The Comparative Management Theory Jungle

HANS SCHOLLHAMMER
University of California at Los Angeles

The proliferation of different conceptual approaches to comparative management theory makes it opportune to review, analyze, evaluate, and classify the various orientations, to examine the roots of this diversity and to propose a framework for synthesis.

A systematic and comprehensive conceptualization about business management is of relatively recent origin. Scholars reviewing the evolution of management thought[1] generally trace it back to the scientific management movement which gained remarkable momentum with the publication of Frederick W. Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management* in 1911. From there on the field of business management attracted a great number of eminent thinkers who all contributed in some form to a systematic identification, classification, and interpretation of managerial problems, and thus provided a theoretical underpinning for the management discipline. However, differences in emphasis or neglect of certain crucial aspects led soon to the development of various theoretical orientations, some of which developed as "schools of management," each with its own focus, instrumentarium, and following. Professor Harold Koontz described and analyzed this situation in an admirable article entitled "The Management Theory Jungle."[2] He attempted to bring some order into this "jungle" by grouping the various major contributions to management theory into six schools of thought: the management process school, the empirical school, the human behavior school, the social system school, the decision theory school, and the mathematical school. But whatever the differences in orientation or emphasis of the vari-

[1]See John F. Mee, *Management Thought in a Dynamic Economy* (New York: New York University Press, 1963); John F. Mee, *A History of Twentieth Century Management Thought* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, Inc., 1963); Claude S. George, *The History of Management Thought* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1968).

[2]Harold Koontz, "The Management Theory Jungle," *Academy of Management Journal,* IV, No. 3 (Dec., 1961), 174-188.

ous management approaches, they have at least one common characteristic: within their frame of reference they perceive the various phenomena under consideration as being universal. For instance, the management process school points out fundamental managerial activities and prescribes general "principles of management" by which managers should let themselves be guided in the efficient discharge of their managerial responsibilities.[3] Similarly, the behavioral school of management emphasizes certain "constants" such as a fundamental incongruency between organizational and individual goals and prescribes to management a behavior pattern which would minimize the negative consequences of this incongruency.[4]

It can be argued that the explicit or implicit claim to universality of the various management theories has delayed the emergence of a field which is now referred to as international or comparative management. This field is of very recent origin; it emerged as a distinctive entity around 1960 and has since then experienced a very rapid development. The comparative management theory now commands the attention of an increasing number of scholars; many of them are attempting to build a conceptual foundation for this new field by providing a framework for the detection, identification, and evaluation of uniformities and differences of managerial problems in different countries or regions.

In spite of the very recent origin of comparative management as a separate field of research and teaching, there is already a considerable diversity in the theoretical underpinning of this discipline. There is thus a need for shedding some light into what might now be called the comparative management theory jungle. This is the purpose of this article: to review the various orientations of comparative management theory, to point out the strengths and the shortcomings of the different approaches, and to make recommendations for a synthesis.

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC APPROACH TO COMPARATIVE MANAGEMENT

This approach starts from the premise that management is the most critical factor for unlocking the forces of economic achievement. For instance, Harbison and Myers see in the manager "the catalytic agent in the process of industrialization; i.e., he acts and reacts with the economic and social environment to bring about economic change."[5] Management thus is considered as a change agent, but nevertheless as an integral part of a particular social and economic system. The emphasis of the socio-economic

[3]See Harold Koontz and Cyril O'Donnell, *Principles of Management* (4th ed.; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968).

[4]See Chris Argyris, *Integrating the Individual and the Organization* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1964).

[5]Frederick Harbison and Charles A. Myers, *Management in the Industrial World* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959), p. 17.

approach to comparative management is on the interrelationship and mutual influence between a given set of socio-economic conditions and management practices. By investigating in various countries the relative intensity of management utilization as well as the social determinants of managerial activity, the advocates of this particular approach to comparative management attempt to isolate those management-related factors which enhance or inhibit a country's economic status. It is hoped that the results of this kind of an inquiry would allow an explanation and evaluation of the relative level of economic achievement of various countries or societies. In addition, it would provide a basis for the normative prescription of certain managerial behavior patterns if a high degree of industrialization and economic dynamism is to be accomplished.

