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# The Dynamics of The Silent Demand Scientific Management Theories and Practices in The Higher Education Institutions

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## Abstract

Over the decades there has been growing concern on silent dynamics of scientific management theories and practices in higher education institutions. The article explores the leadership silent dynamics of scientific management theories and practices in higher education institutions, aiming at drive professional preparation, growth, and maturity. It highlights the importance of understanding these scientific management theories and practices for quality service delivery, such as heretical order, social system and administrative principles. The paper concludes that there is a significant need archer on classical scientific management theories and practices in higher education institutions. It also suggests that senior leaders should be familiar with these silent dynamics to ably influence higher education management so as to make informed decision. The article critically examined prominent silent leadership dynamics and their implications for senior management in higher education, examining various leadership approaches and practices that teach the senior management team of higher education institution.

## Keywords

Higher Education, Institution, Scientific Management, Classical Theories, Practice

## 1. Introduction

Over the years there has been a silent dynamic in scientific management theories and practices in higher education institutions. The corpus of literature has developed within the academy that amounts to a canon or at least a widely accepted set of texts that are the basis for many of the courses taught under the rubric of higher education institutions. It is clear that, there are silent dynamics management theories and practices that aid leadership to enhances effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery (Badran et al., 2023). Yet there is a silent or no unanimity among either academics staff or practitioners of what constitutes good preparation to takeoff and drive to maturity. Such differences in dynamics of opinion can be illustrated by any causal survey of the field in higher education institutions. Examining several aspects of managerial theories and practices from various institutions we learned that there was nothing approaching a “core” experience or “core” text for such dynamic courses, with the possible exception of smooth governance system (Carrasco et al., 2023), (Bolton et al., 2024) which appeared more often than not.

But there were other texts that regularly mentioned while there other that prove silent and there are actually influential in management of higher education institutions. Besides Birnbaum, the works as advanced in that of Carrasco et al., (2023) recur with some frequency.

Although not surprisingly, there is also no corresponding consensus on what constitutes good practice. Interestingly, there are a few senior management people on the academic sided of Institutions and universities who are themselves scholars of higher education or, more particularly, higher education management (Grainger & Weir, 2020), (Hicks & Kaplowitz, 2024). As background for this article some of key informants were interviewed who have taught management, published research on administration and management issues, and hold top positions in major institutions.

Day today workplace issues rarely get resolved by overt recourse to theories and practices in governance systems of institution of higher education in Uganda. The press of time does not permit such luxury (McMahon et al., 2022). This does not mean that there is no theory at work as decisions are being made. It does mean that by the time one reaches senior-level decision making one has developed a management identity—a sense of self as decision maker which is rooted in a variety of identities, only some of which have been developed in a management arena.

It is out of this sense of identity that preferences for particular theoretical orientations emerge in institution leadership dynamics and management practices (Akbar et al., 2023). Just as a sophisticated palate guides one's choice of wine, so does one's education guide one's choice of theory. But it is not training alone, any more than it is palate alone that determines one's choices. There is a dialectical interaction between one's sense of self and the cultural expectations of the institution that condition the specific choice made in a given instance.

There are other limiting factors in higher education management practice. However, the Prime factors among these are the repertoire of possible theories a person may choose among others. One can't make a Freudian analysis without knowing Freud any more than someone can second approach to management theory without having read it (Brenner & Miller, 2024). Thus, there is a necessary correlation between academic training and one's choice of theory,

but academic background alone is not sufficient to explain the preference for a particular theory or the reason for the choice.

## 2. Methodology

This article adopted a singular methodology that enabled reviewing the theories and practices used in higher education institutions as way of collecting of qualitative data. The relevant information was gathered as part of the larger study. The study focused on theory of management and practices of experience, both with specific and broadly reflection to Ugandan context (UNESCO, 2020a), (Leal et al., 2021). The study draws its key assumptions for the national political agenda and paradigm for sustainable development and education for all. This methodology therefore enabled collection of qualitative data to informed the study and it was anchored on change theory stands for manipulating knowledge for sustainable development and transformation of the county (Lytras et al., 2023). The study largely was based on reviewed of secondary data and research rabbit was employed in data collection giving a reflection of the theory and practices of higher education institution in Uganda. Due to its qualitative in nature, it's descriptive and interpretation of facts was based on stakeholders' response about their experience in Uganda's education and transformation paradigm.

