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Synthesis

Moses N. Kiggundu,
Jan J. Jørgensen, and
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Over 70 percent of the world's population lives in developing countries that face challenging administrative problems in trying to survive. Therefore, what managers and administrators in these countries do, or fail to do, is of great significance for the building of a universal administrative science. Reviewing 94 articles on organizations in developing countries, the authors looked for patterns in the structure of the research described (i.e., methodology, theoretical topics, geographical coverage, authors' affiliations) and in its substance, with special attention to the degree of correspondence (or fit) between Western-based theory and data provided. The most important findings are: (1) there is a great deal of interest in the utilization of administrative theory and techniques in developing countries; (2) authors of articles that focused on the technical core (organizational tasks and technology) were most likely to find no significant problems in the use of conventional theory in developing countries (strong fit); and (3) those authors focusing on the organization's relationship with its environment were more likely to find serious difficulties (weak fit) in the use of Western ideas, necessitating major adjustments to conventional theory.*

INTRODUCTION

When Thompson (1956) called on readers of *Administrative Science Quarterly* to join hands and build an applied administrative science, he had in mind creating a body of administrative knowledge applicable not only to North America but to other parts of the world. He expressed dissatisfaction with the then existing concepts of administration for being appropriate only "to one cultural setting but not to others" (Thompson, 1956: 106) and called for a scientific method of administrative studies that "requires the discarding of concepts limited to particular geographical areas" (p. 105). In one of his last papers, published after his death, Thompson (1974) returned to this theme by developing a theory, drawing on his earlier concepts of interdependence (Thompson, 1967), that speculated about the role of technology in determining the nature and developments of human social organization and the interaction of the family, in the local community and at the national and international levels in both developing and industrialized countries. In assessing whether Thompson's optimism for building an applied science of administration has been justified, it is proper that we look beyond the confines of the industrialized countries and examine the efforts being made to develop an applied science of administration for the developing countries.

There are other pertinent reasons for focusing on developing countries in this assessment. First, about 70 percent of the world's population lives in developing countries; therefore, an applied science would have the greatest potential effect on this majority. Second, developing countries are involved in ambitious development programs that draw on modern administrative thoughts and practices for their implementation. Third, as the world becomes more interdependent and business becomes more international, we need an applied science that advances understanding of administration both at home and abroad.

With these considerations in mind, we set out to examine the efforts made since 1956 to build a body of knowledge to guide

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administrative thought and action in developing countries. Specifically, we wanted to investigate: (1) the state and variety of administrative research and practice with emphasis on the methodologies used, the topics studied, the geographical distribution of the research sites, the authors' origins and institutional affiliations; and (2) the degree of correspondence (or fit) between Western-based theory and data from developing countries, focusing on the reasons for either a high or a low degree of fit. It was expected that this assessment of the current state of the art would enable us to generate suggestions for organizational research and its utilization in developing countries.

DATA AND METHODS

To examine how organizational theory and administrative techniques have been applied in developing countries we undertook a structured survey of the literature. The sample of articles studied was selected as follows. First, for the 1956–1981 period, all the *Administrative Science Quarterly* articles dealing with developing countries were included. There were 36 such articles; 23 for the 1956–1970 period, and 13 for 1971–1981. They clustered around two peak years: 1960 with 5 articles, and 1972 with 7. Second, using the keywords Management, Administration, and Developing Countries, a computer search of three bibliographic data bases (*Management Contents*, *Economic Abstracts International*, and *Sociological Abstracts*) generated a list of 772 articles printed between 1971 and 1981 (the data bases go back only a decade for most journals). After examining the article abstracts, we decided to eliminate three types of articles: (1) journalistic accounts found in news and trade magazines (e.g., *Newsweek*, *Fortune*, *Business Week*); (2) articles that dealt primarily with subjects other than management or administration, such as education (e.g., Vanek and Bayard, 1975), finance and economics (e.g., Mahar and Rezende, 1975), or political science (e.g., Scott, 1980); and (3) articles on transnational corporations that did not specifically focus on developing countries (e.g., Edström and Galbraith's 1977 discussion of the international transfer of managers as a coordination and control strategy; Ringbakk's 1976 analysis of the role of strategic planning in turbulent international environments). These criteria eliminated three-fifths of the articles.

