Introducing Concept of Personal Responsibility on the Base of Organizational Constellations in the Course of Entrepreneurship (DOBA Faculty)

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Abstract

Management approach to Systemic constellations is based upon systems theory. Every organization presents a system, which is also part of a larger system, and each internal element has an impact on the functioning of the entire system – even on the thoughts and actions of the employees and external partners. In the school year 2016/2017 one of the Activity for Students of Course Entrepreneurship at DOBA Faculty was to contemplate one of the principles on which this method is based, in their own life. Their answers gave us insight about the way of thinking about their own responsibility and the role in the system and deeper understanding of each step, done professionally. Method and some insights (introduced at the Course for Slovenian, Croatian and Serbian students) are presented in the conference paper.

Keywords: Organizational Constellations, balance between giving and receiving, organizational responsibility, personal responsibility, systems integration
1 Introduction

Organizational Constellations is applied in the context of businesses, organizations and teams. The process can be described as “change-management-simulation”.

In Slovenia the first training under the program of Bert Hellinger Instituut the Netherlands, from Groningen Netherlands (www.hellingerinstituut.nl/) was held in 2014 by Nataša Čebulj, member of Hellinger Science in Slovenia and certified at Hellinger LebenSchule. The knowledge gets its place in Slovenia slowly since then. Mostly it is used in the individual cases by management of private enterprises and heads of some public institutions. There are no articles from this field in Slovenian language and there is one B.A. thesis prepared at The Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Maribor, in 2016.

Looking at the situation in Europe, beside a wide use of the method in organizational and business environment, the method is introduced in some educational institutions in Germany and Netherlands.

At Doba Faculty in Slovenia, the knowledge is incorporated in the study of Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurs Culture, lecturer Mia Miše M.Sc. Students get the basic knowledge about the rules and principles that work in each organization. The subject Entrepreneurship includes as a part an Assignment in which the students should analyze the chosen organizational environment and comment how they see the principle of balance between giving and receiving is respected.

Method:
This article will comment the answers gathered in school year 2016/2017. The subject was taught to students in Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia (on line study). The used data are on a base of students from these courses, so their numbers vary per countries. Therefore, beside the absolute numbers, some percentage to read the results will be used as well.

Goal:
The overall goal is to enhance the acceptance of systemic constellations as valuable consulting tools in business context and to introduce the constellation system thinking into the daily management. Management decisions demand a high level of consciousness and this is one of supportive tools for better linking the social responsibility and economic democracy.

2 System Constellations

Is a special way to get to know dynamics and patterns of structures in an organization. The ‘Business Constellations’ sees organizations and companies as a complex, living and learning network of relations, which are interwoven with each other in many ways.

Life within an organization includes founder dynamics, matrix reporting, multiple hidden loyalties, and the need for constant change. Investors, staff, shareholders, former employees, suppliers and customers make business systems more complex as the interaction with many other systems on a daily basis creates a constant need for re-balancing. (Whittington, 2017, 10th August)

Bert Hellinger, a systemic specialist and philosopher, originated the approach in Europe through application within family and organizational systems. Many thousands of people in
Europe and across the world experience it now in personal, organizational, consulting, educational and executive coaching contexts. This approach enables quick insights into the core of a problem, question and situation. Based on the systemic work of Bert Hellinger, the constellating process draws on the embedded intelligence of a situation to reveal the hidden dynamics in key areas such as leadership, conflict resolution, relationships between stakeholders or between founders and their successors, culture change, management of innovation, organizational restructuring amongst many others. This is one of the reasons, why the systemic approach, instead of focusing just on the elements themselves, emphasizes the relationships between elements. When the gaps are identified, we are more likely to fill them in a balanced way for the whole.

2.1 Best-Practice Areas of Implementation (Infosyon, 2017, August 10th)

Systemic Constellations allow insight into the general structure of relationships and the unwritten system laws. There is a broad list of possible implementations in organizations:

- As an effective holistic diagnostic instrument
- For orientation and decision making support
- As a pre-test simulation
- For "unexplainable" problems
- As crises intervention.

2.2 What informs this way of working? (Whittington, 2017, 10th August)

Constellations are underpinned by a simple truth found to balance successful human relationship and other systems. Key amongst them is that everyone and everything has a ‘right place’ in their system. When, as individuals or teams, we experience being in the ‘right place’ systemically, we feel ready to bring our best selves to our role, in service of the purpose and can then function with clarity, in flow with the system.

It is the job of a Constellation to identify – and then point towards a resolution – these complex issues, bringing renewed clarity, fresh resources and energy to the system.

