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Consumerism – Consequence of the Absence of Ethics

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Abstract- Consumerist society is the consequence of the philosophical movement that started to form at the end of the Second World War. Dynamic development of technology required by the war needs started to be asserted in peace conditions of management mainly in information technology and computing.

The philosophy of management reacted on the changes resulting from the political development and the post-war state of economy. It focused on the quantity law that in time changes to quality. Qualitative management that focused on the benefits of information technology and computing started to develop. It increased the attention to measurable values in economics and limited the observation of immeasurable values of economic phenomena. It was done in good faith that desirable development of immeasurable consequences of economic phenomena will be ensured by legislation. For that reason a slogan “what is not forbidden is allowed” was created and it enabled the “dance” among paragraphs with the help of complicated mathematic methods and computing.

Keywords: consumerism, management, quality, quantity, technology, methods, managerial ethics, philosophy.

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Quantitative management enables solving of past problems of society by frequently inefficient methods so that it can simulate success and support of own decisions and profit. Extent of corruption and clientelism, bureaucracy etc. convinces us about it.

Quantitative development of society is dynamic and it frequently surpasses methods of sustainable development of society. Final form of consumerist society as the consequence of quantitative management could be hardly imagined. But it cannot be expected that the contemporary trend of the development of management could be innovated on its own. Each philosophical trend of the social development evolves and comes alive with the effort of humans. Developed consumerism in management and society for that reason requires enforcing of the innovation of management which would add the observation of qualitative values to the quantitative ones so that the law of unity of quality and quantity would be respected.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Undesirable economic results of consumer development of society are the most frequently excused by the economic causes or by the failure of individuals. Various methods and forms of financial support and amendments to the already existing legislation that usually cannot solve the problem permanently are recommended to overcome crisis that occur.

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Challenging innovation of existing development of management could be seen in respecting the ethical postulate within the unity of quantity and quality. It, of course, gives rise to the need to solve the further development systematically in context. It is, first, necessary to define various concepts that we use nowadays but there is no agreement on their contents. It means that the solution must be based on the transparent complexity with the help of innovation process.

Efficient challenging innovation of management would respect the undesirable development of consumerist management, growth of social needs of society etc. That requires fundamental solution for the philosophy of strategic objectives of management. They should follow the objectives of the development of the society that have been changing in connection with the dynamic development of technical sciences.

It is the convergence of theory and praxis of management of social reproduction so that they would know their visions and would be able to increase mutual cooperation. The main idea is that the final objectives should be known to all participants and they should focus their activities of production and scientific sphere so that the mutual isolation would not decrease the final effect. Non-complex innovation process decreases its efficiency by unbalanced development.

Further complications result from the fact that quantitative management is appreciated by many. It enables routine at work and increase of social demands without the increase of the work efficiency.

Management must focus not only on the dominant development of quantitative values, without proportional development of their qualitative contents. That enables managed objects to manifest their behaviour as if it was completely isolated systems. There are only relatively closed systems in reality that can neither exist nor evolve without their surroundings.

II. CONSUMER SOCIETY

When the results of the Transparency International survey on the causes of contemporary behaviour of society were published mainly widespread corruption, disrespect or circumvention of legislation, entanglement of illegal activities to public administration etc. came out. If we take the results of the survey and search for the causes of the situation, we will find out that consumer thinking and consumer behaviour of

individuals and society arising from that still exists in our conditions.

Factors stimulating the cause of origin and development of consumer thinking: 1)

- Formality – ethics in management and business is focused on rhetoric, even though some managers already acknowledge its importance and application in theory and praxis.
 - Organizations would like to behave as absolutely isolated systems and they do not want to accept the co-responsibility for the process of sustainable development of society.
 - Decision making of managers is based on measurable properties and values of economic phenomena and it overestimates the importance of their quantitative values. Decision making processes neither respect the rules of innovation process nor responsibility for unsuccessful results. Both managers and their co-workers are responsible for them.
 - Ethics, responsibility and cooperation within the inner and outer partnership relations is not enforced. Organizations work short-term, there is no team work, they do not create any creative ethical work relations with scientific institutions and ministries
 - Speaking of ethics we think of managerial ethics whose definition has not been agreed on but non-consumer philosophy of management cannot exist without.
- 1) Results of survey from the publication: Zdeněk Dytrt, et col, Manažerská etika v otázkách a odpovědích, CPRESS, 2011, ISBN 978-80251-3344

The instability of rules limits strategic projecting of business activities and limits the company to operational management. It leads to gaining of fast profit that is often connected with complications with ethical values. The pace of novelization of legislation and implementation of economy management reforms does not correspond with the dynamics of the business development. Possible contradictions are not solved fast enough by courts. In this way educational impact of law is reduced.