## 3. Theory of Action

Glazzard & Green, (2024) wrote an influential article, theory in Practices in the higher institutions of learning that increasing Professional effectiveness. The cornerstone of Raju & Srinivasan, (2023) argument is that an individual's behavior professional and personal is controlled by a private "theory of action." Such theories of action guide all deliberate human behavior, the authors argued, because such theories are actually assumptions about the nature of what is effective to do in any given situation in life or on the job (Lewis, 2019), (Leslie, 2023). Put more succinctly, such theories are personal prescriptions for procedure, or mental guideposts that inform behavior.

Glazzard & Green, (2024) identify two distinct types of theories that influence one's theory in action and practices. When asked what we might do in any given situation, most of us will champion a particular response. Many managers, for example, when asked how they make decisions, will report that they are democratic and even altruistic: they solicit opinions

from many sources, carefully consider all of them, and then act on the decision that is best for the organization. As we all know, practice often falls short of these espoused theories are what people say they will do; these are the theories that individuals can articulate (Hayden, 2022).

In terms of professional practice, however, the more important of the two theories which inform someone's course of action is theory in use. An individual's theory in use is actually what he or she does do. It is a person's sense of identity as a manager. Theories in use are the internal or implicit rules that people apply in any given situation (Giudice, 2020). If they want consequence C, they will do action A. Most of the time managers cannot fully articulate their theory-in-use for a given situation. In fact, most people are even reluctant to apply the word "theory" in such circumstances, with its connotation of formality and academic pretensions. Ask most managers and they would probably call their "theory in use" instinct, intuition, hunches, or even good guessing (Akbar et al., 2023).

People cannot articulate their theories-in-use in large part because of the enormous number of sources that inform them—including formal training but relying most heavily on the full array of life experiences that a manager brings to the job. Based on all that people know or have experienced, they are able to make assumptions about a set of circumstances and act accordingly (Babalola, 2021). In this way, professionals can categorize events, recognize assumptions in new situations that were germane on previous occasions, and respond effectively to a new set of circumstances. Because of the vast complexity of human learning and the limitless number of potential situations possible in any work situation, the linear formulation "if they want consequence C, they will do action A" is much too simplistic.

In fact, Chiedu & M, (2024) suggest that the appropriate representation or model of how theories-in-use effect behavior is, "in situation S, if you want to achieve consequences C, under assumptions. At times an espoused theory and theory in use will have congruence people do exactly what they say. However, individuals are not always aware that their theory-in-use is in conflict with their espoused theory. Anyone who has worked for someone who says one thing and does another has experienced the discrepancy

described by (Nichols, 2024a) between espoused theory and theory in use.

But, back to how the theories-in-use or management identities are formed in senior administrators. It is likely that the most fundamental reason for choosing one theory over another comes from one's experience, even taking formal ideological preferences into consideration (Nichols, 2024b). Clearly judgments about the experiential success or nonsuccess of an applied theoretical frame will be closely tied to one's ideological stance in the world: a Marxist is not likely to choose supply-side economic theory as a satisfactory basis for explanation, regardless of how convenient it may be. Still, few ideologies become senior administrators in Institutions and universities, at least not in the political sense (Prakash, 2023).

There are days when we wish more were. Then, at least we would know where our "leaders" were coming from rather than having to guess at motive and speculate about intent. It is probable that most administrators are electric and pragmatic, which is to say that they make the best decisions they can under the circumstances and hope for the best. As simplistic as this sound, a strong case can be made for the absence of coherent theory in most decision making, planning, and policy formation (Beasley & Papadelos, 2023). It is probably closest to the truth to say that managers pick and choose among the bits and pieces of management theory they remember, combined with their experience of successful practice in the past, combined again with "gut feeling" to form the basis of a decision. Yet we somehow muddle along, on the whole doing rather better than not the silent scientific management in higher institution of education.

