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Revisiting Capacity Development Approach through the Analysis of Case Studies

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Managing International Cooperation for Organizational Capacity Development: Setting a Conceptual Foundation for Case Study Research and its Utilization

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Abstract

Capacity development has been the core of JICA's technical cooperation, especially after 2000s. The issue has been repeatedly debated among the professional institutions including such as UNDP, JICA and so forth. However, even now, there are not so much articles analyzing the issue from the perspective of management science though some arguments called for the conduct of theory-guided, systematic research about episodes of support for organizations in partner countries. The paper argues and proposes the necessity of a conceptual settings for a case study research and its utilization for systematic learning from the standpoint of management science, particularly public management. It illustrates the conceptual framework by using the knowledge of on-going E-JUST case study. The paper also explore the further steps for strengthening the capacity for organizational development. It proposed "triathlon" approach, namely, conducting the case study research, engagement of professional practitioners through organizational learning and professional development, and vocabulary clarification and integration. Considering the fact that organizational capacity development projects are *ex ante* novel and *ex post* unique, the idea of "design references" and "design precedents" are presented for development practitioners to work as "designers" and to create novel solutions in the future.

Keywords: International Development, Capacity Development, Technical Cooperation, Public Management, Design Science, Organizational Development

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Introduction

The concrete, operational activities of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) include development interventions. Presented in such broad terms, JICA's operational activities are the same today as they always have been. However, this timeless description hides major shifts in JICA's approach to development assistance interventions.

For much of JICA's history, one of its main approach to development assistance was technical cooperation. During the 2000's, however, JICA helped to spur a debate within the international development community that questioned the technical cooperation approach. While it was clear that many technical cooperation projects solved technical problems and trained individuals in developing countries, it was common for solutions to remain unimplemented, for lack of institutional support and organizational capacity.[1] The main thesis that emerged in train was that international cooperation should be geared to developing the capacity of a developing country's institutions and organizations.

The argument that the technical cooperation approach should be strengthened by a capacity development approach gained traction among thought-leaders working for multilateral and bi-lateral aid institutions, including JICA, United National Development Programme (UNDP) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)[2], during 2003-4.[3] The capacity development idea the fit within a broader thesis that programs and projects ought to be

[1] During this period, Institute for International Cooperation (IFIC) , a former JICA Research Institute (JICA-RI) commissioned and published a line of eight case studies about technical cooperation projects, which pointed out their strengths and shortcomings. See, https://www.jica.go.jp/jica-ri/IFIC_and_JBICI-Studies/english/publications/reports/study/topical/index.html

[2] CIDA was merged with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) in 2003.

[3] See, "Report: International Symposium on Capacity Development and Aid Effectiveness," Manila, Philippines, January 14-16, 2003. Available at https://unfccc.int/files/cooperation_and_support/capacity_building/application/pdf/undprep.pdf. [Accessed 28 February 2017]; and, "Report: International Symposium on Capacity Development: From Concept to Practice, Exploring Productive Partnerships," Tokyo, Japan, February 4-6, 2004. Available at: https://www.jica.go.jp/cdstudy/library/pdf/20071101_20.pdf [Accessed 28 February 2017]

“owned” by the developing "partner" countries. By the time the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) issued its Accra Declaration for Action in 2008, the capacity development “thesis” had undoubtedly become mainstream thinking within the international development community.[4]

Accepted doctrine is now that effective societies in partner countries depend on organizations that have the capacity to operate programs effectively over the course of time, sustained well beyond the point where the episode of support has concluded. Accordingly, the proper function of development assistance interventions is to strengthen those organizations in partner countries, whose own proper function, in turn, is to resolve specific development issues. Within JICA, these ideas were spelled out in impressive detail during 2006-8 in a series of two publications. Specifically, IFIC (Institute for International Cooperation), a former JICA Research Institute, published initial a guideline on how to plan, implement, and evaluate international cooperation projects in 2006 (IFIC 2006). These guidelines were refreshed in a subsequent document published in 2008 (JICA-RI 2008).

The capacity development approach to development assistance interventions appears to have taken root in actual professional practice. A case in point is Japan's long-standing support for the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST) (Okumoto 2014). E-JUST has been expected to produce highly qualified professionals and academics who can lead the future socio-economic development, not only in Egypt but also Arab and African countries. The main concepts for the university include implementing a Japanese-style lab-, project-, and problem-based learning system. Through technical cooperation projects, Japan's universities have been involved in supporting the development of academic programs, in both teaching and research. In addition, JICA and Japanese universities have provided support for executive action to perform E-JUST's management functions, including through strategic planning.

[4] See, “The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action,” http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/34428351.pdf [Accessed 19 August 2016]

Japan's external support for E-JUST is a continuing feature of the university and of JICA's operations.

While experience abounds within JICA, the agency has not necessarily developed its own organizational capability for systematic learning about capacity development international cooperation projects. There is arguably a need for such a capability. As far back as 2011, Hosono et. al. (2011) called for “opening the black box” of capacity development, in an edited book chapter. Based on their review of three case studies, the authors drew the conclusion that interactions among multiple factors determine what eventuates from efforts at capacity development. These factors are stakeholder ownership, specific drivers, mutual learning, pathways to scaling up, and external actors. As much as they thought research progress had been made, their main concluding point was that “attention is urgently needed to develop and refine capacity development approaches, methods, and tools for more effective support" (p. 196).

There is much merit in what Hosono et. al. called for. The core argument is that the conduct of theory-guided, systematic research about episodes of support for organizations in partner countries will give rise to practical knowledge about this now established form of international cooperation. Embedded in this argument is the belief that it is not only instructive to document episodes in which organizational capacity development has been externally supported, but also it is particularly fruitful to explain how episodes eventuated in their outcomes. A further idea in this argument is that progress in attaining such a systematic understanding is a basis for improved practice. A similar call for practice-relevant research through case studies has subsequently been made by the World Bank, under the banner of its Global Delivery Initiative. The initiative is presented as seeking to develop a science of delivery, with an emphasis on understanding what works in the field, through case study research

(González Assis and Woolcock 2015).[5] Within this initiative, a number of case studies have been undertaken (for example, Hima and Santibanez 2015).