The first comprehensive socio-economic approach to comparative management was propagated by Frederick Harbison and Charles A. Myers in their book, *Management in the Industrial World.* The authors' basic assertion is that economic progress and industrialization—"an almost universal goal toward which all nations are marching"—depends on managers, i.e., "human agents who create and control the organization and institutions which modern industrialism requires. They are the ones who build and manage the enterprises which combine natural resource, technology, and human effort for productive purposes."[6] Harbison and Myers then propose to look at management from two points of view: first, an analysis of managerial activities or tasks, and second, an analysis of the managers themselves. With respect to the first perspective Harbison and Myers follow the traditional management literature emphasizing managerial functions such as the undertaking of risk and handling of uncertainty, planning, coordination, administration, supervision, and control. Their proposal for an analysis of the managers themselves has three perspectives: a) management as an economic resource, b) management as a system of authority relationships, and c) management as a class or elite. The first perspective is on the one hand quantitatively oriented by merely recording the relative intensity of management utilization in a given country. On the other hand it is also qualitatively oriented by being concerned with the relationship of management to the productivity of labor and the inherent inefficiencies in organizations caused by dysfunctional managerial behavior such as personal jealousies, rivalries, prejudices, idiosyncracies, nepotism, etc. The second perspective focuses on managerial authority, i.e., the characteristics and peculiarities of the superior-subordinate relationship in a given society. The main questions which Harbison and Myers want to have answered in this context are concerned with how authority is acquired, exercised, and maintained. The third perspective emphasizes a structural analysis in terms of who gets into the management class, by what means, and what is management's relative prestige as well as power in a given society. This model has been used as a guide for describing and analyzing the management situation

[6]*Ibid.,* p. 3.

in a dozen different countries. The results of these studies confirm broadly Harbison and Myers' hypothesis that the relative level of economic activity and achievement is a function of socio-economic conditions which manifest themselves in the relative intensity of management utilization, the peculiarities of acquisition, exercise, and maintenance of managerial authority, and management's relative prestige and power in society.

This kind of socio-economic approach to comparative management has been adopted mainly among scholars theorizing about the conditions for economic development and industrialization, such as Professors David McClelland[7] and Everett Hagen.[8] The merit of this approach is that it can rely on a well developed analytical instrumentarium for the examination of those economic conditions and sociological norms which govern or strongly influence managerial behavior patterns. But the results of this approach are frequently ambiguous and do not necessarily lend themselves to the support of predictions or at least normative, prescriptive statements. For instance, the analyses of the management situation in Great Britain, France, and Germany in Harbison and Myers' book reveal substantial differences from a sociological perspective, but from the point of view of an economic preference function no clear conclusion can be drawn as to the impact of the noted differences. Another drawback of the socio-economic approach to comparative management is its macro-orientation, i.e., it does not pay equal attention to individual differences in managerial behavior or interfirm differences in a given society. The strongest criticism is, however, the rather limited focus of this approach: from the broad spectrum of environmental differences it concentrates mainly on those which are of particular interest to sociologists and cultural anthropologists. Particularly this latter shortcoming has led to the second major orientation of comparative management theory for which one might use the term ecological approach.

THE ECOLOGICAL APPROACH TO COMPARATIVE MANAGEMENT

The traditional management literature is largely confined to the description, evaluation, and prescription of structural conditions and functional processes from the point of view of an effective utilization of the production factors which the organization employs. It is thus emphasizing the "internal environment" of a firm's operations and takes the external environment largely as given or at least not as being within the realm of business management theory. It seems logical to abandon this position and to focus on the interdependencies and causal relationships between a firm's internal operational conditions and processes and its external environment, i.e., to use an ecological approach.[9] This approach to comparative management

[7] David C. McClelland, *The Achieving Society* (Princeton, N. J.: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1961).

[8] Everett E. Hagen, *On the Theory of Social Change* (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1962).

[9] The term ecology was introduced by E. Haeckel in 1867 meaning the influence of environmental conditions on the behavior and development of organisms—see R. C. Stauffer, "Heackel, Darwin and Ecology," *Quarterly Review of Biology,* XXXII (1952), 138-141.

attempts to isolate those external environmental variables to which similarities or differences in managerial effectiveness in different countries can be attributed. The business firm is seen as a part of an ecological system in which the external factors have a determining impact on managerial effectiveness which in turn determine firm efficiency and, in the end, aggregate economic efficiency. This emphasis on the interaction between a business organizatión and its environment makes it necessary to distinguish between various ecological components such as a country's sociological, political, and economic characteristics which are conceived as constraints on managerial effectiveness.

