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ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR, CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Abstract: *Disciplines of organizational crisis management and human resources development (HRD) share similar problems and field of research, so the scholars and practitioners in both disciplines focus on the question of how could certain elements within the organization (culture, systems, technology) influence individual, group and organizational behavior. Scientists dealing with crisis management and human resource development are likewise involved in the research stemming from common theoretical perspectives, especially in critical reconsideration of human capital/ economic, psychological and strategic/systemic aspects. Besides, the main goal of both disciplines is to deal with the impacts of the organization on the individual, the community and society. The main aim of crisis management is to protect and sustain key organizational stakeholders, communities and resources in the case of a crisis event; the aim of human resource development is to develop human intellectual and emotional abilities and skills for the performance of various tasks for the sake of organizational and social sustainability. Therefore, it seems that disciplines of crisis management and human resource development overlap significantly, although these relationships and their relative implications for the research and practice are yet to be explored. This paper will specify the relationships and ties between these two disciplines, as well as their mutual interrelations.*

Key words: crisis management, human resource development, organizational behavior.

INTRODUCTION

When considering organizational behaviour of the disciplines of organizational crisis management and human resource development (HRD), one can observe that those two disciplines share similar problems and fields of research, so scientists and practitioners in both fields focus on the way in which elements within an organization (culture, systems, technology) can influence an individual, group and organizational behaviour, as indicated by Mitroff and Pearson, as well as Swanson [1],[2]. Scientists dealing with crisis management and human resource development are likewise involved in research stemming from common theoretical perspectives, especially in critical reconsideration of human capital/economic, psychological and strategic/systemic aspects [3],[4],[5]. Besides, the main feature of both disciplines is ultimate concern about impacts of the organization on individuals, community and society. The main goal of crisis management is to protect and sustain key organizational stakeholders, communities and resources in the case of a crisis event; the aim of human resource development is to develop human intellectual and emotional abilities and skills for the performance of various tasks [6] for the sake of organizational and social sustainability [7],[8]. Therefore, it does seem that the disciplines of crisis management and human resource development overlap significantly, although these relationships and their relevant implications for research and practice are yet to be explored [9]. Implications arising from existing crisis management literature for human resource development are mostly limited to proposals concerning the training for crisis management. However, as observed by McConnell and Drennan, the level of „symbolic readiness which does not reflect operational realities" often arises when crisis training and exercises are the focal point of crisis management preparation. Learning and intervention concerning performance are likewise usually related to other human resource management (HRM) responsibilities like management of emergency benefits for displaced workers and compliance with federal and state laws relating to safety [10],[11],[12] in crisis situations, frequently overshadowing the role and contribution by which other interventions of the department of human resources could contribute to crisis management. As a result, the relationship between human resource development and crisis management received limited attention both from scientists, as well as practitioners, thus limiting the possibility that managers who deal with human resource development understand how the measures and interventions undertaken with the aim of developing human potential can be used as a support for the efforts of crisis managers in the same organization.

THE ROLE OF HRD IN THE EFFORTS OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Hutchins and Wang believe that HRD experts can significantly contribute to the crisis management activities in concerning organization. HRD started out as a field oriented towards improvement, problem solving and systems thinking, focusing primarily on the organization [13]. With the appearance of various philosophical paradigms and theoretical assumptions HR focuses on the development of intellectual capital and supporting reconstruction and transformation of the organization [7] for the benefit of individuals, organiza-tions, communities and nations/states [14]. In any case, it is clear that the focus and scope of HRD as a truly integrated global and multidisciplinary profe-ssion widen [15], and Torraco observes that HRD has expanded by influencing traditional domains of training, organizational development and career development so that they include issues such as ethics, diversity, human and social capital, development and strategic changes [6]. HRD has likewise widened its scope, with an emphasis not only on organizations, but also considering policy development in developing countries, reform of secondary and higher education and the development of the non-profit sector. This is an integrated perspective, positioning HRD as a central player in helping organizations develop intellectual and social capital necessary for effective management of potential or actual crisis events. Five philosophical metaphors by Watkins on HRD are applicable when it comes to crisis management: HRD as organizational problem solvers, as initiators or facilitators of organiza-tional change, as those who build organizational strength and values and develop human capital [16]. Each of these roles is applicable to the process of crisis management.