The concluding message in the book chapter by Hosono et. al. is the starting point for work now being undertaken by the present authors. In this exact spirit, we have embarked on a case research project, where the episode involves JICA's coordination of Japan's decade-long support for the E-JUST. In intent, this case research project also has much in common, with the guiding principles behind case research for the World Bank's Global Delivery Initiative.

The project is currently in a conceptualization and data-collection phase. As designed, the case study will focus more on support for E-JUST's management than on the development and operation of its higher education and engineering research programs. Support for E-JUST's management, under our definition, included joint efforts between Japan and Egypt in coming up with a concept and plan for the university. The support for management of E-JUST continued well beyond the university's period of establishment, and it involved high-level participation in management-executive discussions by Japanese counterparts of E-JUST's top officials. The provision of support of this "managerial" nature had few close precedents in JICA's work in the field, particularly if one examines the way in which the support was formalized and operated. The stream of managerial support appears to have contributed significantly to the realization of the Japan government's intentions in supporting E-JUST. This feature of the case is significant, because the idea of capacity development is, in principle, no less relevant to supporting the management of the organizations concerned than to supporting their programs.

[5] It is instructive to read the rationale provided for this program of case study research.
See, http://www.worldbank.org/reference/GDI/pdfs/1PagerFAQsCaseStudy.pdf.
A fuller statement of the World Bank Global Delivery Initiative's case-writing program is available at:
http://www.worldbank.org/reference/GDI/pdfs/Guidelines24September.pdf.
The case research approach of the GDI initiative includes guidance provided by Professor Jennifer Widner, of Princeton University. See, https://novoed.com/casestudies.

In moving back-and-forth between data collection and conceptualizing the study, we came to the view that our empirical examination of the case episode will only be fruitful if the idea of "support for management" of partner organizations comes to be clear and explicit. Such clarity is critical to research design: it provides the basis for making lucid observations about the aspects of the episode that are most pertinent to our central topic of interest (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). Lucidity in the observations, in turn, is key to clarity of explanation, as what is observed about the episode comes to figure as the "explanandum", or that to be explained, on the one hand, and explanatory factors, on the other. Further, the practical merits of the study depend on its case commentary being clear, so that it can play the role of a "design precedent" (Lawson 2004) for future episodes of support for organizations in partner countries - and not just the role of a "bright spot" (Heath and Heath 2010) or motivational tale.

This paper is intended to get crystal clear about the idea about support for developing the capacity of organizations in partner countries. For that purpose, the procedure of the paper involves examining adopted doctrine about this kind of work by international cooperation agencies, to pull its threads together into a compact and integrated idea. More concretely, the idea of technical cooperation for capacity development will be examined by analyzing "vital relations" (Fauconnier and Turner 2002) in this part. The procedure also involves "recruiting" ideas about management generally and public management, in particular. This conceptual recruiting exercise is needed because the main sources of ideas about organizational capacity development are thin and patchy when it comes to a vocabulary of management in the supported partner country organizations. Then, the paper "blends" (Fauconnier and Turner 2002) management and organizationalcapacity development ideas into a clear thought structure, referenced by "ordinary" words and phrases, for instance, by borrowing some company management literature on strategy such as a conception of value chain . In conclusion, it explores the further possibilities for strengthening the capacity for organizational development. It proposes “triathlon” approach, namely, conducting case study researches, engagement of

professional practitioners through organizational learning and professional development, and vocabulary clarification and integration. Considering the fact that organizational capacity development projects are ex ante novel and ex post unique, the idea of “design references” and “design precedents” (Lawson 2004) will be presented for development practitioners to work as “designers”. While the paper is conceptual, it illustrates its points with particulars drawn from the E-JUST case study, as it is developing.

The Idea of Technical Cooperation for Capacity Development

In this section, we start to build up a conceptual foundation for case study research and its utilization about managing technical cooperation for capacity-strengthening. The immediate task is to formalize the vocabulary of mainstream thinking about this topic. Formalization provides an analogue or model of the vocabulary. By vocabulary we mean a system of words and thought structures. By a vocabulary's words, we mean a collection of terms that are commonly used in communicating about a topic. By a vocabulary's thought structures, we mean systems of concepts that have been built up in the minds of people who know and use the vocabulary (Lakoff 1987, Fauconnier and Turner 2002, Murphy 2004). By formalizing a vocabulary, it becomes explicit, rather than implicit; clear rather than vague; integrated rather than disparate.

Let us take the first step in formalizing the vocabulary of technical cooperation for capacity-strengthening. The first step is to assemble a collection of terms commonly used in communicating about this topic. As we go forward, we will use the expert term "lexical field" in place of "collection of commonly used terms", merely for the sake of brevity. For the same reason, we will shorten the term "technical cooperation for capacity development" to "technical cooperation." Hence, our initial formalization of the lexical field of technical cooperation is as follows:

Aid strategy
Technical cooperation
Partner countries
Technical cooperation projects
Societies
Organizations
Capacity strengthening
Planning
Implementation
Evaluation

Concrete instances communication about technical cooperation for capacity strengthening draws on a wider lexical field than this set of ten "lexical items" (i.e., terms with one, two, or three words). However, parsimony is a desirable feature of a vocabulary's formalization. We will take this fragment of the actual lexical field of communication of the topic as adequate for beginning to formalize the topic's vocabulary. This view of adequacy is only provisional, however. If adding items to this model of the lexical field of the topic will help make its vocabulary clearer and more integrated, then it should be done.

Having formalized the lexical field of technical cooperation, we turn to building up the vocabulary's thought structure, after some discussion of the method used. Regardless of topic, the standard format of a formalized thought structure is a collection of one-sentence statements. An example of such a statement is, "As a form of aid strategy, technical cooperation is accomplished through technical cooperation projects." Let us call sentences written for this purpose, "thought structure statements."[6] We now use this example to discuss what makes for an appropriate statement of this kind.

