IDENTIFYING STRUCTURE OF ORGANIZATION AND INDIVIDUAL ROLES AT THE EXAMPLE OF SPORT MANAGERS

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to identify essential elements of the structure of organization and allocations referring to the individuals inside the functional systems and with the example of 40 poll indicators obtained from the sample of 71 top level managers. From the methodology point of view, we are talking about definition of a new model for the analysis of internal developments of real systems giving possibility to collect a complete set of initial data. The results reflected a high degree of correspondence with hypothetical thesis and it resulted in identification of existing levels. The greatest number of hypothetical roles realized by leaders or operatives have been confirmed, too. Transparency on some other situations except sport management is probably very high but it should be confirmed in further research. The results could be applied, for sure, for the purpose of sport management function optimization as well as in some other enough corresponding situations. The value of this research is mostly reflected in its methodological contribution to new technologies.

Key words: management, human resources, positions, leadership

Introduction

In the organizational domain of sport, and especially the top one, the potentially high efficacy of the modern technological school processes requests also a high degree of familiarity with positions and relations among individuals incorporated in the organizations dealing with that kind of technology. Most certainly, within the organizational structure of such a kind of sport subjects of different levels, there is a real request for optimization of roles given to individual persons. These roles are not at all a mere coincidence and they have a direct function to preserve the total system for the purpose of realizing as higher general level as possible, which results in production of top results in sport in the end. Naturally, lots of rules from this domain are valid in other fields of management, and not only in sport. There exist numerous theories on internal structure of management and all of them reflect their effort to understand the long-life structures and roles in order to be able to optimize the total influence of sports organization in dynamic conditions. Some approaches start from the position of a leader as the one being important, but

expressing doubts mostly in terms of identifying the aim and tasks expected to be realized by management in general (Neinaber & Kakabadse, 2007). However, the greatest number of theories in management have still been defined, to a great extent, in a speculative manner, without a true grounds, except in the part referring anyway to the management and control of dynamic systems. Having in mind that the approaches to the management of these systems have been almost directly copied from technical sciences in the last 20 years, disproportion referring to technical systems and systems with human potentials have appeared with a good reason, resulting in impossibility of having a direct transfer of knowledge. The differences appeared as the result of the level of human independence in relation to the parts of technical systems which can be managed in dynamic conditions of operation being induced with people not only by external factors but also with internal motivation, aims, desires, stimulation, etc., and for that reason, it appears very complicated to describe such a kind of systems and organization in a manner of structure (Méric, 2008). This problem area is especially complex when it is about quantifying quality indicators, being common in management and almost always present (Larsson, et al., 2007). Finally, one of the bigger problems is, for sure, defining the vertical upturn of disposition with human resources, and the descending line in decision making respectively, because it is even dealt with more complex developments than they were retrospectively mentioned here. Most certainly, the act of decision making is found at all levels, but the question is how big its scope and authority for implementation of decisions is. One among important questions is certainly the reflextion of tensions being directed from lower levels towards the top of managment structure, which can result in a number of consequences (Braithwaite et. al., 2008). Out of all these reasons mentioned, as well as out of a number of other mentioned real requests (function optimization, financial efficacy, individual people satisfaction, team work, accomplishing aims), a serious task of defining scientifically acceptable thesis on functions, structure and individual roles in all and also in sport subjects such as for example, sport clubs, associations, sport board of management, sport education institutions, independent and private sport organizations, etc. has been set up. In this context, the aim of this work is to determine the levels of general internal structure and individual roles being occupied by some individuals in that structure.

Methods

For the purpose of this project, 71 high positioned managers in sport subjects in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been covered by analysis. The data have been collected by poll which included 40 indicators related to managerial sport activities in the largest sense. The data have been analyzed at a few levels. The first level represented the data which was all oriented in a metrical way so that higher result represented a better result in all situations. Then, normalization has been done since it was dealt with non-parametric indicators. The data have been rescaled on the standard scale (1 to 5) in order to determine the parameters easier. Finally, for the purpose of this work, a special procedure generating the necessary parameters for testing the target hypothesis was prepared. In this way, the information on existence and legalization of levels and then also on: the real level of individual consent with the scope of indicators (*positioning*), level of independent