From the remaining titles, we first selected studies that reviewed and synthesized the literature. These included articles reviewing the state of the art and those discussing broad experiences of one or several countries, such as Deva's (1979) critique of the applicability of management concepts in India, Muwanga-Barlow's (1978) comparison of administrative reforms in Ghana, Tanzania, and Kenya, and Getter's (1975) discussion of the introduction of a human resource development program in Venezuela's ministry of public works. Second, we included empirical studies testing a specific theory (e.g., Jaggi, 1977), discussing practical utilization of administrative knowledge (e.g., Kanawaty et al., 1981), or providing historical case analyses (Davis, 1968). Finally, we added cross-cultural studies comparing utilization of administrative theory in industrialized and developing countries. Among the latter were Negandhi's (1971) discussion of the applicability of American management concepts in Asia and Latin America and Bourgeois

and Boltvinik's (1981) discussion of cross-cultural factors in the utilization of organization development (OD) techniques in Latin America. About two-thirds of the articles chosen were listed in *Management Contents*; the others were equally distributed between the two remaining data bases. In total, 94 articles (58 from the bibliographic data bases and 36 from ASQ) constituted the final sample on which this review is based.¹

The procedures and criteria used for the elimination and selection of articles were discussed and agreed on in advance. Due to practical limitations, however, only one of the authors undertook the actual selection process. A subsequent check by each of the other two showed that although there were a few studies that could have been either eliminated or included, the selection process was consistent overall.

Overview of the Articles

The studies came from a wide range of journals. As a result, there were great variations in conceptual and methodological rigor and in quality. At the outset, however, we can say that there is a great deal of interest in the utilization of administrative theory and techniques in the developing countries. This is demonstrated by the sheer volume of published materials on the subject from social science disciplines ranging from political science to psychology. The 94 articles were analyzed along five dimensions: (1) methodological approaches used, (2) theoretical topics addressed, (3) geographical distribution of the regions and countries covered, (4) authors' origins and institutional affiliations, and (5) analysis of the degree of correspondence (or fit) between Western-based organization theory and empirical evidence from developing countries.

Methodological Approaches

The articles were grouped into two initial categories, empirical or nonempirical, depending on whether the article's conclusions rested on analysis of data presented in the article. The articles classified as nonempirical included theoretical overviews and theoretical model building, normative prescriptions, and armchair philosophical musings. This highly eclectic group shared a common feature: references to empirical work were used for illustrative purposes only. Twenty-seven articles were classified as nonempirical; 67 as empirical. The empirical articles were further subdivided into two groups, quantitative and qualitative.

In the 35 articles classified as quantitative, data collection was structured and was subjected to quantitative analysis, which served as the basis for the conclusions drawn. Two-thirds (24) of these articles set out to test explicit hypotheses.

The size and quality of samples varied greatly. Two articles appeared to involve the administering of questionnaires to students in the author's management course. Six of the 35 articles studied individuals or events within a single organization, with sample sizes ranging from 40 to 333 persons. Nineteen quantitative articles reported cross-sectional comparisons within a single developing country. The number of organizations compared and the persons interviewed ranged from 4 to 40 and from 33 to 600, respectively. In only 5 did the authors control for size and/or industry in making comparisons between organizations. Finally, 8 of the articles involved comparisons of organizations in 2 or more developing countries; 3 of

¹ A complete list of all the studies reviewed and how they were coded can be obtained from any of the authors.

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these were generated by the same large-scale research project on organizational aspects of agricultural extension work in southeast Asian rice cultivation (4 countries, 20 agencies, 1,815 interviews; see Gable and Springer, 1979). All 8 articles in this group were of high quality in key areas: in documentation of the sample and data collection methods, systematic data analysis, and theoretically grounded discussion of the findings.

The methods used to draw samples were often unclear. In only seven articles did the authors specify the size of the population from which the samples of firms or persons were drawn. In others, there were simply assurances that the sample was a good cross section or that the organizations were chosen to be representative of the range of firms.

Methods of data analysis tended to be more sophisticated than the sampling methods. In 16 articles, analysis went beyond the presentation of percentages and simple scaling to tests of significance. Basic nonparametric statistics such as chi square, Mann Whitney U test, Gamma, and Kruskal-Wallis were used in 10 of these. Only 2 articles employed multivariate analysis of variance techniques. Even articles that presented very simple scalings could occasionally be sophisticated in analysis techniques. For example, Montgomery's (1972) study used 25 qualitative case studies to build indices of success in land reform that were then compared with institutional arrangements, with proper attention to control variables: ideology/ regime type, vulnerability, and general tradition of centralized administration.

In the case of the 32 qualitative articles, empirical data served as the basis for the conclusions drawn; however, the data were not structured in a way that would allow quantitative analysis. A few of the articles classified as qualitative did present some structured data, but such data played a minor role in comparison to qualitative unstructured data in supporting the author's conclusions. The four cases in which there was equal emphasis on qualitative and quantitative data were classified as quantitative (Fox and Joiner, 1964; Pusić, 1969; Negandhi, 1971; Al-Araji, 1977). Nine of the qualitative articles presented hypotheses to be tested; an equal number presented explicit testable propositions as part of the conclusions.

Twelve of the qualitative articles were case studies of a single organization. Nine studied two or more organizations within a single country. Eleven compared organizations in two or more developing countries. Longitudinal analysis was used in seven of the qualitative articles and four of the quantitative articles.