Notice that the statement above includes some of the vocabulary's formalized lexical items; in fact, it includes three: aid strategy, technical cooperation, and technical cooperation projects. Also notice that the statement above includes two lexical items drawn from elsewhere than technical cooperation. These two are: "as a form of" and "is accomplished

[6] In linguistics, the technical term is "frame knowledge."

through". They come from what we might call a collection of "vital relations" that are pervasive in human thought. Finally, notice that the statement gives structure to the meaning of "aid strategy", "technical cooperation", and "technical cooperation projects" by using "as a form of" and "is accomplished through" to state how they are related to one another.

The reasons why thought structure statements have these features includes the intentions behind the exercise of writing them. One intention is for the vocabulary's thought structure to be made explicit. This intention is accomplished through (a) including some of the vocabulary's lexical items into the statement and (b) placing the lexical items in relation to each other within the statement. The reason why this is an appropriate way to implement the intention is that research in cognitive science has proven that thought structures consist in fixed relationships among collections of concepts that are specific to domains that make up, and organize, our thought.

Another intention is for the vocabulary's thought structure to be clear. This intention is accomplished through the specific way in which the lexical items are placed in relation to one another. The specific way is to use "vital relations" (Fauconnier and Turner 2002). These relations include irreducibly basic relations, such as: A is an attribute of B, where both A and B are concepts; A is an instance of B, where B is a category within which A is included; A is a part of B, where B is a systemic entity to which A belongs; and A precedes B, where A and B are occurrences within an event. Vital relations also include pervasive relations in human thought that relate combine the basic relations. An example is: A is a cause of B, as when a condition "A" is the reason for condition "B" in the same system, or as when occurrence "A" is the reason for the later occurrence of "B" in the same event." Theorists of conceptual structure and thought have included the following vital relations into a basic inventory: category, attribute, part-whole, intention, cause-effect, time, and change. Such vital relations are not visible along the surface of the vocabulary of topics in public administration like technical cooperation; however, the words that are visible in the vocabulary are there as much for seeking legitimacy

and support as for thinking clearly about the topic. Placing lexical items in relation to each other through the use of vital relations in constructing "thought structure statements" is appropriate to the intention of making thought structures clear, particularly in comparison with the "idealizations" that come to figure in official communication about purposeful activities like technical cooperation.

Let us now preview the first iteration of the full formalized thought structure for technical cooperation by examining two further statements in addition to the one used above just to illustrate the method:

- As a variant-type of *aid strategy, technical cooperation* is accomplished through technical cooperation projects.
- As a variant-type of *aid strategy, technical cooperation* intends to increase the effectiveness of societies of partner countries.
- Effective *technical cooperation projects* eventuate in more capable *organizations* within *partner countries*.

Notice that some of the same concepts (written in italics) appear in more than one of these thought structure statements. [7] In particular, the concept of *aid strategy* is included in the first and second statements, while the concept of *technical cooperation projects* is included in the second and third statements. This feature of the collection of statements is important to building up the conceptual structure of the vocabulary in two ways. First, it means that any given concept is placed in relation to more concepts in the vocabulary than is achieved if each statement is kept simple (i.e., few concepts and even fewer ways in which their relation is structured). Second, it means that the thought structure becomes not only explicit and clear, but also integrated. Also notice that we have introduced some new terms for structuring the

[7] The reason we have switched from using "lexical items" to using "concepts" here is that, within a formalization of this nature, the words taken from a lexical field of communication are theorized as concepts that make up a thought structure for a domain.

relations among concepts, including "eventuate in." This relational concept "fuses together" (Fauconnier and Turner 2002) the vital relations of time, change, and cause-effect. Thus, A (technical cooperation projects) are causes of B (more capable organizations in partner countries); both A and B are occurrences within the same event; and both A and B change with passage of time.

The second and third statements include the term "effective." This term brings the concept of intention squarely into the formalization. Within this thought structure, two concepts are placed in relation to intention: societies of partner countries and organizations within partner countries. As societies and organizations in partner countries are different concepts, this feature of the thought structure is a potential source of strain within the idea. However, the thought structure is actually coherent. One reason is that within the vocabulary is the view that the two intentions are functionally related to each other in that societies wouldn't be effective if the organizations within them were not capable.[8] This idea can be made explicit by elaborating the thought structure as, "capable organizations are functional attributes of effective societies."

Another reason for that is that one intention -- effective societies in partner countries -- is linked to technical cooperation as a variant-form of aid strategy while the other intention -- more capable organizations in partner countries -- is linked to technical cooperation projects. This complex idea arises from the combination (i.e., interlocking collection) of all three statements. As to why this complex idea makes sense, the answer lies, in part, in thought structures that haven't been made explicit here as they relate to a more abstract topic: public administration. Its vocabulary includes the concept of public program (Pawson and TIlley

[8] As a general matter, this relation is as follows: B is a functional attribute of A, if A can't operate adequately unless B operates adequately. The functional attribute relation is well known in biology, where an example of B is inhalation, while the corresponding example of A would then be respiration; respiration cannot operate adequately unless inhalation -- a functional attribute -- operates adequately. For relevant philosophical discussions, see Ariew and Perlman (2002) and Craver and Darden (2013).

1997, Funnell and Rogers 2011) . (Implicitly, aid strategies are a variant-form of public program, while, as we have seen, technical cooperation for capacity-strengthening is a variant-form of aid strategy. In this sense, technical cooperation for capacity-strengthening is a program.) Within the vocabulary of public administration, an attribute of a program is its delivery. Further, the attributes of a program's delivery include its "cases" or "operating cycles," depending on the sort of operation involved in program delivery. (Implicitly, capacity-strengthening technical cooperation projects are cases within the delivery of capacity-strengthening technical cooperation aid strategies.) These attributes are of a special sort: functional attributes. A program operates through (and depends on) its delivery, while program delivery operates through (and depends on) cases or operating cycles.[9] (Implicitly, the functional attributes of technical cooperation projects include project planning and project implementation.) This sort of architectural or systems engineering view of programs is clearly part of the thought structure of public administration, and it is implicitly a source of the coherence of the idea of technical cooperation as formalized above.

