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Diagnosing a company's situation for organizational effectiveness between 2013 and 2017 - Case studies of chosen seaport companies

Summary:

The purpose of this article is to present a summary of studies compiled under research concerning a company's situation for organizational effectiveness of two selected Polish seaport companies from 2013 to 2017. Researched PH and TR companies operate in the same port area but it is not a direct neighbourhood. The ranges of activity of both companies do not overlap. The research is focused on a very specific procedure of diagnosing and positioning an organizational situation represented by both companies from 2013 to 2017. The situation is determined by a recognized level of organizational effectiveness or potential ineffectiveness caused by dysfunctions. The diagnosis is based on a qualitative, long, in-depth analysis of the organizational situation of the companies by means of the specific model, "The Business Life Cycle Model of Organizational Effectiveness Influenced by Dysfunctions". The measuring instrument (grading system) of this model is used to introduce the outcomes of the research work. All collected outcomes of each individual diagnosis gives the picture of an overall organizational performance of a given company annually, during the whole period of the research. The outcomes are adequately visualized on an appropriate scale, making the most of the model.

Keywords: business life cycle, diagnosing, positioning, organizational situation, organizational effectiveness vs. ineffectiveness, dysfunctions, seaport

Introduction

A port is place on a waterway (navigable water) situated at the edge of an ocean, sea, river, or lake with facilities (a manmade infrastructure and required superstructure put together¹) for loading and unloading ships. Usually it is a town or city with a harbour or access to navigable water where ships load and unload goods or passengers (dropping off and picking up). Sometimes it is the waterfront district of a city or town that has a harbour, or the harbour itself². In the era of globalization, the role of

¹ In business, infrastructure refers to underlying components of necessary elements that make business activity possible. Infrastructure is exemplified by such things as roadways and waterways; transportation; telecommunications; waste removal and processing; and power. (...) In contrast, superstructure refers to the overlaying construction of business activity supported by the infrastructure. The difference between the two is that the infrastructure forms the base or foundation of business activity, while the superstructure forms the facilities and operational procedures of business activity. Source: K. P. L. Hardison, In business, what is the differences between infrastructure and superstructure? www.enotes.com/homework-help/business-what-differ-infrastructure-superstructure-761947 (23.02.2018).

² See: The Free Dictionary of be Farlex, www.thefreedictionary.com/port and Oxford Dictionaries, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/port> or Collins Dictionary, www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/port, as well as Cambridge Dictionary,

ports turned out to be an extremely important place of trade. In particular, the international trade was and still is a critical component of an economy. According to Burns, "ports play a pivotal role within the supply chain system, as sea transport represents approximately 90% of the global trade"³. The European Commission appreciates the significance of ports for the European economy by stating in one of its documents: "Sea ports play an important role facilitating the European Union's external trade (90% of the total, in terms of weight) and internal market exchanges (40% of the total). They provide a service to many other industrial sectors and are nodal points of inter-modal logistic chains of key importance for the sustainable growth of transport in Europe"⁴. Discussing the importance of a port's role for the economy, Rodrigue and Schulman stated that ports „are capital intensive infrastructures that are associated with a wide array of economic impacts. Port development and world trade are closely interrelated. (...) Economic theory often refers to ports as important factors of economic development, particularly from an historical standpoint where they promoted commerce and the welfare of nations. (...) The basic argument is that ports expand the market opportunity of both national and international firms. (...) By expanding the market areas of firms, ports increase competition, resulting in lower prices for the consumers of the port traffic. These involve all sectors of economic activity, including manufacturing firms, heavy industries, resource extraction industries or retailers. Therefore, the economic benefits of ports are specific to the nature of the hinterland they service. They can be straightforward for hinterlands heavily dependent on resources, since the output is directly handled by the port, or more nuanced when the hinterland is involving manufacturing firms producing intermediate goods. Ports can be considered as "funnels" to economic development since they act as a catalyst and incite development to take place in specific economic sectors. Port activities have multiplying effects within an economy, which are much larger than the port itself. (...) This means for instance that ports remain fundamental to the economic well being of the nations, regions and localities they are embedded in"⁵.

There is no doubt about the fact that ports, which serve as gateways to international and domestic trade, play a vital role in the economy. Ports are becoming essential elements of the entire transport sector, which is directly related to the developing global economy. Today, for such reasons, ports have become much more important than in earlier times, because they play a key role in determining economic growth.

