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**The significance of the  
quality and quantity  
in the management  
of an organization**

**1. Introduction**

In the management process the category of quantity has become fixed with regard to its time-space nature, as well as with reference to its possibility of concretisation and operationalisation. This feature determines its competitive character with regard to the category of quality and means reducing the person of an employee to the parameters of quantity and functionality. Reducing the employee as a person to the quantity and functionality parameter is hence a challenge to recognise the premises of the quality category in the management process, and especially to recognise the premises of reification of the employee as a person.

The article aims at showing validity and adequacy of the description and explanation subjectively-objective figure of a real person of a worker in the process of management. It will allow to see the person of a worker not only as a thing but also mainly as a quality which is a constitutive element of the person of the worker. As a consequence of recognizing known and unknown, varied potentiality of the activity of the subject, including the person of the worker,

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is an aspiration for perfection owing to the category of the quality and uniformity of the variety.

## 2. From the category of quantity towards quality

In management science, an increasingly often postulated proposal is to depart from the omnipresent category of quantity towards the category of quality (Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii 2004, pp. 172-176)<sup>1</sup>. A shift from the category of quantity towards the category of quality, innovation, and above all, towards the human being, is clearly formulated by M. Crozier (Jaremczuk, Posłuszny 2002, p. 10). This shift, primarily in favour of the human being, is consequently a shift away from quantity, pointing to the category of quality, which is a constitutive element of the human being, and consequently of the employee as a person. This allows to treat quality as a feature that characterises the attitude and behaviour of the person of an employee, and indicates that any propositions about the reality in an organization and its environment depend on the personal beliefs and point of view, according to one's own likes and prejudices.

In this context, the category of quality is in direct relation to the structure and properties of the employee's mind. Thus, this category is of a subjective character, as – according to K. R. Popper – it consists of states of the mind or consciousness, or dispositions to act or react (Popper 1992, p. 152). Hence, it consists of certain innate dispositions to act or of learned modifications of these dispositions (Popper 1992, p. 88, 169)<sup>2</sup>, which in consequence determines quality knowledge. Quality knowledge, which is of a subjective character, means reality; hence – as M. Bierdiajew states – it remains in the centre, and not in periphery, not in the ideal objectivity (Bierdiajew 2003, p. 173, 177, 190)<sup>3</sup>. Knowledge that

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1 Quality is a feature of a thing thanks to which this thing is of a certain nature (of a given nature, as opposed to a different nature); type or kind, value, basis of qualification; quality is opposed to substance, quantity and relation; in a broader philosophical sense quality is any determination of things that may be attributed to the subject. To G. W. Leibniz, quality is nothing but a possibility to act and experience. H. Bergson, in turn, states that quality is the most primary property of reality in its duration (while quantity is the result of quality), possible to be cognized through intuition.

2 As a remark, K. R. Popper adds that knowledge is in us; it comprises information that reached us and which we were able to observe, and that this knowledge is based on the maturation of the innate dispositions.

3 Objectification always subordinates the human being to finiteness, grounds in what is finite, and simultaneously throws the human being into the perspective of a quantitative, mathematical

is of a subjective nature is thus knowledge that in a way entails adjusting the employee to the reality in an organisation and its environment, based on one's innate dispositions to act or on the learned modifications of these dispositions. However, after, K. R. Popper, we should note that we are able to know and understand the human system of dispositions; that is, in certain situations we are able to predict the behaviour, but there are infinitely many possible situations, and thus a complete understanding of human inclinations (Maslow 2004, pp. 220-221) is not possible. D. Hume also explains that the observer is usually able to deduce our deeds from our motivations and personality; and even if the observer is not able, he or she usually infers that it would be possible if only every circumstance of our situation, mood and the most secret aspects of our disposition were known<sup>4</sup> (Popper 1992, p. 279).