#### 4. Managerial Transformation

A full analysis of managerial identity formation is beyond the scope of this article (Bolton et al., 2024). But, in the discussion that follows, one should bear in mind how critically important personal and institutional culture can be in determining preference. Once a highly visible, student-oriented activist, he is now being criticized for remoteness and passivity. Regardless, he is an effective spokesperson for the campus and a promoter of good for UCLA (Echols, 2024). Much depends, however, on how one construes "good." Not only have the times changed, it would seem that the man has changed in that he now espouses theories other than those with which he

started and as a consequence his practice has altered. One infers that this has been a dialectical process; adjustments to differently perceived “realities” have led to new practices, which in turn shape how one understands the situation and appropriate responses to it (Jane, 2022). Charles Young may not be the most complete example of this interactive adjustment, but he is a dramatic embodiment of managerial metamorphosis. He went from being on kind of “effective” administrator to seeming to be quite another, but it may be that “effectiveness,” perhaps now more than ever, lies in the eye of the beholder and the bottom-line rests firmly on shifting sand blown about by political winds.

In spite of this possibly idiosyncratic exemplum, there are ways of thinking about management that allow for generalizations (Greenwood et al., 2020). Most crushing to those who would contend that Institutions are rational systems, is the premise that theories of management built upon rational decision-making models do not work, period. This is part of the reason Cohen, March, and Olsen’s “garbage can theory” was so refreshing (Henning et al., 2023). But classical theory was not so easily dislodged and we would warn against the continuing tacit assumption that Institutions are repositories of reason-in-practice.

## 5. Scientific Theories and Practices

Both scholar practitioners interviewed for this article predicate their daily work on the notion that rational decision-making models. This may provide a basis for post hoc analysis that is helpful but rarely is there time or inclination to work through or even invoke such models in their workaday life (Odell, 2020), (Machiavelli et al., 2023). Closely allied with that position is the equally basic premise that linear models of the sort that lead to a step-by-step sequential checklist not only do not work, they tend to be reductionist, are at least overly simplistic.

The implications of these two observations for theory building and for the teaching of management practice are profound (Menter et al., 2024). Strategic planning is a rational choice model much embraced in higher education management circles in these waning years of the 20th century. There is certain elegance and attractiveness to the one can identify most if not all of the important variables. The articles emphasizes that affect an institution and then design a rational plan of action that takes their influence into account (Dennen

et al., 2022), (Wassenhoven, 2024). Yet it is not at all clear that any of the planning that has been done under the rubric of strategic planning follows the model closely rational in its terms. It is clear that, there has been successful demonstration that a rational model reasonably applied can produce predictable results (Tsesis, 2020), (Loots & Oberholster, 2023). Too many unpredictable, unexpected, uncontrollable factors such as history, whim, personal prejudice, or coincidence come into play. Sometimes these can be “rationalized” in terms of the model, but experienced hands tend to wink at such exertions. The assertion goes on playing the hand to the silent dynamic’s scientific management theories and practice death them as they would have before the model was adopted (Loots & Oberholster, 2023). Yet the model offers hope and for many shines a light where there had been none—primarily, we would argue, because it seems to produce reason. Consequently, it affords managers rationalized grounds for fulfilling their agenda while being faithful to the values of objective process so beloved by the academy.

A cynic might argue that strategic planning is a sham engaged in by manipulative administrators to gain their own ends. That’s an extreme and probably unfair argument. However, it may not be going too far to suggest that the process itself is so full of choice points for which there is no rationale other than preference that the appearance of sequential decision making is tainted by intellectual dishonesty (Ana et al., 2022), (Cardona & Rey, 2022). Planning processes which involve the whole community are feel-good activities draped by a gossamer cloak of academic respectability because they have been named “theory,” that is not to argue that one should not plan. It is to argue that intellectual honesty requires full disclosure. Unexamined assumptions cannot warrant viable conclusions.

