

BEHAVIORAL BUREAUCRACY AND BEYOND

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"Bureaucracy. The most rational known means of carrying out imperative control over human beings." Max Weber (1922)

"Whereas economic man maximizes - selects the best alternative from among all those available to him, his cousin, administrative man, satisfices - looks for a course of action that is satisfactory or good enough." Herbert A. Simon (1947)







- From 2001 to 2010 Executive Courses and Masters at SNA that introduced the behavioral approach to public policies and public administration
- Behavioral public policies and organization in the Corso Concorso to become manager of the State
- Project works, theses and experiments realized by civil servants studying at SNA





2004 2009 SNA

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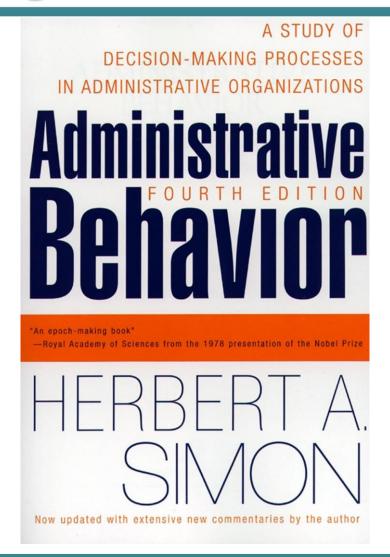
RICCARDO VIALE

INTRODUZIONE: VERSO UNA BEHAVIORAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Le scienze cognitive sono strettamente legate all'analisi dei processi decisionali nella pubblica amministrazione. Lo stesso concetto fondante di razionalità limitata si deve allo studio pionieristico di Herbert Simon, per la sua tesi di dottorato, sull'amministrazione comunale della città di Miwakee. Così come l'analisi delle decisioni di gruppo si è concentrata, spesso, su alcuni casi storici come le scelte del governo americano nella crisi di Cuba e nella guerra in Corea. Ciononostante se uno dovesse fare una ricerca sul web sugli articoli, i libri o i corsi che trattino di scienze cognitive applicate alla pubblica amministrazione, troverebbe ben poco. Gli studi sull'expertise decisionale e sull'organizzazione si sono concentrati prevalentemente sul settore privato dell'impresa industriale e finanziaria, mentre non è emerso ancora un filone di ricerca che, per analogia con campi confinanti, potremmo chiamare behavioral public administration. Le ragioni sono molteplici. In primo luogo, soprattutto nell'Europa continentale ed in particolare in Italia, la ricerca ed in primo luogo l'insegnamento sono stati monopolizzati dall'approccio giuridico e normativo. Un buon funzionario e manager pubblico è tale in quanto è in grado di applicare, in modo appropriato, le norme. Quindi ciò che deve apprendere è il repertorio di azioni o di regole condizione-azione che gli permettano di dare la risposta, formalmente, corretta nei vari contesti decisionali. In base a questo modello olimpico di razionalità amministrativa, di tipo meramente parametrico e non strategico, come quello economico, si è sviluppata la formazione dei manager pubblici nel nostro paese. Non vi è stato interesse né spazio per una riflessione di tipo procedurale che evidenziasse la variabilità e modalità di ragionamento e giudizio, a seconda dei contesti, che mettesse in luce le componenti emozionali ed affettive nel guidare la decisione e che evidenziasse la complessità ed imprevedibilità dell'interazione decisionale pubblica. Questo ritardo scientífico, culturale e formativo, espressione dell'egemonia del diritto sulla società (figlia dello stato romano, prima e napoleonico, poi) oggi non tiene più per due ragioni esogene prevalenti. La prima, legata alla compatibilità economica del sistema di welfare, ha messo la pubblica amministrazione di fronte alla necessità stringente

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Starting from a book of 1947



