

Chart henri fayol and weber max essay



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This assignment will compare and contrast the theoretical perspectives of management theorists Henri Fayol, Frederick Winslow Taylor, and Max Weber. Each of the three theorists had a unique view on public administration and policy. This assignment will briefly show the back ground and basic concept of each theory. Then the assignment will delve into each of the theories to determine how each theory stacks up against one another when they are laid side by side.

The development of Taylor's theory of scientific management began with his first encounter with workers as an " executive trainee. That encounter reveals that his priorities were not with the worker, but instead with management. Taylor himself " associated" the encounter with the " beginning of scientific management. " In this incident, Taylor sought to increase the productivity of the workers (specifically the machinists), a focus of most of his theory. He considered their output low and unacceptable, and a result of the failings of both the factory system and the work methods of workers.

He fired some men, lowered others' wages, installed a piecework-based system notorious still today in sweatshops, and tried to institute a " fining system . . . to punish men who broke tools or spoiled work" (Nelson, 1980, pp. 33-34). Taylor came out of this encounter with the view that management was not strong or organized enough to institute whatever approaches it deemed necessary to increase productivity and profit for the factory owners. Many of his contributions certainly aided the work of the laborer: The majority of his inventions pertained to the operation of metal-cutting machines.

They included a tool grinder, machine tool table, a chuck, a tool-feeding device for lathes, a work carrier for lathes, a boring-bar puppet, and two boring and turning mills (Nelson, 1980, p. 37). Beyond the practical advances these mechanical innovations brought, they also led in a sense to scientific management: “ Taylor, the consummate engineer, soon discovered that technical advance demanded organizational innovations of comparable significance” (Nelson, 1980, p. 7). Fayol emphasized management innovations more than Taylor did, and Taylor focused more on workers, but Taylor also saw that management needed increased power to institute the changes he advocated for the workers: “ Taylor adopted the authoritarian style characteristic of late-nineteenth-century executives” (Nelson, 1980, p. 39). Taylor focused increasingly on the relationship between mechanical improvements and efficient management.

This focus inevitably led to centralized control of the factory operation, a method that increased the power and authority of management and weakened the worker’s power to do anything to help himself: Taylor’s most ambitious initiative was a complicated production control system for coordinating the work of the functional departments. The “ chief idea” . . . was that “ authority for doing all kinds of work should proceed from one central office” (Nelson, 1980, p. 40). An important part of Taylor’s ideas in this area was an attack on the power of the foreman, an individual who was at least nominally aware of the workers as human beings.

By weakening the foreman’s power to control jobs and make schedules, Taylor increased management’s power and further demonstrated his lack of concern for the workers as human beings rather than parts of the overall

factory machine. The division of labor was at the heart of this weakening of the foreman's power and position. Taylor advocated dividing up the foreman's duties so that different men would handle each duty, which also meant that a far less skilled man could take over a single part of the foreman's previous responsibilities (Gabor, 2000, p. 28).

Fayol's first focus was on management and the organization of functions. He was the first to classify those functions, which include planning, organizing, command, coordination, and control. He also formulated fourteen principles of organizing, which include division of work, authority and responsibility, discipline, unity of command, unity of direction, subordination of individual interest to general interest, remuneration of personnel, centralization, scalar chain, order, equity, stability of tenure of personnel, initiative, and esprit de corps (Moorehead and Griffin, 1998, pp. 63-464). Basically, these functions and principles show that Fayol wanted to streamline the organization and operation of the management arm of the business in terms of its own decision-making processes and in its relationship with the workers in the firm.

For example, as Moorehead and Griffin explain, the principle of the "unity of command" was designed to make management's issuing of orders more efficient: "Employees should receive directions from only one person," rather than receiving partial or even contradictory directions from more than one manager, and "unity of direction means that tasks with the same objective should have a common supervisor" (Moorehead and Griffin, 1998, p. 463). These individual parts of Fayol's organizing plan were not meant to be separate but rather integrated parts of a whole new system: Combining <https://assignbuster.com/chart-henri-fayol-and-weber-max-essay/>

these two principles [i. . unities of command and direction] with division of labor, authority, and responsibility results in a system of tasks and reporting and authority relationships that is the very essence of organizing. Fayol's principles thus provide the framework for the organization chart and the coordination of work (Moorehead and Griffin, 1998, p. 463). Fayol focused on the single-product firm, specifically a coal-mining company.