Similarly, theories of budgeting often depend upon linear rational choice models that rarely, if ever, take into consideration enough of the naturally occurring variables to be other than an approximation of what is (Rees et al., 2023). There may be some place in the world where planned expenditures exactly meet actual outgo, but this is doubtful. It probably isn’t even possible in Institutions and universities. This is not because Institutions and universities are necessarily anymore chaotic and less susceptible to order than other Institutions; so much as it is because things don’t work in an orderly and predictable manner (Ahmed, 2023). Positivism long held that there were rules and

laws out there waiting to be discovered. As soon as the right technologies and appropriate methods were developed, and enough time passed, order would be found and named. Once order is named it is captured and then controllable; its behaviors are then predictable and whole industries develop to package and market the named order (Qureshi, 2022).

Perhaps academic Institutions were created to challenge such a linear view of the universe, perhaps not. But somehow there are too many things going on at once, even in the most simple, homogeneous, and tightly managed Institutions to be contained in one philosophy (Laasch, 2024). Albert Einstein said “God does not play dice with the universe,” or something to that effect. Whose work on black holes continues to challenge accepted thinking, has retorted “Not only does God play dice with the universe, He hides the dice”. So it is also with institutions of higher education. Seldom can one know enough about what is going on at any one time to have full confidence that any predicted outcome will closely approximate what actually happens (Fombad et al., 2021). One can hope, gamble, make educated guesses, perhaps even pray, but one cannot be certain.

Possibly certainty is too great a burden to put on any theory. Perhaps theory isn’t intended to produce certainty; only acceptable uncertainty. But theory is intended to provide explanation. Sometimes the explanation is post hoc and then is broadened to include similar preferably identical cases (Meda & Chitiyo, 2022). Alternatively, theory sweeps so broadly (e.g., academic behavior is fundamentally political) that may point in a useful direction but having pointed it takes a little lie down because it has exhausted its capacities.

## 6. Teaching Scientific Management Theory

What, then, is the silent noise in the use of management theory to neophyte administrators towards making informed decision? To return to institutional terms, practice is informing decision making by one’s theory in use, which is developed over time as a result of some mixture of formal training and life experience (Henning et al., 2023). A good preparation program will help staff in both areas or, as we stated earlier, help staff in leadership to inform or refine their managerial identity. It is in the classroom, however, where staff typically acquires the espoused

theory of the professions and adopt appropriate decision-making principles.

A typical higher education curriculum exposes staff integrity to the classic texts and ideas of the field managerial that, introduces them to history, philosophy, and ethics of higher education institutions dynamics. It is pertinent to asks them to be aware of the most current thinking on particular issues of integrity by offering specifically targeted courses such as budgeting, the role of the institutional president. Total Quality Management, adult education, the problem-solving approach contribute to maturity in leadership and governance system (Adams & Harris, 2022). Good case observed can even simulate learning from experience and acquisition of appropriate ways of problem solving. The full extent of the graduate school experience---readings; individual research; informal conversations with peers, supervisors, and faculty members; internships; observations---should help staff acquire a solid foundation in the theory and practice of higher education administration one hopes.

But faculty members continue to speculate on how staff actually performs in their jobs as professional administrators after graduation and what role the curriculum played, if any, in influencing future job performance. While it is highly probable that theories-in-use cannot change without learning the espoused theories, the antithesis is a dubious assertion (Moseley, 2002). It does not automatically follow that simply learning the espoused theory will, in fact, substantially change someone’s theory in use. To say this in a different way using an example we alluded to earlier, if faculty actually thought that staff ought to bring Freudian analysis to bear on administrative decisions. Such exposure is not a guarantee that practice will improve or that they will use the theories.

The challenge for faculty, therefore, is to consider what content and, especially important, what pedagogy can increase the likelihood that staff will alter their theories-in-use based on what we teach as established theory and best practice (Lussier & Kimball, 2023). As the old pedagogue said, “it’s not what you pour on a student that matters, it is what you plant.” One can pour management theory on staff, but it is more effective to plant certain habits of mind that encourage staff to move away from a narrow and nonlinear viewpoint and instead to consider multiple ways of approaching a problem before action is taken (Akbar et al., 2023). When the author surveyed it was

noted that senior practitioners about management theories and practices had the hardest thing to do in order to get staff to realize that not absolutely everything about running a university is politics and dynamics therein.