Polish ports also play a crucial role in terms of the economy, handling the vast majority of external trade for the country. It is obvious that international trade is a critical component of the nation's economy and Polish ports play a vital role in serving the nation's trade needs. Amongst other Polish ports, there are four which have the status "seaports of basic importance for national maritime economy". These ports are controlled and managed (administered) by seaport authorities for which conducting business oriented port operations are strictly forbidden. All specialized port operations focus on business (in the strict sense of "the business") can only be carried out by commercial companies.

The purpose of this article is to present, compare and discuss an organizational situation (condition) of two selected and surveyed commercial port companies based on their business activities for the last five years (2013-2017). Based on the results of these studies, adequate managerial implications for organizations will be suggested. It should be mentioned that both researched companies are separately subject to long-term research in the field of their situation associated with organizational effectiveness

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/port>, and also S. Kumar, What is the difference between a port and a harbor? www.quora.com/What-is-the-difference-between-a-port-and-a-harbor (22.02.2018).

³ M. G. Burns, *Port Management and Operations*, CRC Press Taylor & Francis Group, Boca Raton 2015, s. 37.

⁴ EU MEMO, *Importance of ports for economic recovery and jobs*, MEMO/12/317, Brussels, 11 May 2012.

⁵ J. P. Rodrigue and J. Schulman, *The Economic Impacts of Port Investments*, <https://people.hofstra.edu/geotrans/eng/ch7en/appl7en/ch7a5en.html> (18.02.2010).

since 1989 (two independent qualitative longitudinal research studies). Researched PH and TR companies operate in the same port area but it is not a direct neighbourhood. Because the study includes more than one single case, multiple case studies are needed. These multiple case studies focus on diagnosing the organizational situation of each researched company. The final results are introduced using the original application of "The Business Life Cycle Model of Organizational Effectiveness Influenced by Dysfunctions".

The conceptualisation of the model used to carry out the research⁶

The business life cycle model, as a theoretical construct demonstrates the hypothetical - to a certain degree purposely reduced and simplified (but not reduced too much and not overly simplified) -synthetic picture of organizational reality. This construct based on appropriately selected parameters introduces organizational effectiveness of a given company and its trends during a particular period. Constitutional construction of the model comes from the assumption that real business life is a cycle and consists of a predictable sequence of successive stages that an organization (company, firm) goes through. A business life cycle is the period that begins when a new company is born (and exists legally) and ends with its closure (dissolution of the company). The Life Cycle Model of Organizational Effectiveness Influenced by Dysfunctions helps recognize the manner, in which dysfunctions influence organizational effectiveness in companies doing business in an increasingly turbulent, complex and demanding environment⁷. Moreover, the model supports the organizational diagnosis and visualizes a synthesized picture of an organizational situation represented by the currently researched company. In this context, it should be noted that inevitably "(...) a modern business organization faces many formidable obstacles nowadays, caused by substantial changes of its most powerful but turbulent environment"⁸. Nevertheless, "in spite of these adverse circumstances, every single organization exposed to severe environmental changes has to cope with emerging difficulties daily in order to survive and being aware of risk creates better conditions for uncertain future"⁹. The model seriously supports the procedure of organizational analysis and assessment. This helps thoroughly investigate the organizational situation in the researched firm and, finally, synthesizes all the results and situates them properly on its scale. The concept of the model is based on a radical paradigm shift, from conviction of the permanent stability of the organizational environment, to the permanent organizational instability. This state of affairs, causing instability is not only real, but also more and more common, and in fact, almost ubiquitous phenomenon in the world of organizations, triggered by increasingly accelerating environmental changes and turbulences. The adoption of this new paradigm has led to a complete reorientation of organizational priorities. Instead of senseless quest for perfect balance, when it is not possible to achieve a state of long-term stability, companies should

⁶ Elaborated from: L. Bursiak, Organizational effectiveness of Polish small business in years 1982-2015 based on chosen example. Case study, *Firma i Rynek* 1/2016, Zachodniopomorska Szkoła Biznesu, Szczecin 2016, pp. 81-90, ponadto L. Bursiak, Organizational situation of harbour transshipment PH Company in years 1989-2014. Case study, *Firma i Rynek* 1/2015, pp. 5-18.

