

The Sociology of Organization Theory : Implications for its Teaching and Practice in Developing Countries

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Among the legacies of technical assistance in Public Administration to developing countries, the most notable is the network of institutions devoted to training, education and research in the field.¹ The failure of *American* Public Administration did not necessarily lead to a rejection of Public Administration as a worthy subject for continued study and research. Rather such a failure was responsible for an intensive search to find out as to what had gone wrong in the field. The outcome of the process has informed subsequent generation of academicians and practitioners about the dangers of **indiscriminate** transfer of technologies developed in the western world to the developing countries. Even when some technologies that may seem relevant will need considerable modification prior to their introduction in a different culture. What has come to be known as "ecology" in Public Administration is considered an important determinant in technology transfer.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

One of the identified areas of relative success of technical assistance in Public Administration to developing countries is the transfer of management technology. This technology, conveniently labeled as organization theory, now forms a core in the curriculum of Public Administration teaching in many developing countries. It has also occupied a major place in the agenda for their research. The preponderance of organization theory in teaching and research of Public Administration is due to a received tradition about its **instrumental** nature and neutral posture.

Organizations are instruments in the hands of their masters but they are not neutral tools as claimed by some. They cannot be neutral for the

reason that the circumstances of their creation and the subsequent pattern of their maintenance are deeply influenced by the surrounding cultural milieu. Organizations are culture-bound instruments for purposive action. This fundamental fact is easily ignored by theorists because the cultural values are out there so naturally. These values have considerably circumscribed the conceptual and substantive considerations of organization theory by limiting it to only questions of techniques. Organization theory has thus developed as a technology of organizations. In that conceptualization, it has a limited role ; it ignores values and concentrates on techniques. But however organization theory may ignore values, it cannot avoid its impact. Values have not only dictated the terms of organizational governance, they have also aided the acquiescence of the men to their dominance by organization.

The purpose of this paper is to undertake a critical examination of the evolution of organization theory in America as a case study for a determination of the role of culture in shaping current knowledge. It will be argued that :

- a. Organization theory, like any other social theory, is culture-bound.
- b. A number of past and continuing movements have driven the American society to a highly rationalistic order.
- c. The dominance of the rational order at the social level has also permeated the field of organization theory and has also given it a **rationalistic** paradigm.
- d. The level of sophistication of organization theory has changed in response to changes in the nature of society and its production process.
- e. The organizational society with its rationalistic paradigm has become so pervasive that in post-industrial America a reformulation of the extant paradigm does not seem a probability in the near future.
- f. These insights into the sociology of organization theory will have significant implications for its teaching and practice in developing countries. These implications need to be understood clearly for avoiding the disillusionments associated with the practice of Public Administration in the recent past.

FRAME OF ANALYSIS

This study is predicated on the premise that culture is an important determinant of the nature of organization theory. The frame of analysis comes from a particular form of sociology of knowledge. What follows is a brief review of the frame.

Social Origin of Knowledge : Substantive Sociology

All knowledge is historically conditioned and socially derived. The social scientist is a part of the history from which his knowledge is constructed. This is the essence of the theory of sociology of knowledge. The theory itself has been criticized for its "fundamental dilemma of relativism"* and for its "alienation of the intellect from the grounds of assurance and certitude."³ Within the field, there is no agreement as to the nature of the existential basis beyond a 'formal consensus' that such a basis does indeed exist.

Most of these criticisms, however, relate to the epistemological consequences of the sociology of knowledge and not to what has been called substantive sociology. In this respect Mannheim's division of sociology of knowledge into two forms is a useful distinction to keep in mind.⁴ One form, that is called substantive sociology now, is concerned with a purely empirical investigation into the social determination of knowledge ; the other is concerned with the epistemological consequences of this interrelationship from the point of view of validity. Mannheim mentions that the two forms "are not necessarily connected and one can accept the empirical results without drawing the epistemological conclusions."⁵

Taking a slightly different view, Weber also emphasized the distinction between the source of a belief and its validity.⁶ The truth of a proposition can be assessed quite independently of how it happened to be arrived at ; the source of a belief is logically irrelevant to its validity, whatever criteria of validity are involved. As Weber emphasized, any choice of conceptual framework entails an evaluation. To explain just how the framework came to be chosen may elucidate the evaluation, but cannot mitigate or diminish it.

Reasons for Social Determination of Knowledge :

The Problem of Social Construction of Reality

The statement that all knowledge is socially derived immediately raises the question : why is that so ? The answer is an involved one and concerns the social construction of reality. As has been shown by Schutz, this involves, on the one hand, the transcendence of nature and society into the individual biographical situation and, on the other, the limit imposed by this transcendence for defining that situation.⁷ What follows is a summary of Schutz's treatment of this important matter.