The two scholars who first developed and tested the ecological approach to comparative management are Professors Richard Farmer and Barry Richman.[10] Their major hypotheses are that 1) managerial effectiveness is a function of various external environmental constraints, 2) firm efficiency is a function of managerial effectiveness, and 3) aggregate economic efficiency is a function of the efficiency of the individual economic units. With respect to the environmental constraints Farmer and Richman distinguish between four major categories: a) educational characteristics —referring to the nature and quality of the educational process and society's attitude toward education within a given country; b) sociological-cultural characteristics—meaning the dominant human attitudes, values, and beliefs and the way these tend to influence economically oriented behavior and work performance; c) a country's political system, ideology, and specific legal regulations, and d) a complex set of economic phenomena characterizing a country's level of economic activity, the presence or absence of a supporting infrastructure, etc. Multinational firms are, according to Farmer and Richman, exposed to a fifth environmental constraint category, the "international constraints" which are again subdivided into sociological-cultural, legal-political, and economic factors.

Another major contribution to international and comparative management theory using an ecological approach was made by Professor Roy Blough. As rationale for this approach he declared that "talking with business and government officials in this country and abroad has persuaded me to believe, first that the problems of international business are different from those of domestic business primarily because of the special conditions or environmental factors under which international business operates and second, that some or all of these environmental factors are of substantial concern to those who are interested in the subject of international business, from whatever viewpoint."[11] Blough focuses on three sets of environmental factors and their influence on business decisions: governmental policies,

[10]Richard N. Farmer and Barry M. Richman, "A Model for Research in Comparative Management," *California Management Review,* II, No. 2 (Winter, 1964); *Comparative Management and Economic Progress* (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, 1965); *International Business: An Operational Theory* (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, 1966).

[11]Roy Blough, *International Business: Environment and Adaptation* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), p. V.

cultural characteristics, and the stage of economic development. Throughout his analysis there is an emphasis on the necessity for a kind of passive, adaptive behavior on the part of the business organization to the dynamically changing environmental conditions.

Whereas Professor Blough considers governmental policies as the major environmental conditioning factor on management activities—giving only scant treatment to the impact of cultural and economic factors—Edward T. Hall, in an admirable study entitled *The Silent Language,*[12] concentrates on cultural and sociological environmental conditions and their impact on international management. Apart from an interesting classification of cross-cultural differences, Hall does not project a comprehensive conceptual model for comparative management studies; but his analysis is nevertheless a good example for the ecological approach to comparative management, i.e., an attempt to isolate major environmental conditions and to examine their relative influence on managerial effectiveness and economic achievement.

A number of empirical studies provide evidence of the conceptual soundness of this approach,[13] but it also has some weaknesses which cannot be overlooked: 1. The emphasis on environmental conditions has the effect that the individual enterprise is regarded as being basically a passive creature of these external "constraints." As a result, there is generally an overemphasis on the necessity for environmental adaptation and not enough attention is paid to the fact that management may choose to act in defiance of certain external conditions. More often than not management uses the business organizations entrusted to them as an instrument for active influence on environmental conditions in order to make them more conducive to efficient business operations. In other words, an ecological approach generally neglects to investigate management's role as a change agent. This does not mean that scholars like Blough, Richman, and Farmer are not aware of the active influence of management on environmental constraints, but they simply tend to discount the potentiality of management's nonconformist role, at least in the short run. 2. Another shortcoming of the ecological approach to comparative management theory, as it has been advocated thus far, is its inability to cope with the fact that practically all environmental conditions are interrelated, yet their impact on business operations is not cumulative and not uniform. Theoretically it is possible —and it makes an orderly, logical impression on the reader—to draw up a list of external environmental factors and separate them into black boxes

---

[12]Edward T. Hall, *The Silent Language* (New York: Doubleday, 1959), and "The Silent Language in Overseas Business," *Harvard Business Review* (May-June, 1960), pp. 87-96.

[13]See R. F. Gonzales and C. McMillan, Jr., "The Universality of American Management Philosophy," *Academy of Management Journal,* IV, No. 1 (April, 1961), 33-41; W. Oberg, "Cross Cultural Perspectives on Management Principles," *Academy of Management Journal,* 1, No. 2 (June, 1963), 129-143; E. C. McCann, "An Aspect of Management Philosophy in the United States and Latin America," *Journal of the Academy of Management,* III (June, 1964), 149-152.

with labels such as cultural-sociological constraints, etc. However, empirically it is almost impossible to appraise the precise impact of a given constraint category on internal management practices and management effectiveness. As a basis for empirical research, the ecological orientation of comparative management theory is thus operationally defective. It simply allows too much discretion in the evaluation of external environmental phenomena and their influence on management practices.

