliability is sound (Mann, 1985).

Data Collection

Stage One

I emailed an invitation to participate in the study to the research site administrators as district employees identified as part of the implementation support team. This invitation can be viewed in Appendix D. I ultimately conducted 6 interviews. Participants offered additional evidence which included e-mails, meeting agendas and minutes, progress reports submitted to the board, news articles, and other archival records that participants believed could contribute to a more complete picture of the context for the case. Additionally, I conducted my own collection of documentation through Internet searches and by asking all interview participants for documentation they believed was relevant to the case. Documents were not treated as conclusive evidence or as an unbiased representation of the case but rather used to "corroborate information from other sources" (Yin, 2009, p. 103) as well as to prompt further inquiry. I understood that all documentation "reflects a communication among other parties attempting to achieve some other objectives," and is therefore inherently biased in some fashion (Yin, 2009, p. 105).

The email invitation also included a link where participants scheduled their availability for interviews. Once a participant registered for an interview, they received an informed consent form (Appendix A) in their email for review prior to the interview. I conducted the interview via freeconferencecall.com at the time selected by the participant. Any participant who was more than 15 minutes late for the interview and did not reschedule with for a later time was assumed to have voluntarily withdrawn from the study.

Stage Two

I sent an email invitation to participate in the study to every research site teacher. This invitation can be viewed in Appendix E. I conducted approximately 16 interviews. Apart from the invitation to participate, all other interview protocol established in stage one of the study was followed.

Table 1

Protocol for Data Collection

Data Collection		
	Stage One	Stage Two
Population, Sampling Procedure	Research site administrators and district initiative implementation support team whose assignment reflects familiarity with the planned organizational change and the researcher will send an invitation to participate to this population's district email.	The researcher will send an invitation to participate in the study to the research site teachers.
Pre-Interview	Participants will: a. Select an interview time using a calendar link embedded within the invitation to participate. b. Attend the interview via conference call line	
Interview	All participants will be directed to review their informed consent form prior to the commencement of the interview to clarify: a. Purpose of the research b. The research process c. Informed consent d. Process for protecting participants' identity e. Opportunity to ask questions f. Option to withdraw from the study at any time	
Post-Interview	All interviews will be recorded and transcribed for data analysis purposes.	

All semi-structured interviews for stage one and stage two were conducted by May 2021. Five interviews were conducted in stage one, and sixteen interviews were conducted in stage

two. All interview questions were adapted from an instrument published by Fjellstedt (2015) and

designed using Yin's interview protocol (2009). See Appendix C. During the interviews, I took

notes and listen for the intention of interviewees' communication, asking for clarification often

(Stake, 1995, p. 66). Interviews were recorded with the participant's permission, transcribed

later, and shared with the participant to reinforce the trustworthiness of the study.

Table 2

Research-based Rationale for the Proposed Timeline of Study

Timeline	Element of Study	Collection Activity	Research-Based Rationale
10/1/20	Research Setting	One Southern California public school district I engaged in a planned organizational change selected as the research site.	• Bounded study of the phenomenon (Yin, 2003, 2009) • Study of truth defined by situational context (Creswell, 2013)
After IRB approval	Population, Sampling Procedure	Invitation to participate issued. Random sampling of no fewer than 5 and no more than 16 participants in each stage	• Informed consent (Lichtman, 2010) • Minimize risk to participants (Robson, 1997) • Random sampling (Marshall, 1996)
Four Months	Data Collection	Both stage one and stage two interviews are conducted and supporting documentation is collected.	• Ascertain the contextualized reality of the participant (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003, Holloway & Todres, 2003) • Establish trustworthiness (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Stake, 2005, Yin, 2009)
Eight Weeks	Data Analysis	Semi-structured interviews and document collection conducted in 2 stages and coded to align to the quadripartite framework outlined in strong structuration theory.	• Macro and mesolevel analysis of environment (Stake, 1995) • Extent change is impacted by conditions of agency (Stake, 1995)

Data Management

As described earlier, all collected data were stored and organized in a password-protected database accessible only by me. I used the transcription feature through freeconferencecall.com to transcribe all interviews and then used the NVivo software to organize and code all data collected within the course of the study, including the documents supplied in stage one, in strict observation of the bracketing methodology outlined in Stones' strong structuration theory (2005). This software allows for the capacity to organize the data sources and easily retrieve any data necessary by conducting a keyword search within the database. This study was bounded to a single educational organization and focused on a small population within the organization.

Data Analysis

Consistent with Stones' (2005) preferred technique of methodological bracketing, this research was conducted in two stages to separate and analyze the resulting data as distinctly falling into one of the four categories of the quadripartite framework of strong structuration theory. The context analysis conducted as a result of stage one detailed the conditions of the planned organizational change, which, according to strong structuration theory, are those external structures or circumstances beyond the agent's control that influence their action in response to the change. Secondly, the data resulting from the conduct analysis in stage two were analyzed in search of how the agent's general dispositions and conjuncturally-specific knowledge of their role at the site influenced personal perception of the external structures associated with the planned organizational change and the subsequent response to that change. In addition to the bracketing method presented earlier, all data were coded and categorized in order to surface emergent codes and develop categories resulting in concepts/themes aligned to the quadripartite model presented in strong structuration (Stones, 2005).

Clark and Creswell (2014) described the process of coding and categorizing as grouping similar codes "to form a major idea about the central phenomenon in the database….like codes, themes have labels that typically consist of only a few words…they represent larger patterns in the data that emerged from the analysis" (p. 362). The themes evolve into the study's findings (Clark & Creswell, 2014; Creswell, 2013).

Stage One

Stage one was conducted with participants who maintain a primarily etic perspective on the change but who are still knowledgeable about the external structures governing the change. Two forms of data were collected in this phase: documents and interviews. All documents were sent to my alias email address and catalogued in NVivo. In analyzing the documentation, I first triaged the evidence, prioritizing what appeared to be central to the research question, and leaving other materials for later review, including them in the study as they informed the primary research question. I coded each document similarly to the data collected during the semi-structured interviews, using the process outlined in Figure 4.

Interviews were first transcribed by me and subsequently catalogued in NVivo for analysis. Catalogued documents and interviews were initially coded using an open-coding process, avoiding a priori codes and resulting in several emergent codes which were then set as a priori. I used this analysis as the foundation for drafting a contextualized case narrative, highlighting the external structures of the planned organizational change from an etic perspective.

Figure 4

The Bottom-up Approach to the Process of Qualitative Data Analysis

The Researcher Validates the Findings
(e.g., checks the accuracy of the findings)

⇑

The Researcher Refines the Codes and Builds Findings as Descriptions and Themes
(e.g., combines codes to form a theme that captures a major category of information)

⇑

The Researcher Codes the Data
(e.g., locates text segments and assign a code label to them)

⇑

The Researcher Explores the Data
(e.g., obtains a general sense of the material and records impressions)

⇑

The Researcher Prepares the Data for Analysis
(e.g., transcribes fieldnotes or scans documents)

⇑

The Researcher Collects Data
(e.g., fieldnotes, audio recordings, or documents)

Note. Adapted from *Understanding Research: A Consumer's Guide* (p. 356), by V. L. Plano Clark and J. W. Creswell, 2014. Pearson Education. Copyright 2014 by Pearson Education. Reprinted with permission.

Stage Two

Stage two participants were those agents-in-situ, and semi-structured interviews were the only data collected. This stage of analysis was concerned with how the agent perceived and responded to the planned organizational change, though it was expected that I would acquire additional information to add to the context analysis conducted in stage one. I again record each

interview, had the audio recording transcribed, and catalogued the interview in NVivo for two cycles of coding. In the first cycle, I performed an open coding process to yield emergent codes. These codes were reviewed and combined if similar or repetitive codes were found. Lastly, the codes resulting from both stage one and stage two were organized in a bilateral comparison to determine those distinctively identified with the external structures studied in stage one or the internal structures studies in stage two. Similarly, I examined the codes for a shared association between the two stages.

Categorical Association to The Quadripartite Framework of Strong Structuration

In the final step of analysis, the a priori codes were organized into categories and examined through the lens of the quadripartite framework of strong structuration theory in order to develop key concepts aligned to the framework and to help me address the research question. The results of this analysis are presented in Chapter 4, with subsequent conclusions and implications outlined in Chapter 5.
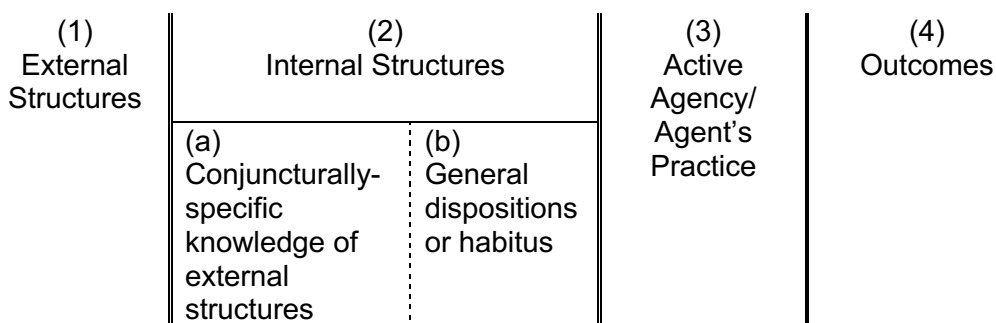
Chapter 4: Results

The aforementioned case study sought to understand the extent to which an individual's

general disposition influenced their response to a planned organizational change. The study

used Stone's (2005) strong structuration theory as the foundation for analyzing how the external

structures associated with the change created the conditions of action, leaving each agent to

draw on their internal structures and act accordingly in acceptance or rejection of all or part of

the change. The sole research question was: How do teachers' general-dispositional internal

structures influence their response to a planned organizational change?

Chapter 4 addresses the research question using Stones' (2005) framework of analysis,

the quadripartite nature of structuration, represented in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Strong Structuration Theory: The Quadripartite Nature of Structuration

(1) External Structures	(2) Internal Structures		(3) Active Agency/ Agent's Practice	(4) Outcomes
	(a) Conjuncturally- specific knowledge of external structures	(b) General dispositions or habitus		

Note. Adapted from *Structuration Theory* (p. 85), by R. Stones, 2005. Palgrave Macmillan.

Copyright 2005 by Palgrave Macmillan.

Stones' reframed Gidden's (1987) original structuration theory to include the quadripartite nature

of structuration and to quell previous criticisms that structuration theory did not yield itself to

empirical research. The quadripartite nature of structuration offered me both a framework to

examine the complexities of an agent's response to change, or in Stones' own words, their

"ability to do otherwise" (p. 75), as well as a sequence for analysis and presentation of findings.

Therefore, it is important to organize the discussion according to the figure above.

The chapter first outlines the external structures associated with the organizational change as the quadripartite nature of structuration dictates. Secondly, the chapter presents active agents' internal structures, how general dispositions and conjuncturally-specific knowledge and behaviors informed the agents' actions. Lastly, the chapter discusses the structuring interactions between the external structures and internal structures resulting in active agency. In summary, this chapter examines three tenets in depth: (a) the external structures requiring agents to act, (b) the internal structures of the agents including their conjuncturally-specific knowledge and general dispositions, and (c) how the intersection between external structures and internal structures prompt an agent to act.

To address the first tenet, the chapter begins with an outline of the external structures associated with the change, including:

1(a)   presentation of participants—those who managed the change at the site level as well as the agents-in-situ, the teachers, who were most directly impacted by the change

1(b)   district organizational structures and parameters of operation most salient to change

1(c)   research-site culture, both before and after the change

To address the second tenet, the chapter explores two findings specific to the internal structures of the agents-in-situ as presented through Stone's (2005) quadripartite nature of structuration. These include:

2(a)   general-dispositional internal structures, those general worldviews shared by the agents-in-situ that influence perception of the planned organizational change

2(b)   conjuncturally-specific internal structure or what the agents know about their

work environment that most informs their response to the change

The third and final tenet offers a discussion of the structuring interactions between the external and internal structures resulting in active agency, or the actions agents-in-situ took in response to the planned organizational change. These structuring interactions were specific to the following elements of the change:

3(a)   aspects of the change process

3(b)   the impact of the change on existing professional values

3(c)   the influence of the change on agents' personal lives

Tenet One: External Structures

The intent of this section is to provide a broad overview of the external structures influencing the planned organizational change. It first presents the participants in the study, outline participants' roles within the two stages of study, and describes the selection process. Secondly, it discusses the school district as a whole and provides a comparison of demographic and performance data between the district and the research site from the class of 2019. More recent comparison data are not available given Senate Bill (SB) 98 suspended reporting data for the 2020 school year. A recent history of the district's organizational structure is reviewed as pertinent to the external structures influencing agents' response to change. Thirdly, a comparison of the research-site culture both before and after the change is examined.

Presentation of Participants

This case study sought to understand the relationship between external and internal structures resulting in active agency with consideration to a planned organizational change. Findings in the study are a result of two forms of qualitative data collection: document review and semi-structured interviews between managers of the change and the agents-in-situ. This

section describes stage one and stage two participants, the conditions for participation, and the selection process. Table 3 identifies key attributes of each group and their role in this study.

Stage One Participants. Site administrators at each of the comprehensive high school sites were invited to share information about the district's organizational structures, and context for change, the implementation process, and the impact of the change on their school community.

Selection Process. Participants in this group met the following criteria: (a) they were employed as a secondary administrator in the district prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and remained so up and to the time of their interview, and (b) they could provide information regarding the organizational structure of the district, their school site, and the change to their culture as a result of the planned organizational change.

Table 3

Participant Overview

	Stage One: Change Managers	Stage Two: Active Agents
Participants	• Secondary site administrators in charge of change implementation	• Teachers at the research site who participated in and played a formal or informal leadership role in the change
Purpose of the Interview	• To understand the external structures associated with the change, including administrative perspective on the need for change, change process, change implementation, and cultural ramifications of the change	• To understand the change experience from the perspective of those most impacted • To understand the response to change as perceived by the participant
Key Concepts	• District and site-level organizational structures • Change process	• Participant perception of the need for change, change implementation, power over the change

I used purposeful sampling to identify participants who met the selection criteria. I first contacted all high school administrators in the district to determine interest. One administrator volunteered the research site and suggested a list of participants with a high level of influence at the school. This influence included both formal and informal leadership roles at either the site or district level.

Role at the Research Site. A good number of change managers participated in this stage of the research: two high school principals and four assistant high school principals. All were aware of the change to virtual learning and actively involved in leading that change at their respective sites, though not all worked directly with the stage two participants. All fit the selection criteria.

Stage Two Participants. This group of participants were all teachers at the research site, though not all were full-time teachers. Several have specialty roles, including teacher on special assignment or department chairperson. These participants were not directly tasked with leading the site change but did have a formal or informal influence over other agents at the site. The primary focus of this research was to understand how those most impacted by the change were influenced by their general-dispositional internal structures.

Selection Process. A good number of active agents participated in this stage of the study. All complied with the following criteria: (a) they were responsible for implementing the change with at least one period of students in any grade level within the 9–12 grade span, and (b) they were employed as a secondary teacher at the site prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and remained so up and to the time of their interview.

Role at the Research Site. To ensure the anonymity of the participants in this stage of the study, I limited what is known outside of the information shared above.

District and Research Site Demographics and Performance Data

  The research site for this study was located within a mid-sized public school district in southern California. The district serves just over 20,000 students, and the percentage of vulnerable populations are as follows: 64% were considered socioeconomically disadvantaged, nearly 20% were English learners, 14% were students with disabilities, and 14% were considered homeless or foster youth. Enrollment by race or ethnicity includes 65% Latinx and 24% White students. The remaining 11% of students were comprised of African American, Asian American, Filipino American, Pacific Islander, and those identifying as two or more races. The district itself is situated in an area within San Diego County and is challenged by one of the top five highest rates of youth disconnection as reported by the San Diego Workforce Partnership in their 2020 report on *Race, Place and Opportunity*. Disconnected youth is defined as young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are neither working nor attending school.

  The data presented in Table 4 reveals the discrepancy between district and research site demographic and student group data. As a magnet school the research site does not confine enrollment to attendance boundaries; it enrolls any student within the district interested in either of the dual magnet themes. However, in the case of this research site, the physical location and lack of district-provided correlative transportation presents a barrier for equitable enrollment. Those seats not taken by district students are offered to students from neighboring districts who can secure an interdistrict transfer and provide their own transportation. The district's efforts to work with local transit authorities to provide additional bus routes leading to the research site have been unsuccessful, leaving the research site with a largely high-performing student body with a middle to upper-class socioeconomic basin.

Table 4

Research Site Demographic Data

		Class of 2019	
		DISTRICT	RESEARCH SITE
	TOTAL	1,595	392
ETHNICITY	LATINX	959 (60.1%)	124 (32%)
	WHITE	447 (28%)	195 (50%)
	OTHER	189 (11.8%)	73 (19%)
STUDENT GROUP	SWD	210 (13.2%)	25 (6.4%)
	EL	105 (6.6%)	3 (0.7%)
	HOMELESS	148 (9.3%)	15 (3.8%)
	SED	933 (58.5%)	109 (27.8%)
GENDER	GIRLS	849 (53.2%)	209 (53%)
	BOYS	746 (46.8%)	183 (47%)

Table 5 offers graduation comparison data, and Table 6 offers a contrast in UC/CSU A-G completion by demographic for the class of 2019. The median weekly earnings for a person without a high school diploma is $592, and the 2019 unemployment rate for this demographic is 5.4%. Conversely, those who earn a bachelor's degree can expect to earn a median $1,248 a week, and the unemployment rate is 2.2%. The local median home price in 2019 was $544,200, and the overall cost of living was 46.6% higher than the national rate. Based on the data, young people who seek to remain in the area in an economically viable position would benefit from earning both a diploma and an advanced degree.

Table 5

Graduation Data

	CLASS OF 2019 ENROLLMENT	GRADUATES	CERT, OF COMPLETION	DROPOUTS	UC A-G COMPLETION
			Class of 2019		
District	1,595	1,442 (90.4%)	40 (2.5%)	113 (7.1%)	648 (40.6%)
Research Site	392	392 (100%)	0	0	272 (69.4%)

The University of California and California State University systems jointly stipulated a sequence of core area courses high school students must complete to secure eligibility for freshman-level college admission. The most recent college graduation statistics provided by educationdata.org report that "bachelor's degree seekers graduate at a rate of 60%" (Hanson, 2021) when entering directly into a four-year school as opposed to transferring from a community college. Conversely, a quarter of students entering community colleges will transfer to a four-year university, and 60% of those students will earn a bachelor's degree (Chen, 2020). In other words, students entering a four-year university during their freshman year are four times more likely to earn a bachelor's degree, and those with bachelor's degrees are two-and-a-half times as likely to stay employed and earn at least twice as much as those without degrees (Chen, 2020).

Table 6

UC A-G Completion

		DISTRICT	RESEARCH SITE
		Class of 2019	
	TOTAL	648 (40.6%)	272 (69%)
ETHNICITY	LATINX	294 (30.7%)	77 (62%)
	WHITE	257 (57.5%)	140 (72%)
	OTHER	97 (51.3%)	55 (75%)

Class of 2019

		DISTRICT	RESEARCH SITE
STUDENT GROUP	SWD	15 (7.1%)	11 (44%)
	EL	3 (2.9%)	1 (33.3%)
	HOMELESS	26 (8.3%)	8 (53.3%)
	SED	272 (29.2%)	71 (65.1%)
GENDER	GIRLS	849 (53.2%)	155 (74%)
	BOYS	746 (46.8%)	117 (64%)

While the research site boasts a 100% graduation rate for the class of 2019, only 69.4% were eligible for admission to a local 4-year public university. A deeper look revealed a 10% discrepancy between Latinx and White students earning UC/CSU eligibility. Similarly, the same discrepancy exists between females and males. For this research site if you are White or female, your long-term economic viability is higher than it is for other students.

Change Setting

The conceptual framework for the study—strong structuration theory—maintains active agency, or an agent's willingness to act in support or rejection of a change, is prompted first by external structures. An illustration of the relevance of discussing external structures in relationship to agents' internal structures is captured in Figure 6.

This section of the chapter describes the external structures surrounding the district's approach to shift from traditional in-person public education to virtual learning including a discussion of: (a) the district's organizational structures; (b) how the district involved stakeholder feedback to drive design for learning, purpose, and implementation of the change; (c) key elements of the virtual learning model; (d) virtual learning in practice at the district level, and (e) virtual learning at the research site.

Figure 6

Conceptual Framework With Organizational Change Highlighted
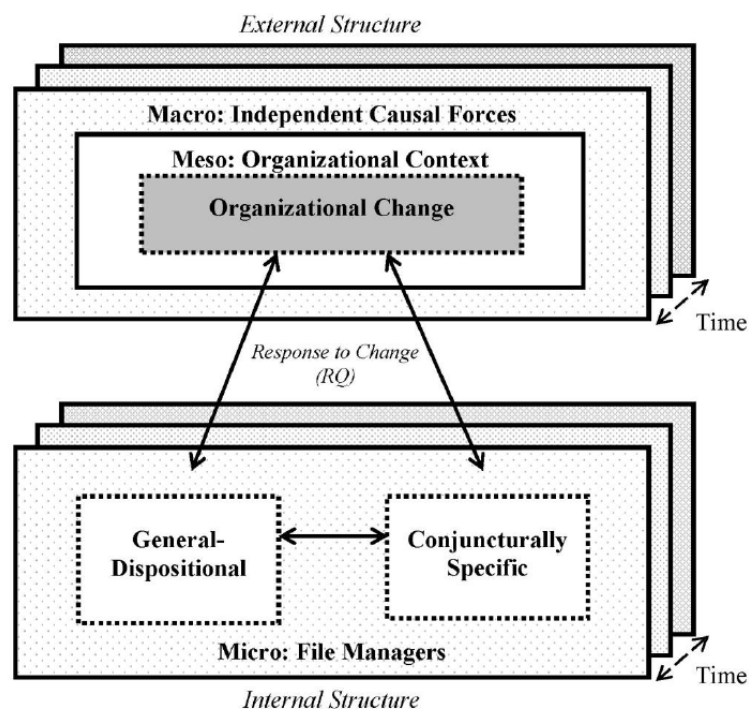
Note: From "Examining Multidimensional Resistance to Organizational Change: A Strong Structuration Approach" [Doctoral dissertation, The George Washington University], L. Fjellstedt, 2015, p. 75, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global. Copyright 2015 by Lindsey Fjellstedt. Reprinted with permission.

District Organizational Structures

This district employs more than 2,000 people, including 1,100 faculty members, 1,200 support staff, and just over 60 administrators. There are a total of 29 schools, including 15 elementary, five middle level, and three comprehensive high schools, one of which is the magnet research site. Five additional schools have authorized charters under the district. The five-member school board oversees a budget in excess of $250 million. Figure 7 offers a representation of the organizational structure within the district.

Figure 7

Organizational Structure of the Research District
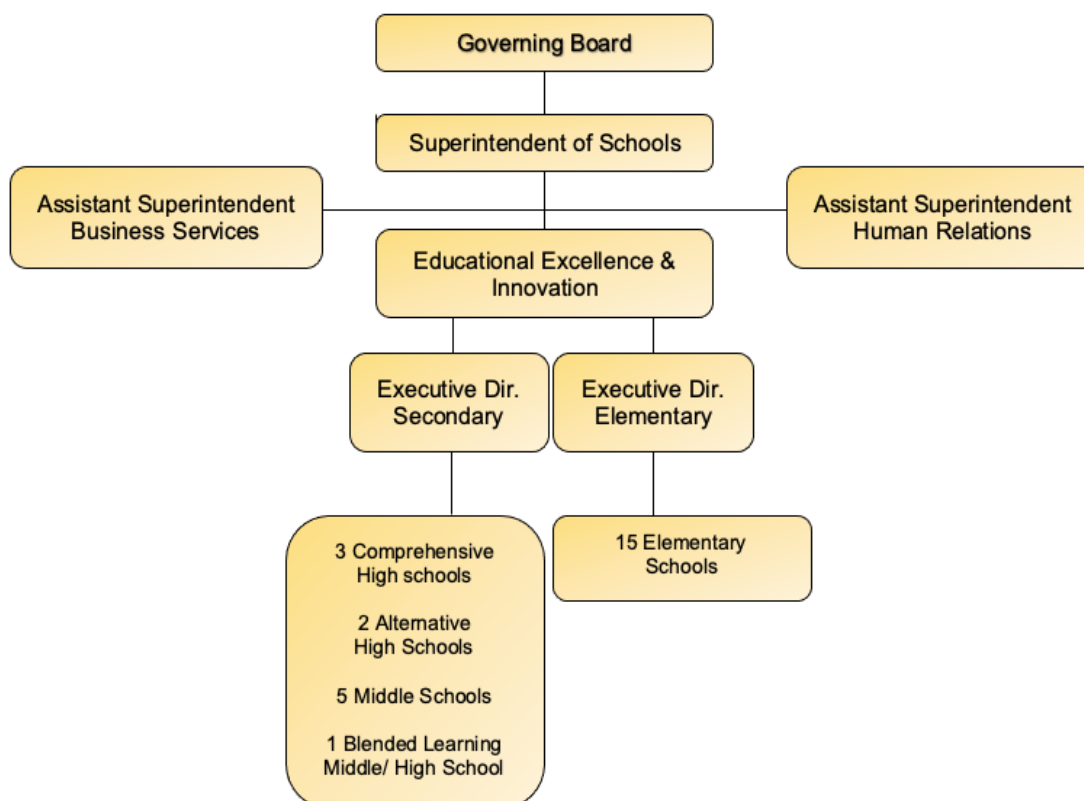
Superintendent's Council and Sprint Teams. Starting as early as March 7, 2020, the district's board began scheduling emergency meetings every other week to stay apprised of the evolving implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on public education and to make immediate and critical decisions pertaining to the health and safety of the district community. Shortly after, the school district developed the Superintendent's Council for Innovative Learning on May 12, 2020, with the expressed purpose of designing a hybrid learning model for 2020-21 in response to the health and safety demands of global and regional pandemic." The council at large was comprised of five smaller "sprint teams," where each team served in an advisory capacity and offered suggestions for support in one of the following areas: instructional, social and emotional,

nutritional, health and safety, and technology. These teams began meeting in mid-May 2020. Additionally, district stakeholders were asked to participate in two surveys, one in November 2020 and one in February 2021. Statistics outlining community involvement are:

- 1,474 community members attended one or more of the Superintendent's Council meetings

- 172 staff members were involved with sprint teams

- 10,464 total participants and survey responses

Ultimately, sprint teams clarified community concerns and provided recommendations to the Superintendent and school board with respect to the California State Health Department and San Diego County Health Authority guidelines. These recommendations were used largely in the design of the external structures associated with the shift to virtual learning. Implications from the instructional support sprint team, social and emotional sprint team, and health and safety sprint team are discussed in the next section as they pertain most directly to the work of the agents-in-situ. Figure 8 presents a timeline of district-level responses to the global pandemic.

