

An Overview of Conceptual Framework of Organizational Models for Higher Educational Institutions*

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Abstract

This paper includes a critical review of few organizational models for higher education institutions. Most researches focused on those conceptual frameworks for higher educational institutions which are being used throughout the institutions of higher educations of the world. Governance structures for institutions of higher education emerge from an intricate interweaving of historic and contextual factors. Readers will find all these models are very useful in order to explain why institutions of higher educations behave as they do.

Keywords

Organization, Governance, Collegial, Bureaucratic, Anarchy, University

1. Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to explore few organizational models related to the operations of Universities around the world. These models can be a very good guide for the fifty-three private universities which are currently operating in Bangladesh or any other organization.

2. Methodology

The study is mainly based on secondary data and documentary methods. Documents are an important source of information, and such sources of data might be used in various ways in social research (Ahmed, 2006). To attain the objectives of the study different books, journals were studied. Some scholars who have vast knowledge on this subject have also been interviewed for collecting information in this regard. Jupp (1996) stated that document researches include institutional memoranda and reports, government pronouncements and proceedings and so on. Documentary products are especially important for the ethnographer, providing a "rich vein for analysis" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 173). Another major issue for archival data is the construct validity and reliability of the data for research purposes (Webb et al., 1981).

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3. Introduction

Since the 1970s the study of management and organizational problems of institutions of higher education and universities has been considered by many writers (e.g. Cohen and March, 1974; Endurud, 1977; Miller, 1994) that Governance has to be adjusted to changing conditions to maintain an adequate capacity to govern their efforts. Their efforts have led to the development of different models of governance of universities. Therefore, to understand the strategic development of universities it is helpful to examine a number of models. Miller (1994) puts a good review of management model for universities: 'organized anarchy' (Cohen and March, 1974), 'garbage-can' (Brunsson, 1985; Cohen et al., 1972; Enderud, 1977), 'bureaucracy' (Lane, 1995; Weber, 1947), 'rational' 'collegiality' (Kuh and Whitt, 1988), 'political systems', 'interactionist', 'the liberal university', 'the multi-university', 'the people's university', 'complete mess up'. These should help in explaining why universities behave as they do and how change in the external environment has affected them differently. The following classification uses the different characteristics displayed by universities to distinguish different models.

4. Collegial Model

The collegial model has been adopted by most universities, showing their belief theories that emphasize the need of sharing of power and decision-making among some or all members of the organization (Bush, 1995). Universities consist mostly of academics in its community (Liu and Dubinsky, 2000). The collegial model is based on the notion of a collegiums or community of scholars which originated within the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge universities in the UK (Demerath et al., 1967; Liu and Dubinsky, 2000; Lomas, 1999; Miandehi, 1997; Millett, 1962; 1978; Warren, 1994). The collegial model allows the academic community to work together to find the best answers to issue facing the university. Collegial governance assigns primary responsibility to the faculty for the educational functions of the institution in accordance with basic policy as determined by the university. This includes admission and degree requirements, the curriculum and methods of teaching, academic and professional standards, and the conduct of creative and scholarly activities. Collegiality rests on a network of interlined procedures jointly devised, whose aim is to assure the opportunity for timely advice pertinent to decisions about curricular and academic personnel matters. In fact, this model borrows the assumption of the human relations of human resources school and places individuals, especially faculty members, above the organization in terms of priority of attention. The model assumes a fraternity of scholars seeking individual and collective fulfillment through full participation in decision making (Miandehi, 1997; Williams and Blackstone, 1983). It is a rather ambiguous concept that favors full participation in decision-making, especially by the faculty. According to Liu and Dubinsky (2000: 1323): The collegial model characteristics processes of most academic operations where courses/programmes and research projects are initiated from within individual departments.