Lack of conviction about the benefits of ethics in management and business creates space for undesirable development of consumer thinking that is the counterpart of ethical decision making. Permeation of consumer thinking to management and business leads to the deformation of ethics. Such state of market environment helps to contribute to consumer behaviour of society.

If we are to evaluate the relation of managers to ethics, it is necessary to differentiate. Strategic decisions of big companies usually arise in the parent company. Ethics is not believed in once non-ethics brings profit and recognition to someone. Unethical methods in business are sometimes even admired. By applying of

the ethics in management of each of us business in economic environment would strengthen both stability and competition.

Ethical thinking in decision making is important not only in praxis of management in individual organizations. It is also important as it brings the feeling of satisfaction from the results of a well done job to managers and their co-workers. These feelings act anti-depressive and they are the stimuli for further innovation activity of workers in the process of strategic sustainable development of managed objects.

a) *Is it possible to prevent consumer behaviour?*

- ✚ Upbringing, Education, Setting Examples
 - in family, private and social organizations (stabilization of workers, minimization of undesirable fluctuation)
 - systematic and life-long education
 - being synthetic and analytic
- ✚ Education to ethical thinking and behaviour
 - on all levels of education including universities, appropriately concretize the use of contents and the system of ethics in management
 - humanization of information on public net, publishing of successful innovations in management and sanctioning the results of non-ethics
- ✚ Thinking and working strategically
 - Overcoming undesirable phenomena in us, in the company and in the society
 - Admiring neither consumerism nor non-ethics and follow its consequences
 - Publishing of ethical approaches of managers
 - Preventing of unethical decisions – get to know the problem deeply, solve it on the basis on knowledge, possibilities and analysis of bad decisions
- ✚ Transparent behaviour
 - Thinking and behaving in the category “we” not “I”
 - We are part of social and economic environment
 - Cultivating ethics both in dealings and behaviour in themselves as well as in the environment
- ✚ Partnership is responsibility (winner – winner)
 - Developing of team work, associations in thinking, managing of human resources and fair relations in cooperation
- ✚ Management deciding about the realization of changes (innovations)
 - Respect the rules of innovation process – continuity, complexity, consistency and realization of innovation in an appropriate time and with appropriate methods
 - Respect the uniqueness of managed object and its environment, consider the specific conditions as a reserve of business

- Not evaluate the success of decision (innovation) in a short term
- Seeing a target of decision making in a goodwill of a managed object
- Considering the decision as creating innovations
- Maximizing of short term profit is connected with consumerism
- The goodwill of the company results from a long term stable position on the market and ethical satisfying of needs and interests of economical and social environment

III. WHO IS A MANAGER?

Manager is anyone who manages and decides about a change of contemporary state of a particular problem. That is the state that was decided about in the past and that was overcome by further development. Management is a science that is not connected to a job position and it concerns us all as we all make decisions about our lives and responsibility at work. Management is a tool of strategic management and tactic fulfilling of own or given goals. It is impossible to find a solution to any problem without applying the management and the outcome of decision. Manager's philosophy of the one who makes a decision is important. In case it is not connected with ethical principles success cannot be expected.

Where could the ethical principles of decision making be gained? The existence of unity of quality and quantity law must be reminded. It requires the unity of both to be respected already in the decision making process. Needless to say the unity of quantity and quality applies to everyone who makes decisions. The factors of decision making process differentiate not only according to level of management and social importance, that is according to the character of decision that is an innovation. The level of innovation is influenced by its contents and extend of a problem being solved that should correspond with its social or functional position, as well as the appropriate level of solved problem.

Management is manifested in decision making process. If every decision means a change of contemporary situation, that it is necessary to be considered an innovation, resp. innovation process, that, to be successful, requires innovation rules to be respected. Successful decision making assumes preventing of creation of bottleneck within the managed object. Manager should not be a general but a leading member of a working team.

To enable manager fulfill this role, manager must be able to use strategic and creative thinking that results from the nature of managerial ethics and communicative abilities. The necessity of adequate information is closely connected to it. It is not desirable to obtain the information by unethical methods due to the fact that its quality could be influenced by that. That is why it is effective to actively cooperate with scientific institutions and ministries and seek the convergence of goals so that the methods as well as the decisions are appropriate for the future innovation to come to life.

Ethical competition is not based on non-ethical methods of gaining information at any cost but on cooperation with institutions of common interest. It is one of the reasons why the managerial ethics both in theory and praxis of management is inevitable.

IV. MANAGERIAL ETHICS – QUALITATIVE MANAGEMENT

The name managerial ethics was created so that the desirable application of ethics in philosophy and practice of management theory was emphasized. In case the effort of maximization and acceleration of profit of producers and workers is not supported by the ethics and creativity of work productivity a spiral of undesirable influences and intensity of undesirable impacts on business climate of society evolves.