Figure 8

Timeline of District Responses to Global Pandemic
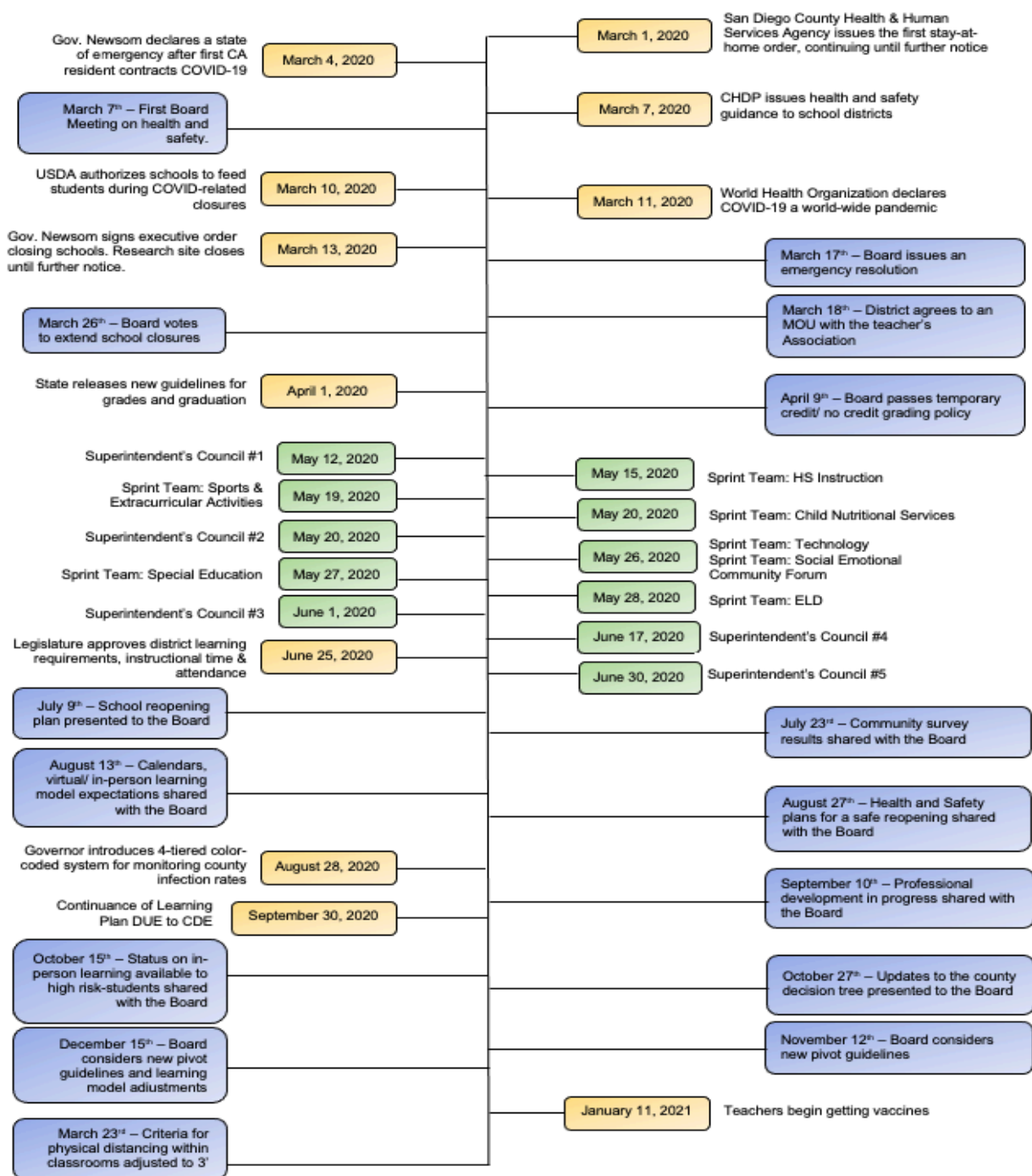
Sprint Team: Instructional Support. Students, faculty, staff, and community feedback regarding the development of instruction at the secondary level was provided through the high school instructional team. This feedback was shared with the larger Superintendent's Council and subsequently presented to the board. The purpose of this sprint team was to provide meaningful and relevant learning opportunities to all students, regardless of what the learning environment looks like in the fall." This team provided the following recommendations as a result of their series of discussions:

- several learning models to allow for choice and to meet the health and safety needs of each family. The proposed models included in-person (classic) learning, hybrid, and virtual learning models.

- canvas as an alternative learning management system, deemed better suited to address the needs of the K-12 community than Google Classroom alone

- best instructional practices in a virtual environment

- expectations for successful engagement in a virtual learning environment for both student and teacher

Sprint Team: Social-emotional Support. Discussions related to the social and emotional wellbeing of district students and families was addressed by this nine-person sprint team. Their expressed purpose was to ensure the social and emotional needs of the district's students and families are met and the district is responsive to the needs of the changing pandemic. The feedback from the community forum hosted by this sprint team provided insight into students' anxiety about returning to school, academic success, lack of personal connections, and how virtual learning affects their families. Concerns around physical safety while on campus, heightened depression, screen-time fatigue, feelings of isolation, and meeting the needs of vulnerable populations were also communicated.

Sprint Team: Health and Safety Support. This 10-member team included representation from operations, after-school programs, nurses, nutrition, purchasing, parents, a principal, and student services. They outlined both what was going well and what revisions to existing plans may benefit the district at large. Conversations were predominantly around the challenges associated with adhering to the county decision tree. Transportation expressed experiencing a shortage of drivers as a result of minor symptoms associated with COVID-19 as well as an abuse of "free" sick time. Other programs communicated a difficulty with reregistration and limited auxiliary support programs associated with in-person learning alone. Childcare, substitute shortages, quarantine fatigue, lunchtime social distancing, community confusion, strains on custodial staff, and food waste were all topics of conversation in this sprint team.

Preparing for the Choice of Virtual Learning. When the first stay-at-home order was issued by the County Health and Human Services Agency on March 1, 2020, school districts sat-in-wait for executive orders closing public schools soon thereafter. On March 13, 2020, those orders were signed, and the research district along with most public-school districts in California closed. As a result, the district delayed the start date of school by several weeks and added five paid workdays for professional development and preparation to the teachers' calendars prior to the start of the year. The following three subsections outline the key elements for continuing public education and reopening schools safely as determined by the research district.

Learning Models. Between July 30, 2020, and August 12, 2020, families were asked to select the learning model most appropriate for their student. The district and the Teacher's Association agreed that hybrid courses—those where both virtual and in-person students attended the same class during the same period—would place an undue preparation requirement on teachers. Therefore, students were asked to decide between a fully in-person

learning model where they would attend school for five days each week or a fully virtual model where they would attend exclusively from home. Teachers, on the other hand, may have a schedule reflecting a combination of the two models—one or more in-person classes along with one or two virtual classes. As high schools developed dual master schedules based on student learning model requests it became apparent that not all courses would be available in both models. In other words, many electives and singleton courses would be offered in only one model. After students were issued their schedules and saw which of their course selections were available, families were offered an opportunity to change their learning model. In order to stabilize expectations for high-quality teaching and learning, model selections would be in effect for the entirety of the fall semester. Families that requested model changes after the start of the term were evaluated on a case-by-case basis. If the switch did not interfere with the student's ability to complete the courses they were already enrolled in and did not infringe on class-size limitations then the switch would be made. All families were offered the choice to select their learning model again for spring term. By November 12, 2020, at the high school level, 477 model change requests were made—329 requesting to move from the classic in-person learning model to the virtual learning model and 148 requesting to move from the virtual learning model to the in-person learning model. Table 7 offers a comparison of both learning models as reflected in the district's school reopening guide.

Table 7

Learning Model Comparison

Virtual Model Full Time Distance Learning	Classic Model Full Time In-Person Learning
• High quality virtual learning with daily teacher instruction • Tailored lessons and live virtual activities and meetings	• Daily, high quality, in-person, on campus learning • Engaging instruction that is grade- and course-level appropriate

Virtual Model Full Time Distance Learning	Classic Model Full Time In-Person Learning
• Robust student engagement experiences for lessons, materials, assessments, and activities through Canvas, the district's learning management system • Clearly defined learning objectives and high expectations for learning • Letter grades for middle and high school and progress reports for elementary	• Robust set of health and safety measures • Clearly defined learning objectives • Collaborative activities designed for high expectations for learning • Balanced assessment system to monitor student progress • Letter grades for middle and high school and progress reports for elementary

Physical Health and Safety Measures. In the school reopening guide published on

October 15, 2020, the district outlined a plan to meet its:

> Dual obligation to ensure the health and safety of all students and staff while, at the
>
> same time, developing an innovative approach to learning and teaching that provides a
>
> high quality, engaging education for all students within the environment of a worldwide
>
> pandemic. (para.1)

To that end, the district offered school sites a variety of personal protective equipment to

protect both teachers and students while participating in in-person learning. These included but

are not limited to masks, gloves, face shields, plexiglass barriers, HEPA/Merv-9 filters,

thermometers, desks carrels, outdoor sinks, shade structures, and box fans for increased

circulation within the classroom. Custodial staff disinfected every room at the end of every day

and reconfigured classrooms for maximum social distancing as well as a minimum of six-feet

distance between teacher workstations and the nearest student. School administrators and

health staff conducted daily temperature checks for staff and students, covered classes in the

event of emergency quarantines or when there was a lack of substitute teachers, printed and

posted a variety of health protocols, developed social distancing campaigns, and enforced all

safety protocols before, during, and after school hours. Students and teachers expanded their use of outdoor learning environments and conducted self-screening prior to entering campus. The district developed a series of community update messages specifying the most recent health and safety guidance and implications to local schools, developed a universal staff and student mask-wearing policy, hosted visitations with county health officials at school sites of concern, and lobbied for local COVID-19 testing centers.

Professional Learning. To prepare staff and faculty for the launch of the 2020–2021 academic year the district negotiated three full days of professional development for all staff prior to the first day of school. A variety of trainings on health and safety procedures including modules on school health checks, creating safe environments, responding to a positive identification on campus, sanitizing desks, and student health protocols while on campus were offered. Additional professional development sessions were mandated to establish common vocabulary around virtual learning and to boost teachers' awareness and familiarity with technology tools, including the district's newly adopted learning management system, Canvas. An additional layer of professional development was required to support parents with the shift to virtual learning and empower families as partners in education. These efforts included videos posted to a website devoted exclusively to parent resources, including academic support, Canvas support, health and safety support, learning environments at home support, social and emotional support, and technology support.

Virtual Learning at the Research Site

This section explores the organizational context of the research site as perceived through the lens of the change agents or participants in stage two research. The darkened portion of the conceptual framework presented in Figure 9 illustrates the related data collected and presented. The section begins with research site demographics in order to provide a

context for several key codes surfacing as foundational to the participants' perspective of the

district's governance impacting research site culture.

Figure 9

Conceptual Framework with Mesoorganizational Context Highlighted
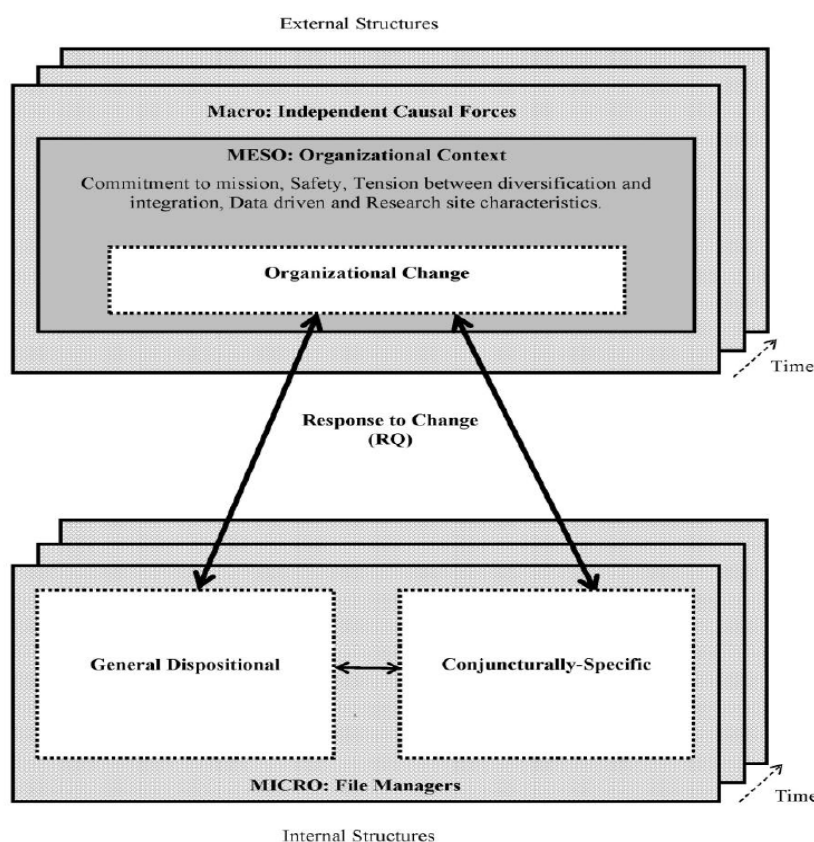
Note: From *"*Examining Multidimensional Resistance to Organizational Change: A Strong Structuration Approach" [Doctoral dissertation, The George Washington University], L. Fjellstedt, 2015, p. 75, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global. Copyright 2015 by Lindsey Fjellstedt. Reprinted with permission.

Research Site Organizational Structures. The research site was an 11-year-old dual-

magnet high school in southern California. The magnets focus on science and technology as

well as arts and communication. The school serves approximately 1,600 students and draws

approximately 33% of its student body from outside the district due to transportation barriers. In

fact, most students attending this school can either walk, drive themselves, or have

transportation arranged by their families. It is an academically-driven school with high-

performing students and a collegial staff that enjoys each other's company both on and off campus.

The defining feature of this school, however, is the block schedule enabling students to take up to eight full-length courses in a year or 32 courses over the length of their four-year high school experience. Given that students graduating from this district are required to successfully complete only 22 courses to earn a diploma, students at the research site have considerably more latitude to engage in elective courses, advanced placement courses, retake courses in which they were unsuccessful, or participate in an intervention course. Students with special needs as well as English language learners, benefit from this structure. Because these students are so often enrolled in mandated language acquisition courses or special education support courses, regular six-course schedules too often keep them from pursuing electives of interests or advanced courses.

The early established mission and vision of the school were refined by a newly-formed staff during the 2014–2015 school year in which 27 new faculty members were added. This growth represented nearly 35% of the teaching staff, and most of those hired came from outside of the district bringing with them new perspectives and new experiences. The administrative staff was intentional in involving every staff and faculty member in the process, and when the opportunity was offered to make personalized learning a core value, the faculty was dominantly in favor. This value remains well established and evident in instructional artifacts and classroom instruction to this day. To date the primary work of this site as described by one of the stage two participants is "helping students develop and grow as individuals through discovery, innovation, and growth." The big picture is "understanding who our students are and what their strengths are, playing to those strengths and coaching or counseling [students] into coursework and pathways that are offered here that align to those."

The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted much of this work and disrupted collegiality at the site level. District administrators responded to each new stipulation presented by the county health office and California Department of Public Health with transparent decision making at the board level, leaving each site administrator with the responsibility of communicating more directly with their own school staff, faculty, and community.

Mesolevel Structures. All 22 stage one and stage two participants possessed information relevant to establishing a complete picture of the external structures associated with the planned organizational change. Therefore, I conducted an open-coding process with all 22 interviews. Fifteen topics surfaced. A secondary readthrough of all interviews was conducted to ensure all participant quotations related to the 15 topics were captured. Next, similar topics were combined, and those topics with three or fewer references were excluded. The final stage of analysis included setting codes (Stones, 2005) through a third readthrough of all interviews and documents supplied. The following six codes related to mesolevel or district-level organizational characteristics emerged. They include: (a) high school as a sophisticated ecosystem, (b) sustainability, (c) Canvas, (d) flexibility and consistency, (e) fair representation and shared decision making, (f) research site as a culture of high performance. Figure 10 shows the relationship among the codes identified within both external and internal structures.

Figure 10

Relationship Between Macro, Meso, and Microlevel Findings Resulting in Active Agency
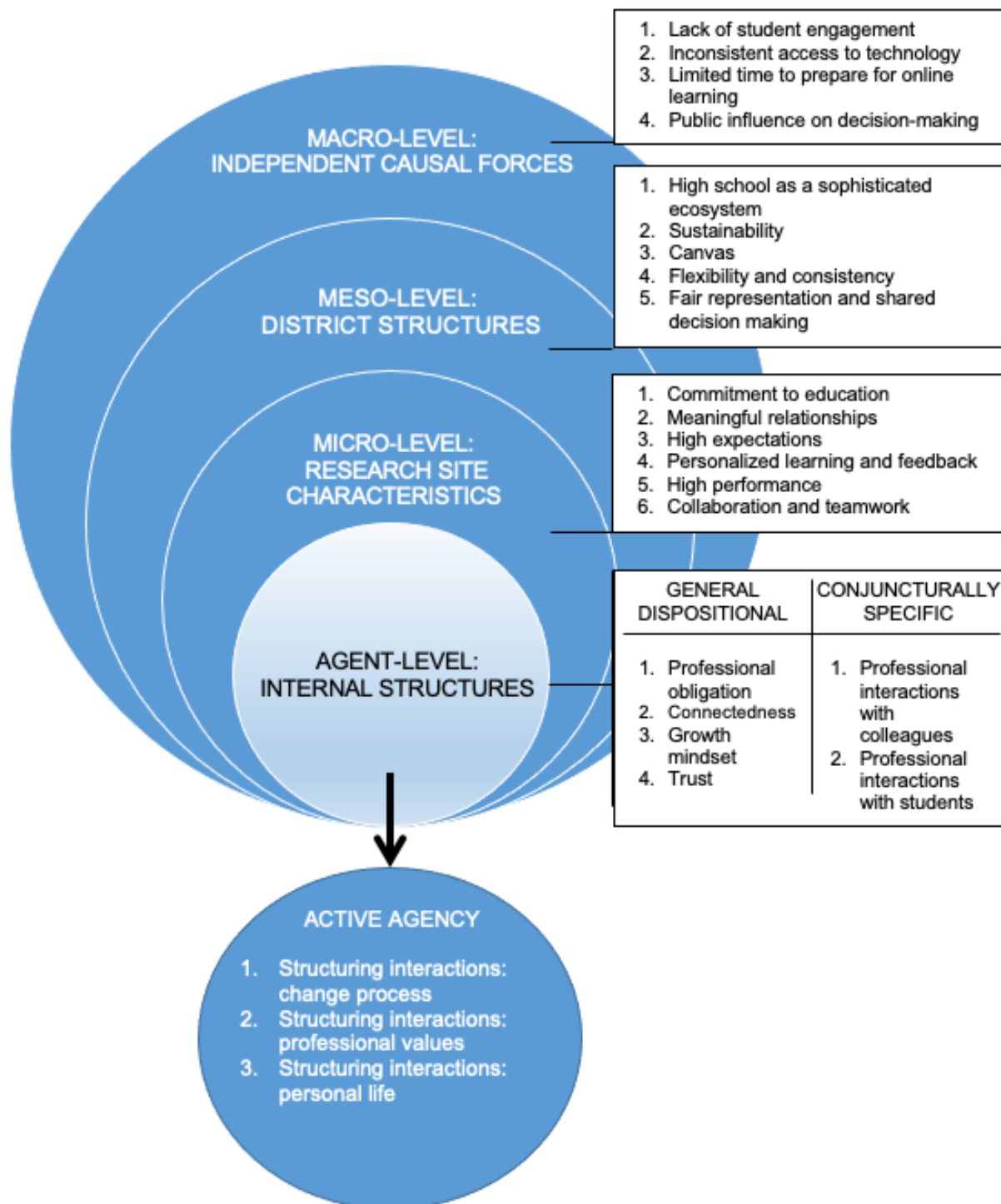
During the final stage of setting codes, all 22 interviews were scanned for references to the code. These references included the following terms: high school, sophisticated, ecosystem, complex, elementary, and simplistic. Additionally, some participant quotations were relevant to multiple codes. All quotations were evaluated collectively and assigned to a unique code. Seven of the 22 participants in stages one and two commented on decision making at a district level that did not fully reflect the complexities of high school systems.

The codes for sustainability and consistency were originally partnered. Between the two, there were 16 total comments. Dictionary.com (n.d.) defines *sustainable* as "able to be maintained or keep going; able to be supported as with the basic necessities or sufficient funds." The same website defines *consistency* as "steadfast adherence to the same principles, course, form; correspondence or uniformity among the parts of a complex thing." In other words, whereas sustainability relates to the willful supply of resources to continue something, consistency is a commitment to the trajectory of a predetermined plan. Further analysis justified the decision to separate the participant comments into two codes, sustainability being one. There were six distinct comments regarding the sustainability of district-purchased software, both past and present. Many more comments were related to the sustainability of the district's new learning management system, Canvas, but I decided to create a new code with respect to Canvas. All six comments challenged the district's history of maintaining software teachers learn to rely on.

There were 22 total comments made about technology and/or Canvas as a learning management system. One stage one participant referenced Canvas, and nine stage two participants discussed it directly. Eight comments were determined to be macrolevel causal forces outside of the research site or the district's control and are discussed later in this chapter. One comment was included in the discussion related to sustainability, given the reference to

Canvas was merely an illustration. The remainder of the comments were evaluated as contextually relevant to this code.

Of the 22 participants between stages one and two of the interview process, there were 12 comments directly related to consistency with regard to pivoting between in-person, on-campus learning and virtual learning. Some challenged "the school board, could have taken those summer months, realizing that this was not going to go away, and figured out a real plan for kids, not this, 'let me change here and let me change their philosophy." Another expressed concern for vulnerable populations, contending that the inconsistency of knowing whether they would be at school or not daily disrupted both incremental progress and the potential for progress. This participant expanded her argument to include the impact this inconsistent placement had on learning:

> When you offer them inconsistency they're not sure what to think from day to day. And they're so busy thinking about what could happen or what might happen, as opposed to focusing on what they know will happen and spending their efforts thinking about how to navigate that.

Participants in both stages of interviews commented on the decision-making process at a district level as well as a site level. In total there were 17 comments from 11 different participants. The participant quotations reflected in Table 8 were selected as fairly representative of the participants' expressed views in combination with the narrative provided above. The final mesolevel structure is discussed next and followed by a discussion of macrolevel influences.
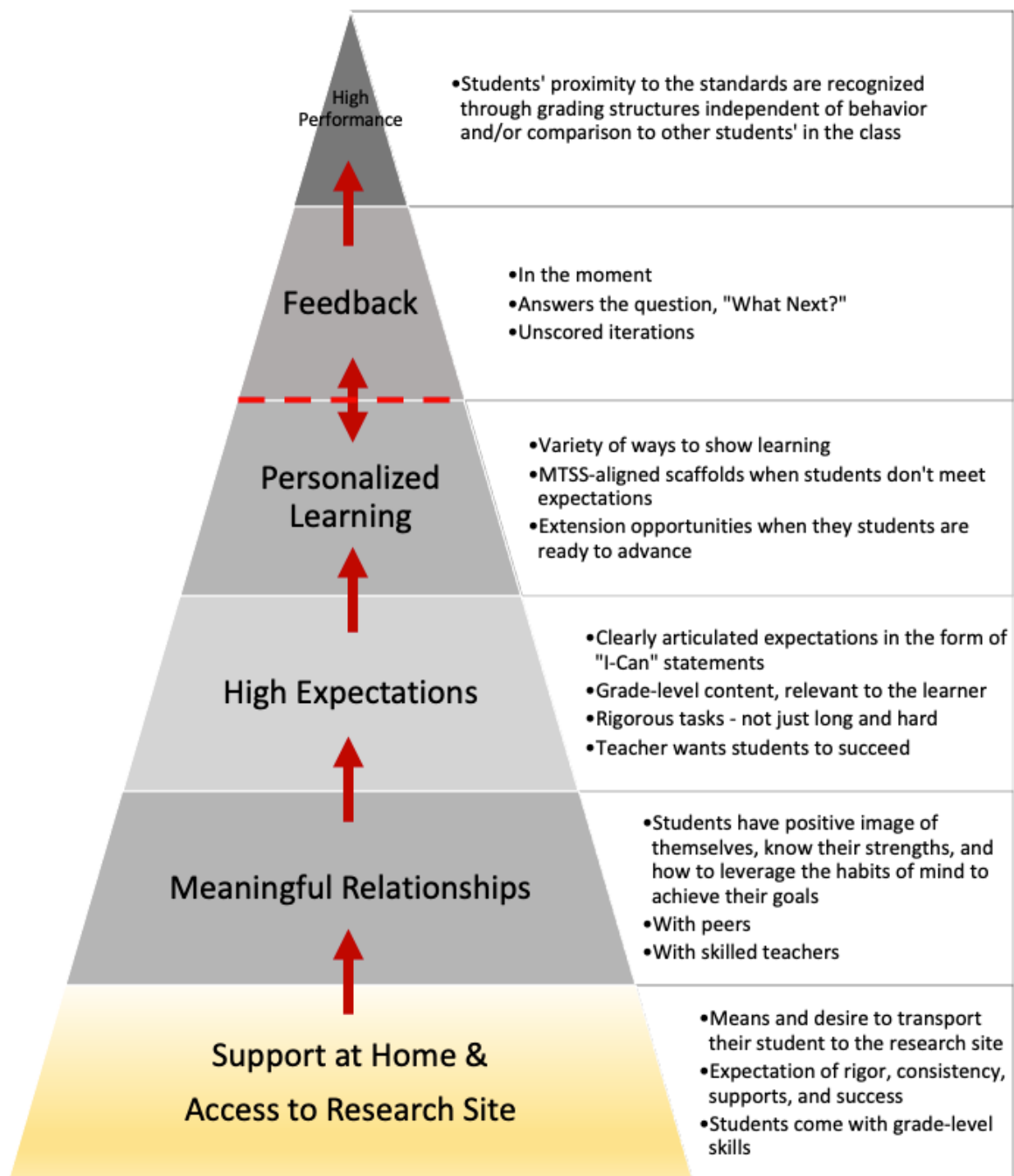
Table 8

Contextual Characteristics

Code	Participant Quotation
High school as a sophisticated ecosystem	• The premise for creating the virtual learning environment was derived through a lens of elementary thinking. That was problematic, and high school folks in numbers weren't consulted on what it would look like. There were a couple of go-to, few people. And as a result, we had to do it too quickly. • The MOU was most certainly from an elementary perspective because they put in there that teachers can't teach a hybrid, virtual and classic, at the same time even if they wanted to, which was really problematic given the number of singletons we have. • A lot of these decisions were made from an elementary lens or at least a simplistic perspective of the multidimensional organizations that we run.
Sustainability	• I think in this district especially there's been a trend over time to look at a particular program and two years later, and purchase it, and a couple of years later it's out the door. • For example, we adopted Canvas this year, and teachers are asking now, "Are we going to keep it?" • And so folks are shell shocked… they would love to see our name on a five-year contract so we know we have something consistent to work with regardless of some of the issues it's causing.
Canvas	• I think 80 plus percent of our staff is using Canvas now, but the robustness with which they're using it and how they're using it, that's going to vary greatly. • Now, is Canvas perfect? No, but was it better than the things we had before? Yes. • I did not convert to Canvas because first of all there's a whole issue where technology works against me. My Google Docs never synched with Canvas. And even all the work orders I put in, they never were able to figure out why it didn't sync with Canvas until like two days before school started.
Flexibility and Consistency	• Not being consistent, it's not good for the kids, and that's when I get upset, when we do something that doesn't made sense for kids. Then I have a hard time buying in. • We're tired, as many sites are, of the constant, "Are we coming back or not?" It just seems like we're hanging on every board meeting. • It's very challenging right now because we just keep having to pivot to into a virtual environment, so I think there's a lot of instability with our instructional practices right now.