Collegiality consists of a shared decision making process and a set of values which regard the members of various university constituencies as essential for the success of the academic enterprise. In incorporate mutual respect for similarities and for differences in background, expertise, judgments and assigned responsibilities and involves mutual trust based on experience. As Bush (1995), Congdon and French (1995) and Lawn and Ozga (1988) suggested collegiality as interdependent working conditions developed by scholars, in which they can learn more from each other, share and develop their expertise together and work as part of a group or team. It would also be where empowerment, critical reflection, feedback and commitment to continuous improvement are a recognized part of their professional obligation. Waters (1989) argues that there are different aspects of collegiality. He suggests that collegial structures are those in which there is a dominant orientation to a consensus achieved between the members of a body of experts who are theoretically equal in their level of expertise but who are specialized by area of expertise. He believes that the exercise of authority on the sole basis of expertise is the first and most important component of collegiality, and counts equally, with consensus and specialization featuring as other characteristics of collegiality.

Studies at Essex University, UK (Thomas, 1995) show that delegation and devolution to departments may either encourage neither efficient use of present resources nor better generation of new resources. Many academic heads are still resistant to training (Middlehurst, 1993). It is a utopian perception of how the educational process should operate, and it is favored by many academics in particular who are discontent with bureaucracy. Hasley (1992) advocates the way in noting the move from collegiality based elite institutions:

The collegiate university still commands wide and powerful affections and interests. But the world is now more competitive and more threatening. The collegiate idea is challenged, will commensality survive and if so with that further modifications? And finally if not what kind of effective university could be envisaged for the twenty first century? The age of faculty domination in colleges, universities, and schools had to end with the rise of mass systems of higher education...the attack on academic autonomy, or...the demand from the state that intellectual labor be proletarian led has been conspicuously aggressive in past decade. (Hasley, 1992: 1, 174-270).

The community of scholars administers its own affairs while bureaucratic officials have little influence. This model suggests that the institution has been as a community of academics who fully participate in all decisions. The main ingredient of collegiality in universities is in fact, faculty participation in the governance of the institution especially by exorcizing almost sole power and influence in academic matters (Miandehi, 1997). As Kogan and Hanney (2000: 190) noted a group of academics within a university department may act collegially when they meet as a course committee or as a board of examiners where all voices may be equal, at least in formal terms. Warren (1994) calls for

new university managerialism to be tempered with a dose of collegiality.

When the polytechnics were made into the 'new' universities they started to dismantle the key elements of collegiality which are the main source of their stability and vitality. Consequently, the new universities are starting to exhibit the traits of bureaucratic anomic life: increased conflict, staff dissatisfaction and alienation which can be redeemed only by a restoration of elements of collegiate life which will help to renew their moral authority, shared academic values and service of community. ... [otherwise] dysfunctional results of the machine bureaucracy will inhibit their future flourishing.

(Warren, 1994: 40)

The collegial model confuses normative (what ought to be) with descriptive, explanatory, and predictive organizational concepts. It has a very strong harmony bias that brushes away the possibility of conflict. Collegiality is most effective when an institution possesses an equal shared set of normative values that create a common culture (Kuh and Whitt, 1988). This is not meant to apply an aversion to participative management and democratic organizations. Indeed, the researchers do favor a high degree of participation where decision has a high degree of impact on those directly involved, where inputs and ideas of the participants can lead to better decisions, and where they genuinely want to participate. However, the growth of higher education in the UK in the early 1990s may have made it more difficult for the collegial aspect of universities to maintain their previous significance in the decision making process (Bush, 1995). Millett (1978) argued that decisions on academic affairs and on faculty affairs cannot be made by deans, academic vice-presidents, presidents, and governing boards on their own initiative, simply because they lack that professional expertise to make such decisions in all disciplines. There are some advantages and some disadvantages for collegiality. Dearlove (1995) argues that collegial governance is slow and conservative, is different to institution worldwide concerns.

As Leal (1995) commented, some faculty members see conflict resolution process as a way to return to the collegial model of the university systems. On the other hand, the process of change in the higher education relies on the concept of shared governance. Observers of higher education management have supported a collegial model of governance when it comes for planning to change (Baldridge, 1971; Birnbaum, 1988; Eckel, 1998; Keller, 1983). Jaratt noted in criticizing the collegial model of chartered university governance, the existence of large and powerful academic departments together to individual academics who sometimes see their academic discipline as more important than the long term well-being of the university which houses them (1985: 33). McCarty and Reyes (1987) describe collegiality as the most venerable model in which the professional authority of faculty is virtually inviolate, and decision-making occurs through consensus between faculty and administration. Bush (1995) and others commentators (e.g. Harvey, 1995; Kuh and Whitt, 1988) suggested a process of shared decision making by a collegial group in relation to academic

matters as one of the core elements of collegialism. The central collegiality and shared decision making is respect for differing opinions and point of view, which welcomes diversity and activity sponsors its opinions. The collegialism must be the last public bastion of respect for individuals, whether they are members of the faculty, students, staff, alumni, administration or other stakeholders.

