

**ICEST 2021****II International Conference on Economic and Social Trends for Sustainability of Modern Society****VALUE ORIENTATIONS OF THE MODERN MANAGER**

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**Abstract**

The goal of this study is to examine the value orientations of modern managers of different levels and structures, their specific features, interrelations and influence on personal development and business success as a whole. The research is based on numerous scientific theories, views and ideas of philosophers, sociologists, psychologists, etc. of different periods and trends, exploring the values and value issues, as well as allowing to more fully disclose the aspects of the topic said in the context of managerial activities of a modern manager. The empirical research was conducted on the basis of quantitative sociological questionnaire method, primary approbation of the questionnaire among managers of the Russian and foreign companies aged 25 years and older, as well as the analysis of the data obtained with a view to possible transfer into practice to improve the effectiveness of managerial activity of managers and achieve maximum business results. The obtained results, reflecting the observations in the value-motivational sphere of managers, as well as the questionnaire itself, represent a pilot study. The research allowed us to make preliminary conclusions that the value orientations of modern managers are independent from age and management activity period, but directly affect personal results and the success of the company as a whole.

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## 1. Introduction

Management in a broad sense is usually understood as a purposeful conscious human activity whereby he controls, regulates, and subordinates the external environment elements - society, animate and inanimate nature, technology - to its interests. The emergence of management as an independent type of activity has been caused by the social division of labor, the expansion of contacts and connections between people, as well as the increase in the volume of production. The practice of management itself has undergone qualitative changes over the years. While at the early stages of the development of capitalist production the enterprise was usually managed by the owner (entrepreneur) himself, at the turn of the XIX-XX centuries, due to the development of machinery and technology, this process became much more complicated and turned into a separate type of activity with its specific features, characteristics and certain wealth of knowledge, skills, and competences.

### 1.1. Values and Value Orientations in Historical Retrospect

Speaking about management from the perspective of modern business, it should be noted that this is a priority area of activity for managers, where they can show their superiority, using the communication and emotional level of intelligence to achieve certain results. Due to the ever-increasing competition among companies, today this activity is driven, has clear criteria for evaluating results and requires from managers uncommon skills, quick response and flexibility. But since all business in one way or another has an economic and financial background and is associated with the conscious choice and acceptance of corporate values by employees, it is necessary to consider the management activity at the personal level in the context of values, value systems and value orientations.

The "value" concept came into sociology before the "value orientations" and is inseparably associated with it, so understanding the essence of the latter is impossible without reference to the former. Interest in understanding the phenomenon of "value" was observed in antiquity and reached its peak in the theories of scientists and thinkers of the turn of the XIX-XX centuries, who considered value as a basic component in analyzing the aspects of social processes, social and cultural values of certain phenomena of reality. The values in social psychology are considered as a subjective phenomenon included in the structure of a person's orientation and are considered as fundamental moral and ethical norms performing both regulatory and predictive functions, determining the prospects of personal development and its behavior. In sociology the values are considered as an evaluation of real phenomena, which give ideas about the world arrangement, a person, cheering him (Elishev, 2010). "Value orientations" is a broader concept that takes into account the connection of values with the specific psychology of the individual and the social environment in which it exists. In other words, it is a structural part of the personality, which, concretizing values, regulates its social behavior, aspirations and actions to achieve certain goals (Evdokimova, 2018). At the same time, the value orientations, as well as values, should be considered in terms of a hierarchical system, changes in which are directly related to the changes in personality as a whole. That is, the integrity of such a system is an indicator of maturity and autonomy of the personality. The representatives of the national sociological school were also actively engaged in the study of value issues. They associated the concept of values with the concept of culture, emphasizing their hierarchical structure, which can develop

in a certain society and state, that is, within a particular culture (Yarina, 2014). Despite many approaches to the study of values and value orientations, until present, there is no single universal definition of these concepts. This emphasizes this issue relevance. In recent years we can also note the increased interest in the study of value orientations of individual social groups, strata and communities. Hence the emergence of many different empirical studies, which require a clearer distinction between the concepts of "values" and "value orientations" to understand all phenomena occurring in public life.