Code	Participant Quotation
Fair Representation & Shared-Decision Making	• (District-Level) Somebody suggested a thought and because that somebody was higher up, everybody kind of worked around that thought. So, was there really a lot of collaboration with regards to this? Did we really look at it from all different angles? • (General) It's great to have options and diversity in teaching and learning, but it has to be from the ground up. It has to be organic and genuine, and teachers have to want to do that. • (Research Site) I like the fact that our administrators are so transparent about the decisions that need to be made. They're always grabbing department chairs or site-based decision making to say, "here's our problem, we need a solution. What can we do?" I like the fact that we have a voice. • (Research Site) The fact that we've had good admin that actually listens to us and talks with us and is transparent with the stuff that involves our departments or involves the teaching or scheduling. If I go in to talk, I know they hear me. They're thinking about what I'm saying, and I know I've been heard.

The final code set for mesolevel context impacting the external structures for this planned organizational change are a set of characteristics pertaining specifically to the research site. These characteristics are interdependent and can best be understood when represented in relationship to each other. Figure 11 was developed in response to the stage two participant interviews.

Figure 11

Relationship Among Research Site Characteristics

High Performance
- Students' proximity to the standards are recognized through grading structures independent of behavior and/or comparison to other students' in the class

Feedback
- In the moment
- Answers the question, "What Next?"
- Unscored iterations

Personalized Learning
- Variety of ways to show learning
- MTSS-aligned scaffolds when students don't meet expectations
- Extension opportunities when they students are ready to advance

High Expectations
- Clearly articulated expectations in the form of "I-Can" statements
- Grade-level content, relevant to the learner
- Rigorous tasks - not just long and hard
- Teacher wants students to succeed

Meaningful Relationships
- Students have positive image of themselves, know their strengths, and how to leverage the habits of mind to achieve their goals
- With peers
- With skilled teachers

Support at Home & Access to Research Site
- Means and desire to transport their student to the research site
- Expectation of rigor, consistency, supports, and success
- Students come with grade-level skills

Two participants directly discussed the characteristics at the base of the triangle, and many more alluded to the importance of having students who "tried their hardest" or "wanted to challenge themselves." Several discussed being resident teachers at other sites and encountering uniquely motivated students at the research site. Nearly all discussed caring parents who held their children accountable when they understood the expectations. The research site principal directly addressed the benefits of magnet school mentality. In short, families interested in the academic reputation of the school elected to source transportation to a school that is otherwise "inconvenient and out of the way." Consider a comparison of the class of 2019 cohort performance growth as measured Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium in Figure 12 as an illustration of both student motivation and parental support for 9th-grade students entering the research site.

Figure 12

Class of 2019 Cohort Comparison of Student Achievement

Students that met or exceeded standards	8th	11th
ELA	39.3%	60.3%
Math	20.7%	18.7%

Research District
High School 1
Research District

Students that met or exceeded standards	8th	11th
ELA	47.6%	70.0%
Math	30.0%	40.3%

Research District
High School 2
Research District

Students that met or exceeded standards	8th	11th
ELA	72.3%	89.7%
Math	60.2%	65.0%

Research District
Research Site
Research District

All 16 stage two participants indicated directly or indirectly their commitment to relationship building with students both as a uniquely gratifying part of their job and/or the primary driver of student achievement. Additionally, several connected content-level learning as the vehicle to helping students "discover who they are, discover their passion, and build their

confidence." One participant discussed "the performance of students, most of the time, tied to the relationships that you develop with them. They know that [he's] going to do everything that [he] can to help them succeed." A review of the documents foundational to the research site, along with transcripts of faculty meetings during the pandemic reinforced the collective commitment to building strong, caring classrooms and communities above all other things.

High expectations for student achievement, another core component of the research site, is possible as a result of the first two components discussed above (i.e., meaningful relationships and support at home). Coupled with "a focus on the students and everybody wanting the students to do well," is a foundational belief that "part of a caring relationship is also being demanding because I think you have potential," as one teacher stated. Another participant discussed the camaraderie of the site and consistency of high expectations across departments and within every classroom. Similarly, as previously discussed, parents invite rigorous academics and praise high achievement. To illustrate, though the majority of fall 2021 was spent learning virtually, over 600 students still earned a 4.0 or higher grade-point average. Teachers at this site consider collaboration and teamwork a necessary property of maintaining equity, high expectations, and high student achievement for all.

The district as a whole and the research site in particular have expressed a commitment to personalized learning and student choice. While the pandemic disrupted the progress of implementing personalized learning on a deeper level, it is nonetheless common to all members of the staff and a focal point of instructional conversations. One participant connected high expectations to the essence of personalized learning like this: "Teachers here all have high standards, but they want all students to get there, and they're totally willing to allow students to get there by a different route." New to the conversation is the idea of iterative feedback, which is the professional learning focus for the 2021–2022 school year. Reflecting on his own experience as a leader of learning in a virtual environment, the research site principal shared:

Knowing that the challenges for next year are going to be as great as those this year,

how do we get the biggest return on our investment with our kids? I thought it was

grading, changing the grading system, but it's on a more granular level. It's feedback,

right? So, how we assess where students are in the learning progression, how we

communicate that to them, and how we provide nonpunitive opportunities for them to

move forward in that progression.

All these components work together to create a culture of high performance at the research site;

however, the theory of action presented in Figure 13 clarifies how equity-driven data drive

collaboration and shared decision making resulting in a perpetual cycle of improvement.

Figure 13
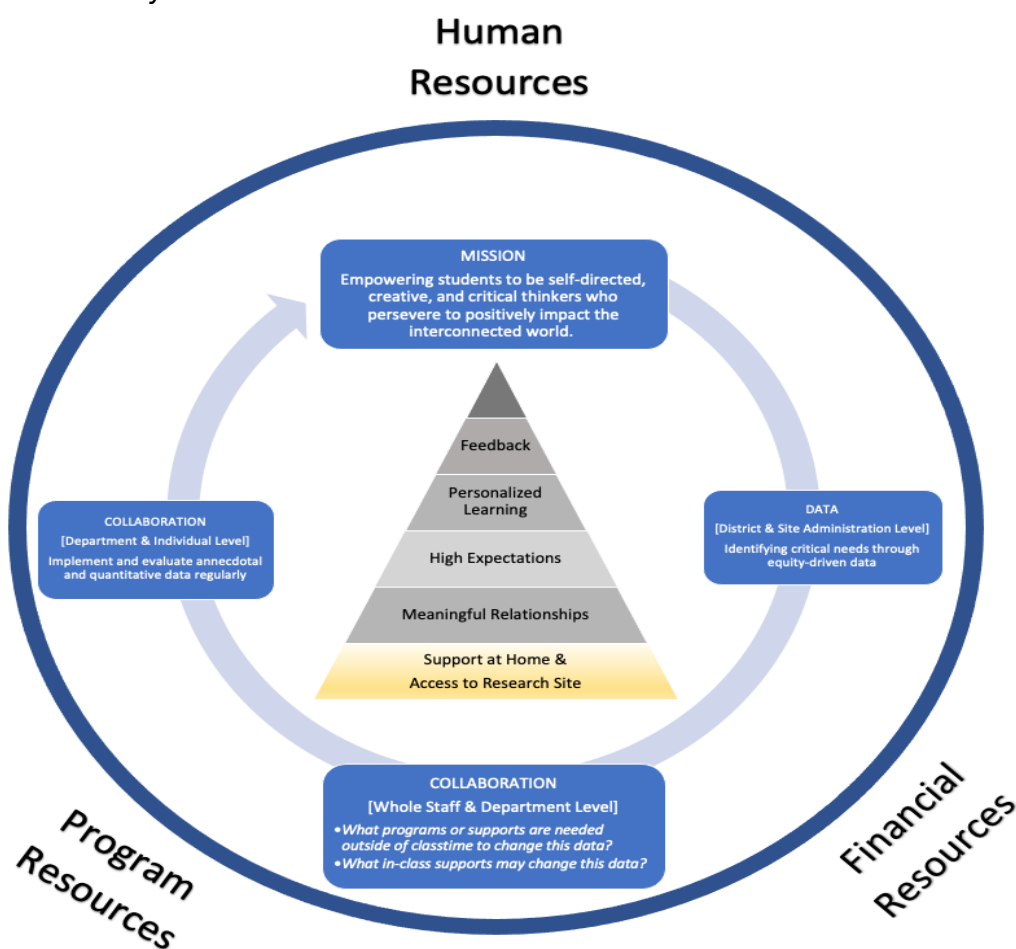
Research Site Theory of Action

Table 9 is not an inclusive list of every participant quotation related to the research site

characteristics. Rather, the quotations included do not duplicate what is referenced or cited

within the narrative and is representative of the general collective comments for each

characteristic.

Table 9

Research Site Characteristics

| Code	Participant Quotation
Commitment to Education	• Since the first day, I've always been appreciative of for the most part, the type of students that we have. I think even in our regular (non-AP) classes the students are more motivated. • I think we get more of the kids who are like, I'm going to go to [the research site] because I know they have a great academic reputation. Yeah, I'm going to challenge myself. And the parents who want that for their kids. They're willing to make the sacrifice to get their kid here in the morning and pick them up.
Meaningful Relationships	• So, it's about the kids. You have to put the children first. It's not about you, and you have to love them unconditionally. And then you use your content to build relationships. • I want to make sure that [students'] lives are worth living and that they have a purpose. It doesn't have to be anybody else's purpose but their own. • I value relationships you create with students and letting them know, "hey, you're completely capable of doing this and there are people here to help you through it and guide you through that process."
High Expectations	• The reason I do this is for the kids. It's really about inspiring them to do something that may be outside of their comfort zone and to learn something new and something that's directly applicable to their lives now and in the long term. • When I started teaching at [another school in this district] I would say there were probably a few [teachers] that did not have the highest expectations and did what they wanted, but I have never seen that at [the research site].
Personalized Learning & Feedback	• I'm going to focus on things that are controllable right now. Maybe they're not going to have their cameras on, but maybe what I do instead to see them is use Flipgrid or find another way to hear their voice and get to know them in a different way because they're not going to speak up inside of class in a normal situation.

Code	Participant Quotation
High Performance	• When you get those moments and they produce something and they blow you away and you think, "Oh, this is what it's all about," just seeing them excited for their own learning and excited to produce something.
Collaboration & Teamwork	• I think we all want to try to get things right for kids, and we lean on each other to try it out. What are you doing? How's this working for you? I'm struggling with this. How can I fix it? • As long as the organization is moving toward the goal, the goal might change a little bit here or there, but I valued the whole team mentality of working towards something together… I think the goal is always kind of the same. It's raising the bar for what we can give our kids here at school and I'm always on board with that. • Everyone wants to take a level of responsibility, wants to take ownership over whatever needs to be done. They're willing to go above and beyond what actually needs to get done in order to help students succeed.

Macrolevel Independent Causal Forces. Structuration theory is a theory of social

system reproduction. In short, it is a theory of how external circumstances at the macro, meso,

and micro levels, along with an agent's internal perception of those circumstances based on

preexisting knowledge, interact with general dispositions toward change to produce an outcome.

That outcome may be to accept the change in whole or in part and then adjust behavior to

reflect that acceptance, or it may be to perpetuate the status quo. Regardless, this study

examined the extent to which each agent or participant in stage two was influenced by their

general dispositions toward change in service of an outcome. The outcome was irrelevant to the

study. What was relevant was which aspects of structuration theory influenced the outcome.

Independent causal forces (Stone, 2005), therefore, are those elements outside of the agent's

control and independent of the external structures associated with the planned organizational

change, yet they still have an influence on the agent's experience and subsequent action. They

are important to the change context and are most commonly considered by mesolevel change

managers, though most of the stage two participants referenced one or more of these forces.

Examples of independent causal forces at the macro level in education are education reform;

political shifts at the local, state, and federal level; policy at the state and federal level; public

school funding; and more. Figure 14 presents the conceptual framework with the macrolevel

independent causal forces highlighted.

Figure 14

Conceptual Framework with Macrolevel Independent Causal Forces
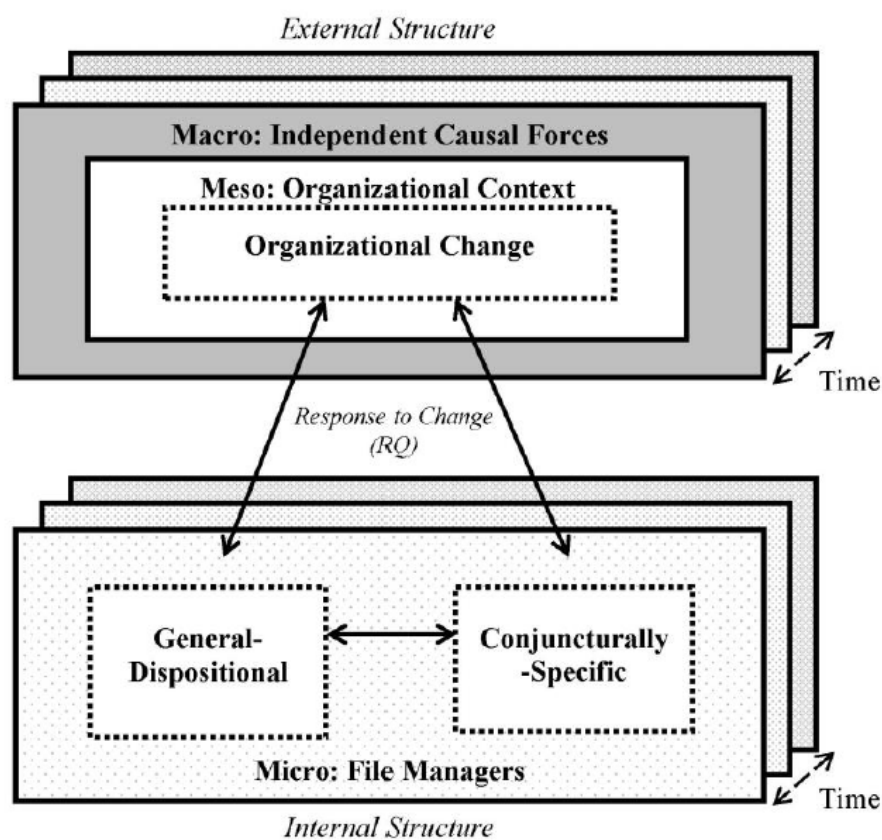
Note: From *"*Examining Multidimensional Resistance to Organizational Change: A Strong
Structuration Approach" [Doctoral dissertation, The George Washington University], L.
Fjellstedt, 2015, p. 75, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global. Copyright 2015 by Lindsey
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Participants identified four unique independent causal factors at the macrolevel

influencing the change to virtual learning. They are: (a) lack of student engagement, (b)

inconsistent access to technology, (c) limited time to prepare for online learning, and (d) public

influence on decision making. Of the 22 interviews conducted, 58 separate comments were made pertaining to these four factors. They are presented in the next section.

Participants in both stages of the study referenced student engagement as a challenge. There were nine comments about student engagement. The following terms were used to identify participant quotations relevant to student engagement: engagement, black box, square, zoom, face. Of the 4 macrolevel causal factors identified, student engagement may appear within the direct influence of the agents, but local guidelines protecting student privacy and promoting equity prohibited agents from requiring students to turn their cameras on. As one stage two participant stated:

I feel like I'm delivering a podcast. They can see me, but I can't see or hear them unless they want to share. They know they get marked present if I see their name in the participant list, but other than that I can't require any level of engagement.

One participant expressed concern for in-coming 9th-grade students stating, "We didn't have the engagement that we're used to seeing from students. Our ninth graders were completely disengaged. They don't have that sense of belonging." All participants with comments related to student engagement discussed a lack of face-to-face interaction as a key factor in lower engagement, motivation, and accountability. Secondly, the lack of connection to their peers and a sense of belonging to the school community as a whole were factors in lower student engagement. While these circumstances are temporary to local health guidelines, they are still outside of either the agents' or district's control, making student engagement a macrolevel causal force.

Virtual learning necessitated teachers use technology to engage their students. Districts were left to independently determine which technological platforms to subscribe to, but the use of technology to offer daily live instruction and regular communication with parents was nonnegotiable per Assembly Bill 77. There were 22 total comments relating to technology in

general, and these comments contribute to the understanding of technology as a macrolevel force.

Several participants viewed district-supplied access to technology and the required use as beneficial to the expansion of instructional strategies and the future of the district. "We've learned that when we went to virtual, the change was good because we learned more technology and we learned more ways of engaging students even when you have little black boxes, so that was good," one agent said. Another confirmed, "We were thrown into teaching virtually, and so we had to use all the technological resources we could in order to deliver the curriculum, so we're very adaptive." Others, though, discussed a surprising general technological illiteracy within the homes, regardless of the fact the district offered one-to-one devices to each student. Often, teachers worked with students struggling to upload or download assignments and manage their Google drives. The extent to which teachers expanded their use of technological tools, too, was largely within their control. Some were pioneers, while some struggled with launching a Zoom meeting. Notwithstanding, the law required teachers to provide live instruction each day, and teachers had no choice but to use technology in order to comply.

By far, the most touted macrolevel constraint for educators was time. There were 23 total comments and 14 participants between stage one and stage two who referenced time as a factor outside of their control, though not all elements within these comments were outside of mesolevel control. Some comments within mesolevel control referred to shortened timelines for learning new technologies, when to pivot between virtual and in-person learning, time spent in professional learning, or helping colleagues adapt old curriculum to a virtual environment. While participants expressed frustration with time constraints, all stated they felt positive about their efforts. One said, "Now did we do everything right? No, but did we do the best that we could in the time that we had? I think so." Another agreed, "We did the best with what we had at the time. There were so many unknowns, and the situation was changing constantly, so I think that

we were all kind of in tornado mode." Others expressed an incongruent sense of urgency among colleagues. One captured the sentiment as, "I noticed that not everybody was on the same page, and I was like we don't have the time. We need to go now!"

Time as a macrolevel causal force, however, surfaced in participants' discussions of students' learning loss from the start of the pandemic. "At this point in time, they truly have lost two years," one agent stated. Another articulated the pressure she felt to teach all the content necessary for students to engage successfully with advanced placement exams. She expressed, "I'm just freaking out about how much time I already spend in a normal school year putting into my class and now how much harder it's going to be losing that instructional time." Several more commented on the amount of time it takes to create new curriculum for a virtual environment. One teacher shared her experience as:

> I would think probably the time piece is the more important, like if we had more time.
> Because it wasn't as bad as far as time for me just because I have so much of my
> curriculum down that it was more about kind of transferring and picking and choosing
> what I wanted to do and how I was going to do it, but I know some teachers that were
> teaching a new course. So, not only was it developing the curriculum, but now you're
> developing it for online. You're teaching this class for the first time, and now you also
> have to get everything into Canvas, which is new. That's why some people were putting
> so many hours.

Public influence is the fourth and final macrolevel causal force discussed by participants in this study. Relevant quotes were identified using the following key words: public, opinion, parent, and community. Five participants in stage two commented on public influence on board policy. While the board is a mesolevel entity, they have little to no impact on what is shared at board meetings or at large in community forums. They do have the power to respond but cannot control what is openly shared and recorded as public record. Therefore, like the previous three

forces this macrolevel causal force influenced agent outcomes but was not within agent control, and neither was it within mesolevel control. "I know we need to get kids back on campus and I know that's what the public wants. I know that's what the parents' voices are speaking very loudly," one agent stated. Ultimately, the board did act because of public influence, but this was tantamount to the board's obligation to create local policy as a result of legislation. The legislation was out of their control as much as the public commentary, making public influence a macrolevel causal force. Table 10 offers key quotations in support of the macrolevel causal forces.

Table 10

Macrolevel Causal Forces

Code	Participant Quotation
Lack of Student Engagement	• I used to be able to walk into a classroom and see what's going on. And then students' video is off and sometimes even the teachers' video is off. And then also when they're interacting with the teacher, they're interacting through private chat. • I think a good part of the population is they're losing motivation. They're not sitting there with their friends in class and their friends are helping them explain, or in small groups to solve a math problem together. If you join some of those math groups and you have four black boxes and nobody's talking. • (2.16) Everything else was a change that I had to take adjustments - the online teaching mode, not seeing students' faces, not really knowing enough about them personally and connecting with them on a personal level the way that you can in person.
Inconsistent Access to Technology	• Other things that have helped us is access to technology and making decisions on a larger term basis, but at the same time, the difficulty being was there enough training, was there enough time to really think about full implementation. • There's challenges with technology that was huge, accessing our new management system, that had a huge impact. Even now, some people have opted not to do that, not to learn a new system and are engaging students in a different way. • We couldn't guarantee that there was equality among all the students in the class for Internet access, technology, access, literacy, whatever it meant.

Code	Participant Quotation
Limited Time to Prepare for Online Learning	• I think organization and making sure it's not a waste of anybody else's time is key because everybody values their time, I think more than anything, and I don't want to waste that for anybody else. • We're already losing time just by the nature of the virtual class. You know, we've already lost so much time and lost so much content. • Make sure you've got things ready just in case that you don't go back or when you have to transition back over to this or when you do show up, you know, and there's been very little flexibility for work and recognition that this will also take time, and it's all happening right now because it's immediate and you have to have something kids for tomorrow. But at the same time, still seven and a half hours with direct teaching, still grade everything, and then on top of it make completely new lessons that are now ready to be approached, ready for the students who have got to do this in this new way.
Public Influence on Decision Making	• I really feel that parents pressured them into making choices that maybe they wouldn't have normally. • Sometimes I felt like [the district] was making decisions that were more political decisions opposed to pedagogical decisions or that they're trying to appease a certain amount of people. Even though we're trending toward purple, why are we trying to open up school, like this is not the right time to be trying to sort this out. • It has been made very clear that the board has made the decision that I don't think has the best interests of teachers in mind. They kind of take our opinion, and they do something else because of perception, because of the pressure, the societal pressure.

Tenet Two: Internal Structures

The primary purpose of this study was to understand the extent to which each agent-in-situ was influenced by their general dispositions toward change in service of an outcome. Strong structuration (Stones, 2005), particularly the quadripartite nature of structuration presented in Figure 1, served as a theoretical framework for this study and offered the language for discussing the findings of the study. The first part of this chapter presented the conditions for agent action in the form of the external structures associated with the planned organizational change, the switch from in-person learning to virtual learning. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to the discussion of internal structures impacting the outcome of each agent. Stones (2005, as cited in Coad et al., 2015) suggested the most appropriate way to conduct research as examined through strong structuration theory is to "look first at an agent's conduct by

identifying general dispositional frames of meaning and then at conjuncturally specific internal

structures from the viewpoint of that agent" (p. 16). Therefore, the findings regarding general-

dispositional internal structures of the agents are presented first. Secondly, conjunctually-

specific internal structure are presented. Thirdly, the resulting active agency is offered, and the

chapter concludes with a discussion of the intersection between external and internal structures.

General Dispositional Internal Structures

It is important to distinguish between internal structures as Stones (2005) presented

them and "individual social positions and collective social systems" (p. 6) as external structures

influencing internal structures. As a reminder, internal structures are not observable, whereas

outcomes as a result of the interaction between external and internal structures are observable.