2.3 Basics and Special Situations - The Effects of Familial Entanglements on the Workplace.

Familial entanglements, for instance, identification with excluded family members or with family members who had difficult fates, often have an effect on the workplace. When someone gives good indication of whether family dynamics overlay the work context, the suggested way is to offer the client a family constellation instead of an organizational constellation. Any focus beyond organizational questions, especially into the private lives of participants, always needs a prior and explicit permission.
Ways Organizational Constellations are Carried Out (Weber, (2000). )

a) The system constellation knowledge is a base for a problem analysis and a solution searching – one to one Consultant Session, or individual use of knowledge by a person trained for Systemic Constellation;

b) Problem analyzing and solution setting via a Session. In a session client (person with a question) can use people or different items. They are placed in the room and represent elements, which are part of the question. After placing, the picture of their relationship and tensions could be seen. Changes and movements are informative as well and some solutions about the next steps could show up.

2.4 What happens in a Session? (Whittington, 2017, 10th August)

The issue holder guides each representative or item to stand in relationship to one another in a way that resonates with their inner sense of the relationship dynamics. As a result, a pattern is created, an external picture of an inner, often unconscious, image.

During the constellation, the facilitator gathers information and insights from the representatives – they will experience distinct and precise sensations. As the dynamics gradually become clearer, the facilitator works with the representatives to bring reconnection and resolution to the whole system. The process of a constellation – lasting from a few minutes to over an hour – and the new image of resolution provides the issue holder with new information for action and change.

3 Basic Principles in System Constellations (Hetherington & Elisabeth)

There are some very fundamental principles, regardless of country, culture, or age. When things are out of order, the system experiences tension, stress, discord, and lower productivity. Constellations often show directly that something is out of order in a work system. The principles that guide us are:

1) Orders, including hierarchy and

2) Conscience, and the right to belong,

3) The balance of giving and taking.

1) Orders: Hierarchy and Right to Belong

The system requires that certain priorities and orders of precedence are observed (length of service, technical competency, qualification, hierarchy, stakes in the system). There is a hierarchy in an organization—official or hidden. If this hierarchy is violated, then dis-order may occur. Even those with a low ranking job must be respected for their contribution by the higher level leaders who arrive later or the system will be out of order.
2) Conscience

To belong to a group means to follow the rules of that group. Conscience grows out of this loyalty. Those who violate the rules experience guilt, which encourages them to return to the prescribed ways. If they do, they are received and can experience a feeling of innocence again. In an organization, everyone has a right to belong as long as his or her contribution to the system is valued. While each group has its own rules, there is a larger system with operating rules of its own. By observing hidden dynamics through a constellation, we can see which movements bring us into greater order, where we thrive, and which movements take us further out of order, where significant difficulties lie.

3) Balance of giving and taking

Everyone has an opportunity for giving and taking—between individuals, between individuals and the system, and between different parts of the system. Either too much altruism (giving) or too much exploitation (taking) creates an imbalance in the system.

The most valuable gift one person can give to another is honor and respect. In the past years, employees gave loyalty to an organization, which in return offered the security of lifetime employment and a comfortable retirement. Today, retention is a big issue—coupled with downsizing, mergers, lay-offs and so forth. The organization reduced practices that encouraged loyalty and the result is loss of loyalty from employees.

4 Introducing Concept of Personal Responsibility on the base of Organizational Constellations in the Course of Entrepreneurship (DOBA Faculty) – Gathered Results

Results are gathered in the school year 2016/2017. The subject was taught to students in Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia. Basic research questions were:

- Do students understand the principle of balance between giving and receiving and connections between sustainable development and social responsibility?
- Do they see the balance, on the level of the organization; and do they see the balance, on their personal levels?
- Can any difference/patterns be traced on the level of ownership of the company or on the country level?
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Table 1: Input for the analyses – no of students per country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>country</th>
<th>all students</th>
<th>works in the organization</th>
<th>organization is in the same country</th>
<th>foreign ownership of the organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SRB</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRO</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Serbia
16 students, 14 among them were analyzing the organization they work in, 11 of them were in organization in Serbia (others from other countries), and 4 among the Serbian organisations have foreign owners.

Croatia
52 students, 44 among them were analyzing the organization they work in, 45 of them in the organization in Croatia, 8 among them have foreign owners.

Slovenia
45 students, 40 among them were analyzing the organization they work in, and 44 of them in the organization in Slovenia, 10 among them have foreign owners.

Remarks:
Mostly there are analyses for the organization, where the student is working himself or herself. 4 of them were presenting the situation in the company, they know, but are not employed by themselves. 3 of the organizations are sports clubs and 2 of them are cultural associations. Students are sometimes working in the country, which is not their country of residence (and study). Therefore, some cases (13) are valid for an organization in a country, that is not: Serbia, Croatia or Slovenia.