THE BEHAVIORAL APPROACH TO COMPARATIVE MANAGEMENT THEORY

In the field of business administration and management one finds presently a proliferation of publications which claim adherence to a behavioral approach, and it is thus not surprising that in the comparative management field too a behavioral orientation is being advocated. In general, using a behavioral approach means first the formulation of concepts and explanations about human behavior in dynamic systems of interdependency, and second, the use of scientific methods for the elucidation of information and data analysis pertaining to causal relationships of interpersonal phenomena. Scholars using a behavioral approach to comparative management theory focus on typical behavior patterns of managers in different cultures, their motivation for particular managerial attitudes, and managers' relationships with individuals or groups of individuals with whom they have to interact in the pursuit of organizational objectives.

One behavior-oriented conceptual framework as a basis research in comparative management has been advocated by Anant R. Negandhi and Bernard D. Estafen.[14] Their model consists of three major building blocks: a) the managerial functions, i.e., planning, organizing, staffing, controlling, and direction and leadership; b) managerial effectiveness, expressed by such indicators as profitability, change in profits and sales, employee morale, and the public image of the company; c) management philosophy, which Negandhi and Estafen define "as the expressed and implied attitude or relationships of a firm with some of its external and internal agents such as consumers . . . , company's involvement with the community . . . , company's relationship with local, state and federal governments, company's attitude and relationship with unions and union leaders, company's relationship with employees, company's relationship with suppliers and distributors."[15]

The basic idea expressed in this model is that managerial effectiveness is a function of the managerial practices which, in turn, are a function of

[14]Anant R. Negandhi and Bernard D. Estafen, "A Research Model to Determine the Applicability of American Management Know-How in Differing Cultures and/or Environments," *Academy of Management Journal,* VIII, No. 4 (Dec., 1965), 319-323.

[15]*Ibid.,* p. 323.

management's behavioral characteristics which manifest themselves in management philosophies and policies. This theoretical concept can easily be criticized as being not comprehensive enough, as being arbitrary in the selection of the various factors it includes in the model, and also as being superficial in the sense that the focus is simply on overt managerial behavior as it manifests itself in a few seemingly randomly selected relationships with internal and external action groups. The Negandhi-Estafen model also can be criticized for not expressing any concern about the *causes* of a given behavior. However, in a complex field such as comparative management, the indicated shortcomings of Negandhi-Estafen's behavioral approach also give rise to some advantages: a) the concentration on only a few largely controllable variables facilitates this model's use for empirical investigation,[16] and b) the concentration on management activities and managerial behavior within individual firms, i.e., on strictly micro-economic aspects in contrast to the other, strongly macro-oriented approaches.

A noteworthy comparative study on managerial behavior, attitudes, and satisfactions has been completed by Professors Mason Haire, Edwin Ghiselli, and Lyman Porter.[17] Their research findings were derived from questionnaire replies by over 3600 managers in 14 countries. The main conclusion of the study is that there is a high degree of similarity in managerial behavior in the various countries, but that there also exist substantial national and cultural differences which account for about 25 per cent of the variations in managerial attitudes which the research revealed. This particular study shows very clearly the difficulties associated with large-scale comparative surveys: in order to keep the research cost in bounds the researchers used only questionnaires. Since the questionnaires were—for a vast subject such as managerial behavior—rather short and simplistic, there is a lack of specific information on the motivations for managerial behavior and attitudes in the various countries. In addition, the reliability of a good part of the "factual" answers, for instance about the authority connected with a given managerial position, is open to question.

Another interesting and promising behavioral approach to comparative management is presently being tested under the guidance of Professor Bernard M. Bass who developed a set of ten case exercises on management and organizational psychology.[18] Each of these exercises is centered on a specific managerial problem or behavioral issue such as supervision, or-

[16]That this model can lead to meaningful empirical results has been demonstrated by Bernard Estafen in his dissertation, "An Empirical Experiment in Comparative Management—A Study of the Transferability of American Management Policies and Practices into Firms Operating in Chile" (Graduate School of Business Administration, University of California, Los Angeles, 1967).

