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Selflessness in Business

EDITED BY

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Preface

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This volume undertakes interdisciplinary perspective on comprehensive understanding of selflessness in business. The authors deal with a controversial and seemingly paradoxical relationship between selflessness and business. It depicts the primary and lasting controversy between the *selfish* (egoistic, competitive) and *selfless* (prosocial, collaborative) behavior in view of social, organizational and individual benefits.

It is noteworthy that selflessness is not understood here as an idealistic purity, requiring the Kantian criterion of a duty emerging from moral imperative causing no personal gain. Selflessness is understood from a social perspective as related to self-transcendence (Levenson et al., 2005; Frankl, 2000) and connectedness to others (Dambrun, 2017). Considering this, it is worth noting, that both, selflessness and business pertain to relation. Those relations may occur and interact at different levels: individual, organizational, and social. The relations can be found in interactions of a person-work environment fit, employee collaboration or participating in corporate voluntary or organizational altruism. On an individual level, authors discuss motivation behind those actions and psychological consequences, like subjective wellbeing. Selfless actions like charity or corporate voluntary are great challenges for organizations in a contemporary business world. Arising literature (Bolino & Grant, 2016; Clarkson, 2014; Li et al., 2015) revealing positive implications of prosocial behavior in organizations for productivity and effectiveness, calls for action to be taken by organizations and business.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution shows the prerequisite for cooperation with others (World Economic Forum, 2016). It seems that it is more valuable for companies to include rather prosocial than self-interested employees. This change is also visible at social level. The research has shown that young adults, surprisingly and in contrary to previous findings, are less narcissistic compared to earlier generations (Wetzel et al., 2017). Furthermore, the idea of a human being driven by self-interests and selfish reward: the *Homo economicus* — “Economic man” model of human behavior (Fehr, Sigmund, & Nowak, 2002) has not been confirmed in the study in 15 societies (Henrich

et al., 2005). Is it a fall of the *Homo economicus*? And if so what should be the next step?

The strain between selfish and selfless motivation translates to basic inquiry about motivation of a human being, and has been undertaken from biological, philosophical or psychological point of view for decades or even centuries. Nevertheless, the aim of the book was to explore this issue in a contemporary business-related context. Therefore, it takes a step into finding a solution to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The volume consists of four parts. Part I deals with the aspects of selflessness in business in the twenty-first century. In Chapter 1 *Finding an Equilibrium between seeking-profit and Work-Life-Balance: The Challenge of Entrepreneurs within their SMEs* by Claudia Nelly Berrones-Flemmig, Françoise Contreras, Utz Dornberger, and Yonni Angel Cuero Acosta, authors aim to develop a framework about how this new ventures that are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can achieve an effective balance between the profits and the personal life of the firms' personnel. Around the world, there is a massive loss of jobs due to the industrial and technological revolution. This revolution contents the common understanding of the entrepreneurship phenomenon, what creates an urgent matter to generate the optimal foundations to be a better entrepreneur that enables not only to make profit and maximizing the shareholders' wealth (as economic theory instructs managers), but also to take into consideration the human being and the resources available in the planet. To find this balance is not easy; nevertheless, it is fundamental to search for developing suitable innovative models that promote this balance. In this context, the main research question of this chapter is: Which elements can be taken into consideration to propose a conceptual framework and methodology for SMEs with the objective to assess the balance between profit and personal life? According to the proposed model, the balance between the worker's personal life and the firm's profits can be achieved through tangible and intangible resources, the latter being the main source of sustainability for SMEs.

Chapter 2 *Social Entrepreneurship: Blending prosocial Motivation and Self-interests in Business* by Andreana Drencheva, pertains to rarely undertaken subject of motivation in social entrepreneurship. This conceptual book chapter proposes that both prosocial and personal motivations fuel social entrepreneurship at the same time or over time and provides examples from the extant research. The chapter examines how prosocial and personal motivations interact with each other to create synergies or tensions that influence the wellbeing of both social entrepreneurs and social ventures. It proposes that meaningful synergies

between prosocial and personal motivations can enhance the wellbeing of social entrepreneurs and social ventures, while unmanaged tensions can hinder the wellbeing of social entrepreneurs and their ventures.

Chapter 3 *Personalist Economics: Caring, Justice, and Christian Charity* by Edward O'Boyle presents a philosophical perspective. The Author thoroughly examines the meaning and interaction of caring, justice, and Christian charity from the personalistic economy perspective. The limits on gain seeking behavior are also explained. As a consequence of a literature review, the Author presents an interactive model of the *Person of Action*, who may act virtuously or viciously. The *Person of Action* challenges the machine-like and passive *Homo economicus* model.

