

Chapter 5

A Fuzzy Cognitive Map–Based Approach for Understanding Value Creation Mechanisms of Artistic Interventions

Daniela Carlucci

University of Basilicata, Italy

Giovanni Schiuma

University of Basilicata, Italy

Roberto Linzalone

University of Basilicata, Italy

ABSTRACT

A number of organizations have started to approach the “arts world” looking for new ways of dealing with the management uncertainties and seeking new approaches in response to social changes and economic pressures. The planned managerial use of Arts-based Initiatives (ABIs) can sustain organisations in their efforts to face today’s competitive challenges. But how do ABIs contribute to improve value creation capacity of an organisation? There are several anecdotal evidences from practitioners who tend to emphasize the positive experience that employees report during or after ABIs. However a better understanding of the dynamics linking ABIs to business performance is still required. This study proposes the use of Fuzzy Cognitive Map (FCM) to model and dynamically analyze the integration of ABIs in the operation and strategy of an organisation. Referring to the “Arts Value Map” framework (Schiuma, 2011), the paper suggests the use of FCM as a dynamic modelling tool to analyze the reciprocal influence, simulate and predict the behaviour of factors involved in value creation dynamics.

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INTRODUCTION

In today's global economy, organisations are struggling to face difficult management uncertainties, increase value embedded in their products/services, create new competencies capable of driving business growth and new business solutions, and spur resilience and innovativeness. The planned managerial use of art forms (i.e. Arts-based Initiatives- ABIs) can sustain organisations in their efforts to face today's competitive challenges and improve their value creation capability.

An ABI can be defined as any organisational and management intervention using one or more art forms to enable people to undergo an art experience within an organisational context, as well as to embed the arts as a business asset. It is primarily and fundamentally an experience-based process involving and engaging people both rationally and emotionally through either active or passive participation (Schiuma, 2011).

The focus of an ABI is not the work of art in itself, but the arts experience instead. An ABI is intended to use works of art and arts as media to trigger, catalyse, drive, harness and govern the emotional and energetic dimensions of an organisation which can have an impact on people and/or on the organisational infrastructure of tangible and intangible assets.

Nowadays it is widely acknowledged that absorbing the arts in organizational working mechanisms and business models can be profitable. In fact, through ABIs new strategic organisational value drivers, such as passion, emotions, hope, moral, imagination, aspirations, and creativity (Boyatzis et al., 2002; Bruch & Ghoshal, 2003; Cross et al., 2003; Gratton, 2007; Steers et al., 2004) can be fruitfully developed, generally first at the individual level, engaging a person emotionally and intellectually, and then at group and organisation level.

What still remains a challenge is how to plan ABIs and evaluate comprehensively their impacts on business performance. More generally a better understanding of the dynamics linking ABIs to business performance is required.

This study proposes the use of Fuzzy Cognitive Map (FCM) to model, understand and dynamically analyse the integration of ABIs in the operation and strategy of an organisation. Referring to the "Arts Value Map" framework (Schiuma, 2011), the paper suggests the use of FCM as a dynamic modelling tool to analyze, test the reciprocal influence, simulate and predict the behaviour of factors involved in the value creation dynamics activated by ABIs.

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