Problem solving. HRD is a process of defining the problem and its solution with the aim of improving the organization [13]. To this end, the experts must assume proactive role in identification of the problem or the variables which could cause a crisis. Numerous tools and models for analyzing deficiencies on individual and organizational level created by HRD researchers, like the Swanson's diagnosis matrix [5], Rummler and Brache's performance model [17], Cummings and Worley's organizational development model [18] can contribute to the elimination of those deficiencies and therefore prevention of crisis situations. Problem identification and solving is what exactly forms an integral part of crisis management. HRD experts direct their attention more towards problem identification than towards their solving, so they have to be continuously proactive and observe and estimate how internal and external changes influence organizational performance, as well as to seek to identify problems that could have an impact on organization's survival.

Agent of change. Crises frequently instigate organizational changes for better or for worse [19]. Organizational crises and their consequences make the role of HRD professionals as agents of change even

more important. HRD professionals are responsible for the education of organization leaders and employees concerning the process of change management and seeking appropriate interventions which would facilitate changes and help individuals and organizations to better deal with crisis outcomes. A field on which HRD professionals can have a significant impact concerns the promotion of organizational culture which includes preparedness for a crisis. Within the scope of crisis management [20],[1] organizational culture is seen as one of main predictors of crisis events, since it represents shared beliefs on the issues like risk and organizational vulnerability to crisis situations [21]. Bearing this in mind, the main task of HRD professionals is how to create mentality and organizational environment prepared for a crisis. Such a culture can be developed through training and education an organization's leaders and employees of how to seek signs of an upcoming crisis and continuously estimate organizational practices [22]. Besides, HRD experts can use changes resulting from the crisis in order to promote organizational learning. Through strategic interventions within the scope of learning they can help organizations to establish efficient systems for crisis communication, build a knowledge base on crises, develop critical thinking in an individual, as well as skills of rethinking and knowledge reevaluation [23].

Organizational designer. Experts functioning from this perspective can see clear connection between the working structure and development of human potential [16]. What is particularly important in organizational design is a continuous assessment of the gap between actual organizational reality and the state which the organization would like to achieve [24] by using diagnostic tools focused on the performance. HRD experts assuming the role of organizational designers should carefully diagnose and choose structures and communications' systems, authority and responsibility in order to enable the achievement of organizational goals [16]. Mitroff's model of crisis system [20] can be a useful framework for HRD professionals while considering numerous organizational factors which can contribute to a crisis. For example, HRD professionals can help organization leaders to make strategic decisions concerning the choice of technological systems and overall organizational structure, what are two critical elements that can cause a crisis event. Besides, these experts can help organizations design corresponding information systems [25] and crisis communications channels [10], [11], [26] so the organization members can timely and effectively share and process information with the onset of a crisis event.

A well-designed organizational structure will likewise enable organization leaders to efficiently respond to uncertainties facing the organization [27]. Finally, HRD professionals assuming the role of organizational designers could also significantly contribute to the development of crisis management system. For example, they can play an important role in the creation

of a system which will enable immediate identification of early crisis signals and then redesign of the organizational crisis management system in order to achieve better results.
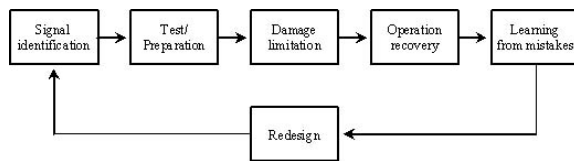

