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Human Resource – Potential Factor of Organizational Crisis

At the level of any economic system, the change brings about the modification of the internal operating method of the relations between the actors and of the work habits. In other words, the substance (main, important) modifications can be shaped on each of the organizational dominant of the system at a structural, functional or cultural level, in which the main actor, the human resource, intends to be part of this equation of changes. In this context, significant is the role played by the main organization actors, a role which can be materialized either as a factor of innovation, prevention and even progress, or as a conflict promoting factor, which, in time, generates a state of abnormality, of crisis. That is why major importance must be allotted to the human resources at the level of each organisation, considering the progress focused on knowledge, experience, experiments, attitude, behaviour and competences, these implying factors of correction and efficient reaction for the administration of the organizational crises.

Keywords: human resource, organisation, crisis

Introduction

The organizations from Romania “brushed” by the transition process, must transparently establish the managerial models of progressive contexts, of national culture proper to the specific realities.

The changes occurred in Romania, amplified by the conditioning of the integration stage within the European structures, set off profound social, financial, economic, technical and technological, informational, judicial, ecological, and last but not least, military modifications.

We detach the necessity of acknowledging the innovating change processes of the general society configuration, highlighting the value systems, the norms and the behaviour of the people of today and tomorrow, as employees, consumers and citizens.

Thus, a synthetic approach of the Romanian organization peculiarity requires the necessity to develop change processes, at the level of conception, as well as of the managerial activity aiming the registration of radical modifications, overdraw-ing the importance and the position of man in the leading systems and materializ-ing the essence – change the vision about man.

What are organizations?

In order to elaborate a definite answer, one must connect the approach of the organisation with characteristic arguments of the institution and enterprise.

In this context, the enterprise is known as „the production, service and commerce economic unit”¹ obeying some logical operating rules, of a rational merging and materialization of the production factors on account of a good management.

The evolution of the term „institution” encounters different significances, nowadays the sociology definition being the most significant one: “an institution consists of a complex assembly of values, norms and customs shared by a certain number of individuals”².

In order to avoid confusions or misinterpretations, we must mention the signification that” the institution is a body or an organization which develops social, cultural, administrative, etc activities”³. The institution is also perceived as a form of organising the social reports, according to the judicial norms established on fields of activity”⁴.

A foray in the evolution of the term „organisation” indicates the following sig-nificances:

- „communities of individuals and groups activating together in order to achieve common objectives”⁵;
- „planned units, deliberately structured for the achievement of specific objectives”⁶;
- „association of people with common preoccupations and conceptions, united according to a regulation, for the performance of an organised activity”⁷.

Referring to the above mentioned issues, points of convergence of organisa-tions and institutions can be outlined, being materialized in modalities of structur-ing human resources based on value systems, norms, customs, faith, rules, princi-ples, etc.

¹ *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române*, Ed. Univers Enciclopedic, București, 1996, p. 540

² Larousse, *Dicționar de sociologie*, Ed. Univers Enciclopedic, București, 1996, p. 137

³ Op. cit. DEX p. 496

⁴ Idem

⁵ Oscar Hofman, *Management. Fundamente socioumane*, Ed. Victor, București, 1999, p. 10

⁶ Idem

⁷ Op cit DEX p. 727

The elements that build the fundament of an organisation are: individuals and groups, tasks and technology, structure, processes, linked to management, which from a strategic perspective, must allow and also stimulate the autonomous, creative and responsible action of economic and social actors. Thus, the organisations do not present themselves as neutral social realities, independent of the individuals' conceptions, being rather considered socio-human structures which benefit of particularities appropriate to a socio-cultural reality.

That is why, the present brings into discussion the purpose for which the organisations are designed and developed with an evident human load. In other words, organisations are not only created by man, but they are also meant to satisfy him.

In conclusion, the organisations are structures created by individuals based on value systems, norms and principles registered in a document-regulation, in order to satisfy the needs of the implied human resources as well as of the beneficiary one, which are not implied.

What is the organizational crisis?

Nowadays organisations function in a permanently changing environment, their adjustment capacity becoming a fundamental condition of success, of survival. The profoundness, complexity and accelerated pace of the technological, economic, social changes, decisively mark the organisational evolution, including the evolution of stress, of unbalance, urging for a modern organisation, perceived as a space of efficiency, of normality.

It is important to mention that the analysis performed on an organisation gravitates, methodologically, around the concept of normality, concept that implies relativity, but when this relativity emphasises, then disturbing factors, crisis promoters may appear. Thus, the organisation constitutes a space of crisis and the supreme test is constituted by the ability of the two main actors (organisation and managers) to cope with the crisis, to reinstate normality.