Managerial ethics is considered a qualitative innovation of methods of contemporary contents of managerial work both in the field of companies and public administration. It ensures qualitative values within the unity of quantity and quality management.

System of managerial ethics – Qualitative Management

Business Ethics	Subsystem	Output
Morality	Character of Managers	Moral Dispositions
Competencies	Work Ethics	Manager's Personal Presentation
Application – realization	Professional Ethics	Management Effectiveness

a) Elements of the Subsystem Morale

- Principles of general morality,
- Ethical legislation – (dilemma of managerial ethics)
- Influence of history and reaction on the development of society
- Responsibility for behaviour and decision making
- Internal conviction about role of morale
- Improvement and self-education of moral attitudes.
- Enforcement of morale and creativity in everyday doing and thinking

b) *Elements of the Subsystem Competence*

- Theoretical and practical knowledge and experience
- Responsibility for qualitative growth of managed system
- Responsibility for the results of decision making and the way of realization
- Long-life education (own, co-workers)
- Knowledge and respecting of specific conditions of managed object
- Creative thinking – ambitious innovations – strategy – tactics
- Application of synthesis and synergy in management.

c) *Elements of the Subsystem Application – Realization*

- Systemic application of subsystems and elements of managerial ethics
- Stimulation and evaluation of ethical approach of workers
- Stimulation to creative work and motivation of workers
- Systematic intensification of managerial ethics
- Analysis of ethics contributions to management
- Deepening of the development of ethics in own managerial work (management – management)

d) *Decision making – creating of innovations*

Present development of theory and praxis of management depends on the boom of the development of technical sciences and on maximal use of technology in management work. From the point of view of management it is both a positive that enables the acceleration and quality processing of information which serves as the advantage for the needs of decision making process. On the other hand the obtained information is incomplete as it only reflects the quantitative values that are presented by technical-economic indicators.

We forget that the indicators are only able to represent measurable phenomena. It could be said that it is non-complexity of management as it actually opens space for the use and realization of any method of maximization. Due to the fact that management is a matter of human beings and their uniqueness it is not possible to rely only on legislation that ethical values of management will be respected. It is mainly due to the fact that from the discussion of lawyers themselves often arises the fact that legislation does not utterly have to respect the principles of managerial ethics.

Creation and growth of imbalances occur owing to the dynamics of technical and social-economic development of the society. It is a natural process that depends on the tempo of development of science and technology that must be anticipated and regulated. The solution of the arisen problems requires a change of contemporary situation that is considered an innovation.

Not every innovation is unfortunately positive so would be a guarantee of efficient decision making process. There are also negative innovations that usually lead to negative or unethical results. Innovation has the form of sinusoid. Negative innovations are shown in its lower part.

Positive part of innovation is the goal of responsible management and it solves every problem efficiently. On the other hand the negative part of innovation does not solve the responsible management but the undesirable goals of a manager. They could be either intentional (corruption, causing crisis) or unintentional as a consequence of incompetence.

The level of innovation determines the extent and importance of innovation for managed object. It defines the action radius of innovation that should correspond to the organizational level on which a manager functions because it enables functioning of synergy effect in functioning of organizational structure project.

Frequency of innovations results from the frequency of them being enforced in time. The smaller importance of innovations for a managed object, the higher frequency and on the other hand the higher importance of innovations for a managed object the longer the longevity should be so that the frequency should be smaller.

e) *Rules of innovation process*

Continuity – concerns both positive and negative part of the sinusoid. It lies in division on three parts

- Invention of decision should be verified from the point of its efficiency whether the fulfillment in time will be efficient on the basis of a change of inner and outer conditions. In the positive case an order of the manager and responsible worker must be given. That is the first stage of innovation.
- Second stage of innovation is the time space in which the innovation fulfills the aims for which it was created. It is its boom that unfortunately is individual and depends on the importance and extent of wear to its demise in time. The second stage of innovation is considered a boom of innovation.
- No innovation can be long lasting, that would mean stagnation and termination of a company. That is why it is necessary to monitor the extent of wear of innovation in time and prepare new solution according to developing conditions. On the contrary, if a manager wants to secure themselves, if they want to apply new innovation earlier, yet in time of boom, the anarchy in the managed object would arise.

Timeliness – The rule of timeliness is a difficult task that requires information that must be worked with. The problem of gaining it should already be ethical. It should be dependent on public involvement of a manager,

ethics in behaviour and experience. The rule of timeliness is related to the rule of continuity and adds time aspect to it. It is about the minimization of the period of anarchy. That is the time of moral wear of the first innovation and decision making about term of further innovation. That is a desirable situation mainly from the point of view competition and growth of expenditures connected with lowering the tempo of production.

We often come across breaching of the rule of timeliness in practice because for several reasons the management is not ready to make a decision about the start of further innovation. In this way the period of anarchy arises that is connected with undesirable consequences. Investment development is the frequent example.

