

Reflections on a Half-Century of Organizational Sociology (Scott)

Bureaucracy

1. What are the characteristics of **bureaucracy**?
 - The characteristics of bureaucracy are: (1) dividing labor to achieve a goal, (2) management teams that ensure workers are efficient, and (3) chain of command that ensures other managers are working properly, among others.
2. Give an **example** of bureaucracy.
 - An example of bureaucracy is the many office workers that the University of California, Riverside employs in order to keep the university running. By having these employees, UC Riverside ensures that certain systems are accomplished correctly. This comes at the consequence of the slowness of the system.

Contingency Theories

3. What is **contingency** theory?
 - Contingency theory is the idea that organizations are all dependent on their environments, but also that the environments for different organizations differ as well.
4. Give an **example** of contingency theory applied to organizations.
 - In the organization of U.S. Congress, typically the state of affairs is highly dependent on the economic and political environments of the United States at any moment. If a Democratic president is in power, for instance, U.S. Congress seats may flip one way or another, causing different workers to become senators, etc. This is an example of how environment may affect the U.S. Congress organization.

Transaction Costs

5. What is the question posed by **transaction costs**?

- The question posed by transaction costs is whether the exchange of goods and services for a certain organization is worth it. Whether the benefit of such a transaction outweighs the cost of it.

6. Where does the **cost** of transacting on the market come from?

- The cost of transacting on the market comes from the balance between the supply and demand forces from the market, which are ultimately dependent on the environments that the organization takes place in.

7. What is meant by the “**make-or-buy** (i.e., hierarchy or market) decision?

- What is meant by the “make-or-buy” decision is whether it is worth it to create a product, or buy it, from the perspective of organizations.

8. Give an **example** of transaction costs.

- An example of transaction costs is, for example, the negative social outcomes that arise when a company trades a certain product. For instance, if a company sells a product from an author whose reputation is negative, a cost of the transaction for that product would be the negative outlook some customers would have of the organization.

Resource Dependence Theories

9. What is **resource dependence** theory?

- Resource dependence theory is very similar to contingency theory, having to do with adapting to the environment for an organization. However, the environment in this conception includes politics and the economy.

10. How is **power** defined in **resource dependency** theory?

- In resource dependency theory, power is defined as the different political and economic influence that two organizations who interact may have with one another. For instance, by trading a certain intellectual property with Google, Facebook has created a power imbalance where Google holds the power to create said intellectual property, whereas Facebook does not.

11. Give an **example** of resource dependence theory.

- An example of resource dependence theory includes, for instance, how the company Moderna suffered losses in revenue due to the political state of the United States.

Network Theories

12. What are **structural holes** in social networks? Give an example.

- The structural holes that are referred to in social networks could be those nodes in the organization network that are not associated with many other nodes, thus creating some sort of vacuum that other organizations can fill. However, it also creates a “hole” for said node, because it does not possess connections to other organizations.

13. Give an **example** of structural hole.

- An example of structural hole, for instance, are food deserts. Some small towns can become food deserts because of their lack of communication edgewise with other food organizations, such as supermarkets. This is an example of a structural hole.

14. What is **social embeddedness** of economic activity?

- Social embeddedness of economic activity dictates that people’s purchasing decisions can be highly influenced by the social influence others have on those people.

15. Give an **example** of social embeddedness.

- The boycott of Twitter by advertisement companies following Elon Musk's announcement to become CEO is an example of social embeddedness, because those advertisements caused economic damage to Twitter, thereby causing users to use Twitter less.

Organizational Ecology

16. What is **organizational ecology**?

- Organizational ecology emphasizes on many organizations in one or many networks. The reason for this is because, as the authors of this theory dictated, organizations are not as able to fundamentally change as we would hope them to be. Therefore, in order to get a more accurate view of how organizations will behave, we have to look at it in the context of many other organizations.

17. Give an **example** of organizational ecology.

- Organizational ecology, for instance, relates to how in the 60s many restaurants began allowing African Americans to sit and dine. Because of the many other organizations doing so, these organizations felt forced to do so as well.

Neo-Institutionalism

18. What is **neo-institutional** theory? Give an example.

- Neo-institutional theory stresses the fact that organizations have set systems of operations that in turn achieve how the company behaves.

19. Give an **example** of neo-institutionalism.

- An example of neo-institutionalism is, for example, when a company has a set "culture" enforcement mechanism that allows managers to assign culture to their employees. This action shapes the actual culture of the organization.

