



A Marcusean philosophy for restoring workplace dignity, and curbing the excesses of capitalism and the de- humanisation of labour: lessons for the hospitality Industry

Angelo Nicolaidis
Graduate School of Business Leadership
University of South Africa
nicola@unisa.ac.za

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to describe the importance of intermingling and ultimately establishing organizational development initiatives based on a Marcusean humanistic paradigm. The interminable pursuit of the bottom-line is promoting a highly curtailed understanding of what it means to be a human being. A humanistic approach has been replaced by undeliverable employer expectations in a labour-oriented archetype, which has led to de-humanising and ultimately enslaving of employees and non-sustainable organizations. Things which employees assume to be reasonable, are essentially far more unreasonable than they like to acknowledge. The dialectical nature of contemporary socio-economic developments in workplaces, including *inter alia*, the interminable pursuit of the maximization of value and profits, invariably leads to a curtailed understanding of employees as human beings. In this ethos there is an irrational nature in many of the things employers and employees take for granted. Capitalist societies in particular, oppress employees and reason and justice are subverted by the apparent attraction of materialism and accessible technological advances in a consumerist society. Employers need to promote humanistic organizational change initiatives in which they are generally more satisfied with their jobs at the start of their careers, and this is despite high levels of apparent stress. Unfortunately, the trend is for them to eventually develop a strong dislike for their chosen career. Hotel managers are urged to seek-out the reasons for negative perceptions and encouraged to develop strategies to mitigate employee attrition. The plethora of reasons for employee burnout require urgent attention if the industry is to remain sustainable. While human resources in hospitality are developing rapidly, the industry is still faced with the problem of a shortage of qualified personnel as there is a perception that the industry is far too stressful to work in. Service quality, management skills and the quality of employees are not enough, employees are simply unable to meet the needs of the industry due to stress and burnout. Recommendations are made based on a Marcusean philosophy, to promote a constructive and mutually optimistic work environment in which organizational leadership seeks to humanise the workplace, build capacity in employees, and foster integrity, innovation, empathy, trust and true empowerment. The need to create a more inclusive and human workplace that truly values individuals, and which does not steal their private time, is great, and this is significant when it comes to the ultimate desired growth and sustainability of an organization.

Keywords: Humanism, Marcuse, slavery, de-humanisation, alienation, exploitation

Introduction

Humanity is in a continuous state of fluidity and within this milieu employees in a workplace find themselves caught up in social limits within very specific social contexts. The modern workplace in consumerist societies, makes employees believe they are free. Is this the case? Jean-Jacques Rousseau stated "Man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains. Those who think themselves the masters of others are indeed greater slaves than they." (Rousseau, 2012). Rousseau considers a person's capacity for free choice as critical and links the connection between freedom of choice and morality as central tenets to his argument against authoritarian and repressive administration. He posits that a renunciation of freedom by individuals is contrary to human nature. To renounce freedom to someone else's authority is to divest one's actions of all moral principles (Wokler, 2014; Rousseau, 2012). In the



contemporary workplace, employees have become 'slaves' of the organization. What is of concern is that one's "whole self" is not attainable.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) asserts that work, one's personal dignity, family stability and harmony are more important than the acquisition of wealth. However. When one engages with the media one realizes that in the last three decades, the market has taken centre stage and markets have become an individual, and the media conveys this all-important message on a daily basis. The market may well be an important role player in society, but it is merely a mechanism, and a means of obtaining material objects, and of improving the dignity and quality of life of people. However, in the final analysis it is the people themselves who, through their diverse social interactions, create well-being, stability and peace for themselves and for others within the family and society (Peccoud, 2004).

Man is to an extent able to interpret and find value in life and alter his world but in the contemporary discourse, humanity appears to focus on only material gains. The pre-Socratic Greek philosopher Protagoras, asserts that "...man is the measure of all things" (Nuncio, 2014; Bartlett, 2016). While there is a preponderance of terms such "ethics", "corporate governance", "corporate social responsibility", "humanism" and "environmental responsibility", we would be blind not to see the reality that the contemporary Capitalistic system is robbing humanity of its core essence that "man as being the measure of all things" (Mintzberg, 1989; Etzioni, 1989; Mason and Stark, 2004).

There is thus no absolute truth, only that which individuals believe to be the truth. This kind of thinking was the precursor of the notion of anthropocentrism which birthed humanism. Corporations in which millions of people work are organic entities and subject to a range of changes in a dynamic environment in which both internal and external forces act. When change occurs this implies than an old way of doing things or even ones way of thinking changes and a new way of doing things or thinking comes to the fore (French and Bell, 1995). Change of course brings new challenges and provides new opportunities. When reviewing of change from a philosophical perspective, it is dialectical, and also developmental.

Methodology

A literature review was conducted to unveil approaches and activities which may be useful in examining the problem under study. The researcher recommends actions and strategies to be explored by organizations, and especially those in the hospitality industry. He has familiarized himself with previous studies, thus facilitating a discussion on the Marcusean humanistic paradigm, and hopefully stimulating new ideas on how employees should be treated in the workplace so that their human essence remains intact. The paper will help employers gain knowledge or a better understanding of the particular philosophical issues in question, namely workplace dignity, curbing the excesses of capitalism and mitigating the de-humanisation of labour as a moral responsibility.

