

Educational Administration

THEORY

RESEARCH

and

PRACTICE

Third Edition

WAYNE K. HOY
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EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Theory, Research, and Practice

Third Edition

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Preface

Our first and second editions reflected the current state of knowledge in educational administration. The books grew from our beliefs that a substantive body of knowledge about educational organizations was available but neglected by both professors and practitioners and that administrative practice could become less of an art and more of a science. To those ends we used a social-systems perspective to synthesize the structure and recurring processes of educational organizations.

In this revision we have described the relevant new developments in the field, both fresh concepts and recent research findings. Elaboration of concepts and empirical applications should help unravel day-to-day behavior in educational organizations. Our social-systems model of the school continues its evolution. In recognition of the importance of the environmental forces on educational organizations, the framework now more fully incorporates the environment and recognizes the significance of organizational goals as a basic element of the school as a social system. The model is also expanded to deal with irrational and nonrational aspects of organizational behavior. To this end, an analysis of organizational culture, as well as the symbolic and cultural aspects of leadership, has been included. Similarly, new conceptualizations and measures of school climates; new models for coping with stress, involving subordinates in decision making, and avoiding groupthink; and the decision-making strategies of maximizing, satisficing, and incrementally comparing are presented and examined. Finally, new perspectives on careers in education, administrative succession, and bureaucracy have been added to this edition.

Our colleagues and students continue to be important sources of ideas and constructive criticism. We would like to thank Patrick Forsyth, C. J. Tarter, Robert Kottkamp, Jim Giarelli, Adam Scrupski, Hal Robins, Richard Hatley, Betty Malen, Rodney Ogawa, Ann Hart, Michael Murphy, and Donald J. Willower. We also want to express our appreciation to Ellen Blanford, who made extensive contributions to the preparation of the manuscript.

In the first two editions, Bryce Fogarty made extensive and valuable contributions; we are saddened by the loss of a respected and thoughtful colleague.

Finally, we owe a special thanks to all our students who have helped enrich the explanations and ground the theories with their experiences.

WAYNE K. HOY
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Chapter 1

Theoretical and Historical Foundations

Although we set out primarily to study reality, it does not follow that we do not wish to improve it; we should judge our researches to have no worth at all if they were to have only a speculative interest. If we separate carefully the theoretical from the practical problems, it is not to the neglect of the latter; but, on the contrary, to be in a better position to solve them.

EMILE DURKHEIM
The Division of Labor in Society

The science of educational administration is as new as the modern school; the one-room schoolhouse of rural America did not need specialized administrators. Systematic study of administration and development of theories of organization and administration are twentieth-century phenomena. Before exploring the theoretical and historical foundations of educational administration, however, we need a basic understanding of what theory is in the scientific sense. Consequently, we begin the chapter by defining theory and science, delineating the major components of theory, and discussing the interrelationships among theory, research, and practice.

THEORY: A SCIENTIFIC CONCEPT

Much of the skepticism about theory is based on the assumption that educational administration is incapable of becoming a science, a skepticism that has plagued all social sciences. Theory in the natural sciences, on the other hand, has attained respectability not only because it necessarily involves precise description, but also because it describes ideal phenomena that “work” in practical applications.

Most people think that scientists deal with facts, whereas philosophers

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delve into theory. Indeed, to many individuals, including educational administrators, facts and theories are antonyms; that is, facts are real and their meanings self-evident, whereas theories are speculations or dreams. Theory in educational administration, however, has the same role as theory in physics, chemistry, or biology; that is, providing general explanations and guiding research.

Science and Theory Defined

The purpose of all science is understanding the world in which we live and work. Scientists describe what they see, discover regularities, and formulate theories.¹ Organizational science attempts to describe and explain regularities in behavior of individuals and groups within organizations. Organizational scientists seek basic principles that provide a general understanding of structure and dynamics of organizational life, a task that we are just beginning in educational administration.²

Some researchers view science as a static, interconnected set of principles that explains the universe in which we live. We view science as a dynamic process of developing, through experimentation and observation, an interconnected set of principles that in turn produces further experimentation and observation.³ In this view the basic aim of science is to find general explanations, called “theories.” Theory has a central role in science.