## 7. Reframing Institutions

Lee Bolman and Terry Deal's article, *Reframing Institutions Artistry, Choice, and Leadership* (Ford & Smith, 2020) is a powerful exemplar of judiciously applied multiple perspectives that staff emulate with ease and understanding. At one level *Reframing Institutions* is primarily synthetic. Bolman and Deal have sorted through an enormous body of literature principally on organizational behavior, management theory, and leadership theory. They assert that all the theories regarding Institutions can be grouped into four frames: structural, human resource, political, and symbolic (Akbar et al., 2023), (Henning et al., 2023)

The structural frame comes largely from the work of sociologists and addresses "fit" for any organization. The human resources frame comes from organizational social psychology, and assumes that Institutions are inhabited by people with needs, feelings, skills, values, desires, and so on (Irby & Lunenburg, 2022). Human resource theorists look at people and Institutions, endeavoring to find solutions that meet the needs of both. As one might expect, the political frame originated in political science. Conflict and power are central themes, as are bargaining and negotiating. Political theorists concentrate on enmity among employees and the distribution of resources. The symbolic frame draws upon cultural anthropology and abandons the assumptions of rationality implicit in the other three frames (Scheper-Hughes, 2023). Symbolic theorists focus on meaning and innovations of the silent dynamics in managerial aspects of higher education institutions.

Even if the article was only synthesis, it would still be a useful tool. It exposes staff to immerse amounts of theoretical material in an organized and coherent manner. The bibliography is also an important resource, because it allows staff to select readings on topics and subjects that interest them. But two additional aspects of the article make it especially useful (Baveye et al., 2020).

The first is the accessibility of the material is meaningful and essential in the managerial of higher education institutions. The writing is clear and lively

and engages academic staffs who invariably find it easy to understand. For a higher education course, Bolman and Deal should be considered domain independent that is, it teaches theories and concepts applicable to college and university management but is not about higher education per se. On the other hand, (Hayes & Kobets, 2023) Works, are frequently required text in management courses, is domain specific the principles of the article have been applied directly to the field of higher education. But because Henning et al., (2023) contends in their organizing in a way that compliments the four-frame analysis and the presentation of ideas is so clear in *Reframing Institutions*, staff find understanding Birnbaum as easier task after reading.

The second reason (Henning et al., 2023) affirms that, there are so beneficial as a text in the course, is because the article is dedicated to increasing a manager's theory-in-use so that performance is enhanced. The authors stress that the need in management is to match the right idea to the right problem the article is intended to provide an increased awareness of options:

The ability to reframe experience enriches and broadens a leader's repertoire..... Expanded choice enables a manager to generate creative responses to the broad range of problems that they encounter..... (Bolton et al., 2024). We cannot count the number of times that human resource managers have told us that they handled a particular problem the "only way" it could be done. Such statements betray a failure of both imagination and its discouraged because it leader senior managers to make an informed decision It can further be enormously liberating for managers to realize that there is always more than one way to respond to any organization problem or dilemma. Managers are imprisoned only to the degree that their palette of ideas is impoverished (Grainger & Weir, 2020).

Bolman and Deal remind staffs that are certain leadership positions of higher education Institutions that, there are complex dynamics and surprising. They are run by people who are equipped with complex dynamics of institutional behavior, their interactions are complex, and the outcomes are arched on policies and decisions are hard to predict, much like hitting a cue ball into the racked triangle of balls (Fleming, 2022). Institutions of higher education are also deceptive and quite ambiguous in their ways of doing some things. Members of the Institutions will

camouflage surprise and fail to communicate in open and candid ways. In addition, information in Institutions may be incomplete, it may be interpreted differently by different people and ambiguity may be deliberately created to hide a problem (Hertwig & Engel, 2021). Sometimes the reality is so complex that the “truth” is not easily comprehended. To cope with ambiguity, managers must first ask “what is going on here?” and then go deeper to ask, “” what is really going on here?” To do so requires a new way of thinking on the part of managers. Boman and Deal state that their goal is not to “produce specific kinds of behavior but to cultivate habits of mind.... In particular, we want to reduce the gap between how managers, consultants, and policy makers typically think and how they might think (Elston, 2024).