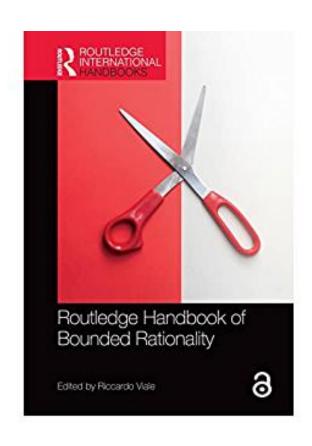


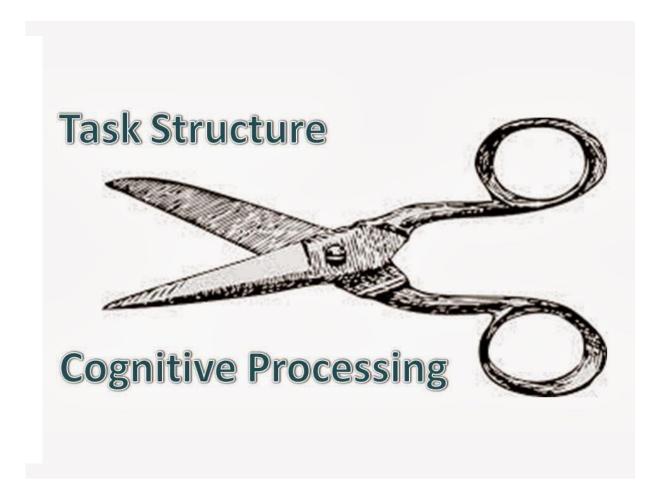






BOUNDED RATIONALITY





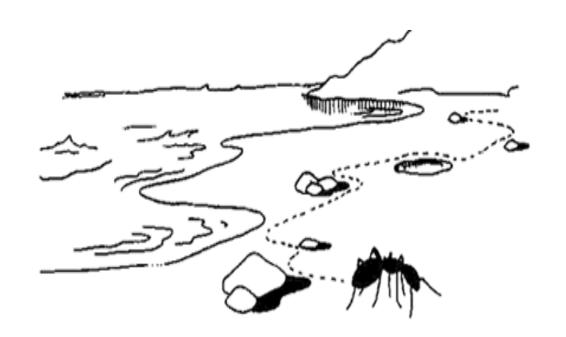








Ant on the Beach (Simon: The Sciences of Artificial, 1970)





WHAT ARE THE BEHAVIORAL FEATURES THAT INFLUENCE THE PERFOMANCES IN THE

ORGANIZATION?













1) Cognitive (Individual): Adaptive Organizational

Heuristics and Ecological Rationality

- The use of heuristics appears to be fundamental to the adaptive capacity of private and public organizations.
- Gerd Gigerenzer (2014), for example, describes how the bulk of the most important decisions for the company are made on the basis of intuition and heuristics rather than through optimizing analytical calculations.
- Every company seems to develop specific heuristics to guide certain contextual decisions and the exploitation of strategic opportunities (Look and Hinnen, 2015; Bingham and Eisenhardt, 2011; 2014).





- Rationality is ECOLOGICAL when individual embodied cognition is able to interact successfully with the task structure and to satisfy his own goal (prediction, problem solution, choice)
- In Uncertain environments the suitable decision making is by smart and frugal heuristics according to