The Hospitality Industry Context

It is approximated that about 28% of European workers suffer from stress in the workplace and 23% of them burnout (Paoli & Merllié, 2001). Studies demonstrate that there is a high frequency of stress and employee burnout in especially services such as hotels (Hsieh & Eggers, 2010). The hospitality industry requires employees who are dedicated to the tasks they need to carry out in what is usually a highly stressful and demanding workplace. This necessitates that employees remain 'in-love' with their chosen vocation (Alonso & O'Neill, 2011). The level of employee satisfaction in the workplace invariably impacts upon levels of customer satisfaction in terms of service quality provision by employees (Chi and Gursoy,



2009). Front-office employees are especially critical as the first line of service in a service-intensive sector such as hospitality. Managers of hotels need to constantly offer developmental support for employees in especially service quality and other high-skills that are required for them to provide the desired service to guests.

Instead, there are some managers who manipulate work schedules to circumvent awarding overtime — which usually kicks in after 40 hours weekly rather than with a daily allocation. The front office employees who work as the reception and marketing arm, are the initial point of contact with guests and their disposition is critical. They cannot conceivably liaise effectively with stakeholders if they experience a sense of disconnect in the workplace due to work overload. Depression is linked to turnover intentions of hotel employees in hotels (Karatepe, 2011). Employees cannot be expected to be professional or friendly in service interactions between themselves and guests when they feel completely out of sync with their work due to stress (Batt, 2000). When employees are tardy due to stress and do not effectively handle a guest issue, this will influence the guest's opinion of the service quality and impacts on their intention to return to the hotel at a later date or recommend it or not (Babakus et al., 2008). When employees burnout this is due to emotional exhaustion caused by sustained periods of exposure to stressful situations and demands of the hospitality industry (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). Managers thus need to be cognizant of this and take steps to mitigate it. This study scrutinizes the human resource and development (HRD) concept of organizational change with lessons to be learned in the hospitality industry. When employees are stressed this places huge burdens on employers and it also has financial implications due to increased levels of employee absenteeism, increased workplace accidents, greater employee health care, and greater employee turnover, and most importantly lower levels of performance.

The paper argues that human dignity is important in the workplace and beyond. The assertion is that employees are duped by materialistic gains and in a sense then complacently accept a loss of what it means to be a human being with dignity. It is important that social phenomena should be studied from a philosophical perspective rather than a scientific one and thus conceptual analysis becomes critical as it supplements learning by synthesising notions and practices. In this regard Herbert Marcuse is tapped into as a key proponent of the humanistic paradigm. This is not to say that empirical research has no role to play. Development is fundamental in all organizations, intrinsically then, a workplace democracy is one in which learning takes place (De Jong and Van Witteloostuijn, 2004) and this implies that human beings who are critical players in an organization are treated with dignity and respect as unique people.

Humanism

There is a preponderance of literature which suggests that corporate organizations are increasingly devoid of humanity. When human beings are productive in the workplace this can be normatively deduced as an outcome of having employees who are free motivated and tuned in to the mission and vision of an organization. We can assume that productive employees are also adequately compensated for the efforts. There are of course also other aspects that result in productivity in organizations. When employees are able to explicitly and dynamically interact, their experiences become valid assumptions of their activity. What one does in the workplace comprises social exigency. If the exigency is relatively broad inexperience it can follow the structure of society and is able to result in well-defined institutions. In such institutions we could argue that individuals work towards a common objective. Social institutions are then abstract models designed to interpret the facts of individual experiences (Bhaskar, 1989:4). Such analyses are termed methodological individualism but such a doctrine is limiting and reductionistic in its scope (Forbes, 1990:119) because in practical terms these are divide in the context between society and what it means to be an individual. While individual behaviours and actions are the criteria which make up a



society, the results of behaviours and actions are created by society. People have a responsibility to exist as individuals and also as human beings. From a moral point of view if people are the caretakers of humanity their normal value judgments should rest upon their volitions of and self-will (Nuncio, 2014; Brown, 1986). When we speak of humanism we argue that we should highly value human beings either as individuals or collectively. The source of morality and moral values and principles is individual human beings.

According to Karl Marx, the means of production were concentrated in the hands of merely a few with the preponderance of power residing in the hands of the capitalistic bourgeoisie who exploited the labourers. In this context, Marx said labourers would revolt and overthrow their oppressors (Berlin, 1963). While steps have been taken in recent times to curtail the abuse of labour, by guaranteeing minimum wages and providing a seemingly healthier work environment, employees in general still feel alienated as they do unfulfilling work despite the ability to be more involved in the materialistic society in which they live. They thus require better dialogue with employers to attain a greater spiritual human worth from the exertions of their labours, towards common organizational objectives. Ultimately, long-term value creation can't be achieved by treating employees as cattle (Hutton, 2015).