The formalization above also has some "loose ends," i.e., concepts in the vocabulary whose relations to other concepts is loose and that, for this reason, are vague, as far as the formalization goes. A readily apparent loose end is "effective societies." We have placed this concept in relation to aid strategies, as an intention; we have placed this concept in relation to capable organizations, as an effect. But otherwise the formalized idea is vague. Perhaps it should be made less vague in a further iteration of the formalization. Another loose end is "capable organizations." We have placed this concept in relation to aid strategies as the intention of the projects through which aid strategies operate; and we have placed it in relation to

[9] Notice that this "architectural" conception of programs within public administration is a different vocabulary from the conception of programs as results chains within the field of program planning and evaluation. In the latter terms, capable organizations are intermediate goals (perhaps labeled as "program outcomes"), while effective societies are terminal goals (perhaps labeled as "program impact").

effective societies, as a cause. But otherwise the formalized idea is vague. On this point, the formalization's vagueness is clearly unsatisfactory, as it is hard to be clear about "managing technical cooperation projects for capacity-strengthening" -- our paper topic -- if one is unclear about the idea that serves as the intention of technical cooperation projects.

Borrowing from Vocabulary about Management

At this point, we ask readers to look through the following list of terms:

Companies
Organizations
Businesses
Capabilities
Strategies
Operations
Operating cycles
Operating characteristics
Administrative organizations
Formalized behavior
Role structures
Superstructure
Operating core
Managing
Administration
Executive Action
Decision-making
Directing
Coordinating
Planning
Controlling

The terms in this list appear in much written and spoken communication about management. However, we need to make sure we are not just using the same words to discuss management, but that we share a vocabulary.

Building up a shared vocabulary can be done conversationally. In conversation, one party, A, chooses a string of words (which we represent here as XYZ) to convey what they mean to the other, B. If B's vocabulary is identical to A's, then B's understanding of what A meant by

XYZ will be the same as what A meant for B to understand when A said XYZ to B. However, it's often the case that B's response to A will cause A to think that B understood XYZ in a different way than what A intended for B to understand when A chose XYZ to make the intended point.[10] If A thinks that the problem was just A's previous choice of words, A might divert the conversation momentarily to explain the conceptual understanding behind XYZ and LMN, with the effect being that B's vocabulary develops toward the point where B has a much better understanding of what A meant by XYZ in the first place. Following the diversion, the conversation would return to the main path.

Reading a paper, however, is not the same as being in conversation. Absent conversation, the scenario traced earlier, where A tries to build up B's vocabulary, won't transpire. Mindful of this, A might take some precautionary steps to build up B's vocabulary, so that it has more in common with A's.

In what follows immediately, we employ the same method of formalization as used earlier -- based on theories of language and cognition -- to build up a vocabulary about management that is shared between you and us.[11] As we have seen, formalization comes with a format. When a given word (or word string) on the page -- management, for example -- is specifically meant to serve as the label for the formal characterization of a conceptual entity, it is written in capital letters, as in MANAGEMENT. When a given word (or word string) -- executive action, for example -- is specifically meant to serve as the label for the formal

[10] See Heath and Heath's discussion of "the curse of knowledge."

[11] Within the linguistics patch of cognitive science (concerned with cognitive semantics), the theory behind the method is associated with the term "frame semantics" (Filmore 1982). The concept of *frame* in the theory of "frame semantics" is conceptually similar to the concept a *vocabulary*. While a frame is specific to a "domain", a vocabulary is specific to a "topic In the vocabulary of frame semantics, the idea of "formal characterization of a conceptual element" is summarized as a "concept." The idea of a "formal characterization of a conceptual entity" is summarized as a "frame." The formal characterization of the specific relationship between conceptual elements" is summarized as a "conceptual relation." So, here, MANAGEMENT is a frame; *organization* is a concept; and is an attribute of is a conceptual relation. There is also a term for an unstructured list of concepts within a frame; that term is the "frame ontology." The collection of statements made about the frame --presented in terms of specific relations among concepts within the frame -- is summarized as "frame knowledge."

characterization of a conceptual element within the entity, it is italicized, as in *executive action*. When a given word (or word string) is specifically meant to serve as a label for the formal characterization of the specific relationship between conceptual elements, it is underscored, as in is an attribute of.

With this in mind, let us begin to proceed with very small step of formalization. Recall the first two items on the list of words presented at the head of this section:

Companies
Organizations
Businesses

While these words are closely associated in everyday discussions of management, this is not a list of three names for the same concept within MANAGEMENT.

The initial formalization is as follows:

- *Organizations* are functional attributes of *companies*.
- *Businesses* are functional attributes of *companies*.

The conceptual structure here is similar to (and may historically derive from) that used in a different discipline to discuss organisms, known as functional biology. The company is the organism: its functional attributes not only make it what it is (as any defining attribute would), but would also enable the organism to fulfill its telos. If a human didn't have the functional attribute of respiration, it would fail to meet the imputed goal of survival, for lack of oxygen. If a company didn't have the functional attribute of a business, it would fail to meet the goal of earning profits, for lack of sales. If a company didn't have the functional attribute of an organization, it would be difficult to acquire and allocate the resources to enable it to accomplish any complex task, also harming the realization of its goals.

Bearing in mind paper's overall topic, a problem with this rudimentary formalization comes to mind right away. Technical cooperation is public administration, not business management. Not only are aid strategies programs of public administrations, but many of the

partners in cases of these programs -- technical cooperation projects -- whether at home or abroad -- are also organizations within public administration.

The workaround we adopt at this point is to conceive of company management as -- but not the only -- kind of management. The narrow question to deal with at this juncture is how to develop MANAGEMENT with this commitment in mind. Part of the answer is, going back to step 1, is to revise the frame ontology by including some commonplace ideas from public administration. Conspicuously available words include:

Ministries
Government agencies
Public programs

For our purposes, we can formalize ministries and government agencies as *public organizations*, as the difference between them seems slight when the task is to formalize "management."

That done, we can focus on the revising MANAGEMENT so that management of companies and their businesses is distinct from, but conceptually consonant with, management of public organizations and public programs. When systematic differentiation is the intention, the standard recipe is to construct variant-forms. What we need, then, is a concept that will be inclusive of companies, but also includes other variant-types.