For a good perception and a relevant reasoning the crisis definition is imposed. Thus, the crisis, regardless of the approached field (economic, politic, cultural, ideological, and organisational) became a colloquial state, a reference notion quasi-present in the general language. From an organisational perspective, most definitions are trying to catch the events which affect them, even at the extra-organisational level, referring to one and the same thing – their state of abnormality.

The crisis represents a system with its own self-destructive cycles, supplying itself from its inner environment and expressing itself through the attraction of disturbances at all levels. In the attempt of defining the *organisational crisis*, the ones who appeal to the word „krisis“, promote *the decision* as a final element of the evaluation, interpretation and communication process of the situation solving model. Thus arouses the idea that the decision would end the indecision and inca-

capacity of solving and interpreting the problems which could endanger the cohesion and functioning of the organisation. It results that a crisis is determined by the period of the incapacity to decide, the functioning of the organisation being questioned or compromised.

In other words, the crisis promotes the idea of threat upon the organisation through the amplitude and the complexity of the registered modifications, including their impact, which can determine the indecisions at the level of management.

In this case, the crisis bears the significance of indecision, being assimilated to all unknown phenomena, which displeases and discourages an individual as well as organisational level.

Nevertheless, the approach of crisis from the specialist perspective is different.

The economists analyse the crisis after their criteria, assigning it the characteristics of some phenomena with fatal consequences for affected groups, organisations, communities: inflation, unemployment, stagnation, recession, when the crisis can be synonym with a interruption of the economic increase rate.

The sociologists identify the origin of the crises in the social injustices, in the decrease of motivation and initiative, in desertions at the level of social control mechanisms.

The psychologists consider the crisis a waste of individual identity, an effect of social experiences, induced by fear and uncertainty.

From the perspective of the organisational development, referring to the physical level, identifiable through human, material, financial and technological resources, as well as to the functional level, distinguished through the specific purposes and missions, norms, organisation culture, formal and informal relations, we conclude that a crisis can be distinguished through the dysfunctions registered at the two organisation levels creating the premises to threaten the fundamental principles, i.e. the identity and the reason it has been set up for.

Thus, we conclude that a crisis can be generated by causes such as:

- The lack of an internal control system or the defective functioning of the existing one;
- The lack of the internal code of norms, rules, standards or the formal existence of ROF and of the records afferent to the employed personnel;
- The existence of a conflict of interests, of the unfair competition generated by incorrect moral and professional conducts of some employees;
- The defective, empirical management at an organisational level,
- The exposure of the organisation at different risk categories, without an efficient administration system;
- Internal fraud etc.

All these are inflicted by the action of the fundamental actor, i.e. the human resource.

Is the human resource a crisis factor?

It is of common knowledge that the economic and social activity implies the participation of all production factors and that their nature, structure and volume depend on the kind and sizes of the developed activities, on the capacity and capability of the human factor to efficiently value the provided means.

Also, any human activity requires actions of programming, organising, and coordinating at different levels the organisational structures, significant being the place and the role of the human resource management. Starting from the significance of the notion of resource as being that reserve of means that can be processed and subsequently fructified, the human resources can be attributed with the signification of "labour reserve the society disposes of, which can be used in different branches and fields of activity, being represented by the total of the elder population capable of working at the respective moment."⁸ This interpretation of human resources sets off their active role as a sub-system of national wealth (analysed as a macroeconomic system) in the drive of the other sub-systems and which depends on their functionality.

The man, represented by its physical and intellectual skills, is constantly implied in any economic and social activity, in any labour process, and its work requires and supposes a consumption of labour resources in the respective fields of activity. In these conditions, the labour manifests itself as a production factor and the population as a premise (source) of work.

For every category of activity, the population represents a source of labour resource, a source of labour force input, in the conditions promoted by the European legislation referring to the persons able of working (the minimum age must not be lower than the minimum graduation age). That is why, it is important to mention that the size and the structure of the human resources depend on a series of factors, as follows⁹:

- demographic factors:
 - the national demographic policy;
 - familial planning;
 - birth-rate;
 - death-rate;
- socio-economic factors:
 - the compatibility of the professional training with the social demands expressed on the labour market;
 - standard of living;
 - average lifespan.

The above mentioned items represent a sustainable argument of the role of the human resource sub-system which created and still creates material resources that were gathered and are still being gathered generation by generation, based on their own experience, and amplified by the capitalization of the information storage in the public training system.

⁸ C-tin Roşca, *Dicţionar de ergonomie*, Ed. CERTI, Craiova, 1997 p. 379

⁹ C-tin Roşca, *Managementul resurselor umane*, Ed. Universitaria, Craiova, 2004, p. 6

A foray in the establishment of the human resources impact on the economic and social operation society sets off the process of mutual relations which materializes the action of the social actors (managers, employees) in order to reconstruct and promote the organisational skills that compete at the fulfilment of human and social needs.