⁷ See more L. Bursiak, *Essentials of Organization Behaviour*, podręcznik akademicki, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Zachodniopomorskiej Szkoły Biznesu, Szczecin 2013, p. 7.

⁸ Quoted from L. Bursiak, *Essentials of...*, op. cit. p. 105 as paraphrase originated from L. Clarke, *The essence of change*, Prentice Hall. New York, 1994, p. 6.

⁹ Quoted from L. Bursiak, *Essentials of...*, op. cit. p. 105 as paraphrase originated from J. Bray, K. Brooke. G. Litwin, *Mobilizing the organization, Bringing strategy to life*, Prentice Hall, New York, 1996, p. 277.

concentrate their activities on reducing all identified deviations caused by organizational dysfunctions to an acceptable level and concurrently try maintain optimal level of effectiveness¹⁰.

Within the framework of the model, dysfunctional measurements are implemented with direct reference to attained level of organizational effectiveness or ineffectiveness, in harmony with principles governing the model, regardless of the sources and locations of organizational disturbances. After evaluation of the level of intensity (the power of influence) represented by detected dysfunctions, appropriate procedures for positioning the measurement results are carried out. These procedures consist of a cross-sectional distribution of the company's position on the scale of the model, within one of three explicitly dedicated phases (see figure 1). Each of these three phases contains six distinctive characteristics of intensity (see the description placed directly below the figure 1), which allows one to place and symbolically visualize an organizational situation of the given researched company in a manner consistent with the scope of the model validation¹¹.

The first phase within the model (look at Phase I in figure 1) embraces the left part of the model, which symbolically represents the organizational situation regarded as safe, with relatively small and relatively benign disorders (the zone of effectiveness). However, even within this part of the model there is omnipresent concern affiliated with the threat caused by possible increase in the number of organizational dysfunctions, having quantitative character¹² in a comparatively wide range of influential power of intensity (from very weak to critical). All organizational activities within the zone of effectiveness seem to be relatively safe, without direct risks jeopardizing the existence of the given company. Nevertheless, organizational insensitivity to occurring and increasing unsolved disruptions (dysfunctions) may lead to the critical point, where increased dysfunctions arrive at the border of effectiveness¹³.

When adverse changes creating dysfunctions go beyond the critical point located at the extreme position of the first phase, the company's organizational situation is classified as related to the second phase of the model (look at Phase II in figure 1). This dislocation brings qualitative change occurring between the first phase, where dysfunctions increase, and the second one, where they accelerate. Within the second phase of the model, even from the very beginning, the given researched firm enters the broader zone of organizational ineffectiveness which comprises two phases, the second and the third one. The second phase of the model, proclaims - throughout its whole range - that the company in question is ineffective, but its organizational situation is still reversible without using extraordinary solutions (emergency means). Unlike the second phase, the third location (look at Phase III in figure 1) is totally irreversible without making the most of extraordinary solutions. Acceleration of dysfunctions, within the framework of the second phase, leads to cross its critical point, which marks the boundary line ending range of the phase. The crossing of the borderline brings about a radical rearrangement of location and transition to the third phase of the model. This is a very dangerous situation, because uninterrupted escalation of dysfunctions can lead to start liquidation or even bankruptcy proceedings¹⁴.

¹⁰ L. Bursiak, *Pozycjonowanie firm start-up na skali modelu cyklu życia organizacji – metoda eksperymentalna*, [in:] A. Zelek (ed.), *Nowoczesna inżynieria finansowa dla firm start-up w Polsce w latach 2009-2010 – raport z badań skreeningowych*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Zachodniopomorskiej Szkoły Biznesu, Szczecin 2013, p. 274.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² Within each phase of the model, any changes in the level of dysfunctions have quantitative character. Only a potential dislocation between phases brings qualitative change.

¹³ L. Bursiak, *Pozycjonowanie...*, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 274-275.