Herbert Marcuse and the loss of Humanism

Karl Marx's ideas of socialism were realized in the formation of the Soviet Union. While Marxism seemed a popular option, a number of Marxist philosophers harboured the opinion that communism as such was losing its core values which were based on Marxism (Marcuse, 1958). Such post-Marxist Critical theorists criticised capitalism as well as the Soviet Union under the authoritarian dictatorship of Joseph Stalin.

A number of these critical theorists were termed 'The Frankfurt School', and were stationed at the Institute for Social Research and University of Frankfurt, where they set out to establish a new type of Marxism containing ideas from sociology, psychology and even existentialists philosophy. The leading figures of this group of intellectuals included philosophers such as Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer and Herbert Marcuse. In this period the post-Marxist Critical Theorists were incorrectly categorised as "Marxist". What they promoted was the notion that one's personal morality is based on political ideas and structures. They all agreed on the common thread that very little of what one believes is in fact genuinely "ours" (Robinson and Garratt, 2009:116-117).

For the purpose of this study then, the focus is on Herbert Marcuse, the German-American philosopher, sociologist, and political theorist, who criticised the existing social order which was embodied in the advanced industrial society of the west. Marcuse won infamy with his theory of a "one-dimensional" society which delivered a highly critical perspective on contemporary capitalist and state communist societies. His idea of "the great refusal" won him prominence as a theorist of radical change and "liberation from the affluent society." He was undoubtedly one of the most influential *cognoscentes* in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s.

Marcuse specified that things do not seem as they are in reality so that for example, employees believing they are free because they have means to purchase the latest technology does not in fact make them free but slaves of technology. The crux is that humanism becomes a sublimated area of an individual (Nuncio, 2014). One's essence does not concur with one's being or existence. In Marcuse's critical theory then, one's reality is not demarcated by factual existence in a society but by a full realization of potential which is for the most part repressed by the way society is systematized. People should be free to critique what involves them and others (Marcuse, 1968b). According to Marcuse, "General happiness presupposes knowledge of the true interest: that the social life-process be administered in a manner which



brings into harmony the freedom of individuals and the preservation of the whole on the basis of given objective historical and natural conditions.”

He considered society to be repressive and somewhat dictatorial. He argued that people were complacent in enjoying material goods and were thus blinded mentally by the dictates what was regarded as a civilised condition. The wide range of material goods which were the result of increasing technology corrupted the masses of people who became reliant on its influx and did not really think about the repercussions of their actions. In his *One-Dimensional Man* (1964), Marcuse argues that people recognize themselves in the commodities they own find their soul in their motor vehicles, hi-fi sets, split-level homes, and kitchen equipment (Bleich, 1977). Marcuse espoused Marx's materialist dialectic but he did not abandon the critical insights he discovered in truly idealist philosophy.

In the consumerist societies human beings merely become extensions of the commodities they purchase. Commodities then become extensions of minds and bodies. Wealthy mass technological societies, are completely controlled and manipulated by the affluent classes. Marcuse asserted that the approach of the Frankfurt School was based on Marxism, but was nonetheless willing to criticize the failings of the then Soviet Union and also those of the Western world (Sim and van Loon, 2001: 39). Each had highly repressive “administered societies” with oppressive practices. In the Soviet Union, political repression was rife, while in the West, populations were and still are programmed to think and consume in a materialistic culture, in a way determined by capitalist rulers (Sim and van Loon, 2001: 41) in advanced industrial societies. This is problematic in itself as Marcuse suggests:

“The distinguishing feature of advanced industrial society is its effective suffocation of those needs which demand liberation also from that which is tolerable and rewarding and comfortable--while it sustains and absolves the destructive power and repressive function of the affluent society. Here, the social controls exact the overwhelming need for the production and consumption of waste; the need for stupefying work where it is no longer a real necessity; the need for modes of relaxation which soothe and prolong this stupefaction; the need for maintaining such deceptive liberties as free competition at administered prices. a free press which censors itself, free choice between brands and gadgets.” (Marcuse, 2007:9)

The forces of capitalism based on material culture, were beginning to triumph over the traditional left. In many countries of the west political opposition to capitalism was eradicated. The majority of people in society were happy to work along with a system which seemingly met by the material needs and which offered them a sense of personal security. In this scenario, the Marxist notion of class broke down and the working class effectively now also included the middle class which was at the intersection of the elites and the working classes (Marcuse, 1973). The middle class was equally exploited by capitalism that blinded it by the drive for material gains in a consumerist world. As technology advanced, the post-industrial society grew so that Marxist thinking began to dissipate and the masses in the working class could no longer be viewed as the saviours of mankind. Marcuse and others strayed from traditional Marxist ideas of how a revolution should begin. Within the context of capitalism, there are closed forms of dialogue in which alternative viewpoints are generally frowned upon and virtually impossible to obtain. In essence, the supremacy of Western civilization has practically destroyed any likelihood of political opposition under the polished appearance of “mass culture consent” (Sim and van Loon, 2001: 41). In this regard, Marcuse states:

“The criterion for free choice can never be an absolute one, but neither is it entirely relative. Free election of masters does not



abolish the masters or the slaves. Free choice among a wide variety of goods and services does not signify freedom if these goods and services sustain social controls over a life of toil and fear—that is, if they sustain alienation. And the spontaneous reproduction of superimposed needs by the individual does not establish autonomy; it only testifies to the efficacy of the controls.” (Marcuse, 2007:10)

Marcuse explained that capitalism obliges people to see themselves as one dimensional consumers and hoarders with a false set of needs. This is because they are constantly bombarded by a barrage of pseudo-images in which they believe they will find content and satisfaction and in this context Marcuse equates “...technology and domination as having a pandemic influence on mans’ logic of existence...this reality is a product of capitalism’s rationalization of human affairs ” (Nuncio, 2014:214).