In management science, however, the dominant image treats the worker mostly as a rational person. Such supremation prefers an attitude oriented at quantifiable stimuli in the time-space system. It prefers the employee's attitudes and behaviours to be compliant with formal organisational patterns, mostly oriented at effectiveness, impersonality and efficient functioning – which determines the relations of subordination in the management process. These relations shape the structure of the discussion, synthesised by the principle of purposefulness (Mises 1996)<sup>5</sup>. This teleological principle draws its premise from a rational attitude (Rakusa-Suszczewski 2008, p. 33)<sup>6</sup> of the human being,

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infiniteness. In objectification itself there is no beauty, truth or value. And it is the subjectivity what means reality, while objectivity is illusive. All that has been objectified is illusion. Objectivity is alienation and abstraction, determinism and impersonality.

4 The supporters of Hume formulated it as follows: our deeds, acts of our will or tastes and preferences are psychologically "caused" by our previous experience ("motives"), and finally by our heritage and environment.

5 According to L. von Mises, there are only two principles available to the human being that allow to grasp the reality mentally. They are the principle of causality and the teleological principle. What cannot fall into these categories remains totally inaccessible for the human mind. A change may be perceived as a result of a mechanical causality or a result of a purposeful behaviour; for the human mind no other interpretation is available. Both cognitive principles – causality and teleology – are limited by the capacity of the human mind, imperfect, and therefore do not provide ultimate knowledge. Causality leads to a *regressus in infinitum* that the mind is never able to finalise. Teleology, in turn, is incomplete without answering the question what causes the primary cause.

6 Rationalism, in the peculiar souls of Europeans, manifests itself by calculation, purposeful behaviour aimed at efficiency and profit, generalisation of rules, and a general dissemination of a methodical lifestyle.

which is consistent with the principles of the mind that are independent from the given experience. Such attitude expresses the primacy of reason to the will and does not take into consideration sources of cognition that are beyond the reason. A rational attitude is thus characterised by calculation as its concretisation, enabled by logic.

On the other hand, does a rational attitude in the management process express a certain reality, in other words, is it adequate to the essence of the given reality in an organisation and its environment, thus, creating an ideal employee, as opposed to a real one (Zielewska 2003, pp. 24-25)<sup>7</sup>. Creating an ideal employee that focuses on the quantitative elements, at the cost of a quality approach, in consequence means reducing the person of the employee to a quantitative and functional dimension in the management process.

The preference of quantitative premises, at the cost of a qualitative approach, enables to quantify and operationalise activities, which results in objectification, as opposed to reality in the management process. In consequence, an objective quantification leads to the dominance of quantitative knowledge. The belief that becomes central is – metaphorically speaking – that the person of an employee is a part of the organisation, and not that the organisation is a part of the person of an employee. The organisational structure thus belongs to the consciousness, and not to the behaviour of the employee, as it refers to what the employee

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7 The external reality starts to possess an objectively existing power that determines the human being and human attributes, which according to S. Opara include:

1. The human being is a unique element of nature. The human is the only being able to analyse his/her own existence. The human being is the one who sees him/herself as a being. In the world, no-one but the human being asks about the sense of his/her own existence;
2. The human being is characterised by a social way of existing, and in its existence purposefully creates certain social bonds, transforms and breaks them;
3. The human being possesses the ability of mental operations. Only the human being is able to think in an abstract way;
4. The human being is distinguished through work, as a collective activity, where the reality is purposefully transformed;
5. The human being is characterised by the fact that he or she is determined not only by needs, but also by goals. In his/her activity, the human being refers not only to the past and current experiences, but also considers the future, which – although not yet real – is a significant motive of action;
6. The human being is determined by the social system of values, norms, assessments and sanctions;
7. Only the human being creates culture;
8. Exclusively the human being possesses not only the ability to acquire knowledge, but also to code it in a cognitive way.

thinks, and not what he or she does (Bierdiajew 2003, p. 77)<sup>8</sup>. The organisational structure<sup>9</sup> is therefore not a feature of the employee's behaviour, who is the only active creator, but it is rather a "mechanism", of an imitative character. This "mechanism" is identified in the conceptions of management by T. Burns and G. M. Stalker, who conclude that the recognised "mechanism" is adequate for stable conditions where there is a greater trust in formal rules and procedures, as well as a centralized flow of information and decision processes (Burns, Stalker 1996, pp. 119-125). The objective "mechanism" is identified also thanks to certain technical-economic and socio-cultural processes that determine the fulfilment of certain tasks and goals. The goals and tasks in the company structure reduce the person of the employee to the quantitative and functional parameter. Hence, the evolution from the "mechanical" approach to organisation towards an organisation where the person of the employee and his or her knowledge is seen as the most primary, is in consequence an attempt to recognise the employee as a person in the subject-object system where the employee is both known and unknown, predictable and unpredictable, and constantly actualising him- or herself. Perceiving the person of the employee not only as a thing, but above all as quality, therefore means aiming towards a – subjective and objective – description and explanation of the two-in-one nature of the person of a real employee.