Overall, slightly over two-thirds of the qualitative articles dealt exclusively with the public sector, whereas slightly under one-half of the quantitative articles dealt exclusively with the public sector — an interesting difference that is statistically significant at the 0.5 level in a one-tailed test. What is more important is that the empirical articles reflect the large economic role played by government and the public sector in developing countries, particularly in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia.

Theoretical Topics

For a number of studies, the underlying theory was not articulated, and where it was, it was rather dated and unrepresenta-

tive of the most current literature. For example, a mid-1970s replication of Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs appears to have ignored the more recent refinements (Alderfer, 1972) and empirical evidence (Lawler and Suttle, 1972; Schneider and Alderfer, 1973). Likewise, some studies of leadership failed to take into account contingencies between leader behavior and subordinate responses that have been developed and tested in the literature (Fiedler, 1967; House, 1971; Vroom and Yetton, 1973). A few studies, however, went beyond traditional theory and developed situationally appropriate contingencies. For example, Kakar (1971), in a study of the relationships between supervision and subordinate responses in an Indian firm, used the subordinate's image of the supervisor, emotional affiliation, and task control as salient contingencies.

These findings suggest that there is a time lag between industrialized and developing countries in the utilization of administrative science. While this may be advantageous to developing countries because it minimizes the possibilities of their utilizing untested theories and faddish techniques, it may also deprive them of the opportunity to use the most current knowledge.

The studies were coded so as to identify the main topics investigated. Ten topical areas, compiled from the more recent textbooks in organizational theory and organizational behavior, were used for the coding. Two topics (role theory and conflict resolution) were dropped for lack of adequate coverage. The remaining eight and their relative coverage are shown in Table 2 below. Most of the studies covered several topics and in many cases included both micro- and macro-organizational topics. For example, Montgomery (1972) investigated organizational tasks and technology, goals and effectiveness, structure, environment (macro), as well as motivation and decision making (micro). This tendency toward multiple-topic coverage across different levels of analyses suggests an attempt to generate comprehensive theories in developing countries.

Regional Distribution

The Middle East was defined to include Egypt, Israel, Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Iran, and countries on the Arabian Peninsula. There is considerable debate as to whether Southern Europe constitutes a developing area. We decided to include Southern Europe because the authors of the articles dealing with administration and management in Greece, Yugoslavia, and rural Italy identified them to be developing areas and because the subject matter — field administration, land reform, and worker control of management — was germane to developing countries.

The distribution of the geographical focus of the studies is: Asia, 28.7 percent; Africa, 21.3 percent; Latin America and the Caribbean, 19.5 percent; the Middle East, 12 percent; Southern Europe, 5.6 percent; and unspecified developing countries, 12.9 percent. Of the empirical studies, 71.6 percent focused on only one country (e.g., Wildavsky, 1972, on Nepal; Roos, 1972, on Turkey; Bjur, 1975, on Mexico; Iboko, 1976, on Nigeria). The others compared two or more countries either in the same region (e.g., Harris' 1968 study in Ghana and Nigeria) or in different regions (e.g., Kanawaty et al.'s 1981 study in India and Tanzania).

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Nonempirical studies discussed developing countries in general or in one region without mention of specific countries. They tended to be theoretical or speculative, based on the author's experience or undisclosed secondary sources of data.

Author's Origin and Institutional Affiliation

We classified the articles according to the author's name and institutional affiliation. An article was coded as having a direct connection with the developing country studied if at least one of the authors had an institutional affiliation in that country or if the author's name appeared to indicate ethnic roots in that country. We were able to code 91 of the articles with a substantial degree of confidence. Of these, 38, or two-fifths, were coded as having a direct connection with a developing country; 14 by virtue of the author's name alone, three by institutional affiliation, and 31 by both criteria.

While there is no direct link between an author's origin or institutional affiliation and utilization of administrative theory, it is our view that an established link between the author and a developing country should enhance the possibilities for feedback from academicians to practitioners in that country.

Degree of Fit

Cases of unsuccessful interventions and empirical disconfirmation of theories can enhance our understanding and provide better explanations of phenomena. Thompson (1956: 110) was mindful of the significance of this in building an administrative science when he wrote, "It is vital that we seek out those incidents or cases which do *not* fit, for this is the only sure way of finding those points at which theory needs revision."

Conversely, we need to examine cases of successful interventions and empirical confirmation of theories to determine if conditions were the same or different compared to the setting where the original technique or theory was developed. On the one hand, we may find that the original theory or technique has wide applicability; on the other, we may find that the apparent success in a new setting was due to spurious factors.

For this study, fit between theory and data has been defined as the degree of correspondence (strong fit versus weak fit) between Western-based organizational theory, in the broad sense, and data from developing countries. Articles in which the authors found that organizations in developing countries function much like organizations in industrialized countries, despite environmental differences, have been coded as demonstrating a strong fit between theory and data. Articles in which the authors stated that management techniques or organizational theory can be transferred, with minor modifications, from industrialized to developing countries have also been coded as "strong fit." Articles in which the authors implicitly assumed that there are no significant differences between industrialized and developing countries in the administration of organizations have been coded as "strong fit." Conversely, articles have been coded as "weak fit" if the authors emphasized the need for major modifications in Western administrative theory and techniques before applying these in developing countries. Those articles in which the authors drew mixed conclusions have been coded in the relevant

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category for each separate theoretical topic, but as “mixed” in the summary data.

