

(Digital) regional management with (subconscious) sustainable social responsibility: a way to and part of society 5.0

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Abstract

Regional management should be requisitely holistic to benefit regional population and protect regional natural attributes. The application of the concept 'Innovative Regional Agency' using Dialectical Systems Theory and/or Social Responsibility may help. Differences in interests and views may be controlled productively in combination with USOMID and 'Six Thinking Hats' methods. Efficiency can be measured with criteria in the Horus Award. Digitalization can support efficiency. Social responsibility shall be included in Total Quality Management criteria.

Keywords: Digitalization, Horus Award, Innovative Regional Agency, Regional Transformation Agency, sustainable and socially responsible society, 'USOMID-cum-Six Thinking Hats'

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(Digitalno) regionalno upravljanje s (podzavestno) družbeno odgovornostjo: del družbe 5.0

Povzetek:

Regionalno upravljanje bi moralo biti celostno, da bi koristilo regionalnemu prebivalstvu in zaščitilo regionalne naravne lastnosti. Uporaba koncepta „Inovativna regionalna agencija“ z uporabo teorije dialektičnih sistemov in / ali družbene odgovornosti lahko pomaga. Razlike v interesih in pogledih se lahko produktivno nadzoruje v kombinaciji z metodama USOMID in 'Šest klobukov razmišljanja'. Učinkovitost lahko merimo z merili v Horusovi nagradi. Digitalizacija lahko podpira učinkovitost. Družbena odgovornost mora biti vključena v merila za upravljanje celotne kakovosti.

Ključne besede: Digitalizacija, nagrada Horus, inovativna regionalna agencija, regionalna agencija za preobrazbo, trajnostna in družbeno odgovorna družba, „USOMID-cum-Šest klobukov razmišljanja“

The Selected Problem and Viewpoint

At the end of April 2021 media reported that Slovenia has already used as much natural resources as she might in 12, not in 4 months; this is a terrible contribution to the current problems of humankind's survival (see e.g. [29]). Regional sustainable future should be attained ([38], [39]). Hence, all regions should be considered similarly to protected areas that are parts of nature; their area is not subordinated to industrial or other developments that focus on the profit-oriented use and abuse of nature, forgetting about the needs of the coming generations. This means that protected areas are very important and can have a positive influence from the viewpoint of a sustainable future (see: [33] and earlier). Equally significant, although less acceptable from the short-term economic benefit angle for the people living in areas such as Natura 2000 (covering quite big areas of Slovenia), are national parks, and efforts to modernize ways of life. Thus the question arises: how can the two extremes of sustainable future and short-term economic benefits be handled in beneficial synergy? The authors do not intend to provide any final answer to these issues, but only up-date their largely overlooked model criteria for decision-makers to figure out how such decisions can be taken with more of a requisitely holistic approach that may lead a way to avoid crucial oversights and their dangerous consequences. The authors base upon the criteria introduced in IRDO's questionnaire for the candidates of the Horus Award for social responsibility who are asked to analyze their own (business) practice [43]. The authors will try to apply these methods to the regional development issues since all areas can be viewed as specific regions. Our method is the Dialectical Systems Theory (DST) ([1] - [12] since 1974). Social responsibility shall be included in Total Quality Management criteria, including regionally.

1. The method: Dialectical Systems Theory (DST); applied to regional development

Mulej's DST: systems theory is a methodology of as holistic behavior as possible and necessary, i.e. requisitely holistic.

10 suggestions on defining the objectives, 10 suggestions on realization of the objectives, USOMID methodology for interdisciplinary creative cooperation, help attainment of the law of requisite holism and the law of hierarchy of succession (process steps) and interdependence, instead of the law of entropy.

2. Application of DST to innovative regional development

The space-based policy in which a region is described with three spatial and one time components is not sufficient to describe the region in the terminology of the 21st century. The region is seen as a nexus of individuals, which on the aggregated level can be described in terms of well-being and can be measured with objective and subjective indicators. sustainability is still hardly understood as the leading objective of regional development is divided into environmental, economic and societal development. Under such disposition, the institutional aspects are usually left out.

The competitiveness is only one of the possible modes, sources and viewpoints of possible development. in 2021 neoliberalism is being replaced with Keynesian measures giving the government much more influence over the economic life, i.e. more holism; factors of innovation mentioned below may not be zero (X denotes interdependence)?

