

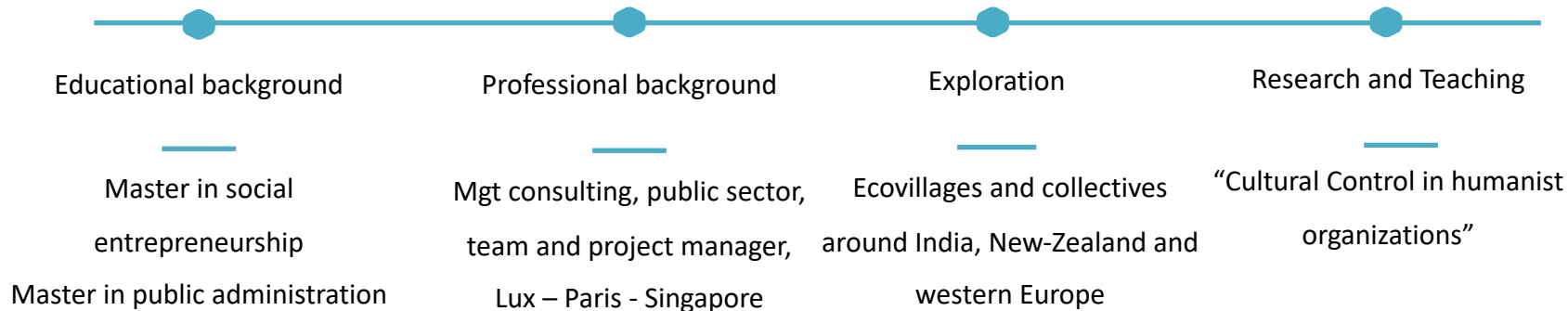


Demystifying self-managed organizations: principles, opportunities and threats

Louise Colling – June 24th 2023

Universidad Pacífico, Lima

Journey towards research on self-management



1. Introduction

2. Understanding SMOs
3. Impact of self-management
4. Operating modes
5. Conclusion

Your interest and understanding of SMOs

1. What is the first word that comes to your mind when you think of self-managed organizations?
 2. Are there any specific elements you would wish to clarify today?
- ▶ <https://app.wooclap.com/events/GIEIZH>



Welcome

- ▶ Organizations pressed to become places of personal and societal development (Wyrzykowska, 2019)

7 in 10

Job applicants
to prioritize CSR

**Cooney et al., 2022*

Decentralization
and **collaboration**
as hygiene factors for
Millennials

**Mustafa et al., 2022*

8%

of organization
applying self-
mgt practices

**Seidman, 2016*

Objectives

- ▶ Understand the characteristics of SMOs, from the ideal vision to the multiple and imperfect reality, and navigate through the broad spectrum of related concepts
- ▶ Developing a critical view of self-management, including freedom-washing and informal autocracies/oligarchies
- ▶ Discovering specific ways of operating in self-managed organizations



Raising your interest and inspiring you for your/the future...

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Definition and typology

- ▶ Organizations that “radically decentralize authority in a formal and systematic way” (Lee & Edmondson, 2017)



Post-bureaucratic



Humanist



Democratic

Flexibility, creativity	Individual satisfaction	Equality
Network, project-based org.	Liberated, Teal organizations, Deliberately Developmental org.	Cooperatives

The spectrum of autonomy



Post-bureaucratic
Autonomy of means



Humanist
Autonomy of purpose



Democratic
Autonomy of ownership

**Inspired by Lee and Edmondson (2017) and Brière (2017)*

Illustrations



Post-bureaucratic



Humanist

DECATHLON



Democratic



A zoom on humanist organizations

<i>Deci & Ryan (1985)</i> Self-satisfaction	Relatedness	Competence	Autonomy			
<i>Melé (2003)</i> Humanistic mgt	Unity	Virtue				
<i>Getz (2009, 2011)</i> Liberated org.		Support for growth	Self-direction	Intrinsic equality		
<i>Laloux & Blanchard (2015)</i> Teal org.		Wholeness	Self-governance		Evolutionary purpose	
<i>Lee & Edmondson (2017)</i> Humanistic mgt	Team-based work	Self-development	Autonomy and influence			Transparency

An ongoing reflection and research on “chosen alienation”

