

## **Max Weber's Approach: Bureaucracy and Power Structure in Modern Educational Organizations**

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### **Abstract**

This research uses Max Weber's theory to investigate the role of bureaucracy and power structures in modern educational organizations. The main focus of this research is to determine how Weber's ideas of power and bureaucracy can be applied to modern educational institutions. The research method involves analyzing the literature on the related subjects of Max Weber's theory, bureaucracy, and power structures in contemporary education systems. This literature review included books, scientific journals, and conference papers. To support the research findings, the data collected was analyzed qualitatively. The study shows that Weber's bureaucratic principles, such as rational rules, division of tasks and hierarchy, are still relevant in modern educational organizations. However, their influence may vary depending on several things, such as flexibility, innovation and participation. Weber's theories of authority and control help to understand how power functions in modern educational institutions. Overall, this study provides a better understanding of Weber's theories in understanding bureaucratic dynamics as well as power in educational institutions; this can help the improvement and development of modern education systems.

**Keywords :** Bureaucracy, Power Structure, Education.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In this challenging era, organizations face increasingly complex problems when they deal with resource management, maintaining stability, and improving operational efficiency. Due to the ever-changing globalization, rapid technological advancements, and increasing competition, organizations must better understand how they organize themselves and manage critical elements of the organizational structure (Devi et al., 2023b).

Although basically as stated in QS Al-AN'am verse 165 that "Indeed your Lord has power over all His servants. And He sends guards (to supervise their actions) until when death comes to one of them, then Our messengers (angels who die) take his soul; and they (the Angels) do not neglect their duties," which means that power and authority in the organization come from God, even though they are carried out by humans. In this situation, organizational theory becomes the main basis for understanding a number of factors that influence organizational performance. The key role of organizational theory lies in its details of the basic principles that guide organizational action. In this context, the main role will be seen from Max Weber's theory, especially in the context of bureaucracy and power structures.

The idea of bureaucracy, which includes essential components such as effective division of labor, organized hierarchical structure, clear written rules, and the principle of impersonalism in relationships, is still very important for modern organizations. It is essential for organizations to understand how to apply and integrate these ideas into decision-making processes and operations. Especially when referring to Muslim HR, "Each of you is a leader

and will be held accountable for his leadership" then how the leader and each individual in it runs an organization becomes very important, because everyone will be accountable for their leadership (Devi et al., 2023b).

How power is distributed and organized within an organization is called the power structure. According to Weber, there are two types of authority in his theory: rational-legal authority based on laws and rules, and traditional authority based on historical and cultural events that influence the distribution of power. The concept of power structure includes many components, such as the hierarchy that determines who is responsible and has authority within the organization (Irawan, 2019). The flow of instructions and decisions within an organization is managed by a hierarchical structured structure. In addition, authority within the framework of the power structure includes the rights of individuals or units within the organization to make decisions, provide instructions, or manage resources. Sources of authority can come from various sources, such as their position in the hierarchy, laws, or established regulations (Azhar, 2016).

In organizations and social structures, power orientation is an important part of the power structure. Different types of authority in this structure affect the exercise of power (Maliki, 2018). For example, rational legal authority relies on officially recognized rules and laws that serve as an objective basis for the decision-making process. In contrast, traditional authority is more associated with history, culture, and traditions that influence the decision-making process. Power structures can also be distributed differently. On the other hand, some organizations tend to be highly centralized, with power concentrated in one or a few people in the organizational hierarchy. Some organizations also tend to be more decentralized. This means that authority is distributed more evenly between different levels or organizational units (Halim, 2020).

Bureaucracy is an administrative system with written rules that regulate individual duties and responsibilities, involving a clear division of labor and hierarchy as key elements. Governments, educational institutions, large companies, and non-profit organizations usually have bureaucracies, because the principle of impersonalism states that decisions must be made based on objective standards (Sawir, 2020). Setiawan (2014) stated that although bureaucracy is sometimes considered slow and too formal, the purpose of the bureaucratic system is to create an effective, consistent, and structured organizational structure so that tasks and responsibilities can be clearly defined. This method has become the basis for modern organizational management and complex government administration.

Understanding Weber's theory in different business contexts is based on previous research (Devi et al., 2023a). Many studies have examined the important elements of this theory, such as power structure, bureaucracy, and rational-legal principles, in various forms of organizations. However, this study will use an in-depth approach through literature review to combine existing information. This study aims to integrate the results of previous studies into a broader framework to provide a broader understanding of the role of Weber's theory in facing the challenges and dynamics of contemporary organizations. The ultimate goal of this study is to improve understanding of how this theory can help organizations achieve their goals and adapt to environmental changes.