Organizational Development in a Marcusean context

Marcuse was a key critical theorist of his era and offered philosophy a significant purpose within social theory and cultural criticism (Keller, 1984). Consequently, at the outset, it is important to state that critical theory is a normative consideration that is both historically and socially contextualised and it is thus a type of discourse which projects normative prospects which are yet unrealised but rather sensed in a specified social reality. The emergent critical theory of Marcuse strove to find synergy between a critical rationality and the historical analysis of a human beings social, economic and political being. This was so as to create a context in which the question of human happiness could be explicated. He ascertained that respective social realities present their own unmaterialized potentials, which are experienced as either deficiencies or needs.

“The philosophic concepts are formed and developed in the consciousness of a general condition in a historical continuum; they are elaborated from an individual position within a specific society. The stuff of thought is historical stuff—no matter how abstract, general, or pure, it may become in philosophic or scientific theory” (Marcuse, 1964).

The one-dimensional thought Marcuse relates to in his 1964 work, *One Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Society*, was a product of the then wider social supremacy of the affluent in society and it has important messages for us. He spoke of the “advanced industrial society”, and described how changes in production, consumption, culture and especially thought, shaped an radical state of conformity, in which the production of needs and ambitions of the dominant social groups integrated individuals into the conventional society. In this context, Marcuse always endeavoured to analyse the fluctuating conformations of capitalism and sought to relate socio- cultural changes to the vicissitudes in the economy. Marcuse tended to reinstate a Marxist means of thinking, that is, one which is in essence dialectical. Marcuse considered the surging inclination toward technological rationality which was an idiosyncratic rationality, and specific to capitalism, as something which seriously tended to undermine a human being’s rationality. It essentially robbed him of his or her capacity to reason critically (Marcuse, 1964). Individuals in the workplace abandon any capacity they have to oppose the status quo in which they are lulled into accepting material rewards in return for psychic enslavement and they become totally dominated by greed spawned by capitalism. It is also problematic when societies maintain they are protecting citizens and are places where freedom abounds, when people are not truly protected:



Can a society which is incapable of protecting individual privacy even within one's four walls rightfully claim that it respects the individual and that it is a free society? (Marcuse, 2007:249)

The current economic and social apparatus demands a human being's submission to the notion of efficiency, and its biased rationality is closed to any contestation. The world of work and even one's free-time are progressively being hyper-mechanised, "operationalised, and defined in narrow terms that erode individual agency" (Reilly, 2015). The submission of the employee is promoted through the proliferation of 'false needs' in a consumerist materialistic society and an improvement in measurable prosperity, but it is robbing human beings of their essential humanity as they become the slaves of the workplace.

Marcuse argued that freedom and satisfaction which was well earned by people should be viewed as universal some objects of the human beings conscious effort to exist. The essence of consciousness is pre-determined by human existence. Marcuse asserted that the universal state people desire should be grounded in their aim to develop (Nuncio, 2014). Nonetheless, individual people still need to move towards a collective mind-set for example, when viewed in the context of organisational development. This is because corporations are organic and mirror society given that the elements of societal structure are present in individuals the cultures and their environment and especially in the technology and in their values. Change does operate in corporations or the key issue is the development of human resources and a major issue of concern. The industrial society and its market economy, and division of labour and especially technological advances are factors which prescribe to contemporary humanity (Marcuse, 1970). In the dialectical nature of contemporary socio-economic processes in the workplace, many employees are simply automatons. Marcuse states that human beings have become mere robots that accept society:

Today this private space has been invaded and whittled down by technological reality. Mass production and mass distribution claim the entire individual, and industrial psychology has long since ceased to be confined to the factory. The manifold processes of introjection seem to be ossified in almost mechanical reactions. The result is, not adjustment but mimesis: an immediate identification of the individual with his society and, through it, with the society as a whole. (Marcuse, 2007:10)

Capitalist bosses have become irresponsible and bureaucratic and appear to be rational in their conduct towards employees:

The capitalist bosses and owners are losing their identity as responsible agents; they are assuming the function of bureaucrats in a corporate machine. Within the vast hierarchy of executive and managerial boards extending far beyond the individual establishment into the scientific laboratory and research institute, the national government and national purpose, the tangible source of exploitation disappears behind the facade of objective rationality. (Marcuse, 2007:35)

Employees have extrinsic motives, and this is because all individuals have physical needs that Maslow attests must be satisfied (Goud, 2008). Employees also have intrinsic motives and may for example, want to do a great days work after having learned something new. In addition they possess transitive motives considering but nonetheless require development in the workplace and not merely for the sake of the organization in which they serve (Frey and Jegen, 2001). The evidence on the ground suggests that employees for the most part are



slaves in the workplace who are according to Marcuse, merely appeased and feel no sense of worth, even while earning reasonable salaries.

