Bureaucracies

Sociology

BUREAUCRACIES [Insert al Affiliation] The contemporary society is dominated by colossal and impersonal secondary organizations. As many organizations continue to mushroom, mainly to take advantage of the growing global economy and amass profits, people continuously see what max weber idealized as bureaucratic organizations. However, people are complaining about the bureaucratization of organizations on the grounds that they are unfriendly, slow in responding to issues, highly bound by rules and often difficult to navigate. According to max weber, a bureaucracy is a formal organization that has explicit rules, has a hierarchy of authority, is impersonal, and has specialization (Johnston, 2010). In lieu of this, therefore, present-day large companies such Facebook, Amazon, or General Motors can to a certain extent be considered to be bureaucracies as they contain and portray most of the features of what Weber idealized as a bureaucracy.

As bureaucracies, these companies have a hierarchy of authority where there is a chain of common to be followed (Rubin, 1986). While departmentalization has also been common in these companies, powers are vested on offices where seniors in those offices have the authority and power to supervise and control the juniors. For instance, employees in these companies are assigned duties by the shift manager who in turn answers to the store manager who also answers to the regional manager. The chain continues until it reaches the CEO who is in turn answerable to the board of directors who eventually answer to shareholders. In these companies, this chain of command is observed, and decisions must rightly be channeled. Large organizations can also be perceived to be bureaucratic as they practice division of labor and specialization. Each individual performs the tasks they are specialized in (Johnston, 2010). Apparently,

departmentalization has made specialization real as you will find the production departments engaging only in production while the marketing and procurement departments engaging only in marketing and procurement respectively. This is an important feature of bureaucracies and all large companies including Facebook, Amazon, or General Motors endorse it. What's more, these companies, as bureaucracies, have explicit rules that guide conduct of employees. For instance, General Motors, like many other large companies, has a handbook of the rules and regulations that stipulate how employees are expected to conduct themselves in the course of duties. All official functions are continuously organized and bound by certain rules whole violation leads to dire consequences on the part of the violators. However, large companies today lack impersonality and meritocracy that makes it hard to consider them as purely bureaucratic. Impersonality requires that individual feelings are excluded in professional dealings. Disparagingly, large companies have often been observed operating in a way that portrays nepotism and favoritism by taking into consideration personal feelings and experiences. In Facebook, for instance, when an employee is absent may be due to illness or other emergencies, some managers have often been seen being more concerned with the subjects' sickness or situation instead of only being concerned with the fact that they are absent. Similarly, meritocracy requires that promotion and hiring be grounded on verified/supported and documented abilities and experience (Johnston, 2010). However, in many companies, people are hired or promoted based on nepotism, the CEO's random choice, and economic or political affiliation while their competency is overlooked. This has been a challenge that has hampered efficiency and the attainment of equal opportunities for all.

In conclusion, large companies can be considered to be bureaucracies as they have explicit rules, have hierarchy of authority, and specialization. However, they lack impersonality and meritocracy that make it hard to consider them as pure bureaucracies.

References

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