Such a concept can be recovered from the history of systematic thought about management, specifically from Henri Fayol's 19th century *Industrial and General Management* (see Faylol 1984). Industrial management was Fayol's name for the concept of managing companies. If industrial management was a variant-type, what term did he use for the general-type? Writing in French, Fayol used the term *l'entreprise* to refer to that which was managed, whether a company or not. The role played by *l'entreprise* in Fayol's framing of the topic of management is essentially the same as the role played by venture in the formalization of MANAGEMENT presented below.

Our proposal for the frame ontology is as follows:

Ventures
Companies
Businesses
Organizations
Public organizations
Public programs
Public ventures

The frame ontology would then be:

- *Companies* are a variant-form of *ventures*.
- *Public ventures* are a variant-form of *ventures*.
- *Organizations* are functional attributes of *companies*.
- *Public organizations* are functional attributes of *public ventures.*
- *Businesses* are functional attributes of *companies*
- *Public programs* are functional attributes of *public ventures*
- *Businesses* and *organizations* are functional attributes of *company-type ventures.*
- *Public programs* and *public organizations* are functional attributes of *public ventures.*

As you can see, the resulting frame is not quite as "mainstream" as it was before introducing the concept of venture and public ventures as a variant-form. However, this conceptual structure has precedents. The prime precedent is Mark H. Moore's *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government* (Moore 1995). In presenting his ideas about strategic management in government, Moore found reason to argue that public programs are conceptually similar to businesses, in that both public programs and businesses are sources of value-creation in societies. Moore also drew on the established idea that public organizations are conceptually similar to companies, in that both are variant-forms of organizations. As part of his more substantive discussion of strategic thinking, Moore argued that the effectiveness of public programs, at any given time, depends on the capabilities of public organizations, as well as their legitimacy and support. In this sense, public programs and public organizations were

bound together as characteristics of a government's strategy for putting public policy into operation. Unfortunately, Moore did not make explicit some of the conceptual structure of his discussion of public management - though he may have had good reasons for doing so at the time. From our position, more than 20 years after publication of *Creating Public Value*, we can see that public programs and public organizations are bound together, in ways that involve some similarity in concept to the relation between businesses and organizations in companies. Thus, *public ventures* are a variant-form of ventures, the defining attributes of which are public programs (as contrasted with businesses in company ventures) and public organizations (as contrasted with organizations in company ventures).

Blending the Vocabulary of Technical Cooperation and Management

The specific issue to consider here is how the vocabulary of capacity-strengthening technical cooperation projects is to be formalized. Doing so is tricky because the wording of accepted doctrine is centered on "organizations" as that which is to be strengthened, while the wording of public management vocabulary, as presented here, is centered on "public ventures", in relation to which "organizations" are an attribute. Public management and technical cooperation vocabulary are thus not entirely compatible. Here is a dilemma. On the one hand, it would be foolish to ignore the vocabulary -- and especially, the phrasing --of accepted doctrine, given that it is meant to be refined rather than undermined. On the other hand, it would be no less foolish to ignore the vocabulary -- and especially, the thought structure -- of management.

The dilemma can be resolved by reconciling the vocabularies, through an exercise similar to what cognitive scientists call "conceptual blending" (Fauconnier and Turner 2002). (Consistent with our use of language so far, we will use the term "vocabulary blending" rather than "conceptual blending.") In the vocabulary blend that we formalize, the thought structure of management in public administration is preserved -- in particular, the idea that effective

technical cooperation projects give rise to better public ventures, with effective programs and capable organizations. While the thought structure of public management is to be preserved, the wording of the blended vocabulary is to be flexible. Specifically, the word "organizations" will serve as a standard verbal reference for the concept of *public venture*. Provided that this is the case, then there is no harm in also using the word "public venture" as a secondary reference to the same concept. Thus, the words "organizations" and "public ventures" will be used interchangeably in what follows. For example, we can refer to the E-JUST as an "organization" in Egypt supported by Japan or as a Japanese supported "public venture" in Egypt.

In the vocabulary of public management, a fundamental attribute of public ventures is their public programs, as they are what public ventures do as they create public value. Correspondingly, the vocabulary of technical cooperation can be worded to say that public programs are fundamental attributes of supported organizations in partner countries.[12] Accordingly, in reference to our case illustration, the programs within the E-JUST venture (or, interchangeably, within the E-JUST organization) included higher education in science and technology as operated along laboratory-, problem-, and project-based lines, (b) novel line of academic engineering research for Egypt, and (c) applied engineering research, in collaboration with Egyptian partners in industry and public administration.

Nevertheless, the relation between public venture/organization and their programs remains vague, as is evident from the minimalist relation, "programs are an *attribute of* public ventures." This must be clarified. A way to do so is to state what attributes of public ventures are *not* attributes of public programs. In this, we borrow an idea that is most familiar in the context of company management, namely the distinct ideas of the *administration* of a venture and the *administrative organization* of a venture.

[12] Programs can also be seen as what changes in a venture when "solutions" are iterated, adopted, implemented, scaled up and so on. This point is developed in the next section.

As conceived by Fayol, administration is a function whose performance enables the other functions of a venture (such as production, sales, and finance) to be carried out in ways that make the *entire venture* effective *over the course of time*.

Also as conceived by Fayol, administration is accomplished through varied forms of executive action, including directing, coordinating, planning, and controlling. If the concept of business is introduced here, administration is that which creates a direction for a venture's businesses and enables their effectiveness through such forms of executive action as those just listed. Administration -- conceived as a function -- also creates a direction for developing the venture's administrative organization, where the intention is to enable effectiveness of their businesses over the course of time.

Drawing on standard features of the mainstream thinking about organizations, the attributes of an administrative organization include: the formalized roles of individual officers and employees; the placement of formalized individual roles within a formalized organizational system of responsibility delegation, communication, and control; a superstructure consisting in an organization's strategic apex, middle line, and techno-structure; and a loosely formalized system of relations between elements of an administrative organization and institutional actors in government, professions, and other realms (Mintzberg 1983).

