

REVIEW

of the dissertation ***RATIONAL AND EMOTIONAL INFLUENCES ON THE DEGREE OF SUCCESS OF MEDIATION,***

submitted by Yael Sne, Israel,

a dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D. in 05.02.24 Organization and Management (Mediation in Resolving Arguments and Conflicts)

Reviewer: Prof. Encho Gerganov, PhD

The research in the doctoral dissertation of Yael Sne is a successive attempt to demonstrate the role of rational and emotional factors in the process of mediation for conflicts resolution. The main goal of the research is to “examine the different parameters of the mediation process as an instrument for the prediction of its chances of success...” and more specifically the author aims at answering the question: “to what extent do rationality and emotion influence the degree of success of the mediation process?”. These are topical issues and the results from their research are very important for the theory of conflict resolution by mediation, on the one hand, and the practice of negotiation management, on the other hand.

The content of the dissertation is structured into five chapters with strong thematic frameworks and well-defined logical links between them. In addition the chapters are subdivided into parts with informative titles directed to the essential ideas about the issues in consideration.

The research goals, questions and motivations are presented in the Introduction. Yael Sne defines them in a readable and clear way with the focus on the nature of the mediation and possible factors that could influence the degree of success of the mediator process. She derives two main groups of factors from this analysis – rational and emotional, and argues for their significant roles in this process. Furthermore the author

organises the research according to the importance of these factors for the mediation.

In the second chapter Yael Sne has reviewed the literature closely related to the main goals of the research. Special parts are devoted to the literature about the both constructs – rationalism and emotions. Philosophical, social and psychological aspects of rationalism are discussed in a broader contexts but the author allays takes into account the role of rationalism in the behaviour of people, in their social functioning and especially in their decision making activities. In the beginning of the review Yael Sne focuses on the nature of this construct and especially on the three types of rationalism specified by Leivovitz – scientific rationalism, constructivist rationalism and instrumental rationalism. The semantic contents of these constructs are revealed in a best way. Specific functions of the separate types of rationalism in the society are illustrated with salient examples. For instance, the author assigns the San Simon's concept of productivity (as the most important economic principle) to the category of constructivist rationalism. Another example is the statement of Ralf Dahrendorf that planning is also a type of constructivist rationalism. Here Yael Sne considers many other concepts of rationalism like formal rationalism in the sociological theory of Weber and Carl Manheim, the substantiative model of Karl Polanyi, Nash model of economic equilibrium, the Prisoner's Dilemma in the game theory etc. Most of these constructs are considered in the framework of the decision making theories which explain one of the most important activity in the process of mediation – decision making in conflict resolution. As the decision making is a crucial event in conflict resolution I would like to ask the author of this dissertation about the Prospect theory of Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky as a model of decision under risk. Do you think that this theory could be useful in the process of conflict resolution by mediation? The question aroused me because I did not find reference on this theory and I thought that the

author of the dissertation considered it as a theory which is not relevant to decision making in conflict resolution.

Emotions are considered in the next part of this chapter. The author overviews the major theories of emotions together with related psychological constructs and describes how the emotions could influence on the mediation. She discusses the recently developed theory of emotional intelligence and its behavioural correlates. Moreover Yael Sne expands the scope of psychological theory beyond the emotions and includes in the consideration the theory of attribution, personality traits theory etc. In such a way she enriches the approaches to the research on main topics. The author of dissertation shows quite well and convinced why the attributions play an important role in the mediation. In a similar way she demonstrates how some personality traits of the participants in negotiations are crucial with respects to the successful outcomes.

Leaderships and emotions are subjects of the next division. Here the author discusses such issues as how emotions are managed in an effective leadership, the integral role of emotions and emotional skills in the everyday lives of leaders, what kind of traits contribute to the effectiveness of leadership, Big Five approach to personality as an effective way to understand leadership traits and their manifestations etc.

In the fifth section "Success" Yael Sne describes models which ensure success of the mediation in a process of conflict resolution. She lists characteristics of transformative mediation according to Bush and Folger, gives six types of resources that people may convert from one to another in negotiations, proposed by Foa and Foa, Giving Trust model of Rooter and his constructs of internal and external locus of control etc. Despite of these more general frameworks of successive mediation Yael Sne presents specific models of negotiation like sources-of-power model of French and Raven, Understanding the perspective of the other side, suggested by Yuri and Fisher, Larkin's model of conflict resolution. Further

she describes different styles of mediation like enabling mediation, evaluative mediation, formative mediation, agreement-focused mediation etc.

All these topics are considered in the relevant theoretical frameworks together with some operational procedures which made them usable in practice. I would like to stress on the ability of the author to extract the essentials of the theory in consideration and to focus on the social context where each theory works in the best way.

The author's own research on mediation is given in the third chapter "Methodology". The research methodology includes three methods which are typical for the general method of case study – interviews, case analysis and participative researcher. The most part of this section consists of the stories of the representatives of three sides participated in the conflict resolution process – the mayor of the city of Beersheba, the CEO of *MetroDan* and the head of the Workers Committee. The model of mediation in this concrete case of conflict resolution process is given. The model includes all parties in the process and functional pathway between them. The role of mediator is also defined very well. The author bolds and underlines all places in the stories closed to the different factors which influence the degree of success of the mediation process. However there are no comments and discussion here on the bases of research framework, goals, tasks, hypotheses etc. This is done in the forth chapter "Discussion".

The three stories are used as sources of evidences of many facets of the mediation in the conflict resolution process, discussed in the different theories. In this chapter Yael Sne "analyzes the goal of the research, the research questions, and the research hypotheses, through the reference of the professional literature to the research topics." The author has found evidences for rationalism in the behaviour of participants in the negotiations. Many places of their stories are recognised as manifestations

of rationalism of different types. Yael Sne attempts to explain them in the context of their influence on the mediation in the conflict resolution process. Analogically she interprets some behaviour of the peoples included in negotiations as emotional manifestations that impedes to reach successful conflict resolution or facilitate this process.

In the last chapter “Summary, conclusions and recommendations” Yael Sne exposes her original model of mediation in the process of conflict resolution she named as **REUT** – an acronym of **R**ational **E**motional **U**nbelievably **T**ake a balance. Moreover she uses it as an interpretative instrument to explain many aspects of the mediation process driven from the stories as sources of empirical data about the influence of the rational and emotional factors on the degree of success of mediation. The explanations are very rich and persuasive.

In conclusion I can say that the dissertation consists of substantial contributions to the theory and practice of the mediation in the conflict resolution process. The author has revealed new aspects of the models of this process and has given convinced evidences how they work in real cases needed of mediation in conflict resolution.

The doctoral dissertation of Yael Sne makes a valuable contribution to the mediation in the conflict resolution process. I recommend the Committee to accept it and to assess it with the highest mark.

Sofia, 10.05.2009