[17]Mason Haire, Edwin E. Ghiselli, and Lyman W. Porter, *Managerial Thinking: An International Study* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966). See also Haire, Ghiselli, and Porter, "Cultural Patterns in the Role of the Manager," *Industrial Relations,* II (Feb., 1963), 95-117.

[18]Bernard M. Bass, *Program of Exercises for Management and Organizational Psychology* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: Management Development Associates, 1967).

ganization planning, communication, industrial bargaining, managers' personal life goals, or on the job of a manager as a whole rather than on specific instances. All exercises require either personal or group decisions, and Professor Bass' empirical, cross-cultural research focuses on the decision-making process and the behavioral peculiarities which it reveals. Presently a European as well as a Latin American Research Group on Management sponsor the use of Professor Bass' simulation exercises within the framework of various executive development programs. Trained observers register how executives tackle these exercises, what decisions they reach, how they modify their decisions. In this way, an attempt is made to get large-scale, empirically verified, objective and comparable data on managerial behavior in different cultures. This research project should also lead to some specific information about the influence of different behavior patterns on the achievement of business objectives.

Although no empirical results of this research effort have been published yet, this behaviorally-oriented approach as advocated by Professor Bernard Bass and his collaborators is certainly—from a methodological point of view—a very original and promising one. It can be expected that the large-scale observation of how executives of different countries, with different traditions and value systems, tackle and solve universal managerial problems will lead to new, interesting knowledge in the field of comparative management.

Another noteworthy conceptual framework with a behavioral orientation to comparative management is a model proposed by Professor Howard Perlmutter[19] and further developed by Professor Hans Thorelli.[20] Both focus on distinct management philosophies which can be adopted by multi-national firms:

Management Philosophy		*Dominant Behavioral Characteristic*
Ethnocentric	→	regulatory, attitude of superiority
Polycentric	→	permissive
Geocentric	→	cooperative

With respect to a multi-national firm an ethnocentric management philosophy signifies that corporate management attempts to implement the same values, policies, sentiments, etc., as adopted by the parent company—regardless of environmental differences. As a result, the various foreign subsidiaries of a firm in which management follows an ethnocentric philosophy have little autonomy; their operations are regulated according to the same guidelines that apply to the parent company. A polycentric management philosophy reflects the corporate executives' awareness of environmental

[19]Howard V. Perlmutter, "L'enterprise international—Trois conceptions," *Revue Economique et Sociale,* XXIII, No. 2 (May, 1965), 151-165.

[20]Hans B. Thorelli, "The Multi-National Corporation as a Change Agent," *The Southern Journal of Business* (July, 1966).

differences and their decision that every foreign operation should be as local in identity as possible. The individual units thus operate in accordance with local norms and environmental conditions. The geocentric management philosophy is truly cosmopolitan in spirit; it leads the company to recognize environmental differences but prescribes an interrelationship with the external conditions on a purely functional basis without any preconceived notion of omniscience at the home office or the foreign subsidiary. The interaction behavior among the various units of such a multinational firm can thus be described as cooperative.

Professor Perlmutter and Professor Thorelli proposed this model to find out the causes for the emergence of any one of these three forms of management philosophies and their influence on the managerial effectiveness and organizational efficiency of multinational firms. Both scholars hypothesized that the ethnocentric, as well as polycentric management philosophy, gives rise to numerous conflict situations which will be detrimental to managerial effectiveness, whereas a geocentric philosophy will lead to more desirable results.

The description of the various models advocating an essentially behavioral approach to comparative management shows the breadth and diversity of this particular orientation. Its positive aspect is the direct and explicit focus on managerial behavior and attitudes in different cultural settings. Another advantage is that we have at our disposal a well developed methodology for empirical investigation and a large body of knowledge from the behavioral school of management which gives the behavioral approach to comparative management a head start. However, one must also recognize some dangers: first, a possible overemphasis of sociopsychological relationships, and second, the generation of a large amount of information on uniformities or differences in managerial behavior in various countries may not add up to a consistent, comprehensive body of knowledge of its own called "comparative management."

