

Assessment One

by Leanne Greening

FILE	FOUNDATIONS_ASSESSMENT_ONE.DOCX (69.72K)		
TIME SUBMITTED	11-NOV-2015 11:28AM	WORD COUNT	1376
SUBMISSION ID	48296111	CHARACTER COUNT	15395

Assignment Cover Sheet

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Student Number:	C1542714		
Module Code:	CPT898	Date:	11/11/2015
Essay Title:	Assessment One		
Required Word Count:	1000	Actual Word Count:	997

Feedback

CPT 898 Summative/Formative Assessment 1.

1 Research Question (99 words)

What challenges and implications have non-profit organisations (NPO's) faced in their attempts to change and adapt to the estimated reduction of £3.3 billion in public sector funding over the spending review period 2010-2015 (NCVO 2012)?

- What is the role of the voluntary sector in contemporary society?
- In what ways have NPO's had to change and adapt to austerity?
- How have these change initiatives been managed?
- How effective have the changes been?
- What challenges have occurred as a result of these changes?
- How have stakeholders responded to the changes that have taken place?
- What are the implications for organisational strategy and culture?



2 Research Field (151 words)

- The management of change literature is located in a well-established field of organisational studies and organisational behaviour studies (Barratt-Pugh et al. 2013; Bowen & Ostroff 2004; Conway & Monks 2008; Jimmieson et al. 2004; Kiefer 2005; Macfarlane et al. 2011; Miller 2002; Molineux 2013). However, few scholars have attempted to examine change within the voluntary sector (Stauss et al. 2011; Liao, et al. 2013).
- The limited empirical research tends to draw and apply knowledge and literature from the for-profit sector to the non-profit sector to support conclusions. However, the effectiveness of this application is unknown.
- A vast and still growing body of academic research focusing on this topic (Schwarz 2012). Its complexity has catapulted investigations into areas including: how best to manage change, resistance to change, strategic change and the psychology of change.
- The proliferation of 'change management' has resulted in the dedication of entire journals to this area, including; The Journal of Organisational Change Management and the Journal of Change Management. Encouraged are investigations of philosophies including; critical theory, postmodernism and post structuralism and are interested in "qualitative analyses of change, discourse and change practices" (Emerald Publishing 2014).

Excellent

Good

Good

Excellent

Improper Citation

Critical Realism (CR)

- Social reality exists independently from human identification and perception, suggesting reality is not determined by humans (May 2011; Edwards et al. 2014). Ontologically, the social world will continue to exist whether we theorise about it or not, however, theorising can help identify the unobservable (Fleetwood 2005). Idea here is that reality has depth, transitive: changing knowledge and Intransitive: unchanging knowledge (Bhaskar 1986; 2015) Good
- An external reality embedded in unobservable structures and mechanisms exists, causes observable events – causation through structures (Archer 2002). To understand the social world we need to understand structures. Good
- CR, unlike positivist and empiricist accounts of science is not confined to empirical events (epistemic fallacy). Seeks understanding of deeper underlying forces behind phenomenon, contesting the simple linear model of causation Excellent (Cruickshank 2011).
- Assumes stratified ontology (Sayer 2000; Al-Amoudi & Willmott 2011)
 - The Real: mechanisms, structures and causal powers reside beneath the surface: objective, generative mechanisms
 - The Actual: events and actions occur, causal powers activated
 - The Empirical: where experiences and perceptions take place. Excellent

Post Structuralism (PS)

Excellent

- Emerged out of critique of Structuralism and Saussure's (1983) theory
 - Rejects idea of single truths and grand structure (Macintosh 2005)
 - Instead, all truths/knowledge are fully contextual (Radford & Radford 2005).
- Focus on the power of social discourses to shape meaning.
 - Discourse produces subjects (Derrida 2005).
 - Discourse is historically/contextually positioned (Alvesson & Kärreman 2000)
- PS is anti-essentialist; meaning and identity are effects as opposed to causes (Harrison 2006).

Good
- PS concerned with relationship between power, discourse and knowledge (Archer 2003)
 - Power circulates through discourse and operates dynamically at a "given place and time" in a "coordinated cluster of relations" circulating through the 'social body' by an array of mechanisms (Foucault, 1980: 199).
 - Discourse is entangled in an open-ended play of signification
- PS disputes the idea of sovereign power and power being wielded by people. Rather, power disseminates through complex webs of actions (Deetz, 1992a; Deetz 1992b).
 - Recognition that power and resistance are intertwined

Excellent
- May (2011, p.15) Foucault's work was a reaction to subjectivity in social science and empiricism of natural science

Excellent

5 How has the perspective identified in box 3, above been used in your field of research? (150 words)

CR influence/analysis in organisation and management (O&M) studies has grown over the last decade¹

