

ACTUAL PROBLEMS OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT THEORY

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Abstract: There is a real need of actualization of contemporary approach and recent questions of crisis management theory. The field of theoretical and scientific discussion with practical implications covers the rethinking the basic definition of the crisis management and its terms like: risk, threats, crisis, crisis situation, crisis management. Actual need to develop the crisis management theory is related to interdisciplinary influence of general and specific development of theoretical frame of solving the crisis situations as the result of changing global environments with new means, forms and shapes of possible and predictable threats.

Generalization of theoretical and practical results in the field of research and practical executing of crisis management is being transformed from achieving the ability of reaction to specific threats into the holistic conception of prevention, increasing preparedness to general complex of risks. This can be achieved by the incorporation of crisis analysis and crisis management to the main objectives and sub objectives as the natural component of management of any social group, family, firm, state etc. This is a result of wider approach to the crisis management which prefers the stability achieved through enforcement the prevention to the rebalancing the stability trough reaction on the impact of crises influence.

The significant changes in content, mission, and objectives of crisis management are being made because of relevant changes in internal and external characteristics of global social, economical, environmental, political and security environment.

One of the crucial conditions of successful change in theoretical and practical frame of crisis management in context of depicted changes and needs is to specify contact areas of crisis management with the other disciplines, which have the same object of observation as the crisis management. This should be connected with characterising of differences and specifics of the own object of observation for the crisis management.

The second important condition is to specify and determine the line between the generalization of the formulated rules and principles valid for all social systems and concreteness of their applications in selected types of organizations.

The third key condition is to size and understand to the recent changes of the global background and their transformation to the formulated statements for selected particular problems of crisis management.

It is more and more clear that the aiming of the crisis management theory and praxis will be influenced by the factors like the radicalization of the ethnical and religious group, tension and antagonisms between the economic growth and sustainable development.

INTRODUCTION

Time to time, during their evolution and development, the social systems (society, communities and the individuals too) are becoming object affected by the various destructive forces - source of

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these destructive ones can be found in nature, but they also can act as a result of hostility among the people, as their personal failure or irresponsible action related to technical or environmental systems.

New conditions of man kind existence, the impacts of globalization, and unpredictable trends in progress of the key factors in external and internal environments bring up the new threats. In present it can be clearly seen more than ever, that the future of man kind will be much dependent on its preparedness to be confronted with traditional and new threats and crises. It will be also much dependent on its ability of international community to secure the systematic development towards socially, politically, economically and ecologically sustainable future. More complex approach to crisis management theory and praxis, searching and rethinking of the theoretical basis, rules, relations and principles, through which it would be possible to guarantee that sustainability are organic part of this process of increasing the man kind preparedness for the new challenges.

1 BASIS OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT THEORY

Management and also the crisis management are from the point of theory, content and methodology ambiguously defined disciplines. From one side management and also crisis management are supposed to be the scientific and theoretical disciplines. On the other hand many of researchers much more accent only their practical fundamental component as a mean of directing process.

Many times, we can read the opinion that the management is art. Art to make the correct analyze of situation in conditions of limited information flows, art of using personal skills and knowledge and available sources and instruments to find and choose the optimal solution. The point of view depends on the manager, whether he needs the theory or practical guideline. The solution of this dilemma is not simply, but it is possible to agree with Hegel's idea, that "the most practical is good theory"

Theory can be sized as a result of scientific research and observation, as an ordered file of information, knowledge and experience, valid rules, principles, methods and procedures. Many times as the core of a theory can be identified the basic rule, paradigm, as (so far, by now) accepted theorem. Established theory has to be confronted to the praxis. It is valid until the time of acceptance of a new theoretical knowledge or concepts which make the old theory unreliable or even unacceptable. According the same logic the theory of crisis management derives the knowledge and information from general theory of management and develops them thank to the generalized results of practical crisis situations management.