Cohen and Brawer (1996) note that the collegial model reflects more rhetoric than reality and that actual procedures maintained in community colleges tend toward bureaucratic and political protection of the staff's rights, satisfaction, and welfare. Kezar (1998) indicates that the participatory model is as likely to exclude people from involvement in decision making as the traditional hierarchical model. The staff in various community colleges have wrestled with issues related to the implementation of shared governance, including resistance to changing historical patterns of bureaucratic and/or political governance, overly prescriptive legislation, and a lack of strong system and local roles enabling the respective boards to actually govern (Nussbaum, 1998).

Implementation of shared governance can: (1) promote divisiveness and turf wars between faculty, staff, students, and management groups each pursuing their own organizational agendas; (2) produce fragmented budgets based on bilateral agreements between the district and each of the warring groups; (3) promote distrust and resistance to change; (4) be unsound in terms of legal accountability; and (5) be too slow (Healy, 1997; Nussbaum, 1998). In the context of USA some college presidents say that the extensive consultation required by shared governance interferes with their ability to do their jobs; they are besieged by pressure groups, including employee unions wanting more money and power, and state officials who want quick improvements (Healy, 1997). Trustees are beginning to avoid the term "shared governance" because they say it implies a level of collaboration that may not exist (Leatherman, 1998). However, Miandehi (1997: 47) sums up the collegial model as "the notion of involvement of expert faculty members of the university, whose professional and technical competencies make them eligible to have autonomy and academic freedom to influence decision making in the institution and participate, preferably collaboratively, in its governance".

5. Bureaucratic Model

Hales (2001: 75) notes "bureaucratic organization means dividing administrative work into specific functions and roles which are then coordinated and controlled through a combination of rules and procedures and vertical chain of reporting relationships". Bureaucratic organization with a legalized formal and hierarchical structure also refers to the formal structural process within an organization (Stoner et al., 1995). It is rational in that it involves control based on knowledge which is an instrument of bureaucratic power and has clearly defined spheres of competence, operating according to intellectually analyzable

rules and regulations with most of higher education institution's business being conducted through "management by meetings" (Lomas, 1999; see for example, Beetham, 1974; Felts and Jos, 1996). Morgan (1988: 56) asserts,

Bureaucracy is giving way to new approaches that require people exercise discretion, take initiatives, and assume a much greater responsibility for their own organisation and management.

In the bureaucratic model, the institution is a formal hierarchy and authority based upon a relative position of individuals in the hierarchy. This model relates to the traditional and formal organization and the management theories of Max Weber (1947). An institution has a formal structure that is hierarchical and is tied together by formal chains of command and systems of communication. Weber himself and Stewart (1970) regarded the bureaucratic approach as the most efficient form of organization for dealing with complex activities. To support this approach, Quinn et al. (1998) state that it is an effective design for stable units whose paramount concern is consistency, accountability, and relative instrumentalism. The writers expect that organizations in hyper-competitive environments will often require some loosely coupled subunits whose bureaucratic design responds to such institutional needs. Weber recognized that bureaucratic organizations usually have governing bodies that exercise power on different grounds. Burecratistation has resulted from the increased need for holistic institutional planning to meet reduced resources, the requirements of quality assurance and many other issues placed upon academic work by central government policies, as expressed by the funding council (Kogan and Hanney, 2000).