## **1.2. Values and Value Orientations in the Context of Management Activity**

In this paper, we understand the values as some abstract entities, a substantive expression of reality, which modern business managers define as their ideals to achieve success. And herein we consider their personal attitudes to the values vital for a particular organization, which entail certain patterns of behavior, as value orientations of the managers (Kambarova, 2016). According to numerous data in open sources, at present, the main values in the manager personality organization include material well-being, career growth, public position, and family (Florovsky, 2003). They act as personal values and determine the purposeful activity of an individual focused on these values. At the same time, the manager should be aware that his subordinates have their own expectations of the results, and should accept them. These expectations may be job-related or not, but they represent a value to another person. They can be used to predict future employee behavior and make appropriate decisions regarding managerial practices and achieving desired behavioral and operating results (Buchele, 2011). That is, if a manager helps his employees to realize their expectations in the context of certain values, he will not only achieve a balance between his expectations and his work but also between all those areas that guarantee a profit and ensure professional success. In other words, it is necessary to remember that values represent a social category closely related to social and personal needs, the satisfaction of which occurs through social activity - certain interests, motives, goals (Kravets & Utyuganov, 2016; Zhukov, 1976). The formation of social needs and interests is a long and complex process. Thus, the intensity of the formation of interests in business among young people may occur differently in different conditions: for example, in the city, where the infrastructure is developed, it is more dynamic than in rural areas (Magomedova, 2017). In general, today every third Russian wants to start his/her own business without reference to the place and conditions of life. They are interested in entrepreneurship primarily due to personal income, which provides decent living standards, and financial independence (from parents, husband, etc.) (Vederina, 2020). We also see that in business a person's strengths are revealed, thanks to which the experience of his backup capabilities is being accumulated. But the success of a business and the company as a whole is not only the merit of certain characteristics and competence of a person, intelligent managerial decisions of the manager but also of the whole team. A manager is just a "product" of the combined creativity of many people and their personalities formed on the basis of certain values, as Steve Jobs, the CEO and inspirer of Apple Computer, succinctly said: "The only thing that works is value-based management". He stayed afloat in lose-lose situations, even when his company lost huge money and got to its feet, regardless of the risks. He said that "big jobs in business don't happen alone, they are always the achievement of a team" (Blumenthal, 2020, p. 97).

Taking into account the social value nature of management activity and modern reality (economic crisis, pandemic, digitalization, etc.), we can distinguish 3 main styles of leadership (authoritarian,

democratic, liberal) and corresponding attributes of a manager (creativity, desire to develop, stress resistance, responsibility, commitment to results, optimism, etc.), able to lead the organization to success (Paarlberg & Perry, 2020). That is, in addition to competent management, today the managers have even more responsibilities and a new scale of values is being formed: decisiveness, acceptance of mistakes, the ability to adjust.

## **2. Problem Statement**

The analysis of the literature has shown the absence of fundamental works in the field of values and value orientations of a modern manager in recent years, and all the previous experience of research in this area is based mainly on the ideas of the classics of sociology or touches only certain aspects of the designated topic. This once again confirms the relevance of our direction of research, which partially fills this gap and comprehends new practical experience.

## **3. Research Questions**

In the course of the research we posed the following questions:

- What values do today's managers consider to be the most important for them?
- Whether the priority of the managers' values is associated with their age and management activity period?
- What qualities a successful manager should have today?

## **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this work is to study the value orientations of modern managers of different levels and structures, their specific features, interrelationships, and impact on personal development and business success as a whole.

## **5. Research Methods**

For a start, let us note that today the study of value orientations involves some difficulties due to the shortcomings and limitations of existing methods for diagnostics of the systems of values and value orientations. These are mainly socio-psychological surveys that organizations use to study the value orientations of their employees or candidates, including on managerial positions. The most popular among them are the Rokich Value Orientations Methodology, the Schwartz Values Questionnaire or HOGAN Questionnaire, the I.G. Senin Terminal Values Questionnaire, the J. Crumbo, L. Maholik Life-Purpose Orientations Test, adapted by D.A. Leontiev and others (Pakhomova, 2011). To implement the objective, we conducted a sociological study using the questionnaire survey method. Methodological potential includes methods of system and comparative analysis. The primary testing was conducted among managers of different age groups (100 persons, as of March 18, 2021). In this case, we refer all managers, entrepreneurs, businessmen, and business owners to managers due to the identity of a number of their

professional functions and implementation of similar goals and objectives. Respondents were selected using the "snowball" method. All participants were asked to respond to 25 questions, with the opportunity to supplement and comment. First and foremost, high scores were taken into account for all the issues concerned, as they give the most complete idea of a particular value significance.

