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MANAGEMENT | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Spirituality of unity in management - Economy of Communion

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Abstract: The spirituality of unity in management processes is presented in the paper. The idea of the Economy of Communion (EoC) project and its realization in more than 800 businesses worldwide as an example of the striving for the eradication of poverty and new style of management is analysed. As an implementation of spirituality in management process, a new paradigm of unity in management sciences is proposed. On the basis of analysis of literature and discussions with experts and entrepreneurs of EoC businesses, six content dimensions of the paradigm of unity are formulated and the empirical research on the evaluation of these dimensions by testing the entrepreneurs of 110 businesses from 22 countries as well the management experts is considered. This research allowed verifying the hypothesis that the paradigm of unity shapes a new organizational culture by the creation of a suitable organizational climate in the EoC businesses.

Subjects: Critical Management Studies; Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management; Leadership; Management Education; NonProfit Management

Keywords: spirituality; management; Economy of Communion; poverty; spiritual, human and relational capital



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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

This paper analyses the implementation of spirituality and human values in management applied in the new, special style of management. In the article, the sources of the new organizational culture (culture of giving instead culture of having) are revealed and the premises for changing the mentality as well of shareholders and managers as employees, customers and other stakeholders are presented. A model of manager and employee as *homo spiritualis*, poverty-sensitive and open on the human needs is proposed. The project of Economy of Communion (EoC), a new idea for eradication of poverty and reduction of social exclusion is analysed and proposed. A special evaluation of application of the paradigm of unity in management in the EoC businesses worldwide and for more than 20 years gives for entrepreneurs and managers an occasion to get to know a new style of management and its opportunities and advantages.

1. Introduction

Searching for the causes of today's global crisis we can say that one of the important factors is a speculative financial market and its impact on the real economy. Instead of serving the economy, this market has become highly damaging in reverse relationships: the goods, services, environment, as well as working people have become subordinated and manipulated by speculative capital seeking to maximize profits.

Being an important element of the economic system and social relationships—human labour has become the slave of profit, which is no longer the profit of the entrepreneur, but the profit of speculative capital, far from workplaces, one which does not see human work but only consumption and income (Bruni, 2012). It must be said that at present the essence of social conflict is no longer between the employer (manager) and the employee but between the world of work (an entrepreneur and an employee acting together) and the world of finances (Grochmal, 2012).

A faction of owners and managers of big industrial corporations, international financial institutions, and banks appear as a group without any moral limitations in misconduct and in managing their institutions with one and only goal—profit maximization.

The maximization of self-interest and profits devastates the reciprocal relationships on the market and in the business environment. In the conditions of the unrestrained capitalism, “efficiency and productivity can be the biggest foes of efficiency and productivity” (Pitelis, 2002). This unlimited greed of shareholders leads to a monopoly like situation, inequitable distribution of income, unemployment and an environmental disaster.

So to say, there is an urgent need to change the mentality of the peoples' role in business relations, in the employment sense of the economic processes, and in the new style of management (Grochmal, 2015). These changes have already become visible—it's enough just to think about the primacy which is attributed today to the immaterial on the material, to the software on the hardware, to the knowledge on the capital, as well as the need to face and, in some way, try to rule the complexity: all these elements underline the centrality taken by the person in the firm, both in his/her absolute dimension and in his/her capacity of operating together with the others (Argiolas, 2006).

The trends of the changes show a decreasing importance of technological and financial capital and the growing importance of social and human capital and relational goods (Grochmal, 2011b). These new trends, reducing the importance of material values in the interest of spiritual values, are determined as proof of a new paradigm creation, based on spirituality in business (Bianchi, 2006; Gold, 2010; Grudzewski, Hejduk, Sankowska, & Wańtuchowicz, 2010; Karakas, 2010; Nandram & Borden, 2010, Quimet, 2013).

The need of the mentality change and the new paradigm in management are presented in this paper as such. A man who knows how to overcome his own egoism and to share his goods with others, as the one who creates a new culture of giving and participates in the well-organized process of helping the poor, constitutes the base of the Economy of Communion (EoC), a project which is the concrete example of the implementation of spirituality in management.

2. Literature review

2.1. *Homo consumens or homo donator? Culture of having or culture of giving?*

The obligatory model outlined in the XX century economics (but is also common now), known as the *homo economicus* and acting with perfect rationality, is concerned only with one's own needs, and is interested in the maximization of his or her self-interest. Contemporary social engineering of mass media and culture has created a new version of *homo economicus*—it wants to consider a man as

homo consumens because he/she is, first of all, the consumer of material goods. He/she can be characterized by a reigning slogan in the consumer culture: “I buy, therefore I am”. *Homo consumens* is the protagonist of the culture of having with the model: to watch TV advertisements → to buy → to have.

The promotion of the culture of having makes a human passive and uncreative, deprives him/her of the ambitions of acquisition of higher values, it limits him/her to the use of material wealth and consumer goods. Such vision of humanity clearly leads to the increasingly divided society in accordance with the criteria of material prosperity and, ultimately, to a serious social disease—egoism of the individual and collective sense.

The special expression of the egoism which seems to be crucial for our common future is the economic and demographic precipice between the wealthy and poor countries. The numbers determining these disparities are shocking. More than half of global wealth remains in the hands of only 2% of the richest people, the 70% of the poorest people own less than 1% of total wealth (Davies, Lluberas, & Shorrocks, 2012). This situation not only poses a threat to social and political equilibrium, but remains in deep contradiction with the essence of humanity, and is a threat to human freedom.

