

3 Max Webers concept of Bureaucracy

Max Weber, the exponent of the most important paradigm of bureaucracy in administrative science was born in Germany in 1864. His father was a lawyer and the atmosphere of his house helped develop in Max Weber an intellectual and keenness right from his childhood.

After completing preliminary schooling in 1882, Weber studied law at the university of Heidelberg. In 1889 he submitted his doctoral dissertation on "A contribution of the History of Medieval Business Organisation". He joined the university of Berlin as an instructor in law and completed his second work called "Roman Agrarian History and its significance for public and private law" in 1891.

Later in 1894 he was appointed professor of Economics at the University of Freiburg. In 1896, he again moved to the University of Heidelberg. In 1898, he suffered a nervous breakdown from which he could not recover easily. Resultantly, the University granted him leave without pay. It was only in 1903 that Weber

was able to resume his academic activities.

Weber's primary interest ^{was} in the analysis & development of civilisations. This is reflected in his study of sociology of religion and the sociology of economic life. In both these important areas, he examined at length the major religions of the world, such as Judaism, Christianity and Buddhism. He also analysed different kinds of organisation, such as economic enterprises, religious orders, associations and Parties. There are some factors in Weber's life which need to be considered before attempting to analyse his writings. First, Weber's life for analysis and systematised study began at the age of thirteen.

Second, Weber always preferred knowledge obtained through practical experience.

Third, Weber was progressive in outlook and yet conservative at heart.

Fourth, Weber's writing reflects the social conditions of Germany of his times. He saw the decline of liberalism and the threat to individual in the bureau-

→ Weber did not use authority as a separate technical term but appeared to think of it as a ~~synonym~~ synonym for domination.

bureaucratization of that society. Unification of Germany under Bismarck and elimination of liberal middle class movement convinced Weber that the great goal could only be achieved through power politics.

Weber's analysis of Bureaucracy starts with the question as to why individuals obeyed command and why people do as they are told. To tackle this problem Weber made a distinction between power - the ability to force people to obey regardless of their resistance - and authority - where orders are voluntarily obeyed by those receiving them. →

Distinction
bt.
power & authority

Weber's most important contribution to social science has been the formulation of three pure type of legitimate authority. Weber believed that the exercise of authority was a universal phenomenon that characterized social relationships. These three type of authority systems are Charismatic authority, Traditional authority and legal-

rational authority. They characterize the relationship existing between a supreme ruler and the masses.

Traditional Authority: Traditional authority rests on the belief in the rightness of established customs and traditions.

Those in authority command obedience on the basis of their traditional status which is usually inherited. The subordinates are directed by feelings of loyalty and obligation to long established position of power. The feudal system of medieval Europe provides an example of traditional authority.

The administrative staff under such an authority system has one of the two patterns, viz. either patrimonial or feudal. Under the patrimonial form, officials are personal servants of the ruler and they ^{owe} ~~owed~~ traditional loyalty to the supreme head, whereas under feudalism the officials have much more autonomy with their own source of income but they owe a traditional relationship of loyalty towards a leader.