Less-Is-More Principle

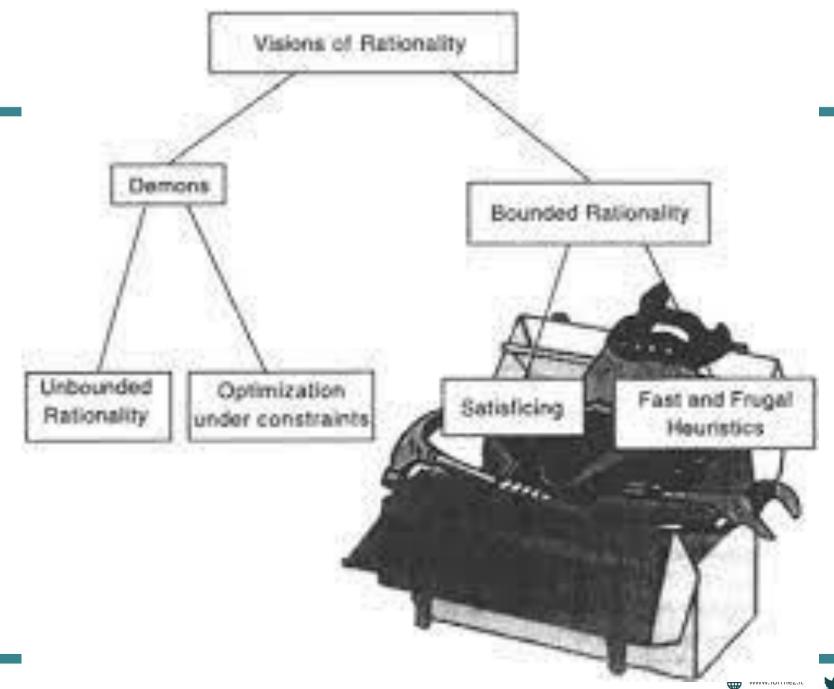






- ▶ The goal of Ecological Rationality is to determine the match between heuristics and environment, that is the structure of environments that a given class of heuristics can exploit (Todd, Gigerenzer & the ABC Research Group, 2012).
- Adaptive toolbox of heuristics for specific classes of problems: features of the environment determine which heuristics are better.
- Accuracy, speed, frugality and simplicity are the pragmatic criteria to prefer the decision tool.
- People use ecologically rational heuristics most of the time

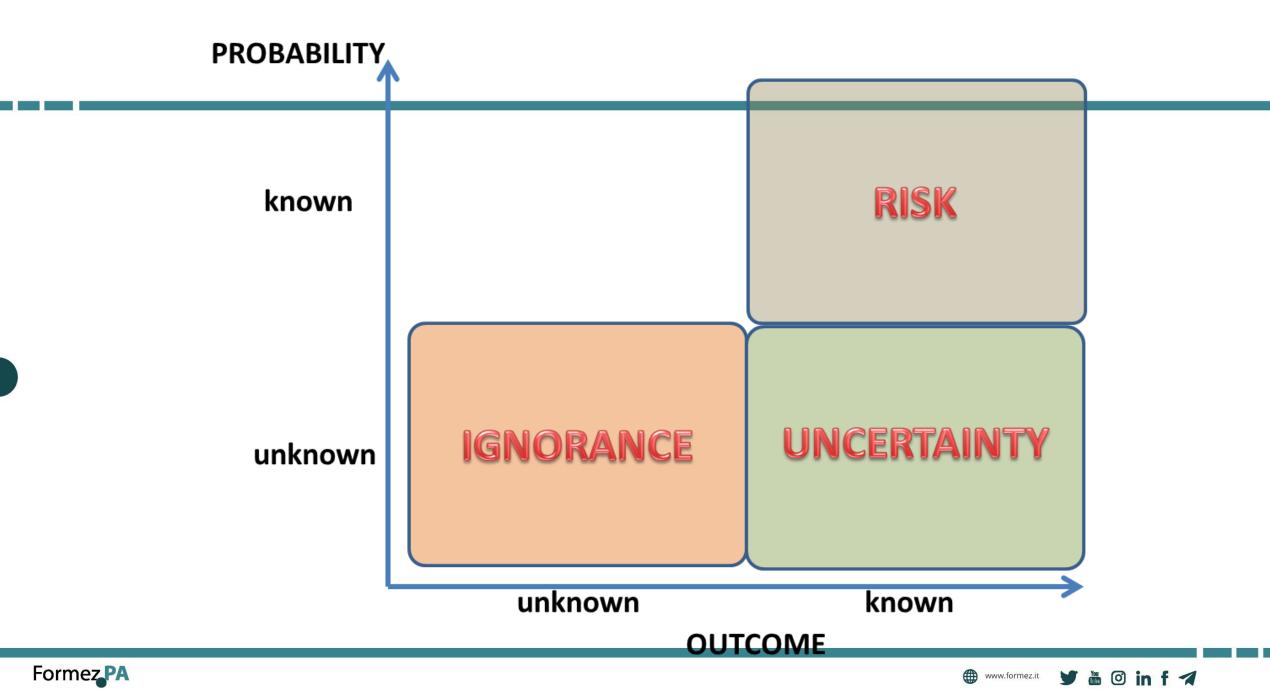


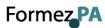


Organizational Heuristics

- There are four main macro types of organizational heuristics: selection, procedure, time, and priority. For example, a selection heuristic might be "restrict marketing to social media."
- A heuristic is **introduced to an organization** by an employee in various ways: by chance, trial and error, imitation of similar contexts, or targeted design. Once inside the organization, it spreads horizontally and epidemically, or else in a top-down pattern.
- Changing CEOs influences the use of organizational heuristics (Graffin, Boivie and Carpenter, 2012).