The need to get out of this track of egoism, to reveal and to develop a new vision of a man and society, a new *culture of giving* opposed to a *culture of having*, is becoming evident. This new vision of culture can be presented by a model: to work → to earn → to have → to give. A human in this vision is a type of *homo donator* who knows how to free himself/herself from this egoism, to open to the needs of others both in private and public life, in particular economic activity, and share material goods and intangible assets with others as a sincere, gratuitous and disinterested gift. Such a gift is an expression of human solidarity and empathy towards others, especially living in poverty, and can be a determinant of the sense of existence: “I give, therefore I exist”.

2.2. Spirituality of unity and paradigm of unity

The vision of the above-mentioned culture of giving, which is being practiced among the members of Focolare Movement for many years created the base for a project called EoC, proposed in 1991 by Chiara Lubich, the Founder and President of the Focolare Movement at that time (Gallagher, 1997, p. 31; Lubich, 2001). This catholic movement was established in 1943 in Italy and now gathers about three million persons of different races, languages, nationalities and religious convictions in over 190 countries.

The spirituality of the Focolare Movement is derived from the charism of unity, the keynote of which are the words of Jesus: *Holy Father ... may they all be one as You and I are one* (J, 17). It is the spirituality of unity, both personal and communitarian, which is mainly practice-oriented. The main goal of the implementation of this spirituality in the life of the Focolare Movement’s members is to live in family, community and society unity day by day. In concrete terms, this means to face all possible barriers that separate people and to look for a way to bring them together in harmony. In other words, it means to create unity in diversity (Burkard, 2006; Vandeleene, 2007).

The striving for universal fraternity among people is an important goal of the spirituality of unity. It requires appropriate interpersonal relationships based on Christian love, or—in case of non-Christians—on mutual kindness. The most specific feature of the spirituality of unity based on the social love is its community dimension.

This spirituality present in the community, in which there is reciprocity of personal gifts and the awareness of appropriate interpersonal relationships based on kindness, friendship and love, lead to reciprocity, and then the community becomes a communion. Such a communion can be the basis of human action in all its aspects, including the economic and social ones.

A scientific analysis of spirituality of unity and its influence on social changes was made by some scholars (Bruni, 2002; Gold, 2000; Henk, 2010; Masters & Uelmen, 2011; Voce, 2013). Gold proves that the spirituality of unity could have profound implications on the economic and social structures, providing a strong motivation for positive action in favour of social justice. Bruni (with other authors) analyses a multidimensional character of the spirituality of unity and its influence on economic and social relationships. Henk, Masters and Uelmen also present a large and deep evaluation of this spirituality in a practical and social aspect of its implementation in the life of the members of the Focolare Movement. An interesting evaluation of the relationships between the spirituality of unity and the contemporary culture is presented by Voce.

The spirituality of unity is one of the few of the Christian spiritualities which comprise, in a significant and wide way, all the aspects of human activity, from the social, political and economic, up to the cultural and spiritual ones. It treats a man as an integral entity, and it wants to show new humanism which would be not only a sign of hope, but it would be a new, positive image of reality. Such integral and solidary humanism is able to create a new social, economic and political order, based on the dignity and freedom of every human person. It is important to say that the spirituality of unity is not only for members of the Focolare Movement, it is not even just for Christians, but it is universal, for all people, regardless of religious beliefs and social, economic or cultural status.

Some scholars, who are familiar with the spirituality of unity concept, see a possibility for creating a new paradigm of different social sciences in it. An original, well-grounded and breakthrough proposal of the new paradigm was presented in 1996 by Biela in his laudation of the honorary doctorate, awarded to Chiara Lubich by the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin in social sciences. Biela pointed out the significant and important role of the spirituality of unity in the shaping of this new paradigm (named by him as the paradigm of unity) in social sciences, which can help make the social reality more civilized and transform large areas of disintegration, conflicts, wars and senseless deaths to areas of integration, harmony and mutual goodwill among men (Biela, 2011).

Biela described particularly the possibility of implementation of the paradigm of unity in psychology (Biela, 2005, 2008), and gave a vision of its application in social sciences (Biela, 2006). Currently, the paradigm of unity is the basis for the construction of theoretical models, strategies of empirical research and designs of application in 12 scientific fields: economics, politics, psychology, social communication and media, law and justice, medicine, education, art, architecture, sociology, ecology and sport (Araujó, 2010). The implementation of the paradigm of unity in management sciences is developed and presented by Grochmal (2013a).

Each of these implementations of the paradigm of unity, especially due to its integrating and holistic character, brings a new look at a human being and his or her relationships with others, with the surrounding material reality, and at the transcendent dimension of the human being.

2.3. Economy of Communion

The communion of material goods and intangible assets implemented in practice at the personal, family and institutional level, shape the members of the Focolare Movement towards the understanding of the needs of others, and sharing with them in the sense of the culture of giving. However, the communion of goods, practiced for a long time among the members of the Movement, was not enough to meet the needs of all the people living in poverty, so it was the need to create more wealth and to create a structure for its equitable distribution. Chiara Lubich in 1991 during her visit to the communities of the movement in Sao Paulo, Brazil was profoundly astonished to see an enormous difference between the level of the rich inhabitants' "skyscraper life" standards, and those living in extreme poverty in the slums (favelas). This astonishment was an inspiration to appeal to the 200,000 members of the Movement in Brazil to create productive businesses whose profits could be in part used to help these people living in poverty.

Lubich called the entrepreneurs in the Movement to divide the profits, which are considered to be due to owners or shareholders, into three parts. One part should be reinvested in the business to provide sustainability and continued growth. The second part would go to help the people living in poverty, to immediately alleviate the suffering of those lacking their basic things as food, medicines, clothing, and providing them with a decent standard of living, while looking for work. The third part would be destined for the formation of people, promoting a culture of giving and the idea of EoC by holding international congresses, schools for young entrepreneurs, by various publications, and books, etc. (Lubich, 1999, 2001).