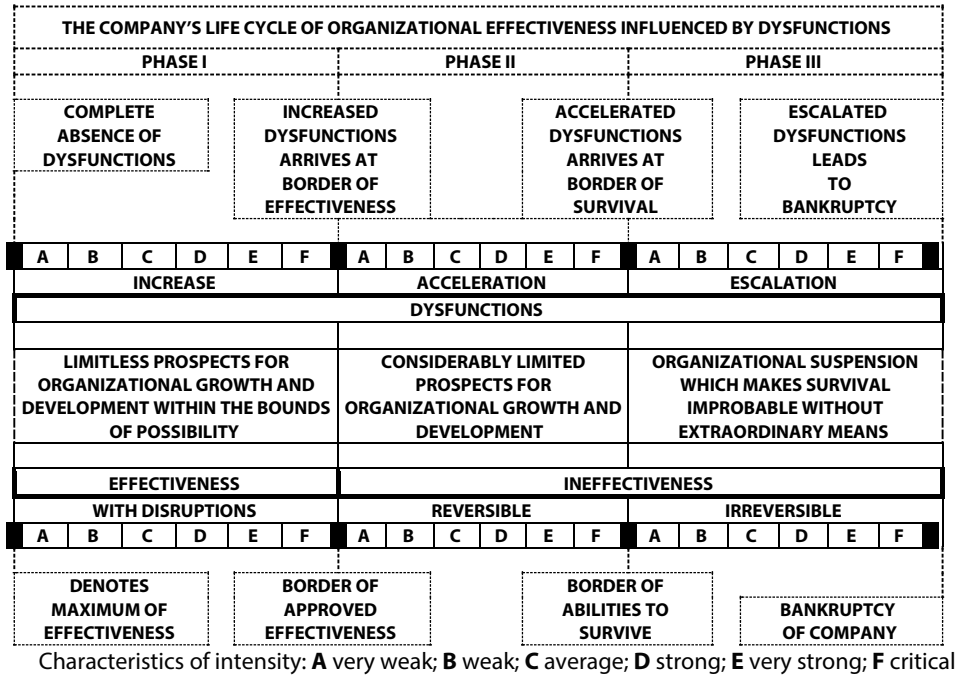


Figure 1. The concept of “The Life Cycle Model of Organizational Effectiveness Influenced by Dysfunctions”

Source: Based on: L. Bursiak, Pozyjonowanie firm start-up na skali modelu cyklu życia organizacji – metoda eksperymentalna [in:] A. Zelek (ed.), Nowoczesna inżynieria finansowa dla firm start-up w Polsce w latach 2009-2010 – raport z badań skreeningowych, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Zachodniopomorskiej Szkoły Biznesu, Szczecin 2013, p. 275.

Within the scope of the second phase, in contrast to the third phase, diagnosed organizational ineffectiveness can be reduced and reversed exclusively on the basis of own management actions and return to phase I (effectiveness) without the use of extraordinary measures. Therefore, in phase III, identical procedure are not possible without the implementation of extraordinary means, which are qualitatively much deeper issues than conventional managerial interventions. These extraordinary ventures may include one of two groups of defensive actions. The first, and the most expanded, corrective and preventive action is undertaken to protect the given company against highly probable bankruptcy which includes: (1) regulated by law (a relevant legal act) insolvency or restructuring proceedings also possible is (2) a merger with another legal entity (firm), (3) split up into parts, as well as (4) sale or (5) liquidation. The second corrective and preventive action is performed to create a shield as protection against almost inescapable bankruptcy¹⁵.

A further part of the considerations will concern some intended modifications within the model. Figure 2 shows the central part of the model introduced in figure 1 with some vital textual changes (pay attention and compare the changes in the middle part of the model).

¹⁵ Ibidem, pp. 275-276, see more S. Wrzosek Upadłość i likwidacja przedsiębiorstwa, [in:] J. Lichtarski (ed.), Podstawy nauki o przedsiębiorstwie, Wydawnictwo Akademii Ekonomicznej im. Oskara Langego we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 1995, p. 63.

