

1. Introductory Reflections on Present Trends in Management Studies

In this article I propose to explore and develop a new concept of management which is based on a new theory of management which is again based on and derived from a reflection on the Chinese cultural tradition and Chinese philosophy as well as from an observation on the actual embodiment of such tradition and philosophy in practice. There is no doubt that management can be both theory and practice-based, and the studies of management should be both theoretically and empirically oriented. It is to be noted that among all published studies of management there are more empirical studies, whether descriptively or analytically, than theoretical studies. Yet this is no denial that theoretical studies of management is equally important, if no more important, than empirical studies. Even granted that management is a practical matter and management science is an applied science, the theoretical involvement of management quickly reveals itself in its reliance on understanding principles of planning, organization, leadership and using conceptual tools in various aspects and on various levels of managing such as decision-making, personnel control, and policy adjustment.¹ The recognition of this involvement is of course found in a few earlier theoretical explanations and normative proposals on management practice and for the purpose of management practice. But modern systems theory and decision theories have made the theoretical studies of management even more urgent: Management needs and thereby becomes more and more systems theory-based and decision-theory oriented. In fact, management can be regarded as a matter of systems planning as well as a matter of decision-making as Herbert A. Simon seems to suggest.²