The response to Lubich's appeal was very positive in many countries. During the first 2 years, 300 businesses were created in ca. 30 countries, now—after ca. 25 years there are more than 850 firms on all continents acting in accordance with the EoC idea. The amount transferred to the persons living in poverty and for the promotion of this idea is some millions of USD per year.

After the first experiences in the EoC, the businesses came into realization that the size of help to the poor was not the most important factor, even the quantity of the businesses acting in EoC. The success of this idea was the humanization of the economy, the awareness that a new style of management is possible, based on the values higher than profits and economical effects, appreciating the human person and all his or her needs, changing the mentality and the model of management, accomplishable in different conditions and in different cultures.

Lubich in her proposal reasoned that it was not enough to exercise acts of charity, creating works of mercy or the communion of goods between the individual persons. The key people to whom she directed her project were entrepreneurs capable to the profitable and efficient managing of companies. The innovation she proposed was that the part of the profits be put in mutually (Quartana, 1992), with destination for the help to the poor.

In the EoC, the profits have to be produced through strict adherence to the law and through the respect of workers', consumers', and competitive industries' rights, as well as, those of the community and the environment. In fact, the EoC can also be seen as a different culture of work and interpersonal relationships. In the management process the attention will be focused on the role that the relationships play within a company (between the employers and their employees), between the company and its customers, local community, and between the company and the larger global community. Without a doubt, the key words of EoC are relationships—relational goods, reciprocity, gratuitousness and communion.

The EoC requires an important and radical change in the business management. It promotes a commitment of owners (shareholders) to operate their businesses both for profit and for the benefit of society. They operate in normal market conditions with all its requirements, restrictions and competition. However, the EoC businesses are the places where the culture of giving is executed in practice, where both profits and needs are shared in an atmosphere of mutual support and trust. Interpersonal relationships are based on mutual trust and create an organizational atmosphere in the company, in which each employee can find suitable conditions in the extent of performing his/her tasks and in building fraternal relations with collaborators (Biener, 2002; Gallagher & Buckeye, 2014).

The original objective of the EoC project was very simple: to eradicate (or at least to limit) poverty and reduce social exclusion, at first among the members of the Focolare Movement, and then on a large scale. In order to fulfil this purpose, it is not enough to create and develop the businesses, it is also necessary to change the style of management according to the spirituality of unity. Unity doesn't only give or do something for others, it also signifies how to live with their neighbour, to stand by him or her without being intrusive. There is plenty of room for action and choices, which no contract could ever regulate. In fact, the EoC is much more than a simple process of redistributing goods and resources. It is a new process of production that through sharing goods and activities of a company "generates" an immaterial yet touchable output: the experience of communion (Crivelli, 2004).

EoC is derived from the charisma of unity from which the spirituality of unity is rooted. In the history of culture Christian, charisms played a significant role—often gave a rise to a new culture of work and the economy (Benedictine charism), or new schools and economic initiatives (Franciscan charism). In addition, the charisma of unity laid the foundation for new communitarian spirituality and new culture that casts new light on all aspects of human activity.

Lubich was neither an economist nor an entrepreneur, but she did use the economy as principal leverage for social change. One can say that her proposal is based on an intuition more of a mystical type than of an economic type (Callebaut, 2012). But on the other hand, the project of EoC constitutes essential, important and tangible approach to economic and social problems of the modern world which awakened interest and recognition in the academic world to such extent that Lubich was awarded several doctorates *honoris causa*, among others, in economics and in social sciences.

Séguy (according to the conception of Weber) defined two types of economy: rational and charismatic. The former is determined through such concepts as accumulation, investment, capital, market or profit; the latter is based on gift, sharing, ascetic motivations and gratuity (Séguy, 1992). The EoC idea takes into account both above-mentioned aspects. It is founded partly on rational dependencies in capitalistic market economy, and partly on the communion of goods executed through sharing of profits with the poor. An important element of management in EoC businesses is also Providence, and it can be said that this idea is at least partially charismatic. Callebaut defines the economic processes in EoC as foreseeable in one part, and in another part, as the processes which are always surprising (Callebaut, 2012).

The EoC project proposes a new style of management where the criterion of the business activity becomes fundamentally changed: the final purpose of the managers (and owners) is not self-interest, not even the maximization of shareholders' wealth, but sustainable development of common good expressed by the good of all stakeholders (together with the poor receiving the help).

The EoC is neither philanthropy nor a distribution of benefits, but it is rather the entrepreneurial interpretation of unity with an emphasis on economic development and the sharing of profits in and with the community (Henk, 2010). This is a communitarian dimension of the anthropological concept of man, which is neither individualistic nor collective, but it is rather a communion.

The idea of EoC consists of the transfer of evangelical charity economics principles on the ground the idea of universal fraternity and an awareness of responsibility. The responsibility in EoC businesses is convergent in some aspects with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), especially with its original assumptions derived from the creator of CSR—Andrew Carnegie. However, it has a different motivation and purpose of socially responsible actions. The EoC businesses are, first of all, responsible for a man, for next generations, and for the Earth.

One of the results of spirituality of unity in management is the humanization of economic activities, i.e. the placement of the human and his or her authentic needs in the centre of all relationships, both inside and outside the company. EoC requires a thorough change of mindset, in reference to profits and the way of their distribution, as well as in consumption patterns or in the gratuitous giving. Also, an attitude according to the spirituality of unity in management requires a cultural change of both the entrepreneur and the employee. It expresses full appreciation of human capital in the company and the demand of decent work conditions in the workplace, but also a requirement of workers' responsibility towards the company and the community.