As the ultimate aim of science, theory has acquired a variety of definitions. Some agreement is apparent in the field of educational administration that the definition of theory produced by Herbert Feigl is an adequate starting point.⁴ Feigl defines theory as a set of assumptions from which a larger set of empirical laws can be derived by purely logicomathematical procedures. Fred N. Kerlinger’s more general definition of the term seems more useful for the social sciences. He suggests that, “A theory is a set of interrelated constructs (concepts), definitions, and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting phenomena.”⁵

In the study of educational administration, the following definition of theory seems most useful: *Theory is a set of interrelated concepts, assumptions, and generalizations that systematically describes and explains regularities in behavior in educational organizations.* Moreover, hypotheses may be derived from the theory to predict additional relationships among the concepts in the system.

This definition suggests three things. First, theory is logically comprised of concepts, assumptions, and generalizations. Second, its major function is to describe, explain, and predict regularities in behavior. Third, theory is heuristic; that is, it stimulates and guides the further development of knowledge.

Theories are by nature general and abstract; they are not true or false but rather useful or not. Theories are useful to the extent that they are internally consistent and generate accurate predictions about events. Albert Einstein, one

of the greatest theorists of all times, captures the essence of theorizing in the following quotation:

In our endeavor to understand reality we are somewhat like a man trying to understand the mechanism of a closed watch. He sees the face and the moving hands, even hears its ticking, but he has no way of opening the case. If he is ingenious he may form some picture of a mechanism which could be responsible for all the things he observes, but he may never be quite sure his picture is the only one which could explain his observations. He will never be able to compare his picture with the real mechanism, and he cannot even imagine the possibility of the meaning of such a comparison.⁶

COMPONENTS OF THEORY

The nature of the theory can be better understood by looking at the meanings of each of the components of theory and how they are related to one another.

Concepts

A concept is a term that has been given an abstract, generalized meaning. A few examples of concepts in administration are leadership, satisfaction, and informal organization. Scientists invent concepts that help them study and analyze a given phenomenon systematically. In other words, they invent a language to describe behavior in the real world. Two important advantages are derived from defining theoretical concepts.⁷ First, theorists, researchers, and practitioners can agree on the meaning of such terms. Second, their abstractness and generality ensures that the concepts are independent of any spatial or temporal setting.

Although concepts are by definition abstract, different levels of abstraction are used.⁸ Examples of terms arranged along an abstract to concrete continuum are presented in Table 1.1. Generally speaking, terms that are specific to a particular time or place are concrete and are less useful in developing theories. Most concepts, generalizations, and theories discussed in this book are in the “middle range,” that is, they are somewhat limited in scope rather than all-embracing.

A concept can be defined in at least two ways. First, it may be defined in

TABLE 1.1 A Continuum and Examples of the Abstraction Levels of Scientific Concepts

| <i>Abstract</i> | <i>Middle Range</i> | <i>Concrete</i> |
|-----------------|---------------------|---|
| Social system | School | Crockett Junior High School |
| Attitudes | Student attitudes | Seventh graders' perceptions of teachers in Crockett Junior High School |

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terms of other words or concepts. For instance, we might define permissiveness as the degree to which a teacher employs a relaxed mode of pupil control; that is, permissive is defined in terms of “relaxedness.” Although this kind of definition may provide one with a slightly better understanding of the term, it is inadequate from a scientific point of view. The researcher must be able to define the concept in measurable terms. A set of operations or behaviors that has been used to measure a concept is its operational definition. For example, an operational definition of permissiveness might be the number of hall passes a teacher issues per day. This definition is limited, clear, and concise. The concept is the specific set of operations measured. IQ is the standard operational definition of intelligence, and dogmatism typically is operationalized in terms of Rokeach’s Dogmatism Scale.⁹ Operationalism mandates that the procedures involved in the relation between the observer and the measures for observing be explicitly stated so that they can be duplicated by any other equally trained researcher.¹⁰

A concept that has an operational definition is often referred to as a variable. In fact, many researchers and scientists loosely use the terms “concept” and “variable” to refer to the same thing. Technically, the term “variable” refers to any symbol to which numerical values are assigned. Variables are thus concepts that have operational measures and take on different values.

