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Book Review

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Introduction

The institutional logic perspective is a meta-theoretical perspective built upon the neo-institutional theory, but, bifurcated from the institutional theory by being grounded on both the symbolic and the manifestation of institutions. Being a meta-theoretical perspective, which integrates theories such as rationality, structuration, agency, etc., it is capable of analyzing the interrelationships among institutions, individuals, and organizations in the social system. The book *'The Institutional Logics Perspective, A New Approach to Culture, Structure, and Process'* by Patricia Thornton, William Ocasio and Michael Lounsbury is organized into eight chapters. The book illuminates how the concept of institutional logics perspective is grounded on neo-institutional theory, and yet, how it fundamentally departs from that theory;

logics perspective as a multilevel theoretical framework; and how dynamic practices of organizations could be theorized using the logics perspective.

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Institutional Logics Perspective

This chapter presents the origin of the theory, why the theory is claimed as a metatheoretical framework and the definition of institutional logics as the socially and historically constructed “set of material practices and symbolic systems including assumptions, values, and beliefs by which individuals and organizations provide meaning to their daily activity, organize time and space, and reproduce their lives and experiences.” (p. 2). This chapter explains the logics of family, religion, state, market, and profession, which determines how actors (individual and organizational) do their sensemaking and reasoning differently, and how the differently perceived and experienced rationality is the reasoning behind organizational heterogeneity. Therefore, the theory is capable of conceptualizing a long-standing issue in social sciences, namely, “how we are all affected by the world of institutions” (p. 2). In addition, Chapter 1 includes an excellent roadmap for the reader.

Chapter 2: Precursors to the Institutional Logics Perspective

Following the theory development method (theoretical proliferation) of Berger and Zelditch (1993), Chapter 2 elaborates on how it departs from legitimacy, which had previously been considered the dominant factor of organizational homogeneity. Opposing the idea that organizations become homogeneous in their attempt to gain legitimacy and mindless cognition of organizational actors, authors explain organizational heterogeneity by bringing organizational actors and symbolic or material manifestation of institutions, among other things, to the foreground of their theory. Thereby, the logics perspective as a meta-theory integrates the cultural, cognitive, regulative, and normative aspects of organizational actors’ behavior. Further, the authors of the book posit that the theory of isomorphism primarily focuses on conceptualizing issues in the Western world; however, this meta-theory of institutions can be applied to all societies as a systematic approach to illuminate cultural heterogeneity.

Chapter 3: Defining the Inter-institutional System

Chapter 3 elaborates on the logics perspective as a multilevel theoretical framework (societal, institutional field, organizational, group and individual). Starting from a macro level analysis, authors argue that the community is also a logics claim. Grounded on the precursors (explained in Chapter 2), the authors develop

family, religion, state, market, profession and corporation as institutional orders, and within each order, there are logics and those logics determine how individuals and organizations behave in a particular way.

Chapter 4: Micro-foundations of Institutional Logics

Leaning on cognitive and social psychology, Chapter 4 explains the micro-foundations of the theory. Furthermore, it elaborates how the authors synthesize existing theoretical notions and mechanisms to construct this theory as an original theory. The chapter provides guidance to logics researchers by illuminating organizational actors' accessibility to logics, and the likelihood of them using the logics, resulting in 'situated rationality'. In other words, this chapter explains how actors' sensemaking, decision making, coordination and problem solving, etc. are shaped by accessible institutional logic. Therefore, the authors argue, institutional persistence and change are determined by organizational actors.

Chapter 5: Stability and Change in the Inter-institutional System

Chapter 5 of the book introduces cases to explain how individuals recognize and attend to several logics based on their capacity, as well as prior experience and knowledge in relation to different societal institutional orders. The chapter mainly discusses the emergence, re-emergence and change of the institutional logics. By doing so, the authors attempt to illuminate the appearance of micro and macro, individual and societal level institutional orders, and how they could be used to construct the novel theory of 'cultural entrepreneurship'.

Chapter 6: Dynamics of Organizational Practices and Identities

Drawing from identity and practice literature, this chapter explains how organizational actors' sensemaking and collective mobilization determine practice variations inside and across the organizations. As the authors argue, this happens because the practice and identity have both been integral to actors' decision-making within an organization. Holding logics on the one hand and the practice and identity literature on the other, the authors explicate how institutional logics shape and are shaped by actors' practices and identities.

Chapters 7 and 8: The Emergence and Evolution of Field Level Logics

Chapter 7 explains the emergence of the culture and evolution of logics at the institutional field level. Elaborating on this, Chapter 7 explains how characteristics of

societal-level orders are represented in institutional logics, Chapter 8 provides implications of the logics perspective.

Conclusion

By Reading *Institutional Logics Perspective, A New Approach to Culture, Structure and Process* by Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury, a contemporary researcher could understand not only how different logics determine practice variations of organizations, and how organizational issues could be theorized grounding on different logics introduced by the institutional logics perspective, Further, the book provides an excellent explanation of how a novel theory could be constructed with an orienting strategy, and how a new theory could stand on its core theory while opposing the key theoretical constructs of that very core theory by drawing from peripheral theories.

References

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