He believed that “ organization structure will not just ‘ evolve,’” but must be planned and institutionalized from the top down: “ Organization design and structure require thinking, analysis, and a systematic approach” (Drucker, 1974, p. 523). Jarvis writes that Fayol's theory was effectively applied in the coal-mining firm. His “ theorising about administration was built on personal observation and experience of what worked well in terms of organisation” and “ his aspiration for an ‘ administrative science’ sought a consistent set of principles that all organizations must apply in order to run properly” (Jarvis, 2001, p.). Jarvis adds that Fayol's five described functions are relevant still today with respect to the roles and action of management.

These functions allow the manager not only to deal with current problems but to “ examine the future and draw up plans of action” for dealing with likely problems before they arise. Organization principles allow management to “ build up the structure, material and human, of the undertaking. ” Command “ maintains activity among the personnel. ” Co ordination “ binds together, unifies and harmonises activity and effort. Control allows management to “ see that everything occurs in conformity with policy and practise” (Jarvis, 2001, p. 2). Savage writes that Taylor's scientific management should be called “ stupefying management,” for it “ assumed <https://assignbuster.com/chart-henri-fayol-and-weber-max-essay/>

the worker was not smart enough to know what to do,” while Fayol “locked people into managerial boxes with his chain of command model, a true chain around people’s creativity” (Savage, 1998, p. 2). These criticisms are both true in part and yet exaggerations of the worst effects of the two theories.

There are far more similarities than differences between the two thinkers, particularly with respect to the goals upon which those theories focused—namely, the increased efficiency of the organization overall, in terms of productivity and organization. The major difference has to do with Taylor’s “bottom up” approach and Fayol’s “top down” approach. Taylor focused on the worker and his productivity, while Fayol focused on management and the effectiveness of the decision-making process.

Taylor’s theory of scientific management began with a plan to speed up the worker and his machine and to increase his productivity, but it developed into a larger theory encompassing the entire work environment: “He was now systematizing and standardizing entire factories” (Gabor, 2000, p. 28-29). In general, both men sought to find a framework whereby the organization could operate more effectively. As a result, both Fayol and Taylor are accused of dehumanizing the worker and making his work (and the processes of production and manufacture) increasingly mechanical.

Taylor did not deliberately seek to dehumanize the worker with his contributions, but when management and worker came into conflict, his priorities on profit and productivity led him to side with management. It may simply be that in many cases to improve worker efficiency and productivity, and to refine the decision-making and authority of management (Fayol’s

focus) does indeed add some mechanical element to the factory. On the other hand, the truth of most of the principles of both Fayol and Taylor is hard to deny.

Some of the results of increasing the division of labor at both the worker and manager levels are indeed dehumanizing to some degree, but such divisions do clearly increase productivity overall. Still, the criticism has merit, and today's factory methods emphasize a worker's ability to move from job to job on the assembly line, correcting some of the dehumanizing process in which worker's became little more than small parts of a machine, repeating one job over and over. Greater worker participation in firm ownership and decision-making is another innovation aimed at correcting the flaws in Fayol's and Taylor's theories.

Both theorists were writing at a time when much organization of both worker and management realms was needed. Later, the needs of the worker were emphasized as labor unions grew stronger, but in the era in which these two thinkers flourished, inefficiency reigned on the production line, in the offices of management, and in the chains of command between the two realms. It is not entirely fair to reject the theories of either man based on the “dehumanizing” effects of the application of those theories, for the focus of those theories was on simply making sure that particular businesses survived.

For example, Drucker writes “Of course we have learned a great deal in the three-quarters of a century since Fayol's generation first tackled organization” (Drucker, 1974, p. 523). Jarvis wrote that Fayol synthesised

various tenets or principles of organisation and management and Taylor [did the same with] work methods, measurement and simplification to secure efficiencies. Both referenced functional specialisation. Both Fayol and Taylor were arguing that principles existed which all organisations . . . could implement (Jarvis, 2001, p. 2).

Both theorists can be criticized for trying to apply to all situations techniques and methods that worked in one factory or workplace. That would be a fair criticism, reflecting what Jarvis calls a “‘ one best way’ approach to management thinking” (Jarvis, 2001, p. 2). On the other hand, as pioneers in management theory, they studied their specific environment and devised schemes for improving those particular factory systems. Later theorists, such as Drucker (who honors both Fayol and Taylor for their innovations), have inevitably offered more flexible theories.