Weber believed that an organization based on legitimate authority would be more efficient than one based on either traditional or characteristic authority. This was because its continuity was related to formal structure and positions within it, rather than to a particular person who might leave or die. Not every formal organization will possess all the characteristics that Weber identified. However, the more of them that it has, the more closely it approximates to the 'ideal type' that he had in mind. Weber's description of bureaucracy is known as an 'ideal type'. It is not meant to describe any particular existing organization, but rather it represents a model or a checklist, against which to compare and assess real organizations. The strength of bureaucracy lay in its standardization. Employee behavior was controlled and made predictable. This made the behavior of people within large, complex organizations highly predictable. Since that time, environmental conditions have changed and authority has increasingly become based on knowledge. In response, professional bureaucracy has developed. Rational discipline has become internalized by professional employees like teachers, doctors, social workers, accountants and similar groups, through a process of socialization, rather than being imposed externally. Thus, self-regulation through internalized professional standards has replaced external rules and controls or authority from above. Professional bureaucracies modify the principle of centralized control and thus allow their staff a greater autonomy. This is appropriate for working in relatively stable conditions in

which tasks are relatively complicated. Higher education institutions are examples of professional bureaucracies whose staff possess key skills and abilities. Until recently in the UK, these occupational groups enjoyed a large degree of freedom and discretion in how they did their work. However, professional staff in both types of organization are being increasingly monitored and subjected to 'quality control and assurance' procedures. These have been instituted by government and have been implemented by senior managements.

Vice-Chancellors sometimes have charismatic qualities and governing bodies are composed of traditional notables from state or commerce, with elected representatives from local authorities and from academic staff themselves as well as university bureaucrats. The degree to which bureaucratism in universities is usually far below that of other organizations of similar size. Bureaucracy is a form of domination based on authority. In this respect, Mintzberg (1993: 199) explores the role of 'administrators' within 'the professional bureaucracy', and his comments may strike a chord with higher education institution managers:

The professional administrator spends much time handling disturbances in the structure ... the professional administrators - especially those at higher levels - serve key roles at the boundary of the organisation, between the professionals inside and interested parties - governments, client associations, and so on - on the outside. The professional becomes dependent on the effective [our emphasis] administrator.

6. Political Model

The political model involves shifting political alliances, which determine the decisions that are negotiated between the power groups. Bush (1995: 73) incorporates the elements of these approaches:

Political models assume that in organizations policy and decisions emerge through a process of negotiation and bargaining. Interest groups develop and form alliances in pursuit of particular policy objectives. Conflict is viewed as a natural phenomenon and power accrues to dominant coalitions rather than being the preserve of formal leaders.

Baldriges's political model offers an important contribution that assumes that complex organizations like universities can be studied as if they were miniature political systems. Baldrige et al. (1978) distinguishes six assumptions about the political process, which would apply to the interactions in and of a university. Firstly, there is much uncertainty and for a great deal of time, most people are not involved in the policy process. Thus while a wide range of individuals and groups may be involved in the political process over particular issues, it is those individuals and this is the second assumption, who spend continuous time and effort, who are effective in influencing the controlling policy. In general they are predominantly senior administrative and academic staff usually the vice chancellor and the registrar. The third assumption is that the universities are composed of different interest groups with different goals

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and values. Unless there are plentiful resources, these interest groups are likely to come into conflict. Thus the fourth assumption is that this conflict is normal, nor aberration, nor necessarily dysfunctional. The fifth assumption is that the power and authority of the formal bureaucratic system within the university will be modified and changed by the political action of effective interest groups. Finally, the sixth presumption is that interest groups like stakeholders are located both inside and outside the university, and often-external interest groups for example political parties may have power influence on what happens inside the university.

Baldrige's political framework is useful in analyzing the political processes and management of universities during stress or crisis such as when there are severe reductions in resources or major reorganization. Examples would include Aston in early 1980s, New York University in the 1960s, which formed the basis for Baldrige's (1971) own analysis of the reform process or Harvey's (1988) analysis of retrenchment in Canadian universities in the mid 1980s. The political model takes conflict as a natural phenomenon and focuses on problems involving goal setting and values, rather problems of maximizing efficiency in carrying out tasks to reach those goals. It takes into account the role of interest groups and power blocs and has thus far found that small group of political elites tend to dominate major decisions but that different elite groups dominate different decisions.

