



Organization's Structure Alignment to the Environment and Objectives is a Key Determinant of its Success

Joyce J. C. Kiplimo

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Joyce J. C. Kiplimo

PhD Student, Department of Leadership Studies, Pan African Christian University

Email address: Jkiplimo2013@gmail.com

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Abstract

The alignment of an organization's structure with its environment and objectives is emphasized in this paper as a critical factor in determining its success. The paper highlights the importance of understanding the external environment and adapting to changes, as well as the role of organizational objectives in shaping the structure. The paper discusses the various types of organizations, ranging from multinational corporations to nonprofits, as well as the unique challenges that each type of organization faces. It emphasizes that organizations operate in a complex and dynamic external environment, and that their structure should be adaptable to changes while remaining aligned with their strategic goals and objectives. It investigates how various schools of thought in organizational theory can assist organizations in identifying and addressing challenges, as well as providing guidance in designing a suitable structure to effectively address those challenges. The paper also provides examples of organizations that used these theories to gain insights into areas such as organizational design, leadership, communication, and decision-making, all of which are critical for effectively addressing challenges. Organizations can design a suitable structure that allows them to effectively deal with the challenges they face and ultimately achieve their desired outcomes by considering the principles and concepts offered by organizational theory.

Keywords: *Organization's Structure, Alignment, Environment, Objectives, Determinant, Success*

1.0 Background of the study

An organization is an intentionally organized social unit with a very distinct border that operates almost continuously to accomplish a common aim or collection of goals (Robbins, 1990). He further noted that organizations have boundaries that differentiate members and non-members and therefore the interaction patterns must be balanced and harmonious to minimize duplication and guarantee the completion of crucial tasks. Usually, there is broad agreement with the organization's purpose, even if not all members must completely support its objectives. On the other hand, (Daft ,2016) and (Daft et al.2014) described organizations as social entities that are goal-directed and created as intentionally organized and coordinated activity systems connected to the outside world. Both definitions emphasis the increased focus on empowering workers by giving them more chances to learn and contribute while working together to achieve common objectives, which highlights the value of people and their relationships. In relation to (Robbins, 1990) assertion that organizations have very distinct boundaries, (Daft, 2016) noted that as businesses are forced to react to changes in the external environment more quickly, departmental and organizational boundaries are becoming more fluid and diffuse. Without engaging with clients, vendors, rival businesses, and other components of the outside world, an organization cannot survive. Some businesses nowadays even collaborate with their rivals, exchanging technology and information to their mutual benefit. Organizations exist within a wider context and are linked to their environment which is shaped and changed by the organizations that comprise it (Daft, 2016).

Organizations can be large multinational corporations, small family-owned businesses, for-profit, nonprofits, or governmental agencies. Some could be manufacturing products like automobiles, lightbulbs, and providing services like legal representation, internet and telecommunications, mental health resources, and car repair (Daft, 2016; Daft et al.,2014). They asserted that it is important to know that managers in businesses focus on financial gain, while nonprofit managers aim to generate social impact. This distinction presents unique challenges for leaders in nonprofit organizations such as the difficulty of securing funding or competing with profit-making businesses as well as navigating unique characteristics and needs. Because of these challenges, it's difficult to measure the performance of non-profits in terms of returns on capital invested but based on the social impact created. Daft et al. (2014) noted that a social enterprise which is a hybrid business model aims to combine business activities that generates income with the pursuit of social impact. It therefore suffices to say that these small, big, for-profit, and nonprofit organizations are different but the organizational concepts and theories apply to all of them although there is a need to be modified as necessary to address their particular issues and demands.

Organizations are a relatively recent development in human history, shaping our lives through their presence and influence in various ways (Daft, 2016; Daft et al., 2014). They assert that organizations first pool resources to achieve certain objectives. Additionally, businesses provide clients with the products and services they need at rates they can afford by turning concepts into client advantages on a scale that is unbelievable. Organizations are adapting and influencing a rapidly changing volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment by seeking innovative approaches to better effectively create and distribute attractive products and services. E-business, the use of technology as well as redesigning organizational structures and management procedures has contributed to increased efficiency. In many organizations, department tasks with innovation

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and knowledge management are on the increase. Daft (2016) noted that some large businesses have entire departments charged with monitoring the external environment and finding ways to adapt to or influence that environment. In an effort to influence the environment, compete on a global scale, and ensure that their products remain appealing to investors, (Daft et.al.2014) highlighted the connection between organizations and the environment. Through their engagements in lobbying governments and regulators and their commitment of enormous sums to initiatives, this serves to strengthen the organization's position in the market, promotion of their brands and possible tax avoidance. Daft et al. (2014) asserts further that organizations are created to generate value for their owners as they give client products and services and jobs for their workers. In addition, the problems of today's workforce diversity, expanding ethical and social responsibility issues, and finding effective methods to inspire workers to collaborate to achieve organizational objectives are all things that organizations must address. Artificial intelligence is currently viewed as the most important and disruptive new technology for large organizations (Benbya et al., 2020).