- It appears that the more the setting is uncertain, unpredictable, and turbulent (as it is for start-ups and high-tech firms in emerging markets or some politically sensible public institution during the change of the government), the more likely it is that a company will benefit from the use of heuristic decisions.
- What this takes is redundancy and variability of information, that is, some of the information must be correlated.
- Heuristic decisions are functional to a lack of representative data samples for decision-making and the failure of long-standing decision-making patterns and "path dependence," i.e. a defined trajectory. Ultimately, these shortcomings can be found chiefly in start-ups in, mature companies in crisis or in the creation of new public agencies..



- In theory, as Bingham and Eisenhardt (2011) argue, simple agreed-upon heuristics **IMPROVE**:
- coordination (people understand each other better),
- the accuracy/effort ratio (good accuracy with little effort),
- and the ability to improvise in dynamic situations (because heuristics are flexible),
- while saving time (they are fast) and freeing up attention resources (they do not require cognitive effort).
- Simplicity improves the dissemination and the sharing of heuristics.
- These types of heuristics, especially the one-reason variety, are well suited to semi-structured environments that require organizational flexibility because the context is highly competitive, dynamic, and changing (Artinger et al., 2014).



2) Cognitive (individual): Behavioral Biases and Formal Rationality

Collecting information: framing; confirmation bias;
 cherrypicking; law of small numbers; availability

▶ Elaborating a solution: group think; polarization; selfserving bias; discontinuity effect; illusion of similarity

 Acting: illusion of control; optimistic bias; overconfidence; time discounting; motivated reasoning and wishful thinking



3) Borderline behaviour (individual): Psychopathology

Paranoid: culture of suspect, malign gossiping, cause of polarization, diffamation, (malign narcissism).

Schizotypic: unreliability of evaluations and assignments

Bipolar: stressing the emotional balance.



4) Epistemological (social): Critical Anesthesia

- Conformism
- Forbidden attempt to falsification
- No critique
- Confirmation and application of the deliberations
- No organizational learning by trial and error



5) Normative (social): Prudential Defence

- Jungle of norms and regulations
- Risk not to be compliant and of legal charges
- Errors to be hidden
- Risk adversity to propose new solutions
- Delayed decisions
- No innovation



6) Decision Making (social): Sludge (Sunstein, The MIT Press, 2020)

- "Excessive or unjustified frictions, such as paperwork burdens, that cost time or money; that may make life difficult to navigate; that may be frustrating, stigmatizing or humiliating; and that might end up depriving people of access to important goods, opportunities and services"
- Avoidable unnecessary steps
- Delays and time taxes
- Complexity and opacity
- Resistance and hostility
- Distopic e-wellfare



7) Decision making (social): Noise (Kahneman, Sibony, and Sunstein, Hachette, 2021)

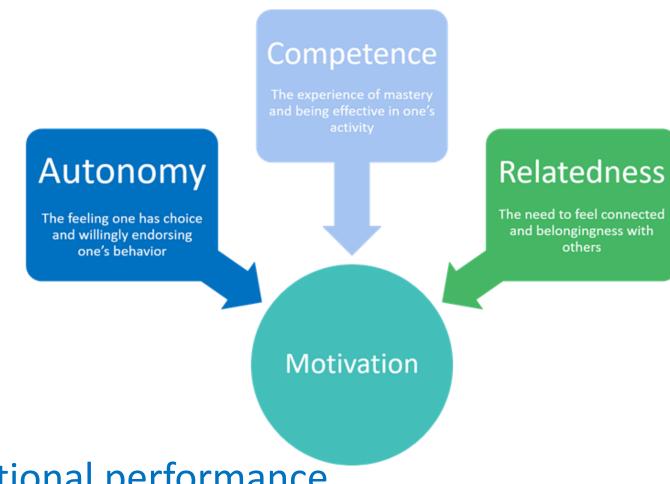
- "undesirable variability in judgments of the same problem"
- noise arises because of factors such as cognitive biases, mood, group dynamics and emotional reactions.
- can lead to gross injustices, unacceptable health hazards, and loss of time and wealth.
- Examples: performance evaluation and business strategy
- A meta-analysis showed that a quarter of the time, two separate recruitment interviewers disagreed on which job candidate was the best fit for the job. This was despite the interviewers sitting on the same panel, thus having seen the candidates in the exact same circumstances