Assumptions and Generalizations

An assumption is a statement that is taken for granted or accepted as true. Assumptions, accepted without proof, are not necessarily self-evident. In many instances they are definitional in character. For example, Daniel E. Griffiths offers the following two assumptions concerning administration:

1. Administration is a generalized type of behavior found in all human organizations.
2. Administration is the process of directing and controlling life in a social organization.¹¹

These two assumptions are taken for granted with little proof. The second is a definition of administration.

A generalization is a statement or proposition that indicates the mutual relationship of two or more concepts. In other words, a generalization links concepts in a meaningful fashion. Many kinds of generalizations are found in theoretical formulation: Assumptions are generalizations if they specify the relationship among two or more concepts; hypotheses are generalizations with limited empirical support (see below); principles are generalizations with substantial empirical support; and laws are generalizations with an overwhelming degree of empirical support (more than principles). Depending on the level of empirical support, the same generalization, at different stages of theory and research development, can be a hypothesis, principle, or law.

RESEARCH AND THEORY

Research is inextricably related to theory; therefore, many of the misconceptions and ambiguities surrounding theory are reflected in the interpretation of the meaning and purpose of research. Kerlinger provides us with the following clear definition: "Scientific research is systematic, controlled, empirical, and critical investigation of hypothetical propositions about the presumed relations among natural phenomena."¹² This definition suggests that research is guided by hypotheses that are empirically checked against observations about reality in a systematic and controlled way. Furthermore, the results of such tests are then open to critical analyses by other researchers.

Haphazard observations followed by the conclusion that the facts speak for themselves do not qualify as scientific research; in fact, such unrefined empiricism can distort reality and does not lead to the systematic development of knowledge. Well-conceived surveys of a broad field for the express purpose of developing hypotheses are at times useful starting points in terms of hypothesis and theory development; ultimately, however, knowledge in any discipline is expanded by research that is guided by hypotheses that are derived from theory.

Hypotheses

A *hypothesis* is a conjectural statement that indicates a relationship between at least two variables. Several examples of different kinds of hypotheses illustrate this point.

- H-1. As group cohesiveness increases, its impact on members increases.
- H-2. Principals who are described as being high on consideration will have faculties with higher morale than principals who are described as being low on consideration.
- H-3. Satisfaction is a function of the congruence between the demands of the organization and the needs of the individual.
- H-4. Teachers with principals who maintain emotional detachment tend to be more loyal than teachers with principals who are excitable.
- H-5. If teacher-administrator relationships are strongly positive, then task-oriented supervision will be more effective than human relations supervision.

Several observations can be made about these hypotheses. First, each hypothesis specifies the relationship between at least two variables. Second, each clearly and concisely describes that relationship. Third, the variables of each hypothesis are such that each could be empirically tested. For example, H-4 expresses the relationship between two variables, emotional detachment of principals and loyalty of teachers. Principals who maintain emotional detach-

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ment in their dealings with teachers are predicted to have more loyal teachers than principals who are easily excited. Emotional detachment is measured by the extent to which principals are described by their teachers as being calm and never losing their tempers, whereas loyalty of teachers is determined by testing the degree to which teachers admire, trust, respect, and are willing to follow the principal.

Hypotheses bridge the gaps between theory and research and provide a means to test the theory against observed reality. Hypotheses developed to test theory are deduced directly from the theory. For example, hypothesis H-3 can be deduced from the social systems theory described in Chapter 3. Typically, hypotheses are on a lower level of abstraction than the theoretical generalizations from which they are deduced. Their confirmation in empirical research supports the usefulness of the theory as an explanation. The hypothesis is the researcher's bias; if it is deduced from a theory, the investigator expects that it will be supported by data. If the hypothesis is not supported by data, then the theory is inadequate and must be reformulated or refined. Hypothesis testing as a part of the theory-research process is essential to the development of knowledge in any field of study.