These traditional ideas about the *administration function of ventures* and an *administrative organization within ventures* are weaved into our notion of a public venture. We see both the administrative function and an administrative organization as attributes of public ventures, distinct from the attributes of *programs*. To make this bit of vocabulary explicit and clear, we use the term, "the venture-level of an organization" to refer to an entity that includes programs, the administrative function, and an administrative organization. Correspondingly, we use the term "the program-level of an organization" to refer exclusively such a venture's program attributes, conceived as distinct from a venture's administrative function and administrative organization.

This excursus into ideas about management in public administration together with our examination of accepted doctrine of capacity-strengthening technical cooperation leads us to the following overarching structure of the conceptual foundations of our topic. *Technical cooperation projects are intended to strengthen both the program-level and the venture-level of the organizations they support.*

Strengthening Organizations at Program-Level

In this section, we elaborate the vocabulary of strengthening organizations at program-level. We also clarify the idea of "capabilities" by relating this idea specifically to the program-level of public ventures, as distinct from their venture-level. We also bring technical cooperation projects into focus, as providing support for both designing (or re-designing) the program-level of public ventures and for strengthening such ventures' capabilities to operate the program as designed (or re-designed).

The idea of a program is clearly abstract. We use ideas from public administration and management, along with that of a taxonomic hierarchy, to get to grips with it. In public administration, a common idea about programs is that they are variant-types of systems. While public programs are a variant-type in relation to systems, they are a general-type in relation to the functional domains of public administration, such as defense, higher education, environment, health, public security, infrastructure, banking and finance, and employment. Thus, higher education programs are a variant-type of program.

For purposes of developing the idea of managing technical cooperation projects, we need to do more than borrow a taxonomy of programs in public administration. We need to get at what makes a program in a given supported venture different from taxonomically equivalent programs in an unsupported venture in the same partner country. For this purpose, it helps to borrow the idea of differentiation from company management. A company's business is

differentiated by offering products or services that are not equivalent to those offered by other companies. The logic is that differentiation begets competitive advantage, which begets profitability. In a public administration setting, a public venture's program is differentiated by providing different services than other programs in the country (as in including robotics engineering research in E-JUST's program) and/or by re-designing the program so that it operates differently (as in providing higher education in science and technology along the lines of laboratory, project, and problem-based learning), or both. [13]

What else about a supported venture's program changes in the course of an effective technical cooperation project? Drawing on the vocabulary of management, one answer is its capabilities. In company management, specifically, capabilities are seen as the source of the features that differentiate one business from an otherwise equivalent business in the same industry. Without capabilities, a design for a business cannot be implemented to the point where it operates effectively along the intended lines. In the setting of public administration, without capabilities a design for a program similarly cannot be implemented to the point where it operates effectively along the intended lines. Thus, it stands to reason that implementing a design for a newly differentiated program involves "strengthening" a program's capabilities.

Note that "capabilities" is quite a complicated piece of vocabulary. It is not a quantity, but a source of characteristics of a program's operation that "fit" with the planned direction or strategy of the venture. If E-JUST had *increased* its capabilities to teach a course about an undifferentiated engineering subject, it would not necessarily have *strengthened* its capabilities. However, if E-JUST increased its capabilities to operate a course whereby its students learned the same subject through problem- and project-based learning in laboratory settings, then saying that E-JUST *strengthened* its capabilities would make perfect sense. In management theorizing

[13] Note, the vocabulary of technical cooperation would suggest that the reason for the differentiation is not to "strengthen the organization," but for the society within which the program operates to benefit from the (differentiated) program. Thus, programs of supported ventures are differentiated to that they contribute to more effective societies.

(as well as that of public policy) strength involves the fit between a capability and the "architecture" of the program or a business, with the architecture reflecting its differentiation.

The idea of capabilities becomes an even more complicated piece of vocabulary when inquiry turns to the related questions of "what capabilities consist in". We broadly subscribe to the idea that capabilities consist in complex, working wholes whose attributes include human and organizational routines, on the one hand, and physical technologies, on the other (Stalk, Evans, and Shulman 1991, Hamel and Prahalad 1994, Szulanski and Winter 2002). Within this theoretical context, we would rely on a view that organizational routines are conceptually similar to skills, habits, and tacit understandings of how things work (Nelson and Winter 1982).

At the same time, we are attracted to conceiving of capabilities from the standpoint of the management idea of value chains. This idea is a feature of the company management literature on strategy, though it has close analogues in the literature on operations management and management accounting. The bold, unqualified idea, is that a business's effectiveness depends on the fit between its value chain and the environment with which it is connected. What is largely the same idea, a business's effectiveness depends on its value chain's capabilities (Porter 1985).

Viewed in isolation from the surrounding environment, a value chain is conceived as a system. Accordingly, a value chain is both a collection of elements and a systemic entity. The elements of a value chain are its activities; the ones that are specific to a business are referred to collectively as primary value activities.[14] Within this collection, primary value activities are functionally heterogeneous. For example, in a manufacturing setting, "operations" are different in function from other primary value activities, including "outbound logistics" and "sales and service." These heterogeneous activities are connected to one another, as for example, in a flow of information from upstream to downstream in a sequential arrangement of activities. The

[14] The other collection of value activities is known as support value activities. We will not discuss support value activities here, as we conceive of them as a venture-level idea, not a program-level idea.

connections are aspects of the organization of the system. The sum total of connected activities is the value chain -- viewed as a systemic entity, as opposed to as a collection of activities. The precise term for a value chain, viewed as systemic entity, is a "value chain configuration."

As stated above, a business's effectiveness depends on its value chain's capabilities. If you wish to understand the capabilities underlying a business's effectiveness, you should follow two different heuristics of inquiry: one focused on primary value activities, and the other focused on a value chain's configuration. That is a reliable way to understand how systems -- like a value chain -- "work".

The literature on strategy focuses on examining a value chain's configuration, on the basis that doing so will illuminate issues and alternatives relevant for making strategic choices for businesses. In this bit of vocabulary, the idea of value chain linkages and the idea of capabilities are fused into one: value chain linkages are capabilities. The same thought structure developed for the "internal" value chain is replicated for value systems. This complementary idea is that a business's capabilities depend on linkages among activities that belong to the value chains of multiple companies.

