

AoM meeting 2010 Montréal/Canada

Dare to Care: Passion and Compassion in Management Practice and Research

CAUCUS THEME: **More AoM-ODC in International Development Cooperation**

PUTTING COMPASSION TO TASK: APPLYING ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE IN DEVELOPING AND LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO HELP REDUCE POVERTY, SUPPORT EMPLOYMENT CREATING AND STRENGTHEN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Very few members of the Academy of Management participate in international development activities in developing and least developed countries (Asia, Africa, Latin America). Hence, important contributions to poverty reduction and peace making are domains of activities occupied by representatives of other academic disciplines, for instance for development work (macro-and micro economics); peace, reconstruction and nation building (political science and military studies); reforms of international organizations (fiduciary and public accountants); and international cooperation (diplomacy and international relations).

AoM colleagues typically work in more specialized fields, often at a relatively low micro-level. That includes for instance gender issues, team development, human resource development or prevention of discrimination at work (e.g., linked to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, illiteracy, and other forms of social and organizational exclusion). Much less, if not completely absent, are participation of ODC and management experts in designing institutional development projects, capacity building programmes at levels of regions, central government, and conceptualizing policies to prevent violence, reduce poverty, increase cross-ethnic cooperation, and foster sustainability of the global system.

Working at larger societal level in developing and least developed countries means applying organizational theory to large-system change settings which are characterized by multi-stakeholder, multi-institutional, and highly international. Such cutting edge work means knowing how to manage the interfaces between government ministries and departments, business organizations, multi-lateral agencies, and Non-government organizations. Complexity theory offers valuable insights to help practitioners working in these large-system projects to deliver much-needed professional help. Applied for instance to nation building and rebuilding in Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti, Yemen, and Ethiopia, important development work should not be left to military commanders trained to conduct war but who are arguably inept in reconstructing societies and working with the psychology of human beings.

Leading figures of OD such as Kurt Lewin and other social psychologists at the New School of Social Research in New York City did not narrow their teaching and consulting focus to intra-organizational private sector work as is the case predominantly with AoM members of the ODC division. The founding generation of OD focused on individuals, groups, organizations AND

the larger social settings including the embedded political and administrative environment. OD in its current North American form appears too much intra-organizationally oriented as if the exchange with the larger social environment is irrelevant.

Concern for others has been part of the OD profession. This idealism was captured in the *vision* statement published by the OD Network, “OD is a field central to creating effective and healthy human systems in an inclusive world community”. This inclusive world community is increasingly finding it overwhelming to tackle the challenges of poverty, disease, violence, disregard of human rights and global warming. However, most of the OD curricula and teaching programmes continue to focus primarily on change management in single organizations and mostly in the private sector of our economies. It is time for the ODC members to step out and interact more actively with the broader systemic issues of our societies! It is equally about time for the ODC educators to put more emphasis on the international challenges confronting the global commons!

Rupert Chisholm (1998) contributed pioneering steps towards an enlarged scope of OD. David L. Brown and Ken Murrell have extensive experience working on such larger scales in developing and least developed countries for NGOs, governments and public sector organizations. Other colleagues have similar experiences including non-American scholars such as Vijay Padaki (2003) or Lichia Yiu (2010) or Raymond Saner (2004) or Stewart Carr (2008) and several other colleagues who will be present to discuss these issues at the Montréal meeting in order to step into the larger realm of development which encompasses an inclusiveness of higher aggregates of human systems and complexity.

Brown, David, L; (1983), Managing Conflict at Organizational Interfaces”, Addison Welsley, USA

Chisholm, Rupert F. (1998). *Developing Network Organizations: Learning from Practice and Theory*. Addison Wesley. USA

Padaki, V. & Vaz, M. (2003). *Institutional Development in Social Interventions: Towards interorganizational effectiveness*, Sage Publications, New Delhi & Thousand Oaks, CA.

Saner, Raymond; (2004); ODC is dead, long live OSD! irreverent thoughts of a former ODC executive board member, ODC Newsletter, Summer 2004.

Murrell, Kenneth; Duffield, Robert; *Management Infrastructure for the Developing World: A Bibliographic Sourcebook* , Kumarian Press, USA.

Yiu, Lichia; Saner, Raymond (2009), A sisyphosian task: managing porous boundaries during OD interventions in un agencies, in *Mending the World: Social Healing Interventions by Gestalt Practitioners Worldwide*; Melnick, Joseph, Nevis, Edwin, Xlibris Corp, USA.

Malcolm MacLachlan, Stuart C. Carr, & Ishbel McWha, (2008); *Interdisciplinary Research for Development: A Workbook on Content and Process Challenges*. Global Development Network, New Delhi, 2008

Caucus Leader:

Professor Raymond Saner teaches inter-institutional negotiations, trade and development in the Master of Public Affairs programme of Sciences Po, Paris. Raymond is Reviewer for the *Journal of Applied Behavioral Sciences*, the *Journal of Managerial Psychology* and *Public Organization Review*. He has been Member of the Executive Board of the Organization Development and Change Division in the Academy of Management.

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