The articles were coded by all three coauthors. To insure intercoder reliability, one author rechecked all the codings, and anomalies were discussed and resolved. Of the 94 articles, 23 were coded as showing a strong fit overall, 42 were coded as giving evidence of a weak fit, whereas 29 offered mixed evidence on the degree of fit (see Table 1 below).

Interactions between Fit, Topic, and Methodological Approach

Table 1 shows variations in degree of fit among methodological approaches. Results show that empirical approaches are more likely to show evidence of strong fit than theoretical ones. Among the empirical articles, those employing a quantitative approach are more likely to show a strong fit than the qualitative studies. These differences are statistically significant at the .05 level ($\chi^2 = 11.37, df = 4$). Theoretically oriented reviews appear to concentrate on what is different or unique about developing countries and to downplay elements of similarity. Among the empirical studies there is a clear difference in the treatment of confounding variables or contingencies, such as education, size, or degree of centralization. Qualitative studies emphasize the discovery of such contingencies as the major finding (e.g., Presthus, 1961), whereas quantitative studies try to control for and thereby downplay these contingencies (e.g., Springer, 1976). Table 2 provides details on the fit distribution by topic.

Table 1

Methodological Approach and Fit ($N = 94$) *

Methodological Approach †	Degree of Fit		
	% Strong	% Mixed	% Weak
Quantitative ($N = 35$)	37.1	37.1	25.7
Qualitative ($N = 32$)	25.0	25.0	50.0
Theoretical (nonempirical) ($N = 27$)	7.4	29.6	63.0

*Level of aggregation is by article.

†The null hypothesis that the degree of fit was independent of the methodological approach was rejected ($\chi^2 = 11.37, df = 4$, probability level = .023). The strength of the association between the degree of fit and methodological approach was .298 using Kendall's Tau.

Overall, the fit trends by approach are the same as in Table 1. In addition, focusing on organizational tasks and technology generally leads to evidence of strong fit, whereas focusing on the organization and its environment generally leads to finding a weak fit. The reasons behind such a pattern are developed in some detail in the next two sections. Finally, motivational factors seem to show stronger fit than do attitudinal factors. Motivation, as discussed in these studies, is more task-oriented and is shaped at least in part by the reward system of the organization, whereas attitudes are more resilient, probably because they include values one brings into the organization from the environment. Attitudes may vary widely in developing countries, but what seems to matter more to the effectiveness of organizations is the person's motivation with respect to the job at hand. The ranking of the topics by order of decreasing fit is basically similar for all three approaches (Spearman's rho

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Table 2

Ranking of Topics by Degree of Fit and Methodological Approach *

Topic Ranked	Empirical				Nonempirical	
	Quantitative		Qualitative		Theoretical	
	No. of articles	% Strong fit	No. of articles	% Strong fit	No. of articles	% Strong fit
Organizational tasks and technology	10	90.0	15	46.7	11	54.6
Leadership	10	70.0	13	23.1	4	25.0
Organizational goals and effectiveness	19	68.4	25	24.0	21	19.1
Motivation	11	54.6	9	22.2	3	0
Organizational structure	17	35.3	23	21.7	14	7.1
Decision making	13	30.8	11	9.1	9	0
Organization/environment	23	26.1	19	5.2	18	11.1
Attitudes	12	25.0	7	0	5	0
Article †	35	37.1	32	25.0	27	7.4

*Article disaggregated by topics covered. Most articles dealt with several topics.

†Fit for article as a whole.

ranges from .73, for qualitative versus theoretical, to .98 for qualitative versus quantitative, significant at the .05 level).

STRONG FIT: REVIEW AND INTERPRETATION

Empirical evidence suggests that administrative techniques are easily applied by organizations in developing countries. For example, Neubauer (1978) showed that job evaluation, performance appraisal, and wage or salary administration techniques, properly customized, were used effectively by Mexico's manufacturers of health-care and safety products. In the Philippines (Flores, 1972), organization planning and management control techniques were used by both indigenous firms and U.S. subsidiaries. Similarly, a survey centered on Egypt, but covering 12 management institutes in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Moursi, 1975), showed that new training techniques (e.g., games, Kepner-Tregoe, programmed instruction, achievement training) are being used successfully to improve managerial effectiveness. Consultative participative leadership is strongly associated with job satisfaction, according to a study of 120 managers' styles in industrial firms of India (Jaggi, 1977). These results hold even when controlling for organization size, employee hierarchical position, and type of organization (i.e., local vs. multinational). This supported Kakar's earlier study of an engineering firm in India. Using the framework provided by the Ohio leadership (Fleishman, 1953) and the Michigan (Kahn and Katz, 1960) studies, Kakar (1971) found that, despite a national culture imbued with rigid hierarchical relationships, Indian managers perceived to be helping and exerting low control elicited higher levels of subordinate performance and satisfaction than authoritarian managers.