A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F
INCREASE						ACCELERATION						ESCALATION					
DYSFUNCTIONS																	
LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES TO SUSTAIN EFFECTIVENESS						LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES TO RESTORE EFFECTIVENESS						LIMITED AND RESTRICTED POSSIBILITIES TO RESTORE EFFECTIVENESS					
EFFECTIVENESS						INEFFECTIVENESS											
WITH DISRUPTIONS						REVERSIBLE						IRREVERSIBLE					
A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F

Characteristics of intensity: **A** very weak; **B** weak; **C** average; **D** strong; **E** very strong; **F** critical

Figure 2. Central part of the model introduced in figure 1 with some vital textual changes

Source: Own elaboration based on: L. Bursiak, *Pozycjonowanie firm start-up na skali modelu cyklu życia organizacji – metoda eksperymentalna*, [in:] A. Zelek (ed.), *Nowoczesna inżynieria finansowa dla firm start-up w Polsce w latach 2009-2010 – raport z badań skreeningowych*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Zachodniopomorskiej Szkoły Biznesu, Szczecin 2013, p.276.

Figure 2 portrays a piece of the central part of the model shown in figure 1. Nevertheless, there are some significant changes in the contents located in the middle of the object of interest depicted in figure 2. These changes in the contents are as follows:

- Within Phase I; the phrase “Limitless possibilities to sustain effectiveness” from figure 2 replaces the phrase “Limitless prospects for organizational growth and development within the bounds of possibility” from figure 1.
- Within Phase II; the phrase “Limitless possibilities to restore effectiveness” from figure 2 replaces the phrase “Considerably limited prospects for organizational growth and development” from figure 1.
- Within Phase III; the phrase “Limited and restricted possibilities to restore effectiveness” from figure 2 replaces the phrase “Organizational suspension which makes survival improbable without extraordinary means” from figure 1.

All introduced shifts in the contents between figures 1 and 2 are very important from an organizational point of view, because they redirect an organizational perception to the problem of organizational effectiveness¹⁶. The shifts reflect the way, and extend to which, an organizational effectiveness is under the influence of organizational dysfunctions. Taking this into account, it should not be questionable that within the scope of Phase I of the model, possibilities to sustain organizational effectiveness are theoretically almost limitless. In Phase II organizational prospects are relatively limitless, but only with clear reference to potential restoration of effectiveness. However, in the case of a firm where its business systematically goes downhill, being classified as situated within scope of Phase III, restoration to complete organizational effectiveness is extremely difficult and requires compliance with strictly limited and restricted extraordinary means. To sum up this part of the discussion, it can be concluded that the changed and transferred textual contents introduced in the middle of the object depicted in figure 2 defines the extent to which organizational effectiveness can be sustained (within Phase I) or restored (unconditionally within Phase II, but with serious reservations within Phase III - bordering on the impossible).

The necessity, sufficiency and specificity of the research and presentation of synthesized organizational outcomes also requires some modification of graphics in the middle of the separated central part of the model introduced in figure 2. For this purpose, the space with textual description has been removed and evenly spaced for 5 horizontal row spaces. The rows have been created to symbolize twenty-six consecutive years of the period under research, from 2013 to 2017. Each row space is

¹⁶ Read more about organizational perception and its management in: K. D. Elsbach, *Organizational perception management*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associate, Mahwah (New Jersey) 2006

assigned to a specific year and are divided vertically into eighteen narrow columns. The intersection of a column and a row creates a small box. There are six boxes (cells) in every singular row per each particular phase of the business life cycle (together 18 cells within each row). Only one of the boxes (cells) within the horizontal space (marked with) represents a specified year in the model. This box shows the position of the researched company in a given year. Additionally, two black figures (two-digit number) presented upon a white box background, display a specific position of an organizational situation represented by the researched company in a given year. The two-digit number consists of two last digits of the year and is settled within one specific box with black background. The two-digit number "13" symbolize year 2013 and adequately "14" symbolize year 2014, "15" symbolize year 2015, "16" symbolize year 2016. The two-digit number "17" symbolize year 2017, the last year of the research. The two-digit numbers representing the year covered by the research are distributed horizontally along a row (line), and are respectively indicated as one of eighteen boxes (cells) assigned to each subsequent year. There should be the same number of rows (lines) in the model as the number of years covered by the study.