An agent draws on their internal structures to make sense of external structures and decide,

consciously or unconsciously, on an action. Stones (2005) suggested internal structures are

made up of two parts: general dispositions and conjuncturally-specific knowledge. General

dispositions are those preconceived worldviews or biases agents hold that color their

interpretation of a set of circumstances. These dispositions are developed, challenged, and

reinforced over time and as a result of the interaction among both conjuncturally-specific internal

structures and external structures. Stones defined conjuncturally-specific structures as "how the

agent perceives her immediate external structural terrain from the perspective of her own

projects, whether in terms of helplessness or empowerment" (p. 124). In other words, the

agent's position within a group and the power of influence they hold over the group combined

with their general dispositions are strongly correlative to an outcome, regardless of the external

structures associated with the planned organizational change. To illustrate the interaction

among internal structures and active agency, see Figure 15.

Figure 15

Interactions Within the Conceptual Framework
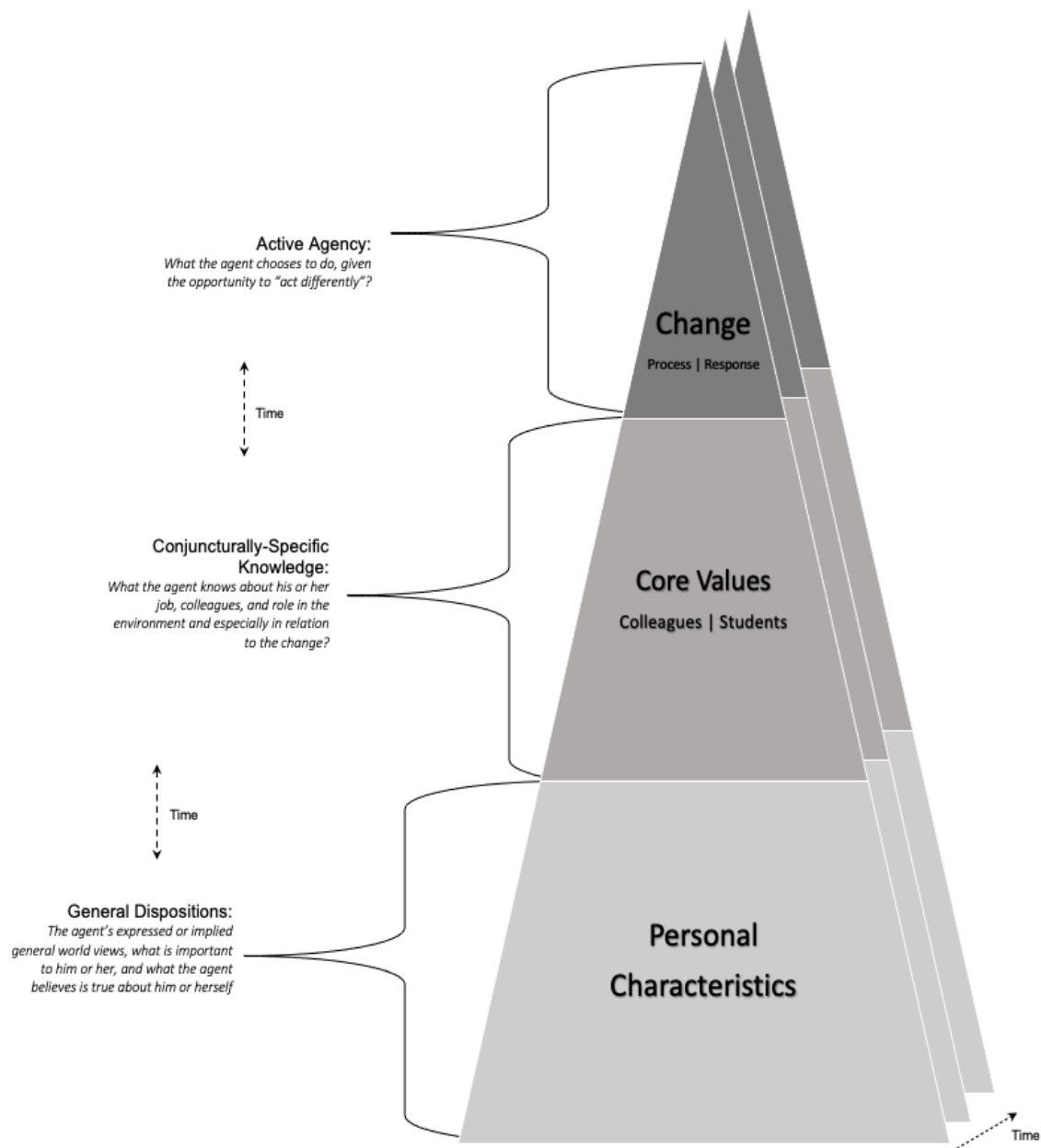
The following section presents four general-dispositional internal structures as identified by stage two participants in the interviews. After all stage two interviews were completed, participant comments related to personal values, characteristics, and world views were gathered

and coded. Comparable comments were similarly coded with the resulting internal structures: (a) professional obligation, (b) connectedness and community, (c) growth mindset, and (d) relational trust. These codes were the dominant general-dispositional internal structures among all stage two participants. The following is a discussion of these structures.

General-dispositional: Professional Obligation. During the stage two interviews, five participants offered comments directly related to professional hierarchy or obligation. These comments were a result my prompting in accordance with Stones' (2005) supposition that agents are only perfunctorily aware of the dispositions guiding active agency. Other comments associated with the disposition of professional obligation were categorized as more directly relating to conjuncturally-specific internal structures because they were made without prompting. Strong structuration holds that general dispositions are those macro or mesolevel formed schemas that inform an agent's sense of belonging. These dispositions are how agents relate to and among each other for the purpose of acculturation (Bourdieu, 2005).

Participants' disposition for professional obligation prompted compliance with the planned organizational change, regardless of contentedness with the decision-making process or resulting impact on other internal or external structures. One participant offered, "As an employee, it's my job to adapt to whatever color we're going to go with the next day. You know, it's not up to me. I'm not making these rules." Similarly, another agreed with the requirement to adapt but extended the commitment to include: "Even if I'm not happy, I'm still going to do it because it's what I'm contractually obligated to do, and I'm that person who does what they're supposed to do." Another capitalized on this contractual obligation, litigiously framing the ethics of professionalism with, "…the bigger picture [is] that they're teachers, and they signed a contract. They need to get their butts in the classroom and teach. And the district has every right to tell them that."

General-dispositional: Connectedness. Like the previous disposition, this code sits partially within general-dispositional internal structures as well as conjuncturally-specific structures. Those comments related to "generalized worldviews and cultural schemas, classifications, typifications of things, people and networks, principles [or otherwise]" (Stones, 2005, p. 88), parsed from agents through prompting were included in the general dispositions relating to connectedness. All other related comments were coded as conjuncturally specific.

Four of the 16 stage two participants, all in leadership roles, referenced an inherent desire to help people find common group in the midst of conflict, which contributes to a culture of positivity and harmony at the research site. In the presence of a planned organizational change, this general disposition prompts a helpfulness among agents despite the discomfort associated with the change. One participant with this disposition shared:

> I think when I see something that needs to be improved or can be effectively altered in a way that won't inhibit or impair or change or negatively impact the group, it just seems to make sense to me. I don't mind affecting that change, I guess. I just think it's the better thing to do and it helps many people. So, it just seems to be the right thing to do.

Another participant, reflecting directly on the shift to virtual learning, commented on her willingness to engage as a result of her other department members' inclination. "Now that I think about it," she said, "I guess that's when I decided to go along with it without a fuss. I mean if they're all on board who am I to cause discord?"

All participants directly or indirectly referencing connectedness placed a high value on this internal structure. In some cases, those comments were included as conjuncturally-specific internal structures and expressed frustration when the planned organizational change disrupted the sense of connectedness at the research site. The connection can be made, then—if agents value connectedness as a founding principle of the research site culture, many may subscribe to this code as a general disposition.

General-dispositional: Growth Mindset. Growth mindset, or the mindset that embraces learning as fundamental to a happy, high-quality professional and personal life, is a general disposition of the agents interviewed for this study. Some participants shared possessing this quality from early childhood: "When I was a kid, I could be thrown into absolutely anything and be super comfortable, be super fine, whatever. And that's how I was raised." Others described their comfort with growth mindset as "embracing ambiguity," "flexibility," or being "okay with not always knowing exactly what's going to happen and being able to handle those situations as they pop up." All participants expressed change as a fundamental part of their job and embraced it as a positive element of their personal and professional lives. One agent exclaimed, "When you stop learning is when you get old, and I don't want to get old. So, I'm always up for change because there's always something better.

As described earlier in the chapter, the change from traditional in-person learning to virtual learning because of the COVID-19 pandemic was a detour from nearly every element of learning and teaching stage two participants previously experienced. Even those individuals captured as having a general disposition toward change as "an opportunity to be better at something" struggled with the transition. When pressed to make sense of the dichotomy associated with embracing change and the dissociation experienced with virtual learning, one participant expressed, "There are some changes that are about loss, and then there are some changes that are about evolution. And so, the changes where we're evolving are okay, but the changes where we're losing something are a struggle." Regardless, nine of the 16 participants interviewed in stage two engaged in the change immediately, most offering the direct stipulation to "make the best of it" on behalf of students. Learning how to engage with students virtually and continue to offer high-quality instruction was a nonnegotiable condition for this planned organizational change and further proof of this widely held general disposition.

General-dispositional: Relational Trust. Participants spoke about trust bilaterally—
trust for their leaders and colleagues, and the desire for others to trust them at their word and
their professional competence. Words such as "transparency," "honesty," and "clarity" were all
used as synonyms for trust. In light of the pandemic, participants even extended their trust to life
itself, with one participant saying, "You get to do what you can do, and you leave the rest up to
life and what it will give me, and I just trust that it will always be the right decision that we move
forward with." Regarding the planned organization change, though, participants extended trust
only to those at the research site. When decisions related to virtual learning were made at the
site and communicated through local leadership channels, trust between colleagues lubricated
challenges associated with the change proposed. Conversely, changes communicated through
district-sponsored networks were met with cynicism and rigidity. In large, participants disclosed
they trust those they have shared personal experiences with and not just those they know of in
name alone. They are more willing to accept the word of a trusted leader they have relationship
with and comply with their expectations even if they disagree. One participant expressed,
"Personally, I don't have a problem with being told what to do especially if it's a person I trust."
Another said, "At some point, we have to trust our leaders to make decisions and sometimes
we'll agree with them and sometimes we won't."

General-dispositional Internal Structures Summary. General-dispositional internal
structures are often established in the agent's subconscious because of social conditioning over
time and are, therefore, uncommonly offered as a basis for action. I then took latitude by
prompting "why" questions and allowing the participant to declare value systems and assume
character-related rationale for described behaviors. The agents' general dispositions influenced
the outcomes associated with the shift to virtual learning inasmuch as their sense of
professional obligation promoted adherence to the contract or loyalty to a trusted leader asking
for compliance. While agents expressed a level of comfort with ambiguity and believed they

generally meet change as learners with a growth mindset, the change from traditional in-person learning to virtual learning was complicated by the lack of trust in the decision-making process and a feeling of loss rather than a move toward something better. Additionally, the change challenged the sense of connectedness the research site community valued. Long-established learning protocols and instructional routines were obsolete outside of the classroom, and as one participant expressed, "It was every man for himself."

The interactions between the general dispositions reflected in the lowest tier of Figure 16 as "personal characteristics" and the agent's conjuncturally-specific knowledge reflected in the middle tier as "core values" are recursive, meaning they intersect countlessly over time, and they influence each other making it difficult to discuss these structures in isolation. Table 11 offers central quotations related to agents' general dispositional internal structures.

Table 11

General-dispositional Characteristics

Code	Participant Quotes
Professional Obligation	- Even if I'm not happy, I'm still going to do it because it's what I'm contractually obligated, and I'm that person who does what they're supposed to do. - They're [the teachers] not understanding the bigger picture that they're teachers, and they signed a contract. They need to get their butts in the classroom and teach. And the district has every right to tell them that. You know, but at the same time, it's a two-way street. You know, teachers do have rights. There's working conditions. There's a contract that clearly states that. So, you know, and it just goes to show that a lot of things people are very selfish, and they want what they want when they want it and to heck with everybody else. - As an employee, it's my job to adapt to whatever color we're going to go with the next day. You know, it's not up to me. I'm not making these rules. - For the most part I will almost always be like a company person as long as I see that this is something that we should do. This is something valuable. This is not something that's a waste of time.

Code	Participant Quotation
Connectedness	• One of the things I've always tried to be good at is helping people find that middle ground. • I've taken some of those strength-finder assessments and relationships and connectedness comes up a lot. • I think when I see something that needs to be improved or can be effectively altered in a way that won't inhibit or impair or change or negatively impacts a group, that it just seems to make sense to me. I don't mind affecting that change, I guess. I just think it's the better thing to do and it helps many people. So, it just seems to be the right thing to do. • Under the most circumstances, it's better to do change with (and you can't involve everyone else in that conversation), but it's better to have more people on board and have a discussion and come to an agreement together instead of just giving someone their marching orders.
Growth Mindset	• When I was a kid, I could be thrown into absolutely anything and be super comfortable, be super fine, whatever. And that's how I was raised. • I'm good at embracing ambiguity. • I figured out a problem and then I find a way to solve it because I'm not going to accept mediocrity, I guess. • I'm OK with not always knowing exactly what's going to happen and being able to handle those situations as they pop up and being able to transition or to think flexibly and do something different. • One of my strengths is being a planner, but I'm very flexible with that as well. I can transition easily as long as I know where I'm going so, I can make a plan. • When you stop learning is when you get old, and I don't want to get old. So, I'm always up for change because there's always something better. • There are some changes that are about loss, and then there are some changes that are about evolution. And so, the changes where we're evolving are okay, but the changes where we're losing something are a struggle. • Change always presents an opportunity to be better at something.
Relational Trust	• My experience has gotten me to a place where I really value that sort of transparency and honesty and clarity • There are controllables, and there are uncontrollables. You have to do what you can do, and you leave the rest up to life and what it will give me. And I just trust that it will always be the right decision that we move forward with. • I think it really helps that I trust the people that I'm working for. if I didn't have that person, I don't know if I would be quite as willing to jump in for any reason • Personally, I don't have a problem with being told what to do especially if it's a person that I trust. • At some point, we have to trust our leaders to make decisions and sometimes we'll agree with them and sometimes we won't.

Conjuncturally-specific Internal Structures

Conjuncturally-specific internal structures are not generalized worldviews held by the agent as are general dispositions; rather, they are specific to in-the-moment, in-situ, decision making. Agents use situational knowledge, including references to positionality of power or influence, to inform "how [the agent] can act within and upon the world to sustain or to change it" (Stones, 2009, p. 85). Both general dispositions and conjuncturally-specific internal structures co-dependently inform active agency leading to outcomes.

The purpose of this study was to understand the extent to which an agent's general dispositions influence their response to a planned organizational change. Therefore, it is essential to separate the agent's general dispositions toward change from their conjuncturally-specific knowledge and discuss each individually. To review, the central tenant of Gidden's (1987) original structuration theory is the duality of structure. In short, social structures erected through rules and resources are employed and reproduced over time resulting in a systemic form of expected human interactions in the presence of similar rules and resources. These expectations ingratiate themselves as general dispositions or subconscious expectations for similar social interactions regardless of preference. Influential social structures may be on the macrosocial level as well as the more confined familial level. The previous section qualified the collective general dispositions toward change at the research site. I prompted participants to consider the "why" behind expressed value systems or actions in order to surface general dispositions. The following section extracts these dispositions to isolate the conjuncturally-specific internal structures.

Given the interdependency of these internal structures, the task is challenging for any researcher working with strong structuration as a conceptual framework. Figure 16 highlights the conjuncturally-specific knowledge of participants and offers a reminder of the influence of

time on the relationship between general dispositions, conjuncturally-specific internal structures, and active agency.

Figure 16

Interactions Within the Conceptual Framework, Conjuncturally-specific Knowledge Highlighted
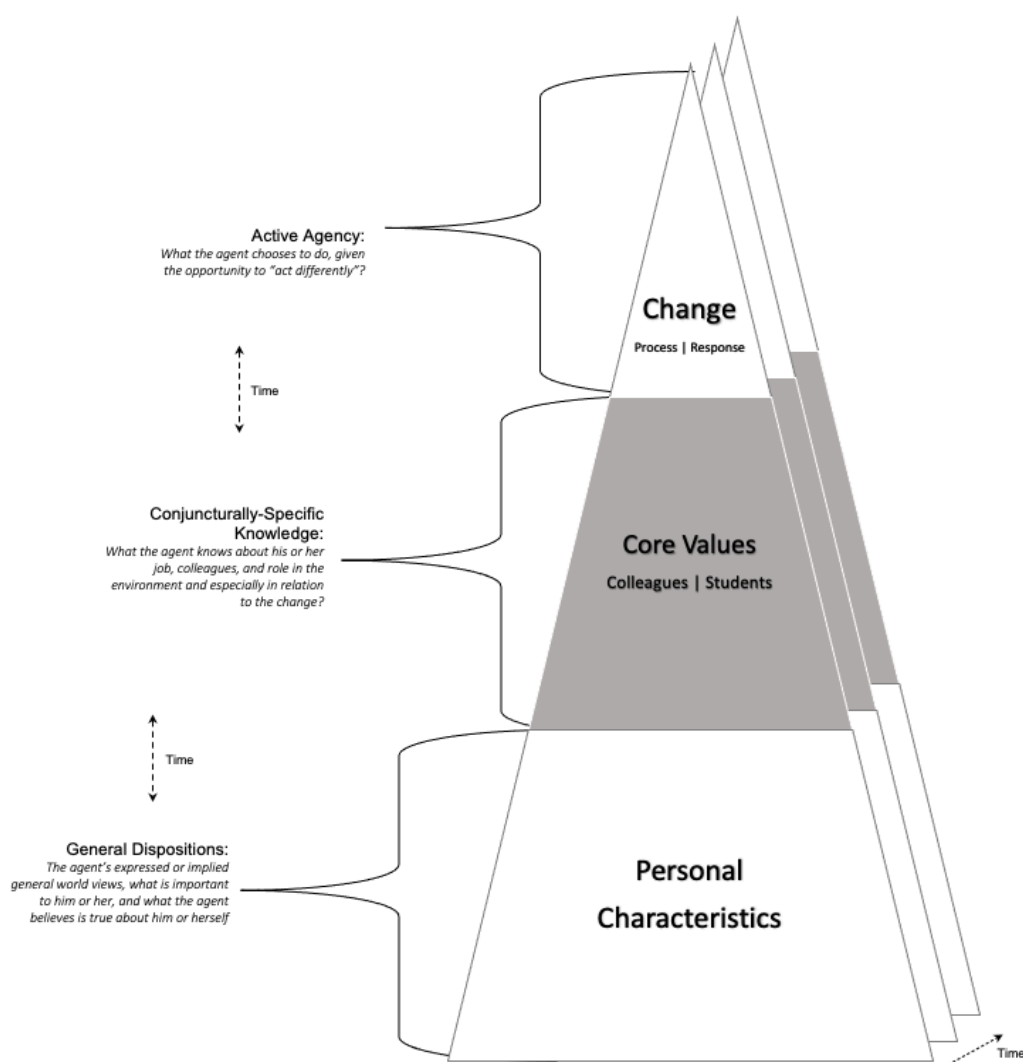
The general-dispositional internal structures examined in the previous section were professional obligation, connectedness, growth mindset, and relational trust. This section presents two broad codes related to conjuncturally-specific internal structures in the form of: (a) professional core values related to interactions with colleagues and (b) professional core values related to

interactions with students. The first segment of this section discusses influence, autonomy, self-efficacy, and team efficacy as central to conjuncturally-specific knowledge of colleagues. The second segment discusses meaningful relationships and dedication to higher purpose as central to agents' work with students.

Professional Interactions With Colleagues: Influence. As agents discussed their initial experience with the shift to virtual learning most discussed their interactions with colleagues and alluded to broader networks that influenced their thinking, feelings, and subsequent action. Conversely, many also spoke of their influence over others at the site. Three discussed professional networks outside of the district that continue to shape their practice. Only one agent referenced a network within the district but outside of the research site that worked interdependently to share information.

When speaking about changes that have occurred in the past at the site, all participants spoke respectfully about their colleagues' professionalism, commitment to high expectations for students, and collective progress toward the research site's vision statement. Others compared their experiences at other schools to that of the research site. One offered:

[With] prior administrators at other schools a lot of times felt like I was talking to a wall. You go in, and they're just kind of nodding at me, but you know they're somewhere else. They weren't quite as open and quite as transparent, I guess.

Another agent described his own unofficial influence with his colleagues and sense of inclusion as:

I feel like my leadership role on campus is a much more unofficial one, but I feel like my opinion is valued…I feel like there are some folks who see me as somebody who understands the environment and the culture of the school. It's hard to define what that leadership role would be because it is very informal, unofficial, but I definitely feel like I'm involved in the process.

Previous positive experiences with administrators leading change at the research site, combined with a transparent shared decision-making process, positioned the agents interviewed as initially favoring the shift to virtual learning regardless of early structural ambiguity. Over time a social structure was built that valued the voice of the teachers as co-developers of the site's mission, vision, values, and trajectory for progress. All 16 agents interviewed offered specific anecdotal evidence to underscore official and unofficial influence over change. The agents' conjuncturally-specific knowledge regarding the inclusive process for change and a sense of power to influence the pursuit and development of the change contributed to the outcomes associated with the shift to virtual learning.

All agents acknowledged that virtual learning as a default model for public education as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic was not really a choice; however, many of the structural details were negotiable from their perspective. This is a highly collaborative site accustomed to co-designing student outcomes and correlative professional learning plans. However, few expressed favorable opinions of the district-level-led process for developing the virtual learning model. Some expressed frustration with failed or abandoned initiatives in the past. Others discussed a lack of transparency or authentic representation of the high school experience. "Under most circumstances," one agent shared, "it's better to have more people on board and have a discussion and come to an agreement together instead of just giving someone their marching orders." All agents agreed they had little to no influence over the development of the virtual learning model, further reinforcing a feeling of separateness between site and district-level administration.

Ultimately, the board of education made decisions regarding virtual learning after open-forum dialogue in twice monthly regular and emergency board meetings. Many of the agents wrote letters to the board offering their opinions but believed those offerings were not given any credence. Despite feelings of defeat and helplessness over decisions made at the district level,

conjuncturally-specific knowledge of site-level influence sustained conversations about virtual

learning in practice. One agent offered the following as a summary: "I think it's good to know

what we can control, like, OK, so this is happening in the bigger picture, but what does that

mean for me and my practice? So, I will control those 'controllables.'" Agent general dispositions

toward professional obligation as well as connectedness were not compromised due to board

decisions because agents did not view their site representatives as responsible for those

decisions. As a result, the conjuncturally-specific knowledge of the site members remained

positive and unaltered to the extent that teachers still actively sought collaboration toward the

betterment of meeting students' social-emotional and academic needs.

Professional Interactions With Colleagues: Autonomy. The level of influence agents

enjoy over decisions made at the site level is compatible with the theme of professional

autonomy. Agents referenced a high level of independence over their time, technique, and

teaming two dozen times in the course of 16 stage two interviews. This self-government is

mutually reinforced through weekly team professional learning communities designed to allow

agents room to explore professional betterment in an area of their choosing. Equally, site

leadership is committed to vetting ideas for professional learning though department chair

meetings, the site-based, decision-making committee, and student governance teams. Many of

the agents interviewed equated great personal satisfaction with their jobs with the freedom to

adjust their curriculum or instruction to better meet to the needs of students. This autonomy only

served to increase the level of ownership over the site to the extent that "when I come here to

do stuff outside of school hours, I don't really think of it necessarily as extra jobs. I just really

enjoy my job." This sense of satisfaction was built on the back of agents' general disposition as

learners combined with the autonomy to learn about what interests them most in a variety of

supportive on-site venues.

Regarding the change to virtual learning, agents' predominant complaint was the disruption caused by pivoting back and forth between traditional in-person learning and virtual learning. Most expressed a frustration with "having no choice in the matter." While some were intimidated by the prospect of encountering upwards of 38 students in a classroom, all believed that proximity to students was essential to learning, and the district adopted unreasonable metrics for quarantining close contacts and/or closing the school down entirely. One department chair stated:

> I was a little frustrated on the first pivot back to virtual because of the threshold the district set. I just felt that the metrics they were using were too low…and so that frustrated me because that took me away from being with students.

This negative sentiment was widespread with many expressing personal feelings of grief, depression, helplessness, and loneliness—all because of the loss of autonomy. This lack of proximity to students and colleagues did challenge the general disposition of connectedness, and the departure from this identity as a result of virtual learning heightened negative emotions toward real or perceived decision makers. At one point in the middle of year, teachers at the site drafted and delivered a letter of no confidence in the association's site representatives. This action further compromised the general disposition of connectedness and was a direct result of teachers feeling a loss of autonomy.

Structuration theory is founded on the premise that social structures are fluid, ever-evolving sets of expectations, actions, reactions, reorientations, or sustained beliefs within individuals and groups as a whole. In this case, agents at the site developed a conjuncturally-specific internal structure of autonomy, made possible by the shared general dispositions of professional obligation, growth mindset, relational trust, and connectedness. When the district began making decisions limiting the autonomy of site-level agents, these agents sought to restore that autonomy. Ultimately, without restoration the general dispositions will be impacted.

Professional Interactions With Colleagues: Self-efficacy. One of the strongest articulated conjuncturally-specific internal structures was agents' sense of self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as "people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that effect their lives" (p. 2). Traditionally, the influence agents sought to exercise is over student achievement as measured by grades and graduation rates; however, the organizational change to virtual learning challenged teachers' sense of self-efficacy. When asked why an agent didn't do something regarding the planned organizational change, the most offered rationale was, "I didn't feel like I could properly take care of all [my students] that way." At no point did any agent interviewed allude to students being incapable of learning in a virtual environment though agents did question their ability to offer instruction effectively.

Several agents referenced strong work ethic as essential to efficacy, using phrases such as "earned my stripes" or "paying my dues" in a positive connotation. Equally, many offered examples of how they contributed to the value of the research site as a whole. "I was the first AP teacher ever on campus," one department chair shared, "so, that's something that I own." Participants tied contribution to their sense of self-efficacy, and the research site principal confirmed the teachers' eagerness to be part of something greater than themselves.