activity (*independence*), level of persistence in the scope of management of individuals (*nonmanagment*) and stability in activity (*stability*), have ben obtained. The initial number of levels have been determined in the standard procedure for determination of the number of categories at the level of safety amounting 95% (K=1.69/sqrt(n)). The range of each category was 1.00. The position of each individual was estimated upon its projection at the linear combination of the whole set consisted of 40 indicators, because it was the way to determine to which extent a particular individual was integrated in such a field of range area. A higher value means for sure a higher position or a better disposition of resources being described by indicators. The level of independence of an individual has been expressed as a derived indicator from the multivariant matrix, in other words, as an average value of all the data in the matrix of euclidic distances of each analyzed entity in relation to all other. The logic of this kind of procedure is extremely simple, because it is reasonably hypothesized that the individuals similar to others by the values of indicators are to a smaller extent independent since they share the common area in a larger extent and in that way their mutual activity itself. The level of nonmanagement was estimated by the product resulting from multiplication of positioning and independence, with the logic that an individual having a higher position and a higher level of independence is in his/her substance less managable (and vice versa). Finally, the stability of each individual was estimated as the absolute result of subtraction of positioning and independence because it is certainly true that the individual having "harmony" between positioning and independence will not aspire for bigger changes, in other words, he will not put the structure in disorder. In conclusion, if he was at a low position and very independent, he would not make any contribution to the system but he would probably seek his own personal result which would endanger his own and the whole system stability. The same is true for the individual who has a high position and who is very much dependent of all others and therefore he would not be able to make his own decisions. The first three parameters are expressed in the standard range from 1 to 5, and the fourth (stability) was obtained as difference between 0 and 3. This lead to a more precise identification of levels within the same range. A hypothetical model has been set up and it was completely confirmed (Table 1). For the purpose of easier understanding, the data was reduced to one decimal. Before the data was collected, a hypothetic model of the role of an individual, including the possible situations described by the combination of the four hypothesized and analyzed parameters, had been set up. This kind of data have been presented in Table 1 (Hypothesis). The average value of all the standardized and summed up data of these four parameters resulted in real levels and allocations of the individuals on the mentioned levels (Graph 1). For the purpose of an objective comparance, the results were also analyzed with a group of different taxonomic procedures (clustering, polar taxsons, ….), but the data was not in line with any of the procedures, which confirmed the fact that this research dealt with definition of internal levels, internal structure and individual roles and not with taxons.

Results

If we suppose that a description of the four offered parameters with five intensities were sufficient to determine the position of an individual, then the first step in that context was the description of potential

roles. Although the possible number of roles might seem very big (combination without repetition = 625 possibilities), that is not true, because there is a great similarity among those particular possibilities, and the roles are arranged in real conditions based on different variations of influences, which results in a smaller number of possible roles in the organization in the end. It is also obvious that the roles cannot be arbitrary, because the structure itself is not arbitrary defined and then a great number of the possible-seeming roles is simply unrealistic. These data are safe very much because it was dealt with even 40 indicators covering in large part the scope of activity performed by sport managers. The complete description of indicators can be found in: (Bonacin, Mujkić and Rađo, 2008). In this way, a real leader was hypothetically described as (5,5,5,0), in other words, at a high position, independent, nonmanagable and stable. The subleader was described as (4,4,4,1), in other words, almost as a real leader, but with some less measurable features, though. A manager (5,4,4,1), a counsellor (3,5,3,2), a communication network knot as (5,2,2,2), etc.

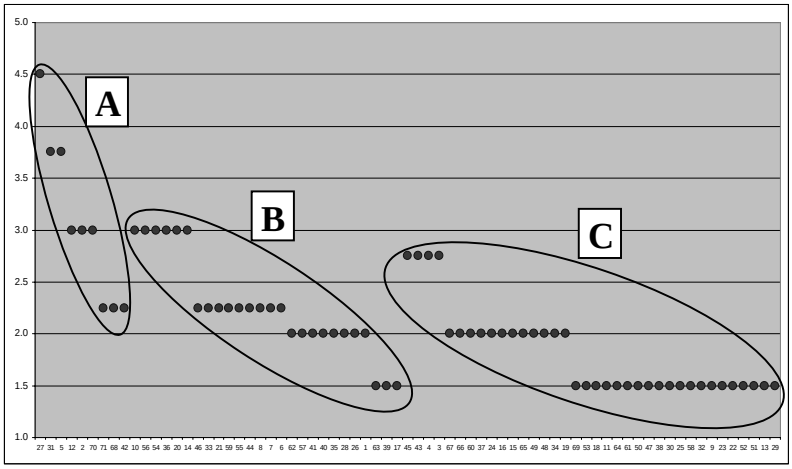
Table 1. Hypothetical and empirical indicators and their differences as well

(P=positioning, O=Independence, N=nonmanagement, S=Stability, X=Entity, A=Strategy, B=Tactics, C=Executive organs)

		Hypothesis				Results					Differences			
Segment	Role	P	O	N	S	P	O	N	S	X	P	O	N	S
A	Leader	5.0	5.0	5.0	0.0	4.5	4.5	4.5	0.0	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0
A	Subleader	4.0	4.0	4.0	1.0	4.5	3.5	3.5	1.0	2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0
A	Manager	5.0	3.0	3.0	1.0	4.5	2.5	2.5	1.0	2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0
A	Counsellor	3.0	5.0	3.0	2.0	2.5	4.5	2.5	2.0	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0
A	Network knot	5.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	4.5	1.5	1.5	2.0	3	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0
B	Supervisor	4.0	3.0	3.0	1.0	3.5	2.5	2.5	1.0	2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0
B	Opportunist	3.0	3.0	2.0	1.0	2.5	3.5	2.5	1.0	8	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0
B	Poser /Accountant	2.0	4.0	2.0	2.0	1.5	3.5	1.5	2.0	5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0
B	Confidant	3.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	2.5	1.5	1.0	1.0	8	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.0
B	Partner/Assistant	1.0	3.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	2.0	3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
C	Segments maintainer	3.0	3.0	2.0	0.0	2.5	2.5	1.5	0.0	4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0
C	Communications channel	2.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	1.5	2.5	1.0	1.0	12	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.0
C	Isolator/disorder	1.0	4.0	1.0	3.0	0.5	3.5	0.5	3.0	4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0
C	Univerzal	3.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.5	0.5	0.5	2.0	7	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0
C	Operative	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.5	0.5	0.5	1.0	9	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0