Vertically, the adequate box (cell) is an intersection of the identified row space of the model for representing consecutive years of the research, with suitable column space which reflects a specific level of intensity classified as a distinguishing feature (see characteristics of intensity below figures 1 and 2). As it is depicted in figures 1 and 2, each specific level of intensity of a definite feature is represented by capital letters arranged alphabetically. The order begins with letter "A" and finishes with letter "F". Characteristics of intensity represented by the letters means adequately: "A" - very weak; "B" - weak; "C" - average; "D" - strong; "E" - very strong; "F" - critical. When intensity of the feature achieves critical level it shows such accumulation of negative quantitative changes (dysfunctions) that it can cause qualitative change which goes beyond the critical point and, quite possibly, be classified as related to the next phase of the model. However, such situation within the third phase of the model may lead to the initiation of liquidation or even bankruptcy proceedings.

In accordance with the model's structure and assumptions, intensity of every distinguishing feature should be symmetrically related to the level of organizational dysfunctions and organizational effectiveness or ineffectiveness. Each year, within the model, is treated as a separated business life cycle (from the beginning to potential closure). All consecutive years following year 2013 (until 2017 inclusively) are considered as separated life cycles. However, all outcomes gathered together within the model constitute a complete, clear and integrated picture of an organizational situation ascribed to the researched company during the period from 2013 to 2017.

The procedure of data collection and method employed to get and to show the final results¹⁷

In accordance with the scope of this research procedure, interviewing was a key method of data collection. The extensive, in-depth interview was held with the management representative who had direct and indirect access to all key information about a given company. Two extensive and content related face-to-face interviews were conducted. The interviews were fairly informal and the participant engaged in a form of interactive, spontaneous communication, conversation or discussion rather than in a

¹⁷ Retrieved from L. Bursiak, A practical application of allostasis as a remedy for organizational homeostasis devastated by turbulent environment based on chosen example (case study), *Firma i Rynek* 1/2017, Zachodniopomorska Szkoła Biznesu, Szczecin 2017, pp. 17-30, which was elaborated from L. Bursiak, Organizational effectiveness of Polish small business in years 1982-2015 based on chosen example. Case study, *Firma i Rynek* 1/2016, Zachodniopomorska Szkoła Biznesu, Szczecin 2016, pp. 81-90.

formal question and answer procedure. The benefits of this approach was that all obtained information and research data were richer, with a deeper insight into the phenomena under-researched areas.

The interviews defined as unstructured, contained one single structured element. Each time, immediately after the introduction, a financial situation of a given company based on a financial statement was introduced and discussed. The final evaluation of the financial situation as a first step in the procedure, enables to take another step towards considering the financial position of the researched entity on the scale of the model. This position is the starting point for further considerations because the established financial situation reflects only a part of an overall organizational situation.

In many cases, unexpected organizational dysfunctions deteriorate considerably the picture of the general organizational situation, despite satisfactory financial results. This statement is based on the own relevant research in this area which was accomplished by combining simultaneously (an integrated presentation) the model of a financial and organizational situation of some deliberately selected business organizations. These studies have confirmed the possibility of significant discrepancies between the financial and organizational situation¹⁸. This is why, the following discussion, during the interview was focused on all other remaining aspects of organizational performance. Taking into account their validity, all collected data had to be sufficient enough to allow the participants (interviewee and interviewer) to make a conclusive assessment of the entire organizational situation in the business referenced to each year over the period considered (from 2013 to 2017 inclusively). The conclusive assessment is crucial not only for the research purpose, but also for providing potential effective countermeasures against the organizational effects of dysfunctional economic activities. Proper ordering and interpretation of the obtained qualitative data allows to create a qualitative diagnosis of organizational effectiveness. The overall picture of the phenomenon is obtained by identifying the positioning path on the model scale of all individualized diagnoses assigned to subsequent years of the study. Due to the research method used, the subjective impact of the researcher and the respondent on the results of the research cannot be entirely ruled out. There may have been some minor lack of objectivity, but they were constantly detected and completely removed from the research material. Additionally, the degree of these subjective effects is so negligible, and the degree of generalization is so high that the synthesized results of conducted research correspond to established research objectives.

Integrated presentation and interpretation of the results

Two port companies covered by the research are located in one of four Polish seaports of basic importance for national maritime economy. The primary business activities that PH company was founded and is still focused on are the efficient storage and transshipment of dry bulk cargo. A different scope of port operations is implemented by TR company which includes such activities as: loading and unloading vehicles and freight from vessels, transshipment of intermodal transportation units and passengers.