According to (Robbins, 1990), an organizational structure includes methods for work distribution, reporting, and communication and encompasses complexity, formalization, and centralization. Organizational differentiation, such as specialization, hierarchy levels, and geographic dispersion of units, are measured by organizational complexity. Formalization is the use of policies and procedures to direct employee behaviour in an organization. While bigger organizations may have substantial rules governing employee skills, smaller organizations may just have minimally standardized requirements. The term centralization relates to the position of the decision-making power; some organizations have highly centralized decision-making, with top executives selecting actions, whilst other organizations have decentralized decision-making, with authority distributed lower in the hierarchy. The organizational structure of a company depends on where it falls on a continuum between centralization and decentralization (Robbins, 1990). Managers now focus on horizontal processes rather than vertical structures in this new era. Important initiatives transcend the lines between organizational divisions and are not merely top-down in nature. Additionally, horizontal interactions now include connections with suppliers and customers, who join the team (Daft,2016). Organizational environment includes factors that are present beyond the organization's boundaries that may have an impact on all or portion of the organization (Daft, 2016). The environment is limitless and encompasses everything that exists outside of the organization, but the organizational environment only takes into account those components of the environment to which the organization is sensitive and has to adapt in order to survive. He further noted that organization's domain defines its niche and the external sectors with which the organization will interact to accomplish its goals (Daft, 2016).

The environment consists of various sectors which can be subdivided into task and general environments for organizations (Daft, 2016). He noted that the industry, raw materials, market, human resources, and international sectors are included in the task environment and have a direct impact on an organization's relationships and capacity to fulfil its objectives. The fluidity of the digital workforce is of significant concern to every business in addition to the pressure of globalization and intense competition(Schreiber, 2019). He noted that the general environment includes those sectors that might not have a direct impact on the daily operations of a firm but will

indirectly influence it. The general environment often includes the government, sociocultural, economic conditions, technology, and financial resources sectors. These sectors affect all organizations eventually. Government regulations for instance influence every phase of organizational life while shifting demographics is a significant element in the sociocultural sector. Economic conditions impact business practices, particularly in the technology sector. Rapid digital advancements have led to a scarcity of financial resources, prompting entrepreneurs to cut costs and maximize returns (Daft et al., 2014). Given the interconnectedness of the global business landscape, managers must recognize the uncertainty and volatility that exists at both local and international levels. By focusing on sectors that are prone to significant change, managers can proactively address emerging challenges and capitalize on new opportunities. This entails continuous monitoring of the environment, adapting strategies and structures, fostering organizational agility, and building strong networks and collaborations to effectively respond to environmental dynamics.

According to Daft (2016), two fundamental ways the environment affects organizations are the need for information about the environment and the need for resources from the environment. Organizations operate within an external environment that is constantly evolving (Benbya et al., 2020). To effectively navigate this environment, managers must gather and analyze information to stay informed about external factors that could impact their organization. This includes monitoring changes in customer preferences, technological advancements, regulatory developments, competitive landscapes, and socio-cultural trends. By understanding the external environment, managers can identify opportunities and threats, make informed decisions, and adapt their strategies accordingly. Organizations also rely on various resources from their external environment to function and thrive. These resources can include raw materials, labor, capital, energy, technology, and information (Scott, 2014). Managers must establish relationships and partnerships with suppliers, investors, customers, and other stakeholders to acquire the necessary resources for their organization's operations (Daft, 2016; Daft et.al., 2014). Additionally, managers need to anticipate and manage potential resource constraints, disruptions, or changes in availability to ensure the continuity of their operations. The alignment of an organization's structure with its environment and objectives is crucial for its success. The organizational theory encompasses various schools of thought that can assist organizations in understanding and addressing the challenges they face and prescribing suitable structures to deal with them effectively. Below are the key schools of thought in organizational theory that have contributed to alignment with organizational structure (Robbins, 1990; Daft, 2016; Daft et.al, 2014).

First the classical management school of thought which includes scientific management, administrative and bureaucratic theory, emphasizes efficiency, specialization, and clear hierarchical structures. (Daft, 2016; Weber, 2019; Taylor, 2017). Second, human relations school of thought that focuses on the importance of social factors, employee motivation, and satisfaction (Mayo, 2015). It recognizes the impact of interpersonal relationships, communication, and employee engagement on organizational performance. Third, contingency theory suggests that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to organizational structure and that it should be contingent upon various internal and external factors (Lawrence & Lorsch, 2019). Fourth, systems theory which views organizations as complex systems composed of interconnected and interdependent

parts (Katz & Kahn, 2015). It emphasizes the need for organizations to adapt to their environment and maintain a balance among various subsystems. Fifth, resource dependence theory emphasizes the organization's dependence on external resources and the need to manage relationships with external stakeholders (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2019). It helps organizations understand the resource flows, power dynamics, and dependencies that exist between the organization and its environment. Finally, modernism and Post modernism that emerged in the late 1800s and early 1900s, whereas postmodernism emerged after World War II (Delbridge et.al., 2019). He noted that in contrast to postmodernism, which claimed that things are illogical, modernism promoted rational thought, the use of science, and reason for the progress of man.

By drawing on the insights provided by these different schools of thought, organizations can assess their challenges, goals, and environmental dynamics to determine an appropriate structure. This involves considering factors such as efficiency, employee motivation, contingency factors, adaptability, and resource dependencies. Organizations may also need to adapt their structures over time as their environment and objectives evolve. Ultimately, an organization's structure should be aligned with its environment and objectives to optimize its performance and increase its chances of success.

