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Employee Subjectivity as a Key Value in Management

Abstract

People, with their knowledge and potential, are undoubtedly the most important part in any organisation because, thanks to them, it might accomplish its goals, gain a competitive advantage and achieve success on the market. That is why each organisation should hire the most appropriate employees and provide working conditions that enable them to unleash their potential for the company's benefit. The fundamental value for creating a good work environment is employees' subjectivity, which can be perceived in two ways. The basic level of honouring a person's subjectivity is respecting human rights and the employee's dignity in mutual relations. The higher level, though, is to give people a certain amount of autonomy and responsibility in their workplace. The aim of this paper is to identify and analyse interdisciplinary concepts that managers can use in order to ensure that people are given the respect they deserve.

Keywords: employee subjectivity, personalism, empowerment, participative management

JEL Classification: A13, M54

1. Preliminaries

Contemporary organisations build their competitive advance and success first and foremost on their employees. People with their knowledge and competencies are far more important than any kind of capital, possessions or assets. That is why the most popular concepts in contemporary management i.e. knowledge management, corporate social responsibility, human potential development, empowerment, personnel marketing, are focused mainly on employees. Companies tend to simplify their

organisational structures, increase their flexibility, take decisions in shorter time and, last but not least, satisfy customers' needs with the tailored products and services. Those actions require creating such work conditions that enable unleashing employees' potential and use it for the common good of the organisation. What should be the fundament for any other work conditions is respecting employees' subjectivity.

Because of the fact that management is a relatively new branch of science, it has to derive from other scientific disciplines. That is why the aim of the paper is to display those theories concerning human subjectivity which have their origins in different fields of study and at the same time can be used in management. The research is conducted with the method of critical literature analysis.

Subjectivity can be perceived in different ways dependently from the field of science. However, each of the scientific disciplines focuses on different aspects of subjectivity, one can find some common points of presented theories. In philosophy, a person is a subject in her essence and subjectivity is a fundamental, immanent human feature, opposite to looking for a person as an object. In theology, a person, created as *imago Dei*, is an element of the order stated by God. Psychologists perceive subjectivity as a feature of an individual who is aware of being a subject.¹ It is also considered as a category which concerns determinants of an individual's behaviour or self-control expression.² According to Piotr Sztompka, subjectivity in sociology means the active influence of human actions on the shape of the social structure. He underlines the dualism in the relation between action and structure and gives primacy to the first one.³ Going a step further, sociologists write also about subjectivity as a feature of a social system which means that this system consists of individuals who are the subjects of social relations.⁴

Such a wide variety of theories concerning human subjectivity demands to narrow the range of the research. For that reason, the author decided to limit the analysis on the subjectivity to Catholic social teaching, sociology, psychology and management. This limitation lets enclose the interdisciplinary research in social sciences and at the same time allows to show a complementary outlook on employee's subjectivity from different perspectives.

¹ Cf. O. Urban, *Podmiotowość jednostki ludzkiej jako przedmiot badań nauk humanistycznych*, Bogucki Wydawnictwo naukowe, Poznań 2008, p. 203–205.

² Cf. *Podmiotowość człowieka w organizacji*, eds. M. Motyka, J. Pawlak, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Krakowie, Kraków 2012, p. 80.

³ Cf. P. Sztompka, *Socjologiczna teoria podmiotowości* [in:] *Podmiotowość: możliwość, rzeczywistość, konieczność*, eds. P. Buczkowski, R. Cichoński, Wydawnictwo Nakom, Poznań 1989, p. 12–13.

⁴ Cf. K. Wielecki, *Podmiotowość społeczna i jej makrostrukturalne uwarunkowania* [in:] *Podmiotowość: możliwość, rzeczywistość, konieczność*, eds. P. Buczkowski, R. Cichoński, Wydawnictwo Nakom, Poznań 1989, p. 32.