The picture of an organizational situation of TR company during the period under consideration covering the years 2013-2017 is introduced in Figure 3. The Figure occurs as the integrative model depicting organizational effectiveness of seaport company TR, being a consolidated view of its organizational situation in years under research. Taking all this into account, it should be noted that the organizational situation of this company was very satisfying throughout the years 2013-2014, and the most satisfying in years 2015-2017 (Figure 3).

¹⁸See L Bursiak, *Pozycjonowanie firm start-up na skali modelu...*, op. cit., p. 313.

A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F
INCREASE						ACCELERATION						ESCALATION					
DYSFUNCTIONS																	
	13																
	14																
	15																
	16																
	17																
EFFECTIVENESS						INEFFECTIVENESS											
WITH DISRUPTIONS						REVERSIBLE						IRREVERSIBLE					
A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F

Characteristics of intensity: **A** very weak; **B** weak; **C** average; **D** strong; **E** very strong; **F** critical

Figure 3. Integrative model depicting organizational effectiveness of seaport company TR, as a consolidated view of its organizational situation in years 2013-2017

Source: Own elaboration based on: L. Bursiak, Raport sporządzony na podstawie własnych, pogłębionych badań jakościowych sprawności organizacyjnej firm portowych TR i PH, prowadzących działalność gospodarczą na wydzierżawionych terenach portowych (tytuł do terenu: wieloletnia dzierżawa terenu wraz z infrastrukturą) należącym do Zarządu Morskich Portów Szczecin i Świnoujście S.A. Badaniami objęto lata 2013-2017, Zachodniopomorska Szkoła Biznesu w Szczecinie, Świnoujście 2018, Część 1.

Throughout the entire period under consideration, the organizational situation of TR company was located at the beginning the first phase within the model (in its very left part), which symbolically represents the organizational situation considered to be very safe (the zone of effectiveness). During the first two years of the period under examination (2013-2014) the strength of organizational dysfunctions affecting the company was diagnosed as "weak". In the next three years (2015-2017), the impact of emerging deviations was specified as "very weak" (see Figure 3). The improvement of the company's organizational situation was undoubtedly influenced by debt repayment, infrastructure and superstructure investments, as well as an exploration of new organizational solutions. In 2015, the new pier for loading and unloading the ships was put into exploitation in the TR company. The company, in 2016 bought a new loading and unloading vessels equipment, and in 2017 implemented intermodals in cooperation with a neighbouring company. In addition, one of the ramps has been modernized, increasing the range of services provided¹⁹.

An organizational situation of PH company was also diagnosed and located within the first phase of the model, which is considered to be safe (the zone of effectiveness). However, its location in the model allows to draw the conclusion that the situation was comparatively less advantageous than TR (compare the respective items of the diagnosed organizational situations of each of the surveyed companies presented in Figures 3 and 4). During the entire period considered, the best organizational situation of the TR company took place in 2013, when the strength of dysfunctional interactions was defined as "average" (see Figure 4). The next three years (2014-2016), were characterized by slight deterioration of the organizational situation of the examined entity, stabilized at the level of dysfunctional interactions defined as "strong". In the last year of the examined period (2017), there was a further aggravation of the organizational situation to the level of dysfunctional intensity identified as "very strong" (see Figure 4).

¹⁹ Own elaboration based on: L. Bursiak, Raport sporządzony na podstawie własnych, pogłębionych badań jakościowych sprawności organizacyjnej firm portowych TR i PH, prowadzących działalność gospodarczą na wydzierżawionych terenach portowych (tytuł do terenu: wieloletnia dzierżawa terenu wraz z infrastrukturą) należącym do Zarządu Morskich Portów Szczecin i Świnoujście S.A. Badaniami objęto lata 2013-2017, Zachodniopomorska Szkoła Biznesu w Szczecinie, Świnoujście 2018, Część 1.