Part II of the book relates to dimensions of selflessness at the work environment. In this part, the idea of organizational altruism, quantum leadership and issue of employee's loyalty will be undertaken.

In Chapter 4 *Dimensions of Selflessness at Work: Typology of organizational Altruism* by Joanna M. Szulc, a novel approach to organizational altruism is presented. The chapter replies to increase of scholarly call to examine workplace behaviors which are clearly other-oriented (e.g., Bolino and Grant, 2016; Grant and Patil, 2012; Li et al., 2015). The Author presents insightful literature analysis and examining organizational altruism and how it reflects the idea of selflessness in modern business. A typology of organizational altruism has been developed. Building on organizational and socio-psychological research, the Author consider a variety of dimensions of organizational altruism that relate to the: a) beneficiaries of such behaviors, b) associated costs, c) level of the actor's commitment, d) intuition and rationality involved, e) consequences of such actions, f) actor's initiative, and the g) type of help involved. The Author demonstrates how the development of a comprehensive taxonomy can advance the existing theory and research on organizational altruism and selflessness in business and how it generates a number of important directions for future research.

In Chapter 5 *Quantum Leadership: Toward Ethical Selflessness* by Michael A. Piel, Karen Putnam, and Karen K. Johnson present a novel idea of quantum leadership and its benefits toward overcoming corruption. Ethical selflessness is one immunogenic mechanism which has the potential to transform organizational cultures and mitigate the corruption infection. Authors claim that quantum leadership opens businesses to the powerful potential capabilities of ethical selflessness. After briefly introducing the concepts and principles of quantum leadership, this chapter leads the reader to exploring the value dynamics of ethical selflessness. In examining several standard ethical theories, the

selflessness construct is described in detail within the context of quantum leadership principles and practices. Further comparing the concept through a range of various philosophical and literary perspectives, the reader can ultimately decide whether to accept, reject, or sustain judgment on whether to implement this leadership approach within their organizations. The power of selflessness transcends and is far greater than the impotence of selfishness. Any individual or organization currently plagued by any form of corruption would benefit from the ethical selflessness actualized in exercising quantum leadership. The ethical wave of possibilities is unlimited for those organizations and individuals who embrace selflessness.

Chapter 6 *Type of Obligation to the Company and the Loyalty of an Employee* by Renata Rosmus is dedicated to an empirical examination of the employee's loyalty. The author analyses the factors of employee loyalty in the situation of deteriorating working conditions. Various individual and situational factors were taken into account when deciding about remaining loyal towards the company such as formal obligation, attachment, conformism, standards, norms, as well as personal factors (e.g., locus of control, Machiavellianism). The paper-pencil research plan was used. In order to collect the data ($N = 125$), the specially designed survey questioning participants' opinion on their level of moral duty (obligation) and their level of acceptance of the new deteriorating working conditions have been used. The results confirmed the hypothesis on the relation between the type of obligation, personal characteristics and loyal behavior. The conclusions can be applied in explaining the social behavior of people as members of organizations and also in working out the strategy for creating the loyal behaviors of the company.

Part IV of this volume relates to dimensions of selflessness and gender. The chosen subject is rarely tackled.

In Chapter 7 *Selfless Women in Capitalism?* by Luka Boršić and Ivana Skuhala Karasman deal with selflessness in the context of traditional and contemporary understanding of the role of women in society and personal identity from a philosophical approach. Personal identity is a direct consequence of social roles that individuals have in society. When it comes to women in business, there is a conflict between different systems of values and the roles women are expected to take. To what extent is the social expectation of women's behavior paired with the socially acceptable role of women in collision with the corporate expectation that is imposed upon the same women? Selflessness appears here as a value that connects and bridges over these two different social roles. Involvement of selflessness in corporate ethics opens up new dimensions

of the problem. Moreover, authors deal with the question of how selflessness as a value is matched to the value system that dominates liberal capitalism. When questioning the consistency of selflessness with the dominant system of values in liberal capitalism, there is the gap between the proclaimed values in business, which are based on maximizing profits based on rational egoism, compared to the moral imposition of selflessness as an altruistic attitude towards the other. Authors systematically challenge syllogisms leading to the conclusion that “capitalism is not suitable “habitat” for women.” This discussion contributes to a deeper awareness of the social role and situation of women in business. The Authors propose social perception of capitalism less selfish or perception of women less selfless, as to provide equal opportunities.