This study aims to explain how bureaucracy and power structures function in contemporary educational systems. Weber's method is used as the theoretical basis for this study. This study will look at recent developments in the understanding of Max Weber's theory, its use in modern educational organizations, and its role in solving problems in the field. This study will discuss relevant previous research on Max Weber's ideas on

bureaucracy and power structures, and explain the purpose of the study to answer key questions and provide deeper insights into Weber's role in contemporary organizations.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study was designed as a qualitative study and used a literature study approach. This method allows for analysis and conclusions of literature on modern education, power structures, and bureaucracy, in accordance with Max Weber's approach (Syafitri et al., 2023). Related literature, such as books, journal articles, and conference papers, serve as the main data sources. The process of keyword searching, synthesis, and classification of sources is used to select the right literature.

Primary data analysis was conducted by reading literature texts, summarizing, and finding patterns, themes, and concepts. Comparative analysis was used to compare perspectives and findings found in the literature and to contrast those findings. This study used a descriptive as well as analytical approach. To understand the complex dynamics of this topic, the researchers provided a description of Max Weber's ideas on bureaucracy, power structures, and the way modern education is organized. They also analyzed the various perspectives, similarities, and contradictions found in the literature (Devi et al., 2023a).

## DISCUSSION

### Bureaucracy in Max Weber's View

Solong and Yadi (2021) stated that bureaucracy is a system used to manage an organization, especially a large one such as a government or company. The bureaucratic system has clear rules, procedures, and hierarchies. The principles of bureaucracy include rationality, impersonality, well-structured hierarchy, and division of specific tasks. Haning (2018) stated that bureaucracy helps organizations carry out decision-making and carry out their duties in an orderly, efficient, and consistent manner. Despite its benefits, bureaucracy is sometimes considered too complicated and slow to adapt to change.

In the research of Munafaroh and Masyhuri (2019) it is stated that the understanding of modern organizations is greatly influenced by the concept of bureaucracy defined by Max Weber. Bureaucracy is a term used to describe an administration or management system that has certain characteristics, such as rationality, impersonality, hierarchical structure, and specific division of tasks. This concept was developed by Weber in the 20th century and Weber explained its principles, which can be applied to various types of organizations, such as companies, governments, and others.

Each member of the organization has a defined role, and work is divided into specific tasks, which is a characteristic of bureaucracy. In government institutions, where officials are responsible for tax revenue and other officials handle licensing, a clear division of tasks can increase specialization and efficiency (Devi et al., 2023a). Bureaucracy is characterized by written rules, guidelines for members of the organization on policies and procedures. These rules create transparency, prevent arbitrary policies, and ensure consistency in organizational actions. The principle of impersonality demands that decisions and interactions are not influenced by personal factors, ensuring compliance with the rules and preventing discrimination or favoritism. Thus, bureaucracy ensures fair and equal treatment for all members of the organization (Ambarwati, 2021).

Taruna (2017) in his research stated that bureaucracy implements a well-organized hierarchical structure, with levels of authority distributed from the highest to the lowest level. The organization has clear lines of communication and decision-making because each level

of the hierarchy has clear responsibilities and authorities. For example, in a company hierarchy, the CEO holds the highest position and has the highest authority. Employees at lower levels report to the managers above them. This structure helps the organization make decisions and work together.

Rationality is a fundamental principle that underlies Weber's concept of bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is planned with the aim of achieving the highest level of efficiency and effectiveness in achieving organizational goals. Rules and procedures are carefully crafted to achieve desired outcomes and provide structure and parameters for achieving corporate goals. Although Weber's concept of bureaucracy brings benefits such as the establishment of stability, order, and efficiency in organizations, criticisms and challenges also arise. According to some critics, bureaucracy can lead to excessive bureaucratization, rigidity, and lack of innovation. On the other hand, there is debate about how quickly bureaucracy can adapt to advances in information technology (Arif and Kriswibowo, 2020).

The basic principles of Weber's bureaucracy remain an important basis for understanding organizational structure and management in contemporary organizational environments. Key elements such as rationality, impersonality, hierarchy, division of labor, and written rules remain relevant and applicable in a variety of situations, although the interpretation and application of these concepts have changed. In addition to remaining a vital tool for achieving organizational goals and ensuring clear and consistent decision-making processes, understanding Weber's concept of bureaucracy can help organizations address issues more effectively in this changing era.

