

ROLE OF INTRAORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS IN ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN BASKETBALL FEDERATION OF LITHUANIA

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INTRODUCTION

A number of studies (Allmedinger & Hackman, 1996; O'Brien & Slack, 2003) have provided the evidence of effects that a rapidly changing environment has on different areas of state life. In many cases it has been concluded that previously settled ways of living were disrupted and, thus, all involved state actors were expected to make necessary adjustments to accommodate new standards. Therefore, as Oliver (1992) suggests, under certain specific conditions organizational change should be explained by "the failure of organizations to accept what was once a shared understanding of legitimate organizational conduct or by a discontinuity in the willingness or ability of organizations to take for granted and continually re-create an institutionalized organizational activity" (p. 564). Nevertheless, according to Greenwood and Hinings (1996), the process of deinstitutionalization must be understood together with the internal dynamics of interpretation, adoption, and rejection by the individual organization.

Since the restoration of Lithuania's independency almost two decades ago, the Basketball Federation of Lithuania (LKF) has been a subject to numerous organizational changes. During the period of transition from a centrally planned economy to a market driven economy, the LKF has experienced three executive changes and several structural rearrangements. Also, the sole regulator of Lithuania's "second religion" has always been under the emphasised public scrutiny regarding the results of national teams and organization's personnel decisions. All aforementioned adjustments happened within a turbulent and an unstable transitional environment, which was mostly characterized by a constant lack of funds and a changing nature of their reception. As described by Mauws & Phillips (1997), within emerging economies the market context is characterized by a move towards the ownership of private property, an ethic of individualism, and the quest for profit, which ultimately sets the stage for the development of new organizational standards. This article, largely grounding on a framework set out by Greenwood and Hinings (1996), presents the pilot study of a research that explores how the internal organizational dynamics interact within a process of organizational change in Basketball Federation of Lithuania.

METHODS

An anonymous questionnaire was distributed to 20 respondents that worked or are currently working with the LKF. 19 filled questionnaires have been received. The main goal was to identify leadership changes that took place through 1990-2003 and what organizational changes followed along with them.

RESULTS

All the respondents had the university education and the majority of them (63%) had the work experience in basketball field of more than ten years.

The study showed that three executive changes took place in the LKF from 1990 to 2003 and that all three presidents of the LKF distinguished in different leadership styles – liberal (1990-1993), democrat (1994-2003), autocrat (2003-present).

The majority of the respondents agreed that the head of the organization was the key in 1) forming LKF's politics and strategy (100%), 2) forming LKF's organizational structure (85%), 3) planning and implementing change (100%).

DISCUSSION

The conducted pilot study proved that the change in the leadership also affected other organizational activities. It is evident that the power dependencies strongly influenced organizational change within the LKF. However, the process of successful and completed change is uncertain and requires additional research investigation. Evidently the initial period of Lithuania's regained independency (1990-1993) has brought the biggest challenges to country's organizations and to the LKF as well. However, the response to such contextual changes was poor as the organization could not even form its future vision.

The later period (1994-2003) saw the decentralization of the LKF, the formation of various departments responsible for their appropriate tasks and an increasing growth of organization's budget. Also, at that time autonomous professional leagues that started to organize the elite level basketball competitions were formed.

Autocratic governance and a strong control of all organizational assets characterize the latest period (2003-present). The key outcomes of such leadership changes – steady and slightly increasing budget and liquidation of several departments and organizations.

The study showed that organization members were not entirely and actively involved in the change process. As a result, it is needed to further analyse what value commitments were prevailing among organization members throughout the examined periods and how the interests of organization members were accommodated. Also, we must further seek into what organizational capacities the LKF displayed throughout the different periods of organizational change. A further research, preferably a case study, should be conducted to address the aforementioned issues in greater details.

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