The authors of two other related studies, in Yugoslavia (Kavčič, Rus, and Tannenbaum, 1971) and Brazil (Farris and Butterfield,

1972), also rejected the null hypothesis that effectiveness depends on congruence between internal and environmental authority patterns. The Brazilian study showed that technology rather than the authoritarian environment shaped the structures of the firm. These, as well as the leadership studies, support the argument that attributes shaped by technology are more important than national culture in affecting behavior in organizations. Structure in general, and the degree of centralization of authority in particular, can have dramatic effects on organizational performance and effectiveness. For example, in a study of 25 countries, Montgomery (1972) found a strong relationship between devolved authority structure and land reform effectiveness. Four criteria were used to measure the reform's effectiveness: it was effective if it (1) improved tenure security, (2) improved peasants' income, (3) increased peasants' political power, and (4) increased bureaucratic power. The study controlled for strength of landlords, ideology, motives for the reform, vulnerability to unrest, and traditions of centralized administration. The findings showed that among the ten countries using devolved authority (i.e., authority delegated to local government) only one increased bureaucratic power, ten improved tenure, and eight increased peasants' income and power. Among the fifteen other countries with centralized or multiple-agency authority, land reform was significantly less effective.

New forms of work organization based on sociotechnical systems have been applied effectively in some developing countries, as Kanawaty et al. (1981) showed in their study of 6 Tanzanian and 6 Indian firms. They recorded improvements in productivity, training, job content, and satisfaction for the firms that went through the program. Finally, exposure to Western ideas can influence both attitudes and effectiveness of managers, as indicated by a survey of 249 Egyptian administrators (Berger, 1957). Compared to others, those exposed to Western thinking and education were less concerned with hierarchy or status and more concerned with economic rationality, efficiency, and universalism.

Interpretation

The reasons advanced to explain why the conventional theory works in developing country settings can be aggregated into three major clusters: (1) the subset of theory involved is technical in nature, (2) the domain of application is the technical core (as defined by Thompson, 1967) of the organization, and (3) the environment is benign or favorable to the implementation of the theory.

Nature of theory. Many successful applications of organization theory findings essentially involved the application of clear-cut and systematic techniques that called for little or no interpretation or judgment, though adjustments were sometimes required. The techniques studied included, among others, organizational development (Kanawaty et al., 1981), budgeting (Rak-sataya, 1978), and the use of computers (Siffin, 1976). Such techniques require expertise which is available only to the organization and not to actors in its local environment.

Domain of application. Other successful applications, the bulk of the strong fit cases, were possible because they dealt essentially with the core of the organization and entailed little

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interaction with its environment. It is, therefore, not surprising that training yielded positive results (Ekpo-Ufot, 1979), that occupational identity was stronger than national culture in determining the most effective, satisfying authority patterns (Kakar, 1971), that technology determined the structure of the firm (Farris and Butterfield, 1972), or that development administration was more affected by the task at hand than by other factors (Boguinar, 1971; Adamolekun, 1976; Boseman and Phatak, 1978).

Favorable environment. Conventional theory has also been applied easily to developing countries in those situations where the environment was favorable (or neutral) to the effects of such applications. The researchers' findings can be expressed as follows:

- The traditional culture in developing countries does not impede the application of new training methods (Moursi, 1975).
- Environmental factors that encourage the use of newer methods are more powerful than the discouraging factors (Moursi, 1975).
- Developing countries have the advantages of being late starters; they are more open to scientific management techniques than are older firms in the West (Badran and Hinings, 1981).
- Civil servants have a positive attitude towards rationality (Berger, 1957).

These major clusters are closely related. All four support the idea that, whenever the application of conventional organization/management theory is under the control of the organization's managers, it is successful — whether because the elements of theory are straightforward techniques of little interest to actors in the organization's environment, because the domain of application is within the core technology of the organization and therefore little understood by these actors, or because the forces in the environment are themselves favorable or indifferent to the application of the particular aspects of the theory under study. If our sample is representative of what happens in developing countries, then we can say that, in both developing and industrialized countries, the theory can be applied in two cases: first, where the effects of the intervening variables can be circumscribed to the organization's technical core; or second, where the organization can deal freely with these variables because their effect on the environment is minimal or is welcomed by the composite forces of that environment.

Using Thompson's metaphor, we can say that theory works when it deals with constraints rather than contingencies (Thompson, 1967). Stated differently, whenever the organization can behave as a closed system, conventional theory does apply.

