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# THE CONCEPT OF BUREAUCRACY: AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT

RICHARD H. HALL

## ABSTRACT

The concept of bureaucracy is viewed as a series of dimensions, each in the form of a continuum. When each continuum is measured, no concomitant variation is found among the dimensions. It is suggested that the bureaucratic concept is more empirically valid when approached in this manner, rather than assuming that organizations are totally bureaucratic or non-bureaucratic. The suggested approach is demonstrated through the application of the model to ten organizations.

Students of organizations from the time of Weber to the present have used the bureaucratic model as the basis for conceptualizing the system of interrelationships in organizations. This acceptance of the bureaucratic model has served as the point of departure for studies of the development and modification of organizational structure, the place of the individual within such a structure, and various associated problems. This paper examines the bases of the bureaucratic model, the dimensions of organizations that are characteristically cited as bureaucratic attributes by measuring the degree to which these dimensions are present in a variety of organizations.

There has been an unfortunate lack of sophistication in the use of the bureaucratic concept. All too often organizations have been labeled "bureaucratic" for purposes of study when little evidence has been presented that they are in fact bureaucratic. Alvin Gouldner has pointed out that the bureaucratic model has been used as a finished tool rather than as a set of hypotheses to be verified by empirical findings.<sup>1</sup> In a similar vein, Udy has suggested that the Weberian ideal-typical attributes be recast as variables in order to determine their empirical interrelationships.<sup>2</sup> Upon closer examination, the characteristics or dimensions

that are typically ascribed to bureaucracy appear to be variables that can be systematically measured to demonstrate the degree to which organizations are or are not bureaucratic.

## BUREAUCRATIC DIMENSIONS

Max Weber, in his formulative work on bureaucracy, described bureaucratic organizations from the dimensional perspective.<sup>3</sup> That is, he listed a series of organizational attributes that, when present, constitute the bureaucratic form of organization. These dimensions, including division of labor, hierarchy of authority, extensive rules, separation of administration from ownership, and hiring and promotion based on technical competency, have served as the basis for subsequent delineations of bureaucratic structure.<sup>4</sup>

Carl J. Friedrich, commenting on Weber's work, incorporates six of Weber's characteristics into his own formulation.<sup>5</sup> Michels, although writing in another context, similarly uses the dimensional approach.<sup>6</sup> Contemporary sociologists have either directly relied upon the Weberian

<sup>3</sup> *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 330-34.

<sup>5</sup> "Some Observations on Weber's Analysis of Bureaucracy," in *Reader in Bureaucracy*, ed. R. K. Merton *et al.* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1949), p. 29.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Michels, *Political Parties* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1949), pp. 33-34.

<sup>1</sup> "Discussion," *American Sociological Review*, XIII, No. 4 (August, 1948), 396.

<sup>2</sup> Stanley H. Udy, Jr., "'Bureaucracy' and 'Rationality' in Weber's Organization Theory: An Empirical Study," *American Sociological Review*, XXIV (December, 1959), 792.

formulations in their discussions,<sup>7</sup> or have used selected dimensions based upon the Weberian model.<sup>8</sup>

Those students who have used this theoretical model as the basis for empirical research or theoretical development have typically made the assumption that the dimensions are present in the first case or would be present in the latter case in the organizations under study or consideration.

This assumption was the source of Gouldner's concern noted above. In a later publication, he more specifically questions much of the current usage of the bureaucratic model:

It is instead an *ideal type*, in which certain tendencies of concrete structures are highlighted by emphasis. Not every formal association will possess all of the characteristics incorporated into the ideal-type bureaucracy. The ideal type may be used as a yardstick enabling us to determine in which particular respect an organization is bureaucratized. The ideal-type bureaucracy may be used much as a twelve-inch ruler is employed. We would not expect, for example, that all objects measured by the ruler would be exactly twelve inches—some would be more and some would be less.<sup>9</sup>

Stated in other terms, Gouldner, and later Udy, imply that bureaucracy is a condition that exists along a continuum, rather than being a condition that is either present or absent. This point may be expanded to state that bureaucracy is a form of organization which exists along a number of continua or dimensions.

<sup>7</sup> E.g., Talcott Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1937), p. 506, and Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1949), pp. 151-52.

<sup>8</sup> E.g., Marshall E. Dimock, *Administrative Vitality* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1959), p. 5; Ferrel Heady, "Bureaucratic Theory and Comparative Administration," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, III, No. 4 (March, 1959), 516; Peter Blau, *Bureaucracy in Modern Society* (New York: Random House, 1956), p. 19; and Morroe Berger, *Bureaucracy and Society in Modern Egypt* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 48.

<sup>9</sup> Alvin Gouldner, *Studies in Leadership* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1950), pp. 53-54.

In regard to the dimensionality of bureaucracy, Udy's findings are relevant. In his study of formal organizations in non-industrial societies, Udy utilized seven characteristics of bureaucracy. These characteristics, subdivided into "bureaucratic" and "rational" elements, were also treated as dimensions.<sup>10</sup> Using a present versus absent dichotomy for each characteristic, he found a variation among the associations in the pattern of presence versus absence for the seven dimensions. The characteristics were not either all present nor all absent in any one organization. Instead, some had certain configurations of present versus absent characteristics, while other organizations had other configurations. These findings support the contention that the bureaucratic model is best approached from the dimensional perspective.

In order to study this dimensionality further, specific dimensions had to be delimited. A review of the relevant literature yielded the dimensions noted in Table 1. The author citing each dimension is also listed.

Six dimensions were chosen for use in this study on the basis of frequency of citation and theoretical importance. They are:

1. A division of labor based upon functional specialization
2. A well-defined hierarchy of authority
3. A system of rules covering the rights and duties of positional incumbents
4. A system of procedures for dealing with work situations
5. Impersonality of interpersonal relations
6. Promotion and selection for employment based upon technical competence

In the ideal-type bureaucracy all of these dimensions would be present to a high degree, while non-bureaucratized or simple organizations would ideally have a low degree of all the dimensions present. Stated more directly, a highly bureaucratized organization would be characterized by an intricate division of labor; a multilevel, closely followed hierarchical structure; ex-

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 791-95.

tensive rules governing on the job behavior; well-developed and systematically followed work procedures; interpersonal behavior, both between organizational members and toward outsiders, governed by norms that stress the importance of the positional rather than the personal basis for interaction; and the importance of successful performance as opposed to sentiment as a basis for both hiring and promotion practices. The non-

The bureaucratic characteristics described above are not highly intercorrelated; thus, organizations that are highly bureaucratized on any one dimension are not necessarily so on the other dimensions.

This hypothesis assumes that the bureaucratic dimensions do in fact exist in the form of continua and that these continua are measurable. Both of these assumptions will be demonstrated.

TABLE 1  
CHARACTERISTICS OF BUREAUCRACY AS LISTED BY MAJOR AUTHORS

Dimensions of Bureaucracy	Weber	Friedrich	Merton	Udy	Heady	Parsons	Berger	Michels	Dimock
Hierarchy of authority.....	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Division of labor.....	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*
Technically competent participants.....	*	*	*	*		*	*		
Procedural devices for work situations.....	*	*	*		*		*		*
Rules governing behavior of positional incumbents.....	*	*	*				*	*	
Limited authority of office.....	*		*		*	*			
Differential rewards by office.....	*			*					
Impersonality of personal contact.....			*						
Administration separate from ownership.....	*								
Emphasis on written communication.....	*								
Rational discipline.....	*								

\* Cited by author.

bureaucratic organization would be characterized by a relatively flat and often bypassed hierarchy, simpler division of labor, and so on.

The question that immediately arises, based on the contributions of Udy and Gouldner, is: Do actual organizations conform to either of these ideal extreme types? As has been noted, many observers have assumed that they do, but even from a common-sense approach an opposite assumption appears to be more defensible. In order to delineate more accurately the actual structural characteristics of organizations in relation to the bureaucratic dimensions, and to test the proposition that bureaucracy actually exists in degrees along the six dimensions, the following hypothesis was tested:

METHODOLOGY

There appeared to be two possible methods of dimensional measurement. One alternative was to observe the actions of organizational participants, noting the incidence of the various types of activities associated with each dimension. Besides being extremely time-consuming in multi-organizational analysis, this method would require prolonged and complete observation in any one organization.

The second alternative was the use of interview responses from organizational participants. The responses for this method would necessarily be directed to the dimensions studied. This second method was selected on the basis of its greater simplicity

and equal reliability.<sup>11</sup> Interview responses can be ordered by the use of carefully prepared scales for this purpose.

It is recognized that the perceptions of participants of their organization may well be at variance with the officially prescribed structure. The official structure, however, is only as important as the degree to which it is adhered to. If the actual organizational structure is a replica of the formal structure, then the formal structure is the significant structural component. On the other hand, the degree of variation from the formal structure is the actual significant structure for organizational operation. Accurate measurement of participant perceptions should therefore yield a reliable and valid representation of the actual organizational structure.

Scales were constructed for measurement of each of the six dimensions. The format of the Likert internal-consistency technique was employed together with other methods.<sup>12</sup> Preliminary items, in the form of descriptive statements related to one of the six dimensions, were collected and edited. The items were placed in preliminary scales on the basis of the "logical" fit of the items. The scales were then pretested to eliminate irrelevant items and, perhaps even more importantly, to eliminate any interdependency among the scales.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Each of the measurement methods outlined involves the possibility of perceptual variations. In the first case the observer may bring a particular biasing viewpoint with him (e.g., antilabor or anti-management). In the latter two cases reliance upon participants' perceptions could be a problem if sufficient care is not exercised in sample selection.

<sup>12</sup> A complete discussion of the methods of scale development is included in Richard H. Hall, "An Empirical Study of Bureaucratic Dimensions and Their Relation to Other Organizational Characteristics" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbus, Ohio State University, 1961).

<sup>13</sup> Maximal elimination of interdependency was accomplished by analyzing each scale item of each scale in its relationship to the other five scales. Those items that were discriminating in more than one scale were eliminated from consideration for the final scales. It should be noted that total independence of scales was not achieved. Some scale items

The six scales that were developed on the basis of these considerations were comprised of items to which organizational respondents were to respond. The responses were based on a five-point scale designed to indicate how closely each statement corresponded to an accurate description of the organization. Examples of items from each scale are:

1. Hierarchy of authority scale: "A person can make his own decisions without checking with anyone else"
2. Division of labor scale: "One thing people like around here is the variety of work"
3. System of rules scale: "The time for coffee breaks is strictly regulated"
4. System of procedures scale: "We are to follow strict operating procedures at all times"
5. Impersonality scale: "We are expected to be courteous, but reserved, at all times"
6. Technical competence scale: "Employees are periodically evaluated to see how well they are doing"

In their final form, the scales were quite brief; five contained ten items each, while the sixth contained twelve items. In spite of their brevity, all the scales were reliable with the corrected split-half correlation coefficients ranging between .80 and .90.

Validity of the scales was more difficult to establish. Inspection led to the conclusion that a high degree of face validity was present. More significantly, the use of external criterion groups indicated that all scales were valid. For each scale the organizations that scored at both extremes were examined to determine whether the scale scores corresponded with the relevant organizational characteristics. The absence of other measures of the dimensions made such a determination difficult, but observational and inter-

had partial relevance in other scales. It appears to be almost impossible to eliminate all such interdependence since the dimensions under study are in fact parts of a whole, the organization. Nevertheless, there is a high degree of independence in the scales. Furthermore, any interdependence that does exist among the scales would lead to higher, rather than lower, intercorrelations among the dimensions. As will be indicated below, the degree of intercorrelation among the dimensions in actual organizations is relatively low.

view data did indicate a high degree of validity. For example, on the hierarchy of authority dimension, the most bureaucratic organization studied was a large hotel that had rigid separation into levels of authority, even in the smaller subdivisions. On the other hand, the least bureaucratic organization was a stock brokerage firm, not included in the final organizational sample because of its small over-all size, in which there were few hierarchical levels. Once licensed, a "representative" had equal authority in comparison to the other "representatives." It was a very flat organization in terms of its hierarchical structure. Similar comparisons were made on the other five scales to establish their validity.<sup>14</sup>

The scales were designed to be administered to the personnel of the organizations selected for study. The organization was assigned a score on each dimension based on the mean of all responses from that organization. The mean scores yield an ordinal score for each organization.<sup>15</sup>

Data were collected from the employees of ten organizations.<sup>16</sup> In each organization

a systematic random sample of employees was selected that was designed to include members of both "management" and "worker" categories in order to reduce bias from either perspective. Respondents from the various internal segments of the organizations were similarly included to avoid any departmental bias.

The selection of organizations for study was purposive to the extent that organizational variety in terms of type, age, and size was desired in order to demonstrate the relationship between the several dimensions. If there is concomitant variation in the magnitude of the dimensions, it should be present when a series of organizations are compared. On the other hand, if inter-organizational comparisons indicate that the dimensions do not vary concomitantly, then the dimensional nature of bureaucratic structure will be further demonstrated.

The final sample included organizations that performed a number of different functions. The organizations ranged in size from 65 to 3,096 employees and in age from four to sixty-three years.<sup>17</sup>

#### FINDINGS

When the mean scores on each dimension were tabulated, a range of scores for the ten organizations was found (Table 2). It should be noted that these scores do not correspond to the possible range of scores for each scale. The possible range is from 12 to 60 on the hierarchy dimension and from 10 to 50 on the other five dimensions. As Table 2 indicates, the scores tend to cluster within a more limited range of the total possible range. It may be possible to locate organizations that would approximate either extreme on any one dimension, but this appears somewhat unlikely. Since the scales are ordinal, the range of the actual scores for the organizations will not approximate

as Udy's, require the assumption that such an organizational structure, or at least some parts of it, approach universality as organizational components.

<sup>17</sup> Pertinent information on organizational selection and descriptions of the organizations selected are included in Hall, *op. cit.*

<sup>14</sup> A more complete description of the methods of establishing validity is found in Hall, *op. cit.*

<sup>15</sup> It must be noted that the use of data from organizational members was done with the realization of the frequently made distinction between the official and unofficial structures of organizations (formal-informal structures). It was recognized that the unofficial relationships that develop in work situations can modify any officially prescribed arrangement. This frequently made observation should not be overstressed, however, for as William F. Whyte has indicated, the formal or official structure sets limits on the shape of the unofficial structure ("The Social Structure of the Restaurant," *American Journal of Sociology*, LIV, No. 4 [January, 1949], 308). The actual organizational structure is thus the pattern of interrelationships that exists. It is a result of both the official and unofficial structures.

<sup>16</sup> The use of multiple organizations in testing these hypotheses will allow any generalizations proceeding from the findings to be more widely applicable. Although some would argue that the concept of bureaucracy can only be applied within one organization at one time, it is this writer's belief that the utility of the concept must be demonstrated within a range of organizations. These organizations are comparable in that they reflect contemporary Western culture. Cross-cultural comparisons, such

the theoretically possible range. The significant point is that a range does exist.

From Table 2, it is evident that the assumptions made regarding the nature of the bureaucratic dimensions are upheld; the degree to which each dimension is present ranges along a continuum, rather than existing in a present-absent dichotomy. Bureaucracy in general thus may be viewed as a matter of degree, rather than of kind.

The major hypothesis was tested by use of the Spearman rank-order correlation method. A rank was assigned to each organization on each dimension. Rank-order coefficients between each dimension and every other dimension were computed and are shown in Table 3.

None of the coefficients reach the .05 level of significance, upholding the central

hypothesis. In the organizations studied, there is no concomitant variation in the presence-absence patterns among the dimensions. The relatively small number of organizations included in this study indicates that caution should be exercised in the interpretation of these findings. The results of this analysis are suggestive, however, of the variability with which the degree of bureaucratization can exist.

Analysis of the matrix of rank correlation coefficients in Table 3 suggests that the "hierarchy" dimension may be the central dimension in the determination of the overall degree of bureaucratization. This can only be looked upon as a tentative proposition, however, because the data from this research do not yield significant conclusions in this direction.

TABLE 2  
MEAN SCORE OF EACH ORGANIZATION ON EACH DIMENSION OF BUREAUCRACY\*

RANK OF ORGANIZATION	SAMPLE N	DIMENSION					
		Hierarchy of Authority	Division of Labor	Rules	Procedures	Impersonality	Technical Qualifications
1.....	35	33.1	29.0	27.6	26.5	21.9	22.5
2.....	26	33.3	32.3	36.0	29.4	25.0	20.8
3.....	37	33.4	34.7	22.2	28.9	23.9	20.8
4.....	36	34.5	34.3	28.7	26.7	25.6	23.2
5.....	32	36.7	36.8	26.3	29.4	24.8	16.3
6.....	28	36.5	31.5	31.0	28.6	21.4	20.2
7.....	45	36.7	32.7	23.9	31.0	31.0	19.0
8.....	26	37.0	28.6	28.3	28.1	26.3	22.0
9.....	26	38.3	36.3	36.9	32.7	30.6	25.5
10.....	26	38.9	35.9	33.2	33.2	27.7	19.3

\* High score = less bureaucratic; low score = more bureaucratic. Difference between extreme scores on all dimensions significant at .05 level.

TABLE 3  
RANK-ORDER INTERCORRELATION COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN DIMENSIONS\*  
(N = Organizations)

	Hierarchy of Authority	Division of Labor	Rules	Procedures	Impersonality
Division of labor.....	.419				
Rules.....	.594	.134			
Procedures.....	.660	.678	.167		
Impersonality.....	.678	.266	.194	.624	
Technical qualifications...	.032	.300	.627	-.303	.170

\* The ranking of each organization was from most bureaucratic to least bureaucratic on each dimension.

Another possibility that should be considered is that organizations of similar types may be found to have similar configurations of dimensional magnitude, with the corresponding concomitant variation among the dimensions. Two organizations, both marketing divisions of large national firms, which were *not* included in the final organizational sample due to inadequate sample size, were found to have quite similar dimensional configurations. Although the data were insufficient for analysis, they are suggestive of the possibility of such common configurations.

TABLE 4

SIZE AND AGE OF ORGANIZATIONS CORRELATED WITH MEAN SCORE ON BUREAUCRATIZATION DIMENSIONS\*  
(*N* = 10 Organizations)

DIMENSION	RANK-ORDER CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS	
	Size	Age
Hierarchy of authority . . . . .	.227	-.409
Division of labor . . . . .	.362	.423
Rules . . . . .	.398	.411
Procedures . . . . .	-.201	-.171
Impersonality . . . . .	.133	.001
Technical qualifications . . . . .	.403	.368

\* Organizations ranked 1-10 from most bureaucratic to least bureaucratic. Size and age ranked 1-10 from largest and oldest to smallest and youngest.

Although there may be similar configurations of bureaucratization among organizations of the same type, evidence obtained during the course of the research indicated that the commonly noted factors of organizational size and age were not related to the degree of bureaucratization on the six dimensions. As Table 4 indicates, none of the rank-order correlation coefficients indicated any significant relationship between age or size and degree of bureaucratization.

The fact that the size and age of the organizations studied were not highly related to the degree of bureaucratization should not be taken as conclusively ruling out the effects of these factors. If a larger organiza-

tional sample were taken, covering a wider range of age and size, the importance of these factors could be more easily determined. It may well be, however, that these factors have been overestimated as the important determinants of bureaucratization. From the evidence here, the type of organizational activity appears to be of greater importance.

It must be stressed, however, that the organizations studied did not yield any significant patterns either in the interrelationships among the dimensions or in over-all organizational configurations.

These findings raise some serious questions about bureaucratic theory as it has been commonly formulated, and about many empirical studies done in "bureaucratic" settings. First, the findings indicate that what is commonly approached as a totality (bureaucracy) is not such an integrated whole in reality. The configurational nature of the degree to which the dimensions are present suggests that organizations are indeed composed of the commonly ascribed dimensions, but these dimensions are not necessarily all present to the same degree in actual organizations. The bureaucratic concept would appear to be more descriptively accurate if it were rephrased in these dimensional terms, with an emphasis on the continual nature of the dimensions. This would allow continuity in the over-all discussions of "highly" bureaucratized organizations, but in a more sophisticated manner. It would also allow other organizations to be studied from the bureaucratic perspective with less conjecture as to their degree and type of bureaucratization.

Second, many of the empirical studies of conditions within the bureaucratic setting and of the setting itself might be re-examined. There is little empirical evidence presented in many studies that yields any reliable estimate of the degree to which the organizations are bureaucratized along the dimensions cited by the authors themselves. Indeed, some research in this area has simply stated that the organizations under investigation are bureaucratic without any



attempt to demonstrate their degree of bureaucratization. From the evidence presented in this study, a reassessment of certain assumptions included in past and contemporary research is warranted. A more exacting delineation of the degree to which the organizations being studied are bureaucratized would aid in the over-all systematization of findings from the field.

