Qeios

Peer Review

Review of: "Effective Organization is a System of Four-Dimensional Evolutionary Coordination"

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Recommendation: Major Revision.

Overall Assessment

This manuscript presents an ambitious and intellectually stimulating attempt to develop a novel theoretical framework termed *Evolutionary Intelligence (EI)*. The proposed framework seeks to integrate evolutionary theory, organizational democracy, collective intelligence, the DIKW hierarchy, and strategic management into a four-dimensional model of organizational coordination. The author argues that effective organizations achieve long-term resilience by internalizing evolutionary mechanisms through the coordinated interaction of four dimensions: People, Directives, Alternatives, and Resources.

The paper addresses an important question concerning whether evolutionary processes can be organized within a single organization rather than being confined to interorganizational competition. This is a potentially significant contribution to the literature on organizational evolution and strategic management. The manuscript is intellectually ambitious, interdisciplinary, and highly original in its conceptual scope.

The central framework is summarized in the EI model.

The conceptual architecture is further elaborated through the 4×4 coordination typology.

Despite its originality, however, the manuscript currently falls short of the theoretical rigor and methodological standards expected in leading JCR journals. The argument relies heavily on personal experience and retrospective theorizing, while empirical validation and systematic theory-building

doi.org/10.32388/MUoBZY

remain underdeveloped. Consequently, substantial revision is required before the manuscript can be considered for publication.

Major Comments

1. Insufficient Methodological Rigor

The most significant concern relates to the methodological foundation of the study. The framework is derived primarily from the author's personal experiences accumulated over several decades and subsequently interpreted through the lens of microhistory. While microhistory can be a legitimate approach for theory generation, the current manuscript relies almost exclusively on autobiographical reflection as the basis for developing core constructs and relationships.

This raises important concerns regarding:

- Replicability of the theorizing process;
- Potential confirmation bias;
- Construct validity;
- Transparency in model development.

The manuscript would benefit from a more rigorous explanation of how theoretical constructs were systematically derived and refined from the microhistorical material.

2. Lack of Formal Theoretical Development

The paper repeatedly describes EI as a theoretical lens and a theory contribution. However, the framework remains largely descriptive rather than explanatory.

The manuscript does not explicitly specify:

- Formal propositions;
- Testable hypotheses;
- Boundary conditions;
- Causal mechanisms.

As a result, readers are left with an interesting conceptual architecture but limited guidance regarding how the framework generates novel predictions or explains observable organizational phenomena better

than competing theories.

The contribution would be substantially strengthened through the development of formal theoretical propositions.

3. Limited Differentiation from Existing Theories

The author argues that existing evolutionary and strategic management perspectives are unable to internalize evolutionary mechanisms within a single organization. However, this claim is not demonstrated with sufficient rigor.

The manuscript would benefit from a more systematic comparison with relevant theoretical traditions, including:

- Organizational Ecology;
- Dynamic Capabilities Theory;
- Behavioral Theory of the Firm;
- Complexity Theory;
- Open Strategy;
- Collective Intelligence literature.

At present, it remains unclear which specific phenomena EI explains that cannot be adequately addressed by these existing perspectives.

4. Absence of Empirical Validation

Although conceptual papers need not include large-scale empirical analyses, leading journals generally expect some form of validation or illustration.

The manuscript currently lacks:

- Empirical case studies;
- Historical illustrations;
- Comparative organizational examples;
- Simulations;
- Analytical demonstrations of the proposed mechanisms.

Consequently, readers cannot evaluate whether the framework is practically applicable or merely conceptually appealing.

Including even a single illustrative organizational case would considerably enhance the paper's credibility and contribution.

5. Normative Rather Than Analytical Reasoning

Several sections move beyond theoretical analysis and adopt a normative stance, particularly regarding organizational democracy, management hierarchies, and shareholder primacy.

For example, the manuscript concludes that shareholder primacy is inherently incompatible with organizational evolution and ultimately leads to maladaptation and failure.

Such claims are highly consequential and currently exceed the evidence provided. They would be more appropriate if presented as theoretical propositions, alternative explanations, or research questions rather than definitive conclusions.

6. Overextension and Theoretical Scope

The manuscript attempts simultaneously to contribute to:

- Organizational evolution;
- Strategic management;
- Organizational democracy;
- Collective intelligence;
- DIKW theory;
- Systems theory;
- Societal governance;
- Artificial intelligence.

While admirable, this breadth reduces conceptual focus. A narrower and more targeted contribution would likely increase the paper's theoretical impact.

Minor Comments

1. Citation Quality

Several references are unconventional for a theoretical article targeting a top-tier journal, including YouTube sources and practitioner-oriented materials.

The manuscript would benefit from greater engagement with recent peer-reviewed scholarly work.

2. Structure

The section entitled "Results and Analysis" does not report results in the conventional academic sense. A title such as:

- Theory Development;
- Conceptual Development;
- Development of the EI Framework;

would be more appropriate.

3. Length and Repetition

The manuscript repeatedly reiterates several central arguments, particularly:

- the necessity of multidimensional coordination;
- the importance of organizational democracy;
- the limitations of hierarchical management.

Substantial reductions in repetition could improve clarity and readability.

Contribution Assessment

Criterion	Evaluation
Originality	**Excellent**
Relevance to the field	**High**
Theoretical rigor	**Moderate**
Methodological rigor	**Limited**
Clarity of contribution	**Moderate**
Potential impact	**High if further developed**

Recommendation to the Editor

The manuscript presents an original and potentially important conceptual contribution. The proposed Evolutionary Intelligence framework offers an innovative perspective on organizational coordination and strategic resilience. However, at its current stage, the work resembles a conceptual manifesto more than a fully developed academic theory.

Before publication, the manuscript requires substantial revision to strengthen its methodological foundations, clarify its theoretical contribution, derive explicit propositions, establish stronger differentiation from existing theories, and provide some form of empirical or analytical validation.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.