### 3. The category of quantity in management science

At present, in management science the category of quantity has become fixed, while the category of quality is treated with favour and support, as it is reflected in the recent pro-quality orientation of the management process. However, this orientation, and Quality Management in particular, is – according to W. Mantura – at a stage when the assumptions and philosophy of the concept have been sufficiently formulated, and now it is necessary to develop the methodology and tools of this approach to management (Hamrol 2006, p. 17). This view leads to a reflection to what extent in the future the postulated

8 A. Hercen is of a controversial opinion – as M. Bierdiajew states – that subordinating the person to the society, nation, humanity, and idea, is a continuation of human sacrifice.

9 The organisational structure is understood in the paper as a "sum" of the material and immaterial values of the organisation.

development of methodology and tools in Quality Management might verify the formulated assumptions and philosophy of the concept.

Apart from the identified reflection, it is also important to mention the understanding of the human nature, which is the source of activity that determines a further establishment of the quantity category in the management process, or directs it at the category of quality.

Understanding the human nature, which the source of human activity, requires to recognise the existing forms of human activity, that is, the activity of the mind (its nature, conditions and ways of acting), the activity of the will (seen as a rational desire, related to the reason), as well as the activity of the feelings, and their co-operation with the reason and will. The realization of the human freedom in decision acts that involve all forms of human activity, ultimately reveals the nature of the human being – as long as by nature we understand existence as a source of determined activity (however, the determination in human activity is a result of human auto-determination, that is, a type of free action). Through free activity, the human being, as a rational being, most fully reveals the human nature (Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii 2001, p. 377)<sup>10</sup>. Human activity, and consequently the activity of the employee as a rational being, is an existence of three forms of activity, which are: the activity of the reason, the activity of the will, and the activity of the emotionality, as well as its co-operation with the reason and will.

An identification of the three forms of activity of the person of an employee is a result of a continuing process of substituting the domination of material aims by less quantifiable goals. The substitution process of the domination of the material goals is also mentioned by M. Crozier, cited above, who warns that shifting from the category of quality towards the category of quantity means shifting away from quality, the constitutive element of the person of an employee. This reduction, thus, does not allow a real description of the two-in-one – subjective and objective – nature of the employee as a person. Hence, it becomes impossible to transform the primacy of the thing over the person of the employee through the primacy of the person of the employee over the thing.

A real description of the person of an employee is directed by the pro-quality orientation in the management process, also recognised by J. Lichtarski. From the

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10 The nature which, synthesising matter and spirit in one being, reveals the transcendence over matter, subordinating it to the transcendental goal imprinted in its nature.

point of view of the client, the pro-quality orientation in managing a company is – as J. Lichtarski rightly concludes – related to the pro-market orientation. Its basis is the idea of striving towards a perfection of processes and products, through support, and, in many cases of activities aiming at improving the quality, through substituting “hard” instruments with “soft” solutions from the area of human resource management, psychology of management and organizational culture – as concluded by J. Lichtarski (1998, p. 53).

The objective orientation has the properties of a pragmatic one, as its goal is to strive for excellence, thanks to the category of quality. Striving for excellence in management through the category of quality is a proposal of goal-oriented management. The indicated pragmatic aspect of the analysed orientation is an important direction that should also penetrate the causal approach to management. Such orientation would imply a certain diversity, and simultaneously a uniqueness of the employee as a person, who, being three forms of activity, remains beyond an ultimate synthesis and classification. The person of a real employee is a known and unknown diverse possibility of activity of the subject whose element is the reality of an organization. Recognising the known and unknown diverse potentiality of the subject’s activity is in consequence a strive for excellence thanks to the category of quality, the excellence being characterized by a compliance in diversity (Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii 2004, pp. 173-174).

