

A/ ASSIGNMENT RECAP

- Write a 2000-word individual essay reflecting on your personal background and your struggles in specific organizational contexts
- **It requires a critical analysis based on the first four course paradigms**, using specific examples and theories.
- Use **at least 3 relevant, credible references** to support analysis.

Suggested Structure:

I. Body

A. Personal Background (Suggested 400 words)

B. Organizational Challenges (Suggested 1000 words)

C. Potential Solutions (Suggested 400 words)

II. Conclusion (Suggested 200 words)

B/ KEYWORD EXPLANATIONS

Essential keywords relating to Organisations

Four course paradigms

1. Functionalism:

Definition: Functionalism is a framework that conceptualizes societies as unified systems akin to organisms. (Kitchen, D.P, 2016). **Purpose:** The functionalist paradigm providing practical solutions to practical problems. → **it has a decidedly managerial flavor and bias.** (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Rubenson, 1989).

EX: While Mitrany's preferences for a functional world do not provide us with a simple and clear roadmap of how to construct such a functional world, or what the subsequent global order might look at, his emphasis on functionalism does **provide us with a useful way of thinking** about alternative non-polar forms of global organization; including forms that are not uniquely the preserve of states and state actors as participants and potential leaders (in some, if not all, issue areas).

Link: [Leadership and Followership](#)

EX: each part of the organism has a particular function, or purpose, that contributes to the maintenance of the organism as a whole, each social institution contributes to maintaining the social system (Klein and White, 1996).

→ these institutions are interconnected and interdependent, like the organs in a body, changes to one institution often have effects on other aspects of the organism that is society.

Like Murdock, Parsons and Smelser (1956) articulate a view of the nuclear family as a functional and ideal structure for ensuring the wellbeing and health of society as a whole and of the individual family members.

Link: [Functionalism \(family\)](#)

2. Social Relativism:

Definition: a philosophical outlook that challenges the notion of fixed, absolute truths in the realm of right and wrong ([Shafer-Landau, 2003](#)).

Purpose:

- Social relativism promotes tolerance and understanding by encouraging appreciation of diverse moral frameworks, helping to bridge cultural divides and facilitate dialogue ([Malinowski, 1922](#)).
- It serves as a critical lens to question universal moral truths and uncover biases, fostering nuanced ethical discussions that recognize our perspective's limitations ([Douglas, 1966](#)).
- Highlights the evolving nature of morality, demonstrating how it changes with societal developments and cultural interactions ([Parsons, 1951](#)).

Examples of Social Relativism:

- Gift-giving customs: In some cultures, giving gifts on birthdays is expected, while in others, it is not. ([Malinowski, 1922](#)).
- Dietary restrictions: Different religions and cultures have varying dietary restrictions, such as the prohibition of pork in Islam or the consumption of dog meat in some parts of Asia. ([Douglas, 1966](#))
- Marriage and family structures: Monogamy is the dominant form of marriage in many Western societies, while polygamous families are accepted in others. ([Murdock, 1981](#))

3. Radical Structuralism:

Radical Structuralism, particularly in the context of organizations, is a paradigm that emphasizes objective-radical change. It is primarily concerned with understanding inherent structural conflicts within society, particularly how these conflicts drive constant change through political and economic crises. (Burrell, G., & Morgan, G. Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis, Heinemann, 1979)

- Radical Structuralism emphasizes objective-radical change
- Radical Structuralism is concerned with understanding inherent structural conflicts within society.