Social responsibility according to EoC is also expressed by care for equitable distribution of goods and ensuring the conditions for a dignified life, work, education, and access to health care to the people living in poverty, with opportunities to use cultural goods as well as through appropriate shaping of consumer needs, in accordance with the principle that “good, which is not shared with others, or that I have acquired without any significant need, ceases to be good” (Grochmal, 2013a).

2.4. Relationship with the poor

One should look at the problem of poverty in two aspects: who the poor person is and how one can help him or her. According to the spirituality of unity a man is poor when he/she does not have any close relatives or friends, when he/she is lonely, without relationships with others or without a community. The poverty is concerned more with the interpersonal relationships, rather than the lack of material goods. Therefore, the first step in the analysis of the situation of a man who needs the help, should be the examination of the conditions in which he/she lives. Bad relations (or the lack of them) in the family or community are very often the main causes of poverty. The improvement of these relationships often leads to better material conditions. However, financial help is also necessary to change the level of life of humans or families. The EoC project implementation is an example of a well-organized, systematic and prudent help for the poor.

The EoC connects poor people who are beneficiaries of the sharing of profits to the businesses. They not only receive help in different forms but they also bring in something very important into the organization: their needs and hopes, their poverty, but also their gratitude, solidarity, attention, kind word or prayer. Through these “contributions” they are not only consumers of the help but they participate in this unique exchange of gifts according to their opportunities. Such a service to the poor ensures a new social and human dignity of these people who are very often socially excluded from the society. In this sense the poor are one of the important stakeholders. According to Grochmal (2012) such a statement constitutes an extension of the theory of stakeholders formulated by Freeman (1984). Persons living in poverty, often from no fault of their own, never before have been considered as stakeholders of the business.

Poor people, understood and considered as crucial stakeholders, actively contribute to spread this concept of communion to other persons who live in similar circumstances of poverty (Crivelli, 2004).

Héjj (2006) comments the subsumption of the poor to the group of stakeholders in such words. If there is a relationship (direct or indirect) between the company and the poor to be supported, then they (the poor) become stakeholders. They give input to the business from the outset of their existence, triggering increased prudence and responsibility, and they are a part of the value-generation value-chain, as a part of its output.

The addition of the poor as stakeholders in EoC makes the dynamism of giving and receiving possible. It is a dynamism which is constitutional of the EoC and distinguishes itself in essence from other approaches which are guided by the accumulation of wealth (Burkard, 2006). It has, however, the serious consequences: the satisfaction of the requirements of all stakeholders must be considered in terms of conjunction (logical product) of the expectations of all beneficiaries (non-performance of expectations of one of the stakeholders “cancels” the whole pool of goods for sharing). However, up to the present theory of Freeman, the stakeholders’ expectations were treated as a simple logical sum (alternative); in this case the omission of one or more stakeholders (e.g. of little influence) does not disqualify a suggested decision (Grochmal, 2011a).

In this way, circulating goods contribute to growth of social awareness, solidarity and fraternal relations in society. In addition, such a relationship teaches the art of creating unity between stakeholders in discussions regarding fulfilment of their expectations relative to the company. The experiences demonstrate that such involvement of the poor in the project does not lead them to a position of being “assisted”. On the contrary, they feel profoundly dignified as persons. Immediately after their own economic and social recuperation, most of them spontaneously start to share the few things they have (Burkard, 2006). Numerous examples (Garlow, 2007; Gold, 2000) of practically applying this extended theory of the stakeholders in the EoC businesses demonstrate the ability to solve these undoubtedly difficult problems in an atmosphere of unity and mutual understanding of needs and possibilities.

Lubich appealed with the EoC project to entrepreneurs, especially of small- and medium-size enterprises, to help the poor. She placed these two categories of people at the centre of her project; the entrepreneur and the poor are the central protagonists in the implementation of the EoC. However, as it was written above, the spirituality of unity creates unity in diversity, so despite the different status and social situation, the entrepreneurs and the poor are called to make unity, what in evangelical sense means being in mutual love. In theology, such a relationship is named Trinitarian or perichoretic style of life. It comes from the Greek concept of *perichoresis* what signifies that “two realities can exist one within the other, without confusing them and maintaining (and even expressing better in a certain way) their proper identity: united without confusion and distinct without being divided” (Cambón, 2009, p. 31).

2.5. *Homo spiritualis* a new model of manager and employee

Some people consider the level of the intellectual life (beyond the physical) as sufficient, limiting their feelings to the experiences of the mind, emotions and will. In contrast to the physical layer (individualistic), intellectual level takes into account the relationships with others. Humans who are satisfied with this quality level of life can be named *Homo sapiens*. He/she considers himself/herself as the centre of all references, and treats everything and everyone outside as means to maintain a position. According to this human, the life is a struggle for possession of the material means to be able to get positional goods, whereas economics and management have to serve to achieve this objective.

However, there are many people who distinguish and appreciate a higher level of life—the spiritual one. This level characterizes a human who perceives the reality in immanent and transcendent perspective, one who is bound for realization of the common good and building spiritual relationships with others, whereas economics and management consider such values as mutual love, friendship, solidarity and gratuitous gift as fields of implementation. Such type of a human can be named as *homo spiritualis*.

This division implies different visions of the human’s role in the management process. Interesting behaviour analysis of these above-mentioned aspects are presented by Héjj in comparing the ego-centric attitude with comportment oriented with the community in management of the EoC businesses. The material level based on self-interest is characterized by the ratio of I/I (I do it for myself), the life on an intellectual level is characterized by the ratio I / we (I work with others because of my interest), while the third level, spiritual, motivated by intrinsic values, can be defined as a community-oriented relationship we/we (we work together and serve each other for the common goal) (Héjj, 2011, pp. 151–162).