Starting from one of the peculiarities of the moment (provided by the demographic factor), that of quantitatively limiting the human resources, it is qualitatively imposed to set off the most significant operational features of human resources:

- represents one of the most important investments, with results which are getting more and more evident with time;
- suppose most difficult managerial decisions;
- are considered rare resources with considerable influence on the competence based management;
- constitutes a category of regenerative resource managed by the diversity of educational processes;
- are rare, valuable, difficult to ensure and replace;
- represent a creation dominated source;
- dispose of a relative inertness at changes, compensated by a great adaptability to different situations;
- the lack of mental exercise and motivation creates the condition of perishable resource;
- are strongly marked by the time factor necessary for the mentality, custom, behaviour, etc, changes;
- *it is a resource capable of blocking, of introducing new risk and uncertainty factors, consuming, but at the same time, promoting crises.*

An approach of the human resource role at the level of organisations must be processed through management. In this context, it is important to mention the fact that the hypothesis, according to which the management as well as the managerial knowledge benefit of the principle of universality, is not topical, i.e. regardless of the situation, these can be transferred and implemented at the level of any country. For this reason, we can affirm that at the level of all Romanian organisations, a complex change process broke out at the level of conception, as well as at the level of specific management activities.

Considerable changes registered in the Romanian economy, also at the level of economic agents, are part of the process of market economy construction, a process of special complexity, which is denoted through multiple economic, social and political mutations, and their feasibility highlights the necessity of the management quality increase, on a functional level as well as from a structural point of view.

Thus, the Romanian economy represents the beneficiary of positive-qualitative consequences at the application of management for developed economies. The participative management implementation at the level of Romanian economic or-

organisations promotes the indispensability of a management contract through which „the owner assigns to a manager the organisation, management and administration of activities based on some objectives and quantifiable performance criteria”[6]. This activity benefit of premises performed through the creation of participative management organisations according to Law 31/1990 republished and updated.

The management structures at the level of each organisation type must give much importance to the attributions, competences and responsibilities of the *participative management bodies* in order to increase their competitiveness. For more information regarding the benefits of the participative management application in the Romanian companies and the imposed correction measures, a series of advantages and disadvantages of this kind of management are pointed out. Table no.1 presents some of these.

The main characteristic of the participative management is represented by the decision at each hierarchic level, ending with the work place, as well as the setting of the objective performance and the performance through team work.

Also, the organisational politics that aims the mechanism of emitting the decisions at the level of each economic organisation must start from the possibility of the employee to feel responsible for the organisation success, by registering personal success, leading to the premises of his implication when taking a decision.

Table 1.

Advantages	Disadvantages
The increase of the general information level of the employees	Much time allotted to the consulting and participation of employees at meetings
The increase of the decision substantiation	The decrease of problem solving promptness
The increase of the employee number at the setup and achievement of objectives	Amplification of the meeting expenses, the material multiplication and the transport expenses of the persons from the participative bodies

Conclusion

A simple survey of the above mentioned issues points out the role of the human resources in the organisations’ activity from an executive as well as from a managerial, decisional point of view. As long as functional and structural modifications, imposed by the conditions of the integration of the Romanian society in the European community, are functioning at the level of organisations, unbalances such as disturbing factors, crisis promoters, may occur.

The main actor in this equation is the human resource, from an organisational point of view as well as from a social one. Thus, some of the extremely diversified external causes must be reminded:

- averse conjunctures supplied by the economic and labour market;

- consequences of calamities: floods, earthquakes, plagues etc.;
- legislative modifications with effects on the institution activities;
- institutional reconfigurations as a consequence of reorganisations, mergers and other procedures.

At the same time, the tendencies registered at the level of human resources must be analysed under a managerial aspect, set up in consequence of the society's integration in the European community. Thus, the new challenges of the human resources are managed by:

- a. the changes from the economic activity solicited by:
 - the changes of employment and of occupational categories;
 - the change of functions in the economy branches and the pressures of global competition;
- b. Demographic changes at the level of labour force characterised through:
 - Reduction of labour force;
 - Aging process of labour force;
 - Increase of average lifecycle and decrease of birth-rate;
- c. Changes regarding the character and the type of work characterized through:
 - Changes at the level of life style and work time;
 - Emphasis of the temporary employment tendency or of the part-time jobs;
- d. Changes of the social values solicited by:
 - Aspects regarding the employees' rights;
 - Balance of the employees' efforts between the family obligations and the professional ones.

In conclusion, the role of human resources may consist of their conjugated action so that the reports governing the relation managers-employees should not contain informalities that could break out major conflicts leading to a state of abnormality, crisis, respectively, at the level of organisation.

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