8) Affective (social): Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (Bateman & Organ, 1983)

- Crowd-in (Frey, 2001; Le Grand, 2003)
- Voice and loyalty (Hirschman, 1970)
- Self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985)

- ▶ 1)ALTRUISM
- 2) CONSCIENTIOUSNESS
- > 3) CIVICNESS



-> Better individual and organizational performance





L'OCB o Comportamento di Cittadinanza Organizzativa

- Viene introdotto da Bateman & Organ (1983) per differenziare la performance di lavoro non riducibile alla produttività, ma a comportamenti non formali come la cooperazione, la formazione, l'aiuto reciproco, la salvaguardia della proprietà della organizzazione e la compliance.
- L'OCB viene definito, in contrasto con la performance produttiva (anche se ha come effetto quello di migliorarla), come: "Il comportamento individuale che è discrezionale, non direttamente od esplicitamente riconosciuto da sistemi formali di ricompensa e che in aggregato promuove il funzionamento efficiente ed efficace della organizzazione" (Organ, et al., 2006)



Gli attributi comportamentali che caratterizzano l'OCB

- Quattro macroaree:
 - Aiutare i colleghi
 - Aiutare l'organizzazione
 - Seguire le regole organizzative (Loyalty)
 - Impegnarsi a migliorarle in modo costruttivo (Voice)





Effetti positivi dell'OCB-Organizzativo sulla performance organizzativa

- Aumenta la produttività dei lavoratori
- Riduce le risorse dedicate a lavori routinari
- Libera risorse per scopi più produttivi
- Aumenta l'attrattività dell'organizzazione
- Aumenta il capitale sociale e relazionale organizzativo
- Aumenta la customer satisfaction





Effetti positivi dell'OCB-Individuale sulla performance organizzativa

- Inoltre l'OCB-I ha effetti positivi su:
 - Miglioramento della task performance
 - Minore assenteismo e turnover
 - Aumento del well-being individuale
 - Aumento del significato intrinseco del lavoro
 - Effetto stimolante e proattivo







Italy Behavioral Insights Team



Team di Analisi Comportamentale

What is TAC

TAC is the Italian acronym for 'Team per l'Analisi Comportamentale' and represents the Italy Behavioral Insights Team-IBIT: a new research and consulting group for Public Administrations that aims to use insights from cognitive and behavioral sciences to improve the well-being and job performance of PA employees.

The initiative follows the steps of the many Nudge Units created by

governments around the world.

The *nudge* tool will target the behaviour of PA employees, to help them improve their performance and their individual and organizational well-being.







Team di Analisi Comportamentale

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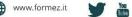






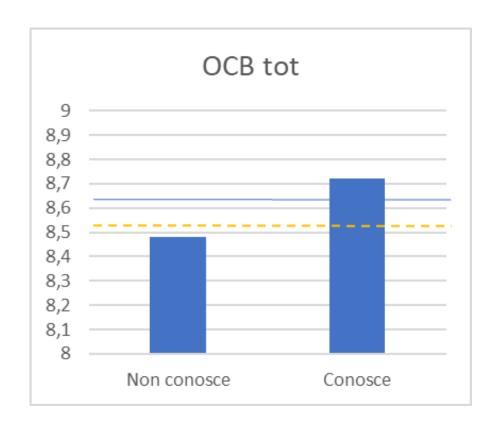
ITALY BEHAVIORAL INSIGHT TEAM (TAC) OCB And Organizational Nudges