Interpretation of the results was carried out on the following items:

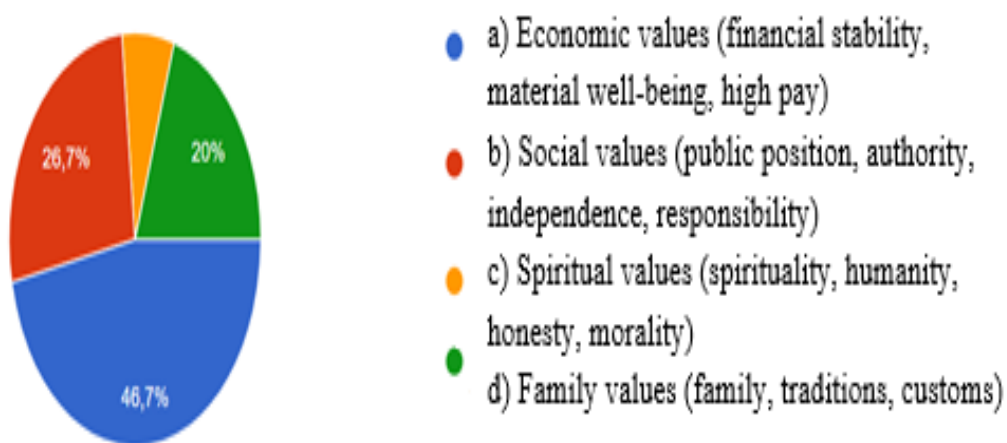
- interpretation of value hierarchies of personally significant values (social, economic, family values, spiritual);
- interpretation of value hierarchies of professionally significant values;
- interpretation of personal and professional qualities of a successful manager;
- analysis of systems of personal and professional values and qualities in accordance with the manager age and the management activity period.

We used diagrams to visualize the results. Some of them are given below.

We also offer the author's model, presented as the image of the modern manager influenced by various components: the values of the organization, individual-personal-values, age, years of service and other factors of external influence.

## 6. Findings

The results of our empirical study of the sphere of personal and professional values through questionnaires give a sufficient understanding of the structure and content of the value orientations of business managers. There is a noticeable gap in the assessment of the importance of values in the personal system (see Figure 1). Almost half of the respondents (46.7%) marked economic values as significant, little less respondents (26.7%) marked social values as significant for themselves, almost the same number (20%) specified family values as significant. Spiritual values are the least important in this category (6.6%).



**Figure 1.** The Most Significant Personal Values Associated with Business

In the system of values significant for professional activity (manager), the following trends were revealed (see Figure 2): the economic efficiency of the team (73.3%), the ability to realize personal innovations (70%) and high pay (56.7%) are approximately equally rated (more than 50%). Such values as a respect of employees (43.3%), career growth (20%) and social status (10%) fill the remaining lines of the "rating".



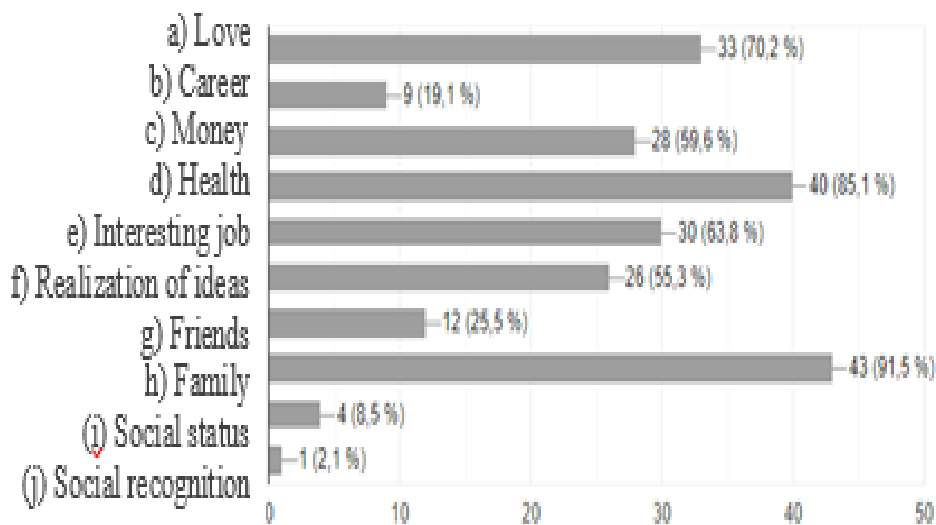
**Figure 2.** The Most Significant Values for a Manager's Professional Activity

An assessment of the successful manager qualities according to Figure 3 showed that a modern manager should at first be able to make sound economic decisions (83.3%), be result-oriented (73.3%), stress-resistant (53.3%), and responsible (50%). The respondents ranked systemic thinking (40%), organizational skills (33.3%), communication skills (30%), the ability to stand up for the team, the ability to self-analysis, optimism, and self-development (23.3% each) as fewer priority qualities. Such qualities as the authority (16.7%), creativity (16.7%), the ability to make a compromise (13.3%), and honesty (10%) complete the list.