When faced with a choice as a result of the change, agents who agree that work ethic and self-perception are the foundation of self-efficacy drew on their general disposition toward professional obligation and worked harder and longer to achieve the goal. One agent, discussing the long hours she put in during the initial stages of virtual learning said:

> I have to have that level of excellence, and I can't step back from that. And that's what
> got me. And it was so hard for me to figure that out. For Canvas, I want to make sure
> everything's there and the links are all good and the kids can have an easy, smooth

experience and not get frustrated. I want to have perfection. That's why I was putting in

90 hours a week.

The effort this agent put into creating accessible curriculum offers evidence of her commitment to this conjuncturally-specific internal structure. Bandura (1997) maintained that "successes build a robust belief in one's personal efficacy. Failures undermine it, especially if failures occur before a sense of efficacy is firmly established (p. 2). All agents forced to adapt to teaching in a virtual learning environment expressed trepidation likened to that of a first-year teacher. Despite the decades of successful teaching with students, their once well-rooted sense of self-efficacy turned fragile.

Teachers believed they could deliver highly efficacious instruction given the proper amount of planning time; however, district-level decisions to pivot between in-person and virtual learning, often in a matter of days, left them with little to no planning time. One department chair commented, "That part's been the most disconcerting and frustrating part with the transition, just feeling like there's an under appreciation for the amount of work it takes to deliver expert instruction." A few said had they been aware of the amount of time students would spend learning virtually they "probably would have gotten on the ball sooner with getting [themselves] up to speed with all the digital content, the Flipgrid, Peardeck, all the different ways of interacting with kids online." The consensus among participants was a wish for district-level leadership to commit to virtual learning for a defined amount of time for both consistency and purposeful instructional planning. Instead, teachers were offering compliance-based performance assessments that did not provide an honest reflection of a student's proximity to the standard. One agent offered the following anecdote:

I know for me in that first eight days that we were there, I was able to have some

conversation with students that I never would have been able to have online. And with

one student literally was like, "Dude, why haven't you turned in any of these things? And

they opened up their computer and were like, "Oh yeah, this is done. I just didn't turn it in." And I said, "OK, so hit the submit button." And like, OK, let's look at it and getting that person to go from their F to a B just by finishing up a couple things and just being on them like, "Hey, let's do this. Let's get through this." That was huge.

Maximizing student achievement at high levels is the driving force behind self-efficacy as a conjuncturally-specific internal structure at this research site. Despite the time constraints, agents continued to draw on their general dispositions of connectedness, professional obligation, and growth mindset as an impetus for progress. "I guess I just don't feel you can stay stuck regardless of what you want. You know, you have to evolve," said one teacher. She concluded, "If we stay stuck in the past, how are you ever going to learn something new? How are you going to see what you can do?" Though agents expressed extreme difficulty teaching in the virtual environment, each remained resolute in their general dispositions towards change.

Professional Interactions With Colleagues: Collective Efficacy. Closely related to self-efficacy is the concept of collective efficacy. Bandura (1997) coined the term and defined it as "a group's shared belief in the conjoint capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given levels of attainment" (p. 477). In short, collective efficacy is the belief that everyone in the group has the capacity to contribute effectively toward the achievement of the group's collective goal. Agents interviewed in this study believed that all teachers at the research site are independently capable and desirous of maximizing student achievement at high levels. One agent confirmed, "We all want to get things right, and we lean on each other to try it out." This level of confidence in and among the group is the basis for this conjuncturally-specific internal structure. In other words, when change happens at the research site and agents are faced with decisions related to the change, they draw on their confidence in the collective efficacy of the group as a rationale for engaging in the change.

One of the most cited factors contributing to the collective efficacy of the research site was teachers' genuine affection for each other, which extends beyond simple professional concern and courtesy in service of meeting a shared goal. In fact, 11 of the 16 agents interviewed referenced listening, helping, connecting, supporting, camaraderie, growing, or serving. One agent said, "I feel like little things over the years have kind of garnered me somewhat of a reputation as somebody who cares about what's going on and shares the interests of the other teachers." This level of combined interest and support cultivates an environment celebrating vulnerability leading to professional and personal growth. This site principal uses wildly important goal (WIG) declarations to support this element of the site's culture as well. More specifically, he asks all staff and faculty to declare both a personal and professional WIG at the beginning of the year and then schedules individual meetings with each person to discuss the goals and offer support.

An awareness of growth mindset as a general disposition and a significant contributor to the culture of collective efficacy is also evident in the hiring processes. One department chair explained:

When we did the hiring for the department, we were always looking for those who wanted to improve or wanted to try new things. We weren't satisfied with, "Well, this is how I've always done it, so I'm going to do it [this way]. It seems to work just fine." It was, "What can I do to make it better?" And so that was kind of the mentality what we were looking for as a department as we were growing.

This chairperson later explained his views of growth mindset as innate, whereas excellent teachers are "grown" by observing other excellent teachers, seeking feedback, reflecting on current practices, and developing a network of support. In other words, excellent teachers are firstly lifelong learners.

Agents used growth mindset as a general disposition in the presence of the shift to virtual learning and leveraged their confidence in the research site's collective efficacy to address the challenges associated with the change. "I think the biggest influence that I have had is just more one-on-one with teachers when they're struggling with how to do things and spending time helping them figure that out," one agent described. Another department chair offered her commitment to "a lot of community building in the department or being there just to support them in whatever way I can to try to help." Agents described late night text threads, community happy hours, and other informal connection points as pivotal to maintaining collective efficacy as a conjuncturally-specific internal structures. The general dispositions toward growth mindset, relational trust, and connectedness buoyed against challenges to collective efficacy in the presence of a change that intimidated the study's participants.

Professional Interactions With Students: Meaningful Relationships. Relationships in general with both colleagues and students were of central concern to agents in the study. The health and safety dangers associated with the COVID-19 pandemic paired with the resulting shift to virtual learning heightened individual and collective anxiety and in some cases led to confrontational or irrational behavior, according to the agents. Agents spoke of their general disposition toward relational trust as an influence in maintaining meaningful relationships. More specifically, they assigned obligation for poor choices to temporary, stress-induced circumstances rather than reframing these behaviors as fixed character traits. They believed the integrity, strength, and truth of individuals was more accurately reflected outside of the tensions associated with the pandemic and the shift to virtual learning.

Equally, the disposition toward connectedness enhanced a preexisting commitment to building relationship in service of students' social and emotional wellbeing and academic achievement. One agent described the traditional culture of care in her classroom as:

It's about the kids. You have to put the children first. It's not about you. The second thing

is you have to do is love them unconditionally. You have to love them unconditionally

with all their baggage, and you can't judge them because you have no idea what they're

going through, and you just have to let them know that you love them unconditionally.

And you respect them…And then you use your content to build relationship.

Thirteen of the 16 participants interviewed in stage two cited the development of meaningful

relationships as the primary reason they do their job. One agent offered the following

explanation:

I think the thing I love most about my job is spending time with students. It doesn't really

matter what I'm doing, whether I'm coaching or teaching English or, you know, serving

as the club advisor or hanging out with a small group, or tutoring someone. I just like

spending time with the students.

Another department chair discussed positive relationships with students and the requisite

avenue toward maximizing student achievement and "hopefully getting to positively influence

them in the long run." In a cursory review of proffered research site staff and faculty

presentations over the course of the year, the topic of caring classroom environments and

meaningful relationships appeared in every discussion. Agents agreed this conjuncturally-

specific structure informs many of the decisions made at the site traditionally, but it was a

struggle to redefine an effective approach for developing caring classrooms in a virtual

environment.

Professional Interactions With Students: Higher Purpose. Agents at the research

site approach their work with a purpose higher than a simple transmission of content-specific

knowledge. Agents spoke of "giving kids the tools to be successful," sharing the wisdom they

had acquired in their own journey, and maximizing students' long-term potential as the most

influential conjuncturally specific structure, or the lens through which they weigh all change. If

the change was likely to disrupt this structure, agents at the research site resisted. One agent compared his purpose as an educator to the current battle with COVID-19, saying:

> Less than 2% of the population is dying from COVID. And then I look at, you know, 70% of our population is dying from chronic illness, and I think that people need to be educated on how to exercise and eat. I know what I teach them, they'll use for the rest of their lives, hopefully on a daily basis.

Agents also drew from their own experience as learners, seeking to either replicate positive experiences or avoid repeating negative ones. One such agent reflected on her purpose for teaching as, "I thought this would be a really cool opportunity to really help students with critical thinking and also, I was just frustrated with some of my own experiences feeling like I didn't always get the education that I wanted." All spoke of either the opportunity or privilege of serving students, some sharing the manifestation of reciprocal dignity in the classroom through intentional metacognitive practices. Still, others believed they had an obligation for "sparking a light and a passion in students and [it] doesn't have to necessarily be about the subjects that 'm teaching… It's finding a spark and figuring out how to make it grow." Agents at this site believe their occupation is equally a vocation or calling to a higher purpose. Part of that purpose is to serve students by sharing the wisdom they have acquired through their own life experiences.

Within the same vein, agents described a resolute dedication to maximizing long-term student potential as a primary purpose for the work. One exclaimed, "We have an incredible job because we are the ones that send them to the world. Whatever we do now is how they're going to be affected later on, especially during this age." Agents spoke of using their content as a vehicle for fostering personal discipline, building confidence, uncovering passions, overcoming adversity, developing work ethic, and generally wanting "them to be a better human being." Equally important to the agents interviewed was the expectation that each student had access to support and the opportunity to achieve this vision. One expressed:

I value just making a difference in students' lives, and it takes sometimes years to see

that difference, but just valuing students knowing that I am here for them, and if they

need something, I'm there for them and seeing where they progress in their future.

While grading practices and assessment did not surface explicitly during the interviews, the

implication was that grades serve as a measurement of both the development of transferable

skills associated with long-term potential and proximity to grade-level standards. None of the

agents interviewed, however, held students accountable for deadlines as they had in the past.

Rather, agents shared that most teachers at the site offered grace for extenuating

circumstances associated with learning in a virtual environment, further evidence of the

commitment to education as a higher purpose rather than a simple evaluation of content-

specific knowledge gained in a defined period.

The knowledge and beliefs of this conjuncturally-specific structure of higher purpose is

built on an innumerable in-the-moment circumstances over the years spent as educators. As a

result, agents are conditioned to approach students with the expectation of sharing their wisdom

in service of helping students design the best next steps toward maximizing their potential in

class and in life for the long-term. This internal structure is reinforced through staff and faculty

discussions, smaller professional learning communities, and colleague-to-colleague

conversations. One agent more abstractly positioned her role as service to God:

I truly believe that Christ called me to be a teacher. It is my vocation. He made me, and

I'm on this earth to serve him and that's my purpose. And the only reason why I can

explain why I'm so good at it has nothing to do with me. He called me to be a teacher.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the directive to shift to virtual learning only strengthened this

conjuncturally-specific structure and reinforced the research site agents' belief that educators

serve a higher purpose. In this light, while agents expressed feelings of frustration and

powerlessness because of circumstances outside of their control, they leveraged this

conjuncturally-specific structure to actively adopt roles of encourager, protector, and provider for students struggling with the shift.

Conjuncturally-specific Internal Structures Summary

Overall, conjuncturally-specific knowledge is what the agent knows to be true about the structure of their environment, the players in the environment, and how the agent may influence outcomes pertaining to the organizational change because of their positionality and conjuncturally-specific knowledge. Agents at the research site approached the shift to virtual learning with the knowledge that they had influence over site-level decisions, the autonomy to design and execute learning as respected professionals, and the belief that their efforts would lead to student achievement—and their colleagues were similarly committed to the same goal. Table 12 presents the conjuncturally-specific internal structures and correlative participant quotations.

Table 12

Conjuncturally-specific Internal Structures

Code	Participant Quotation
Influence	• I've been made to feel comfortable speaking my mind, so that's a nice environment to work in when people, you know, not only allow but encourage you to speak your mind. • I've got a broad enough network at school where I feel like people trust my opinion. • People like to be heard. People like to, at the very least, feel validated. I think most people don't like change and they need a good reason for that, and they need to be part of that conversation before they'll accept it.
Autonomy	• My curriculum is fairly flexible. I've got autonomy to be able to adjust it the way that I see fit, and so I can come up with ways that work for me, that it will also move us forward in what it is that I want to teach. I still need to teach the core content standards of the arts curriculum and the CTE standards and all these other things, but how can I still naturally build in some of these other skills along the way? • If you want to find value in anything that you do, you just take a step back and figure out why you're doing it. I don't know if a lot of teachers have that, but for me, I know when I come to work every day what I want to get out of it and how I'm going to do it.

Code	Participant Quotation
Self-Efficacy	- I think pivoting to virtual was the right thing to do. And I honestly think that we did an OK job doing it. - Irrespective of what anyone says, change is hard. You know, we're always going to push a little bit against change that takes place because it's outside of our comfort zone. And the second you move anyone outside of their comfort zone. There's a little bit of a panic about how am I going to do this? Will I be able to do that? Can I accomplish it?
Collective Efficacy	- I'm always willing to jump into a leadership role if I think it's going to be supporting someone or helping someone. - I like to listen, and I like to understand. I feel like my unofficial role is to be the person that does whatever needs to be done to get things done. - There is a high level of camaraderie here. Everyone wants to take a level of responsibility, wants to take ownership over whatever needs to be done, and they're willing to go above and beyond what they actually needed to get done or need to do in order to help students succeed.
Meaningful Relationships	- A big part of it is making the connections with the kids. And, you know, for me, that's the most important part. - I see the performance of my students and my players a lot of times, most of the time, tied to the relationships that you develop with them. - I value my time in relationship with my students and probably the thinking and learning and the opportunity to see students grow through it.
Higher Purpose	- The thing I like best about teaching is this kind of being able to share the things that I have learned in my life and the things that I think are valuable and important to me. - I mean, the reason I do it is for the kids. I think it's really about inspiring them to do something that may be outside of their comfort zone and to learn something new and something that's applicable to their lives. I want kids to understand that things don't work in isolation. It's about the whole person a lot more than just the content. Even though it may still come through doing stuff that's directly through our content. - I have an opportunity to try to educate these kids, so that way, as they become adults, you know, they're not making decisions based off of emotion and myth, but hopefully they'll be able to make educated decisions, you know, at least have a little bit of a foundation to where they can do some critical thinking. You know, rather than just, you know being a lamb that follows everything. - I really value seeing where my students, my players, where they end up going. Where can I help them get to?

General dispositions, then, are key factors in the way an agent views life in general, both inside and outside of the organization. In this case agents used their shared general-dispositions of professional obligation, connectedness, growth mindset, and relational trust to preserve the conjuncturally-specific structures specific to the research site. When

conjuncturally-specific structures were compromised at the site level, agents justified noncompliant behaviors as outside of the norm and consequential to the pandemic.

Tenet Three: Active Agency

The final section of this chapter examines the extent to which agents drew upon both general-dispositions and conjuncturally-specific internal structures within the context of the planned organizational change. As previously addressed, agents may not be aware of the way internal structures intersect with external structures to inform active agency. Regardless, outcomes are contingent upon individual's negotiation of "their ideal set of wants, desires and principles in order to be realistic; they sacrifice some things in order to safeguard others" (Stones, 2005, p. 112). More simply put, agents' value systems and worldviews, combined with what they know about their position within the work environment, the people in it, and their own skills and access to resources, will inform how they perceive and respond to the planned organizational change. In this case, many adaptations to the larger change to virtual learning were required over the course of the academic year. Agents employed this same structuration process each time an adaptation was required.

Per Stones' (2005) quadripartite nature of structuration (Figure 1), the following section discusses the outcomes of the planned organizational change as a direct effect of active agency, specifically the intersection between agents' internal structures and the external structures associated with the shift to virtual learning. What agents knew to be true about their professional environment and the relationships within in it contextualized the facets of the change and provided clarity for when an agent had the opportunity to "act differently." General dispositions, on the other hand, helped agents distinguish between right and wrong, or more accurately, what felt comfortable and what did not regarding the change. The interactions between evolving external structures associated with the change and individual active agency resulted in dynamic outcomes. Initial outcomes often resulted in secondary and tertiary

outcomes as a result of dialogue between colleagues. Active agency, then, can only be

revealed by the agent through discussion about the intersection among preexisting values,

conjuncturally-specific knowledge, and elements of the change and the change process.

The remainder of this chapter discusses active agency and outcomes related to the

change. Active agency was informed particularly by conjuncturally-specific knowledge in the

following three areas: (a) change process, (b) professional values, and (c) personal life.

Structuring Interactions: Change Process

Eleven of the 16 participants discussed the process for district-level organizational

change through the lens of previous experiences with change at the research site. In other

words, they leveraged their site-level conjuncturally-specific knowledge to inform their response

to organizational change as outlined by the district. These structuring interactions resulted in

active agency reinforcing an existing belief that district-level leadership makes decisions

unsupported by evidence; regardless, agents remain willing to engage in the process because

of site-level conjuncturally-specific internal knowledge. While the decision to shift to virtual

learning was made outside of the purview of the agents, they knew they could exercise a level

of autonomy over elements of virtual learning within their courses. They had an existing level of

confidence in their own efficacy, and they were accustomed to high-performing teams. These

conjuncturally-specific elements informed by general dispositions toward professionalism,

connectedness, relational trust, and learning as a community contributed to the agents'

response to the shift to virtual learning.

Justifiable Change. Agents respectfully spoke of existing external structures for eliciting

change at the site level through department chairs, a site-based decision-making committee,

and/or the student guidance team. Changes made to site-level governance, staffing, processes,

or procedures are vetted through a variety of venues to hear and honor all voices and seek

consensus, if possible. When consensus is not possible, justified change is acceptable in the

eyes of the agents. One agent said broadly, "Maybe I don't necessarily agree with your reasoning, but I respect your leadership. And in that sense, I will give you the benefit of the doubt. I think that's better than no reason at all." Another agent agreed, "I think when it comes to change that really matters, I'm like 100% in as long as there's a good reason for it. So, if change makes sense, then I have zero problem with it." A third agent and department chair indirectly referenced efficacy as a conjuncturally-specific structure related to requisite but reasonable change:

> I definitely do like structure and organization and all that, but the way I look at it is that if there's change coming, and if I'm not initiating the change and someone else is, I always question what's the purpose of this? If it's something that I see as valuable, then, of course, I'm totally on board. If it's change just for the sake of change, then I think like a lot of people, I would hesitate to do it.

Nearly all agents considering change argued for a justification for change and pledged compliance if the change was in the best interest of students regardless of whether they agreed with it or not. Even when the change proposed did not appeal to the conjuncturally-specific higher purpose, agents' general disposition toward connectedness and professional obligation encouraged compliance. One agent summarized:

> Well, I think that vision changes as administration changes. So, as they come in, I try to get behind whatever the initiative is. I think the last big one was WASC accreditation, which I got behind and I did my part, but I think WASC accreditation was kind of like an entry-level goal. If every school in California has to get WASC accredited, I don't know if the apple of my eye is a six-year accreditation…just as long as an organization is moving toward the goal, the goal might change a little bit here and there. Maybe it's that whole team mentality of working towards something.

Related to the shift to virtual learning and near the time stage two interviews were conducted, district-level leadership decided to bring students back to campus for a limited number of days during the week. Agents strongly committed to both the conjuncturally-specific structures of self and team efficacy, as well as the general dispositions of connectedness and professional obligation, considered this decision a violation of both internal structures. In explanation, one agent said:

> I don't know how much benefit it's going to be to students being there one day, socially distanced, half their peers missing…I think it may make things more complicated. I always look forward to seeing my students in person, but I don't know one day back is really going to help students. I do think if we're fully back that would help students for sure, but one day will probably be more detrimental than good.

While it was clear to agents the benefits of in-person learning far outweighed those of virtual learning for most students, agents riled against the inconsistency of attending one day a week as more detrimental to learning than virtual learning in exclusivity. Regardless of their disagreement with the decision, site-based teachers employed their general disposition toward professional obligation and responded to the required change appropriately. The strength of general dispositions, then, is in their appeal to the agent's moral or ethical foundations rather than alignment with conjuncturally-behavior.

User-sponsored Solutions. One of the central tenets of innovative teaching and learning at the research site is the design thinking process, which proposes all great innovation starts by empathizing with the user. At the research site, professional development begins with an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data to identify a learner-centered problem followed by rich dialogue to define the problem, ideate plausible solutions, and discuss outcomes. This process, then, aligns with agents' general dispositions toward growth mindset, connectedness, and professional obligation. Equally, agents draw from their conjuncturally-specific knowledge of

collective efficacy to confidently engage in the design-thinking process and trust that the

outcomes of the process will maximize students' learning and long-term potential.

When discussing the shift to virtual learning, agents described a district-led decision-

making process that slighted the voice of the "user" or the teacher that would be most impacted

by the decision. One agent reflected with emotion:

> I think I was the recipient of this, and there was nothing I was really going to be able to
>
> do. I honestly don't feel that I had a voice in anything that was really happening. I feel
>
> that decisions were being made from the very top and that's been pushed out. They had
>
> a plan, there was something that was in place. They knew what they wanted to
>
> accomplish. And that was the direction that it was going to go into.

While the external structures of the change process disrupted the conjuncturally-specific

expectations of the agents, ultimately internal structures overpowered the discontentment with

the external structures and resulted in agents' compliance with the shift. Agents drew on the

conjuncturally-specific structures of higher purpose and professional obligation to supersede

their dissatisfaction with the process. "When we do something that doesn't make sense for kids

then I have a hard time with buy in," one agent said. Another continued:

> Especially when decisions come top-down, I complain about it privately or to my family,
>
> and then after I get that over with, I figure out, OK, how do I make it work and what can I
>
> do to make the best of it moving forward?

Agents also spoke positively of "grassroots," "ground up," or "organic" change as the

preferential method for sustainable change, especially regarding second-order change that

presents a "dramatic [departure] from the expected way of conducting business" (Marzano et

al., 2005, p. 66). This perspective aligns with agents' conjuncturally-specific internal structures

for influence, autonomy, and collective efficacy. The structures, built over time through a

sequence of successful change experiences have reinforced the agents' belief that "the more

grassroots the change usually happens…the more homegrown the changes, the better."

Because the shift to virtual learning was perceived as a solution to a temporary problem, agents

were more willing to ignore the perceived failings of the process in service to the conjuncturally-

specific higher purpose. In other words, agents are less likely to comply with solutions perceived

to be permanent if they are not processed through a user-centric lens.

       Transparent Process. Agents described a transparent decision-making process as

inclusive of those who would be most impacted by the change and resulting in a decision

representative of the collective voice. However, while the Superintendent's Council was

constructed as a platform for such a process, agents believed that their contributions to the

conversation were advisory only. Their decision-making capital was superficial. One agent

described the experience as:

> I don't like to be part of a group where you give feedback when you already know that
>
> they have a plan, they're going to go forward with it. I felt as though they wanted these
>
> groups together so they could say that they had staff input, and the support of the
>
> teachers moving forward with the plan.

Others compared the decision-making process at the research site with the district-led

experience, one saying "At our school there's a good amount of transparency, but I don't think

people feel like that's been true all the way up the food chain." The general-dispositional internal

structure of relational trust and the conjuncturally-specific structure of influence in the presence

of the external decision-making process intersected to produce discontented agents and

furthered an existing mistrust of change initiated at the district level. Nevertheless, agents

acknowledged district-level decisions as final and binding and drew from their general

disposition of professional obligation to "figure it out. Instead of complaining and saying so much

of why it doesn't work… just like, OK, this is what it is. Let's figure out and let's move on to make

it work."

Agents discussed their willingness to "make the best of it" regularly in conjunction with external structures outside of their control and particularly regarding the change process. Ten of the 16 participants interviewed either directly or indirectly referenced flexibility as critical to maintaining relationship in the presence of unfavorable circumstances. Many discussed their response to the district-level change process using the "we" pronoun, suggesting an invocation of the general disposition toward connectedness. One agent offered, "A lot of us thought, 'Okay, so this is happening. Let's do it and give it our best shot.' So that's how I kind of felt about it. It's way out of my control." Agents later defined the phrase "making the best of it" as providing "the best experience for students" regardless of the whether they agreed a decision. In this way, agents drew on the conjuncturally-specific structure of higher purpose through active agency resulting in a commitment to high-quality learning in a virtual environment. One agent summarized, "Was it going to be as good as in person? Probably not, but we were going to try to make it as close to it as we can because we didn't have the option to do the other thing." Agents drew from the conjuncturally-specific structure of influence through active agency to accept the limitations of the change and maximize opportunities within their control. The outcomes of the decision-making process at the district level as an external structure of the change and as it relates to transparency, a value correlative to the agents' conjuncturally-specific internal structure of influence, are twofold: (a) agents are less likely to exercise their influence at the district level in the future, and (b) agents drew their site-level influence to maximize the learning opportunities within the confines of district parameters.

Leadership. A subject common to both user-sponsored solutions and process transparency, leadership was described at two levels: firstly from a site perspective and secondly a district perspective. Agents acknowledged the value of long-term leadership at both levels and at the site specifically. One agent captured it as, "I really appreciated all the input and the opportunity to provide feedback and the effort to really try to provide teachers the

opportunity to be flexible." Another offered, "Just like I know that whatever comes out of this there's going to be parts that I don't like, so I'm ready to be happy with a good effort." Agents at the site-level drew from all conjuncturally-specific structures through active agency to substantiate the site leaders' efforts as an authentic attempt to value their voice in the process and maintain the collectively built culture despite the external structures associated with virtual learning. In short, each time a variable related to the organizational change shifted, agents drew on their existing relationships and shared conjuncturally-specific knowledge through active agency to confirm the integrity of site-level leadership.

Secondly, agents championed the vision of district-level leadership in equipping them with the technology required for the virtual learning years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. One agent offered:

> The district was smart to get us ready for anything that might happen in utilizing Google, so the fact that we had a Google suite, we had a google classroom, and we could utilize that [helped us be] ready to do it when we had to.