Organizational politics involve those activities taken within organizations to acquire, develop and use power and other resource to obtain one's preferred outcomes in a situation in which there is an uncertainty of dissensus about choices. It also involves intentional acts of influence to enhance or protect the self-interest of individuals or groups. However the development and application of the model thus far have focused on the organizations and situations where there has been a great deal of conflict and turmoil as well as unique circumstances. One can by no means make sweeping generalizations from those applications. Also, this model cannot be applied to all aspects of university governance or administration. Whilst it is a good model for understanding, explaining, and even dealing with conflict, power and important aspects of decision-making, it is not useful in all situations and under all conditions.

7. Organized Anarchy

The model of "organized anarchy" was developed by Cohen and March (1974; 1986). The basic properties of organized anarchies include ambiguity of purpose and problematic goals; unclear technology, fluid participation, ambiguity of power; ambiguity of inability to learn from experience and ambiguity of success and so on (Bush, 1995). Cohen and March (1974; 1986) believe that organized anarchies should not be viewed as vehicles for solving well-defined problems, but more as a collection of choices looking for problems, issues and feelings looking for decision situations in which they might be aired, solutions looking for issues to which there might be answers, and decision makers looking for work.

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Cohen's and March's (1974; 1986) decision-making model is based on a garbage can concept, according to which participants throw their solutions into the can whenever the decision is needed to make. The garbage can model has been applied to decision making in various types of organizations and it is no exaggeration to suggest that its appeal has been most obvious to public sector organizations (Clark, 1983; Cohen and March, 1974; March and Olsen, 1976; Olsen, 1983). Bush notes that Cohen and March regard the garbage can model as particularly appropriate for higher education purposes. When a garbage can model is measured against a conventional normative model, it does seem pathological but Cohen and March (1974) point out that the great advantage of trying to see the 'garbage can' phenomena together, as a process is the possibility that this process can be understood and to some extent managed. Given this model they are skeptical about how much meaningful an effective institutional planning for the future can be done. They also feel that for sound evaluation in terms of what is presently felt to be important may be the best. The degree of empirical support is an issue of contention as the garbage can model over emphasizes the irrational components of organizational behavior even in relation to its most typical empirical case university decision making (Trow, 1984). Its most serious weakness however is its lack of deductive power. According to Lane (1995: 81):

The garbage can model raises some puzzling problems about the practical usefulness of theories modeling public sector decision-making. The rational decision making model has a long standing as a usual tool for solving problems in public sector.

It has long been recognized that certain underlying processes, for example - in very different ways - decision making in committees and mutual respect for the academic freedom of colleagues, put converging constraints on the common academic practice of decision making at a low level in the academic hierarchy, that is, very close to the practices influenced by the decisions to be taken, and create what has been called an 'organized anarchy' (Cohen and March, 1986). This phenomenon could perhaps be explained as a feature of a 'complex adaptive system', as described by Stacey et al. (2000: 106) (where the system could be either an individual university or the system of universities as a whole):

A complex adaptive system consists of a large number of agents, each of which behaves according to its own principles of local interaction. No individual agent, or group of agents, determines the patterns of behaviour that the system as a whole displays, or how those patterns evolve, and neither does anything outside the system. Here self-organisation means agents interacting locally according to their own principles, or 'intentions', in the absence of an overall blueprint for the system. These adaptive systems . . . display broad categories of dynamics that include stable equilibrium, random chaos and a distinctive dynamic between them, at the edge of chaos.

In view of the survival of universities over the centuries in very different

patterns, not to mention their survival and success over the past very difficult 25 years, it is not unreasonable to describe them as at times 'near the edge of chaos'. However, the underlying processes being proposed now would be influenced by common professional principles, so as to favour a creatively organized anarchy, i.e. creating excellence through true professionalism 'bottom up', in contrast to the less than successful managerial attempts by UK Government and UUK (Universities UK) to create excellence 'top down'. Regarding the professionalism of academics as teachers it must be stressed that, while the latter unquestionably mostly want to do a good job, they mostly do not carry it out in a professional manner - they lack training and the depth of understanding which comes from a knowledge of the relevant literature, deep reflection and regular discussions with colleagues (Elton, 1993; Holroyd, 2000). The achievement of such professionalism lies in turn in underlying processes which increase professionalism - and it is therefore the existence of these (rather than their particular form,) that have to be audited.