The basic form of knowledge in all disciplines is similar; it consists of concepts, generalizations, and theories, each being dependent on the one preceding it.¹³ Figure 1.1 summarizes the basic components of theory that are necessary to the development of knowledge. It shows that concepts are eventually linked together into generalizations that in turn form a logically consistent set of propositions providing generalizations that in turn form a logically consistent set of propositions providing a general explanation of a phenomenon (a theory). The theory is then empirically checked by the development and testing of hypotheses deduced from the theory. The results of the research then provide the data for accepting, rejecting, reformulating, or refining and clarifying the basic generalizations of the theory. Over time, with continued empirical support and evidence, the generalizations develop into principles and laws that explain the phenomenon. In the case of organizational theory, principles and laws are developed to explain the structure and dynamics of organizations. Theory is both the beginning and the end of scientific research. On one hand, theory serves as the basis for generating hypotheses to test verifiable propositions that describe and predict observable empirical phenomena. On the other hand, the ultimate objective of all scientific endeavor is to develop a body of substantive theory.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

Theory is directly related to practice in at least three ways. First, theory forms a frame of reference for the practitioner. Second, the process of theorizing provides a general mode of analysis of practical events. And, third, theory guides practical, rational decision making.

Theory gives practitioners the analytic tools needed to sharpen and focus

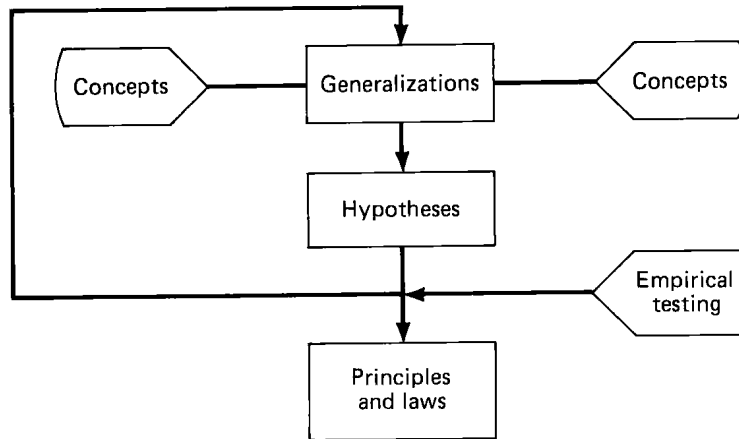


FIGURE 1.1 Theoretical system

their analysis of the problems they face.¹⁴ The administrator so armed can develop alternative solutions to pragmatic problems. Administrators themselves maintain that the most important qualification for their jobs is the ability to use concepts. It is a mistake, however, to assume that the ability to label aspects of a problem by using theoretical constructs from sociology or psychology automatically provides a solution to a problem. Designating a problem as one of role conflict, goal displacement, or anxiety reduction, for instance, does not in itself solve the problem; it may, however, organize the issues so that a reasonable plan of action can emerge.

The theory-practice relationship goes beyond using the concepts and constructs of theorists to label the important aspects of a problem. The scientific approach provides a way of thinking about events for both theorists and practitioners alike. Indeed, the scientific approach is the very embodiment of rational inquiry, whether the focus is theoretical analysis and development, a research investigation, organizational decision making, or problem solving at the personal level. A good general description of this approach is found in John Dewey's analysis, *How We Think*.¹⁵ The process involves identifying a problem, conceptualizing it, proposing generalizations in the form of hypotheses that provide answers to the problems, deducing the consequences and implications of the hypotheses, and testing the hypotheses.

Some differences do exist in the specific ways that theorists, researchers, and practitioners implement and use the scientific approach, but the differences are a matter of degree of rigor and level of abstraction rather than approach. Theorists operate on a higher level of abstraction and generality than researchers, who test hypotheses. Practitioners, in turn, operate on an even lower level of abstraction than researchers because they are primarily concerned with specific problems and events in their organizations.

