

WHEN INTERNATIONAL ACADEMICS IN MANAGEMENT MEET IN HUNGARY: REPORT ON THE 5TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MANAGEMENT

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The 5th International Conference on Management (ICoM 2015) was jointly organized by the Szent István University Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences (Hungary) in cooperation with the Czestochowa University of Technology Faculty of Management (Poland), the Slovak University of Agriculture Faculty of Economics and Management, and Mendel University in Brno (the Czech Republic). The conference was held in the idyllic surroundings of Gödöllő in Hungary on 18th and 19th June 2015.

The very idea of the conference was based upon the observation that the situation with contemporary organizations can be characterized as growth in risk and volatility, meaning that a key feature of management (namely, decision making) requires new analytical categories, new descriptions and new forms of clarification. In the modern approach to management, increasing attention is being paid to the people who work in organizations. In fact, individuals are increasingly coming to be appreciated as of the most significant organizational resources.

Consequently, the aim of the conference was to bring together social scientists, researchers and students, as well as representatives of the business sector, to exchange and share experiences and research findings about contemporary management issues. An additional goal of the conference was to provide a place for discussion for academics and professionals with multi-disciplinary interests in organizations, business and management.

Over 300 participants from across the world were welcomed by the keynote speakers who emphasized the main points for reflection at the conference:

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Leadership, management and entrepreneurship. Csaba Bálint Illés, Anna Dunay and Maria Nowick-Skowron stressed the need for a multi-disciplinary, cross-comparative approach to developing new models of management, identifying the determinants of entrepreneurship and enriching the concept of leadership.

Firstly, plenary speeches underlined the challenges and new opportunities for organizations that a highly competitive “smart” world is raising through the creation of a new ecosystem (in particular, concerning how the concept of entrepreneurship should be re-defined). In this respect, Dorota Jelonek talked about the virtualization of entrepreneurship with the rise of the internet, while László Szerb presented the perspective of the Global Entrepreneurship Index for the V4 countries. Elena Horska stressed the relevance of new methodological solutions borrowed from disciplines such as neuroscience for understanding individual behavior in the market and in organisations.

Secondly, parallel sessions offered not only an opportunity for participants to present their research findings related to the main topics of the conference, but also served as platform for intense discussion and exchange among the international audience.

The topic of Leadership and management was discussed according to a critical and cross-cultural lens. Presentations focused on various organizational behavioral patterns, and in particular on so-called counterproductive behavior. This term is used in the search for alternative ways of defining leadership. The notion of intuitive management was raised in connection with the established knowledge about and the perspective of evolution.

This leads us to the next main topic of the conference; namely Knowledge management. Knowledge management has been thoroughly defined in the organizational and management literature but its dynamic nature and the different dimensions it entails still bring up challenges as the workforce is increasingly becoming transnational and international. Hence, perspectives presented during the related session helped participants, for example, to better understand the process of the diffusion of intergenerational knowledge, the role of knowledge networks in the ability to innovate and the new phenomenon of e-learning in diverse organisations. Examples of studies that were conducted in Indian, Iraqi and Polish organisations were described.

Another topic that was touched upon during the conference was Contemporary questions of SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises). A study from the Penang region in Malaysia showed how SMEs were not only reacting against external influences to promote their survival, but were also acting as agents of change, potentially restructuring society and shaping new forms of relations. Further presentations were policy-oriented and examined,

among other things, work life balance in SMEs in Poland, and how gender and disability are addressed in German SMEs.

The session on Social capital and corporate social responsibility involved a discussion about the mechanisms and factors that account for the construction of socially responsible organizations; in particular, the ethical dimensions of CSR. Particular attention was paid to the involvement of employees as a key factor in sustainability. Hence sustainable organizations with high social capital contribute positively to the ecosystem in which they operate.

The strength of the conference came from, on the one hand, the variety and quality of contributions that ranged across disciplinary areas and employed diverse methods of investigation, and, on the other hand, on the willingness of the social scientists that were present to learn through expanding their perspectives and sharing their opinions in fruitful exchanges which will later result in innovative and creative research efforts. Thus the main outcome of the conference was the building of bridges between disciplines, and across borders.