In the period of anarchy of innovation process of managed system it is always about an insufficient definition of the goals of innovation and unpreparedness of constituent factors of its inner structure. The rule of timeliness aims to minimize the period of anarchy by preparing a new innovation already in the period of boom of still valid innovation.

Essential is the decision when to start preparing a new innovation and mainly when to set the date of its realization. If it was still in the period when the previous innovation is functional, it would bring anarchy into the system and the period of anarchy would arise.

The basis for the estimation of tempo of fast and qualitative solution for problems and quality of decision making is the information technology and computing and opinions and experience of experts either co-workers or cooperation with scientific and specialized institutions. During the period of anarchy of innovation process of managed system it is often about the insufficient definition of the goal of innovation and unpreparedness of coherent factors of inner structure.

Complexity– Non-complex asserting of innovation usually brings lower or negative effect, if we solve the problems isolated, without searching for consequences that are related to the problem being solved, as well as inquiring the causes of their origin and correlation. Complexity of decision (order) is ensured from the point of overall impact on the managed object, that is both from the horizontal point of view (width of action radius of innovation) and vertical point of view, action radius of innovation process (order of innovations). The condition of complexity is fulfilled if a given problem is being solved in all basic areas and problems of the managed object as well as the relations that exist among them.

It is about creating of innovation net that is from the horizontal point of view usually divided to seven factors that solve the crucial bottleneck that could arise either now or when the innovation is applied (f. ex. it could be insecure entries into the system, quality and number of workers, organization of the environment, production technology etc.).

From the vertical point of view it is the order that is the number of managed levels (or their inner structure) that should participate in the realization of innovation process. Each factor means a problem that a particular problem should solve and for which a certain worker should be responsible for. The innovation should be incentive and should arise innovation in each part of the innovation net. The aim is to fulfill every part of the net which actually means delegating of particular rights and duties. The innovation net is the important aid of a manager that is nowadays missed.

Consistency– Fulfilling the rule of consistency ensures a manager with information about the efficiency of previous and about the need of future precautions within the innovation process of managed object. The tool to enforce the condition of consistency is the analytic activity of measurable and non-measurable values that were reached within the functioning of managed system and what economic and social benefit they brought. Computing and information technology also play in important role in this process.

Significant condition of successful analysis as the basis for qualified and responsible decision making about the strategic development and assessment of managed object, that is contents of innovation and when the strategy of contemporary theory and practice of management of particular system should be enforced. It mainly concerns respecting the complexity and synthesis that is the unity of quality and quantity within the management and evaluation of results of economy.

The extent of synthesis depends on the level of management the information should serve to. The higher the organization pyramid of management is, the higher extent of synthesis of information the top manager needs for own activity. The management system should mainly be synthetic. On the other hand the lower the vertical level of organization of management is the approach should be more analytical. But it cannot do without synthetic approach so that they could both successfully participate on the management system as the whole. It means that synthetic approach cannot be marginalized otherwise the managers on the managerial level of subsystem would not be able to participate on managing of the system as the whole. To motivate the workers it is essential for them to know why they work and what the importance of their work is.

The information that is obtained from the analysis of results of economy, from accountant record and statistics has the form of technical-economy indicators. It is necessary to create systems of indicators for complex evaluation of results of economy but it is essential to add survey or even verbal evaluation of methods through which the results were obtained.

If we are aware of the fact that the quantitative values are not sufficient enough then we do not think

about leaving the system of work with indicators but we look for quantitative relations and connections. It is about systematic monitoring of quantitative and qualitative properties of economic, social and political phenomena to understand their behaviour and developing tendencies. Even here we cannot do without respecting the principles of managerial ethics.

V. CONCLUSION

Consumer society is not static and it still develops and we are not able to imagine its final form. According to the topical experience it can be seen that consumerism in the society develops dynamically and aggressively. We know that we all are consumers and that we aim to create desirable balance between the necessary and unnecessary needs. That of course concerns each of us.

It is also known that to reach the desirable balance between the necessary and unnecessary needs respecting the principles of managerial ethics is essential. It is clear that it is not a short term struggle and that many of us are interested neither in its causes nor in its results. It is certain that not everyone is convinced about the necessity of this effort and about the tools used to overcome it or even about the necessity of its innovation because they are satisfied with the contemporary situation.

It is mainly necessary to reevaluate contemporary philosophy, theory and practice of management that has been stagnating since the last century because it focuses mainly on technology of management. It is a huge task for educationists on all levels of educational process because younger graduates might not be able to understand this problem.

The centre of problem solving lies in ethical cooperation between fields of science and production so that they link in collective effort to solve the problems of quantitative management both in itself and in the society. Cooperation of everyone is no less important than the creators and realizers of all changes–innovations are.



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