The idea of value system linkages is readily illustrated by a feature of E-JUST's education program during the early years of this venture's operation. Some of E-JUST's advanced degree students received a small part of their education (measured in weeks) working in labs and attending classes at universities in Japan. The direct exposure to the Japanese learning system in operation was meant to make them better at co-producing the differentiated form of education (in line with the Japanese learning system) they were "receiving" in Egypt. What they were exposed to was the operation of Japanese universities, something that was inside the value chain of those organizations. Conceptually, the exposure of successive cohorts of E-JUST students to education at Japan's universities was a value system linkage. This value system linkage formed part of the capabilities of E-JUST's higher education teaching program.

It is our present view that there is little extra to be gained from continuing further along the path of formalizing the vocabulary of a supported venture at program-level. From this point, attention should focus on *how capabilities become stronger* (bearing in mind that the concept of strength involves capabilities fitting with the newly differentiated program whose operation depends on them). Issues that come into view at this stage involve understanding how capabilities become strengthened in supported ventures, and, taking a step back, how designs for newly differentiated programs develop to the point of being part of the planned direction for a supported venture. We see these issues as pointing to research questions for case studies; in that sense, we see them as substantive matters, as distinct from ones that involve formalizing an explicit, clear, and integrated conceptual foundation about the topic.

A case involving (a) Japan's support for E-JUST and (b) E-JUST's historical path as a public venture provides fertile ground for developing substantive theory about managing technical cooperation projects for capacity-strengthening issues. The case is one in which the joint activity of Japan's government and universities, on the one side, and Egyptian officials and academics, on the other, developed a differentiated set of engineering research programs in the Egyptian context (illustrated, specifically, by robotics research), as well as a differentiated way of teaching science and technology subjects (specifically, through the operation of a laboratory-, project-, and problem-based learning system). It is also a case in which the strengthening of capabilities to operate E-JUST's differentiated program was supported, through specific lines of contact and joint working between academics at E-JUST and academics in Japanese universities. As such, a study of this case can be used to address substantive questions of *how technical cooperation works* in relation to (a) creating adequate designs for newly differentiated programs and (b) strengthening capabilities for operating them. Addressing substantive questions involves collecting data and using theory to open up "black boxes" of technical cooperation projects and supported ventures, thereby "discovering" the causal processes involved.

Strengthening Organizations at the Venture Level

The program-level of organizations is not the only one that is strengthened by technical cooperation projects. The other level is that of the public venture. As a case, Japan's support for E-JUST is highly relevant to developing an understanding of how technical cooperation projects support the venture-level of organizations in partner countries.

Several features of this case's profile provide an indication of this. One feature was strengthen the capabilities of E-JUST as a whole to implement the Japanese learning system concept. To illustrate, the laboratory-, project-, and problem-based learning educational methodology required facilities that included labs and meeting rooms. Japan supported campus development planning and, within that, the preparation of the design brief for academic buildings.

A second feature of the profile was to strengthen capacity for supporting the operation of E-JUST's program on an ongoing basis. To illustrate, Japan supported professional development activities for administrators in the units within the techno-structure performing such as human resource management. The form of support included periods in Japan as visitors to their counterparts in universities there.

A third feature, particularly worth highlighting, was to strengthen E-JUST's capability for administration in the specific sense of strategy development and choice. This sort of capability is notoriously slippery to conceptualize and observe. However, a notable feature of Japan's support for administration (in the sense of directing and planning) and strategy development and choice was to operate a monthly executive meeting whose participants included not only E-JUST's president and principal officers, but also a few senior academic leaders of universities in Japan, via teleconferencing technology.

This section's narrow purpose is to put some structure into ideas about strengthening organizations at the venture-level. The challenge is that ideas about management at the

venture-level are plentiful. The most practical response to this challenge is to present the vocabulary of just two schools of thought, as a basis for further iteration in the future as warranted. The first school of thought presented here is that of strategic management in government.

As to what a strategy is "for", a key idea is that it serves to direct an organization's internal and external stakeholders, so that their activities contribute to the effectiveness of its programs, through successive changes in program-level design and capabilities as the organization's future unfolds. A strategy is also "for" securing legitimacy in a society, attracting support from some influential institutional actors, and (c) deflecting opposition from others. Finally, a strategy is "for" strengthening the capabilities that the organization needs to support its programs and to perform the function of administration.

As to what a strategy consists in, the answer is indeterminate. The reason for this seemingly strange answer is that a strategy is a functional-teleological concept: a strategy is, fundamentally, that which a strategy does. Accordingly, the attributes of a strategy are ideas about what is a good strategy.

Within strategic public management, a summary statement about a good strategy is that following the direction it indicates will eventuate in an organization with three characteristics. One is that its programs will be effective in relation to creating public value. A second is that the organization will enjoy legitimacy and support needed for freedom of action and the garnering of resources. A third is that the organization's programs will be capable of operating as designed. This bit of vocabulary is sometimes referred to as the "strategic triangle," because of the message that value, support, and capacity are the attributes of a public organization with a good strategy. It is an idea that has become fairly well-established.

In sum, managing international cooperation projects, for the sake of effective episodes of support, poses a multitude of challenges. Any list of them would include working with partner organizations on matters that touch not only on the public policies they implement

through public programs, but also matters that relate to their capacity as organizations. Such matters include their legitimacy and support, executive action to fulfill the administrative function, the designing of programs, and the strengthening of capabilities to operate programs effectively. Supporting partner organizations means working with them as they deal with challenges of managing within public administration. Stated boldly, the challenges of managing technical cooperation projects mirror the challenges of public management generally. Thus, accepted doctrine implies that some of the support is to be directed specifically at management, complementing support directed specifically at designing effective programs and strengthening the capabilities to operate them.

Conclusion

This abstraction-filled, conceptual paper is inherently difficult to conclude. After all, conceptual papers, like tools, offer little in the way of intrinsic merit. They are enabling factors. Their merit is chiefly instrumental: their true worth lies in enabling users to accomplish something meritorious, which would otherwise be done less well, or at greater expense, or not at all. Thus, it makes sense to conclude by discussing the intended instrumental value of the exercise that we have completed here, in relatively brief terms.