A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F
INCREASE						ACCELERATION						ESCALATION					
DYSFUNCTIONS																	
		13															
			14														
				15													
					16												
				17													
EFFECTIVENESS						INEFFECTIVENESS											
WITH DISRUPTIONS						REVERSIBLE						IRREVERSIBLE					
A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F

Characteristics of intensity: **A** very weak; **B** weak; **C** average; **D** strong; **E** very strong; **F** critical

Figure 4. Integrative model depicting organizational effectiveness of seaport company PH, as a consolidated view of its organizational situation in years 2013-2017

Source Own elaboration based on: L. Bursiak, Raport sporządzony na podstawie własnych, pogłębionych badań jakościowych sprawności organizacyjnej firm portowych TR i PH, prowadzących działalność gospodarczą na wydzierżawionych terenach portowych (tytuł do terenu: wieloletnia dzierżawa terenu wraz z infrastrukturą) należącym do Zarządu Morskich Portów Szczecin i Świnoujście S.A. Badaniami objęto lata 2013-2017, Zachodniopomorska Szkoła Biznesu w Szczecinie, Świnoujście 2018, Część 2.

As it has already been articulated, the PH company conducting its activity in 2013-2017, had a slightly worse organizational situation than TR in the same period. As it has already been expressed the PH company, conducting its activity in the years 2013-2017, had a slightly worse organizational situation than TR in the same period. In addition, the results of 2014 deteriorated slightly compared to the previous 2013 year, which worsened the company's organizational situation from its position identified as "average" to "strong" (see Figure 4). The reason for this deterioration were economic results worse than in the previous year, caused by temporary shortages of cargo handling goods. Freezing this situation at the same level for the next two years (2015-2016), was mainly caused by the introduction of strategic changes in ownership structure (transfer of shares), which significantly influenced the business management. Additionally, in 2016, the company undertook the modernization of existing chemical storage to crop storage facility. Modernization has excluded the facility from operation. At the beginning of the year 2017 was noticed a dramatic shortage of loads, which was reflected in the organizational situation of the company under the study (see Figure 4)²⁰.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article was to present a summary of the studies compiled under research concerning the organizational situation of two selected Polish seaport companies between the years 2013-2017. The summary was prepared on the basis of "The Business Life Cycle Model of Organizational Effectiveness Influenced by Dysfunctions". As the research has shown that even if the surveyed companies are positioned within the model in the same its phase throughout the whole period considered, it does not have to mean that their organizational situation is identical. The model will show these differences.

²⁰ Own elaboration based on: L. Bursiak, Raport sporządzony na podstawie własnych, pogłębionych badań jakościowych sprawności organizacyjnej firm portowych TR i PH, prowadzących działalność gospodarczą na wydzierżawionych terenach portowych (tytuł do terenu: wieloletnia dzierżawa terenu wraz z infrastrukturą) należącym do Zarządu Morskich Portów Szczecin i Świnoujście S.A. Badaniami objęto lata 2013-2017, Zachodniopomorska Szkoła Biznesu w Szczecinie, Świnoujście 2018, Część 2.

Summarizing the results of the conducted research, it should be stated that TR company performed very well under its management throughout the period covered by the study. In this situation, the appropriate managerial recommendation would be to concentrate efforts on maintaining this result at such a high level in the future. In regards to the PH company, its situation was relatively good but not as excellent as the TR company. It is recommended to take appropriate allostatic measures (actions) to improve effectiveness.²¹

Diagnozowanie sytuacji firmy pod względem efektywności organizacyjnej w latach 2013-2017 - Studia przypadków wybranych firm morskich

Streszczenie:

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest przedstawienie wyników badań sytuacji w zakresie efektywności organizacyjnej dwóch wybranych polskich przedsiębiorstw portowych w latach 2013-2017. Badane przedsiębiorstwa PH i TR działają w tym samym porcie, ale nie w bezpośrednim sąsiedztwie. Zakresy działalności obu tych przedsiębiorstw nie pokrywają się. Badanie koncentruje się na bardzo specyficznej procedurze diagnozowania i pozycjonowania sytuacji organizacyjnej reprezentowanej przez badane przedsiębiorstwa w latach 2013-2017. Przedmiotową sytuację określa rozpoznany poziom efektywności organizacyjnej lub potencjalnej nieskuteczności spowodowanej dysfunkcjami. Diagnoza opiera się na jakościowej analizie sytuacji w zakresie efektywności organizacyjnej przedsiębiorstw za pomocą modelu sprawnościowo-dysfunkcyjnego cyklu życia organizacji biznesowej.

Słowa kluczowe: cykl życia biznesu, diagnozowanie, pozycjonowanie, sytuacja organizacyjna, efektywność organizacyjna, dysfunkcje organizacyjne, port morski.