### **Bureaucracy of Modern Educational Organization**

Sawir (2020) stated that bureaucracy has a central role in the organizational structure of modern education. Its definition and development by Max Weber made the concept of bureaucracy a dominant framework in the arrangement, management, and operation of educational institutions throughout the world. Weber's concept of bureaucracy reflects an efficiently organized administrative structure, relying on a clear division of labor, hierarchy, rational rules, and standard procedures. Parlina et al. (2023) stated that bureaucracy is very important in modern educational organizations, providing an efficient framework through division of labor, hierarchy, rational rules, and standard procedures. The main advantage is creating an orderly administrative structure. Educational institutions with a large number of employees, such as schools and colleges, need this. Every worker in a bureaucratic environment has clear roles and responsibilities, and organized communication ensures that daily work runs smoothly.

Through a clear division of labor, bureaucracy in modern education helps to establish staff responsibilities. To ensure efficient management in carrying out their respective tasks, teachers, administrators, and support staff have clear roles. Teachers focus on teaching, administrators take care of school arrangements, and support staff help run the school's daily routines. This division of labor increases specialization and service for students and other stakeholders (Daraba, 2019). Solong and Yadi (2021) stated that in addition to the division of labor, hierarchy plays a crucial role in modern educational bureaucracy by forming structured levels of authority and responsibility. The top position of the hierarchy, such as the principal or dean, is responsible for key decisions, while administrators and teachers at lower levels have authority according to their respective roles. With a hierarchy, educational institutions can operate with a high level of discipline and effectiveness.

Hamzah and Yusuf (2023) stated that rational rules and standards are other important components of contemporary educational bureaucracy. These two components ensure that

every day-to-day work is carried out in a predetermined manner. For example, rational rules can include rules on teacher recruitment, school fund management, and how student assessments are carried out. If there are clear rules and procedures, every action and decision can be given a clear reason. Solichin (2015) explained that bureaucracy in modern education plays a vital role in managing resources and creating operational transparency, especially to meet accountability demands. With a large budget, educational institutions are managed by a bureaucracy to ensure that funds are used efficiently. With clear roles, employees can manage resources such as operational funds, school equipment, and physical facilities effectively, which helps achieve organizational goals by maximizing the use of resources.

Local needs and problems may not always be in line with centrally determined educational bureaucratic policies. As a result, educational institutions must be given sufficient autonomy to overcome bureaucratic limitations. Methods such as school-based management give schools more authority to choose policies, resources, and teaching that suit their specific needs and difficulties (Adia and Susetyo, 2022).

Gaoi (2023) explains that Weber's concepts such as standard procedures, rational rules, division of labor, and hierarchy show bureaucracy as an important element in contemporary educational organizations. Challenges such as inflexibility and inability to adapt to local needs arise despite providing an effective framework. Therefore, in order for educational institutions to adapt to change and meet the growing demands of education, an approach that balances bureaucratic structures and flexibility is needed.

### **Power Structure in Max Weber's View**

Salim (2023) stated that Max Weber defined the concept of power structure as the basis for organizational theory and power systems. He believed that power structure is an important component in understanding how power is interpreted, distributed, and used in an organization. Traditional authority, rational-legal authority, and charismatic authority are the three main power structures according to Weber's theory. Traditional authority comes from traditions, customs, and norms of society that are passed down from one generation to the next, an example of which is a monarchy that relies on the descendants of the royal family for its power.

Rational-legal authority is a form of power based on written rules and rational procedures, used by many modern government organizations and companies. Decisions and actions taken within this framework must be made objectively without being influenced by personal considerations or social relationships. Therefore, charismatic authority depends on the leader's personal appeal or charisma. Fascinated by the leader's vision or personality, people follow them. Religious figures or political leaders who inspire their followers are examples of charismatic leaders who are often revolutionary and have the potential to change the power structure (Adia and Susetyo, 2022).

Dewi and Sos (2017) revealed that the form of authority, whether traditional, rational-legal, or charismatic, has a different impact on the organization. Conventional authority is usually more conservative and not easily changed. Although rational-legal authority is useful for managing a business, they can also be too rigid. Charismatic authority brings innovation and change, but if it depends on one person, they can also be unstable. In looking at contemporary organizations, the influence of this power structure is important. Rational-legal power often takes over the business, but charismatic leadership brings change and innovation.