For this purpose, it is instructive to introduce a conceptual metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) from the domain of competitive sport. The conceptual metaphor is that we are competing in a triathlon. A triathlon is a multi-stage competition of three sequential "endurance disciplines".[15] A popular form of triathlon competition involves swimming, cycling, and running in immediate succession over various distances. This metaphor entails that writing the conceptual paper is the first endurance discipline of three - specifically, swimming.

[15] See, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triathlon.

In the metaphor, competing athletes will fail if they do no more than swim: they need to cycle and then run. In the context of our project, "cycling" is conducting the case study research, while "running" is to engage with professional practitioners in international cooperation agencies so that they learn how to use the research as they solve problems inherent in supporting organizational capacity development in partner countries. Thus, "swimming" is vocabulary clarification and integration; "cycling" is conducting the case study research; and "running" is a form of organizational learning and professional development.

Since organizational learning and professional development is the end-game, it makes some sense to comment first on the "running" discipline. For grace of writing, we will use the term "JICA staff" to stand for the idea of "professional practitioners in international cooperation agencies who work in support of the development of partner country organizations." We take the view that episodes of support are complex "artificial phenomena" (Simon 1996). To work, their many features have to fit together, and the episode of support in its totality needs to fit the goals and setting. Episodes of support also need to evolve through active adjustment in response to issues that arise as they unfold. This perspective implies that every episode of support has to be accomplished in a unique way. When every case of implementing the strategy of supporting organizational capacity development is unique in some way, the implication is that every case poses the challenge of creating novelty. In brief, organizational capacity development projects are *ex ante* novel and *ex post* unique. A consequence of *ex ante* novelty is that designing organizational capacity development projects cannot be based exclusively on official instructions. Further, reliance on personal experience is inevitably myopic (Levitt and March 1988) and under-exploits the collective experience of an organization like JICA (Nonaka and Takeuchi 1995).

This thought further implies that there is conceptual similarity between managing an organizational capacity development project, on the one hand, and, on the other, designing -- for designing is an activity whose value lies in finding novel solutions to unmet needs or unfulfilled

aspirations, where the solution is internally complex and its effectiveness depends on its use environment and user behavior (Simon 1996). In this sense, being a designer is a characteristic of JICA staff's professional practice.

Consequently, the "running" part of the triathlon involves engaging with JICA staff as designers of organizational capacity development projects. JICA staff need to receive the kind of support that designers receive from their professions. The support received by designers includes explicit, clear, and integrated ideas about heuristics for tackling design challenges in their field, with the aim of creating ingenious solutions. But that is not all. Designers also receive support in the form of studies of historically-existing "design solutions". At the point where such studies are used to create ingenious solutions to unsolved problems, the historically-existing solutions are considered as "design precedents" (Lawson 2004).

A design precedent is an expert opinion about past practice. A design precedent includes *reporting of observations* about a case. A design precedent includes *commentary about the merits and shortcomings* of the solution in the case. And, most importantly, a design precedent includes a sustained *analysis of how* the “solution" achieves its putative merits – opening the black box to answer the “*how* does it work” question (Pawson and Tilley 1997, Bardach 2004).

Thus, JICA staff needs to receive two kinds of support in the form of well-examined and researched "design references": practical ideas in propositional form that apply to any organizational capacity development project (like the handbooks published byIFIC in 2006 and JICA-RI in 2008); and knowledge in the form of design precedents, drawn from a pool of experience with historically-existing solutions. In this sense, the premise of setting off on this triathlon is that the need for design references within JICA -- both propositional and design precedents -- has yet to be satisfied in full. Thus, the specific intent of our triathlon is to provide an avenue for satisfying the need for design precedents about episodes of support for organizational capacity development.

It should now be apparent that the case study of Japan's support for E-JUST, when completed, is meant to function as a design precedent for organizational capacity development projects. In particular, the E-JUST case is meant to "reverse engineer" ingenious solutions to challenges of supporting the development of the "management" aspects of the organizations that are externally supported by international development cooperation agencies. This focus is appropriate, as the "management" aspects of supported organizations are critical to the whole idea of supporting organizational capacity development. The "cycling" part of the triathlon will take a view on how best to use case study research to open up this black box.[16]

Finally, it should be apparent why we devoted a whole paper to the "swimming" part of the triathlon. Its merit is two-fold. First, a clear, explicit, and integrated vocabulary will help when "cycling," specifically in focusing and internally structuring the case study about the episode of Japan's support for E-JUST. Second, the vocabulary will help when the endurance discipline is "running", i.e., as part of any instruction for JICA staff at that stage. As to why "swimming" required a whole paper, we would stress that accepted doctrine about organizational capacity development is too patchy in relation to the management ideas that are needed, whether as a framework for case studies in "cycling", or in "running" by presenting "design precedents" for JICA staff. Accepted doctrine needs to recruit ideas about management, which need to be blended together with accepted doctrine to form a conceptual foundation for design references for creating novel solutions to the inherent challenges of providing external support for organizational capacity development in partner countries.

[16] Our starting point is Barzelay (2007) and Barzelay (2012).

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Abstract (in Japanese)

要約

キャパシティ・ディベロップメントは、特に 2000 年以降、JICA の技術協力における中心課題の一つとして、UNDP 等国際機関も含めて社会・制度、組織、個人の観点から議論がなされてきた。このうち、組織レベルの支援について、理論に基づく（theory-based）システマティックな研究への必要性は高まる一方、マネジメントサイエンス（management science）の観点からの議論は限られている。本ワーキングペーパーでは、技術協力「エジプト・日本科学技術大学（Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology, E-JUST）」における実施中のプロジェクトの事例分析の知見をもとに、公共経営（public management）の観点から、事例分析のための概念整理及びシステム学習（systematic learning）への活用の必要性を議論するものである。

本研究を通じて、事例研究、実務者による組織的学習（organizational learning）、概念整理等の必要性に言及する。組織開発プロジェクトは本質的に一般化しづらいという事実を踏まえ、開発分野に従事する実務者が「デザイナー（designer）」として活動するための、「デザイン・リファレンス（design reference）」、「デザイン・プレシーデンツ（design precedents）」といった考え方も併せて提案する。

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