The standard of living attained in the most advanced industrial areas is not a suitable model of development if the aim is pacification. In view of what this standard has made of Man and Nature, the question must again be asked whether it is worth the sacrifices and the victims made in its defence. (Marcuse, 2007:246)

Thus, the interminable pursuit of the notion of maximization of profits leads to a reduced understanding of the multifaceted and philosophical nature of Man. Employers need to make it possible for their employees to function as human beings with lives beyond organizational physical and mental walls, instead of human resources. A humanistic climate in the workplace in which there is an *esprit d'corps* and a coming together of minds between employees of an organization and their overlords is decisive for any organization to allow them to function effectively and be sustainable (Collins and Porras, 1991). Unfortunately, many CEOs are not rational beings and feel no need to adhere to any ethical code espousing humanism, and they believe their organization exists only to create wealth for shareholders, thus negating the worth of their main stakeholders, their employees.

Organizational Change based on Humanistic Considerations

The notion of the paradigm of Decent Work paradigm as espoused by the Declaration of Philadelphia in 1944, is that labour is not a mere commodity. As such, work cannot and should not be treated as simply another product on the market on which we place a certain "cost worth".

"It is true that the cost of production of a certain product includes the calculation of the cost of labour, which is in turn defined by the labour market. However, that which is a cost in terms of the production process is at the same time a human being; one is paying here for "something" called a human being, as well as for the material components. This is where the moral/ethical/values issue comes in because a person cannot be defined in terms of his or her relationship to society by the market" (Peccoud, 2004).

Treating employees as human beings is not taking a moral high ground, but doing the right thing. The enactment of human dignity in an organization is concerned with the mundane activities of working life, and it assesses the quality of activities in relation to the broader context, as well as the more fundamental levels of interaction and collaboration between people and within organizations (Bal, 2017). Surely, one may ask, is it not also a strategic task of employers to assist employees to develop the intrinsic and transitive motives they require in order to accomplish organizational objectives?

Karasek and Theorell (1992) assert that job stress is based on excessive work demands that exceed an employee's ability to handle. When stressful situations are sustained and employees are exposed to excessive work demands beyond their coping capacity, the result is often a sense of helplessness and ultimately burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). Are Employees not one of the most valuable resources organizations have, which allows them to remain competitive? Organisational change is not the only part of the capitalist way of thinking but requires consideration. Employees are by virtue of their positions change agents and need to collaborate with employers to bring about more humanised workplace arrangements. The main purpose of democracy in a workplace is to involve all employees in organizational



practices and the various decision making processes and above all to empower them to be engaged with all the essential aspects of the organization (Bal and De Jong, 2016), but they should not be dehumanised in the process. Employees thus need to change organizations from the base and be willing to take on the responsibility for this task or they will forever be automatons. There should be integrative recognition between employees and employers to ameliorate any differences in matters that relate to work hours, conditions of employment and other related aspects. Without necessary effective communications of their various expectations, neither party can achieve their desired objectives and there can be no hope for a collective consciousness. It is no good to use an organization's human resource department specialist/s to seek to humanise the workplace, even though they may be 'immersed' in change management initiatives, since they too are victims of the system (Nuncio, 2014).

There is a psychological contract in which an employee joins an organization, works well and is loyal and committed, and then obtains a salary (Sen, 1977), but is this enough? For Marcuse, a society without opposition is problematic and the unmatched prosperity of a consumerist society and workplaces and governments shutting down all possibilities of radical social change is a horrific contemplation given that the neoclassical economic theory promotes the notion of self-interest and value maximization and it disregards the interests and wellbeing of employees, while it remains far from ethical soundness (Ghoshal, 2005). Kant's Categorical Imperative which is a deontological moral theory calls on people to act in such a way that they always treat humanity, whether in one's own person or the person of any other, "...never simply as a means, but at the same time as an end" (Paton, 1971). Employees are not faceless or abstractions of humanity, but flesh and blood entities requiring nurturing, care and dignity in treatment. Employees have innate value and their humanity should not be diminished. Considered thus, the rightness or wrongness of one's actions does not depend on their consequences but on whether they fulfil our duty based on the utmost principle of morality (Uleman, 2010) and the Golden Rule. Rational beings must pursue certain "ends" by means of the suitable "means" (Luchte, 2007). Social anthropologists such as Evans-Pritchard (1950) contend that human beings are not mechanistically oriented but rather entities ruled by reason, emotions and choices and not likely to follow "causes" or inducements unless they are forced, other-determined, or feel a sense of stress and alienation, and are then objectified and become instruments. Stress is not conducive to sustainable business in terms of employee turnover and it makes employees feel very threatened and convinces them that they are unable to cope (Hayes & Weathington, 2007).