2.0 Literature Review

Scientific Management School of thought Scientific management, also known as Taylorism, is a school of thought in organizational theory that emerged in the early 20th century. It was developed by Frederick Winslow Taylor, an engineer and management consultant, and aimed to improve organizational efficiency and productivity through scientific methods (Robbins, 1990). The primary goal of management, in the words of Fredrick Taylor (Taylor, 1911, p. 1), should be to provide the greatest prosperity for both the company and each employee. The employer benefits from profits made as a result of efficient workers producing products and services at a reasonable cost. When the company that they work for experiences profits, as opposed to losses, management and workers, are able to earn more, creating a partnership that is win-win for all parties involved. In order for Taylor's reasoning to hold up, it must be assumed that the employer will be ready to share any greater earnings with management and employer rather than keeping it for themselves.

Taylor proposed several principles of scientific management. First, the division of labor that involved breaking down tasks into smaller, specialized components to increase efficiency. According to him, management was responsible for planning their employees work, providing instructions and ensuring that they have the relevant equipment to perform their tasks to the best of their natural abilities (Wren, 2011). While this aims to improve efficiency, there are concerns regarding its impact on employee satisfaction and well-being (Taylor, 2017). This mechanistic view of workers that treats workers as mere cogs in a machine, disregarding their unique skills, knowledge, and creativity may lead to demotivation of staff. Currently, most organizations hire the right people for the job based on their qualifications and experience. This is in line with Taylor's principle on specialization. However, in a study conducted by (Zardet & Voyant, 2003), they found that while specialization promised positive economic effects, it did involve hidden costs related to the employees' social behavior that included absenteeism and turnover, as well as the complexities of required coordination of the different employees. The modern digital and dynamic

workforce is looking to innovation and creative work environment(Schreiber, 2019). It overlooks the social and psychological aspects of work, failing to consider the impact of interpersonal relationships, motivation, and job satisfaction on productivity.

Second is the time and motion studies which involved analyzing work processes to identify the most efficient methods and eliminate unnecessary movements. While this aims to improve efficiency there are concerns regarding its impact on employee satisfaction and well-being. Stephen (1990) argues that the emphasis on time and motion studies and strict standardization can lead to monotonous, repetitive work, resulting in decreased job satisfaction and even employee resistance. Today's organizations continue to emphasize efficiency so as to strive to optimize their operations and deliver better results.

Third was the standardization of work by developing standard procedures and techniques to ensure consistency and reduce variability. While the use of standard procedures to perform work as proposed by Taylor's scientific approach provides structure and order leading to clarity in expectations, it was viewed as restrictive and allowing minimal room for creativity by the people expected to perform the tasks viewing them as machines leading to the development of human relations school of thought (Daft et al., 2016).

Fourth is the incentives and pay systems which links employee compensation to performance to motivate higher productivity. Ajunwa (2023) stated that Taylor's view looks at workers as seeking employment for one reason to earn money. Taylor believed that by enabling them to be more productive, linking output directly to payment he could reconcile the demands of the employees who obtained substantially improved wages, and shareholders who received massively increased surpluses. This view is narrow as it overlooked the fact that employees develop a sense of identity and meaning outside of the workplace. Daft et al (2016) further noted that despite a strong interest in earning money from their employment, many were unwilling to accept their treatment as living machines who simply executed repetitive tasks. In addition, Taylor's theory is not effective in meeting all the needs outlined in Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Landy & Conte, 2010). The monetary incentive only meets the physiological and safety needs of employees. Today, this scenario is playing out in our organizations, where workers are demanding soft rewards such as respect, appreciation, and recognition. Many trade unions are agitating for workers' rights beyond monetary compensation. We are also seeing a trend of employees leaving well-paying jobs for employment opportunities where they feel appreciated.

Fifth, selecting and training employees based on their aptitude and providing them with the necessary skills to perform their tasks effectively. This will ensure skills alignment to tasks hence increasing efficiency and productivity. Daft (2016) found that implementing scientific management principles can lead to significant improvements in work processes, reduced waste, increased output, and higher levels of employee performance. To avoid employee fatigue and boredom because of routine tasks, employers are now keen to train employees and motivate them to advance to the next level. Workplace training and professional development courses are available as a means to motivate employees hence improve productivity at work.

The historical significance of scientific management, such as assisting organizations in streamlining processes, defining clear roles and responsibilities, and establishing formal lines of

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authority cannot be wished away. By adopting principles from the scientific management school, organizations can achieve greater operational efficiency and coordination. The applicability and effectiveness of scientific management principles is more suitable for manufacturing and repetitive tasks. Applicability of scientific management may be limited in knowledge-intensive and creative work environments. Many organizations are finding themselves in a fast paced, volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment requiring constant innovation and creativity. The lack of worker participation and involvement in decision-making and the top-down nature of scientific management can lead to reduced employee engagement and empowerment. These limitations may not be able to address the complexities of today's organizations (Schreiber, 2019). He noted that in modern organizations, there is more emphasis on horizontal structures which emphasize the importance of a more holistic and human-centric approach to management, considering factors such as employee empowerment, engagement, and work-life balance.

Taylor's scientific approach still applies to today's organizations. While the principles continue to influence management practices, modern perspectives emphasize the need for a more horizontal balanced and people-centered approach to organizational management. The need for healthy working environments has increased among employees and emphasis on employee wellness means that organizations cannot emphasize on their prosperity at the expense of employees' wellbeing. The vertical structures support the scientific management school of thought but modern organizations require horizontal structures that enhance collaboration and team work (Daft, 2016; Daft et al., 2014).

