

Schools bureaucratic organizations



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16." D" Schools tend to be bureaucratic organizations. What does this Mean?

Why is Max Weber an important name to know when

Discussing bureaucratic organizations? What are some benefits

and some disadvantages of schools as bureaucratic organizations? Why are

many of the characteristics of Weber's ideal bureaucracy still used in

school's today? In what ways is your current school a bureaucratic

organization?

Bureaucratic Organizations are characterized by numerous attributes, a few of the major points are: a detailed hierarchy of leadership, a clear set of rules formally applied, a workforce of full-time, life time employees, whose salaries are not a product of their performance. Typically bureaucratic organizations were government agencies; however, political parties, churches, educational institutions, and private businesses have become bureaucratic organizations.

Max Weber wrote his doctoral dissertation on business organizations and then later wrote. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* . " In this work, Weber argued that religion was one of the non-exclusive reasons for the different ways the cultures of the Occident and the Orient have developed, and stressed importance of particular characteristics of ascetic Protestantism which led to the development of capitalism, bureaucracy and the rational-legal state in the West." (Wikipedia, Max Weber) Weber is considered as one of the originators of modern sociology.

Advantages of having a bureaucracy in schools today are the hierarchy of leadership and formally applied rules. Leadership is an important and necessary element in schools. Without consistent leadership and rules, the

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school will become chaotic. “ Weber speaks of ‘ credentialism’, the preoccupation evident in modern societies with formal educational qualifications. All these things - credentials, fixed salary, tenure, stability of staffing, Weber incorporates into his ideal type. They are all required, he believes, for the efficient functioning of an administrative machine.”

(Kilcullen, John, Max Weber: On Bureaucracy) However the previous points also become some of the disadvantages of a school being a bureaucratic organization. These points become the reason you have full-time, life-time employees being paid a sizeable salary that is not a product of their performance; thus allowing employees to continue working, even though the employees are no longer productive to the organization. Another disadvantage of the bureaucratic organization is the excessive paper trail that is mandatory but keeps the educational process from happening at all or changing to fit the needs of students.

Weber’s ideas on the modern bureaucrat (educator/administrator) is a permanent professional; this requires a sufficient salary and job security, otherwise people will not stay in the job. Unless they do stay in the job, the organization will not be efficient. It takes time and experience to learn the job, not so much because it is difficult to perform the particular task, but because it all has to be coordinated. A complex division of labor requires constancy of staff. Due to the nature of bureaucratic work, and also perhaps because of the significance of training and coordination in the job, the bureaucracy (educator/administrator) wants trained recruits. Their education will be attested by some certificate. Since School Systems are governed by

the State, (yet another bureaucratic organization) more certifications, paper work and rules are stipulated. (Kilcullen, John, Max Weber: On Bureaucracy)

My school is a bureaucratic organization in all the points discussed previously. We have all the advantages and disadvantages. It has become such a problem, that board policies are inhibiting educational possibilities from happening due to their 10 day notice rule. Some educational situations are spontaneous, they do not give a ten day notice and since we cannot “bend the rules” for particular situations; these opportunities are just passed by. Students are the only ones being hurt by these bureaucrat decisions.