We may agree that human development activities within organizations are undertaken for the sake of improving the performance of employees, in order to advantage the organization, which then hopefully results in more competitive, lucrative, and resourceful organizational practices (Gilley, Egglund, and Gilley, 2002). Nevertheless, we should never downplay the human factor and we cannot thus simply view employees as mere instruments of the workplace (Lucas et al., 2013). The value of man as a change agent in corporate organizations necessitates human activity and a sense of labour consciousness. In this view, human activity in the workplace is in essence taken to be a derivative of human consciousness that must play a role in organizational changes (Nuncio, 2014). Consequently, work should imply the freeing of human beings from denigrating and derisive situations in which oppression is rife. Capitalism must be based on humanity in which justice prevails as stated by Adam Smith: "If justice is removed, the great, the immense fabric of human society...must in a moment crumble into atoms" (Bolderman, 2007: 1).

The workplace should cultivate virtue in human beings, in order for them to be truly devoted to their work and on doing the right things. Employees should benefit from the workplace but not simply in material terms. They should be urged to innovate, create, change and seek continual personal regeneration towards a full life (Collins and Poras, 2000). It is also important for organizations to demonstrate that they are not in business primarily to increase the bottom-line for shareholders but also operate to make a meaningful contribution to society



in general by driving social responsibility initiatives (Rhodes, 2016). Job stress has serious financial implications for businesses and it has been assessed as costing businesses about \$200 billion annually in the United States, £63 billion in the United Kingdom, and \$15 billion in Australia (Qureshi et al., 2013).

The individual development of employees, sound career advances, realistic performance management, and general organizational development, should be the key concerns of organizations when they desire a humanistic workplace. Only in this way can organizational performance be enhanced (Sen, 1977). Monetary rewards alone are being replaced by a new employee contract with employers based on the notion of continuous learning and the recognition of the human being who has an employee number. With this in mind, the mission of the Human Resources Department of an organization is not purely to serve the needs of the organization, but rather, to augment the lives of employees and guide them to improve themselves and realize their true potential as human beings (Avci, 2016). Smart organizations appreciate that their chief goal is to augment the performance of their employees since they are the catalysts that keep them developing, adapting, improving and transforming to remain sustainable.

It is important for employees to be able to truly identify with an organizations goals but they should not be duped into exploitation and slavery in the workplace. What is needed in the workplace is an employer's understanding that the employees are human beings and treated as such. Employees will then be able to identify with the organization's vision and mission and be motivated to work in tandem with others towards the attaining of common objectives. Hope comes to individuals when they work in a place which offers them prospects and treats them as flesh and blood entities. It is good to have prospects of a stable future, but what is equally important is having a happy present and be a human being. Fromm (1975: 147) provides a good definition of humanism when he asserts that Humanism is a system "...which is centered on Man, his integrity, his development, his dignity, his liberty. [It is based] on the principle that Man is not a means to reach this or that end but that he is himself the bearer of his own end. It is not just based on his capacity for individual action, but also on his capacity for participation in history, and on the fact that each man bears within himself humanity as a whole."

Employees often feel a sense of commitment to an organization which is somewhat enforced upon the by the world of materialism which captures them. Nonetheless, there are many cases where commitment to a workplace is enforced on them by external factors. Global economic insecurity and the thought of not having a job to go to obliges many employees to remain in the current workplace and if an alternative work option arose they would leave because of their sense of a lack of human dignity in their workplace (Cappelli and Keller, 2013).

Job satisfaction and happiness are important as they build self-esteem, motivate and humanise what is otherwise a mundane existence. Employees who are in a good space spiritually in the workplace are crucial to an organization's profitability and ultimate survival and also impact on competitive advantage. Employees are far more socially-conscious today and care less about bonus systems and more about their lives as human beings and when they obtain positive feedback for work well done and encouraged to do better when work is not well done, they feel they are fulfilling some greater existential cause and that they are truly emancipated. Democracy necessitates the deliberate choice by employees to commit themselves to an organization, and this should be based on the notion that they perceive the workplace to be a place which values them as human beings, and they thus become committed to happily be part of a group (Solinger et al., 2013). How one views one's work and oneself is far more important than capital acquisition. Work must be a source of dignity and family stability. This implies that employees should have time to be with their families and not be 'attached at the hip to workplaces'. It is the workplace in which an employee derives part of their sense of identity (Pecoud, 2004). The time is overdue for bringing humanity back into the



workplace and challenge employers and employees to look beyond material gains. A re-humanization is required in which ethics plays a great role in humanistic Aristotelian nous.

Crafting workplace cultures in which everybody in the organization is able to respect others and find true meaning to life, is highly desirable and requires an organization to be a learning one. While employees are increasingly responsible for their work outputs, are expected to develop their careers and keep up with fast technological advances, which are all good things, they are nonetheless repudiating their dehumanisation (Bauman et al., 2015) and accept their helplessness to have meaningful lives beyond the world of work due to their mental enslavement in a hyper- materialistic world. This is where the organization needs to make changes. A learning organization is one that facilitates the learning of its employees and continuously transforms itself for the good of all its stakeholders. In such organizations, there is a shared vision and there are mental models in the shape of beliefs and values and even assumptions that regulate how employees think. Learning organizations promote self-awareness of how an employee's individual behaviour influences others. Such workplaces exude a spirit of engagement and team learning where insights, knowledge and skills are shared with others in a systems thinking approach where complex interactions are promoted as employees reflect and new ideas emerge (Senge, 1990).