2.1 Bureaucratic School of Thought

The Bureaucratic school of thought in organizational theory is commonly attributed to the contributions of Max Weber. This analysis offers valuable perspectives that can aid an organization in identifying and addressing challenges by recommending an appropriate framework. The influence of the bureaucratic school of thought on organizational designs is evident based on the findings of various researchers (Weber, 1947; Stephen, 1990; Daft, 2016; Daft et al., 2014). The Bureaucratic school of thought aids in the identification of challenges by placing emphasis on the significance of well-defined roles, formalized procedures, and hierarchical organizational structures. By implementing the tenets of this educational institution, organizations have the ability to discern obstacles associated with bureaucratic processes, inefficiencies in the decision-making process, coordination difficulties, or ambiguities in delineating responsibilities. For instance, challenges could encompass an abundance of bureaucratic procedures, sluggishness in addressing issues, or obstacles in accommodating to alterations (Weber, 1947; Robbins, 1990; Daft, 2016; Daft et al., 2014). Secondly, it enhances efficiency and standardization by placing emphasis on the necessity of organizational processes. Through the application of this framework, organizations have the ability to analyze their operations and pinpoint instances where efficiency is compromised or standardization is deficient. This process may entail the identification of bottlenecks, redundancies, or superfluous layers of approval that hinder productivity (Weber, 1947; Robbins, 1990; Daft, 2016; Daft et al., 2014). Thirdly, this perspective places significant emphasis on the establishment of clear authority and effective communication within organizations.

Consequently, organizations can utilize this perspective as a means of evaluating and addressing challenges that arise in relation to decision-making processes, information dissemination, and breakdowns in communication. Through the process of identifying these challenges, organizations are able to determine an appropriate framework that elucidates the authority for decision-making, simplifies channels of communication, and establishes efficient mechanisms for sharing information (Weber, 1947; Robbins, 1990; Daft, 2016; Daft et.al, 2014). Furthermore, similar to Taylor's principles, the bureaucratic school of thought places significant emphasis on specialization and the division of labor as means to enhance operational efficiency. This perspective can be employed by organizations to evaluate challenges pertaining to roles and responsibilities. Please identify occurrences of overlapping duties, deficiencies in responsibilities, or incongruent skill sets. By acknowledging these obstacles, organizations have the ability to develop a framework that fosters unambiguous delineation of responsibilities, specialization, and effective distribution of tasks (Weber, 1947; Robbins, 1990; Daft, 2016; Daft et.al, 2014). Fifth, bureaucratic theory advocates for the establishment of standard operating procedures to ensure consistency and reduce variability. Organizations can apply this principle to address challenges related to quality control, operational errors, or deviations from desired outcomes. By implementing and regularly reviewing standardized procedures, organizations can reduce errors, improve quality, and address challenges related to inconsistent processes (Weber, 1947; Robbins, 1990; Daft, 2016; Daft et.al, 2014).

Finally, bureaucratic school emphasizes hierarchical structures and centralization of decision-making authority. Organizations can utilize this perspective to evaluate challenges related to decision-making bottlenecks, delays in responses, or difficulties in delegation. By recognizing these challenges, organizations can consider appropriate levels of centralization, delegation, or decentralization to enhance responsiveness and efficiency (Weber, 1947; Robbins, 1990; Daft, 2016; Daft et al., 2014). While the Bureaucratic school provides valuable insights into structure and efficiency, it is important to consider its limitations. Over-reliance on rules and formal procedures can stifle innovation, flexibility, and employee empowerment. Therefore, organizations should balance the principles of the bureaucratic school with other schools of thought, such as the human relations school or contingency theory, to create a structure that addresses challenges while also considering human factors and adaptability.

2.2 Administrative School of Thought

The Administrative school of thought in organizational theory, associated with Henri Fayol and focuses on the functions of management and administrative principles. It can assist an organization in highlighting challenges and prescribing a suitable structure to address them in the following ways (Simon, 2017; Daft, 2016; Scott, 2015; Daft et.al, 2014). The administrative school provides a framework to identify challenges by focusing on the key functions of management such as planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling. Planning involves formulating strategies, setting clear objectives, aligning goals with the organization's vision, or effectively planning for future contingencies. Organizing through identification of challenges in terms of structural inefficiencies, coordination problems, or unclear lines of authority and responsibility. Then designing the right organizational structure, allocating resources, and establishing authority relationships. The Administrative school can help identify challenges related to employee

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engagement, leadership effectiveness, or communication breakdowns. The organization can therefore set up structure that can lead, guide, and motivating employees. Coordination involves harmonizing and integrating activities within the organization and the administrative school can help identify challenges related to interdepartmental conflicts, information sharing, or coordination difficulties among different functions or teams. Controlling involves monitoring performance, comparing it with set standards, and taking corrective actions. The Administrative school can help identify challenges related to performance measurement, deviation detection, or ineffective control mechanisms (Simon, 2017; Daft, 2016; Scott, 2015; Daft et.al, 2014).