THE ECLECTIC-EMPIRICAL APPROACH TO COMPARATIVE MANAGEMENT

Up to date, the largest number of contributions to comparative management can be characterized as eclectic-empirical. They are eclectic in a sense that no attempt is made to develop and test a comprehensive comparative management concept, but rather the authors of these studies adopt a framework which facilitates the practical investigation of certain facets of this broad field. Almost all contributions in this category are based on some form of empirical investigation and describe aspects of managerial attitudes and practices in various countries. Obviously, for a rather new and developing discipline such as comparative management, an eclectic-empirical approach has several merits, the major one being that it leads relatively quickly to a stock of empirically derived knowledge to which many researchers can contribute and from which generalizations can be drawn which in turn provide guidelines for further research.

Although there exist a good many competent contributions which fit into the eclectic-empirical category, only a few should be mentioned as prototypes of this particular approach: a very perceptive study of this sort is Professor David Granick's book *The European Executive,*[21] in which he investigates and analyzes management's role in Great Britain, France, Belgium, and Germany. He pays particular attention to structural characteristics of European industry and its consequences for managerial attitudes, peculiarities of managerial practices, labor relations, etc. By doing so he establishes clearly the remarkable differences in the business patterns among these four countries as well as the managerial differences between Western Europe and the United States. An equally noteworthy study is Professor Granick's comparison of Soviet and American management,[22] a subject to which Professor Barry Richman added an impressive amount of empirical information.[23] A comparative management study with focus on the managerial attitudes toward economic development in the Latin American countries by Albert Lauterbach shows the possibilities and limitations of management as a factor in the economic development process.[24] A somewhat similar study on the managerial situation in African countries by Theodore Geiger and Winifred Armstrong reflects on the various external constraints on the rise of an effective, indigenous managerial elite.[25] Other studies which can be mentioned in this category, dealing only with the managerial situation in one particular country, are by Heinz Hartman, Sayigh Yusif, Cochran and Reina.[26] The importance of these studies is that they are generally in-depth analyses of the management situation in a particular country. The only difficulty is that most of these studies focus on different features, which impairs comparability.

THE ROOTS OF THE VARIOUS APPROACHES

By outlining and analyzing the four major approaches or orientations to comparative management it becomes evident that there are distinct dif-

[21]David Granick, *The European Executive* (New York: Doubleday, 1962).

[22]David Granick, *The Red Executive* (New York: Doubleday, 1960).

[23]Barry M. Richman, *Soviet Management—With Significant American Comparisons* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1965); *Management Development and Education in the Soviet Union* (East Lansing, Mich.: Michigan University, Institute for International Business and Economic Development Studies, 1967).

[24]Albert Lauterbach, *Enterprise in Latin America—Business Attitudes in a Developing Economy* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1966); and "Managerial Attitudes and Economic Development," *Kyklos,* XV, No. 2 (1962), 374-398.

[25]Theodore Geiger and Winifred Armstrong, *The Development of African Private Enterprise* (Washington, D.C.: National Planning Association, 1964).

[26]Heinz Hartman, *Authority and Organization in German Management* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1959); Sayigh Yusif, *Entrepreneurs of Lebanon* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962); Cochran and Reina, *Entrepreneurship in Argentine Culture* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962).

ferences in focus and emphasis among them as well as substantial similarities. It is, however, surprising that there is not a higher degree of commonality among them. In tracing the causes for the differences, it becomes clear that they are partially the same as those to which Professor Harold Koontz attributed the "management theory jungle," namely strictly semantic differences in the definition of comparative management as a body of knowledge, the inability or the unwillingness of scholars to understand each other, and the misunderstandings which are a necessary consequence of such a situation.[27] Obviously, semantic difficulties are bound to appear in a field where definitions of certain key terms such as management, management philosophy, authority relationships, and environmental constraints are not universally accepted. More serious than these definitional difficulties is, however, the lack of a clear boundary for what does and what does not belong to the comparative management field; particularly hazy is the delineation toward international business. This kind of "demarcation conflict" is aggravated by the fact that comparative management research is conducted by scholars rooted in a variety of disciplines such as sociology, political science, cultural anthropology, and business administration, each with its own terminology and specific interest.