Innovation = (invention X entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial spirit X requisite holism X governance & management X coworkers X innovation-friendly culture X customers X competitors X suppliers X natural environment X socio-economic environment and other outer, i.e. objective conditions X random factors, such as luck).

‘Agency for Regional Innovation’ (ARI) or Regional Transformation Agency (RTA) that acts in a sustainable and socially responsible way should take care of such needs in the region it covers.

Criteria for Agency’s working?

3. The first organizational and content-based steps concerning the regional development agencies in the digital era

The tasks of ARI/RTA shall become (include):

- Mediator and mutual connector of innovation potentials in regional communities.
- ARI/RTA shall introduce new and useful ideas for local/regional society
- ARI/RTA shall use innovative technologies, including the e-Science, virtual reality, simulation techniques, to introduce innovative changes into its e-regional community. Digitalization belongs here.
- ARI/RTA shall shape the innovation policy on local, regional and other levels.
- ARI/RTA shall promote social responsibility (Customers may be selfish and require social responsibility to be included in total quality criteria of supplies.
- ARI/RTA can contribute to sustainability and social responsibility by revealing the mentioned cognitive preconditions needed for innovation: interdisciplinary creative cooperation, etc., and risk taking, etc.
- ARI/RTA shall contribute to socially responsible public procurement by requesting the green and innovation policy from the suppliers or the service providers.
- ARI/RTA shall become the research and development institution for its region.
- ARI/RTA shall be a place for companies, NGOs, research and educational institutions to meet, inform, prescribe and decide.
- ARI/RTA shall use the IKT to empower the citizens/inhabitants.
- ARI/RTA shall enhance the digital transformation of the region by introducing new processes.
- This includes different levels of communication.
- Thus, the core of ARI/RTA shall consist of regional innovation and its diffusion. The sustainability and social responsibility is part of the societal innovation, and more.
- Social psychology that prevails in the region must be considered, for the suggestion to be acceptable and become the prevailing habit.
- How shall sustainability and social responsibility be seen in the projects of ARI/RTA?

Let’s add criteria summarized in the Horus award. They can be used for the evaluation of ARI/RTA working.

4. Overview of Criteria of (Sustainable) Social Responsibility (SSR) in 'Horus Award'

1. How is SSR understood and realized (several answers can be provided and proofs added)? beyond limits of legislation:
2. Ethical behavior
3. Incorporation of SSR in the organizational strategies and its matching the international guidelines:

4. Insight into activities by fields of practicing SSR:
5. Action plans and key success factors:
6. Ways of involvement of stakeholders in SSR actions (coworkers, partners, owners, local and other government, NGOs, ...)
7. Communication of SSR behavior:
8. Sustainable and socially responsible investment:
9. Reporting about the SSR activities:
10. Certificates, awards, recognitions, memberships concerning SSR. E.g.:

Several professional organizations have their codex close to SSR that might also be helpful.

5. Some conclusions and suggestions: a link to Society 5.0 concept

SSR society in a modern region attains the highest level of requisite holism and destroys the human condition for survival the least of all.

SSR regions, organizations and individuals make a SSR society. Very close it is the concept of Society 5.0. It contains identified basic problems and their impact on limiting the sustainable development of the Japanese and world economy, which complicates the state of society. Society 5.0 seeks to solve problems of sustainable development recognized by Japan, which other countries will also face sooner or later.

The problems include: significantly smaller and aging workforce; escalating international competition and monopolization; industrial infrastructure requiring renovation; terrorism; natural disasters, environmental problems, and scarcity of natural resources. Solutions to these problems were used as the basis for the creation of a super-intelligent Society 5.0 concept. It is therefore a Japanese growth strategy, but not limited to Japan, as the goals are in line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals presented in Agenda 2030.

It is an upgrade of the Industry 4.0 concept by taking a more comprehensive view of societal challenges and man-made challenges to create a human-centered society based on economic development and solving social challenges. Society 5.0 presents the path to a welfare/well-being society as a sustainable socially responsible society.

Differences in interests and views may be controlled productively in combination with USOMID and 'Six Thinking Hats' methods. We have no more room for them.

References

This contribution is a shortened version of the chapter by the same authors: Sustainable social responsibility in innovative regional development management, in the book, BASES FOR A SUSTAINABLE SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE SOCIETY, Trilogy, edited by Mulej, M., Hrast, A., Štrukelj, T., Likar, B., Šarotar Žižek, S., forthcoming as coauthored monograph