In Chapter 8 *Prosocial vocational Interests and Gender in the Labor Market* by Dominika Ochnik empirical approach is introduced. The author shows research on prosocial vocational interests with regard to gender in the age of entering the labor market and the highest vocational activity within the framework of *Contextual model of vocational interests*. The so-called *vocational social clock* as the key factor of the model – reveals the dynamics of vocational interests in view of social expectations with regards to age and gender. The prosocial vocational interests were measured by an original tool — Vocational Potential Inventory (Ochnik, Stala, & Rosmus, 2018). The number of 9359 persons, including 5364 women (57%) and 3995 men (43%) in the age of entering labor market (20-24 years), the highest vocational activity (30-34 years) and the age of 40-44 and 50-54 years, took part in the study. Research results revealed a significant effect of gender and age interaction of pro-social vocational interests. Men, both in the youngest and the oldest group, scored higher than women, whereas in the group of 30-34 years women scored higher, and in the group of age 40-44 years, the gender differences were irrelevant. Therefore, in the age of decreased professional activity (the youngest and the oldest group) both men and women preferred non-stereotypical vocational interests. Whilst the period of the most intense professional activity and also undertaking new social (family) roles – was related to stereotypically gender-based prosocial vocational interests. The phenomenon of non-stereotypical vocational interests referring to interpersonal relations emerging in such a large sample of women and men of various ages may be significant for breaking stereotypes in society.

Part IV has been dedicated to the aspect of selflessness in practice. The authors in this part showcase studies and discuss selflessness from a practical point of view.

In Chapter 9 *Selflessness in Business – Theory vs. Practice* by Monika Jakubiak, the motivation behind and types of philanthropic initiatives undertaken by the employees of the companies in the financial sector are revealed. The subject matter of the study pertains to issues associated with the significance of selflessness in business. The chapter outlines theoretical concepts and results of own studies connected with activities undertaken by a socially responsible entrepreneur. Results indicated that the owner and the company's employees undertake numerous activities in the area of corporate social responsibility, especially as far as charity is concerned. The following constitute the driving force behind these activities: values, cultural orientation, interest in raising awareness regarding healthy lifestyles. Such activities result in positive models of behavior and norms for functioning becoming rooted, and the brand becoming more recognizable (higher reputation).

Chapter 10 *Donations from Ecuadorian Firms: A quantitative Analysis* by Hector Alberto Botello Peñaloza presents empirical analysis. This phenomenon of the selfless actions of Ecuadorian companies is analyzed by observing the amounts of donations they make and the endowments they provide to their workers. The author reveals the relationship between these behaviors, satisfaction and productivity of companies. The database corresponds to the 2010 economic census along with administrative records and industrial surveys. This is one of the first quantitative studies in the country. The contribution of this research is to use firm and worker-level data to observe the disinterested behavior of companies and psychology at work. This area of research has always been one of the scientific literature associated with Latin American developing countries such as Ecuador.

In Chapter 11 *Prosocial Motivation and Selflessness in Cultural Institutions. A Case Study of CAC Málaga* by Lucía Pérez-Pérez and Miquel Banstons Prat, the authors relate to prosocial motivation. The chapter examines the communication strategy aligned to the mission for XXI century museums and cultural institutions. The authors propose the Prosocial Model applied to communication, which builds on the opportunities offered by the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Authors propose a management model that brings the idea of communication closer to the idea of service (*prosocial motivation*) and aligns it with the fulfillment of the own mission of the institution. According to this model, the organization develops its strategy of communication starting not from the information that you are interested in giving but of the communication oriented to what interests the public. This makes possible to achieve competitive efficiency in the

current environment of globalization; and starts from the point of the fact that the museum is, above all, a community of people that relates to each other and to other people from abroad. Authors defend that the person, not only should be treated accordingly the dignity of the human being, rational and free but also, the knowledge of their motivations is essential for the communication management in order to reach the true objective of the institution —its mission. The methodology combines the CAC Málaga case study, focused interview and documentary analysis. The study revealed the benefits of applying a Prosocial Management Model in the communication strategy for effective interaction with the public and how this reinforces the effectiveness, attractiveness and unity of the institution.

The academic discussion presented in this book presented non-obvious relations between widely understood selflessness and business. Interdisciplinary perspectives shed new light on various aspects of relations between selflessness and business and showed new directions for future research in the theme.

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