The above-mentioned classification lets a determination of the requirements in relation to managers (or owners) and employees to implement the management process according to the spirituality of unity. One of the principle goals of the EoC businesses is to transform an enterprise into communion of persons (managers and employees but also customs, suppliers, co-operators, even competitors, representatives of local community, and poor to be helped). The achievement of this scope often depends on “spiritual” cooperation between these persons. The experiences of many businesses, entrepreneurs and employees show what one can call a new model of a manager and an employee—*homo spiritualis*.

3. Research methodology

3.1. *Paradigm of unity-implementation of spirituality in management*

The paradigm of unity in the context of management sciences is analysed by Grochmal (2013a). In this context paradigm of unity means a methodological postulate, taking into account scientific research, a wide and multidimensional system of human behaviours in the management processes. A big part of these behaviours lies outside of the contemporaneous, classical interests of management. Suffice it to mention the family, the unemployed, the socially excluded, the pensioners, the

poor, etc. The paradigm of unity requires in the aspect of economic analysis an extension of the goals of this analysis. That means that one should take into account other, also important aims, especially not measurable or intangible. It refers to some special values as a growth of human, relational, social or spiritual capital in the business and to the group of external stakeholders, the persons waiting for the material and spiritual help. The paradigm of unity makes possible the achievement of these aims through realization of the new style of management based on the personal vision of a human and on interpersonal relationships, enriched by the intrinsic values of all persons in the management process.

Paradigm of unity implementation into the EoC accepts all its premises. Comprising a man in his integrity, this paradigm includes all quasi aspects of his activity: anthropology (personalism), ergonomics (the sense and value of work, especially “for other” and “with other”), economics (not only profits but the common good), culture (formation to the culture of giving) and spirituality (transcendent values and the faith in Divine Providence).

The scientific analysis of the implementation of the paradigm of unity in the management processes can be conducted from different points of view. Grochmal (2013a) on the basis of extensive analysis of literature, discussions with experts and professionals, and also with his own experiences as an entrepreneur of EoC business has arbitrarily determined the following six content dimensions including the most important aspects of the paradigm of unity in management:

- human capital,
- relational capital,
- new organizational culture,
- spiritual capital,
- investment in the sustainable development,
- help to the persons living in poverty.

Human capital is expressed by the placement of the human person at the centre of all initiatives, treatment of a human as the subject of work and organizational structures, and creating the organizational climate based on mutual trust and social integration. The care about the work conditions, ergonomics of the workplace and safety of the employee belong to this aspect of the paradigm of unity too.

Relational capital presents mutual interpersonal relationships in the business (the administration and the employees) and the outside (all external stakeholders). This capital also includes the relationships between enterprises and social institutions for building a common good.

Organizational culture is the content dimension which includes, among others, the promotion and implementation of the culture of giving and the meaning of gratuitous gift. The important element of this dimension is shaping the consciousness of belongingness to the community, the denomination of values declared by the entrepreneur and the striving to the widespread implementation of these values in practice. In paraphrasing of a famous saying “Do not give a man a fish, teach him how to fish instead”, one can say that the paradigm of unity not only teaches fishing (and gives the fishing-rod) instead of giving fish, but encourages the common fishing, and teaches to share the fruits of fishing with others.

The special meaning in the paradigm of unity has spiritual capital. It is intrinsically connected with the spirituality of unity and is expressed by all its rules presented above. In particular, the intangible assets and transcendent values stimulate the integral development of each participant in the economic process. This dimension concerns the interpersonal relationships based on openness, kindness, friendship and appreciation of each human person. Producing healthy and useful products

which are user- and environment-friendly, or providing safe and useful services to the public are also the aspects of spiritual dimension. The work in this dimension is understood as a vocation to serve others and to change the world to be a better place. The spiritual capital teaches humility in relation to the nature and to the events in which the influence of the man is limited or excluded. A constitutive element of this dimension is the faith in Divine Providence and its help to entrepreneurs, not only in difficult or critical situations, but also in daily struggles, in making important decisions and in a constant establishment of unity between the people and the creation of a common good.

The assumptions of the paradigm of unity require keeping both feet on the ground by the entrepreneurs and conducting the business in the free market economy with all its conditionings (socio-economic situation of the country, state economic policy, system of tax and insurance, human potential, competition). For the proper performance of the business a continued investment in the sustainable development and raising its integral value is necessary. A balance in the distribution of profit for other purposes is also important (support for the people living in poverty and for the promotion of the idea of EoC).

The last but not least is the economic content dimension of the paradigm of unity. The main criterion of the management in the communion businesses economy is not only the help for the poor by sharing of the profit and providing them a part of it, but also the way of the generation and distribution of profits.

For such defined content dimensions of the paradigm of unity the empirical research in the EoC businesses were done and a correlation of the above mentioned theoretical considerations along with the empirical results are analysed.

3.2. Research problem

The research problem was formulated by Grochmal (2013a) as a hypothesis that the paradigm of unity shapes a new organizational culture in the EoC businesses creating a suitable organizational climate, regardless of cultural, economic and social differences, company size, ownership forms, and even the degree of the involvement of the owners, managers or employees in the Focolare Movement.

In order to examine this hypothesis, a theoretical analysis and the empirical research were made in 2012–2013. The aim of this research was also a verification of an auxiliary hypothesis that the EoC not only proposes a new management style bringing out the transfer of the part of profits for people living in poverty but offers much more: shaping human and relational capital in the company and its surroundings, proposes and implements a culture of giving instead the dominant culture of having (also in personal and family life) and forms the spiritual capital among entrepreneurs and employees.

