

Max Weber (1864-1920)

German economist, historian and major classical sociologist. His major areas of study: Bureaucracy, where he examined the ways in which an organization and a bureaucracy functions.

Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, where he traced the development of capitalism among the Calvinist sect to their religious beliefs, that labeled hard-work as a mark towards salvation.

Organization = any social network defined by a common purpose & a boundary between its membership and the rest of the social world.

A Formal organization: a group designed for a special purpose and structured for maximum efficiency. Though the sizes of these organizations may vary their larger goal is to facilitate the management of large-scale organizations.

They also have a highly bureaucratic structure of operation.

Organizational structure = size & ways in which power and authority are distributed within an organization

Historical Types of Authority:

Authority = legitimate right to exercise power

Charismatic authority: based on the personal appeal of an individual leader.

(Problem: transferring power)

Traditional authority: based on appeals to the past or a long established way of doing things. (Problem: innovation & adaptation)

Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy is a legal-rational basis of authority that governs with reference to rules & roles (emphasis on positions over individuals; policy over circumstance)

Max Weber

(Early Critic of Rationalization's effects on Society)

Argument:

Increasing rationalization associated with big organizations trap individuals in an "iron cage" of rule-based, rational control of their own making (which is actually highly irrational).

Bourdieu's three forms of capital

Economic: Financial assets (property, bank balance etc).

Social: Social connections that can be capitalized for economic and social gains.

Cultural: Finer taste in music, arts and educational qualification that one acquires through their social location.