WEAK FIT: REVIEW AND INTERPRETATION

The articles emphasizing difficulties of application deal with broader issues and tend to be more general than those described in the previous section. The literature on needs satisfaction and importance suggests that developing countries are at a stage in their developmental cycle comparable to that of industrialized countries several decades ago. For example, Howell, Strauss, and Sorensen (1975), using Porter's need satisfaction questionnaire, showed that the order of the need

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importance is relatively culture free, but that of need satisfaction is not. For Liberia, security had the highest need importance, followed by autonomy and self-actualization, yet the managers expressed more satisfaction with the latter two than with security.

Another example is provided by Szal (1979) who showed that in various countries — China, Vietnam, Tanzania, India — incidents of genuine popular participation in the decision-making process bring about effective mobilization of local resources and enable the community to fulfill its basic needs. However, Helmich and Papageorge's findings (1976) show that participation and effectiveness are not always related. They hypothesized that employee-oriented leadership will tend to increase with the level of industrialization. Using Fiedler's LPC scale and samples from the United States, Japan, India, Mexico, and Greece, they found that task-oriented leadership was more typical in countries with higher degrees of industrialization, with employee-oriented leadership more typical in developing nations. These results held, even controlling for organization size.

The effectiveness of an organization is related to the clarity and stability of its objectives (Andrews, 1971; Mintzberg, 1979). In developing countries, however, strong forces work against such clarity or stability, and they frequently succeed in forcing organizations to deviate from the original objectives or prevent them from adopting new ones. For example, Poitras (1973) found that the Mexican Social Security Institute, which is supposed to pursue goals of political stability and balanced development, yields to clientele politics and ends up co-opting and serving private elites rather than its followers. Accordingly, it favors political stability and avoids controversial issues that may help development. Sinha (1979) described a similar process in a study of the Indian department of food. Instead of encouraging public participation in the policy-making process — an important element of its mission — it evolved toward a rigid bureaucracy, insensitive to its constituencies. Structural decisions — creating posts or linkages — were determined more by status-consciousness than mission. He concluded that, over time, government departments in India tend to expand and proliferate into activities unrelated to their mission. In Turkey, Presthus' (1961) study of EKI — a state-owned firm — and Etibank, its holding company, also found similar deviations from Weberian bureaucratic norms (i.e., value of skill, merit, efficiency, and rationality). These deviations gave rise to a welfare bureaucracy (i.e., value of full employment, status and class authority, and traditional claims to welfare).

Structure is also dominated by the organization's relation to its environment. For example in Kenya (Henley, 1977), Zambia (Crosby, 1976), and Argentina (Miller, Chamorro, and Agulla, 1966), the functional boundaries are blurred. The personnel department, for example, has welfare, social, and political activities that extend well beyond the organization's boundaries into the surrounding community. This happens because the organization is expected to provide extraorganizational services. In Singapore, Deyo (1978) compared five Chinese and eight Western-owned (British, American, Australian) factories. He found the Chinese-owned firms more centralized, with autocratic, task-oriented authority relationships. The middle-level supervisors were not given adequate institutional authority and

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responsibility to perform their jobs. The Western firm's decision-making process was, in contrast, more democratic and widely diffused across levels and departments.

The interrelationship between environment and organization has led many researchers to suggest that administrative practice is culture bound. For instance, Fleming's (1966) study of bureaucracies in East Africa reported that their internal efficiency (in the Weberian sense), based on the application of Western methods and standards, conflicts with the need for traditional authority. Bureaucrats depend on traditional values and institutions (e.g., tribal system, chiefs) to win compliance from their clients. As a consequence, the bureaucracy is effective only when it is able to strike the appropriate balance between efficiency and traditional authority. In Nigeria (Luckham, 1971), even the military cannot avoid the conflict between traditional values and organizational concepts and techniques transferred from the West. In particular, traditional charismatic leaders frequently emerge at lower levels of the hierarchy, undermining bureaucratic authority.

The same pattern is observed in an early study of the Vietnamese public administration system (Fox and Joiner, 1964). Even though civil servants were generally competent, the institutional traditions and cultural patterns inherited from the mandarin system and the French colonial power were stifling. The resulting bureaucracy had a highly formal and legalistic structure which, added to political interference from above, created a crippling climate of insecurity. In Iraq (Al-Araji, 1977) prior to 1972, development and change of administrative practice appeared to be chaotic. Intended change did not take place because of vagueness of objectives and lack of consistency, comprehensiveness, or coordination among the elements concerned. In Nigeria (Balogun, 1976) the civil service has been closely associated with the country's political systems. For example, in the 1970s civil servants had acquired power that was perceived as a threat by the political establishment, leading to confrontation and subsequent loss of civil servants' security of tenure.

Two other works documented the association between environment and administrative practice. First, Bourgeois and Boltvinik (1981), in a study of OD utilization in Latin America, reported that facilitating factors were few, vague, and unstable (i.e., the capitalist ideology, profit motive, and business practices similar to those in the United States). The obstacles were many, important, and stable (i.e., psychosocial, cultural, political/economic). Earlier, Ajiferuke and Boddewyn (1970) replicated Haire, Ghiselli, and Porter's (1966) research and supported their findings. Using eight socioeconomic indices of culture, they conducted a survey of 14 countries from three continents and concluded that culture is a significant determinant of managerial attitudes.