Bolman and Deal also provide interesting case studies from a wide variety of organizational settings, including higher education, which are helpful teaching tools. Although case study teaching is typically used to enhance or exercise particular managerial skills, it is also an effective device for problem analysis according to the frames proposed by (Chatterjee & Saxena, 2023). As mentioned above, the point of Bolman and Deal is to get leadership staff to look at Institutions policies through different lenses so that an analysis of the problem is complete and richly textured. Case studies are an effective device for promoting such learning. The leaders of the staff can then solve the problems by offering prescriptions based on theoretical knowledge and thereby illustrating a successful blending of theory and practice (Tijus et al., 2020).

Clearly, Reframing Institutions to adhere to the philosophy those in leadership of staff should approach problems from different perspectives using superior methods and practices arched on the scientific management theories. It provides the knowledge base that facilitates such a goal, and presents the information in a way that is both understandable and challenging (Brenner & Miller, 2024). Looking at management from multiple perspectives is not only good advice for staff, but also for college presidents as well. (Akujieze, 2023) give the same advice to members of boards of trustees. In their prescriptive article, The Effective Board of Trustees, Chait et al. recommend that board members, in order to be more effective, learn (Alter & Fernekes, 2022)

These theories, termed “frames” provide lenses or perspectives that managers use to gather information,

reach decisions and take actions.... To quibble about the number or description of these frames would be to miss the central point: where and how we look determines what we see. If a trustee were to view an Institution through only one of these frames, some facets of a problem would be sharply illuminated, while other aspects would be blurred or even invisible

## 8. Conclusion

The article affirms the silent unanswered questions on scientific management theories and practices in this argument of higher education institutional management and classroom-based learning practices as the main the question. “Why not just put people to work and then trust on the job training to supply all that’s needed to perform well as a manager. In some cases that is all that is needed. But most of us need contexts within which to think about things we observe and experience. All of us who do academic administration are little theory makers. We constantly check this experience against that experience or current practice, in order to find patterns to guide our next decision or to help us out of the next crisis. Rarely is large theory invoked, although pieces of theory abound and are bouncing around in our heads. These, like platelets, attach themselves to our thoughts and guide our thinking in unexamined (perhaps unknowable) ways, but in ways that would not be possible were it not for the already encountered theories. The platelets coagulate into a critical mass that combines enough pieces of theory with enough experience to produce insights adequate to the task. Built into this thought pattern are sensibilities about what is right and what will work that are so inchoate as to defy description. But, like talent, you know it when you see it even if you cannot account for it. These sensibilities act like alarms that go off when something is not working. With good luck and good experience, the alarms go off more often at the right time than as a consequence of short circuits or over heating or anxiety attacks.

We can’t really teach talent—though we can burnish it. What we can do, through exposure to case and intelligent compatriots with whom to share good conversation, is provide safe forums. Whether these are called seminars or workshops or courses doesn’t matter. What matters is that inexperienced practitioners get to test their thinking in a cauldron of shared intensity where fully formulated theory comes into contact with workaday theory making. Here we

begin to arrive at possible understandings without risking fortunes or the welfare of others. Here we elaborate and formalize the on-going process of filtration that we began as youngsters and refined as we grew; filtration that begets appropriate discrimination, that lets in the right data and keeps out the wrong that allows the mixing of theory with theory and experience and observation. This is rigorous filtration, where disciplined minds can interact and reflect with a suspension of disbelief that is almost never possible on the job. These encounters provide a reservoir of unpractised knowledge that can be invoked or, more likely, that come bubbling up when needed, to inform a decision or to guide a choice. With luck and some talent good management may result.

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