A greater number of conceived roles in this way (features) were hypothetically arranged in the strategic, tactical and operative segment of the organization, and finally we came to the number of 15 existing roles. For a certain number of hypothetic roles, it was not known in advance if they could be experimentally determined, which finally happened in the end. Namely, a set of 10 more roles of that kind were expected, but their existance was not confirmed. With an additional inspection of data in the poll questionaries, in rescaled data and with the inspection of final results, it became obvious that such a kind of roles (at least in this sample) were only nonexistent constructions which do not exist at the latent level and they might be synonims for some other roles which in reality exist. In comparance to the number of examinees, the initial number of categories was 5. In fact, the number of 7 levels was identified and all the examinees can be traced in them (Graph 1). Other results of this research are presented in the table. According to the results in the Table 1, it can be seen that the deviations from the hypothesis are minimal, in other words, all the hypothetic roles were pretty well guessed. The hypothetic models obviously turned to be sustainable and credible. The number of entities per a particular role (X) was also found as sustainable and credible.

Graph 1. Identified real levels and allocations of individuals



Within the seven identified levels, and on the basis of the described model of structure and structural roles, it can be seen that hierarchy, according to which the strategic block of management (A) covered the least number of individuals (9) being mostly at high levels, whereas the operative block (C) covered the greatest number of individuals (36) being mostly at the lowest levels, was preserved. It can also be seen that the level of the strategy block is expressed in vertical and of the operative one in horizontal dimension of structure, which is also one of indicators of results credibility. The tactic segment (B) can be found somewhere between the two, which is also found as expected.

Discussion and conclusions

Identification of levels as well as of structure indicators of the relationships network and individual roles within the structure itself appeared to be a possible and achievable task. The indicators in the Table 1 learly support the fact that the existing roles within the organizational structure are not coincidence at all or found as chaotic, but that it is dealt here with the functions of a big importance by any standards. At this moment, a possible terminology choice disagreement in relation to the recognition of individual roles, is totally unimportant because it is really possible that some of these roles could be given some other terminology name by some other researchers. However, their precise allocation and quantitively determined position on the basis of the well defined parameters, bring the functionality of the system and the whole organization of the analyzed structure to the fore. It is clear that, among 71 managers, the only one real Leader and the only two Subleaders have been obtained. In such a large quantity, there are only two Managers and only one Counselor. This seems to be the very management top itself, which gives "sound and colour" to the driving mechanism and it is, together with the Knots, responsible for the strategy of any system in which it can be a structure constituent part. In the hypothetical second line of organization we find the individuals with tactic roles beginning with supervisors (2). However, on the basis of the description of the applied parameters, it can be seen that, even in the mentioned segments, you can find the individuals with the roles being not

necessary systematically orientated, but it could be said that they are above all self-oriented. For that reson, the allocated entities were recognized as Opportunists (no less than 8) and Posers (5). But, there are those who can be seen as ones giving the system (organization) a big dose of Credibility, because they are of the same kind and they follow the organizational instructions (no less than 8), and there is also a certain number od Assistants who should be the experts in particular fields (3). In this way, two considerably polarized types of roles meet at this middle level of activity and possibly of decision-making process and they are the following: the roles substantially aiming at the personal promotion (Oportunism, Posing) and the ones following the established global values of the system (Supervision, Credibility; Cooperation). Different implications can be generated out of this tension, depending on how much the whole structure has been successful and how many of the necessary conditions for function operation can be ensured by the segment of strategy. Naturally, the individuals are recruted from this segment into the segment of strategy, which is an additional development rising the whole dynamics. In the operative segment the following are mostly found: Operatives (9), Universals (7), the roles for Communication preservation (12), Maintenance (4) and the roles of Disturbance (4), which show that the organizational operation activities are really settled at this level. So, in this article, with the poll questionaire applied at 71 managers at high levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina, *a new methodology frame of reference for defining the structure of organization* and individuals allocation has been obtained. That frame also includes the definition of existent levels as well as the indicators of confirmation degree referring to the preliminary hypothesis. Quantification of all the indicators was realized by the application of elementary mathematics procedures, but together with the multivariant methods at entities being very much different from taxonomic and cluster procedures. It is suggested to apply the described metodology in all the situations with the totally known set of initial indicators which cover well the aim area referring to the application of identification of organizational elements of any social structure given, as it is here in the case of sports management.

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