Finally, most of the theoretical papers highlighted the existing differences between developing and industrialized countries. The authors' beliefs or theories, based on prior studies or experiences, were found to be generally consistent with what was described by empirical research. Riggs' "Prismatic Society" (1960) is an impressive conceptualization of the politico-administrative situation of developing societies that captures

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well many of the empirical findings described. Siffin's (1976) review of two decades of public administration in developing countries classified the public administration exported from the United States in terms of its (1) tool orientation (e.g., budgetary process, use of computers); (2) structure orientation (e.g., How should things be organized?); (3) value orientation (e.g., administration is instrumental with values of efficiency, rationality, responsibility, effectiveness, and professionalism); (4) contextual orientation (e.g., vast resources and limited administrative role, pragmatic, pluralist, no obligation to transform society rapidly, or orderly and limited involvement of people in control of government). He concluded his review with a key finding: that only tools are transferred readily. Echoing this, Stahl (1979) suggested rather bravely that to be more effective in administration, developing countries should accept fundamental cultural changes. In contrast, Timsit (1976) argued that developing countries' problems come from their inability to stay away from foreign models. Thompson's (1964) position is that the discipline of public administration can make a contribution to the economic development of these countries; it will not, however, come from the doctrines of management or administration prevalent in the West. Developing countries, he maintained, are in a situation of rapid change, while the rituals and teachings of public policy have been fixated on maintaining stability; therefore control is less relevant. Adaptation, creativity, looseness of definition and structure are needed.

Drawing from experiences in Peru, Whyte (1968) similarly emphasized the need for developing countries to innovate and develop local social and administrative tools. He sees the developing countries' situation as a unique opportunity to make major breakthroughs and generate dramatic social and economic improvements.

Interpretation

The situations where conventional theory does not explain the effects or behaviors observed can be clustered into three major groups, according to their degree of difference in: (1) culture, (2) economic systems, and (3) political/institutional systems.

Differing cultures. History, both ancient and recent, has fundamentally altered the values of developing and industrialized countries, shaping in each largely different attitudes toward the managerial implications of industrialization. This explains why theory developed in a modern Western setting may be irrelevant or inadequate in the traditional setting of a developing country. Some of the more specific reasons for weak fit due to culture can be summarized by the following traits:

- Deep personal insecurity dominated by formalism, ritualism, paper fetish, and amoral familism (Milne, 1970).
- Caste systems, religious taboos, differing concepts of time, deep-rooted traditions of centralization and informality (Niehoff, 1959; Helmich and Papageorge, 1976).
- Trade practices, friendship patterns, cultural norms and expectations, patriotism (Kizilbach, 1974).
- Extended-family concept and kinship relations, authority of the elder, collective responsibility (Harris and Kearney, 1963; Pizam and Reichel, 1977).
- Smoothing mode of conflict resolution, closer emotional interactions (Bourgeois and Boltvinik, 1981).

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- Corruption, elitism, and status related to personal and group alignment rather than merit (Shor, 1960; Caiden, 1978).

Differing economies. Similarly, developing countries are at an early stage of their industrialization and this considerably affects their behavior, making it difficult for conventional theory to apply. For example, in developing countries labor is abundant, yet there is a shortage of skilled labor and professionals; there are "infant industries," monopolistic practices (Shetty, 1973), weak capital markets (Flores, 1972; Glen and James, 1980), inadequate infrastructure (Bjur, 1975), and low levels of education in management (Iboko, 1976), resulting in an ineffective mobilization of local resources. Moreover, Western administrative concepts assume (1) large size, (2) specialization, and (3) competition, all of which do not exist in developing countries (Deva, 1979). Finally, developing countries are in a situation of rapid change and need more creativity and adaptation than is permitted by the rigid bureaucratic models developed in the West (Thompson, 1964).

Differing institutions and political practices. Developing countries generally have highly centralized governments (Montgomery, 1972) lacking both local autonomy and delegation of authority (Tapia-Videla, 1976; Mills, 1979; Villanueva, 1979). They also have large public sectors (Harris and Kearney, 1963), and managers are evaluated on the basis of multiple goals (Muwanga-Barlow, 1978; Szal, 1979). They are not fully organizational societies (Caiden, 1978), and their middle class is weak or nonexistent (Subramaniam, 1977). The level of institutional differentiation is low (Bjur, 1975), the expressed purpose is vague, the organization of work is diffuse, and the organization-individual relationship is permanent (Inzerilli, 1978). Finally, political influence and corruption undermine managerial action (Iboko, 1976), leading to management by crisis (Marston, 1978). A need for participation, creativity, adaptation, and looseness of definition and structure (Thompson, 1964; Boguinard, 1971) is frustrated by the chaotic development of administrative practice (Al-Araji, 1977) and a dependency syndrome characterized by weak "endogenetic" forces (Riggs, 1960). As a consequence, conventional theory does not apply satisfactorily and explains very little of the observed behavior.