The identified problem of substituting the “hard” instruments in activities aiming at improving quality with “soft” solutions from the area of human resource management is in consequence an attempt to shift away from an absolute objectification of the employee as a person – from an absolute reification. The “soft” instruments considered from the area of human resource management point to the person of an ideal employee, who using certain his or her own features, and selecting certain motivators, completes tasks and achieves certain goals of the organization. However, the “soft” instruments used are recommendations of a propositional character in that they do not have a concretization that would be of a real character, for example through the phenomenon of internalization, as opposed to an ideal, artificial character. Otherwise, it is difficult to distinguish within the employee the three identified forms of activity: the activity of the reason, the activity of the will, and the activity of the feelings and its co-operation with the reason and will, and to submit it to the requirements of a pragmatic nature. The key difficulty in the object of a concretization of the proposed recommendations is, for example, formulated by D. S. Weiss: perceiving the human resources as a source of a competitive advantage, or one

by M. Armstrong: caring for the involvement of the employees in the realization of the mission and values of the organisation, and also in the suggestion by S. P. Robbins and D. A. DeCenzo: to attach importance to persons in the context of achieving the company goals (Gableta 2003, pp. 168-169). Example proposals of such recommendations may determine various consequences, from passive to active involvement of the person of the employee. Recommendations referring to perception and taking care are examples of a rather educational type, in contrast to a pragmatic type, dominated by quantity, a thing, and the concrete (Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii 2004, p. 173), determined in of time and space, and defined in a rational way, as opposed to quality, which, in accordance with the position of G. W. Leibniz – is nothing but a possibility of acting and experiencing (Morawski, Niemczyk, Perechuda, Stańczyk-Hugiet 2010, p. 174)<sup>11</sup>.

#### 4. Conclusions

In management sciences evolves the significance of the process of substituting the supremacy of material goals by less quantifiable ones, and even by less recognisable ones, which originate from premises that are: ethical, aesthetic and intellectual of the employee as a person, the organisation and its environment. The objective process of substitution is the departure point of considerations that concern recognising the premises of quality in the management process. This departure point especially refers to recognizing premises that remain in a system of competition with regard to the category of quantity with reference to the category of quality and to identifying the current state of affairs in quality management.

#### Summary

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The article is an attempt to recognise the premises of quality

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11 It should be noted that the theories, models and methods recommended within the concept of the human capital entail the use of participation in management, trainer style of management, intensive, open and informal communication networks, motivation which refer to intellectual and content-related ambitions of employees and are characteristic for knowledge-oriented companies, specialising in professional services of a consulting-expert type that function in modern branches of the economy.



in the management process by pointing to the consequences of reducing the description of an employee as a person to only quantitative categories. Focusing on the rational attitude in the management process may lead to creating an ideal image of the employee, who functions in a reality which is created by quantification and operationalisation. A dominant significance of quantitative knowledge means a domination of an unreal image of the person of an employee in the management process. This process may lead to a reification and primacy of the thing over the employee as a person, and therefore to omitting the various potentialities for activity of the subject, whose element is the reality in an organization and its environment.

### Streszczenie

#### **Znaczenie ilości i jakości w zarządzaniu organizacją**

Artykuł stanowi próbę rozpoznawania przesłanek jakości w procesie zarządzania poprzez wskazanie na konsekwencje redukcji opisu osoby pracownika w kategoriach tylko ilościowych. Akcentowanie racjonalnej postawy w procesie zarządzania może prowadzić do idealnego obrazu osoby pracownika, która funkcjonuje w rzeczywistości kreowanej przez kwantyfikację i operacjonalizację. Dominacja znaczenia wiedzy ilościowej, to dominacja nierealnego, nierzeczywistego obrazu osoby pracownika w procesie zarządzania. Proces ten prowadzić może do reifikacji i prymatu rzeczy wobec osoby pracownika, tym samym do pomijania różnorodnych możliwości działań podmiotu, którego częścią jest rzeczywistość w organizacji i jej otoczeniu.

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