The Administrative school offers principles that can guide organizations in designing a suitable structure to address challenges (Simon, 2017; Daft, 2016; Scott, 2015; Daft et.al, 2014). First the principle of unity of command suggests that employees should have only one direct supervisor, minimizing confusion and enhancing accountability (Daft,2016). Second, the scalar chain principle emphasizes a clear hierarchy and chain of command, which facilitates communication and decision-making processes. Third, the division of work principle promotes specialization and division of labor, which can increase efficiency and productivity. Fourth, the authority and responsibility emphasizes the need for clear authority and responsibility assignments, enabling effective decision-making and accountability. Administrative school of thought can assist organizations in identifying challenges across management functions and prescribing a suitable structure (Scott, 2015). By applying these principles, organizations can design a structure that enhances communication, coordination, accountability, and overall organizational performance. However, it's important to note that the administrative school has been criticized for its hierarchical and centralized nature, which may limit its applicability in contemporary organizations seeking more participative and flexible structures (Simon, 2017; Daft, 2016; Scott, 2015; Daft et.al, 2014). Organizations should adapt these principles to fit their specific context. It's important to integrate insights from other schools of thought, such as human relations or contingency theories, to balance the benefits of the administrative approach with modern organizational needs for a more comprehensive and contemporary approach.

2.3 Human Relations School of Thought

The human relations school of thought addresses some of the gaps identified in the classical approaches. It offers valuable insights for organizations in identifying challenges and prescribing suitable structures to address them. It also helps organizations understand the human aspect of their structure and design strategies to enhance employee motivation, teamwork, and job satisfaction, ultimately leading to improved productivity and performance (Follett, 2018, Daft, 2016, Daft et.al, 2014). The human relations school first recognizes the significance of employee motivation and engagement and therefore help organizations identify challenges related to intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction, and employee well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2014). Second, effective communication is crucial for organizational success. The human relations approach can help identify challenges related to communication breakdowns, information flow, or barriers to effective communication (Tourish & Pinnington, 2012). Third, human relations school highlights the impact of interpersonal relationships on organizational dynamics. It can help identify challenges related to conflicts, teamwork issues, or breakdowns in collaboration (Briscoe et.al., 2012). Finally, effective leadership is vital for employee satisfaction and performance. The human

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relations approach can help identify challenges related to leadership practices, supervisory support, or leadership development (Northouse, 2018).

The human relations school promotes employee participation and empowerment. Organizations can therefore create structures that encourage employee involvement through mechanisms such as participative decision-making, autonomous work teams, or empowerment programs (Lawler, 2018). Creating a supportive work environment is emphasized in the human relations approach. Organizations can design structures that foster open communication, trust, employee well-being initiatives, or work-life balance programs (Eisenberger et.al, 2010). The human relations school also highlights the benefits of teamwork and collaboration. Organizations can create structures that facilitate collaboration through cross-functional teams, virtual collaboration tools, or shared goals (Bakker et.al., 2012). Leadership development is key and the human relations approach underscores the importance of effective leadership. Organizations can prioritize leadership development initiatives, coaching, mentoring, or succession planning to enhance leadership skills and create a supportive leadership culture (Avolio, 2011). By incorporating these principles, organizations can design suitable structures that prioritize employee motivation, communication, teamwork, and effective leadership, thereby addressing the challenges they face.

2.4 Contingency Theory

Contingency theory offers valuable insights for organizations in identifying challenges and prescribing suitable structures that emphasizes the importance of adapting organizational structure and practices to fit the specific circumstances and contingencies faced by an organization (Donaldson, 2018). He further noted that one of the key concepts in contingency theory is fit. It recognizes that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to organization design and management. Fit refers to the degree of alignment between an organization's structure and its environment or specific contingencies. A good fit between the organization and its environment leads to improved performance and effectiveness. The most effective organizational structure and management practices are contingent upon various factors, including the organization's environment, technology, size, and strategy (Scott, 2014). This theory emphasizes the importance of aligning the structure with the organization's goals, strategy, size, technology, and environment. By considering the unique challenges and contingencies faced by the organization, managers can identify the most suitable structure that fits their specific context (Daft, 2016). According to contingency theory, organizations must match their structure and practices to the demands and contingencies of their external and internal environment. The external environment includes factors such as industry competition, market conditions, customer preferences, and legal regulations. The internal environment includes factors like the organization's resources, capabilities, and culture (Daft et al., 2014; Daft, 2016).

Contingency theory proposes that different situations require different approaches to organization design and management. What works in one situation may not work in another and that organizations must continuously monitor and adjust their structure and practices to fit changing contingencies (Scott, 2014). It provides a set of principles and guidelines rather than a prescriptive framework. The correct management approach is contingent on the organization's situation. For example, a highly dynamic and uncertain environment may call for a more flexible and

decentralized organizational structure to quickly respond to changes. On the other hand, a stable and predictable environment may favor a more centralized and formalized structure to ensure efficiency and control. Contingency theory suggests that organizations should assess the external environment and identify the key factors that impact their operations (Barney & Hesterly, 2010; Hill et.al., 2014). Instead, organizations should align their structure and practices with the specific contingencies they face. For example, a more flexible and organic structure may be suitable for dynamic and uncertain environments, while a more mechanistic structure may be effective in stable and predictable environments (Mintzberg et.al, 2017; Lawrence & Lorsch, 2019). Organizations need to analyze their internal characteristics, such as size, complexity, technology, and resources. This helps in understanding the organization's strengths, weaknesses, and areas where adjustments may be required (Daft & Marcic, 2010; Grant, 2013).