The differences uncovered herein are of an obviously "exogenetic" nature. Whether cultural, economic, political, or institutional, these differences are related to the organization's environment, not its core. We can therefore say that whenever the practice suggested by conventional theory affects and disturbs the existing balance of the organization's environment, it generates forces that seem to counteract or nullify its intent. We can also say that the contingencies assumed by conventional theory are irrelevant or inadequate for developing countries.

STRONG AND WEAK FIT: A SUMMARY

The findings of the literature reviewed can be reconciled by saying that, whenever the organization can function as a closed system — either because of the nature of the practice involved or because the managers succeed in sealing its core technology from the intervention of "outside" actors — then what we

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know about organizations from North America seems to work fairly well. Whenever the organization interacts with its environment, however, the resulting behavior cannot be understood without significant adjustments to the theories developed in industrialized nations.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This structural and substantive review of the literature on administrative theory in developing countries provides numerous implications for utilization. We discuss below those that can be translated into workable hypotheses or management guidelines.

The coverage of the articles by regions and topics indicates that the building of a universal body of knowledge, for which Thompson (1956) hoped, is well advanced. The findings in particular comparative studies across countries or regions make a convincing case for the development of more global approaches to research on and utilization of administrative science. Quantitative studies have proved to be useful for understanding utilization of techniques or theories confined to the core of the organization, while qualitative ones have provided a better view of the contingencies and constraints under which organizations in developing countries operate. This suggests that creative combinations of the two approaches may be needed to help capture all the complexities of management in these countries (e.g., Montgomery, 1972).

The review shows that developing countries are characterized by change and instability, the understanding of which requires the formulation and testing of dynamic theories and, therefore, the use of longitudinal research. In some cases, this means revisiting the same or similar research sites studied previously. For example, Davis (1968) looked at six Mexican family firms and developed a theory of the transition from entrepreneurial to professional management in developing countries. Returning to the same firms would not only provide a more critical test of the theory, but would also help specify the change processes of transformation from traditional to professional management. Furthermore, the chances for utilization would be enhanced if incentives were provided for local investigators to serve as facilitators or change agents in order to build a network of local and international support systems necessary for experimentation.

Most of the articles reviewed were written by and for Western audiences with little or no attention given to local perspectives. Even articles written by authors with institutional affiliations in developing countries did not differ in this regard. Lack of local perspectives reduces the opportunity for long-term utilization because the real reasons for local reactions may never be known. In the interests of sustained utilization, one wishes that Miller's (1975) study of the Ahmedabad textile mill visited almost 25 years earlier by Rice (1958) had included explanations by local managers and workers of why the earlier changes did not hold. In discussing Colombia's Poder project of rural development, American scholars have argued for (Hunt and Truitt, 1971) and against (Toth, 1971) the utilization of an achievement as the framework for change. Opponents argue that the approach ignores structural rigidities in that country's organiza-

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tions and institutions. The campesinos' (villagers') points of view as to why the project collapsed would provide valuable information not only for testing the theory and its external validity, but also for the utilization of similar administrative theories in situations similar to that in rural Colombia. Clear understanding of local perspectives is necessary to enhance the utilization of administrative science in developing countries through innovation and adaptation rather than through imitation or duplication.

The most important implication for utilization relates to the discovery of the relationships between fit, the core of the organization, and its environment. Managers can effectively utilize those theories and techniques whose effects can be narrowly circumscribed to the organization's technical core (e.g., operating techniques, specialized training methods, computer applications). In other situations in which important actors in the environment may be affected, either these techniques should be adjusted to make them acceptable or the environmental actors' perceptions of the threats involved should be managed. Both actions can be taken simultaneously. Organizational closure is possible when: (1) utilization is limited to the technical core of the organization, (2) the theory or technique used requires expertise not available to actors in the firm's immediate environment, and (3) these actors are favorable or indifferent to the systematic application of such knowledge. Researchers and consultants should carefully monitor these conditions and advise their constituencies accordingly so as to avoid confrontation with a hostile environment. This observation is akin to the sheltered experiment approach used in OD interventions in the West. The difference, however, is that in developing countries, there was no evidence of the development of systems for learning and diffusion.

In general, each time the environment is involved, the theory developed for Western settings does not apply, because it assumes contingencies that may not be valid for developing countries. In these situations, utilization must be preceded by a situational analysis to identify the relevant contingencies and their interrelationships. To the extent that contingencies for the utilization of administrative science in developing countries differ from those of industrialized countries, the transfer of management knowledge and technology (e.g., management development, curriculum development, technical assistance) should emphasize *process* rather than *content* theories (Campbell et al., 1970) and methods.

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