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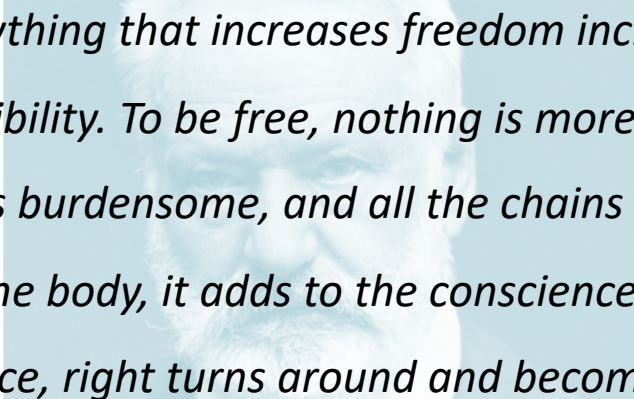
Opportunities for SMOs

- ▶ Enhanced innovation and creativity
- ▶ Reinforced EVP in a context of war on talent, great resignation
 - Flexibility, autonomy, democracy expected by Millennials
 - Ratchet effect following the pandemia
- ▶ Relevance to address global challenges (Moreno Romero et al., 2020)



Threats for SMOs

- ▶ Freedom-washing and superficiality (Brière, 2017)
 - Self-management as a lever for engagement leading to exploitation, psychosocial risks
- ▶ Getting lost in time and meetings
- ▶ The “tyranny of structurelessness” (Freeman, 1973)
 - Study on the women’s liberation movement
 - Informal oligarchies of elites
 - Recommendations :
 - › Delegation of specific authority by democratic procedure
 - › Requiring responsibility
 - › Distribution of authority among as many people as is reasonably possible
 - › Rotation of tasks among individuals
 - › Allocation of tasks along rational criteria
 - › Diffusion of information to everyone as frequently as possible
 - › Equal access to resources needed

A portrait of Victor Hugo, an elderly man with a full white beard and mustache, wearing a dark suit and a white cravat. The portrait is overlaid with a semi-transparent light blue rectangle.

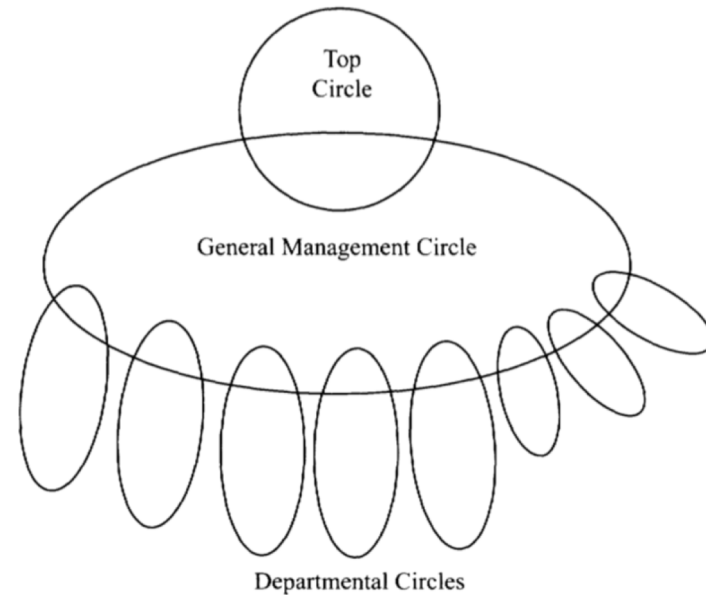
"Everything that increases freedom increases responsibility. To be free, nothing is more serious; freedom is burdensome, and all the chains it removes from the body, it adds to the conscience; in the conscience, right turns around and becomes duty."

V. Hugo, Actes et Paroles

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Introduction to holacracy

- ▶ ὅλον – a synthesis of collectivity and individuality
- ▶ Circle structure – hierarchy of missions
- ▶ Roles instead of job descriptions
- ▶ Elections without candidates
- ▶ Decisions based on consent
- ▶ Double reporting



**George & Romme (1999)*





Cultural and personnel control

- ▶ Construction of a **strong and shared organizational culture**, where internalization of values, symbols, action logics ensures that members **act towards organisational objectives**, through **self- and peer regulation** (Etzioni, 1961; Ouchi, 1979)
- ▶ Methods of introduction: sourcing of candidates, selection, acculturation and identity management, sociabilization and fun management, D&I
- ▶ In opposition to direct, ex post forms of control

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Lightbulb moments

- ▶ What is the information, element of this course that you found most interesting ?



<https://app.wooclap.com/events/GIEIZH>

Key messages

- ▶ SMOs have a large potential
- ▶ There are many aspects of SMOs to consider
- ▶ SMOs should be approached with realism and professionalism



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Thank you for your attention !

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