For each of the above-mentioned content dimensions, six specific aspects characterizing the properties of a given dimension were assigned. The interesting question for research was an importance evaluation of all content dimensions according to managers' and entrepreneurs' opinion as well as after the EoC experts' ranking. In order to answer the main research problem an auxiliary question was formulated: is the extent of the acceptance of each content dimension (for the EoC businesses) statistically significantly dependent on the independent variables: country of business localization, size of business (number of employees), legal form of business, branch, character (family owned), type of business (production, commerce or services) and years of practice in EoC. There is also one more problem: in order to have a possibility to use the descriptive statistics for data analysis it is necessary to check whether the empirical data are normally distributed.

3.3. Methodology

The aim of the research can be determined as well verifying as descriptive. Such a statement authorizes the using both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and analysis. The research used a manager-standardized questionnaire as a based research strategy due to great

dispersion of businesses under examination in the world. A complementary method was a questionnaire interview as well as individual conversations and written correspondence with managers, entrepreneurs and experts (scholars) of management.

For the purpose of deep recognition of the management processes in the EoC businesses, the specific aspects of management were scrutinized by the phenomenology analysis. In order to interpret the source texts of Lubich and other experts in EoC (Bruni, Zamagni, Araujó, Gui) and to understand the experiences, opinions and behaviours of entrepreneurs, employees or beneficiaries of help the hermeneutic method was applied.

Before the distribution of questionnaire to entrepreneurs, it was sent to 40 persons (EoC entrepreneurs and experts in economy, organizations' sociology and management) from 4 countries in order to conduct pilot studies. The answers and opinions allowed to ascertain that the research problem was accurate, well founded and the research tools were methodologically grounded. Some particular remarks were taken into consideration in the final version of inquiry form, and the computer program for data acquisition was appropriately modified. Finally, the questionnaire contained 36 questions concerning the content dimensions (6 aspects for each of the 6 dimensions) and 24 particular questions concerning the style of management realized in the business. All questions were defined in an interval scale with equal intervals (from 1 to 5) where the answer corresponded to an extent in which a given content dimension is realized in the business.

Other type of questionnaire was elaborated for experts in EoC (scholars) who were asked to determine the weight coefficients for each of the above-mentioned content dimensions in respect of the extent of importance of given dimension in the management process. In these questionnaires, two methods were applied: one method based on Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) due to Saaty (1990) using the paired comparisons of all aspects for given dimension, and the second—one called Biela method (AB)—consisting in the estimating of weight coefficients by the distribution for each content dimension and each aspect the points from a pool according to the importance of this element in the management process.

The questionnaires were elaborated in such a way that the answers were very easy and less time-consuming for respondents. The majority of questions were closed questions with five options for the respondents to choose from. The questionnaires for entrepreneurs were placed on a website in 7 language versions; the data were collected and recorded in a computer system. There were about 400 businesses of EoC worldwide which were asked to respond in this research. Simultaneously, 45 experts (scholars, professional persons and high specialists in EoC) from 7 countries were asked to respond by the second type of questionnaire. This questionnaire was a little more complicated due to two methods of estimation of weights coefficients; two methods were applied in order to compare the quantitative and qualitative ways of determining the parameters of research process. The experts' responses served to creating an importance ranking of the content dimensions and also to additional research problem (evaluation of conformity of management practice with a paradigm of unity: Grochmal, 2013b).

4. Research findings and analysis

4.1. Empirical research

Out of the 119 questionnaires received from the entrepreneurs (owners, managers), 110 were complete, correctly filled and coming from 22 countries. On the basis of responses to the questionnaire for entrepreneurs one can present short characteristics of the businesses under examination. There were 61% business from Europe, 29% from South America, 7% from North America and 3% from Asia. The most represented countries were: Italy (25%), Brazil (20%), Germany (7.5%) and Swiss (7.5%). Almost 40% of examined businesses were small (one man businesses or having less than 5 employed) but there were also some big enterprises (more than 100 employed). In respect of the

Table 1. Mean values of weight coefficients calculated on the basis of entrepreneurs' answers

Content dimension		Arithmetic mean	% of whole
A	Human capital	3.721	16.86
B	Relational capital	4.077	18.50
C	New organizational culture	3.251	14.73
D	Spiritual capital	3.895	17.68
E	Investment in the sustainable development	3.651	16.55
F	Help to the persons living in poverty (sharing of profit)	3.458	15.68

Source: Author.

Figure 1. Mean values of weight coefficients calculated on the basis of entrepreneurs' answers.

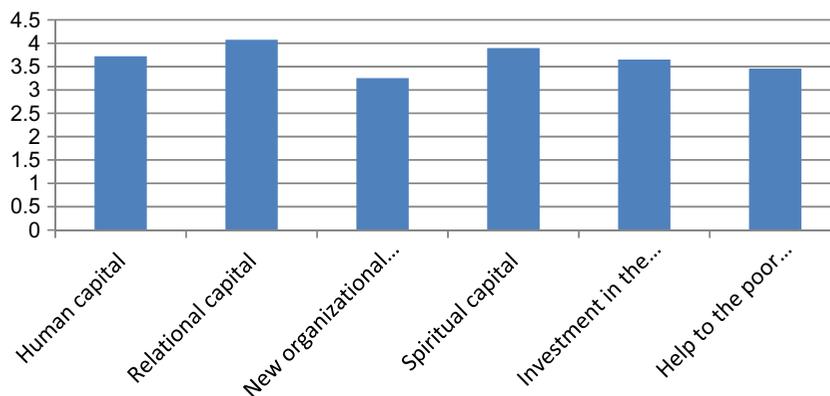
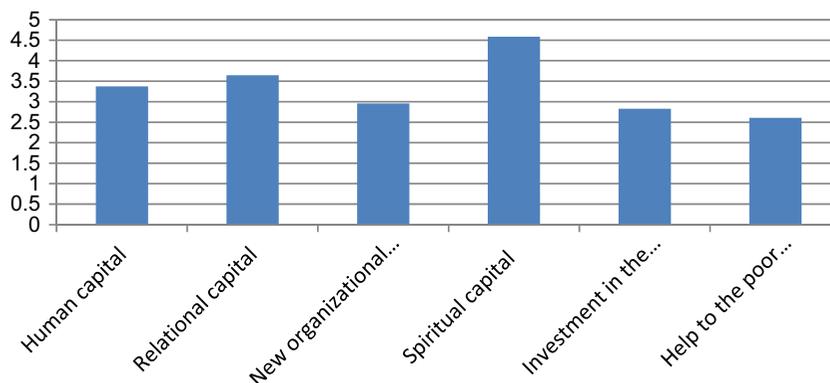