Every man is born into this world in a "biographically determined situation" which is unique to him. Through his natural attitude he takes this world for granted as his reality. He confronts the reality around him in the perspective of his own desires and motives that are called "the purpose at hand". This purpose at hand calls into being the "system of relevances" in the common-sense thinking in everyday life.⁸

But soon the individual realizes that his "system of relevances" cannot be put into operation in a private world of his own. The world he is born into is an intersubjective world, experienced and interpreted by others. To realize his purpose at hand, he has to come to terms with this world common to all fellow beings. This is done through the "reciprocity of perspectives."⁹

The reciprocity of perspectives implies an attitude of "taken for granted". Taken for granted means "to accept until further notice our knowledge of certain states of affairs as unquestionably plausible"¹⁰ Thus, under the idealization of interchangeability of standpoints, there is the mutual assumption that two persons would have typically the same experiences of the common world if they changed places. Under the idealization of the congruency of the system of relevances, it is further assumed that despite different biographical situations, two persons can select and interpret the actually or potentially common objects and their features in an identical manner. In other words, these two idealizations mean that the **sector of the world taken for granted by one is also taken for granted by the other**. In this way, knowledge transcends the boundaries of private domains of individuals and becomes objective and anonymous.¹¹

The social construction of reality is based on a world taken for granted. But why is the world taken for granted? This is because the world taken for granted is the individual's "stock of knowledge at hand." It is this knowledge, typified and standardized in socially approved ways that ushers the individual to the threshold of social knowledge. It is on this basis that he confronts his current problems and tries to comprehend the future ones. Without this knowledge, there would be no common ground for individuals to effect "reciprocity of perspectives" and without this reciprocity there would be no intersubjective communication. The taken-for granted world is the most crucial element in the socialization of knowledge and maintenance of meaningful social structure.

This paper is divided into four sections. The first section discusses the **cultural** foundations of organization theory. In the second section, the

evolution of organization theory is traced and analyzed in the mode of a case study. The third section deals with future outlook of theoretical development in the field while the last section tries to bring out the implications of this study for the teaching and practice of organization theory in developing countries.

I. THE CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF ORGANIZATION THEORY

Having reviewed the basis of the social origin of knowledge, I will now try to identify and discuss the movements that have contributed to the "stock of knowledge" of the organization theorists. Any attempt at the reconstruction of the cultural basis of current thought of a society is fraught with severe methodological problems. Ideas that become effective forces in shaping culture are themselves intertwined with each other to such a degree that individual evaluation of their contribution is next to impossible. Movements influencing the course of human thought are so diverse and may be so remote that seeking to find a strict causal relationship would be stretching things too far. However, acknowledging these limitations, I would try to capture *the essence of the cultural foundations of organization theory*. This I propose to do by discussing a few movements and noting their main thrusts in shaping modern American thought and society.

Scientism

This represents the scientific world view of the New Science first earnestly espoused by Galileo and Newton and reinforced by their successors. The Universe of the New Science is one of perfect symmetry and absolute precision: certainty, predictability and control are its essential values. In such a universe, there cannot be anything that is not amenable to scientific explanation. The affective elements are of no concern to the schemes of New Science. Only the objective things matter. The systematic reduction of all knowledge to the dimensions and categories of science and to the postulates of neutral objectivity and analytic reductionism has come to be known as **Scientism**.¹² This mode of thinking has been dominating the western mind for three centuries now.

Social Darwinism

The world view of classical physics found new allies in the life sciences. One of the outstanding contributions of nineteenth century thought was the

notion of survival drawn from Darwinian biology. All creatures are in competition to survive. There must be a natural selection of the fittest. And this is also true of man.

When applied to human society, the Darwinian theory of evolution became an ideology of business groups in modern society.¹³ In the American context particularly, the economic growth after the Civil War showed the unlimited possibilities of success. The pessimism of a Malthus was more than overcome by an optimistic construction of evolutionary theory. In that view, "success and riches were regarded as signs of progress and as the reward of those who had proved themselves in the struggle for survival".¹⁴ The rich are the fittest and worthy of possessing their wealth while the poor, having failed to make their mark, are justifiably condemned to poverty. The most forthright exponent of this thorough-going conservatism in America was William Graham Sumner. To him, man was the creature of nature and the latter decided the ways things are. Man, of course, has a part to play in this world, but such efforts are of little consequence in changing the outcome as already decided by the laws of nature. "There can be no rights against nature except to get out of her whatever we can, which is only the fact of the struggle for existence stated over again".¹⁵

Social Darwinism at bottom is the logical extension of the hegemony of nature into the affairs of man. It is based on the assumption of the helplessness of "man" in the face of circumstances beyond his control and subjects man to nature and its laws. Social Darwinism views man merely as an instrument in the evolutionary mechanism of nature.