Figure 1. *Crisis management model. Source: Mitroff and Pearson, 1993*

Organizational empowerer/meaning maker. HRD experts who accept this metaphor have a tendency to adopt a critical perspective and try to transform people and organizations to encourage long-term success [16]. Organizational crises management should be seen as an effort in that direction. Swanson and Holton have suggested strategies for transforming action perspectives, including (a) identification of potential unwanted consequences of an action strategy, (b) ensuring that organization members assume full responsibility for their actions and (c) they offer alternative for action in the form of learning-oriented behavior instead of control-oriented behavior [13]. Such critical perspective is especially useful in promoting organizational awareness and respecting merits of and the need for crisis management. They can likewise help in reducing negative effects of shared beliefs, values and process of understanding for individuals involved in crisis situations [21],[26]. HRD professionals with a critical approach must look for corresponding strategies in order to include organizational leaders and employees into collective reasoning and understanding, as well as critical reflection on crisis experiences, for example, through dialogue and collective learning activities.

Human capital developer. Scientific community agrees one of the fundamental roles of HRD to be the development of human resources through training and development activities.

One of the factors contributing to the occurrence of a crisis, according to Mitroff and Pearson, is human error [1]. The fact is that individuals make mistakes and certain decisions are based on the lack of information what indicates the need for and the significance of training and development. It also represents enormous possibilities for HRD professionals primarily responsible for human capital development and organizational efficiency. In crisis circumstances, it is extremely important that organizations build a knowledge base on crises and capacities to cope with them. For this purpose, training can be an efficient means for the reduction, if not elimination, of the influence of elements which could probably cause a crisis, like complex technology and human factors. Training can be applied in each phase of the crisis management process from identification to redesigning in order to help organization members to learn

systematically about nature and causes of crisis events and become capable of coping with a crisis when it occurs. Besides, numerous studies have discovered that risk perceptions of organizational leaders and their ability of dealing with them have a direct impact on the organizational plans for preparation, prevention, reaction to crisis and crisis management [1, 28, 21, 29]. It is vital that HRD professionals provide not only general training for the development of crisis management awareness, but also training for the improvement of crisis leadership in order to ensure the development of proper and adequate mentality in organizational leaders, as well as appropriate perception relating to risks which could then lead to shared beliefs and culture reflecting organizational reality [30]. In the meantime, with a lot of essential training, it is quite likely that the leaders will make decisions based more on the information and knowledge in order to avoid or reduce potential negative outcomes of a crisis. In the same line of thinking, HRD professionals should assume responsibility for the improvement of individuals and organization learning abilities so that organization members have knowledge bases for crisis management not only when a crisis occurs, but also the ability of documenting, analyzing, comparing and sharing knowledge of their crisis experiences [31]. This can be achieved through individual and organizational learning which is strategically harmonized with the organization's aims and values [11].

Finally, HRD professionals can play a crucial role in the facilitation of organizational crises management by

(a) insisting on the development of indispensable leadership qualities (e.g. strategic thinking, communication, empowerment, trust and integrity),

(b) encouraging organizational culture and learning abilities which will enable organizations to foretell crisis situations [32] and learn from crisis experiences,

(c) harmonizing crisis management with business results using key performance indicators (e. g. a balanced organizational performance map) [11] and

(d) establishing crisis communications channels [26].

These possibilities represent three main aspects of HRD training and development (e.g. leadership development), career development (e.g. succession planning) and organization development (e.g. organizational culture, organizational learning, strategic compliance) and further emphasize the fundamental role which HRD could play in the efforts of crisis management.

IMPLICATIONS FOR HRD RESEARCH, THEORY AND PRACTICE

Efficient crisis management is of crucial significance for the success and continuity of an organization at the time of intensive changes and complex systems. Analysis of current literature and the above stated indicate several implications which could be of use for future HRD research and development of theory and practice.