While not every element of the shift to virtual learning aligned with agents' personal or professional dispositions, all resolved to "accept the fact that this was completely out of normal… completely out of our territory, so I'll do what I can do, and I'll just have to make the best of it," which suggests an acceptance of proffered leadership at both levels. It also highlights an outcome related to active agency as a result of the intersection between the conjuncturally-specific structures of influence and self-efficacy in the presence of external structures.

Table 13 offers key participant quotations for structuring interactions related to the change process.

Table 13

Structuring Interactions for the Change Process

Code	Participant Quotation
Leadership	• I was on a committee for classic learning. I don't even know whatever name is was called, "Sprint" for Classic and it was discussed what classic would look like for the spring, which I mean, it was like a waste of time because none of that mattered. • (2.1) At least at our school one of the things that I have valued is that the leadership tends not to make you do things differently for no reason. If there is a big systemic change that's about to be put in place, there's typically some sort of clarity or transparency with, "this is why we're doing this."
Transparent Process	• This is one of those situations where the more transparency the better. • I think I know when a decision has been made that it's going to go. So, it's more like, alright, I'll just adapt. I say all you can do is give my two cents. So, when on those committees I gave my two cents. And the direction we moved is the direction we move in.
User-sponsored Solutions	• It's great to have choice. It's great to have options and diversity definitely in teaching and learning and all that stuff, and that is wonderful. But it has to be from the ground up. It has to be organic. Like, if you really wanted to be genuine and you're excited to be organic and grassroots, like the teachers have to want to do that. • It really should have been something that was built from the ground up, but I'm hoping and praying that it's sustainable and that we can have the kids on campus.

Code	Participant Quotation
Justifiable Change	• …at least a reasonable chance for success coming out of that change… People resist the most when there's no good reason to change other than just change because we're telling you to. • I'm not a fan, and I don't think it's a big stretch of the imagination to say it's not the best way to teach, and I don't understand why we're doing the things we're doing. • I'm pretty flexible with that as long as it's what's best for the kids, and you can prove that it's what's best for the kids, not just because somebody says so. Show me the numbers, show me the data, show me the research, and then I'll get on board. • There's change that I guess in my mind makes sense to me, that are always something that enhances your teaching. You're learning more and you're being better because the change is right. • Let's say they change something districtwide they want to do. Are you going to give us support for that? Another thing with that, too, is are we going to see this out before we got to start this process of change and then in a couple of years, we're just going to abandon it? Yeah, because then you have to ask what was the point of that?

Structuring Interactions: Professional Values

Conjuncturally-specific knowledge has been central to the discussion of strong structuration with deference to general dispositions as generalized worldviews guiding agents' initial responses to the external structures associated with the planned organizational change. The following section reintroduces the conjuncturally-specific knowledge presented earlier in the chapter and highlights the outcomes as a result of active agency.

Influence. The ways that agents used their influence with their students, colleagues, and among the school community during the shift to virtual learning shaped their students' and colleagues' experience which, in turn, shaped agents' response to the change. Agents drew on their disposition toward professional obligation to develop quality instruction in a virtual environment despite disagreeing with the change process itself. Additionally, agents drew on conjuncturally-specific knowledge of self and collective efficacy to influence the development of virtual curriculum and instructional strategies within their departments. One agent described his

department chairperson's strength-based approach to curriculum design over the course of the year, saying:

> You know [she] just said we've got to get this done fast, and you're good at this, and you're great at that, and I'll do this and then at the end of it all, everyone in the grade-level team just used the same thing. Actually, it might honestly be better this way.

The structuring interactions between those external structures for the change outside of the agent's influence and the internal structures resulted in the agents seeking to reestablish influence where they could. The outcomes of this structuring interaction were new curriculum and instructional practices designed to support the change and a strengthening of the conjuncturally-specific self and collective efficacy. In addition, the successful implementation of the curriculum in a virtual environment and the experience with students bolstered agents' sense of self efficacy and encouraged more experimentation. External structures for the change at the site level interacted with the internal structure of influence resulting in teachers sharing their successes with each other and replicating best practices.

Another outcome of the structuring interaction between the external structures associated with change and influence as a conjuncturally-specific structure was a perceived weakening of secondary teachers' influence at the district level and a perceived increase of agent influence for shaping decisions at the site level. One expressed, "It makes me frustrated that we didn't seem to be listened to because of a lack of empathy and a lack of understanding or listening." Agents believed that empathy and strong reasoning would increase their influence over decisions made at a district level and believed that influence was minimized when their arguments failed to sway board members' position. One agent also voiced, "At the district level, they aren't listening or meeting with enough individuals or including enough voices. They're making decisions too quickly without doing the necessary research or study." The outcome of

the structuring interaction between this change context and agents' sense of influence was a dissolution of trust as a general disposition in relation to district-level leadership.

Autonomy. The structuring interactions between relational trust as a general disposition and the change context in the early stages produced highly motivated teachers who prioritized engaging with technology as a platform for virtual learning. One agent shared, "It seemed kind of like the directive was, 'Hey we're all trying to figure this out as we go. We're going to trust you guys to do the best you can.'" This coupled with growth mindset at an agent level to organically produce a learning organization with the expressed goal of maximizing student learning despite the challenges associated with educating during a global pandemic.

The original structures for weekly professional learning remained intact through Zoom, and many agents commented on the energy and rich dialogue inherent to these meetings in the early stages of the change. Later, when district-level decisions disregarded agent appeals to commit to virtual learning as a consistent structure, these meetings dissolved into conversations of policy and renegotiations of general dispositional structures. Agents were still connected and valued community but in a narrower sense. They explored connecting with others who shared the same opinion pertaining to district-level policymaking and excluding those who did not. One agent offered a commentary to a local publication in favor of students returning to the classroom as directed by the district and was ostracized from site-level networks for a span of time over the year.

The general disposition toward professional obligation interacted with the external structures of the change, particularly the superintendent's council, with an outcome of volunteer participation. Agents argued, though, that this structure was flawed in the sense that elementary and secondary perspectives were too far apart, and the solutions designed were not representative of the secondary voice. Many of the design decisions compromised agents' autonomy at the structural level but not the classroom level. The resulting outcome was

contentious participation in the council, a reinforced belief that the district-level leadership failed to understand the complexities of secondary schools, and agents' exerting autonomy over who they collaborated with and the nature of their instruction.

Recognizing the challenge to the conjuncturally-specific structure of autonomy, the site principal regularly wove the mantra, "Remember to control your controllables" into faculty and department chair meetings. The phrase resonated with agents and surfaced in many of the interviews as captions for expressed frustrations relating to loss of autonomy. In this way, trust in the site principal's leadership buffered extensive cultural animosity at the research site. This leadership combined with the understanding that the organizational change to virtual learning is temporary, and teacher autonomy will be restored once the external structures associated with the change are lifted.

Self-efficacy. The outcome of the structuring interaction between self-efficacy as a conjuncturally-specific structure in the context of the change to virtual learning was present in the daily actions of agents in the form of teaching and learning. All expressed a diminished capacity to engage their students appropriately in the environment as a result of students' disconnection from school as a social construct in addition to an academic one. Furthermore, agents received a variety of external criticisms related to tripled D and F rates. One agent countered:

> You know, I guess I get tired of people who have less experience, less knowledge, trying to tell me how to do a job that, you know, I'm highly trained for, I guess. I have spent my lifetime working on, improving on and trying to do the best I can possibly do and then having some, you know, whether it's administrators, superintendents, school board members, community members, whatever, come in and say, well, you need to do it this way because this is how you should do it without the experience, without the background, without the education, and then those decisions being made.

Agents reiterated the critical nature of meaningful relationships as interdependent to engagement in the classroom and resulting in learning. They challenged the supposition that learning is only a direct consequence of engaging lessons. In other words, highly effective teaching and learning occur through the intentional facilitation of meaningful interactions in the presence of rigor, relevance, and relationship. Connecting the idea of classroom culture to learning outcomes, one agent posed the questions:

> How am I going to create the same sort of culture in my classroom where we collaborate a lot, and I have that face-to-face contact with them, and I can get to know them? How am I going to do that virtually?

This cognition of the influence of classroom culture on student learning is a direct outcome of the shift to virtual learning. Many teachers initially failed to appreciate the power of connection to and among students in their class as a primer to learning, seeking instead to continue with prestructured curriculum and pacing, altering only the medium of delivery. The approach was championed by site leadership, and the outcome was an exponentially higher number of failing students.

Ultimately, agents spoke of redefining efficacious learning and teaching to include a fostering of strong relationships among students. This outcome is a result of the structuring interactions between the general disposition of growth mindset and the external structures of the change that limited personal contact. Additionally, agents' general disposition toward professional obligation undergirded this evolution. Because agents at the research site are governed by a sense of obligation, they were compelled to reevaluate their effectiveness when faced with large numbers of failing students. One agent described her struggle as, "I had to figure out what was going to work, and in the end, it was just remembering what I am here to do and to do it properly and to do it to allow [students] to be successful."

Collective Efficacy. Agents spoke of the change context as an ideal environment for enhanced collective efficacy within their networks at the research site. Though many experienced a sense of compromised self-efficacy, collaboration within professional learning communities promoted a greater sense of connectedness which encouraged agents to share both challenges and best practices. The structuring interactions between the change context and this general disposition, therefore, increased the collective efficacy in and among professional learning communities at the research site. One agent described the experience as, "I've never seen my department come together just like so willing to help each other through. I think we were all trying to do whatever we could." Another echoed:

> You know, we're trying to help all of our colleagues understand how to approach it and what's manageable for the students and that things aren't going to be exactly the same in our virtual school as it is in normal school.

Whereas virtual teaching and learning presented significant challenges to individual agents at the research site, the general disposition toward connectedness interacted with the change context resulting in a stronger sense of collective efficacy.

Lastly, there is a reciprocal relationship between self-efficacy and collective efficacy (Hoy et al., 2002). Teachers who trust in their colleagues' collective ability to maximize student learning in any environment will work harder to assimilate to the collective identity. They become better teachers because they are surrounded by better teachers. In this way the general disposition toward relational trust influenced the way the agents in this study addressed the shift to virtual learning.

Higher Purpose. The shift to virtual learning did not challenge agents' commitment to maximizing students' short-term and long-term potential. Neither did they pause in their efforts to meet this commitment until traditional learning resumed. "The whole purpose of my job is to help kids move forward," one agent explained, "and I can't say that's just not going to happen

this year." The general disposition toward professional obligation as inclusive of student learning, and not just teaching, interacted with the change context to produce a greater dependence on collaboration and autonomy, equally. Agents leveraged the human and technological resources to inform the development of effective instructional techniques for a virtual environment. Many agents used the COVID-19 pandemic to contextualize the research site's long-term commitment to the philosophy of habits of mind (Costa & Kallick, 2008), thereby continuing to share their personal wisdom in an effort to maximize student potential both inside and outside of the classroom.

Agents also spoke of an obligation to offer students the best learning experience possible within the context of the change, regardless of whether they agreed with the external structures associated with the change. One such agent said:

> If this is the way the train is going, and even if what we're doing today is not really my best opinion of how we should be getting the kids back, but it is the train that we're on then we're going to make these kids feel really good. And I'm going to do the best I can to give them a good experience.

This perspective offers evidence of the outcome of the structuring interaction between the general dispositions of both professional obligation and connectedness within the change context. To summarize, agents' general worldview is that employees of an organization have an obligation to perform their jobs well. In this case, the job of the educator is to facilitate student learning regardless of the context of the learning environment. Additionally, agents at this research site believe in a schoolwide unified approach to change as a premise to the general disposition of connectedness. If the collective agrees to pursue one action, most if not all members will comply. In this case, the outcome is a sustained commitment to the higher purpose associated with being an educator.

Table 14 offers key participant quotations for structuring interactions related to professional values.

Table 14

Structuring interactions: Professional Values

Code	Participant Quotation
Influence	• I think the shift in the virtual models should have included more input from different people. Sometimes the district picks specific people to provide input, and sometimes those specific people give the answers that the district wants to hear. I think they should have actually had more people contributing to how can we do this better for these kids? • I'm pretty much willing, but if you can't explain it to me in a way that I understand, or if people that are not teachers are making a decision for me as an experienced teacher, that is when you prompt my bias. I'll do it because I have to do, but I'm not happy.
Autonomy	• I've been given freedom to do my virtual classes how I want. And I like that. Each of us in the department do it a little bit differently, but I feel like I've had freedom to run virtual how I want. • And in education, a lot of times we think, well, OK, things are pretty set and this is how it is. And these are my hours, here's my curriculum. We do instruction and we go and, you know, you feel like those are fairly set in stone. And I think that last year probably more than ever showed us how those things aren't as fixed as we might have thought. And so, I think I have a predisposition to be able to easily adapt and handle those situations because I'm good at dealing with ambiguity. And I also get bored. • I appreciate the fact that they said, "OK, do what you need to do to make it work."
Self-Efficacy	• I like working with the kids more than anything. I like teaching them something. And like nowadays, I just can only prop them up, and that's kind of harsh because I don't get to teach anything anymore. I'm only putting Band-Aids on, and that's the most frustrating thing about this whole COVID situation. The students aren't able to make any progress whatsoever. They're failing, and I think that's the part that upsets me the most. • I thought, well, what can I do to bridge this and try to make it as successful as we could. Now, did we do everything right? No, but did we do the best that we could in the time that we had? I think so. • I think that's why so many people are struggling a lot. The change is just making it harder for them to do their job as well as they know they can do it. They're frustrated and they're killing themselves because they're trying to do the impossible

Code	Participant Quotation
Collective Efficacy	• And so it's like, OK, well, I've got to jump on board and let's figure this out. And what are the other things that I can do with that. And, you know, I mean, trying to get people on board so that we're all on uniform platform, that's easiest for the students makes sense. • I think I just feel like I always want to be a team player. I always want to be encouraging. And so even if I don't understand the change or don't agree with it at first or whatever, I still want to be a team player. I value teams that allow me to give my opinion and then be told, you know, maybe flesh it out and flesh out other people's opinions. And that way that helps me to process the change and it helps me to see where my own thinking needs to be changed as well. I really am open to my change, my thoughts being changed. Yeah, but I also value the fact that I value if I can share my opinion and I value seeing it get changed based on the opinions of others or the circumstances around us.
Higher Purpose	• But the kids are the focus. What I want is irrelevant. What the kids had to live through, you know, I had to help them through that. And it was hard. • If it's something that I look at and say, "OK, this is really going to affect student learning in a negative way, well, I will slide over and be a little bit more rigid." And then if I look at it and say, "Oh, OK, I think this could really affect student learning, student outcomes in a positive way. I'm going to slide over here and be much more flexible, open minded with it.

Active Agency Summary

The structuring interactions offered in this section were divided between an analysis of: (a) the change process, and (b) professional values. Active agency was discussed as an inevitable biproduct of the interaction between general dispositional and conjuncturally-specific internal structures in the presence of external structures. In the case of the planned organizational change to virtual learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, outcomes specific to the change were directly related to the dynamic interaction between structures. This section of the chapter attempted to objectively present the circumstances of varying elements associated with the change and describe the process of interaction between structures as explained by the agents.

Chapter Summary

      This chapter first presented the external structures associated with the planned

organizational change to offer context for discussing findings related to the research question.

Elements of the shift to virtual learning, including learning model options, health and safety

measures, and professional learning opportunities were offered, as was a detailed discussion of

the change implementation process. Virtual learning as an evolving structure within the district

was examined, and later site-specific impact was assessed. Macrolevel causal forces were

included as contextually relevant as a result of their influence on mesolevel decision making,

irrespective of reciprocation. Figures of the conceptual framework were offered periodically to

clarify the relationship between internal and external structures. These external structures were

a contributing factor in varying degrees to agents' responses to the shift to virtual learning. The

second part of the chapter presented the internal structures associated with the change. These

structures included general dispositional worldviews and conjuncturally-specific knowledge. The

interaction between general dispositions and conjuncturally-specific internal structures, informed

by external structures, result in active agency and subsequent outcomes. Chapter 5 presents

the discussion of the results of this study, including implications for theory, practice, and future

research.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This bounded case study was conducted to understand the extent to which an individual's general dispositions toward change impacts their response to a planned organizational change, with consideration to the relationship between internal and external structures. In this case the planned organizational change was the shift from in-person learning to virtual learning due to COVID-19. The primary setting for this study was one comprehensive high school in southern California. To answer the research question in full, it was critical to understand the original context of the school's culture at a micro and mesolevel, as well as the school in relationship with the district as a whole. The intersection between the external structures associated with the change and agents' individual internal structures informed agents' perception of the change and their response to it.

Strong structuration theory (Stones, 2005) was the guiding theoretical framework for this case study. Originally constructed by Giddens (1989) to explain how social structures are created and replicated over time, Stones reimagined the theory to include the "quadripartite nature of structuration," allowing for researchers to study social phenomena as a product of individual responses informed by four domains: external structures, internal structures in the form of conjucturally-specific knowledge and general dispositions, and active agency. This structure allowed me to simplify the presentation of findings in this case using the quadripartite nature of structuration to sequence the discussion. It is worth noting, however, that the intersection between the four domains is dynamic, each having a recursive effect on the other, whereby the ultimate outcome is likely to be based on several rounds of exchange.

The subsequent discussion of findings in this chapter is based on the extent to which an individual's worldviews and perspective (general dispositional internal structures) influences their response to the planned organization change. To do so, I examined the external structures associated with the change, the school site culture, and participants' conjuncturally-specific

knowledge. The remainder of this chapter outlines the results of the study, ensuing conclusions, and closes with implications for the strong structuration theory, educator practice, and future researchers.

Summary of the Results

The guiding research question for this study is as follows: How do teachers' general-dispositional internal structures influence their response to a planned organizational change? To address this question, data collection was structured in two stages. The first stage was designed to understand the context of the change, or those external structures upon which individuals perceive and respond to. The second stage was designed to understand the conduct of agents in-situ—more specifically, how agents leveraged their conjuncturally-specific knowledge and behaviors as well as general-dispositional internal structures to inform active agency. Both stage one and stage two participant responses were included in the analysis of context (Stones, 2005). This analysis yielded six external structures pertinent to the change, including high school as a sophisticated ecosystem, sustainability, Canvas learning management system, flexibility and consistency, fair representation and shared decision making, and research site characteristics.

The teachers interviewed in the second stage during the conduct analysis (Stones, 2005) of this research were of central importance in answering the research question. The data collected during this stage resulted in ten findings, all of which are identified as internal structures influencing the agents' response to the planned organizational change. The first four of these internal structures are coded as general-dispositional internal structures:

- Professional obligation
- Connectedness
- Growth mindset
- Trust

The remaining six internal structures surfaced as conjuncturally-specific to agents'
interactions with both colleagues and students. These include:

- Professional interactions with colleagues: influence

- Professional interactions with colleagues: autonomy

- Professional interactions with colleagues: self-efficacy

- Professional interactions with colleagues: collective efficacy

- Professional interactions with students: meaningful relationships

- Professional interactions with students: higher purpose

Ultimately, the structuring interactions surfaced between the external structures and the
general-dispositional and conjuncturally-specific internal structures induced active agency and
agents' response to change within the following two areas:

- Change process

- Professional values

Discussion of the Results

The outcomes of this study offer an increased understanding of how interactions
between the external and internal structures result in an agent's response to a planned
organizational change, particularly those changes outside of the agent's direct control. The
study did not seek to understand how an agent might respond to unplanned change. To that
end, while the context of the planned organizational change was a result of school closures due
to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was not interested in agents' response to the pandemic, nor the
government-prompted closure of schools. The context of the study, then, was the district-level
design and implementation of virtual learning, and the research endeavored to understand more
about how a response to change is formed. The following sections explore these results through
the lens of strong structuration theory.

External Structures and Active Agency

External structures cannot be represented simply as a static organization of statistical data. Rather, the external structures associated with any organization flex over time within an evolving network of position-practices and relations. Studies conducted through the lens of strong structuration have provided the opportunity for researchers to explore the introduction of new technologies, processes and procedures, and the resulting structuring social order within an organization (Greenhalgh & Stones, 2010). Many of the initial studies using strong structuration as a theoretical framework were conducted within the health industry and sought to explore the consociation between human agency and technology, ultimately finding a recursive relationship between the two and establishing a "flux between these various dualities over time" (Greenhalgh & Stones, 2010, p. 1286). In other words, agents acknowledge and exercise the power of their positionality within the existing social and organizational infrastructure to respond to the change introduced. Simultaneously, networked relations influence active agency. The introduction of any change will invariably challenge existing position practices "through [the] enactment by active agents within the network of relationships" (Greenhalgh & Stones, 2010, p. 1288). At the point of action agents-in-situ recognize the boundaries of current external structures, including their positionality within the organization, and use these conditions to inform a single action (Stones, 2005). In an analysis of organizational change research conducted over a period of ten years, Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) broadly qualify external structures as inclusive of the following themes: content, context, and process. The following section examines external structures through these themes.

Content

Research conducted by Vollrnann (1996) on change content prompts organizations to consider the structural dimensions and resources necessary for strategically managing the elements of a planned change. The structural elements of the change in this case from in-

person learning to virtual learning most directly impacted teaching and learning as well as student and educator physical, social, and emotional wellness.

Teaching and Learning. Change managers participating in stage one of the study shared the great efforts teachers went through to create engaging, standards-based curriculum for a virtual environment. They also noticed that the shift to virtual learning accelerated practice transformation for those teachers who were already interested; those teachers reticent to change "just basically took what was intended for the regular classroom and put it in a virtual setting because they just couldn't handle the technology," one change leader offered. Additionally, the learning management platform, Canvas, intended to be a unifier among the learning community was challenging even to the most technologically savvy teachers.

Agents discussing Canvas were divided in their support of it as a key feature of the virtual learning environment. Many stage two participants argued for the merits of Canvas as a tool for teachers to house their curriculum, but many of these same participants also articulated feeling overwhelmed by the timeline of adoption to implementation in relation to the start of school. Administrators, however, used their administrative access to Canvas to chart user analytics, speak with students and families about levels of engagement, view students' log-in records and prolonged work time, problem solve for issues with access, address technology violations with offenders, and clarify teacher expectations with families.

The fall 2020 semester grades at the research site (Table 15) substantiated agents' skepticism that learning virtually was not possible for all students, especially those from vulnerable populations. Teachers struggled to offer meaningful feedback to students during virtual learning without being able to see them on Zoom.

Table 15

Fall 2020 D and F-rate at the Research Site

	Latinx	White	Girls	Boys	SED	SWD or EL
Virtual	27%	9%	24%	30%	28%	43%
Classic	50%	12%	23%	30%	42%	23%
TOTAL	39%	11%	23%	30%	35%	33%

Educator and Student Wellness. Throughout the initial phases of virtual learning and later when the district decided to reopen in-person learning for interested families, student and educator wellness was a primary topic of conversation. The district made significant investments in personal protection equipment to support physical wellness. Some teachers, too, were offered fully virtual class schedules and telecommuting agreements because of the significant dangers COVID-19 infections presented to medically fragile teachers and family members. Though the district was able to cater to some agents' particular needs, those who were accommodated also shared in the collective outrage when their colleagues were required to compromise their individual health when students were placed back in the classroom at a ratio of 38 students to one teacher.

Most agents shared a desire to see their students in class on campus as soon as could be safely negotiated; however, they were unwilling to put their own family in harm's way to achieve this aim. The most divisive conversations among staff and faculty at the site level and as conveyed at board meetings was secondary teachers' believing that district-level leadership were making decisions that compromised their health and that of their family. Conversely, the district-level leadership and many community members argued virtual learning and social isolation were significantly impacting their students' emotional wellness. Agents in this study

expressed compassion for students struggling with mental health due to the isolation, but they strongly disagreed that it was their responsibility as teachers in a classroom to sacrifice their own safety in service of their employment.

Teachers also reported a diminished connection with students because of virtual learning, and though the district and sites specifically pressed for an increase in building classroom community, student engagement remained low. Participants in the study commented on the need to sacrifice large amounts of educational content in favor of community-building exercises and regular social-emotional check-ins.

Context

Pettigrew's (1987) research on change phenomena frames context as the prompt for agent action. Pettigrew presented context as a bifurcated study of: (a) the macrolevel outer context, which includes those structures influencing the organization but over which the organization has limited influence; and (b) the mesolevel inner organizational context, which presents the immediate conditions of action for the agents-in-situ. In short, whereas the content of the change includes the elements of the change specifically, an examination of context offers an opportunity to understand the organization's rationale for the proposed change and frames the conditions for agents' response. The change in this case from in-person learning to virtual learning largely impacted the organizational and cultural structures of the research site.

Organizational Structures. The three organizational structures most critically impacted by the shift to virtual learning were the 4x4 block schedule, the collaboratively composed mission and vision, and a shared commitment to high expectations and student performance. In a virtual setting, the 4x4 schedule frustrated many students, prompting them to prioritize required courses over elective courses. Teachers grew fatigued and disheartened by the lack of student responsiveness despite their efforts to "meet students where they were" and develop more engaging lessons. One principal reflected, "We had teachers who were extremely

frustrated and burned out, and I think it's because they're used to experiencing success and feeling like they are effective in their work." The nearly triple D and F grade rates each term further exasperated teachers for the remainder of both the 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 academic years. After the district developed a hybrid return to in-person learning, those students quarantined during any length of time in this period would miss double the amount of in-person instruction and were expected to maintain their learning asynchronously, which amplified student and educator anxiety, apathy, and disconnection.

As planning for the 2020–2021 academic year commenced, the ambiguity of the actual learning structure, late access to teaching assignments, and the learning curve for technology heightened the frustration of faculty members and parents. One site-level administrator captured it as, "I think the staff would say they were not ready nor trained for the initial change nor experienced a great amount of communication or understanding of what this would actually look like." Students and teachers at the research site, a hands-on, project-based learning school, were so unaccustomed to teaching and learning in a virtual environment that one teacher described it as "trying to learn, speak, and teach in another language overnight." The school's espoused mission and vision for learning through "discovery, innovation, and growth" went largely unrealized in the virtual setting, despite teachers' attempts to leverage technology as a support.