Behaviorism

Behaviorism in social sciences has come to embrace a variety of viewpoints but its origin can be traced to the Darwinian revolution in biology and the all-pervasive impact of scientism in the west. It all started as a distinct movement in psychology with a rigorous natural science methodology to fit man into a determinate and predictive world of science.¹⁶

The discovery of the conditioned reflex in animal psychology by Pavlov gave the signal to the experimental psychologists to apply the objective physiological methods to human species without any reservation. One of the enduring legacies of early behaviorism is the belief that human conduct can, indeed, be conditioned. If man can not be made perfect to the requirements of a technological society, behaviorism proclaimed his indefinite malleability and manipulability. Early behaviorists made the fundamental

assumption about the irrational and involuntary character of all human behavior. That the impact of this assumption has not been lost upon the present generation of psychologists is evident from the work of Clark L. Hull and B.F. Skinner.

Functionalism

The impact of Darwinian theory is felt in yet another nineteenth century movement known as functionalism. The basic postulate of functionalism consists in its vision of society as a system of interdependent parts where most parts serve functions enabling the system to survive. Functionalist analysis treats the system "as an already established and going concern."¹⁷ In order to survive, such a system must reflect the dominant value system. There may be strains to the equilibrium from within or from outside : the reaction of the system to strains is to adjust and to adopt toward a new equilibrium. Conflict is thus viewed as pathological or dysfunctional. Functionalism visualizes individuals as harmoniously coordinated in groups and groups harmoniously coordinated in the social system. In such a vision of society, the dominant value system is to be accepted as the undisputed first premise that can only be contested at the peril of resurgence of the Hobbesian state of nature.

Positivism

Positivism seeks to explain happenings in the world exclusively in terms of experience. In the modern world, it is almost synonymous with the attempt to make the procedures of science the norm of all effective thought. As a movement in thought, it takes physical science as its model, liberalism as its political faith, material progress as its practical concern and religion and institutionalism as its enemies.

The positivistic view of the world nurtures an ontology that shows the "natural order" as a condition of rest : any vitality, unrest, change are suspected as aberrations. As Orion White has shown, in this model "the motive of action becomes a **problem**".¹⁸ Any disequilibrium in natural order can only be remedied by action. Action in turn is formulated with reference to a relativistic perspective gained from experience. Thus self is totally divorced from the construction of reality. Reality based on experience that can be conceived in causal sequence can **only** claim to be data for scientific enquiry.

Rationality

Rationality as a concept has been amenable to diverse interpretations. From my standpoint, I would try to comprehend rationality in the manner it has affected the evolution of the modern world and has persisted as an ideal of the industrialized societies. Max Weber introduced the concept of rationality to explain the uniqueness of the western civilization.¹⁹ In a masterful analysis of the rise of modern capitalism in the west, he convincingly argues that this particular development has been possible only in the west because of the rise of "rational conduct on the basis of the idea of calling" born of Protestant asceticism. This specific rationality is opposed to all forms of traditionalism and legitimations based on it.

In the pre-capitalist west, people were beholden by the magical and religious forces and derived their ethical ideas of duty from them. Early capitalism was viewed by religion as selfish acquisition of wealth and was, therefore, morally reprehensible. Calvinism by stressing this-worldly asceticism transplanted the ascetic devotion to hard work to the mundane affairs of economic life. What Weber calls the spirit of capitalism is essentially a transformation of pursuit of wealth as an end in itself to a fruit of labor in a calling.

The growth of bourgeois capitalism and the rise of modern science are integral parts of the progressive rationalization of modern world. As a historical phenomena, rationalization means "the extension of the areas of society subject to the criteria of rational conduct" and the replacement of old forms of legitimations by new ones congruent with the altered situation created by extended rationality. The concept of rationality is linked with the concept of legitimacy of systems, for, as will be seen, rationality not only helped the emergence of the modern west, it has also subsequently become the basis of legitimation of the new social order.

The concept of legitimate order is crucial to Weber's analytical scheme. All conceivable factors would not be enough for "a system of imperative coordination" unless there is a *belief* in the existence of a legitimate order. This link between legitimacy and rationality has been explicated by Habermas in his reformulation of the Weberian concept of rationality.²⁰ Within the institutional framework of a society, there are subsystems in which sets of purposive rational actions are institutionalized while at the same time there are other subsystems such as family and kinship structures where affectual norms predominate. In the traditional societies, the institutional framework is legitimated by mythical, religious or metaphysical interpretations of

reality. Such a society would tolerate technical innovation and organizational development to the extent that its traditional bases of legitimacy are not called into question by the new forces. "Traditional societies exist as long as the development of subsystems of purposive-rational action keep within the limits of the legitimating efficacy of cultural traditions".