**Figure 3.** Successful Manager Qualities

Data analysis (see Figure 4) revealed a hierarchy of life values of managers, in which the following values are absolutely leading: family (91.5%), health (85.1%), love (70.2%). This ratio indicates that the managers are clearly aware that physical and mental well-being (health) provide self-confidence and the opportunity to fully enjoy life. This, in turn, allows them to maximize their professional capabilities and achieve their goals. The importance of health for most respondents also indicates that the value orientations of managers are focused on the company internal activity arrangement. That is, managers with a health value orientation are likely not only to adhere to a healthy lifestyle themselves, but also to actively pursue a policy to ensure a healthy lifestyle for the entire team - implementing programs to give up bad habits, offering a subscription to a fitness center as an additional bonus, arranging fresh bars and play spaces in the office, holding corporate retreats, trainings, business meetings in the fresh air, etc (Gao, 2017). Less important than the above values for managers are the following life values: interesting work (63.8%), money (59.6%), realization of ideas (55.3%), friends (25.5%), career (19.1%). Hence, we can assume that interesting work for managers is directly related to communication with colleagues at work, warm relations in the circle of family and friends, and only then with the possibilities of career growth. They attach much less importance to such values as social status (8.5%), social recognition (2.1%).



**Figure 4.** The Most Important Life Values

The analysis of personal and professional systems of values, presented in Figures 1 and 2, showed that their priority is independent from the age of the manager or management activity period, but he confidently demonstrates a tendency to increase profits in the first place. However, the data obtained allow us to reveal an average personality profile of a modern manager, aimed at success. This is a young man or woman, 30-45 years old, with about 10 years of experience as a middle manager. The most important values for him or her are economic values, i.e. we can say that they associate the idea of happiness with material well-being. The priority value for them is also social status, which not only gives them certain rights and obligations but also the freedom to choose ways to achieve specific goals, including those aimed at improving their image and gaining public recognition. At the same time, as a rule, they are focused on the

result and satisfaction of not only personal needs but also the needs of their employees. And most importantly - they are more flexible and courageous in solving even the most complex and non-standard tasks.

Our analysis of the distinctive features of the managers' value orientations also allows us to suggest that today they are more influenced by external factors (e.g., the U.S. Western model) and oriented toward the values of personal success rather than team success. This trend can be clearly seen in Figure 3: 73.3% of respondents choose "team economic efficiency" (team player, team focus) as a significant value for professional performance, and 70% choose "the ability to implement their innovations" (fixation on themselves, indifference to the success of others). This, among other things, can be explained by the fact that we tend to attribute individual successes to specific people, while team success is often attributed to situational (random) factor.

According to our data, the value orientations of managers as a subject of management activity is a determinant that regulates their behavior. It, in turn, is based on the personal choice of values, which in specific conditions and circumstances are a priority for the manager in the context of his management activity.

## 7. Conclusion

From all of the above it can be concluded that the values represent a unique human resource that creates a competitive advantage in the organization, they "arrange people and encourage them to act together, in the name of common interests" (Epishkin & Shapiro, 2019, p. 326). However, we must remember that the process of their formation, the development of value orientations - quite complex and contradictory, due to several circumstances at once. First, it occurs spontaneously, outside of any system, unlike knowledge. Secondly, it is strongly influenced by changes in scientific and technological progress, which determines the dynamics of the spheres of production and consumption. Third, it does not lend itself to external regulation and requires a historically long time to create the conditions in which new values will be formed. And fourth, it occurs under the influence of the social environment.

As part of this study, we proposed a pilot study and initially tested a questionnaire to identify personal and professional values in the managers of different levels, as well as their qualities that are most likely to lead them to success. Analysis of the survey results showed that the value orientations of the modern manager does not depend directly on his age or management activity period, but is a guide in the career that determines the future success of the entire business. In other words, what the manager focuses more on becomes important for the entire entity and over time is included in the company's overall value system.

These studies also confirmed the relevance of the research problem and showed the direction of further work to improve the questionnaire.

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