The third and final driving organizational structure was teachers' high academic expectations and commensurate student performance. Chapter 4 expanded on the structure as a core characteristic of the research site and presented performance data typical to the school. Because of the drastically different teaching and learning associated with the virtual environment, the community was divided; some expected uninterrupted rigor despite the confines of virtual learning, and some expected a shift in expectations given soaring social and emotional needs of students learning in isolation. On April 1, 2020, State Superintendent

Thurmond issued grading guidance for districts to "hold students harmless" through a pass/no pass grading system, and the district made the decision to enforce the guidance. The research site community did not favor the decision. High-performing students wanted the grade bumps associated with honors and advanced level courses, but students struggling with access to technology and those with emotional challenges benefited from the guidance. While the decision ultimately was made to promote equity among all students, it was nonetheless deeply divisive in the district at large and the research site community, specifically.

Cultural Structures. The research site's cultural structures were equally impacted by the shift to virtual learning. Firstly, the ability to develop and maintain meaningful relationships with individual students and nurture a strong and supportive class culture were limited given a lack of physical proximity. Teachers were prohibited from requiring students to turn their cameras on, vocally engage in discussion, or stay active in the class for any length of time. Virtual learning allowed struggling learners to avoid accountability and reinforced a negative academic identity. Teachers were faced with inflated D and F rates. One agent captured this disillusionment as:

> I value relationships you create with students and letting them know, "Hey, you're completely capable of doing this and there are people here to help you through it and guide you through that process." When kids are learning virtually, they don't even hear that because they don't know you and you don't know them. I wouldn't even recognize half the kids in my class if I met them in person because I've never even seen their faces online. Why would they let me guide them through anything?

As the 2020–2021 academic year concluded, virtual learning had significantly strained relationships between administrators and teachers, teachers and students, students and their peers, students and their parents/ guardians, and among the school community at large.

Secondly, the research site is one of high teacher expectations and high student achievement buoyed by strong support networks at home. Parents of typically high achieving students watched their students struggle to learn in a virtual environment. Many students placed unrealistic expectations on themselves, spending hours completing assignments intended to take 15–20 minutes in teachers' estimations. Students struggled with high levels of anxiety, mental health, apathy, isolation, and depression. Teachers, too, articulated the challenges of providing personalized learning to students in a virtual environment and struggled to meet the needs of each individual learner. Parents and guardians advocated for a return to on-campus learning. Board meetings were tense discussions around performance data, safety concerns, and the viability of returning to in-person learning.

Process

Research on the change process began as early as 1947 with Lewin, though researchers continue to develop change models even today. Many models propose a theory of sequenced stages to entice member acceptance of the change. The process for changing from in-person learning to virtual learning in the case of the research district was of immediate necessity and subsequently less formulaic; therefore, it is more appropriate to view the change through Jaffe et al.'s (1994) model offering member interpretation of the change as it unfolds. The four stages of this model include denial, resistance, exploration, and commitment, though members may move in and among the stages throughout the change implementation.

Denial. In this stage agents may reject the necessity and/or viability of the change as a whole or in part. While all stage one and stage two participants acknowledged the necessity of continuing public education despite the threat of the pandemic, many initially denied that the change to virtual learning was comprehensively planned and reflected the complexity of secondary schools. One agent offered:

I think the shift in the virtual models should have included more input from different

people. Sometimes the district picks specific people to provide input, and sometimes

those specific people give the answers that the district wants to hear. I think they should

have actually had more people contributing to how we can do this better for kids.

Agents at the secondary level who felt either excluded from the decision-making process in its

entirety or that their voice had no bearing on the design and implementation of the change were

more resistant to adopt elements of the change to virtual learning, regarding them as

superfluous.

Resistance. Members in this stage of the change actively or passively refused to

engage in the behaviors conducive to the change. One such element was the sustainability of

the district's learning management, Canvas. One agent elaborated

If a big change comes from the district level, it's usually something like every two years

when they come up with some new computer program or testing software or you know,

you learn how to use it, you use it for a year and then it gets phased out. I'll go along

with it, but it's hard to get behind because, you know it's not going to be followed

through.

Other comments echoed this skepticism regarding sustainability and conveyed a resistance to

learn new instructional technology without a promise of long-term access. Several participants

discussed an elementary-focused board whose decisions led to heightened anxiety among staff

and confusion for high school communities. Lastly, agents expressed varying levels of

frustration with the board's commitment to bring secondary in-person model students back to

campus at the earliest possible opportunity without consideration for professional development

and implementation timelines.

Exploration. Members in this stage were exploring elements of the change and testing

effectiveness in relation to the desired result. The desired result in this case was highly effective

teaching and learning in a virtual environment. Despite the frustration with the district-level

decision-making process, some agents expressed the hope that:

> If we have to make a similar change in the future let's talk about it now. What are we
> going to do so that we can do better next time and not make the same mistakes because
> if we think nothing like this is ever going to happen again we're kidding ourselves.

In thinking about equity awareness, one change manager commented, "I think one thing this

has forced us to do is to be open to other ideas, that one thing doesn't just work for everyone

and it's not necessarily their fault." Many agents acknowledged the push to evolve more quickly

in a less formally planned manner than previously approached at the site level. As such, site

administrators embraced and encouraged informal pockets of innovation.

      Commitment. At this stage of the change, members embrace the behaviors associated

with sustained change. Students learning virtually as a result of the global pandemic was never

in question, though the components of the district's approach to virtual learning were debated at

every level with each agent-in-situ wavering among denial, resistance, exploration, and

commitment to each component. Regardless of the friction throughout the process, leaders at

both the site and district levels were already, at the time of these interviews, reflecting on the

growing opportunities for the 2021–2022 academic year. As one change leader offered:

> We ended the 2020–2021 school year trying to frame conversations with our teachers
> around some of the positives that we're taking away. What's going to change? We've
> made a lot of progress with a lot of people, and we're in a position now where we're
> primed to make some big shifts for next year.

This reaction may be amplified by the juxtaposition of one of the research site's defining

characteristics, shared decision making. Agents at the site level were more apt to explore and

commit to the components of virtual learning over which they had initial and continued input

combined with the flexibility for execution that best served the needs of the students in their classes.

Summary

This study sought to understand the extent to which teachers' general-dispositional internal structures influenced their response to a planned organizational change. Strong structuration theory suggests that external structures shape the boundaries for agent action. Therefore, to address the research question, it was critical to first understand the conditions surrounding the change. In a review of literature pertaining to organizational change, Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) suggested the themes of content, conduct, and process are common to all change efforts, and a deeper understanding of these enabled me to understand both the expectations for change and the prospective impact on organizational structures. This literature does not, however, explain how agents process and make sense of external structures leading to active agency. The following sections explore the phenomena of structuring interactions between the external and internal as outlined in strong structuration theory.

Structuring Interactions Between the External and Internal

Of pivotal concern to this study was how agents become knowledgeable and then make sense of the external structures associated with a planned organizational change, which cause an outcome to one or more of the variables of the change. Mead (1961) theorized that knowledgeability was created and influenced through social interactions and processes by acknowledging and accepting community attitudes and norms and gauging the perspective of those with whom one is in a relationship. The quadripartite nature of structuration presented in strong structuration theory (Stones, 2005) aligns to Mead's proposal in part, recognizing that knowledgeability evolves through social interactions and an increased understanding of position-practices, or those networked relations within the organization. In addition, though, strong structuration supposes that agents make sense of external structures through both

conjuncturally-specific and general-dispositional internal structures. They do not gain knowledge strictly through making sense of current circumstances alone. They bring existing perspectives and worldviews through which they interpret the environment. The interactions between the internal structures and the external structures result in outcomes for each agent. An agent's outcomes, along with those of their colleagues, offer a new set of external structures and additional information about position-practices to consider, at which point the cycle of structuration begins again.

This structuration, or the dynamic exchange and subsequent influence of the external on the internal and vice versa leading to outcomes was observable as the elements of virtual learning evolved and were communicated and discussed at the research site. Participants viewed elements of the change that challenged existing mesolevel structures, particularly characteristics of the research site, as oppositional to their calling as educators. Some openly rejected to adopt behaviors associated with these elements of the change as a result, while others drew on their general disposition of professional obligation and complied. For example, the learning management system, Canvas, along with Zoom, greatly hindered teachers' ability to develop meaningful relationships with students including holding them accountable for vibrant, live interactions. Teachers viewed Canvas as a virtual filing cabinet of work students needed to complete to earn a grade in the class and removed dynamic instruction from the definition of education, redefining teachers' expectations for high quality student performance into grades-by-compliance. Regardless, agents processed these external circumstances through their conjuncturally-specific knowledge with some believing they enjoyed no level of control over any element of the change and others expressing a modicum of control over elements of execution. Early in the shift to virtual learning and prior to the district's formulation of standardized expectations for teaching and learning in a virtual environment, agents were encouraged to "just make the best of the situation." Agents discussed this period with lower

levels of anxiety and higher job satisfaction, a reflection of the research site community's value for the mesolevel structures of shared decision making and high school as a sophisticated system. In short, the undefined parameters of virtual learning early in the process did not significantly challenge position practices or mesolevel external structures such that agents demonstrated deep dissatisfaction with virtual learning.

Schwandt's (2008) research highlights three outcomes associated with micro and mesolevel interactions including: (a) making sense of stimuli through the lens of position, (b) preserving systems of self-interest, and (c) mitigating tension and generating order. As virtual learning developed over the course of the following year and a half, agents believed that mesolevel external structures and position practices were transformed by virtual learning as a whole. As a result, the structuring interactions between the micro and meso levels caused friction among agents at the research site. None of the participants interviewed believed that virtual learning was the best choice for students, but some believed it was a necessity of the time given the risk of COVID-19. These participants sought to preserve their systems of self-interest by maintaining the power of their position in the organization, particularly as it related to maintaining the virtual learning environment. Other participants believed a return to in-person learning was the only way to preserve pre-COVID order, or the research-site characteristics and conjuncturally-specific values.

Internal Structures and Active Agency

The primary purpose of this study was to understand how an agent's general-dispositional internal structures influence their response to a planned organizational change. Strong structuration theory suggests an individual's internal structure is comprised of two parts—conjuncturally-specific knowledge and general-dispositions—upon which agents draw on to interpret and respond to external structures. Any shift to existing systems causes an individual to consider how conjuncturally-specific knowledge will change. At the same time,

general-dispositional knowledge informs perception and feelings about the change. Stones' (2005) definition of general-dispositional knowledge includes "generalized world-views and cultural schemas, classifications, typifications of things, people and networks, principles or action, typified recipes of action, deep binary frameworks of signification, associative chains and connotations of discourse, [and] habits of speech and gesture" (p. 88). This description presents general-dispositional knowledge as formed in the past tense but neglects to include the more utilitarian drives like pleasure and pain that influence the present tense. This study suggests both are needed to fully address the research question.

Chater and Loewenstein (2016) proposed a theoretical model of utility suggesting individuals have two goals that drive behavior: (a) a need to live a life that satiates one's desires, and (b) to organize a life that makes sense in the simplest terms. These combined with the agent's internal structures as described by Stones (2005) offer a more complete explanation of the social structuring interactions and correlative responses to a planned organizational change, including how agents interact with new information in light of existing conjuncturally-specific and general-dispositional knowledge.

To fully appreciate the relationship between strong structuration theory (Stones, 2005) and Chater and Loewenstein's (2016) model of sense making, I paid attention to the following foundations of the model:

1. The brain can only make sense of the world one way at a time (Chater & Loewenstein, 2016).

2. Sense making is an autonomous and involuntary response to stimuli (Fodor, 1983).

3. Both cognition and general dispositions aid in the sense making of new information, including causal inferences about the giver's intentions and motivations (Clark, 1996; Levinson, 2000) and decisions to obtain or avoid, accept, or reject the information.

4. The brain automatically uses existing structures to make sense of data and prefers "the briefest explanation that it can find" (Chater & Loewenstein, 2016, p. 139).

5. When the brain can't autonomously make sense of information, it employs deliberate processes to attain understanding.

6. The process of sense making is pleasurable to the brain (Hsee & Ruan, 2014). Conversely, the inability to make sense of information is aversive.

7. Sense making is most pleasurable when it explains aspects of an individual's life and most frustrating when the expectation for sense to be made is unmet or when "receiving information that challenges the sense one has made of the world, but then having that information discredited" (Chater & Loewenstein, 2016, p. 141).

Regarding this study, Chater and Loewenstein's (2016) model of sense making as outlined above can be used to explain the role of: (a) curiosity, (b) flow, (c) confirmation bias, (d) information avoidance, (e) concern about others' beliefs, and (f) the significance of storytelling, as elements contributing to one's ability to make sense of the world. These six elements are discussed below to illustrate how the internal structures as presented in strong structuration (Stones, 2005) are also influenced by the utilitarian desire for sense making. In other words, when presented with change individuals draws on both the internal structures as presented in strong structuration theory, as well as the utilitarian desire for sense in active agency.

Curiosity

Curiosity can be described as an intrinsic desire to know or learn something without the promise of personal or professional benefit, other than the satisfaction of adding to an existing conceptual framework. Curiosity is heightened when one believes new information can help make greater sense of current information, though curiosity can lead to frustration when left unfulfilled. One study participant discussed his experience with virtual learning as:

One of the best classes I ever taught because I was able to focus on developing

relationships in a new way and trying new things just to keep that spark. Some things

worked and others didn't, but it was still fun.

Others reflected on the number of hours spent researching best practices for online learning

and annexing new ideas to their instructional repositories. In some cases, general dispositional

internal structures interfaced with curiosity to produce active agency in the form of an expanded

identity as an educator and a willingness to attempt and adopt new practices.

In other cases, participants resented the challenge to self-efficacy that virtual learning

prompted. They remained uncurious and unwilling to expand their practice, holding true to the

sense they had already made of teaching and learning prior to virtual learning. In these cases,

change managers saw agents merely transcribe in-person learning assignments to a virtual

learning platform, appearing to result in lower student and teacher engagement and higher D

and F rates. As part of the structuring interactions, agents redefined conjuncturally-specific

internal structures, some finding a lower sense of self and collective efficacy despite the

increased autonomy.

In conclusion, while most expressed frustration with the ability to develop meaningful

relationships, some grew more curious while others remained committed to their existing

framework, which compromised the effectiveness of the change.

Flow

Chater and Loewenstein (2016) also recognized the phenomena of flow

(Czikszentmihalyi, 1990) in relation to their model of sense making. Agents in this study all

discussed the long hours spent shifting from existing in-person learning paradigms to the new

practices associated with virtual learning. A few participants described the intrinsically rewarding

sense of flow while organizing curriculum, building Canvas platforms, and recording

demonstration videos. Unlike curiosity, people in flow are making sense of existing information

at their disposal without the drive for missing information. Participants in this study who experienced flow had higher levels of technological skill and employed that skill to effectively transition to teaching and learning in a virtual environment. Others though, never experienced flow because they were simultaneously developing technological knowledge while considering the application in service to teaching and learning at the same time. For these agents, frustration and resentment was high. In particular, the structuring interactions between the mesolevel structure (Canvas) and the general dispositional structures of professional obligation resulted in agents attempting and succeeding at various levels to leverage the learning management system to drive teaching and learning in a virtual environment. Agents with novice technology skills drew on their general-dispositional internal structures of connectedness, growth mindset, and trust to work alongside more experienced colleagues in service of the goal. Those who experienced flow were more likely to comment positively about the shift to virtual learning. Those who did not commented on compromised self-efficacy.

Confirmation Bias

Coined by Nickerson (1998), "confirmation bias" is a phenomenon whereby people involuntary select information that confirms existing beliefs and actively avoid or reject conflicting information. Chater and Loewenstein (2016) tied this concept to their model of sense making suggesting that the brain is most content when life makes sense and there is no unexplainable or contradictory data. When we accept new interpretations of data, we run the risk of needing to revise an existing set of beliefs and potentially related beliefs. The shift to virtual learning presented all participants with new student engagement and achievement data. The structuring interactions between the research site characteristics as part of the external structures and participants' internal structures considering this new data tempted some to ignore the need to redefine high expectations and the process for achieving meaningful relationships. These educators talked about students' laziness, the need to focus more, or video games as a

distraction during instructional times. In other words, they didn't accept their approach to virtual learning was incomplete despite new data and refused to adjust their belief systems and subsequent practices in light of this information. These teachers believed students were responsible for assimilating to the system they'd created, and the data reflected a lack of effort on the students' part. Drawing on the general disposition of professional obligation, defined as offering access to grade-level content standard, they maintained their pre-virtual learning professional identify as highly effective despite evidence to the contrary. Others, though, remembered feelings of loss as they let go of what "used to" work but didn't in the virtual environment. They accepted responsibility for the learning over the teaching and reevaluated their approach. These educators drew on their conjuncturally-specific internal structures to redesign highly effective instruction in a virtual environment.

Information Avoidance

Contrary to confirmation bias, which agents use to edit information in favor of interpretations that support only an existing belief system, agents avoid information that disrupts or disorganizes current explanations. People prefer organized information that is easy to describe. Virtual learning as an educational model new to all study participants was initially organized as "status quo except it's online"—the least disruptive application. Participants articulated the shock of how different the experience initially was for both educators and students. In response, some educators chose to avoid faculty meetings and training opportunities and filtered information solely through colleagues with shared beliefs. Conjuncturally-specific internal structures of influence, autonomy, self-efficacy, meaningful relationships, and higher purpose interacted with information avoidance, such that some drastically redefined these structures while others continued to avoid information out of conjunction with the pre-virtual learning model. These structuring interactions increased the general disposition of trust and connectedness among colleagues with shared belief systems

and decreased it in the alternative setting. In some cases, tensions arose within and among departments as misinformation circulated because of both information avoidance and confirmation bias.

Concern About Others' Beliefs

Concerns about others' beliefs was an additional phenomenon contributing to the social stratification that information avoidance and confirmation bias prompted. The general dispositional internal structure of connectedness was challenged by virtual learning and the concern about others' beliefs. Equally, some participants used their conjuncturally-specific internal structure of influence to sway others toward evolving factions of belief-aligned in-groups. Chater and Loewenstein (2016) explained the resistance to new information and correlative social sorting as a consequence of sense making and loss aversion. People want their lives to make sense, and those with contradictory beliefs present a potential for loss of sense because one or both cannot be the correct interpretation. The research site prior to virtual learning verbalized and practiced a largely collective commitment to building meaningful relationships, articulating high expectations for learning, designing personalized learning experiences, and seeing students' high achievement. The shift to virtual learning altered all of these and resulting structuring interactions between these external structures and agents' internal structures produced theoretical explanations. Over time, people organized themselves in alignment with sympathetic others and once honest dialogue was edited for deepening rifts between factions.

Narrative

Contributing to both sense making and confusion is the importance of narrative. Stories are powerful in that they are more persuasive than logical arguments (Pennington & Hastie, 1992). As virtual learning evolved, teachers at the research site shared stories of success and failure and subsequent feelings and used these stories to rationalize behaviors. Throughout the

time students spent in strictly virtual learning and when school entered a hybrid model of learning, board meetings were deeply divisive. Parents and educators shared stories of students struggling through public comment, and these stories were retold at the research site in subsequent days. Belief-aligned groups selected stories in concert with their own beliefs and shared parallel personal experiences within the group, deepening shared commitments to existing belief systems and further dividing the research site. The structuring interactions between these external structures associated with the change and participants' general dispositional internal structure of connectedness resulted in strengthening in-group identity and out-group mistrust, firstly. Secondly, agent behaviors perpetuated the shared narrative. As Bruner (2004) wrote:

> The self-telling of life narratives achieves the power to structure perceptual experience, to organize memory, to segment and purpose-build the very 'events' of a life. In the end, we become the autobiographical narratives by which we 'tell about' our lives. (p. 694)

In short, the general disposition of connectedness combined with a life narrative prompted agents towards behaviors that conform to the narrative instead of the other way around. They acted in such a way to make the narrative true, either positive or negative.

Summary

General dispositional internal structures color the way agents perceive proposed change. Agents use their conjuncturally-specific knowledge to define the power they have within an organization as well as respond to change and influence others. Every individual has a set of internal structures as exclusive to them as a fingerprint. Strong structuration theory supposes it is through the interactions occurring between and among external structures and internal structures that every society is built and evolves. It neglects to include the universal drive everyone has to make sense of their life in the simplest of forms. Structuring interactions between general dispositional and conjuncturally-specific internal structures within the

boundaries of external structures and with respect to an individual's utilitarian drive offer a more complete picture of active agency and a more complete explanation of the outcomes of this planned organizational change.

Conclusions

1. This research underscores the importance of thoughtful preparation with consideration for how any planned organizational change will challenge the intrinsic value system of an organization. In this case, prior to the shift to virtual learning, agents reflected positively on the research site culture, attesting to a collective commitment to high expectations for achievement through strong and supportive relationships. Virtual learning restructured the physical interactions between students, their peers, and teachers in the presence of learning, compromising many teachers' conjuncturally-specific knowledge and leaving them with feelings of loss, inadequacy, and isolation.

2. Despite frustration with the change process and challenges to conjuncturally-specific knowledge, agents drew on their general-dispositional internal structures to adhere to the requirements for successful implementation of the change, revealing a disposition to confirm the rightness of those general worldviews and maintain the sense they have made of their world.

3. The internal structures of agents are essential to understanding the effect of structuring interactions on any change initiative.

4. Changes to external structures are more successful when agents can easily and quickly reorganize their world according to new parameters. Subsequently, changes that challenge an agent's internal structures are more difficult given that general dispositions are often subliminal and intrinsic to the agent's identity. Dismantling

these subconscious worldviews leaves agents with an undefined path back to a life that makes sense.

5. Each agent internalized the expected behaviors required for successful change implementation and evaluated the extent of disruption to their environment. Those agents with a strong general-dispositional internal structure of professional obligation reorganized their learning environments more quickly than others. Once their world made sense again within the new constructs of learning, these teachers became leaders of best practice at the research site. This is evidence of the recursive relationship between internal and external structures leading to social restructuring.

6. Agents will leverage general-dispositional internal structures to address changes to conjuncturally-specific knowledge.

7. The desire for an organized life, one that makes sense in the simplest terms, led to teachers banding together in social groups defined by shared belief systems whereby information that confirmed the belief system was accepted, and information that challenged the belief system was avoided or rejected.

8. Extrinsic rewards (more time, hourly pay, etc.) offered to entice agents toward peaceable acceptance of the change did not soften agents' resentment of those creating the policies surrounding the change. Baumeister (2001) explained that undesirable departures from expectations are more unpleasant than positive departures are pleasurable. In other words, maintaining an existing system's organization is more satisfying than changing to a more effective system, and extrinsic rewards are not enough to combat disillusionment associated with the loss of an organized world.

Implications

Implications for Theory

Strong structuration (Stones, 2005) served as the theoretical foundation for this study and illuminated the ways in which social structures evolve because of interactions between the external structures associated with a change and agents' internal structures. This section makes suggestions for theory by examining the theory in light of more recent change research.

Intersection Between Strong Structuration Theory and Sense Making. Change research often focuses on the role of change leaders, change readiness, the context for change, and the process for change. Less common is research conducted on the impact agent attitudes have on the change initiative. Strong structuration theory (Stones, 2005) suggests a recursive relationship between an agent's internal structures, primarily their conjuncturally-specific knowledge, and those general dispositions that inform their perspective of the change initiative. This research supports the idea that an agent's response to change, even one they agree must happen, is manipulated in part by their subconscious worldviews.

Chater and Loewenstein's (2016) model of sense-making may add further depth to the theory of strong structuration (2005) as it inadvertently suggests an incompleteness to the theory. Strictly speaking, strong structuration holds that an agent's internal structures interact with the external structures associated with a change to produce an outcome of acceptance or rejection of the change in whole or in part. Chater and Loewenstein built on this foundation to include the utilitarian concept of sense making in an agent's response to change. The desire for maintaining conscious or subconscious worldviews (general-dispositional internal structures) causes agents to avoid information or confirm existing biases. Additionally, the sense making model stresses that individuals feel good when their world is organized in alignment with their general dispositions and keeping the body and mind feeling good is an essential psychological function.

Change Context and General-dispositional Internal Structures. Social structures enable and constrain outcomes; they are the boundaries of conformity (Parker, 2000). Those with the most power have the highest level of influence over the construction of social structures and fight the hardest to stagnate change. As Chater and Loewenstein (2016) established in their model of sense making, social structures are elicited to protect the world as organized by those with the most power, and restructuring is most probable when power structures shift or those in power change their worldviews.

This research suggests that additional attention should be paid to the relationship between the change context and communally held general dispositions. In this case, participants described shared general dispositional internal structures as inclusive of the following: professional obligation, connectedness, growth mindset, and trust. The application of these four internal structures in the presence of the shift to virtual learning accelerated adaptation to the change for those participants who didn't believe the change defied their general dispositions. Though all participants expressed a level of frustration as they sought to reimagine and reorganize conjuncturally-specific internal structures, only those participants who believed their sense of identity was being challenged were openly resistant to change. Change context is the rationale behind why an organization should change, and change leaders must reflect on and address existing power structures and shared general-dispositional internal structures. When participants in this study disagreed, they reestablished power through collectively held general dispositions. Those who did not conform to these dispositions resigned levels of power within the research site's social structure.

Advancing Research in the Educational Field. Change research in the field of education widely treats organizational change as a process and leaders as simple facilitators of that process. Agents-in-situ are offered binary consideration as either ready or resistant. Research on change readiness and resistance is plentiful, though it studies individuals largely

from a cognitive lens and bypasses the study of participant affect as a significant and contributing factor. This affect (Crites et al., 1994), or habitus (Bourdieu, 1990), or general-dispositional internal structures (Stones, 2005) and the impact it has on organizational change remains only superficially explored (Bouckenooghe, 2010). Empirical research conducted in the field of education using strong structuration as a theoretical foundation, particularly the quadripartite nature of structuration (Stones, 2005), may allow researchers to understand the extent to which general-dispositional internal structures at the micro and mesolevels influence change. The findings in this study suggest that leaders who sought to preserve these structures were more effective in maintaining relationships with and among colleagues and leveraging these relationships to contribute to the change initiative.