The radical perspective of organizational learning implies an organization where the individuals learn as free actors. However, there are norms or rules to guarantee freedom. The learning space in the organization guarantees the occurrence of different opinions, and allows everyone to reflect upon their actions and learning. Working time and employee commitment are restricted so that work does not interfere too much with other undertakings. All employees are guaranteed permanent appointments. Finally, in the radical perspective of organizational learning, organizations die to make place for others when their missions are accomplished. (Anders Örténblad, 2003)

Link: [Radical Structuralism](#)

4. Radical Humanism:

Radical humanism creates more democratic, participatory, and empowering work environments. It advocates for management practices that recognize and foster individual autonomy, creativity, and a more profound sense of meaning and purpose in work (Lawrence Wilde,2004)

The radical humanism considers the human being as a being of speech, of symbols, of senses, of society, of free-will, and **not just simply as a resource at the service of the company and of maximization of profit.** (Organ. Soc, 2008)

Embracing a radical humanism, as well as a governance that aims to serve Man rather than exploit him introduces a **virtuous dialectic**: the adoption of a fuller understanding and respect for Man and Nature **leads to the production and subsequent sharing of profits**, which in turn reinforces the respect and understanding of Man and Nature, leading to further profits (and subsequent sharing), and so on. (Organ. Soc, 2008)

Adopting a humanistic approach within business activities and interactions is of the utmost priority if society, and by extension, we as human beings both in the individual and collective sense, are to survive, flourish and emancipate ourselves. (Organ. Soc, 2008)

Link: [Radical Humanism](#)

5. Ontology/Epistemology

Definition: Researchers make use of empowerment theory to explore relationships between individuals within specific social, organizational, educational, and political environments (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Cummins, 2001; Freire, 1972/1986; Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995; Rappaport, 1995; Shor, 1992; Speer, Jackson & Peterson, 2001). Empowerment theory focuses on the participation and collaboration of individuals within an organizing structure to focus their efforts on an identified outcome or common goal.

Empowerment is the process by which individuals and groups gain power, access to resources, and control over their own lives. In doing so, they gain the ability to achieve their highest personal and collective aspirations and goals” (Robbins, Chatterjee, & Canada, 1998, p. 91).

→ **Purpose:** Empowerment help gain the ability to achieve their highest personal and collective aspirations and goals” (Robbins, Chatterjee, & Canada, 1998, p. 91).

Social scientists often draw upon empowerment theory as a means to counteract feelings of powerlessness among particular groups of individuals including women, certain ethnic populations, and individuals with disabilities (Conger & Kanungo, 1988)

→ **How:** Empower through active participation and engagement

Link: [Ontology/Epistemology](#)

Other terms

6. **Organizational Behavior:** The study of how people interact within groups in a workplace setting, often used to improve organizational effectiveness.
7. **Paradigm:** In academic terms, a paradigm is a distinct set of concepts or thought patterns, including theories, research methods, postulates, and standards for what constitutes legitimate contributions to a field.
8. **Power Dynamics:** Refers to how power is distributed and exercised within an organization, often affecting decision-making and employee relations.
9. **Cultural Norms:** These are shared expectations and rules that guide the behavior of people within social groups, including those in an organizational context.
10. **Conflict Resolution:** A way to bring a dispute to a peaceful end. In organizations, it involves strategies to address disagreements among team members or departments.
11. **Inclusivity:** In an organizational context, this refers to strategies and practices that ensure diverse individuals are welcomed, represented, and given equal opportunities.
12. **Empowerment:** The process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. Within organizations, it involves giving employees more autonomy and decision-making power.

C/ REFERENCES

Some academic journals and additional references you can explore:

A, Reliable Sources:

- + Tidd, J., Bessant, J., & Pavitt, K. (2005). *Managing Innovation: Integrating Technological, Market and Organizational Change*. John Wiley & Sons.
- + Burrell, G., & Morgan, G. (1979). *Sociological paradigms and organisational analysis*: Elements of the sociology of corporate life. Routledge.

B, Newspapers:

- + ***Forbes - Leadership Section***

Features articles on business leadership, organizational change, and management strategies.

Access via: forbes.com

- + ***Bloomberg Businessweek***

Provides news and analysis on a variety of business topics, including organizational strategies.

Access via: bloomberg.com/businessweek

- + ***The Wall Street Journal - Business Section***

Provides news and analysis on organizational trends, leadership, and management.

Access via: wsj.com