Table 2. Mean values of weight coefficients calculated on the basis of experts' answers

Content dimension		Arithmetic mean	% of whole
A	Human capital	3.374	16.87
B	Relational capital	3.648	18.24
C	New organizational culture	2.958	14.79
D	Spiritual capital	4.586	22.93
E	Investment in the sustainable development	2.828	14.14
F	Help to the persons living in poverty (sharing of profit)	2.606	13.03

Source: Author.

Figure 2. Mean values of weight coefficients calculated on the basis of experts' answers.



legal form there were dominant limited companies (44%) and private ownership (24%). There were more than 50% service firms, whereas productive firms were 21%. The financial situation of

Table 3. Results of Kolmogorov–Smirnov Z-test for the content dimensions distributions

	Content dimensions					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Maximum differences (absolute value)	0.099	0.113	0.076	0.097	0.123	0.077
Kolmogorov–Smirnov Z-test	1.040	1.184	0.794	1.017	1.291	0.807
Asymptotic significance level (bilateral)	0.229	0.121	0.555	0.252	0.071	0.532

Source: Author.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics for the content dimensions distributions

Statistics	Content dimensions					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Arithmetic mean	3.721	4.077	3.251	3.895	3.651	3.458
Standard error	0.067	0.042	0.083	0.057	0.071	0.076
Variance	0.501	0.195	0.773	0.359	0.567	0.647
Standard deviation	0.708	0.441	0.879	0.599	0.753	0.805
Skewness	-0.842	-0.387	-0.404	-0.578	-0.459	-0.135
Kurtosis	1.327	0.605	-0.184	0.383	-0.619	-0.913
Range	3.83	2.33	3.83	2.83	3.00	3.00
Percentile 25	3.33	3.83	2.67	3.50	3.17	2.83
Percentile 50 (median)	3.83	4.00	3.33	4.00	3.83	3.50
Percentile 75	4.17	4.33	4.00	4.33	4.17	4.00

Source: Author.

businesses under examination was very differentiated: the average annual profits (2011–2013) were in the range from several to tens of thousands USD.

On the basis of entrepreneurs' answers, weight coefficients for each content dimension were calculated (Table 1 and Figure 1). The high values of relational (4.077) and spiritual (3.895) capitals are noteworthy.

The second type of questionnaires was addressed to the experts of EoC (scholars, professional persons and specialists). Out of 24 questionnaires received from these experts (living in 7 countries), 22 were complete and were taken to the analysis. Among the experts was 59% of scholars and 41% of specialists.

The weight coefficients calculated on the basis of experts' answers are presented in Table 2 and Figure 2. These values were evaluated as mean values (of the values calculated by two above-mentioned methods) and only serve an illustrative purpose. The AB method is based on interval-scale data whereas the AHP is a rank method, thus, there is no justification for the mean values.

These results reveal also the high values of the same capitals as in entrepreneurs' answers but in the inverse order: spiritual (4.586) and relational (3.648).

In order to verify the above-mentioned hypothesis that a new organizational culture in the EoC businesses can be applied independently on the cultural, economic or social conditioning, a variance analysis (e.g. ANOVA and MANOVA) has to be executed. This analysis can be applied only for the normally distributed data (or very close to them); then descriptive statistics can be used to

characterize the content dimensions distributions. So, it was indispensable to execute a Kolmogorov–Smirnov Z-test. The results of this test are presented in Table 3.

All values of the asymptotic significance level exceed a threshold value 0.05 (lack of statistical significance), so the empirical distributions for all cases are close to the normal distribution (the quantile–quantile plots are close to a straight line). Therefore, the variance analysis can be applied and the descriptive statistics for content dimensions distributions can be calculated; the results are presented in Table 4.

In order to investigate whether the evaluations of content dimensions are statistically significantly differentiated by the entrepreneurs according to the independent variables, the analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed. The results of the MANOVA analysis were statistically significant (or near to the limit of significance) for some dimensions and only for three (of all 7) independent variables (the country of business location, family character and branch of business). The localization of the firm statistically significantly influences the extent of investment in the business ($F = 1.879$; $df = 21$; $p = 0.022$) and is close to the limit of statistical significance for the human capital ($F = 1.578$; $df = 21$; $p = 0.073$) and for the help to the poor ($F = 1.525$; $df = 21$; $p = 0.089$). In reference to the family character of business this variable is near to the limit of significance only for content dimension C (new organisational culture understood as a shaping of mentality to the culture of giving): $F = 2.943$; $df = 1$; $p = 0.089$. For the branch of business, the statistically significant differentiation refers only to the help to the poor ($F = 2.405$; $df = 9$; $p = 0.018$). The other independent variables did not have any significant effect on the differentiation of the content dimension.

