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Organizational Spirituality. Comments on C.A.R.E Model for Organization Development & Transformation

Antonio SANDU*, PhD

Abstract

Identifying the spiritual frames that stake the development of organizations in conjunction with specific culture where that organization works may reveal dynamic motivational elements and construction of organizational culture. The question arising from this paper, beyond the author's analysis on Commitment, Awareness, Readiness and Engagement generated through spiritual participation at the organization level, appears to be: "what is the place and role of spirituality in the organization and consequently in its development?". It would be interesting to know whether Preudhikulpradab considers organizational spirituality a social construction specific to each organization generated by the dynamics within the organization at the interface between organizational culture and spirituality of each individual with which it enters the organization, or rather a form of social control by creating a collective identity that gains features of a spiritual organization.

Keywords: organizational spirituality; organizational culture; commitment; awareness; readiness; engagement.

Is organizational spirituality a way of participation of organization's members to spiritual life?

The question arising from this paper, beyond the author's analysis on Commitment, Awareness, Readiness and Engagement generated through spiritual participation at the organization level, appears to be: "what is the place and role of spirituality in the organization and consequently in its development?" American and European literature emphasizes the role of faith-based organizations in the sphere of social, educational, medical services etc. (Sider, Unruh, 2004; Wagner, 2008; Chaves and Wineburg, 2008; Cojocaru, Cojocaru, Sandu, 2011) resulting in a typology of faith-based social initiatives starting from on elements such as: mission, speech, sources of funding and

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human resources. Organizational spirituality is a new approach in the field, elements of organizational culture being interpreted in conjunction with spirituality (Sass, 2000).

Preudhikulpradab (2011) “examines the level of perception/ experience of organization spirituality in terms of Commitment to, Awareness of, Readiness for, and Engagement in/ with organization contents/ contexts. It also crafted an organization development and transformation model to enhance the levels of Commitment, Awareness, Readiness and Engagement for long term competitiveness. The study involved respondents from the management and staff of a Thai software and professional services company”.

Is organizational spirituality a way of participation of organization’s members to spiritual life? The author understands spirituality as an inner voice that determines the individual's motivational system (Preudhikulpradab, 2011) being an essential part of self-consciousness that acts at the top of the hierarchy of needs such as those of self-fulfillment and self discovery. The author shows that the belief system and mental models determine the level of involvement in the organization’s development. Commitment is crucial to the organization's spirituality often being experienced as loyalty to the group and organization. Spirituality of organization becomes an aspect of organizational culture derived from the cultural and religious model where the organization develops, in our analyzed case, a complex model with Confucian and Buddhist influences.

Preudhikulpradab identifies four quadrants of analysis of organizational spirituality: commitment, awareness, readiness and engagement identifying a series of indicators of each of them.

Quadrant 1: Commitment with its key characteristics: accepting, analyzing, planning/designing, and evaluating.

Quadrant 2: Awareness with its key characteristics: researching, idea generating, common understanding, and articulating.

Quadrant 3: Readiness with its key characteristics: energizing, action taking, sustainability, and benchmarking.

Quadrant 4: Engagement with its key characteristics: collaborating, empowering, enhancing, and self managing.

It would be interesting to know whether Preudhikulpradab considers organizational spirituality a social construction specific to each organization generated by the dynamics within the organization at the interface between organizational culture and spirituality of each individual with which it enters the organization, or rather a form of social control by creating a collective identity that gains features of a spiritual organization. It is not clear in the article whether if the dimensions are taken from specialty literature, or are constructed by the author, and which was the operational approach that led to this result.

From the methodological point of view it stands out the detailed analysis of each indicator with a special care in terms of consistency and coherence, validity and significance of data. The abundance of research questions, not less than six, correlated with four research questions, shows the ambition of the author for the exhaustive study of the researched organization. However, some research questions could have been counterproductive, such as: „what are the demographic profiles of the organization members, such as gender, age, number of years of service, education attainment, nationality, total years of work experience and experience of living, studying and/or working overseas?” (Preudhikulpradab, 2011), as the answers to other questions do not necessarily need a question on the demographic profile of the organization.

Conclusions

We consider that Preudhikulpradab's papers (2011) draws attention to a specific dimension of organizational culture called by the author organizational spirituality that is able to generate development through commitment, attachment and loyalty to the organization and self-mobilization. Identifying the spiritual frames that stake the development of an organization in conjunction with specific culture where that organization works may reveal dynamic motivational elements and construction of organizational culture.

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