Some of the recent studies is by He et al. (2021) who examined the contingency effects of environmental uncertainty and complexity on the relationship between organizational structure and innovation performance. The findings supported the core tenets of contingency theory, showing that organizations that aligned their structure with the specific demands of their environment achieved better innovation outcomes. Another study is by Das et al. (2020) exploring the contingency factors influencing the adoption of flexible work arrangements in organizations. The research highlighted that factors such as technological advancements, market competition, and employee preferences played a significant role in shaping the adoption of flexible work practices. The study demonstrated how contingency theory provides insights into understanding the contextual factors that drive organizational decisions regarding work arrangements.

in addition, a study by Felin et al. (2021) investigated the contingency-based nature of leadership by examining how leadership styles interacted with different environmental conditions. The research revealed that certain leadership styles were more effective in specific contexts, highlighting the importance of aligning leadership approaches with the organization's environment. Contingency theory has also been applied in the context of digital transformation (Schreiber, 2019). A study by Kim and Lee (2019) examined how different organizational structures and IT capabilities influenced the success of digital transformation initiatives. The findings indicated that the alignment between the organization's structure, IT capabilities, and the digital environment was crucial for achieving successful digital transformation outcomes. Overall, these recent studies demonstrate the continued relevance and applicability of contingency theory in understanding how organizations should adapt their structure, strategies, and practices to fit the unique demands and contingencies they face. Regular review and adaptation to the environment is necessary because organizational contingencies may change over time. Organizations should therefore, regularly review their structures and practices to ensure they remain aligned with the evolving challenges and contingencies they face (Cameron & Green, 2015; Burnes, 2019). By considering the specific contextual factors and aligning their approaches accordingly, organizations can enhance their performance, innovation, and adaptability in an ever-changing business landscape and therefore design the right structure.

2.5 Systems Theory

The systems theory views organizations as complex systems with interconnected parts, which helps in identifying challenges. This perspective allows organizations to understand the interactions and relationships between different components, enabling them to identify challenges related to coordination, communication, and information flow (Robbins, 1990; Daft, 2016; Scott, 2018). They noted that systems theory focuses on understanding the organization as a whole and the interactions between its various components, rather than analyzing isolated parts in isolation. These elements include people, departments, processes, technologies, and the external environment. The theory suggests that organizations should strive for harmony and balance among these elements to achieve optimal functioning and performance (Scott, 2014). One key concept in systems theory is the notion of inputs, processes, and outputs (Robbins, 1990). Inputs refer to the resources and information that enter the organization, processes involve the activities and transformations that occur within the organization, and outputs are the results or products produced by the organization. Systems theory emphasizes the importance of aligning inputs, processes, and outputs to achieve organizational goals and objectives.

In the context of aligning an organization's structure to its environment and objectives, systems theory suggests that organizations should consider the external factors and contingencies that influence their operations. This includes analyzing the organization's environment, such as market conditions, customer preferences, and legal regulations, and aligning the structure and processes to fit these external demands (Donaldson, 2018). A recent study by Baloch et al. (2021), examined the impact of organizational structure on innovation performance. The study found that organizations with a flexible and decentralized structure were more likely to achieve higher levels of innovation. Another study by Tavares et al. (2020), explored the role of organizational structure in managing environmental sustainability. The study highlighted the importance of aligning the organizational structure with sustainability goals to effectively address environmental challenges. Jha et al. (2020), study on the other hand applied systems thinking to analyze the alignment between organizational culture, strategy, and structure. The study highlighted the importance of considering the interdependencies and relationships among these elements for successful alignment.

The systems theory provides principles and concepts to guide organizations in designing a suitable structure to address challenges: First, the systems theory advocates a holistic approach to organizational structure. This involves considering the interdependencies and interconnections among various elements of the organization. By adopting a holistic perspective, organizations can design structures that promote integration, collaboration, and synergy (Scott, 2018). Second, it emphasizes the importance of feedback loops in monitoring and regulating organizational functioning. By incorporating feedback mechanisms, organizations can be flexible and adaptable to respond to environmental changes, identify and address challenges in real-time, enabling continuous improvement and adaptation (Van der Waladt, 2019; Morgan, 2016). Third, it recognizes that organizations exist within a broader environment and are influenced by their external environment. It also recognizes that organizations are dynamic entities that are constantly interacting with their environment and adapting to changes. To effectively address challenges, organizations need to be responsive and adaptable. By adopting an open systems perspective,

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organizations can design structures that facilitate effective interactions and adaptation to external factors (Scott, 2018). Finally, it highlights the need for interdisciplinary collaboration within organizations. By promoting collaboration across different functional areas or departments, organizations can leverage diverse expertise and perspectives to address complex challenges effectively (Van der Walddt, 2019).

Other research has highlighted the relevance and applicability of systems theory in understanding and managing complex organizational issues. For example, in a study by Tsai and Wu (2021), they explored the application of systems thinking in managing the sustainability of supply chains. The study highlighted the importance of considering the interdependencies and feedback loops within the supply chain system to enhance its overall sustainability performance. In another study by Sánchez-Medina et al. (2020), they examined the role of systems thinking in managing organizational change. The study emphasized that systems thinking helps in understanding the interconnectedness of different elements and the potential impact of change on the entire system. It highlighted the importance of managing change holistically to ensure the overall success of the organization. Systems theory also emphasizes the concept of feedback loops, which provide information about the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization's processes (Robbins, 1990; Daft et.al.,2014). By utilizing feedback, organizations can identify challenges and areas that need improvement in their structure and operations. Positive feedback reinforces successful behaviors and outcomes, while negative feedback highlights areas that need attention or improvement. This feedback-driven approach allows organizations to continuously adapt and adjust their structure to align with the changing demands and objectives (Scott, 2014). It's important to note that the Systems theory does not prescribe a specific structure but provides a framework for understanding and designing adaptable structures aligned with organizational goals and the external environment. The systems theory therefore assists organizations in highlighting challenges by considering the interactions and relationships within the organizational system. By adopting a holistic approach, incorporating feedback loops, embracing an open systems perspective, and promoting interdisciplinary collaboration, organizations can design structures that effectively address these challenges.