Capitalism, as the handmaiden of rationality, made possible for the first time in human history a continuous expansion of the subsystems of rational purposive action and thereby overturned the traditionalist superiority of the institutional framework to the forces of production. To the extent that technical advancement and science have invaded the traditional institutional framework and transformed them, the traditional form of legitimation has broken down. The capitalist mode of production has not only guaranteed a permanent expansion of the subsystems of rational action but also has created a new economic legitimation in place of the traditional one. This is the process of rationalization through which Weber perceived the uniqueness of Western civilization.

II. ORGANIZATION THEORY: THE NATURE OF ITS EVOLUTION

All the movements discussed in the last section, along with many others that could not be touched upon in this brief essay, have imperceptably and unmistakably driven modern societies to a rationalistic order. This is not to suggest that positivistic rationality has been the only ideological movement in the modern world. On the contrary, a counter ideology has been crystallizing since the turn of the nineteenth century in the form of romanticism. Its strands are as diverse as those of rationality, but its intellectual themes like glorification of the aesthetic, a philosophy of subjectivity, consciousness and creativity give it a thematic unity.²¹ What is suggested here is that despite occasional dissents, rationality is the dominant ideology in the modern societies. It is only natural that this dominance would permeate the field of modern organizations.

The Rationalistic Paradigm

Organization theory, since its early construct, has maintained a stable, rationalistic paradigm.²² The term paradigm is used here to mean the "entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on" held by the main-line organization theorists.²³ The term rationality as used in organization theory is hard to define. As an abstract principle, it is taken to be some-

what comprehensive that has to deal with both ends and means, facts and values; but when used in organizational context, it becomes partial, more concerned with means rather than ends.²⁴ This is essentially the position taken by Simon who designates operational efficiency as rationality. Efficiency "in its broadest sense" is rationality ; it "is implied in all rational behavior".²⁵ What is efficiency then ? According to Simon, the criterion of efficiency as applied to administrative decisions is strictly analogous to the concept of the maximization of utility in economics. Thus, he defines efficiency as "that choice of alternatives which produces the largest result for the given application of resources."²⁶ In other words, an organization is rational, that is, efficient when it can reduce the cost of inputs relative to that of the output.

As will be seen, by importing the concept of efficiency as operational surrogate for rationality, Simon was codifying the predominant ideas and beliefs about the rationale for organizations. Ever since the beginnings of modern organizations, efficiency has continued as the ideal to be achieved. Scott has traced the origin of the rationalistic paradigm to the particular nature of American political economy enshrining the values of growth, abundance and consensus.²⁷

In order to grow, an organization must create a surplus ; a surplus can be created by a lower cost of production, and finally, cost can be lowered by greater efficiency. Efficiency is not an end in itself, **but** is linked with the broader societal concerns of growth and abundance.

Efficiency/rationality is an ideal to be achieved : it is not something given and efforts must be made to achieve it. In other words, efficiency is a problem requiring solution. The problem is more acute in human organizations because (1) not all men are equally suited to perform all jobs, and (2) not all members of an organization have the similar perception about the organizational goals. The rationalistic paradigm of organization theory solves these problems by creating its own imperatives. It assigns the stewardship function for carrying out the organizational goals to a managerial class and ordains that class to achieve internal consensus as a necessary condition for success. The rationalistic paradigm takes for its practical ideal the goal of efficiency, achievable under the guidance of a managerial class and conditions of perfect harmony.

The main focus of this section is to reassert the position already taken by some that organization theory has maintained a stable paradigm over the many years of its evolution. The different theories of organization based

on different models of man deal with the means rather than the ends constituting the paradigm. The different models are articulated not to achieve goals different from the existing ones, but to achieve the same goals by somewhat different means.

NATURE OF EVOLUTION

Within the framework of rationality, organization theory evolved in stages in response to gradually unfolding requirements of an industrializing society. The division of this body of technology into classical, neo-classical and modern is for analytical purposes and is not intended to indicate mutually exclusive categories. Each of these signifies the dominance of a particular focus at a particular period of its development : the overshadowing of one focus by the other does not at all mean the total abandonment of the former by the latter. Each is vitally and logically related with the other in the gradual evolution of management thought.