- Ackroyd & Fleetwood (2000)
 - O&M research ignores CR – a polarization between positivism and postmodernism. Excellent
- Easton (2010)
 - Demonstrates CR approach in practice using a case study to investigate the development of an organisational relationship after the implementation of change. Excellent
 - Examines complex phenomenon of organisational relationships.
- Tsoukas (1989); Tsoukas & Chia (2002: 567) Excellent
 - Case study: to describe structures and associated mechanisms
 - Investigates management causal powers and their relation to the superstructure
 - “Change... reweaving of actors’ webs of beliefs and habits of action as a result of new experiences obtained through interactions” - demonstrates recognition of organisations becoming durable entities with causal powers that shapes events (Fairclough 2002)
- Fairclough (2002 p.13) Excellent
 - CR to investigate organisational change
 - Rejects commitment to postmodernism and constructivism in O&M studies because they adopt a ‘flat ontology’ which ignores the distinction between agency and structure.
 - Without dualist ontology “methodological examination... for organisational change becomes impossible”

¹ Ontologically CR has much to offer O&M studies (Edwards et al. 2014) particularly for investigating the management of change (Marchal 2010). See these authors for their use CR to offer a richer epistemological insight into the search for evidence, meaning, and theory in organization studies; Mutch 1999; Ackroyd & Fleetwood 2000; Mingers 2000; Kwan & Tsang 2001; Farclough 2002; Easton 2002; Fleetwood & Ackroyd 2004; Reed 2005; Hesketh & Fleetwood 2006; Tourish 2013. Good

6 How has the perspective identified in box 4, above been used in your field of research? (147 words)

PS has contributed enormously to O&M studies². Westwood & Clegg (2003) have identified O&M studies as going through a cultural, linguistic, post-structural turn.

- Foucault (1979; 1982)
 - The importance of discourse analysis and notions of resistance and power cannot be overstated in his contribution to O&M studies. Excellent
 - Caldwell (2007 p.3): Reinvention of 'agency' - "decentred agency allows new possibilities for resistance and the dispersal of agency and change in organisations"
 - Sees power and resistance as dispersed and multi-dimensional
- Thomas and Hardy (2011)
 - Use a discursive approach to identity in investigating approaches to resistance to change Excellent
 - Demonstrates how approaches to change and resistance are unsuccessful in effectively addressing power relations
 - They draw on insights from Foucault's (1979, 1980, 1982) conceptualisation of power relations
- Hardy & Thomas (2014)
 - Use a Foucauldian approach to investigate the implementation of strategy
 - Investigates the role 'meaning' plays in shaping strategy Excellent
 - 'Strategy as practice' literature conceptualises senior managers as initiating change and possessing the power to do so

² Carter (2008) Questions what organisation studies would look like had another social theorist been adopted with the same vigour as Foucault. See Chan & Clegg 2002; Knights 2002; Deetz 2003; Hardy 2004; Barratt 2004; Caldwell 2007 for more Good contributions of post structuralism to O&M studies.

7 Choice and justification of epistemological framework selected for research question in box 1, above. (150 words)

- A CR inspired approach would allow for identification of unobservable structures and the exploration of generative mechanisms which establish how/why actors respond to change initiatives in certain ways.

Good

More suitable though, is a Foucauldian Poststructuralism inspired approach, because:

- Change, change actors and resistance to change are conceptualised in predetermined ways – Actors for example, are categorised in fixed ways, their identities are constructed and predetermined as a result of the literature that problematizes resistance and seeks to blame employees for causing resistance which leads managers to force change. This highlights the interplay between change, resistance, identity and power, however, this interplay is scarcely represented. Investigating the research question in this way would allow for the exploration of power relations between agents of change and recipients within the voluntary sector
- Exploring power as a theoretical concept linked to resistance is in keeping with Foucault's view that power and resistance implicate each other.

Good

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Excellent

Assessment One

GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

85/100

GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor

This is an excellent answer. It was enjoyable to read since it clearly demonstrates a high level of achievement in meeting the learning outcomes for this module. You write with a maturity, succinctness and confidence and demonstrate extensive further reading.

Noteworthy is that as well as providing concise and critical descriptions of two epistemologies you are also able to talk about how these perspectives have been used by other researchers in the creation of knowledge both in your field and across the social sciences.

Your account of the management of change literature is exemplary and demonstrates convincingly your expertise in the field and allows the general reader a clear idea of where your work fits.

You answer each of the seven questions comprehensively;- I'd like to use your paper as an exemplar next year.

There is room for improvement however. You can improve your mark by noting my comments in the text and the following comments below:

In box one you could tighten up your research aims and drawn a better correspondence between the aims themselves and the research question.

In box seven you need to be much clearer about your choices and to reflect upon your research aims. This is an opportunity to put right the issues I raise above.

Check to ensure all sources are referenced properly.

feedback on your assessment - note that I am using a grading form which is visible if you click on the far right icon at the bottom of the window (it looks like a tiny office block)

PAGE 2



Comment 1

These aims are too broad and too numerous. Your research could probably do with being a little more focussed.



Excellent

Excellent



Good

Good



Good

Good



Excellent

Excellent



Improper Citation

Improper citation:

Improperly cited material. Please use the link below to find links to information regarding specific citation styles: http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_citation_styles.html

Additional Comment p?

PAGE 3



Good

Good



Good

Good



Excellent

Excellent



Excellent

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PAGE 4



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Excellent