The crisis management theory is trying to find generalized principles and rules valid in variableness of managing of those systems which are threatened or impacted by the crisis situations. This theory explores and studies the processes of the organization management in the crisis situation, which have a general validity. It is trying to find the system of rules and principles which would be independent on the individual willing and thanks to which it would be possible to set up the system of principles methods and order of instructions for efficiency crisis management. The sources of these information are not only the scientific theoretical and practical knowledge of crisis management theory, but also the systematized experience and knowledge of many various different scientific disciplines.

The fundamental (key) problem of crisis management theory is not hidden in the definition or creating the efficient methods but in the problematic definition of the own object of researching. Present evolution and development of crisis management theory and praxis is influenced by the various approaches (accenting the economical, political or military and political dimension and importance of the crisis management), from the other side it is influenced also by the step by step changes in seizing of the content of crisis management. The basic frame of content of crisis management is arising from the real need to influence background of the social systems. It can be done by the searching the related problems, by making the risk and threats analysis and by identification of crisis causes and progress in social systems etc. In historical point of view there can be identified various significant approaches to crisis management object and content. For example:

- Elimination of the impacts of natural disasters, saving the human lives, properties, later - the problematic of prevention and preparations to possible influencing of crisis progress towards restricting or minimalizing of the crisis impacts.

- Protection of the lives, health and property of population against the fire, industrial accidents, technological and environmental disasters.
- Protection of the individuals (or population) against negative impacts of war or military attacks.
- In the second half of the last century the terms crisis management and risk management was being more intensively included into the concepts of firm management and it also is used in concepts of managing other types of organizations mostly related to the economical impacts of various crisis situations.

Cardinal terms in crisis management theory are: crisis and crisis situation. Mainly the crisis is really complicated term which can point to significantly different states or processes on various level and dimensions in social and economical, political or ecological or military development and day to day existence of individual, social groups or complicated social systems. This complicated variableness and antagonistic character of recent approaches to crisis is based on the variableness of the objects on which the causes, influence and the impacts of crisis can be seen. The antagonistic character of definition of term crisis is caused also by the differences among the many scientific or praxeological approaches which are trying to define or characterize the crisis by accenting its own point of view or accenting the view based on the preferring the selected specific disciplines (McEntire, 2004). As the crisis we consider the various conditions of surroundings which threat the lives, health, material and spiritual values. Objective character of crisis makes possible to define the crisis independently on the opinions, and feelings of those, who are involved to the crisis influence. The crisis is reflection of a fact that all processes, environmental, social, technical and technological are formed by the evolutionary and development changes, which are related to the surrounding, where the substance transformation and energetic interaction is under running, the environment in which it is possible to detect the more or less important discrepancies from normal state through the stability to instability.

From this point of view the crisis can be seen as the objectively existing natural phenomenon of evolution and development processes in our lives. On the other hand the classification of states or level of various characteristics of environment as the irrelevant or critical discrepancy or crisis is problem of the crisis subject and its perception of the selected discrepancy as a threat or not. Crisis as the category exists only in intentions of human and social systems. It has principally neo ethical and axiological dimension. The crisis it self does not exist, it exists only through perception and evaluating by the subject of crisis and this is its subjective character. Events like the volcano eruption, extraordinary floods, earthquake, and ecological disaster are not the crisis because of their substance. It is not a crisis for the volcano, neither for the earth planet nor for the nature. It is the crisis for the human, for the social systems, so for the systems which are able to percept the impacts of these events as a crisis threatening the health, lives, live environment or existence of these social systems them selves (Kostelný, 2000).

Approach to the crisis as the cardinal problem of crisis management is given through more dimensions of this term, its subjective and objective attributes. The variableness of approach to the crisis is given by the possibility of its objective perception on the concrete examples as well as the possibility of its subjective perception. Our task here is to make some sense of this variety. A basic point of view is to identify four broad different perspectives on what constitutes a crisis (Drennan, 2007).