2. Subjective dimension of work in Catholic social teaching

Human work as a part of human identity and activity is in the centre of Church's attention. The most significant publication on a subjective dimension of human work is John Paul's II encyclical letter *Laborem exercens*. Although work conditions and respecting of employees' rights in XX century differentiate from current practices, *Laborem exercens* contains many arguments that are actual and should be taken into consideration by contemporary managers. It is said that John Paul II created a totally new theology of human work in which a person is the subject, not the object, of work. The fundamental assumption of the Polish pope about human work is that man, the *image Deo*, is a person which means 'a subjective being capable of acting in a planned and rational way, capable of deciding about himself, and with a tendency to self-realisation. As a person, man is, therefore, the subject of work.'⁵

Only a human being is able to take actions oriented on a specific goal out of his or her will. That is why a person can be perceived as the actor who decides to take a specific action on purpose. As D. Savage states: 'when the human person experiences himself as the efficient cause of her actions, that an authentically human act, an *actus personae*, can be said to take place.'⁶ What is more, 'the person not only acts consciously, but she is aware that she is acting, as well as the fact that it is she who is acting.'⁷ That consciousness of acting is inevitably connected to the subjectivity of a person which has its reflection in human work.

Going further, John Paul II wrote that the primary value of work was a man himself because the subject and the measure of the dignity of work was the individual who carried it out.⁸ What it means is that independently from the kind of work its ethical value is derived from the fact that it is done by a conscious and free subject – a person.⁹ Through work man not only changes the world, but he also realises his humanity by developing himself and realising his vocation. According to pope Francis: 'We were created with a vocation to work (...). Work is a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfilment.'¹⁰

The subjectivity of a man in the process of work assumes respecting human rights. In relation to work basic rights are the following: right to work; right to just salary; right to own property; right to participation in management, ownership and profit; right to decent life standard; right to social security and benefits; right of association; right to strike.¹¹ John Paul II adds the right to rest in three aspects: rest

⁵ John Paul II, *Laborem exercens*, No. 6.

⁶ D. Savage, *The Subjective Dimension of Human Work*, Peter Lang, New York 2008, p. 131.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 133.

⁸ Cf. *Laborem exercens*, No. 6; Papiéska Rada Justitia et Pax, *Kompendium Nauki Społecznej Kościoła, Jedność*, Kielce 2005, No. 271, p. 184.

⁹ Cf. A. Miziński, *Obowiązki i uprawnienia katolików świeckich w życiu gospodarczym i politycznym* [in:] *II Polski Synod Plenarny a Synody Diecezjalne*, eds. J. Krukowski, M. Sitarz, A. Pastwa, Lublin 2015, p. 121.

¹⁰ Francis, *Laudato si*, No. 128.

¹¹ Cf. S. Fel, J. Kupny, *Humanizacja życia gospodarczego*, Polihymnia, Lublin 2000, p. 45–57.

at least on every Sunday; a longer leave during holidays; a pension and insurance for old age or in the case of accidents at work.¹² What is more, a man perceived as a subject of work should conduct his work freely and without any constraint.¹³

Although work can be done individually, it also has its social dimension. People often cooperate with each other and associate in bigger units – organisations. In Catholic social teaching an enterprise is ‘a community of persons who in various ways are endeavouring to satisfy their basic needs, and who form a particular group at the service of the whole of society.’¹⁴ This definition implies that economic development, the growth of production and achieving high profits are not the aims *per se* but, first and foremost, organisations ought to serve individuals and the whole human community.¹⁵ In that sense gaining the profit is not the exclusive purpose of company’s existence but a reward for carrying its tasks properly and serving not only the customers but also the employees. An important aspect of human work in the company perceived as a community of persons is putting at least a small part to the common good of the society. It is possible to achieve if people will know that each and every employee is responsible for the enterprise and can have an influence on its work which means that he or she is a subject of work. It is practical realisation of the principle of subsidiarity according to which ‘employees at a lower level who are trusted, trained, experienced, know precisely the extent of their responsibilities, and are free to make decisions, can fully use their freedom and intelligence, and thus are enabled to develop as people; they are indeed ‘co-entrepreneurs.’¹⁶

3. New institutionalism and open society in sociology

The main object of research in new institutionalism are broadly defined institutions and connected to them key aspects of human actions.¹⁷ Those institutions, as well as relations between them, create a context for the active individuals who are named *homo agens-institutionalist*.¹⁸ New institutionalism allows finding mutual connections between human actions and institutions. On the one hand, it states that human actions are determined by existing institutions and applicable rules. On the other hand, though, this theory perceives an individual as the agent of changes who is able to influence those institutions and at the same time modify the set of institutional rules.

