

The General Review of Dualities Theory in Managing Organizational Change

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Abstract

This article is about how duality theory is perceived by leaders and how we should focus on its element. It is important because organization tend to underestimate the importance of dualities. This research will show that duality thinking provides us the knowledge to handle opposing values and appreciating the concept on utilizing it. It is a paradox that needs identifying and explaining in an attempt to understand how to mediate between two opposing poles. This article will provide a basic understanding on how paradoxes are managed and by balancing the duality tension what possible effectiveness will occur.

Keywords: Duality theory, dualistic tension, paradox.

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Introduction

Organization management tends to view management change as an exception, a problem that managers or leaders think of to eradicate immediately in order to reclaim back the organizations stable state. A solid foundation of organizational performance isn't just purely by assumption given by organizations rational, fair and stationery individuals which are then combine into a "weapon", but also stability and conformity. Also, a strict logic on the path of organizational change would defy itself. Never would manage

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organizational change could be as simple as it looks. It wouldn't work by simply following a book of rules; in fact, it would require a complicated and conflicting social system along with rising of hidden and debatable events that would occur in the process to be achieved. To have an organization reach its effectiveness, it requires stability but also necessarily needs dual attributes which are contradictory, for example, stability versus change, control versus flexibility or efficiency versus creativity (Cameron, 1986; Evans, 1992; Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983). Organization that thrives to have changes and obtaining great effectiveness therefore requires attention towards the dualistic theory. When it comes to the duality theory, people would think and predict which contradictions would have a bigger impact over the other (Jackson, 1999, p.549). Instead, we should focus on finding out what is within this paradox and what strong links are present within it. There are some theorists that imply dualism elements could be run independently, and in a context it would imply that dualism elements could be matched by its specification rather than its incompatibility (Ford & Backoff, 1988, p.100). But when it comes to a live scenario, how do managers handle multiple paradoxes simultaneously? An amount of risk and tension will exist in order to choose its right path. Imagine learning to balance opposing forms of dualistic elements like managing "stability vs change" along with the commitments to either managing or organizing. Some say there are answers that could be explored and guided along when identifying the oppositional concepts while simultaneously understanding the importance of it (Graetz & Smith, 2008). However, to understand dualism elements in order to achieve organizational effectiveness, a deeper understanding on the dualities characteristics is required. This article would later discuss on the several different combinations of dualism elements and its characteristics, managing the dualistic tensions and understanding its value.

A right perspective on Dualities Theory

There are many forms of dualities that we need to understand well before reaching organizational effectiveness. But before doing so, how does a leader in organization learn to balance these paradox and dualistic tension between opposing forms of organizing. There are many methods that we could learn from either traditional or modern organization. In traditional methods, some simplest form to understand dualities is to create an environment with the dualities. How? When applying the dualities into an organization, it creates a complexity that would force manager or leaders to adapt to its tension. While remaining at that current state, they would learn on the patterns on how dualities works. Dualities can allow managers to find out the answer of paradoxes even when implicating dualities in their organization, even though current management models are still in demand, the concept of duality could project out new emerging models and paradigm, because the combination of complexities, vagueness and contradictions create by the dualities tension could give out hints in the daily routines in an organization (Pettigrew, A. M. and E. M.1988. p.288). Dualities are always underestimated by many managers; in fact, many of us do not know how to implement it and only seen the surfaces of it (Galunic, D. C. and K. M. Eisenhardt 2001. p.1265). Although ambiguity needs to be focus by organizations to solve more problems and recognized more pattern, still there are many organizations there aren't prepared to take the risk of the tension and face the contradictions that will appear.

In modern organization, some managers and leaders think that by managing the resulted dualities is to join many different forms of organizing into one. Not only organizational managers have to identify the opposing forces of 2 poles, and simultaneously exploiting the importance of the dualities aware approach. The dualities aware approach requires one to think and act at a highly adaptive and manipulative form within the tension in order to reach its resolution towards a position (Roberto B, Carlo B, Roland R. F, 2013. p.434). But of course, we need to first understand both characteristics of the dualities before depending on the dualities aware approach.

There are leaders who are still finding answers on how to handle the tensions and opposing forces by the dualities. Dualities are two things that come clashing against one another. Although they aren't simply each other's alternative, there is still a balance within it. Organizations are often facing problems when they choose to focus on one side of the dualism elements, thus ignoring the alternative part, and ends up having a problem to enact both paradoxes at the same time. To have a better understanding on dualistic tensions and interactions within a paradox, it also would require the understandings of the form and function of duality characteristics.

Characteristics of Duality

Managers are able to make their planning and management interventions while they understand the characteristics of dualities. Understanding how to mediate between two contradictory dimensions of organizing is a key benefit of identifying and explaining duality characteristics (Mason, R. 2007.p. 154) The solution wouldn't be revealed by finding the resolution between the two opposing forces. Instead, we should focus on working towards characteristics of simultaneity. In this content, identifications on some duality characteristics will be described. Those dualities are simultaneity, relational, minimal threshold, dynamism and improvisation. And of course, through understanding, and implementation it can reach organizational effectiveness.