It is generally the case that human values such as decency, dignity, fairness, social justice, human security, dialogue, freedom and team spirit are in some or other way incorporated into organizational public statements of their vision and mission, and posted on the internet. In reality, these values are not realized in the workplace or broader society, in which case the public statements are merely a façade. In a material sense these statements are then just words, but when assessed from a holistic paradigm perspective in which there is identification with such values, they reflect an employee's state of "being". When an employee obtains what the ILO calls Decent Work, it suggests that there is a need for employees to realize higher levels of human dignity. Thus dignity is not simply material but somewhat of a state of being which embraces a person in holistic terms (Peccoud, 2004). So, while material, needs' and gains are important, the personal, relational, moral and spiritual dimensions of work cannot be overlooked. Work should then result in one's self-realization and transformation in the material as well as ethical and spiritual dimensions. What happens in reality however, is that employees, including their superiors, often misperceive their own ideal of the self with that of their organization's drive for value maximization.

Hegel stated that "Man has no essence. His essence is within his action". In terms of the argument then, once an employee cannot create and be innovative, but simply needs to make sure that the bottom-line grows for the organization, he cannot liberate himself and reach a state of wholeness, in which case he then loses the meaning to his life (Craig, 2013). Hegel understood that we do not see the world or anything in it directly, and that all our minds have access to, are ideas of the world, so when we believe the workplace is important for only material gain in a consumerist society, this becomes our reality. The workplace which is focussed only on the bottom-line, then shapes the ideas and consciousness of each individual employee and robs them of their humanity.

Research by Globoforce has determined that 92 percent of people spend more than 30 hours a week with colleagues, as opposed to only 52 percent who spend the same amount of time with their family. Why is it then the case when we know that human interaction and the existential satisfaction it brings are important aspects, but in the average workplace, human beings are not treated as such and expected to work late, to work at home and even to work on weekends? (Mosley, 2016). Organizations have become excessively engrossed on maximizing profits and shareholder value, and give credence to unethical actions to realise such an objective (Amann and Stachowicz- Stanusch, 2013). The WorkHuman Research Institute, states that 40 percent of employees have not been recognized in the past year by their employers who demonstrate a total lack of appreciation. Such inaction demoralizes



employees and negatively affects productivity levels, (Mosley, 2016) despite a good salary they may be receiving (Mosley, 2016).

Contemporary organizations can implement numerous strategic humanistic planning practices to augment employee satisfaction levels over and above pay levels. Numerous things make employees unhappy at work but they continue to serve due to the robotic receipt of their 'pay-cheque' at the end of each month, especially in environments in which there is no other option. For example, many a manager will abuse their power and authority and this leads to employees experiencing humiliation in the workplace. Idle threats and intimidation are also often used to humiliate employees. Employees are also robbed of their autonomy as they are micromanaged and lose any relevant decision-making ability. Employees seek self-worth, and need and want to be treated with respect and for their private life to be considered when they are given workloads that require twenty four hours a day attention and made slaves of the workplace.

A 2016 WorkHuman Research Institute survey, found that 92 percent of employees believe that recognition in the workplace made them feel more valued and 86 percent said they felt happier at work, while 85 percent feel more satisfied in their jobs (Mosley, 2016). Organizations can improve the quality of existing employees by offering wide-ranging training and development activities to those who require it and in this regard it is important to recognize that individuals have diverse and dissimilar perceptions. Thus it is equally important to get to understand people and their total environment, and that they have families and lives beyond work. Humanistic planning then becomes a strategic imperative in which raising the skills and abilities of current employees is essential, especially for younger employees. Participative management practices and clear support for creativity and innovation by employees will go a long way in promoting humanism in the workplace. This needs to be done in tandem with manageable goals and employee upskilling on an ongoing basis.

The workplace is in dire need of a relationship equilibrium as it is clear that the contemporary hierarchical authority and power residing in superiors is aimed at total control and enforcement (Stohl and Cheney, 2001). Corporate governance in organizations needs to support human beings as opposed to the current trend of human beings supporting corporate governance. Human dignity can be brought back to the workplace if there is a redistribution of power in organizations, so that peoples' personal time is not stolen by work and this notion becomes part of the culture of the workplace. This will generate a better levels of affinity for one's work, and also bolster awareness that employees are useful members of a larger collective with a fundamental set of values, and that all are working together to achieve common objectives. Power and authority must be distributed in a workplace via the mechanism democracy (Graeber, 2013). Democracy in a workplace is about reversing top-down management towards more equitable bottom-up approaches relating to organizing, change in organizations, and important decision making (Hamel, 2011).