2.6 Resource Dependence Theory

Resource dependency theory emphasizes an organization's dependence on external resources and the need to manage relationships with external stakeholders. By understanding resource flows, power dynamics, and dependencies, organizations can identify challenges related to resource scarcity, uncertainty, and vulnerability (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2019). By analyzing the resource dependencies, organizations can design structures that facilitate resource acquisition, strategic alliances, and effective stakeholder management (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2019; Oliver, 1991). The Resource dependency theory offers insights for designing a suitable structure to address challenges: The theory suggests that organizations should actively seek to acquire and control critical resources to reduce dependency and mitigate challenges. By developing strategies for resource acquisition, organizations can establish a structure that ensures a stable supply of essential resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2019). The theory highlights the importance of forming strategic alliances with external organizations. Collaborative partnerships and alliances can help overcome resource constraints and improve access to critical resources.

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Organizations can structure their alliances to enhance resource availability and reduce vulnerability (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2019). It also emphasizes managing relationships with external stakeholders, such as suppliers, customers, and regulatory bodies. Building strong relationships and networks can provide organizations with access to resources, information, and support. Organizations can structure their interactions and relationships to foster resource dependencies that are advantageous and beneficial (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2019). In addition, resource dependency theory recognizes the significance of effective stakeholder management. By understanding and addressing the needs and interests of key stakeholders, organizations can reduce dependencies and negotiate mutually beneficial resource exchanges. Organizations can structure their stakeholder relationships to ensure resource availability and support (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2019). Just like the systems and contingency theories the resource dependency theory does not provide a one-size-fits-all structure but offers principles and strategies for managing resource dependencies. The theory assists organizations in highlighting challenges related to resource dependencies by focusing on resource acquisition, strategic alliances, inter-organizational relationships, and stakeholder management, organizations can design structures that effectively address these challenges.

3.0 Modernism and Post Modernism

Modernism is a school of thought that emerged in the late 1800s and early 1900s, whereas postmodernism emerged after World War II. In contrast to postmodernism, which claimed that things are illogical, modernism promoted rational thought, the use of science, and reason for the progress of man. The idea that there are universal truths or certainties was contested. Modernism asserts that humans may advance through influencing the environment via the use of science, technology, and knowledge. Modernism attempted to identify the issues impeding development and aimed to replace them with strategies that may aid in achieving their ultimate ends (Robbins, 1990; Daft, 2016; Daft et.al, 2014). Modernism and Postmodernism theories in organizational theory offer contrasting perspectives on organizational challenges and suitable structures. According to Hatch (2018), modernism emphasizes rationality, stability, and formal structures that can assist organizations in highlighting challenges by emphasizing the following key aspects: First the importance of efficient processes and effective operations that can help organizations identify challenges related to productivity, performance, and achieving goals. Second, it emphasizes hierarchical structures with clear lines of authority and defined roles that can assist organizations in identifying challenges related to power imbalances, communication breakdowns, or decision-making bottlenecks. Third, modernism incorporates principles of scientific management, focusing on standardization, specialization, and task efficiency. It can assist organizations in identifying challenges related to process inefficiencies, lack of coordination, or outdated work methods (Hatch, 2018).

Modernism suggests suitable structures based on efficiency, control, and predictability (Hatch, 2018). Bureaucratic structures with clear rules, procedures, and hierarchy can provide stability and control. They help address challenges related to coordination, authority, and accountability. Organizing departments based on specialized functions helps achieve efficiency and expertise. It addresses challenges related to task allocation, knowledge sharing, and coordination. Implementing formal communication channels with established protocols helps address challenges related to miscommunication, information overload, or lack of clarity (Hatch, 2018).

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Postmodernism on the other hand, challenges traditional organizational perspectives and offers alternative insights (Hatch, 2018). It can assist organizations in highlighting challenges by emphasizing the following aspects: First, postmodernism recognizes the complexity and ambiguity of organizational contexts. It helps identify challenges related to adaptability, diversity, and multiple interpretations. Second, it highlights power dynamics and resistance within organizations by helping to identify challenges related to power imbalances, exclusion, or marginalized voices. Third, it emphasizes the construction of organizational identities and narratives that help identify challenges related to conflicting identities, lack of coherence, or cultural clashes (Hatch, 2018).

Postmodernism suggests flexible and participative structures that accommodate diverse perspectives (Hatch, 2018) such as network structures that promote collaboration, fluidity, and knowledge sharing. These structures will help address challenges related to adaptability, innovation, and interconnectivity. Empowering employees and encouraging decentralized decision-making addresses challenges related to power imbalances, autonomy, and responsiveness. Embracing cultural diversity and fostering inclusive practices address challenges related to identity conflicts, exclusion, and discrimination. Organizations can also integrate aspects of both modernism and postmodernism to balance efficiency and adaptability. This approach acknowledges the limitations of each perspective and promotes a more comprehensive understanding of organizational challenges and suitable structures (Hatch, 2018).