   The Influence of Environment on General-dispositional Internal Structures. The research in this case study establishes general-dispositional internal structures as influential over a planned organizational change both at the micro and mesolevels. These internal structures establish and reinforce practices at the site level to maintain organizational structures that conform to collective worldviews. Future research might be conducted to understand the extent to which one's general dispositional internal structures can be challenged and changed in various environments. Implications of this research could be relevant to sociopolitical issues including human rights, conservationism, poverty, literacy, and more.

Implications for Practice

   Case study design is especially useful when attempting to understand the complexities of a phenomena or issue in its natural context (Yin, 2009). This study sought to understand the extent to which an individual's general-dispositional internal structures had an impact on a planned organizational change. General dispositions are often defined as subconscious cultural schemas that contribute to our general worldviews and inform our perspective and subsequent action in any situation (Stones, 2005). The study of agents-in-situ, then, was required to fully

answer the research question, as I was able to conduct semi-structured interviews inquiring about the affect associated with agents' action. A beneficial byproduct of this design are clear implications for future practice. The following suggestions are shaped by the conclusions of this study and offer practitioners guidance in designing organizational change with deference to agents' general dispositional internal structures or those subconscious affects that inform action.

Reciprocity. Many participants in this study referred to a lack of ownership over the decision made to shift to virtual learning and the auxiliary outcomes pertaining to the shift such as Canvas. This perceived top-down approach prompted participant comments such as "illusion of choice" and "disingenuous district appeals." In truth, the district structured a variety of opportunities to gather input from all stakeholders, including town hall meetings, sprint teams, and community surveys. All contributions were made public through "community update" publications and board meeting discussions and materials.

While time to process new information was limited prior to twice monthly board meetings and contributed to participants feeling a lack of control, more important was the absence of clearly defined reciprocity, which left agents feeling underappreciated as professionals at best and manipulated at worst. In this case, all stakeholders desired to serve student needs amidst a global pandemic, but the district failed to outline how learning virtually was beneficial to both student and teacher. This contributed to teachers' feeling isolated and resentful as they believed the broad dictate to comply with the expectations for virtual learning did not consider the richness of relationship building as foundational to that learning. Furthermore, many participants expressed a view that the district was more interested in recovering lost student funding than ensuring teachers had the resources to provide quality learning experiences for all students.

This study emphasizes: (a) mutuality as a pivotal consideration for organizational change, and (b) how the recursive relationship between the external structures associated with change and the agents' internal structures shape culture and future expectations.

Communal General Dispositions. Change leaders must understand the general dispositional internal structures common to their staff and particularly within their management structures. As Chater and Loewenstein (2016) suggested, people are happiest when their world is organized and makes sense. Information that challenges this sense of organization disrupts happiness to different degrees. In the event of first-order change (Marzano et al., 2005), which seeks to modify existing processes and procedures, agents bring established conjuncturally-specific internal structures to this conversation and assess the extent to which power structures will shift. Change managers facilitating this type of change need to address reciprocity and illustrate the extent to which temporary discomfort in learning a new process will ultimately lead to greater organization and sense in the agent's world. Change managers must also avoid assuming all staff members will experience the same level of discomfort, as was the example with the adoption of Canvas in this case.

When change challenges an agent's general dispositional internal structures or when it challenges the organization's identity in relation to a value system, it becomes second-order change (Marzano et al., 2005). Change managers in this circumstance should navigate change using communal general dispositions as a metaphorical compass for successful implementation. It would be valuable to replicate the methodology in this study to establish shared general dispositions in advance of second-order change, and then open dialogue about how the change will challenge how individuals make sense of their world. When change leaders acknowledge staff members' feelings of loss and resulting depression as valid, they underscore a commitment to true transparency and relationship. In this case study, district-level leadership clearly outlined a plan for the shift to virtual learning and "the why" was obvious; however, only the research site leader was available to host conversations around loss aversion and infringements to general-dispositional internal structures. The structuring interaction between

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external and internal structures allowed the research-site leader to build trust with and among staff and faculty members throughout the change.

Sense Making and New Information. In their model of sensemaking Chater and Loewenstein (2016) argued that the brain automatically seeks the simplest explanation for the data it processes. Through a series of experiments, Chater and Loewenstein illustrated that "people have a strong preference for sets of items that can be organized simply" (p. 149) and are easy to describe. For example, in one experiment conducted by Evers et al. (2014), college students were presented with a choice between a set of different-colored pens and the same set with an additional two same-colored pens. Most students selected the first option, despite the additional pens. In other words, "'all different' is much simpler to encode than the mish mash of same and different colors" (Chater & Loewenstein, 2016, p. 149).

Complex, second-order change is anything but characteristically simple. As such, change leaders should separate the change into manageable segments and spend a significant amount of time redressing misconceptions and incomplete or unsophisticated interpretations between each segment. Leaders should also design information dissemination in the simplest construct imaginable, likening elements of the change to existing shared understandings. Because the brain involuntarily draws from existing knowledge to make sense of new knowledge, and each individual has limitless permutations for interpretation of new and complex information, change leaders would benefit from designing opportunities for ongoing dialogue regarding agents' multifaceted interpretation of the change and continue to memorialize defining elements of the change as it evolves. This approach, though, is incomplete without the consideration for how general-dispositional internal structures are challenged, as discussed earlier.

Lastly, if much of what causes discontentedness is a disruption of sense making, as Chater and Loewenstein (2016) suggested, it would benefit the leader to assess agents'

trajectory of sense making with relation to the change. This may be accomplished through the incorporation of personal reflection as a design element for change implementation. Leaders may use this information to identify: (a) where the organization is overall on the continuum of acceptance or resistance; (b) stagnation, apathy, or the rationale for open resistance at the microlevel; and (c) determine impediments to reestablishing sense of the world given the change.

        Group Interactions and Power Influences. The second-order, planned organizational change described in this study, dismantled many existing systems of sense, including power and status constructs within conjuncturally-specific internal structures. Study participants described fissures within existing social groups as members offered new data related to the change that further disrupted sensemaking and elevated frustration. As a result, new social groups were formed based on the application of shared general-dispositional internal structures, reassigning power and status to its members, and invited confirmation bias and information avoidance. The narratives constructed in these newly formed groups helped members to reestablish sense, albeit in concordance with the demands of the change or not, and these narratives served to reinforce espoused beliefs. Bruner (2004) wrote:

        The self-telling of life narratives achieves the power to structure perceptual experience,

        to organize memory, to segment and purpose-build the very "events" of a life. In the end,

        we become the autobiographical narratives by which we "tell about" our lives. (p. 694)

In other words, the decisions we make and the actions we take conform to the narrative we tell, and we struggle to maintain alignment with this narrative.

        Organizations seeking to implement second-order change should be mindful of both the professional and social groups members belong to and listen closely to the narrative they share. Too frequently organizations view groups as conduits for relaying top-down information pertaining to the change and ignore the value of what these groups may be saying in return.

The reflection strategy discussed earlier may be helpful in encouraging organizations toward purposeful listening and provide insight into the structuring interactions between external and internal structures leading to outcomes that support or resist the change effort.

       Organizational Complexity. In their work on organizational complexity, Glenn and Malott (2004) defined an organization as a group of people who perform tasks in order to achieve a desired result. Organizations vary in size, and the more systems within an organization the more complex the organization becomes. In the field of education, each classroom can be considered a microorganization comprised of a variety of interdependent systems for operational and instructional purposes. Likewise, each school within a district can also be considered an organization. In this way, a district seeking to implement a K-12 second-order change must recognize the thousands of interdependent systems that will also change as a result. These alterations—large and small—will subsequently change the district as a whole. It is incumbent upon the district-level leadership, then, to: (a) cast a vision for change that reflects a shared goal; (b) define how existing systems—micro to macro—will need to modify to achieve this goal, (c) convene forums for people to surface and discuss systems change challenges, and (d) be sensitive to the varying levels of support—time, resources, training—each member of the organization will need to reorganize the systems within their control to comply with the vision for change.

       In this case, while the goal of each classroom and school within the district remained committed to maximizing learning for each student enrolled, study participants articulated a frustration with the district-level leadership's apparent disregard for the complexities associated with high school organizations in relation to the goal. These teachers criticized the district and the board of education for their oversimplification of the shift to virtual learning and the destruction of all existing systems of learning. Teachers were required to develop entirely new systems for engaging with their students, beginning with the expectation that students attend

and engage with their classes. Though the district provided Canvas and Zoom as tools to achieve this basic requirement, teachers were overwhelmed with the myriad of interrelated systems they were simultaneously creating, including drafting new curriculum, developing new instructional strategies, building new techniques for online assessment, etc. The district-level development of expectations for teaching and learning did little to address how to build the systems to achieve the expectation, and teachers were encouraged to work together to strategize and solve dilemmas. As a result, and as discussed in the previous segment, teachers developed new social systems based on shared narratives and altered their behaviors to perpetuate the narrative.

If districts and school sites seek to implement transformational change, they would benefit from finding a way to define and organize complex interdependent systems within the organization prior to launching the change to mitigate the risk of unwanted narratives and to structure more direct support.

Implications for Future Research

The results of this study indicate a variety of implications for theory and practice and prompt additional questions that future research may help answer. Based on the theoretical framework, strong structuration (Stones, 2005), and the conclusions this study yields, the following implications are offered for researchers interested in the human-centered dynamics of change within complex organizations.

Human-centered Change Research. The ability for organizations to quickly change processes, procedures, and approaches in response to ever-shifting economic expectations and exponential increases in knowledge has never been more critical, yet most organizational change efforts continue to fail (Keller & Aiken, 2009). Research conducted in response to this phenomenon includes reevaluations of the steps for successful change implementation, the varying levels of change, and organizational and individual change readiness and resistance.

Still, this research has done little to impact the rate of failure prompting additional considerations for how to study change through a more human-centered lens, beginning first with an assessment of the general dispositional internal structures of the individual most impacted by the change.

Strong structuration theory (Stones, 2005) lends a structure for this empirical research through the quadripartite nature of structuration. Researchers using this theory as a framework can better understand the intersection of external and internal structures, particularly as it relates to change in-situ. Leaders can then navigate the impact of change on the individual both personally and professionally more effectively. As Chater and Loewenstein (2016) posited in their model of sense making that change will always be accompanied by feelings of loss and varying levels of depression while someone is reorganizing their world to include new information. Organizations that understand the subconscious general-dispositional internal structures of its members may be more equipped to steer the group toward transformational change.

Strong structuration, along with additional composite research, are useful in tandem to assess the evolution of organizational culture, particularly in light of change. This study offers grounds for continued research in the field of education using strong structuration theory to understand how an individual's general-dispositional internal structures influence social structures and organizational change. Any attempts to develop a tool to support the assessment of general-dispositional internal structures would be particularly useful.

Useful questions to guide future research may include:

1. To what extent does a teacher's general dispositional internal structures influence the development of social structures at a school site?

2. What is the most effective tool for assessing the collective general-dispositional internal structures at a school site?

Macrolevel Influences. This study expands on the relationship between micro and mesolevel structuring interactions in the presence of second-order change. Absent, however, is a clear understanding of: (a) how macrolevel structures influence microlevel decision making, and (b) how the micro and mesolevels intersect to produce change in macro structures. Strong structuration theory (Stones, 2005) alludes to macrolevel impact in its presentation of general dispositional internal structures, which are those cultural schemas innately acquired through the experiences and personal interactions in one's formative years and drawn upon reflexively to inform responses to new data. Little empirical research exists, however, to suggest how microlevel practices may lead to macrolevel shifts (Carter et al., 2008; Vaara & Whittington, 2012). Seidl and Wittington (2014) described the dangers of this oversight, calling it "micro-isolationism," the practice of studying microlevel actions without consideration for macrolevel contexts, which limits findings to how personal practices are effective instead of a greater understanding of the why.

Future research conducted to expand on this gap may be of particular importance to educators as they seek to introduce social structures to their students and challenge the need for revision, including political, social, economic, and ethnic constructs. Guiding questions may include:

- What is the extent to which macrolevel structures influence microlevel decision making?

- What is the extent to which microlevel practices contribute to macrolevel shifts?

- What is the extent to which micro and mesolevels intersect to produce change in macro structures?

Shared Valence. This study did not originally seek to understand the role of sense making in relation to general-dispositional internal structures, though sense making is a factor in outcomes related to change. For example, when change disrupts the way one views life, they

are less likely to participate in behaviors aligned with the change. General-dispositional internal structures are deeply ingrained structures that agents reflexively draw from to make sense of new data. Any change that challenges these internal structures will result in an existence that makes less sense and leads to resistance.

Valence, or the desire to live a satisfactory and pleasing life, is a concept related to sense making in that when one's life makes sense it is both satisfactory and pleasing (Chater & Loewenstein, 2016). Future research might seek to define and quantify the shared valence of an organization, which may help leaders understand more about change readiness and resistance on micro and mesolevels. A clearer understanding of organizational valence may also support with research connected to the study of happiness and wellbeing. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected and interdependent, any awareness of how to influence transformational change with the least disruption to a member's happiness would be important information for a leader and has the potential to expedite change. Future researchers may consider asking the following question: What is the process for identifying organization valence?

Positions of Power. This study did not directly focus on positionality within the organization as a factor in the interpretation of external structures; rather, it sought to understand how general-dispositional internal structures influenced an agent's response to organizational change. Nonetheless, there is value in future research conducted to understand the difference between how those in and out of power perceive and respond to change and how general-dispositional internal structures impact that perception and response. In this study it was observed that those who articulated their position in the organization as less powerful were more likely to offer a negative view of the change to virtual learning.

One question to guide aligned research may be: how directly does power—formal or informal—add to an individual's sense of an organized world and, consequently, how does that power impact an agent's response to change?

Summary and Conclusion

This case study was designed to understand how an individual's general-dispositional internal structures impact a planned organizational change. The primary purpose of this study was to expand consideration for how the structuring interactions between an individual's positionality within an organization as well as their general worldview informs action in response to change. Existing research on change readiness and resistance largely ignores the influence of agents' habitus (Bourdieu, 1990) on change initiatives, favoring instead more tangible processes and well-defined steps for implementing change. When change efforts fail, processes are restructured, or change leaders are blamed as mismanaging the effort. Despite the breadth of research conducted to date, failed change efforts remain high, particularly in the field of education; therefore, greater consideration of how outcomes are generated through structuring interactions between external and internal structures can only serve to decrease failure rates. Future research conducted in this vein will yield greater implications for theory, practice, and research regarding dynamic social structures and their impact on organizational change.

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APPENDIX A

Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant,

Thank you for your willingness to engage in this case study, titled *Change Readiness and The Mediating Role of General-Dispositional Internal Structure*. The principal investigator authorized to conduct this study will remain anonymous but can be reached at pepperdineresearcher1@gmail.com. This study will serve as the foundation for the researcher's doctoral degree in educational leadership and policy from Pepperdine University. This study seeks to understand how a teacher's general-dispositional internal structures influence his or her response to a planned organizational change.

You have been invited to participate in this study because of your experience with the changes associated with the Virtual learning initiative. 16 of the teachers at your site volunteering to participate in this research will be interviewed once according to the following process:

1. Participants will click on the link in the initial invitation to participate in the study in order to select a time to engage in a 30 and 60-minute interview conducted by the researcher. This interview will last no longer than 60 minutes under any circumstances.
2. The researcher will ask between 6 and 8 general questions about the participant's experience with the change process and provide guiding questions as needed.
3. If, at any time concluding the interview, the participant would like to communicate with the researcher she can be reached at pepperdineresearcher1@gmail.com.

As a gentle reminder, your participation in this study is strictly voluntary, and you may terminate your participation any time you wish without being questioned about your decision. You may also refrain from responding to any question that makes you feel uncomfortable without terminating the interview.

All interviews conducted and documents collected during this study will occur via a secure conference call number and serve as the foundation for the researcher's dissertation. Lastly, you will be assigned a fictitious name in the publication of this dissertation. As a final precaution to ensure confidentiality, all data will be stored in password-protected computer files in an off-site location. All hard copies of notes taken and digital imaging of interviewee responses will be destroyed following the conclusion of the study and after they are deemed no longer useful for research purposes.

You are invited to take part in this research study. The information in this form is meant to help you decide whether or not to participate. If you have any questions, please email me at pepperdineresearcher1@gmail.com.

Completion of the interview is an acknowledgement of the information provided above and represents the participant's consent to be part of the study.

Yours Sincerely, Pepperdine Researcher

APPENDIX B

Stage One Interview Protocol and Questions – Organizational Context

Organizational support staff members imply consent to participate in the study by:

1. Selecting availability for a 30- to 60-minute interview through the Doodlepoll link embedded within initial interview
2. Attending the interview via secure conference call line.
3. Completing the interview

Prior to the engagement in the interview, the researcher will read the script below to remind the participant of the salient points within the informed consent form:

- Hello! Thank you for your willingness to engage in this study. Before we begin I'd like to remind you of a few things. Firstly, the larger purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between the external structures or circumstances surrounding a planned organizational change and their influence on a teacher's response to that planned change. As part of the larger focus of the study, this interview seeks to understand the school site's context and your personal history pertaining to change both inside and outside of your experience at the site.
- The interview will last between 30 and 60-minutes, and you are welcome to stop the interview at any time if you need to ask a clarifying question or you decide you would like to terminate your participation.
- When answering the questions, remember that it's your perception of the answers that is most critical. Don't worry about reciting "the right" answer. The interview will not be shared with anyone.

Question	Focus	Probing for

1. Can you tell me about [your school site]?
  • *How would you describe [school site's] primary work?*
  • *What are the elements **within** the school that are most important to its work (i.e., environment, history, values, culture, org structure, workforce, etc.)?*
  • *What factors **outside** of [the school] are most influential on the work that the school does (i.e., external environment, industry trends, political influences, etc.)?*
	Organizational context (macro/ meso level)	• Macro: Politics, industry, education trends
		• Meso: Culture, vision, values, purpose, roles, hierarchy, structure, workforce, experience, longevity, satisfaction

2. What are the factors within your subject-area specific department that most influence the work that the high school does? • *What are the elements __within__ your department that are most important to its work (i.e., environment, history, values, culture, structure, workforce, etc.)?* • *Describe the relationship between the work of the department and that of the school site as a whole.*	Organizational context (macro/ meso level)	• Macro: Politics, industry, trends, technology • Meso: Culture, vision, values, purpose, roles, hierarchy, structure, workforce training, experience, longevity, satisfaction
3. Tell me a bit more about the actual change to [the high school] as a result of the shift to a virtual learning environment. • *Describe the content of the change (content or composition).* • *Describe how you are/were leading the change (process).* • *Describe the conditions or circumstances around the change (context).*	Content, context, process of the change within the organization (mesolevel)	• Content: Impressions of the change composition (what exactly might change, how would this change the day-to-day work, roles, requirements, results, episodic vs continuous, etc.). • Process: Impression of the change process (how the change has been led, power, normative, inclusive, etc.). • Context: Impressions of change context (the factors that led to this change – catalyst, history, motivation, technical system/ resources, social system/ roles and responsibilities, political systems/ power relationships, culture/ norms and values).
4. Tell me about your perspective of the process for shifting to the virtual school model • *Where are you in the change process and how has the change gone so far?* • *What are your impressions of the collective response and/ or readiness for the shift?*	Content, context, process of the change at [the research site] (mesolevel)	• How does this organization's mission, clients, leadership team, location, staff, previous schedule, history, impact the change to wall-to-wall pathways? • In what ways is the change for the positive? In what ways is it challenging? • Impressions of collective response and/or resistance to the change to wall-to-wall pathways.

5. How is the staff reacting to the change, particularly those in your department? • *What do you believe is causing this response? What is it about the organization? What is it about the individuals?* • *How is the organization responding to the staff response? Have there been changes to the virtual school model rollout as a result?*	Content, context, process of the change at [the research site] (mesolevel)	• Impressions of collective staff response. • External (organizational) structures that are shaping the response. • How are these responses shaping the external structures (content, process and context)?
6. Is there anything else I should know about [the high school] or the shift to the virtual learning model?	Content, context, process of the change at [the research site] (mesolevel)	• Those elements about the context and change which are most relevant and salient to the individual and organization.

APPENDIX C

Stage Two Interview Protocol and Questions – Personal Experience with Change

Teachers imply consent to participate in the study by:

1. Selecting availability for a 30- to 60-minute interview through the Doodlepoll link embedded within the initial invitation
2. Attending the conference call
3. Completing the interview

Prior to the engagement in the interview, the researcher will read the script below to remind the participant of the salient points within the informed consent form:

- Hello! Thank you for your willingness to engage in this study. Before we begin I'd like to remind you of a few things. Firstly, the larger purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between the external structures or circumstances surrounding a planned organizational change and their influence a teacher's response to that planned change. As part of the larger focus of the study, this interview seeks to understand the school site's context and your personal history pertaining to change both inside and outside of your experience at the site.
- The interview will last between 60 and 90-minutes, and you are welcome to stop the interview at any time if you need to ask a clarifying question or you decide you would like to terminate your participation.
- When answering the questions, remember that it's your perception of the answers that is most critical. Don't worry about reciting "the right" answer. The interview will not be shared with anyone.

Question	Focus	Probing for
1. I would like to get to know a little more about you. How did you end up in your position at [school name]? What brought you to this point in your career? • *How did you select this career path or occupation?* • *What do you value most about your work?* • *What about your background or prior experience has most influenced your work as a teacher?*	General – dispositional	• Personal values, background, influences, habitus • Professional values, background, influences, habitus

2. Tell me about your experience as a teacher at this school. • *What is your role at the school, officially and unofficially? How would you describe this role?* • *What is your network in the organization? Who are the people you are most connected to professionally and personally?*	Position-practice relations	• Organizational role, context, background, position-practice relations, connections within the organization, whether professional and personal connections overlap • How does this role and network influence the agent's reaction to the change?
3. How would you describe your disposition as it relates to change? • *How would others in your life (friends, family, coworkers) describe your disposition as it relates to change?* • *What experiences in your background most impact your approach to change?*	General – dispositional	• Inclination towards or against change, comfort/ discomfort with change, flexibility vs. stability, comfort/ discomfort with ambiguity
4. Tell me about the change to virtual learning. • *What are your current thoughts or beliefs about the change? What is causing you to think about it in this way (cognition)?* • *Tell me about your current emotions or feelings you are experiencing related to the change to virtual learning. What is causing you to feel this way (affect)?* • *Tell me about your intention to support or resist the change.* • *What are you actually doing (behaviors) as a result of this pending change? What is causing you to behave in this way? How is it the same or different than your intentions?*	Context of the change	• Change content, context, process, perceptions about this specific change • Response to change; cognition, affect, intention/ evaluation, and behavior/ action • Probe for the source of the reaction

5. What was your first reaction to the idea of virtual learning?
   • *What was your reaction and behavior? Emotion? Cognitive response (belief)?*
   • *What do you think is most influencing your first reaction to the change?*
   • *What are the factors from the environment, the organization, or you as an individual that most influenced your first reaction?*
	Response to change	• Response to change – cognition, emotion, intention, behavior
		• Internal and external structures influencing individual reaction

6. What do you think is most influencing your reaction to the change? Why are you reacting this way? (internal/ external structures)
   • *Disposition toward change*
   • *Personal history, values, worldview*
   • *Content of the change*
   • *Circumstances surrounding the change*
   • *How you were led through the change*
   • *Your position or roe in the organization*
   • *Resources to support the change (human/ technical)*
   • *Politics surrounding the change*
	Response to change	• Internal and external structures influencing individual reaction

7. Do you believe that you have influenced the development of the Virtual Learning Initiative as a whole? If so, how?	Dynamic between internal and external structures	• Internal structures influencing external structures
8. Is there anything else I should know about your response to the change?	Content, context, process (mesolevel)	• Those elements that are most relevant and salient to the individual response

APPENDIX D

Invitation Email to Participate in Stage One

Dear High School Site Leader,

I am a doctoral student in the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University. I am conducting a research study examining the extent to which an individual's response to change is influenced by his or her internal structures, particularly those generalized world views and cultural schema subconsciously drawn upon to inform action in the presence of change. You are invited to participate in the study. If you agree, you will participate in a single 30 to 60-minute interview in order to explain your personal perception of the changes associated with the Virtual School initiative.

Your interview will be audio recorded to ensure accurate transcription. All data will be destroyed subsequent to the publication of this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary, and your identity as a participant will remain anonymous during and after the study. In order to do this, all interviews will be conducted via a secure conference call line. I will identify myself only as "Pepperdine Researcher," and you will only identify yourself as "Participant." If at any time you need to correspond with me, please ensure you do so from a secure email address that maintains your anonymity. My email address is pepperdineresearcher1@gmail.com.

Should you choose to participate in this research the interview process is outlined below:

Process	1. Select an interview time convenient to you by clicking HERE and signing up as "Participant." 2. Review the Informed Consent Form in advance of your interview. 3. Call the conference call line at the time you selected. The number is (609) 663-5915.

Thank you for your participation,
pepperdineresearcher1@gmail.com

Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology
Doctoral Student, Educational Leadership and Policy

APPENDIX E

Invitation Email to Participate in Stage Two

Dear High School Site Teacher,

I am a doctoral student in the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University. I am conducting a research study examining the extent to which an individual's response to change is influenced by his or her internal structures, particularly those generalized world views and cultural schema subconsciously drawn upon to inform action in the presence of change. You are invited to participate in the study. If you agree, you will participate in a single 30 to 60-minute interview in order to explain your personal perception of the changes associated with the Virtual School initiative.

Your interview will be audio recorded to ensure accurate transcription. All data will be destroyed subsequent to the publication of this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary, and your identity as a participant will remain anonymous during and after the study. In order to do this, all interviews will be conducted via a secure conference call line. I will identify myself only as "Pepperdine Researcher," and you will only identify yourself as "Participant." If at any time you need to correspond with me, please ensure you do so from a secure email address that maintains your anonymity. My email address is pepperdineresearcher1@gmail.com.

Should you choose to participate in this research the interview process is outlined below:

Process	1. Select an interview time convenient to you by clicking HERE and signing up as "Participant."
	2. Review the Informed Consent Form in advance of your interview.
	3. Call the conference call line at the time you selected. The number is (609) 663-5915.

Thank you for your participation,
pepperdineresearcher1@gmail.com

Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology
Doctoral Student, Educational Leadership and Policy