Classical Theory

The classical theory of organization was born at the first stage of modernization of industry and bureaucracy in America. At that time, there was too much inefficiency and too little harmony in the plant. Government was getting bigger and bigger but with no corresponding improvement in its output. Taylor's own investigation showed him that for the unsatisfactory state of affairs both management and workers were to be blamed. "Workers loafed, but managers flopped, too ; they failed to provide incentives for work and efficient means to do work. If workers were naturally lazy at work, then managers were naturally lazy at management."²⁸

The classicists assumed that man is primarily motivated by economic incentives : therefore, the greater the prospect of economic gain, the greater the effort he would be willing to put in. This prospect could be made better by a "complemental revolution" on the part of both workers and management. The method of revolution propounded by Taylor was a method of science. Efficiency in industry consisted in discovering "the one best way" and this could be found only by a scientific study in place of rule of thumb. Structure or the anatomy of organization was the focus for the application of the methods of science. The goal of classical organization theory was the discovery of the principles of scientific management or the principles of administration. Time and motion study and the span of control were its inevitable outcome.

Neo-Classical Theory : Human Relations

The classical theory provided an answer to the emerging needs of a pre-industrial society. With rapid industrialization, new problems arose to which the classical doctrines proved inadequate. Classical organization theory postulated economic incentives as the chief motive for work in industry. The L-Iawthorne studies dramatically discovered that it was not money that mattered so much as the desire of the workers to stay close to their work group. Based on these experiments, a new model of man was conceived by the early industrial psychologists giving rise to the movement known as "human relations" in industry. This model of man is called social because the individual worker is believed to derive satisfaction from his social association with the work group. The social man perspective is articulated, among others, in the works of Mayo and Roethlisberger and Dickson. The Foundations of Mayo's social man theory began to be firmly laid out of his deep concern at "the developing social disorganization" accelerated in part by rapid scientific and technical advance.²⁹ High labor mobility and a clash of cultures had seriously damaged the traditional routine of intimate and family life in America. The old "established" society was decaying but new conditions, conducive to the emergence of "adaptive" society, were not being put into full play. This failure, Mayo ascribes to what he calls, the "rabble hypothesis" of economic theory that had been dominating management thought until his time. According to that hypothesis (1) society consist~of unorganized individuals, (2) every **individual** acts in a manner calculated to secure his self-interest, and (3) every individual thinks logically.

Mayo challenged all these assumptions. He pointed out that man is basically motivated by social needs and obtains his identity through groups. He further pointed out that most people do not think logically most of the time. They do so upon failure of social routines. Man is born morally neutral. Whatever man is, he is because of social conditioning. Man is guided in his action by socially sanctioned standards and not by his personally defined self-interest. Social association thus makes logical thinking unnecessary normally and a measure of last resort exceptionally. In this view, economic self-interest is an exception rather than the rule. Workers increase their output not in response to economic incentives, but in their desire "to stand well with (their) fellows."

Mayo and his associates believed that industrialization would lead to disintegration of traditional social groups like the family, village, community

and the religious groups. They predicted the disappearance of the intermediary bodies between the state and the individual as mass society evolved. Mayo visualized the plant as a new home providing social security to the atomized individual. The industrial plant thus forms the basic unit of analysis from the vantage point of a social system.

Neo-classical theory : Industrial Humanism

The human relations movement emphasized man's social needs as a measure of both human happiness and industrial productivity. Some industrial psychologists found this to be an inadequate appreciation of human motivation. They argue that worker dissatisfaction is not related so much to his social needs as to man's inherent drive for self-actualization. The coming of post-industrial society in America brought about an affluent society where men were no longer considered to be motivated by money alone or by proximity to his social group. Known as industrial humanists, these theorists drew heavily on the work of psychologist Abraham Maslow. Maslow held that human behavior in regard to work is motivated by a hierarchy of needs, in ascending order : physical, safety, social, egoistic, and self-actualization. A higher need does not provide motivation unless the lower needs are satisfied, and once a basic need is satisfied, it no longer motivates. Maslow describes self-actualization "as the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming ... what a man can be, he *must* be".³⁰

The traditional management theories view man as recalcitrant by nature and resistant to change. This, industrial humanists think, is long out of date and argue that workers' hostility toward management is not inherent in their personalities but is a reaction to the frustrating organizational environment. One of the notable industrial humanist, McGregor, is deeply concerned about the plight of the rank and file in organization but he does not dismantle the organization as such nor even its authority structure. He tells us that man cannot achieve his potential for personal development outside of a group-oriented society. As he emphasized : "The 'good society' whatever form it may take will be created only by organized human effort".³¹ Organizations are, therefore, a prerequisite to man's self-actualization because they are the only place where men make most of their sustained efforts. Following the intellectual lead from Maslow, a whole generation of theorists have devoted their attention to the design of organizations that will integrate the needs of the individuals with the goals of the organizations.