4.0 Practical Applications

The importance of strategic organizational design in attaining success in the dynamic business landscape is shown by actual instances of African organizations that have effectively matched their structure to their environment and aims. One such example is Safaricom, which has operated in a highly competitive and rapidly evolving telecommunications market. Safaricom has demonstrated effective alignment between its structure and objectives. The company has adopted an agile organizational structure, encouraging cross-functional collaboration and innovation to respond quickly to changing market conditions and customer needs (Abuga & Deya, 2019; The Standard, 2019). This alignment strategy has resulted in rapid innovation, allowing Safaricom to introduce new products and services like M-Pesa, which has revolutionized financial services in Kenya. Additionally, Safaricom's customer-centric approach has led to enhanced customer experience, fostering strong customer loyalty and market dominance, enabling the company to maintain a leading position in the Kenyan telecommunications market (Buku & Meredith, 2012)

Another example is Ecobank Transnational Incorporated (ETI), a Pan-African banking conglomerate operating across various African countries. Facing diverse regulatory frameworks, economic conditions, and cultural contexts, Ecobank has successfully aligned its structure to meet the unique needs of its local markets while benefiting from centralized critical functions (Kinyua, 2015). The federated organizational structure allows each subsidiary to offer tailored banking solutions, enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty. Moreover, centralized functions promote collaboration among subsidiaries, enabling knowledge sharing, best practices, and economies of scale across the group. This alignment has facilitated effective risk management, ensuring compliance with local regulations and maintaining financial stability (Okafor, 2019).

Ethiopian Airlines is another prominent example of successful alignment between structure and objectives in Africa. Operating in a highly competitive and dynamic aviation industry, the airline has adopted a centralized organizational structure, facilitating efficient decision-making and resource allocation across its operations (Al-Kwifit et al., 2020). This centralized structure has contributed to operational excellence, enabling Ethiopian Airlines to maintain a strong safety record and operational efficiency, positioning it as a reputable carrier globally. Additionally, the streamlined decision-making process has supported the airline's successful expansion into new routes and international markets, enhancing its global reach and market share. The centralized structure has also enabled effective cost management and resource utilization, contributing to the airline's financial sustainability (Oqubay & Tesfachew, 2019). These examples illustrate the benefits of aligning organizational structures with the environment and objectives. Their success can be attributed to their ability to adapt quickly to changing market conditions, focus on customer needs, promote innovation, and achieve operational efficiency. By strategically aligning their structures, these companies have maintained their competitive edge and sustained growth in Africa's dynamic business landscape.

5.0 Conclusion

Many organizations are adapting to global impacts by adopting self-directed teams and horizontal structures to foster communication and cooperation. They utilize information technology and e-business to streamline supply and distribution networks, transcending geographical and temporal limitations. Some organizations form joint ventures or consortia to seize opportunities and expand their global presence. Cutting-edge structural strategies, like the virtual network model, help them focus on core skills while outsourcing tasks. Moreover, modern organizations face the need for major strategic and cultural changes, while continuous advancements in technology, services, products, and processes are vital (Daft et.al, 2014; Daft 2016). By demonstrating their compliance with the needs and expectations derived from cultural norms, standards imposed by professional groups, funding agencies, and consumers, organizations adapt to the environment. The organization uses structure as a kind of veneer that is separate from technical activity to win acceptance, legitimacy, and on-going support. Therefore, the adoption of structures could not be related to real production demands and might take place even if certain internal issues are not resolved. In this perspective, formal structure and technical activity are distinct (Daft et.al, 2014; Daft 2016). The alignment of an organization's structure to its environment and objectives is a complex yet crucial factor that determines its success. Therefore, organizations that effectively align their structure with the external environment and internal objectives are more likely to achieve optimal performance and adapt to changes in their operating environment. The various schools of thought in organizational theory offer valuable perspectives and frameworks to assist organizations in highlighting the challenges they face and prescribing suitable structures to address them. By drawing upon these different schools of thought, organizations can gain insights into the challenges they face in aligning their structure to their environment and objectives. They can analyze the external and internal factors that influence their operations and design suitable structures to address these challenges. By leveraging these perspectives and conducting further research, organizations can design the right structure for their organizations and improve their overall performance.

6.0 Recommendations

Organizations should adopt structures that are flexible and adaptable to change. This means avoiding rigid hierarchies and bureaucratic structures that can slow down decision-making and innovation. Instead, organizations should adopt structures that allow for cross-functional collaboration and decentralized decision-making. In addition, organizations should use technology to their advantage. Technology can help organizations to streamline operations, improve communication, and collaborate with partners and suppliers around the world. Organizations should invest in technology that can help them to better understand their customers and markets, and to deliver products and services more efficiently. Moreover, organizations should focus on their core competencies. In today's competitive environment, it is important for organizations to focus on what they do best. This means outsourcing non-core activities to partners who can do them more efficiently. By focusing on their core competencies, organizations can free up resources to invest in innovation and growth. Finally, organizations should create a culture of continuous learning and improvement. In order to stay ahead of the competition, organizations need to be constantly learning and adapting. This means creating a culture where employees are encouraged to take risks, experiment, and share ideas. Organizations should also invest in training and development programs that help employees to develop new skills and knowledge.

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