Apart from these general causes there are additional, more specific reasons for what has been referred to as the comparative management theory jungle: 1) the undue focus on managerial activities and managerial behavior within the boundaries of a national state. Most researchers in comparative management embrace explicitly or implicitly as a first hypothesis the existence of a relative uniformity in the environmental conditions and a high degree of homogeneity in managerial behavior within any given country. That this is not the case in most countries can easily be demonstrated. Consequently, comparative management research which starts from the premise of national homogeneity can easily lead to distorted results, simply because it tends to neglect the frequently considerable interregional differences within a country. 2) The managerial class within any country also shows a great heterogeneity: professional managers, owner-managers, managers of large and small organizations, etc., show great differences in their educational background and do not uniformly embrace traditional norms, nor do they react in a similar fashion to environmental conditions. This diversity lends itself generally to an easy support of all kinds of hypotheses that a researcher may put forward. In short, it is not too difficult to find representative empirical evidence for any type of comparative management approach that has been advocated. For instance, a researcher of French management using a behavioral approach may observe that the large majority of firms are small, family owned, thoroughly organized by noncompetitive agreements. He may see in this situation a reflection of the value system which emphasizes security, protection, sta-

[27]Harold Koontz, "The Management Theory Jungle," pp. 182-185.

bility, insistence on independence, and the maintenance of a family status. He may note that these norms work against a dynamic business climate and against an aggressive market behavior, and he thus finds behavioral causes for managerial inefficiencies. On the other hand, a researcher with an ecological orientation may become quickly aware of the considerable impact of French national economic planning on the decisions of the large enterprises. He may observe the close cooperation between the bureaucrats of the planning authority and the technocrats of the large organizations, and he may find that the largely rational decisions of a relatively few technocrats (who behave markedly different from the vast majority of the executives of the many small firms) have a much greater influence on the total level of economic activity than the peculiar attitudes of the mass of small family-firm managers. In this case, both the behavioral and the ecological approach would lead to findings which could not easily be reconciled with each other but would, nevertheless, be supported by representative empirical evidence. In brief, the comparative management theory jungle is, at least in part, a consequence of the heterogeneity of the research object which lends itself to the provision of empirical evidence for various types of conceptual orientations.

THE QUESTION OF DISENTANGLEMENT: A FRAMEWORK FOR SYNTHESIS

It can be argued that the different orientations in the comparative management field are a sign of a healthy development; different perspectives facilitate a thorough analysis of the relevant phenomena and the attempt to find empirical verification for a variety of approaches adds to the stock of knowledge from which from time to time higher levels of abstraction or a synthesis may be derived. Therefore, the only kind of disentanglement that seems desirable is a successive integration and synthesis of the empirically verified knowledge to which the diversity of approaches has led. In this spirit an attempt is made to propose a comparative management framework which incorporates and synthesizes the various orientations that have been advocated.

It is generally recognized that the logical structure of a theory and of rational inquiry consists of three steps: describing relevant phenomena and providing proper explanations, evaluating the observed phenomena by using certain standardized, objective measures, and formulating generalizations with predictive properties.

I COMPARATIVE MANAGEMENT ELEMENTS: THE FOCI OF DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATION	SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF INVESTIGATION
1. Managers as professionals	a) Number of managers in absolute and relative terms, their age distribution

	b) Analysis of managers' social origin, family background, types of schooling
	c) Analysis of managers by typical patterns of career such as required credentials, typical promotion procedure, personal qualities emphasized, earnings
	d) Managerial mobility (interfirm mobility)
	e) The status of management as a profession
	f) The scope of management, education, and development
2. Managerial norms and values	a) Analysis of managers' personal values in terms of commitment to economic, political, religious, aesthetic, social, ethical norms
	b) Analysis of managers' life goals such as relative importance of prestige, power, security, recognition, independence, self-realization, service, leadership, pleasure
	c) Analysis of business objectives as determined by managers; i.e., relative dominance of such objectives as to make satisfactory profits, to grow, to meet and stay ahead of competitors, to promote good will, to provide service to society, to provide for employee welfare
3. Managerial actions and decisions	a) Analysis of types of functions performed such as planning, organizing, directing, controlling, and the techniques or methods used in the discharge of these functional responsibilities
	b) Analysis of task priorities
	c) Analysis of instrumental activities, e.g., average time spent per day on correspondence, phoning, discussions, writing and reading reports, planning future activities
	d) Analysis of the decision-making process: who gets involved in the major strategic and administrative decisions, how these decisions are reached
4. Managerial attitudes	a) Analysis of the relative dominance of certain attitudes, e.g., toward delegation of authority, the use of staff, employment of financial and nonfinancial incentives
	b) Analysis of the predominant patterns of leadership
5. Managerial conflicts and conflict resolution	a) Analysis of the frequency of interpersonal conflicts in organizations
	b) Analysis of the major sources of conflicts

	c) Means of conflict resolution
6. The structure of managerial relationships within an organization	a) Analysis of the structures of relations of managers with superiors, peers, subordinates b) Analysis of the scope and limits of managerial authority, i.e., organizational constraints on the exercise of authority c) Analysis of the interplay between individual managers and the organization
7. The interplay of management as a system with the external environment	a) Analysis of the external constraint categories such as geophysical, socio-cultural, legal-political, economic, technological characteristics of the environment b) Analysis of the structure of external relationships in particular with consumers, suppliers, competitors, labor unions, governmental authorities c) Analysis of the locus and distribution of power in the larger society and its impact on business operations