Madistriyatno (2022) stated that in modern organizations, there is often a combination of the three forms of authority: strict written rules and the presence of a leader with charismatic appeal. Because of this situation, the role of the power structure is very dynamic

and complex. Understanding Weber's theory of power structures in a social and political context helps explain the various forms of government and power that exist in various countries. Conventional or charismatic authority is prioritized in some countries, while rational-legal authority is prioritized in others. The extent to which a country can operate effectively, fairly, and responsively to the needs of its people can be influenced by this power structure.

In conclusion, understanding the concept of power structure in Weber's theory is a significant foundation for understanding modern organizational structures and power systems. According to Weber, there are three types of authority: traditional authority, rational-legal authority, and charismatic authority. These types show how power is defined, distributed, and used in various situations. In-depth knowledge of the impacts and consequences of these three types of authority helps to manage power structures and organizations well. This knowledge also helps to explain various phenomena in society and the political realm.

### **Modern Educational Organizations and Their Constraints**

Azra (2019) in his research stated that modern educational organizations in the business, government, and non-profit sectors face complex challenges to remain relevant and successful in this dynamic era. These challenges include rapid changes in the global environment, culture, economy, technology, and society. Adaptation and development of appropriate strategies are key to addressing these changes. The impact of globalization is one of the main challenges, where increasingly close world connectivity creates new opportunities as well as tighter competition. Success in competing in a complex global market requires a deep understanding of the laws, cultures, and norms in various parts of the world.

Wahyudi (2023) stated that modern organizations face major challenges due to technological developments that occur in the digital era, which have an impact on operations and interactions with customers. To stay competitive, investments in technologies such as data analytics, artificial intelligence, and automation must be balanced with addressing pressing data security and privacy issues. In addition, organizations must be flexible to quickly respond to market changes and customer needs. Developing structures and cultures that support adaptation and flexibility is necessary because rigid business models and slow processes can be obstacles.

In modern organizations, diversity and inclusion are top priorities. It is essential for organizations to ensure a diverse population and create a welcoming environment where every member feels valued regardless of their background. Diverse perspectives and ideas drive innovation as a result of success in this regard. Sustainability and corporate social responsibility are top priorities on the agenda of contemporary organizations. Organizations are motivated to act sustainably and responsibly in their operations because of their concern for environmental, social, and economic issues. Organizations integrate sustainability and social responsibility initiatives into their strategies and branding (Wicaksana et al., 2022).

Sabri (2020), changes in employee and customer expectations, especially from millennials and generation Z, affect the structure and culture of modern organizations. Organizations need to be responsive to these values, including meaning in work, meaningful collaboration, and sustainable products or services, to attract and retain talent and customers. Organizational culture must encourage inclusion, innovation, and sustainability, while organizational structures must allow for flexibility and responsibility. Innovative and flexible leadership and competent and dedicated employees are needed for this change.

In facing today's challenges, contemporary organizations need to evaluate concepts such as bureaucracy and Weber's power structures that originated in the past. This is despite the possibility that power structures must be adjusted to changing environments, but basic principles such as rationality, impersonality, hierarchy, and division of labor continue to be the basis of organizational management. For organizational leaders, a thorough examination of how these ideas adapt to today's challenges can provide valuable guidance (Maolana et al., 2023).

In conclusion, in a changing environment, modern organizations face complex and diverse issues. Flexibility, sustainability, innovation, responsibility, inclusion, and adaptation are the keys to addressing these challenges. To succeed in this dynamic world, both leaders and employees must have the right innovation and strategy. In such a situation, understanding important concepts such as Weber's power structure and bureaucracy can help modern organizations address these challenges more effectively.

## I. CONCLUSION

Max Weber's theories on bureaucracy and power structures are still relevant in contemporary education systems. Order and efficiency are supported by principles such as rationality, impersonality, hierarchy, division of specific tasks, and written rules. However, research also shows that contemporary educational institutions face complex issues such as globalization, technological advancement, flexibility, inclusion, sustainability, and changing employee and consumer expectations. Therefore, Weber's principles must be adapted to contemporary organizations by considering today's challenges and integrating traditional principles with today's needs. In short, a good understanding of Max Weber's ideas is essential for modern organizational management. Organizations that are flexible and responsive to the times can use bureaucratic principles as a strong framework.

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