- Crisis as self evident phenomenon - (uncontroversial sense) approach arising from fundamental character of the crisis event (e.g. WTC attack or Haiti earthquake). There is not need to explain it.
- Crisis as objective phenomenon –. There are three conditions that are characterized necessary for a crisis to exist:
 - existence of serious threat with hard impacts,
 - existence of high level of uncertainty (high degree of risk),
 - situation demands urgent need for action.
- Crisis as social construction – sense of crisis always contents it self the objective as well as a subjective crisis dimension. Crisis is always related to the concrete object and it is arising thank to the concrete factors, but on the other side its dangerousness and impacts are often influenced by the subjective feelings.

2 POSSIBLE APPROACHES TO THE BASIC QUESTIONS OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT THEORY

Ambiguity of approaches to the crisis management is arising through imperfectness of defining the basic terms. It could be solved by the more precocious defining the basic terms. For ex sample security is often defined as a state or situation in which exists no danger. There can be found some mistakes in this definition. Problem is that we are not defining any part of objective reality. Security is not relevant object for defining. Security is either attribute or relation. But relevant is only object which can be secure or insecure or dangerous for somebody. The same is valid for the other terms like: risk, crisis etc.

Recently there is being established the opinion that the crisis management should be seized like: to the objectives focused, coordinated process oriented to the prevention, elimination of progress and removing or resolving the impacts of the events threatening or having ability or potential to seriously threat the security of the society, lives and health and property or living conditions of population as well as the environment. Considering the various areas of societal living which can be influenced or impacted by the crisis management towards various types of subjects as well as on the different levels of directing or managing, it is possible to percept the crisis management these ways:

- Crisis management as a system and process of the military and political arrangements
- Crisis management as a system of state arrangements (arrangements of state authorities and public governance, arrangements of firms and the other organizations
- Crisis management as a system of principles, regulations and arrangements of economic subjects(most of all the industrial firms focused to the solving the situations threatening the prosperity and stability

In relation to the turbulent and hardly expected changes in the environment the original content of crisis management is being extended to the new dimension (Pearson, 2008). The terms like a disaster management, emergency management, risk management, crisis management, and business continuity management are complementing to each other and overlapping ones. Contemporary meaning of crisis management:

- as general (comprehensive) crisis management,
- as crisis management which is possible to applicable in specific conditions of individual types of organizations (firms, non profit organizations, state authorities and institutions of public management and public government, towns, and communities),
- specific position has the crisis management as the theory and praxes of direction of security system of state or the group of states (Šimák – Ristvej, 2009).

Problem is that the mentioned reflections do not fix the question what is the main content of crisis management and what is the content of the crisis management theory. It can be defined by various ways:

- Crisis management searches the processes of the managing social systems, whose functions and objectives are threatened by the impact of those relevant factors of environment, which make the system operating difficult or impossible.
- Crisis management searches the selected phases of managing the social system accenting the preventive arrangements and preparedness for the solving crisis situation, preparedness for its managing during it implication and eliminating its impacts and refresh of the system's functions.
- Crisis management searches the sources and the causes of the up rising the crisis of the social systems, their substance, progress and possibilities of their effective managing.

Recent experience as well as the actual problems of solving of various crisis situations are determining the future problems and challenges of the crisis management. We suppose that there are those problems:

- Theoretical and methodological approaches to specification of possibilities and assumes for their application..
- Analyze of the crisis causes and the rules and principles and general characteristics of its lasting and acting in the social systems

- Overlapping more of the scientific disciplines in process of defining, analyzing, and specification of the basic, fundamental terms.
- Principles, rules and the arrangements for the managing of social systems in conditions of impacting risks, threats and crises. Opportunities and possibilities and assumes for renewing or reconstruction or reorganization of the system. As the social system we understand the political and economical subject, region, city, organization, firm, as well as the community, family and individuals.
- Functions, tasks and activities of subjects participating on the solution of the crisis, competences of the crisis managers, their education, and practical trainings of population.
- Process of crisis management as a cycle application of functions and tasks considering the prevention, preparation of people, mitigation, response and the recovery processes.
- Political, economical, social and law implications of crisis management

CONCLUSION

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