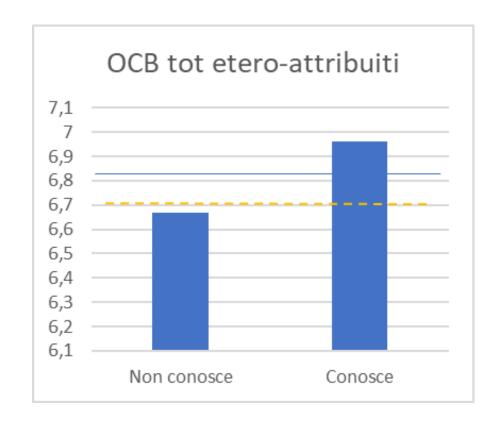
- TAC 2019-2023 promoted by FORMEZ and Dipartimento della Funzione Pubblica
- OCB in 6 Central Public Administrations: Agenzia delle Entrate, Istituto Commercio Estero, Agenzia Spaziale Italiana, ENEA, INAPP, AGEA
- 4 Stages:
- Qualitative analysis of the organizational culture
- Ex-ante Survey on OCB
- Nudging
- Ex-post Survey on OCB

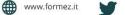




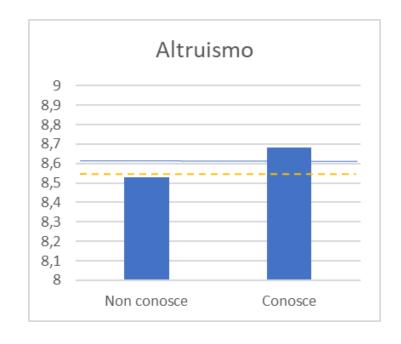
Risultati rilevazione Ex-post

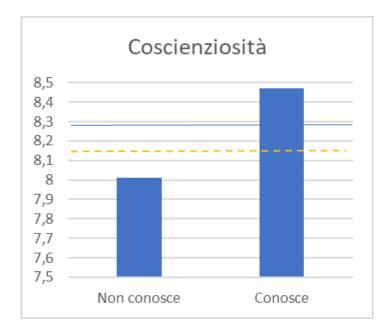


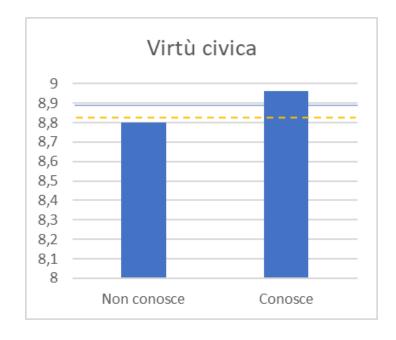




Risultati rilevazione Ex-post











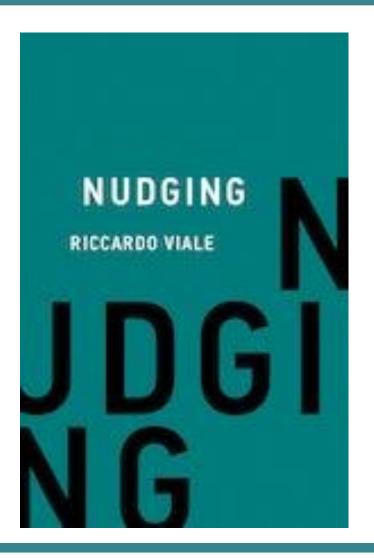


Conclusioni

- I risultati mostrano effetti complessivamente positivi del progetto attuato a favore dei Comportamenti di cittadinanza organizzativa all'interno delle pubbliche amministrazioni coinvolte.
- Le analisi trasversali hanno evidenziato che coloro che sono a conoscenza del progetto sperimentano più alti livelli di OCB, in tutte le sue dimensioni. Allo stesso tempo, attribuiscono livelli più alti di OCB ai propri colleghi.

Some Related Books:

Viale, R. (forthcoming) Behavioral Bureaucracy. The MIT Press



The MIT Press (2022)



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