Similarly, theorists and researchers typically use the scientific approach more rigorously than practitioners and for good reason. Theorists usually preface their propositions with the phrase "other things being equal," and research-

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ers control all other variables except those under study. In contrast, practitioners function in the real world, where other things typically are not equal and all variables are not controllable. Practitioners are constrained by their position, responsibilities, authority, and the immediacy of their problems. Although they do not abandon the scientific approach, practitioners are forced to be more flexible in applying it. For example, educational administrators are probably less concerned than theorists or researchers with generalizability, that is, the extent to which their solutions work for other administrators in other districts. Nonetheless, the approach of theorists, researchers, and thoughtful practitioners is basically the same; it is a systematic and scientific one. One final relationship between theory and practice needs to be mentioned. We can define administration as both the art and the science of applying knowledge to administrative and organizational problems. Such a definition implies that administrators have access to knowledge needed for making decisions. Without theory, however, there is virtually no foundation for knowledge, for the meaningful research that provides information presupposes a theory. Unfortunately, theory and research in educational administration continue to make only modest gains at best. Halpin's biting criticism that books on education, especially those on educational administration, "ooze with verbal slush" points to the lack of substantial knowledge in the field.¹⁶ If educational administration is to become more of a science, then the practical decisions and actions of administrators must be based on knowledge.

Administrative theory does influence practice. Over the last eighty years, the evolution of administrative science can be divided into three general phases: (1) classical organizational thought (1900), (2) human relations approach (1930), and (3) behavioral science approach (1950). These phases, shown in Table 1.2, overlap and continue to develop today.

CLASSICAL ORGANIZATIONAL THOUGHT

Frederick Taylor, the father of the scientific management movement, sought ways to use people effectively in industrial organizations. Taylor's background and experience as laborer, clerk, machinist, foreman, chief draftsman, and finally, chief engineer reinforced his belief that individuals could be programmed to be efficient machines. The key to the scientific management approach is the metaphor of "man as machine."

TABLE 1.2 The Development of Administrative Science, 1900–Present

| <i>Beginnings</i> | <i>Developmental Phases of Administrative Science</i> | <i>Pioneers</i> |
|-------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| 1900 | Classical Organization | Taylor, Fayol, Gulick, Urwick |
| 1930 | Human Relations | Follett, Mayo, Roethlisberger |
| 1950 | Behavioral Science | Barnard, Simon |

Taylor and his associates thought that workers, motivated by economics and limited by physiology, needed constant direction. In 1911, Taylor formalized his ideas in *Principles of Scientific Management*, a few excerpts of which reveal the flavor of his managerial theory.

1. *A Large Daily Task*—Each person in the establishment, high or low, should have a clearly defined daily task. The carefully circumscribed task should require a full day's effort to complete.
2. *Standard Conditions*—The worker should be given standardized conditions and appliances to accomplish the task with certainty.
3. *High Pay for Success*—High pay should be tied to successful completion.
4. *Loss in Case of Failure*—Failure should be personally costly.
5. *Expertise in Large Organizations*—As organizations become increasingly sophisticated, tasks should be made so difficult as to be accomplished only by a first-rate worker.¹⁷

Taylor and his followers—the human engineers—focused on physical production, and their time and motion studies sought workers' physical limits and described the fastest method for performing a given task.

1. The two hands should begin and end motions simultaneously.
2. Arm movements should be simultaneous and made in opposite and symmetrical directions.
3. Smooth, continuous hand motions are preferable to zigzag or straight-line motions involving sudden or sharp changes in direction.
4. Tools, materials, and controls should be close to and in front of the operator.
5. Tools should be combined whenever possible.¹⁸

Although Taylor's work had a narrow physiological focus and ignored psychological and sociological variables, he demonstrated that many jobs could be performed more efficiently. He also helped the unskilled worker by improving productivity enough to raise the pay of unskilled labor nearly to that of skilled.¹⁹

In a similar vein, traditional or classical organizational thought, often called *administrative management theory*, concentrates on the broad problems of departmental division of work and coordination. While Taylor's human engineers worked from the individual worker upward, the administrative managers worked from the managing director downward. Their focuses were different, but their contributions complemented one another.

Henri Fayol, like Taylor, took a scientific approach to administration. Fayol was a French mining engineer and successful executive who later taught administration. According to Fayol, administrative behavior consists of five functions, which he defined as: