

CHAPTER TWO: The Structure of Media Organizations

There are two major views of the structure of media organizations. The first view emphasizes on the human relations aspect of the employees regardless of the structure. And the second view is concerned with the formal structure of the media organizations. However, there is also another approach of organizational structure by taking the other situational factors into consideration. In general, namely, there are three approaches for the structure of any organization: classical, humanistic and contingency approach.

2.1 Classical Approach

Many theorists in classical approach believe that the employee's performance in a given organization depends on the right organizational structure regardless their relations. The structure of the organizations defines the tasks and roles, communication and authority relationships and positions are specified within the organization independently of the personal characteristic of members. An organizational chart illustrates how the parts of an organization fit together organizations are viewed as formal classical systems. And the organizational structure is viewed as formal classical systems. And the organizational structure is viewed as a means to an end that can be modified only to improve performance. There are two theories in the classical approach: Scientific management theory and Theory of bureaucracy.

2.1.1 Scientific Management theory

Scientific management theory assumes that the tasks performance of workers can be scientifically analyzed, so that we can produce maximum output with minimum resources input. Managerial decisions in this theory are made based on scientific analysis rather than arbitration. Workers, for example, would be selected scientifically to perform tasks for which they were best suited. Prescribed scientific techniques determined the work arrangements and salaries. And communication was always one sided (From managers to subordinates) and task oriented.

The failures for this theory were it undermined workers; good judgment and it tried to standardize every aspect of their performance.

For example, the span for top executives should range somewhere between three and nine. The span for middle managers should be between 10 and 30.

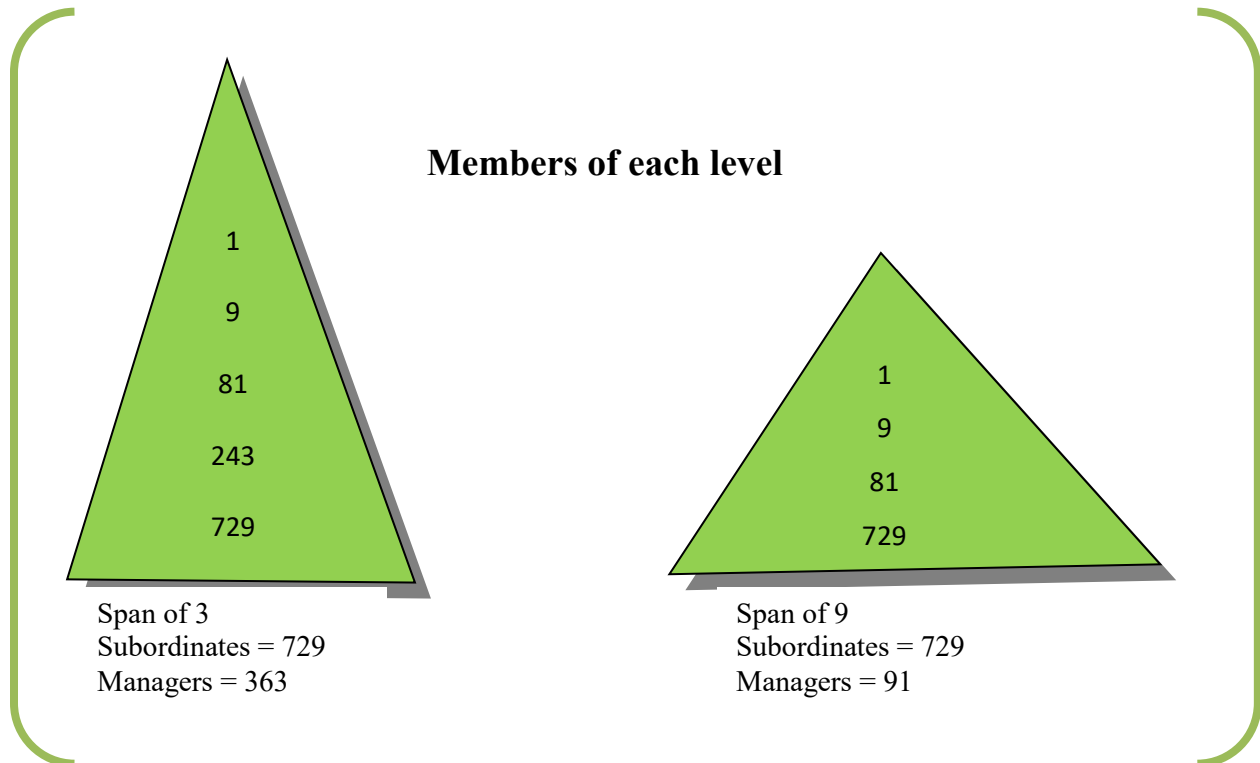


Figure 3: Contrasting span of control

The above figure shows that differing spans result in varying numbers of managers. If one media organization had a span of nine, the wider span would have three and the other a span of nine, the wider span would have three and the other a span would have three fewer levels and 272 fewer managers. If the average manager earned \$ 40,000 a year, the wider span would save more than \$ 108 million a year in management salaries. However, questions remain as to whether wider spans are as effective. In contrast, managers can give subordinates more attention when they have narrower spans of control, which indicates that managers should consider carefully adding subordinates. However, there are other more additional factors to be considered as determinants to understand span of control. Complicity of the work to be done, degree of

information, (b) reproducing information, (c) distributing information, (d) promoting the product (newspaper, news cost) to readers and advertisers, (e) financing operations of the firm, and (f) coordinating the other five processes.

Product: Departmentation by product allows employees to identify with a particular product or service and cohesion or allegiance to the product or service.

Customer: customer Departmentation is based on division by customers served. One example would be a newspaper organization that has one department to handle home deliveries and another to handle industrial customers.

Geographic: Geographic Departmentation occurs in organizations that maintain physically scattered and independent operations or offices. Departmentation by territories permits the use of local workers and/ or sales people.

An examination of most contemporary media organization reveals numerous formal management principles still in operation. These organizations not only have hierarchies and chains of command, but also the transfer of power is governed by rules and regulations similar to those of formal organizational theories assumptions. However, more contemporary schools of thought have attempted to shift the emphasis from the structure of organization, work decision, and measurement to the interactions of individuals, their motivations, and influence on organizational events. This informal approach to organizational structure views organizational design and function as reflections of basic assumptions about human behavior.

2.2 Humanistic Approach

The humanistic approach to organizational structure is based on the assumptions that work is accomplished through people. It emphasizes cooperation, participation, satisfaction, and interpersonal skill. The characteristics of this approach presented by different theories as follow.

2.2.3 Theory X and Theory Y

In this theory the basic nature of people is divided into two attitude profiles as Theory X and Theory Y. Managers can be categorized on either of the two attitude profiles. A theory X manager or believes that the average person dislikes work and will avoid responsible labor whenever possible. These managers must respond to this attitude with controls such as punishments if employees fail to produce. They also assume that employees prefer to be directed in order to avoid responsibility. Such type of managers is based on scientific management theory.

In contrast, a theory Y manager understands motivations and interactions of individuals in the organization are crucial for the accomplishments of tasks. Such managers believe that employees find work as enjoyable as play. They are self motivated and self directed. Because employees are committed to organizational goals, they do not need the threat of punishment to be productive. Theory Y workers neck responsibility and are creative in a solving organizational problems. However, with their contrasting attitude profiles, managers can draws on both sets of ideas depending on the situation.

2.2.4 Theory Z

This theory is one of the approaches to informal organization structure. It is based on the culture of the organization. There are two contrasting organizational cultures: The American organization (Type A) and Japanese organization (Type J). The first one is characterized by short term employment, specialized career paths, rapid promotion, formal control, and individual responsibility. They value individuality over group membership. And the latter one is characterized by lifetime employment, slow advancement, informal control, consensus decision-making, and generalized (not individual based) career paths. Loyalty to groups is of primary concern and more important than individual achievement.

Therefore, theory Z organizations have the chance to take the advantages of both organization cultures individual achievement and advancement with organizational community. The drawback for this theory is that it does not take into account additional situational variables that come into play environmental factors, for example, are overlooked.

2.4 The Effect of Structure on Media Organizations

Organizational influences on media organizations come from many sources. There are formal and informal influences on media organizations. Additionally, there is a contingency approach to structuring media organizations that considers formal and informal variables.

2.4.1 Formal Influence

Some research (done on the formal organizational influence) show that there are some factors to be considered in the organizational structure of media, whether the media are broadcast or print. Studies indicated that there are some work activities of media managers: For broadcast managers their functions include determine policy, executing policy and checking results for control and planning purposes. For news paper managers their functions include supervising, planning and coordinating. The additional ones are descending order, evaluating, investigating, negotiating, staffing and public relations.

With these and other functions of media manager whether in print or broadcast, there are some influences of the formal organizational structure. The communication flow in larger media organization is usually from the top to down. Face to face communication declines as organizations increase in size. In other words the larger the media organization, the more formal the communication between managers and subordinates becomes.

The other influence of formal media organization is technology. However, the formal structure of media organization still needs more studies. Concerning the principles of the formal organizational structure such as optimal span of control for large and small media organizations; departmentalize news personnel and other media employees; and increased division of labor at larger media organizations productivity; there is a demand of research.

2.4.2 Informal influence

Informal organizational influences on the media include (a) the socialization process that takes place within organization. Unspoken message and unwritten laws work in the news room. Journalists are left on their own to discover and internalize responsibilities. The major informal

2.4.3 A Situational Approach

The basic thing here is looking into additional situational variables. Different organizations in different environments require different kinds of organizational structures at various stages in their growth. Variables that can affect the most appropriate organizational structure include the stability of the environment, the objectives of the organization, the tasks involved, the size of the organization, the management approach, the culture, and the characteristics of the work. Dissatisfaction exists when management makes most decisions. An increase in centralization and bureaucratization fosters job dissatisfaction because of diminished autonomy.