II COMPARATIVE MANAGEMENT ELEMENTS: THE FOCI OF EVALUATION	SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF INVESTIGATION
1. The rationality of managerial decisions	Taking into account the boundaries of rationality, the focus of the investigation ought to be: a) Analysis of the degree of consistency between stated preference functions (objectives) and related decisions b) Analysis of the awareness and application of "sound management practices." The yardstick in this respect has to be the present state of the art, i.e., empirically tested, fundamental management principles which have a clarifying and predictive value in the understanding and improvement of managerial, economically-oriented activity
2. Managerial effectiveness	Since managerial decisions are subject to the boundaries of rationality, managerial effectiveness can only by determined in relative terms by comparing a firm's performance with that of another firm, the average norms of the industry, and/or the achievements of the entire economic system. For the determination of managerial effectiveness one has to eliminate as far as possible those factors which influence a firm's performance level but which are beyond management's control. Selected quantitative indicators for the determination of the relative degree of managerial effectiveness:

	a) Production criteria usable output per employee, defective output: total output unanticipated equipment breakdown, capacity utilization, inventory: total output goods in process: total output
	b) Marketing criteria rate of growth of sales and market share, Unfilled orders: total output or sales, goods returned: sales, sales: inventory, marketing and distribution costs: sales,
	c) Financial criteria gross and net profit: net worth return on investment current ratio, debt: equity ratios, cash velocity
	d) Personnel criteria absenteeism rates, personnel turnover rates, accident frequency rates and lost working time
3. Firm efficiency	Firm efficiency is the relative degree of performance in comparison with another firm, industry norms, and/or the achievements of the entire economic system. Firm efficiency is a function of managerial effectiveness as well as external factors beyond direct managerial control. Major indicators of firm efficiency are: a) Organizational productivity (input/output relationships) b) Profitability c) Any enhancement of a firm's potential for survival and growth
4. Aggregate conomic efficiency	Aggregate economic efficiency relates to the comparative degree of economic achievement of a country or region. Major indicators for aggregate efficiency are: a) Rate of growth of GNP b) Per capita income and its rate of growth c) Investment efficiency (average rate of growth of real GNP divided by the ratio gross domestic investment to GNP) d) Utilization rate of factors of production e) Total labor productivity

The model presented thus far indicates the major elements of analysis and evaluation; it is the platform on which a comparative management theory rests. To the extent that this model becomes substantiated with empirically verified information, it becomes possible to draw from it *generalizations with predictive properties,* for example the degree of improvement in managerial effectiveness in response to certain changes in the managerial value structure. However, as far as the predictive properties of empirically derived generalizations are concerned, it has to be borne in mind that they are subject to two major constraints: first, since these generalizations are derived from historical data, new emergent patterns of management behavior or new environmental conditions diminish their predictive value. Second, there is always the possibility of the occurrence of chance events which also can modify the course of development and thus make predictions hazardous. The reason for pointing this out is to indicate that comparative management theory will always be only of a tentative nature, in need of continuous empirical verification and in need of changes as new evidence becomes available. Seen in this light, the proliferation of "the comparative management theory jungle" is a sign of a healthy development of this discipline.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper was to review, analyze, evaluate, and classify the various conceptual, theoretical frameworks which have been advocated and used in the past decade to advance a theory of comparative management. This was intended as a stock-taking and as a first step toward an integration of the knowledge about comparative management as it evolved in the past few years. This effort resulted in the development of a more comprehensive comparative management model which should aid in a systematic classification of existing empirical findings to which the various comparative management approaches have led thus far. The advantage of this synthesis or unification is that it helps promote the cumulative growth of knowledge and also indicates specific areas where a greater research effort is necessary. The model should also help to minimize the existing biases of the various comparative management orientations, and it should provide a guide for further research.