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Improving Leadership: Analyzing and Managing Organizational Phenomena by Reframing

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The structural perspective is not always wrong or unwanted

In studies by Möller (1968), it was seen that morale and ethics were higher in a highly structured school compared to a loosely structured school, with high participation

Therefore;

- the form of structure is as important as the tightness of it

- there are "good" and "bad" rules

- strong structures support high morale, if they are seen to help attain goals: they are seen as negative, if they are obstacles for work or they are seen to foster control by administration

The assumptions of structural frame: creating a model of roles, tasks and relations in order to accomplish goals in the best possible way

Basic assumptions:

1. Organizations exist to achieve goals

2. Organizations increase efficiency through specialization and a clear division of labor

3. Structures need to be designed to fit the circumstances (goals, technology, workforce)

Basic assumptions – cont.:

4. Appropriate forms of control and coordination ensure that diverse efforts of individuals and and units mesh

5. Organizations work best when rationality prevails over personal preferences and extraneous pressures

6. Problems and performance gaps arise from structural deficiencies and can be "cured' by restructuring

Working with Different Frames

The assumptions you hold about an organization influence how you assess its performance, what you look at, and what you think needs to be changed

Structural Frame

Organizations should:

- Have clear lines of communication
- Have a specified chain of command
- Have rules for all decisions
- Focus on impersonal decision-making
- Authority should be assigned to a position
- Job descriptions should be specific and no one should do work outside of that description

From a structural paradigm:

- Teams represent a problem in terms of clarity of roles, responsibility and authority
- Collaboration across work units is problematic if the chain of command is no longer clear
- E-mail is a problem because people can communicate with anyone without approval, clearance or following the chain of command

From a structural paradigm:

- Conflict represents poor communication or problems in the structural elements of the organization

- Change should be resisted if it upsets established operating procedures and routines

- Informal authority and power outside the structure are problems

Structural Frame

- Works best when you are dealing with a stable environment and routine work
- Works worst when you are dealing with a rapidly changing environment and non-routine work, where adaptability and flexibility are essential

Organizations attempt to coordinate and control in two ways

1) <u>Vertically</u> through authority, rules, policies and control
   - likely to be significant when the environment is stable and the task well understood

2) <u>Laterally</u> through meetings, task forces, special coordinating roles, matrix structures and networks
   - are less formal, more flexible than authority-bound systems

The roles and tasks of structure

1. Structures support goal-attainment

2. Structures minimise the variation caused by people; people merely fulfil organizational objectives – not the other way around

3. Organizational power is channelled in structures; structures determine the decision-making structure (especially by the flow of information)

The main themes of structure - 1

A. Complexity

-   horizontal division of labor; work performed by single experts – number of departments

-   vertical division of labor; depth of hierarchies

The main themes of structure - 2

B. Formality

- rules, norms, guidelines, punch-cards, career-paths

- hierarchical decision-making

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The main themes of structure - 3

C. Centralization –
delegation/decentralization

- the role of power and decision-making in the organization

- the organizational power politics as a guiding principle

Leadership in the structural frame

Effective leadership		Ineffective leadership	
Leader	Leadership style	Leader	Leadership style
Analyst	Analysis	Petty	Management by details
Architect	Designing	Tyrant	and orders
of work	work		

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MOTTO:
Machiavelli about change in the book Prince (1514):

Nothing is so hard to plan,
there is nothing so uncertain to succeed in,
and there is nothing else so dangerous to execute
than **reorganizing** things.

Because he, who presents the change to happen,
makes enemies with all those who benefit from the
old system, and receives only mild support from those
who benefit from the new system.

Discussion:

Where and how have you detected the structural frame in education?

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