4.1 Results

The task was the same for all student in all countries (Assignment no 1 in the week II). Some students did follow the instructions, but some of them did not and prepared a document with comments, that were not up to their task. Most students prepared the analyses for the organizational level and personal level, but few prepared only one of this two. In Serbia 12 students prepared the analysis, and 4 were writing about other subjects (33 %). In Croatia 46 analyses were prepared and 6 students wrote about other subjects (12 %). In Slovenia 43 prepared the analysis and 2 were not following the instructions (4 %). There is no connection between the students that prepared the accurate assignments and maybe the ownership of the organization or the country of the organization. For all students there was the same literature available (Slovenian, English, Croatian and Serbian language), so the lack of understanding instructions cannot be the reason.
Further results about the balance they measured are based on the answers of the students that prepared the accurate answers.

Serbia: out of 12 answers 11 commented the level of the company, where 7 (63 %) found the balance, and 10 commented the personal level, where 3 (30 %) find the balance. There is no significant result typical for organization in the country or abroad. Considering the organization with foreign ownership, 3 among them prepared the data for the organizational level only and not for the personal level. On the organizational level, they found balance.

Croatia: out of 46 answers, 45 commented the level of the company, where 32 (71 %) found the balance, and 34 commented the personal level, where 24 (70 %) find the balance. Among 7 students that work abroad 6 found balance on both levels, but 1 found imbalance on both level. Considering the organization with foreign ownership, 2 among them found imbalance on the personal level.

Slovenia: out of 44 answers, 40 commented the level of the company, where 30 (75 %) found the balance, and 39 commented the personal level, where 33 (84 %) find the balance. There is no significant result typical for organization in the country or abroad. Considering the organization with foreign ownership, 2 among them prepared the data for the organizational level only and not for the personal level. On the organizational level, they found no balance.

4.2 Comments on results:

The % of given accurate answers is similar in Slovenia and Croatia (12 and 4), and a little lower in Serbia (33).

The % of answers, that there is a balance on the organizational level is similar in Slovenia and Croatia (71 and 75) and a little lower in Serbia (63). The % of answers, that there is a balance on the personal level is very high in Slovenia (84%), then in Croatia (70 %) and very different in Serbia (30 %).

We cannot link the answers with the ownership of the organization or with the economic branch of the organization.

The imbalance was commented in a very broad manner; that proves that students were able to understand how deep the impact of this principle is. On the organizational level, they were able to comment employees to employees level, employees to management, organization towards owners, customers, other partners, to the society, and toward nature and environment. Their level of consciousness is very high; some were comparing these principles with the public responsibility point of view. Therefore the good news as well is that the balance was
found in such a high % of cases. On the personal level, the imbalance can be seen in the way of too much giving or too much receiving. When pointed out as an imbalance, both of these possibilities were mentioned. The answers were deep and sincere, with reflecting the past as well. It was nice to read cases of some owners of the company, where they were commenting how they feel big responsibility toward company, employees and customers and how they are willing to give more in some points of view, as this is a part of their contribution to the society.

The percentage of comments that they found balance is relatively high, and this shows a good picture of the organizational environment as a whole. One possibility is that their good comments can be so because of the structure of organizations, that are willing to support their employees to study and so the whole bunch of students could not represent the typical organization. But this was not the case, as there is only a smaller part of the students, which are supported by the company, to do their study.

About the pattern for these analyses: students chose the organizations and the sample is not following the sample of economy in their country. There are business organizations and some other organizations that are part of the analyses. The number of students from Serbia is relatively small, so the answers are not very typical and with comparing to other two countries can be less representative.

5 Conclusions

From answers, it was obvious that students welcomed this knowledge and confirmed that they have their inner “measurement device”, which point to some blockages, but they were not able to understand the whole picture and define the solutions before. As well they were able to define their own role and situation and feed-back of their own involvement. They were able to follow the changes in their own balance and balance of the organization through time. Vital changes and influences were clear to them. Mostly they were able to define the influence of their input not only on the organization but as well to their social environment. These students confirmed that they feel fulfilled in their life, when living in this balance. They confirmed as well that this is a good base for peaceful and good life of their children.

From the organizational point of view, they mostly confirmed that balance means also a sustainable development. There is not only a question what an organization can get from society and environment, but as well how to respect and give back. Mission and vision are vital, as well as personal alignment of management and owners, and this brings real success. Some students name it a “win – win” situation. Numbers of answers, where students can confirm that their organization is in this so called “Win – Win” situation confirm a high understanding of social responsibility among all types of organizations from the 3 mentioned countries. Economic democracy is with this analysis confirmed in its broad meaning. It as well stressed that every single person counts and we cannot reach economic democracy without respectful actions of each individual.
References

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