Statistically significant differentiation of the weight coefficients for the content dimensions given by the experts is evident in small extent only for one independent variable (country of the residence of expert) and only to the spiritual capital.

These results positively verify the hypothesis on the weak extent of differentiation of the content dimensions by the entrepreneurs in EoC businesses.

4.2. Analysis of the results

In the answers of the questionnaires as well, experts as entrepreneurs confirm a high evaluation of the importance in management such factors enriching the organizational culture as spiritual, relational and human capital.

The entrepreneurs ranked the dimensions according to their opinions in such an order: the relational capital was ranked on the first place (18.5%), then the spiritual capital (17.7%), and then the human capital (16.9%). There was not a big difference between the dimensions, but these three were definitely determined as the most important in the management practice.

The experts of EoC (scholars, professional persons and specialists) ranked the content dimensions in such a way that the same dimensions (which were the most important for the entrepreneurs) are the top three but the order is changed: the highest priority was given to the spiritual capital (22.9%), in second place was the relational capital (18.2%), and in third the human capital (16.8%).

The first place of the spiritual capital given by the experts can be interpreted by the modern trends and the growing meaning of the workplace spirituality in the contemporary theories of management (Karakas, 2010; Nandram & Borden, 2010). In practice, however, these trends are not yet dominant but are also fundamental. The importance of the relational capital in the practice of management can be interpreted as a preference given by the entrepreneurs to interpersonal relationships in the business and beyond which together with human and spiritual capitals create the most important aspects of management in the EoC businesses.

It is worthy of notice that the distribution of content dimension's evaluation by the entrepreneurs is rather uniform (the variance of values is less than 0.08); this testifies to the holistic approach and integral treatment of the content dimensions.

Results of the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test for all dependent values (content dimensions) confirm that the distributions don't differentiate statistically significantly from the normal distribution. So using variance analysis can be reasonable and descriptive statistics can be applied to characterize content dimensions distributions.

The negative skewness (left asymmetry) for all dimensions testifies that more part of the results has the values above mean (median is greater than mean). The negative skewness is also confirmed by the concave character of the the quantile–quantile plots.

The kurtosis of the content dimensions distribution bears testimony that the respondents in large majority evaluated the capitals (relational, spiritual and human) in a decided mode (positive kurtosis, leptokurtic distribution, small range), and for other dimensions the values are evenly distributed (negative kurtosis, platykurtic distribution). These dependences lead to the conclusion that the respondents were more convinced of the high evaluation of the capitals than of other dimensions.

The analysis of the results according to the branches of EoC businesses shows special appreciation of the relational capital for all branches (with the exception of the construction industry) and of the spiritual capital in the branches: health and medical services, engineering, management and administration, and in construction industry.

On the basis of additional questions in the questionnaire, one can say that for entrepreneurs of the EoC businesses the significant aspects in management process are:

- acceptance and consciousness of participation in the EoC project,
- realization of the principle that man as a person is the subject of work and organizational structures,
- creating a climate within the company based on trust,
- relationship between administration of the firm and employees, and between the firm and customers, suppliers, financial institutes and other stakeholders (these relations lead directly to the social responsibility of the business),
- production of good and safe goods and offering fair services,
- building the common good through open and friendly relations,
- faith in Divine Providence and help in the building of unity among people.

The working “with others” and “for others”, the good relations with local community and a care for the environment were also often mentioned as constitutive elements of the management in the EoC businesses.

The analysis of the results mentioned above empowers to formulate a conclusion on the verification of the earlier hypothesis.

5. Conclusions

The theoretical analysis and empirical research allowed to formulate and to positively verify the hypothesis that, in the opinion of the experts of EoC as well as of the entrepreneurs (owners, managers), the paradigm of unity shapes a new organizational culture through creation of a suitable organizational climate in the EoC businesses. Furthermore, the feedback of the respondents allowed to formulate a conclusion that the new principles of management proposed by the paradigm of unity are universal and possible to be effectively implemented in the businesses, regardless of

cultural, economic and social differences, company size, ownership forms, and even the degree of the involvement of the owners, managers or employees in the Focolare Movement.

The paradigm of unity related to the management sciences includes all of the spirituality of unity features. The content dimensions of this paradigm presented in this research show its multidimensional character and the possibility to introduce it as a new way of management. This paradigm provides the possibility to manage a business according to the Christian personalism, to see a human in the centre of any activity, to understand the needs of all stakeholders, internal as well as external ones.

These considerations constitute a vital inspiration and an example for social sciences inciting to create an interdisciplinary paradigm of unity as the methodological foundation for the construction of theoretic models, strategies of empirical research and designs of application.

In practice, the paradigm of unity implemented in management leads to the eradication of poverty and to the reduction of social exclusions. In this sense, it can be considered as a new vision of social economy.

On the occasion of the conferment of an honorary doctorate in social science to Chiara Lubich by the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin (Poland), Biela affirmed in his laudation that the spirituality of unity has created a new social phenomenon that acquires a new force of application—capable to cure and prevent social pathology, conflicts, psychogenic illnesses, manifest aggression, wars and crimes (Biela, 2005). The paradigm of unity based on this spirituality has a very inspiring role to play not only in management sciences but in all social sciences. “I am convinced—said Biela—that it could indeed be at the foundation of social sciences and be as significant as the Copernican revolution was for natural sciences” (Biela, 1996).

In the recent decades, more and more often there are terms in the economic and management literature, along with phrases or concepts that till now have been, in principle, subject to consideration only of such sciences as psychology, sociology or ethics: altruism, gift, reciprocity, friendship, and even love. If these concepts remain not only in theory, but the entrepreneurs try to implement them in their activities they will not only contribute to the transformation of the world to a more “human” one, but they will find great, authentic joy and satisfaction.

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