Modern Theory

The complexities and uncertainties characteristic of a post-industrial society have made the organizational revolution highly ambiguous and less comprehensible than earlier times. A number of researches have shown that none of the earlier theories fully explains the actual organizational phenomena.³² They indeed help to increase organizational effectiveness in some cases, but do not work at all at other times. These theories are considered to be too oversimplified to explain complex organizational phenomena. Positing one dominant characteristic such as rationality, sociability or self-actualization as the basic nature of man is vastly inadequate to capture the complexity of the situation he is required to handle. Such conceptualization becomes all the more vulnerable when environment is included in the frame of analysis. Some theorists have consequently drawn a vastly complex model of man that is capable of tackling a diverse task environment composed of both internal structures and external realities. This model rejects the idea of one best approach and emphasizes a fit between task, people and organization. A few of the notable constructs are discussed below.

Katz and Kahn build their theory on an open system framework taking a limited organic analogy.³³ Although organizations share the properties of an open system, they have properties of their own. For one thing, organizations are essentially contrived systems and not born. They consist of the patterned activities of a number of individuals. The contrived nature of human organizations and the unique properties of a structure consisting of acts rather than unchanging physical components make the control mechanisms crucial for the survival of the system.

Lawrence and Lorsch look at organizations from a systems perspective and try to identify the factors which make for effectiveness in different kinds of organizational environment. They do this by systematically building up the concepts of differentiation and integration and indicating the possible ways of managing them.³⁴

While the empirical reality is the fact of differentiation, the goal of organization remains effectiveness. This can be achieved by a process called integration—"a process of achieving unity of effort among the various sub-systems in the accomplishment of the organization task."³⁵ The authors, however, found that differentiation and integration are inversely related. They are essentially antagonistic, and the one can be obtained only at the cost of the other.

The fundamental problem for organization is in what ways it can meet the environmental demands for high differentiation and close integration if these two are, in fact, antagonistic. Lawrence and Lorsch indicate that organizations can be more effective when they meet environmental pressures and at the same time allow their members to achieve their individual goals. Differentiation, by its very nature, would lead to conflict and the success of an organization consequently depends on the mechanism of conflict resolution. The authors, however, do not suggest that there is one best way of conflict resolution. The highly differentiated and effective organization anticipates conflict and establishes integrating subsystem whose primary task is to work with the other subsystems in conflict. The integrating subsystem maintains a middle position between the departments in terms of their time, goal, interpersonal and structural orientations. This position leads to effective resolution not through simple compromise but rather through direct confrontation between the conflicting parties.

There is no one best way to achieve organizational effectiveness. Complex organizations are complex in more ways than just their structure. Among other things, effectiveness is contingent upon task, people, and organization, and their appropriate fit with each other.

III. THE RATIONALISTIC PARADIGM : THE FUTURE OUTLOOK

Herbert Marcuse has argued that the drive towards progressive rationalization leads to a one-dimensional society where “the web of domination has become the web of reason itself”.³⁶ The obsession for instrumental rationality limits choice to alternatives that are functional and removes the total social framework of interests from the scope of reflection. The choice is further conditioned by the possibility of technical control, whether of nature or of society. Technology becomes a language capable of supplanting other language games including the administration. It thus becomes a vehicle for reifications whose consequence is undetected service to the dominant values of the society.

ORGANIZATION THEORY AND POLITICS

One-dimensional thought in its all-pervasiveness has aided organization theory to hold on to its rationalistic paradigm. There are differences among the theorists on many substantive matters like nonnative concerns

and methodological issues but most of them converge on the fundamental goals. In a functionally rationalized society, organizations have been largely viewed "as essentially mobilizational instrumentalities" where human relations techniques are employed not for the purpose of increasing the inherent worth of man, but for increasing organization effectiveness.³⁷ The ideology of liberal capitalism, the virtual sway of positivism in the social sciences and the spurious plausibility of the "end of ideology" analysis further reinforced the instrumental nature of organization theory. In this kind of organizational analysis, politics is seen as irrelevant and excluded from consideration. Even in functionalist systems theory, the political system is not analytically isolated and summarily treated as part of the larger environment. The sublimation of politics to large-scale organizations was effected by submerging matters political "in favor of an emphasis on administration as a generic process susceptible to scientific study if freed from the trammels of political, value or moral dimensions."³⁸

The political sterility of organization theory buttresses and is buttressed by functional rationality. It not only engenders one-dimensionality but it is itself a mechanism for its perpetuation. In this sense, organization theory is a "technology of power". It is, therefore, not surprising that organization theory is a bulwark of ideological orthodoxy with very little possibility of internal subversion. That organization theory has been able to maintain its rationalistic paradigm ever since it began is an indication of internal consensus as regard its objectives. As, of now, there is little evidence to show that this consensus is in jeopardy by any work of any significant organization theorist.

ANTI-BUREAUCRATIC UTOPIAS : THE NEW PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The internal stability of organization theory, however, has been vulnerable to outside attacks. Its historical links with Public Administration have exposed it to the critique of the anti-bureaucratic utopia in particular and to the trammels of politics in general. In the last years, the conservatism of organization theory has been matched by severe changes in the general social situation of many advanced industrial countries. The changed general situation is often characterized by the phrase "politicization of administration."