Simultaneity

Simultaneity is the foundation of duality characteristics. Why it is the foundation of it? Simultaneity means the properties of two events happening at the same time frame. For example, an organization that is projected as multiple environments has huge dynamic sectors that are run together alongside with stable sectors simultaneously. People observes that an organization survivability is affected by not only the ability to increase its efficiency, but also at the same time being innovative (March, J. G. 1996. p.279) Simultaneity and contradiction can show the push and pull tension of organizational dualities, for example, accountability and freedom, competition or cooperation.

Relational

The dualism elements where different organization practices aren't on its own creations as most of it have similar effects and relations. Many of these dualities are not independent and are somehow related to other dualities as well. So what does this have to prove? It has shown that for many years organizations have seek to create its own dualities balance and ignoring how other organization balance their dualities. Instead,

some dualities are the same within organizations when it comes to its relation (Lewin, A. Y., Long, C. and Carroll, T. 1999. p. 537)

Minimal Threshold

There is a pre-requisite of minimal threshold for dualities. There is a force that the minimal threshold is needed to balance to ensure it remains centrifugal rather than centripetal within the structural pole. For example, there are some attributes that an organization needed to keep at minimal level. Like having a minimal consensus to ensure the status quo isn't unsatisfied or unchallenged (Kimberly Stoltzfus, Cynthia Stohl, David R. Seibold, 2011. p.359). Therefore, minimal satisfaction and affluence are relevant to ensure commitment, and also control the possibility of non-satisfactory. And minimal consistency and minimal rationality are need for further exploration and exploitation of a self-design organization. Organizations need to recognize and embrace the need for ongoing learning, strategizing and structuring to avoid the constraints and inertial qualities of embedded systems.

Dynamism

Dynamism demonstrates how duality thinking creates a complementary force that encourages a dynamic interaction between duality poles such as integration and differentiation. Organizations will never reach a fully balance equilibrium (R.T. R, P.R. W, 2001. p.1320.) Primarily because the simultaneous need for freedom and order within social systems means these two poles are often acting against each other. Duality thinking places the concept of time at the heart of organizing, along with the need for change and continuity.

Improvisation

Improvisation can create activities to change, revise, and invent a new event rather than just simply shifting, switching or adding new elements. Improvisation can create a dynamic interaction between two poles of planning and action (Cunha, M.P., Cunha, J.V., Kamoche, K. 1999. p.330). Improvisation could work as a mediating force where it reinforces the importance of two dualities working to create further decisions and give directional feedback between two dualities poles. Improvisation can be seen as an action which unites the characteristics of simultaneity, relational, minimal threshold and dynamism to manage the push/pull tensions of continuity and change.

Discussion

Organizations must deal with the five duality characteristics on a daily routine. Each characteristic has a role to operate together simultaneously such as control and flexibility. Simultaneity is to predict the various forms of dualities. Simultaneity can be used as a start to understand and manage organizational dualities. For example, it shows the pattern of organizations and where its strength and weakness, what their managers and leaders should focus and progress on, a starting pointer. Relational can create the interactions between the dualistic tensions that arise in the form of continuity and change of organization goals. It reveals the advantages that come from managing the contradictions.

Simultaneity would then be balance with Relational, one is to find out the root of something and one is to invoke the dualistic tension between opposing poles. Dynamism and the minimal threshold are 2 balances where it maintains the minimal threshold and also a balance between enabling and constraining forces simultaneously creating dynamic interaction that happens between opposing poles to ensure flexibility, creativity and adaptability in order to keep the organization fit for competitive level. (Roberto B, Carlo B, Roland R. F, 2013. p.430). For example, the existence of contentment and satisfactory is the minimal threshold required and at the same time organization can have a centrifugal part that's maintain in exploitation and exploration. This allows an organization to make more extensions to its improvements while at the same time maintaining its healthy state, without hindering the progress state with more problems. Improvisation acts as a medium on all simultaneity, relational, minimal threshold and dynamism. Improvisation is the central force where it is the fusion of actions and constantly creating a final paradox, a complicated goal. When all else are ready, initiating improvisation may be a smooth task, if the outcome isn't what to be expected, should there be something that should be altered in the other four dualistic elements categories.

Conclusion

Managers and leaders would view change in management and organization as a very complicated and hard task. Simply by saying unfreeze, shifting, refreeze, but when doing so, it is different compared to a written plan. (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002, p.568). Although the stability of an organization is often view as the "Holy Grail" to achieve organizational effectiveness, still sticking to stability itself can backfire because organizations tend to ignore new insights and opportunity which may threaten their existing stable state. Dualities can have a potential on organizational renewal and long term stabilization when the dualistic tension is perform and manage at a positive manner. Ferlie, E. (2007, p. 155). It also cannot be ignored because dualities like flexibility or control, individuality or teamwork as such, if not taken care of properly, can become a major disaster that relates to an effective critical reflection on the development of the organization. Managing change for organizational effectiveness is to plainly manage the paradoxes and contradictories positively: Evans (1999, p.335) there is no fix answer or solution on how dualities need to be followed on managing. Only having patience to experience the dualistic elements on a live scenario would give a manager or leader to master the control over the dualistic tensions and balance the dualistic elements.

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