In practice, all higher education institutions display their characteristics but the relative mix and degree of emphasis varies from institution to institution. These models offer useful descriptions of institutions but suffer from a primary requirement of public accountability.

8. Comparison and Discussion

We have found four distinctive organizational models for universities, these being described as collegial model, bureaucratic model, political model and organized anarchy. Cohen and Brawer (1996) observe that Richardson's (1975) description of bureaucratic, political and collegial governance structures is particularly appropriate for community colleges. The bureaucratic model describes a traditional, rule bound, hierarchical power structures. Authority is delegated from the top down with the faculty, staff and students each occupying respectively lower levels of the pyramid. The political model proposes a perpetual state of conflict between constituencies' ...trustees, administrators, faculty, staff and students -- each with competing interests. The collegial model proposes a community of scholars, with consensual decision making processes involving all constituencies affected by the decisions. Universities are academics of community; therefore collegial model is based on the notion of community of scholars (Liu and Dubinsky, 2000). This model focuses on applicability in academic operations in order to continuously improve courses and programs (Bush, 1995; Warren, 1994). Writers Stewart (1970) and Quinn et al. (1998), which envisaged an ideal type of bureaucracy as the most efficient form of administration. Bureaucracy is an approach to the organization of public sector of work recognizing the parts of an organization may be organized bureaucratically, whereas others may not be so. It is difficult to identify the generality of the applicability of models in all circumstances. While a particular model may fit well in a higher education institution in certain circumstances, it does not mean that it will work necessarily as well as in other situations.

9. Concluding Remarks

The effectiveness of any organization depends, in the long term, upon the effectiveness of its management and the arrangements of its governance. This applies particularly during periods of change and especially to higher education institutions in the years ahead. The quality of their management and governance will therefore be a matter of continuing attention. Our recommendations on the management and governance of institutions are guided by some core principles:

- We all advocate these principles as a foundation for collegial model: 1) shared leadership responsibilities and shared decision-making are the norm; 2) management structure and lines of reporting are fluid and relatively non-hierarchical; 3) emphasis is on process and communication rather than authority and structure.

- Within a bureaucracy, we do what managers, civil servants and university lectures tell us, not because we think that they have a natural right to do so, or because they possess some divine power, but because we acknowledge that their exercise of power is legitimate and hence supported by two factors:

1. The demonstrably logical relevance of their requests, directions and instructions to us. Their commands must seem rational by being justified through their relevance to the tasks of the bureaucracy and, ultimately, to its objectives.

2. A shared belief in the norms and rules of the bureaucracy which have been arrived at rationally (not based on tradition or personal whim) and which possess a law-like character.

- Institutional autonomy should be respected. Whilst we take it as axiomatic that government will set the policy framework for higher education nationally, we equally take it as axiomatic that the strategic direction and management of individual institutions should be vested wholly in the governance and management structure of autonomous universities and colleges.

- Academic freedom within the law should be respected. By this we mean the respect for the disinterested pursuit of knowledge wherever it leads. This too is axiomatic, but needs to be managed responsibly by individual academics and institutions.

- Institutional governance should be conducted openly and should be responsive to constituencies internal and external to the institution.

Whilst acting to support these principles, higher education institutions should govern and manage themselves to obtain maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

Those from whom we received evidence demonstrated the ways in which the management and governance arrangements now in place are working well and highlighted many achievements. But they also identified ways in which the arrangements could and need to be improved if the agenda defined in our report

are to be tackled to its best effect. This applies particularly to the use of resource in institutions, where sustained effort is required. It applies too to institutional governance, where often the arrangements tend to be complex and not well understood by students, staff, and those outside the organization, and do not necessarily seem designed to equip institutions well to address future challenges. In this regard we have considered two main issues:

- Improving the use and management of resources in institutions.
- Enabling governance to become more effective.

The new organizations in this new millennium will face many facets of challenges and in order to survive in the steep competition of today, they need to be very careful to choose suitable models for their organization. However, this paper can be expanded in the context of Bangladesh and will be an interesting exercise to conduct test as to which model(s) Bangladeshi higher education is following.

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