Drucker points out that Taylor is criticized for dehumanizing workers, but Taylor’s aim “ was first the desire to free the worker from the burden of heavy toil, destructive of body and soul” (Drucker, 1974, p. 24). Weber (1864-1920) believed that the requirements of the Industrial Age necessitated the use in public sector management of bureaucratic or highly centralized, rule bound, expert-driven hierarchist systems. That system as it has evolved lent itself to excesses and has proved to be inadequate to meet the needs of the Information Age.

Various experiments are underway to reorient public administration to make it more flexible, efficient and responsive so that it may better serve the public interest in the Information Age. However, it is by no means clear that

this process of reform will lead to more enlightened or effective government. On the contrary, it may produce a system of public management which represents a more pervasively intrusive, impersonal and oppressive form of government than anything Weber contemplated. Weber feared such a development.

In that sense his insights were prophetic and are relevant today. Weber's writings on power relationships in society, the sources of legitimacy of state power and its organization and administration do not fit neatly within the epistemology of modern cultural theorists. The latter posit that societies are organized along hierarchist, egalitarian, individualistic or fatalistic lines. While all societies contain "competing ways of life," each of them evidence "a consistent package of biases" toward one or the other of these cultural orientations" (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990, p. 1).

Weber saw life and politics as a "struggle between nations, classes and individuals for power and authority" (Droneberger, 1971, p. xii). He said that "as a rule compliance with authority is almost invariably determined by a combination of motives such as self-interest, or a mixture composed of adherence to tradition and a belief in legality" (Weber, Basic concepts, 1962, p. 83). He believed that history followed cycles, periods of inspirational or charismatic leadership followed by the rationalization and codification in law of change.

However, for Weber, who believed in the efficacy of elite rule, "what [some] people thought and believed was decisive" (McCrae, 1974, p. 89).

Thompson, Ellis & Wildavsky commented on the apparent contradiction

between Weber's belief in the need for hierarchy and his belief in the importance of spiritually inspired individual leaders (1990, p. 96). Given the complex economic and social conditions of his time, Weber recognized the need for a centrally managed, hierarchically organized and rationally administered state.

He called bureaucracy “ the most crucial phenomenon of the modern Western state” (Weber, The theory, in Eldridge, 1971, p. 337). He said “ the modern economy cannot run in any other way” and that “ the decisive reason for the advance of bureaucratic organization has always been its purely technical superiority over any other form of organization” (Weber, Speech, 1917, in Eldridge, 1971, p. 197; Gerth ; Mills, 1946, p. 214). He saw no alternative to “ a firmly ordered system of super- and subordination in which there is a supervision of the lower offices by the higher ones” (Weber, Bureaucracy, 1911, in Gerth ; Mills, 1946, p. 97).

Silberman says that Weber recognized “ the inevitability of a bureaucratic rationality” and the “ urgent need for stable, strict, intensive and careful administration” (1993, p. 412). The expert, because of his access to the facts and specialized knowledge, is in command. He says “ the ‘ political master’ finds himself in the position of the ‘ dilettante’ who stands opposite the expert” (Weber, Bureaucracy, 1911, in Gerth ; Mills, 1946, p. 232). Fayol, Taylor, and Weber's theories must be analyzed in the context of the era of the early 20th century and the fact that they were trying to save specific troubled businesses.

They are complementary more than contradictory. If given the opportunity to choose, however, Fayol's theory because it allows for more "top down" innovation in the long run, especially in terms of the human needs of the worker. Taylor was almost exclusively focused on improving productivity, with minimal focus on management. Fayol's emphasis on management, decision-making and authority leaves open the possibility that managers could change their attitudes toward workers once the firm has been effectively organized.

Taylor's approach, on the other hand, inevitably treats the workers as if their productivity were the answer to all problems, including their own. Fayol's theory, once implemented, would seem to leave room for growth on the part of those in power in the business. Taylor's focus on output simply blinded him to the humanity of the workers. He was more concerned with numbers, whereas the organizational emphasis of Fayol might lead him to ease up on his authoritarian management theory once that organizational goal had been clearly reached.

The type of bureaucratic public administration deemed by Weber to be an inescapable necessity in the Industrial Age no longer serves well the needs of the post-Industrial Age. Nevertheless, some of what passes under the guise of reform of public sector management may in reality be just a further step to the bureaucratization of all phases of society, public and private, about which Weber was concerned.

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