Until the end of the Second World War, the politics-administration dichotomy was congruent with the tenets of liberal capitalism and political

pluralism. The operating **economic** principles of free market and competition were transposed into the political arena in the form of bargaining and compromise among the interest groups. Following the war, while the unreality of the politics-administration dichotomy in Public Administration was being assailed by a new generation of scholars, the New Deal expanded greatly the use of public administration as an instrument of social progress. The erosion of apolitical paradigm of Public Administration was followed by severe attacks on the chief values of pluralist democracy. The policy of maintenance of the political and social systems, acceptance of "the rules of game" in social interactions, use of limited and legal power only and negotiation and compromise as dominant and accepted methods of political action are increasingly questioned and violated; Politicization of administration reflects the change of functional **requirements** of political activity in modern capitalist societies.

While politicization had traumatic effects on Public Administration, it had limited impact on organization theory. Unperturbed by the outside developments, it concentrated on developing a truly management science. Organization theory could have successfully avoided being drawn into the political arena had the politicization of administration been a success as a strategy. The events of the 1960s showed the inadequacies of the American system to many radical critics who found organizations to be the chief villain for all social maladies. It is believed that the public realm in America is dominated by bureaucratic rule and that the most influential bureaucracy of all is the public bureaucracy. The failures of administration have largely been perceived as failures of organizations.

The significant attack on the paradigm of organization theory has come from the ranks of young Public Administrationists known as the "New Public Administration".³⁹ The main thrust of the movement has been recognized by many observers as utopian in the sense in which Mannheim used the concept.⁴⁰ The "New Public Administration" is utopian in as much as it addresses itself to problems in the existing order but the solutions go significantly beyond its present **framework**.⁴¹

The **themes** of the movement flowed from the central question : Knowledge for what? Analysis of the contemporary American situation revealed the pernicious impact of positivism, political and ethical neutrality, and rationality on the larger society. The movement, accordingly, tended to reject the belief that the scientific study of Public Administration qua organization theory could be conducted in an **ethically neutral context** and **asser-**

ted that normative values should be the principal concern of any such study. The 'New Public Administration' in so far as it identifies its concerns to be relevant to post-positivism, adopting to turbulence, new organizational forms and a client focus has both political and utopian orientation. It is political to the extent that it views the resolution of administrative difficulties as a problem in the restoration of authentic politics. The focus is not toward a rearrangement of the administrative state, for that would bolster the apolitical sterility of organization theory ; but the recreation of that state where interrelations between power, administration and public policy would lead to more social equity. The knowledge for what would not solely be answered by reference to the need for improvements in the technologies of organizations but also by an assessment of its impact on the human condition.

The utopian orientations of the new movement can be glimpsed from its attempted theory-building, however incomplete it may be. Hierarchy is rejected as a central organizing principle and in its place a new "conso-ciated" model is presented. Weberian legal-rational mode of bureaucracy is supplanted in favor of a phenomenological model. Professionalism, permanence, impersonality, routine and anonymity are replaced by such concepts as ambiguity, temporariness, multivalent authority, and authentic interpersonal relations as criteria for new organizational designs.

THE GROWTH PSYCHOLOGY AND RATIONALITY : THE REENFORCED PARADIGM

While the antibureaucratic utopias in general and the New Public Administration in particular had the portent of bringing about paradigm reformulation in organization theory, that just did not occur. Much of the power of organization theory to withstand the outside onslaught derives from the weaknesses of its adversaries.

The anti-bureaucratic utopias, indeed, have suggested alternatives but they are incomplete at their best. The question of knowledge for what does receive its proper attention in the utopias but only for a brief moment. The attention is further distorted by an ambivalence towards technology; they want its fruits but reject the means through which the goods and services are produced. In this respect the utopian tradition is no different from the industrial humanist tradition and it is no wonder that both should have been equally eclipsed by the forces they are assailing.

IV. IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS FOR TEACHING AND PRACTICE OF ORGANIZATION THEORY

A deeper understanding of the sociology of organization theory is important in designing curricula for teaching and in recommending techniques for increasing organizational efficiency in developing countries. Contrary to the tradition of Public Administration teaching in the West in general and America in particular, an unintended communication barrier has kept the academicians and the practitioners apart in many of the developing countries. This state of affairs is partly an inheritance from Comparative Public Administration when knowledge was sought for knowledge's sake. While American Public Administration has been overwhelmingly practitioner-oriented, Comparative Public Administration sought to build theories of development on the tradition of the grand theorists. It is not the intention here to argue that academic learning should not be a quest for knowledge for knowledge's sake. Indeed, it is essential to inform the students of Public Administration about all the technologies relating to the evolution of modern organizations as a general framework. This theoretical framework needs to be developed as an essential aid to the practice of some useful technologies in the context of one's own situation.