Conclusion

True contentment and a meaningful life in the workplace and beyond, is a process of becoming and prosperity. The ancient Greeks called this moral philosophy *eudaimonia* (flourishing) and it is based right action as that which leads to the "well-being" of individuals, thus "well-being" has essential value. Organizations adopting an the *eudaimonic* approach, will tend to focuses on meaning and self-realization for employees and not only the bottom-line. The lack of legitimacy of the contemporary global economic system is based on the fact that it is not grounded on moral or ethical values but rather slanted values, where the notion of value is reduced to financial terms that advantage shareholders. In this system, a human being is merely measured in terms of profit they can generate for organizations or as consumers of material goods. In this equation, many employees become narcissistic and get caught up the ethic of self-preservation and lose what it is to human as they are captured by a consumerist mentality. Employees have been in the main made powerless by the smokescreen of material



prosperity and through the increasing overt and covert suppression of their critical thinking and opposing thoughts. However, today they want to be a part of something bigger than themselves, and feel a desire to contribute to the workplace in way that positively impacts their human experience from a humanistic perspective and not only one that is materialistic. A culture that exudes an ambience of humanism will attract new skilled employees and allow for the retention of employees. It will also increase the bottom-line business results and consider the planet and people first and foremost. Organizations should be crafting an environment which enables employees to experience their work as exciting and challenging, and as something which does not invade their private lives.

In hospitality, employees' start of being very enthusiastic about working in the industry but generally tend to develop negative current and future expectations after only a few years in employment which ultimately make them highly dissatisfied with their chosen vocation. This results in them leaving the industry after only a few years' service after a likely burnout in the workplace. What is required is a more humane and efficient management group who are able to consider employees as human beings with needs and wants. They need to constantly monitor the organizational climate and consider the expectations of all employees and especially their satisfaction, morale and stress levels (Erdogan and Gonca, 2017).

Human dignity must reside in all work relationships, and employees should emancipate themselves from the excesses of capitalism and purely material gains and importantly focus on aspects of their lives which make them truly human, for example, their family relationships and their true value to an employer as a unique person. What is required is a humanistic capitalism which is 'socially conscious'. This means that fundamental changes need to occur in economics so that there is a synergy between the profit and non-profit sectors so that needed social and economic changes can result. The 'Free market' is increasingly immoral and selfish as it enslaves employees. It may be argued that capitalism is highly moral as it calls for voluntary actions to take place between individuals, so that an employee is not forced to work for an organization, but accepts to do so. In reality is a zero sum game in which employees lose their humanity and are blinded to believe it is a positive sum game, in which one party works and another pays for the services rendered. In any event, organizations have too much power over the lives of their employees.

Marcuse asserts that capitalism has reached a stable point where it blinds employees to accept a status quo that is dehumanising. They are content to work in an organisation and adherence to any practices despite the dehumanising aspect of many practices. Sadly, when blinded by the materialistic culture in which we live, many employees are content to become robotic and be paid a salary, and allow themselves to be enslaved and alienated. Workplace respect for human dignity must be about diversity and equity, health and safety, quality, equal opportunity and transformation of unrealistic organizational work demands. Personal growth and development give employees a sense of dignity. Employees need to know that they are indeed making a difference and this is a basis for promoting self-worth. For employees, the spiritual and the materialist routes to happiness meet when they are treated as human beings. Many employers who voluntarily use immoral means to further their aims and those of greedy stockholders, thus need to embrace a "radical humanism" and implement corporate governance with a purpose of serving humanity rather than exploiting it. Human beings are not merely instruments, or resource in the service of an organization aimed at value maximization. If employees are managed more humanely, they can become an organizations greatest asset and provide a strategic competitive advantage.

It is critical for then for example, for hotels to attract personnel with the needed range of skills in language, communication, psychological profile and the wider soft and hard skills that are needed for operative work in the industry. The employee skills set is thus critical to success and once employees are suitably skilled, they are less likely to feel stressed and are thus far more beneficial to a hotel and likely to offer prime service quality excellence.



When employers are bent on making profits at all costs and conveniently turn the proverbial 'blind eye' to the human component that provides their affluence, and they basically confine and distort humanity and such employers require drastic transformation. The bottom line is that employees must function as human beings instead of been viewed as mere human resources. A humanistic approach in the happenings and communications is of the utmost importance in the workplace. Restoring a true sense and meaning to work, is non-negotiable in humanistic terms. Organizations should ask themselves how they can best support employees and consider their dignity and diversity in such processes. Organizations' which fail to invest in the task developing their employees in a humanistic fashion considering human dignity, will ultimately not prosper since their employees will be incapable or unwilling to walk the 'extra mile'. Human beings must be the absolute subjects in all societies and need to outgrow the notion that having flashy motor vehicles and other material goods, or millions in the bank, is the measure of all things.

Professional employee development and realistic workloads are vital for hotel to remain sustainable. Hotels employers need to elucidate to employees the realistic expectations they have for them and their prospects as employees in a hotel. Ongoing training is indispensable in developing the skills of hotel employees so as to help them cope within a stressful environment. In fact an investment in training is suggested even when an organisations turnover is high. This is because training diminishes the possibility of workplace problems arising (Poulston, 2008). A fundamental part of any organisation's efforts to accomplish competitiveness is to invest meaningfully in the skills development of employees. More importantly, employees need to be treated with respect and valued as unique human beings with varied and often unique challenges in life.

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