Hutchins and Wang provide two approaches to the improvement of HRD research on the basis of the analysis of theory and practice of organizational crisis situations' management [9]. First, the majority of existing HRD research has been conducted in quite stable and predictable conditions in which rational and logical decisions help in performance achievement. However, major crises in organizations during the last decade show that decision making and operation frequently occur in dynamic and unpredictable circumstances, rather than in a static environment in which most research is conducted. In that sense, it is important that HRD researchers think about the way in which HRD interventions concerning learning and performance achievement can be used in complex times of changes and to understand the relationships of these interventions with success or failure [33]. Several HRD studies have been devoted to cognitive, behavioral, psychological and technological implications of a crisis on the crisis interventions in organizations.The other approach focuses on additional research of the crisis management process. Significant part of organizational crises research is focused on three of five areas of crisis management, especially crisis preparation, crisis limitation and recovery, that is, continuation of operations after a crisis. Despite the importance of learning for the prevention of crises and crisis preparation [22], the exploration of ways in which organizations can identify new learning opportunities arising from a crisis event is a focal area in which HRD research can involve stakeholders in order to contribute to the consideration of system redesigning and the processes which led to the problems. Common HRD analysis methods like evaluation research [34] and action learning [35] can serve as effective interventions in order to help the stakeholders identify and process crisis events, as well as improve current practices in crisis management. Traditionally, learning is considered as a separate step in the crisis management process and frequently occurrs in the form of crisis training in the planning phase or as a reflection on practices immediately after a crisis. When included in planning, lessons learned are usually related to the HRM practices like management of emergency benefits for displaced workers, coordination with the employee assistance program in compliance with federal and state laws on security [11],[12] in crisis situations. Considering learning as a component of crisis management, HRD researchers are more prone to assume a proactive role in helping the organization search for opportunities to learn how to prevent, deal with and finally recover after crisis situations. In any case, it would be useful to collect even more empirical evidence and case studies supporting the claim that learning contributes to efficient crisis management in each phase of this process.

DEVELOPMENT OF HRD THEORY

Overview of theoretical perspectives governing research in the field of crisis management can be a useful starting point for future theoretical development. Likewise, it would also be useful to reconsider main or emerging perspectives in HRD in order to formulate new or different approaches to research in the field of crisis management. McGuire and associates have suggested four meta-perspectives (language, community/societal, system and psychological) representing a "higher order view" of various theoretical perspectives in HRD. Each of these four metaphors represents a collection of similar individual perspectives as a way of emphasizing the difference between values represented by each of them [3]. For example, meta-perspective systems consist of strategic, line management and evidence-based perspectives, each of whom represents resource based economic perspective of HRD role in organizations. Although the scientists in the field of organization and management have primarily observed crises from the system perspective (meaning how to mitigate operational or financial loss through crisis planning), there is also the need to take into consideration other perspectives (community/societal) what could enhance our understanding of crisis situations management.

Earlier studies which explored crisis consequences firstly and foremostly from the aspect of environmental protection and ecology [4], in developing countries or communities located in sensitive ecological areas are excellent examples of how the community or societal perspective has been used for studying the imapct of crises on communities. This is in accordance with spreading interest among HRD professionals for national and international HRM [8] where the concept of learning and employee performance has begun to involve the community even in global issues like health, culture, safety and community development within the context of national development policy [15].

HRD PRACTICE

Beside the possibility to improve HRD research and theory, HRD practitioners can find Garavan's strategic HRD model to be a useful framework for the understanding of how could HRD coordinate interventions concerning changes and performance in order to support organizational goals concerning crisis management [37]. This model suggests that HRD is given an integral role in the mission of organization in collaboration with line managers in order to design and develop HRD measures in accordance with HRD policy and organizational culture and values. Garavan's articulation of SHRD model [37] relates learning, performance and change strategies to different organizational levels (organization, group, individual) and stakeholder interests (owner, employee, internal and external users). As one of the features of an organization prepared for a crisis, it is said that within it crisis management is a process encompassing the