FOCUS OF TEACHING

What is being argued here is that Public Administration teaching, of which organization theory is a core technology, must have a focus. It ought to be a focus of broad relevance and applicability. Public Administration teaching cannot be an esoteric academic pursuit only : it has to make itself valuable to its large student community by making these teachings amenable to meaningful practice. In order to bring that focus particularly in the teaching of organization theory, there is a need for a total restructuring of the curriculum of the subject. It will also need a reorientation in the treatment of the subject by the concerned instructors effected through a proper appreciation of the field in terms of the assumptions, basic values, tradition and ideology surrounding a body of technology.

Such a focus and reorientation in the teaching of organization theory in developing countries will demand attention to the following issues at the least.

First, the unquestioned acceptance of organization theory as a neutral tool capable of being used in any culture must be abandoned. **The pre-**

sent study has amply demonstrated that organizations are not neutral instruments but are created to serve specific purpose under distinct cultural milieu. While it is useful to know about the development of a technology, there ought to be incisive scrutiny about its replicability in another culture. Nothing should be taken for granted.

Second, while it is true that technology is culture-bound and so is organization theory, it would be absurd and simplistic to cast aside the accumulated knowledge just on that ground. There are components of a technology that can more or less be used across cultures. Organization technologies relating to methods, standards or procedures are the ones that have been transferred with the least resistance for administrative improvement. The O & M techniques, fiscal and budgetary procedures are now integral part of administrative culture of many countries. Currently techniques and procedures relating to project management are being widely used in many developing countries. All concerned with Public Administration teaching should be able to identify the hard core from the soft for treatment of technologies according to clientele needs.

Third, it is important to recognize that organization theory has developed in stages, each successive stage meeting the inadequacies of a previous one. It has thus developed from a relatively simpler to a more complex level of technology. This development is continuous and not exponential. In other words, there was no jump from classical to modern theory. In the circumstances of the evolution of organization theory in America, it was not possible either. As has already been shown, the development of this theory has been a function of the development of industrial and post-industrial society in America. If this evolution as a case study has any relevance for developing countries, it is this : consideration of any segment of organization theory for application to a country or to any particular organization should take into account the level of development of that particular subject. First thing must be done first. Structure is the basis of any organization. If there is no sound structure, there cannot be any process. Organizational deficiencies in many developing countries relate to the structural defects : in such a situation, OD techniques may not be of much avail. The teaching of organization theory is bedeviled by many stereotypes or reifications. Siffin has talked about the sub-optimization and formalism affecting the efficacy of organizational technology.⁴¹ What kind of intervention will produce the desired outcome will depend upon a perfect fit between level of development and level of technology.

Fourth, it is worth remembering that organization theory is a "technology of power". It is an instrument in the hands of its creators. It can be used for good or eternal evil. These technologies are intended to create conditions to bring about rationality in organizations, to increase their efficiency and effectiveness. Organizational interventions, however, require behavior changes or shifts in the existing power structure. But it is beyond the capacity of an organizational expert to initiate those changes or shifts. The regime elites and vested interests will not let these interventions succeed if these jeopardize their interests too severely. A knowledge of organizational technology must be moderated by a knowledge of institutional dynamics of a particular country. While known western organizational technology may not be immediately installed, there will be opportunities for trying less threatening methods on an incremental basis. The faith about the efficacy of a given organizational technology should not be technocratic : it ought to be judged in the context of the political economy of the country.

INTERACTION BETWEEN TEACHING AND PRACTICE

All this talk about the focus of teaching is meaningless unless the things taught at the academic institutions are tested in the field. This need is urgent and inevitable. If organizational study aims at increasing our understanding of organizational dynamics and equipping us with the necessary skills for increasing organizational effectiveness, there is no alternative to a constant and purposive interaction between its teaching and practice. As has amply been demonstrated in this paper, American organization theory cannot be a substitute for theories tested and developed in individual developing countries. What is true in the development of that theory on the soils of America do not most of the time hold good for most of the developing countries.

The benefit of the American organization theory for developing countries is that it offers a storehouse of ideas or hypotheses that need to be tried and tested. Formulation of hypotheses is a long way forward in the making of relevant theories and this opportunity should not be missed through benign neglect. There is an urgent need to link researchers with practitioners for applied research on organization. This essential linkage will foster joint programmes, engender common methods based on comparative experience, help incorporate tested organizational practices and adopt them by trial and error to specific local conditions. It is through this mutually beneficial and co-operative enterprise that we can hope to invent technologies for the organizations of our societies.

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