Third, the direction of the relationship between the "technical qualifications" dimension and three of the other dimensions is negative, as Table 3 indicates. This finding, while not conclusive, does raise the question of the appropriateness and utility of the inclusion of the dimension in the bureaucratic model. If technical competence is taken to encompass a general high level of training and ability, then it may not be an appropriate dimension. In a highly bureaucratized situation (along all dimensions) the highly competent person might not be able to exercise the full range of his competence due to specific procedural specifications, limited sphere of activity, limited authority due to hierarchical demands, etc. The generally competent person in these terms could easily manifest the symptoms suggested by Merton and others.<sup>18</sup> If, however, this dimension were rephrased to specify that technical competence is required only to the degree necessary to fulfil each job requirement within the hierarchical structure, the dimension might have more verifiable utility.

These findings are similar to those of Udy in certain regards. In distinguishing between the "bureaucratic" and "rational" elements of organizational structure, he notes that there are high interrelationships among the attributes of each element. There was also, however, a negative association between the attributes of the two elements.<sup>19</sup> The dimensions of the present study, while essentially on the "bureaucratic" side of Udy's distinc-

tion do include one dimension which could be termed as "rational."

The "technical qualifications" dimension can be viewed as a "rational" aspect of the over-all concept of bureaucracy used here. As noted above, this dimension was generally negatively associated with the other dimensions. The findings of Udy and this study thus concur on this point. As Udy suggests, the distinction made may be operative in contemporary society as well as in the non-industrial societies that he analyzed.

#### CONCLUSION

This research has raised some serious questions about the theoretical and empirical application of the bureaucratic model of organizational structure to actual organizations. The model itself was not questioned, nor was the possibility of finding organizations that would approach, in all dimensions, the polar extremes of the ideal type. However, through the use of measuring devices, it was shown that, in the organizations studied, the bureaucratic dimensions existed independently in the form of continua.

While additional evidence is needed to demonstrate conclusively the validity of the findings reported in this paper, certain conclusions can be drawn. First, the bureaucratic dimensions are meaningful organizational structural attributes. Second, when measured quantitatively, the dimensions exist in the form of continua rather than as dichotomies. Third, the magnitude of the dimensions varied independently in the organizations studied.

Factors related to the degree of bureaucratization along each dimension were examined. From the data available, it appears that the type of organizational activity may be highly related to the degree of bureaucratization. Additional research in this area may indicate that certain organizational activities are related to particular degrees of bureaucratization on one or several dimensions. For example, organizations that regularly deal with a large volume of customers or clients may develop a high degree of impersonality. At the same time, a rather low

<sup>18</sup> See Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*, and P. Brown, "Bureaucracy in a Government Laboratory," *Social Forces*, XXXII (1954), 259-68.

<sup>19</sup> Udy, *op. cit.*, p. 794.

degree of procedural specificity could be present if there is much variation in the type of interaction involved. While the activity factor appears to be related to the degree of bureaucratization, the factors of age and size did not emerge as important factors in this study.

These findings suggest some additional directions that research in this field could pursue. Studies of conditions that are thought to be associated with a bureaucratic structure could utilize this framework to specify more accurately the situations in which such conditions arise. Certain problems that are typically ascribed to bureaucratic structures may in fact only exist when a particular configuration of the dimensions is present. Some "problems of bureaucracy" could be more concretely studied if the exact nature of the setting were better understood.

The use of this dimensional approach could also lead to a more accurate delineation of the organizational form that is most "rational" for the pursuit of particular organizational goals. For instance, an intense emphasis on procedures may be very useful in one type of organization but not in other

types. It is within the realm of possibility that there are optimal or most rational forms of organization for particular organizational activities. Bureaucracy, as it has commonly been used, may not be that rational form described by Weber, but particular configurations of the bureaucratic model may be the most rational form for particular activities.

If human life is increasingly becoming organizational life, a better knowledge of the organizational structures in which such lives are led may allow a more realistic confrontation of the problems associated with such a life. The mere fact that the "organization man" is a symbol of modern life for some people is not enough for the understanding of the organizational forces that produce such a man. Inasmuch as all organizations are not equally bureaucratic, there are undoubtedly a variety of organizational factors that contribute to a variety of different types of "organization men." More adequate knowledge of such factors is thus essential to the understanding of the overall significance of organizations for contemporary life.

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