entire company and representing systematic coordinated effort which connects human resources, safety, information technologies and other related areas [20],[1]. While HRD practitioners consider how to play the roles specific to crisis management, SHRD model provides a blueprint for understanding not only the way in which HRD interventions will affect organization performance arising from crisis management process, but also the way in which organizational culture and stakeholder roles will influence those interventions in the sense of acceptance, implementation and evaluation. SHRD model provides a wide objective for research of how various crisis factors can interact, influencing results of crisis situations management. Additional implication for HRD practitioners would be to consider crisis vulnerability of current interventions and processes used in the function of HRD. Clardy was the first to apply the practice of risk management on HRD interventions, especially in administration and support of training and development programs which can result in a crisis event [36]. Examples of potential dangers include failure to comply with relevant HR laws and HRD practices (necessary training, copyright laws, fair employment, fees), not using professional standards (ethics, proper application of regulations) in HRD planning, development and evaluation and inefficient management of HRD function (records, controls, reports). Clardy's working protocol for the revision of HRD function (identifying potential risks, planning procedure and implementation of guidelines) could help HRD reduce the risk of specific interventions using programs and policies. Consideration of how crisis vulnerability occurrs in HRD function can also help practitioners overcome initial stakeholders' scepticism towards organizational practice of crisis management.

CONCLUSION

Besides having common theoretical roots in critical consideration of economic, psychological and strategic/systemic aspects of human capital, study of the influence of culture, system and technology on the individual, group and organizational behavior is the subject of both organizational crisis management and human resource development, from somewhat different, but complementary angles and aspects. Different approaches are determined by different goals since crisis management tries to protect and support key organizational stakeholders, communities and resources in the case of a crisis event, while human resource development wants to develop human intellectual and emotional skills and abilities for the performance of various tasks for organizational and social sustainability. Accumulation of human knowledge and abilities definitely increases the overall potential of employees as a basic resource of every organization which can be useful both in normal (regular) conditions and crisis (emergency) situations. The cause of why this synergy did not earn appropriate scientific and practical attention, that is, why it is

generally reduced to implications related merely to training, lies foremostly in the reduction of holistic concept of crisis management to training, which is at the same time often reduced to symbolic ritual, while human resource development is related to other aspects of personnel management, and potential contribution to crisis management is unduly neglected. Because of all this, the relationship between human resource development and crisis management has not so far been the subject of consideration, research and action to the extent necessary, neither in the academic sphere, nor in the management arena. Mutual dialogue, partnership and joint efforts of theorists and practitioners dealing with human resource development and crisis management can undoubtedly provide results which would significantly improve personnel operation in both normal circumstances and in a crisis situation.

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BIOGRAPHY

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ORGANIZACIONO PONAŠANJE, KRIZNI MENADŽMENT I RAZVOJ LJUDSKIH RESURSA

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Rezime: *Discipline organizacionog kriznog menadžmenta i razvoja ljudskih reusrsa (HRD) dele slične probleme i oblasti istraživanja, tako da se istraživači i praktičari u obe discipline usredsređuju na pitanje kako pojedini elementi u okviru organizacije (kulture, sistemi, tehnologija) utiču na individualno, grupno i organizaciono ponašanje. Naučnici koji se bave kriznim menadžmentom i razvojem ljudskih resursa su takođe uključeni u istraživanja koja proističu iz zajedničkih teorijskih perspektiva, posebno iz kritičkog preispitivanja ljudskog kapitala/ekonomskih, psiholoških i strateških/sistemskih aspekata. Pored toga, glavni cilj obe discipline je izučavanje uticaja organizacije na pojedince, zajednicu i društvo. Glavni cilj kriznog menadžmenta je zaštita i održavanje ključnih organizacijskih stejkholdera, zajednica i resursa u slučaju kriznog događaja; cilj razvoja ljudskih resursa je razvoj ljudskog intelektualnog kapitala i emocionalnih sposobnosti i veština za obavljanje različitih poslova u cilju organizacijske i društvene održivosti. Imajući ovo u vidu čini se da se discipline kriznog menadžmenta i razvoja ljudskih resursa u značajnoj meri preklapaju, mada ove odnose i njihove relativne implikacije za istraživanje i praksu tek treba izučit. U radu se navode odnosi i veze između dveju disciplina kao i njihovo međudejstvo.*

Ključne reči: krizni menadžment, razvoj ljudskih resursa, organizaciono ponašanje.