¹² Cf. *Laborem exercens*, No. 19.

¹³ Cf. A. Gembariski, *Człowiek jako podmiot naturalnego prawa do pracy a kwestia społeczna w nauczaniu Jana Pawła II* [in:] *Biznes, Prawo, Etyka*, eds. W. Gasparski, J. Jabłońska-Bonca, Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne, Warsaw 2009, p. 166.

¹⁴ John Paul II, *Centessimus annus*, No. 35.

¹⁵ Cf. A. Miziński, op. cit., p. 127.

¹⁶ Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace, *Vocation of the Business Leader: A Reflection*, Vatican 2012, No. 50.

¹⁷ Cf. P. Chmielewski, *Homo agens. Instytucjonalizm w naukach społecznych*, Wydawnictwo Poltext, Warsaw 2011, s. 247.

¹⁸ Cf. *Ibidem*.

Crucial for understanding the new institutionalism theory is the dualism of human nature. People and their identity are somehow shaped in the process of socialisation through which they learn how to live in accordance with norms shared within a society. At the same time, an inherent feature of human identity is creativity, which enables people to improve the reality in order to achieve their individual goals. In some situations, however, people need institutions because they cannot fulfil their needs alone and, as a part of a society, they are willing to build its common good. That is why human actions are determined by a whole set of social institutions which define interactions and relationships between individuals.¹⁹

What is more, the presumption of new interactionism is that a person, as a reflective being, before taking the decision has to take into consideration many factors as 'desire and will, goals, accessible means to realise tasks, actual and future actions of others, her own image and probable result of chosen action.'²⁰ Reflexivity in the modern world is not just a simple control of actions but it is connected with a constant process of gaining knowledge and using it to reconsideration of all kinds of activity as well as relations towards nature and other people.²¹ Each person is able to use possessed knowledge in everyday interactions but this knowledge cannot be understood as a collection of solutions to choose from. It has to be perceived as a general ability to react and influence on different social circumstances because a person as the reflexive entity is aware of the social rules that show some accepted patterns of behaviour suitable to different circumstances.²² Human reflexivity is one of the conditions that enable the creation of open societies.

K. Popper defines open society as a society in which 'individuals are confronted with personal decisions.'²³ This kind of a society provides formal conditions in which individuals can take a risk and use their own beliefs about their behaviour's rationality to invent solutions of appearing problems.²⁴ In open society people have right to state their own opinions and to criticise reality. On that basis, they can take independent decisions and actions. According to A. Jabłoński, the openness is the factor that allows overcome of monistic and monopolistic projects of goals setting and accept the pluralism of problems solutions instead. Openness does not eliminate certain specific solutions but requires the creation of the procedures that give an opportunity to choose the best solution in specific conditions.²⁵

Values in open society are not ordered hierarchically. The most important are human values which are relevant only to people, not to objects. Other values are marginal and depend on the perception of a specific object by the subject – a person who sets the value of that object. In this concept, there are no objective values which would be obligatory for each and every person independently from the place, time

¹⁹ Cf. P. Ibidem, s. 12.

²⁰ H. Blumer, *Interakcjonizm symboliczny. Perspektywa i metoda*, NOMOS, Kraków 2007, s. 15–16.

²¹ Cf. A. Jabłoński, *Budowanie społeczeństwa wiedzy*, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2006, p. 567.

²² Cf. A. Giddens, *Stanowienie społeczeństwa: zarys teorii strukturalizacji*, Zysk i S-ka Wydawnictwo, Poznań 2003, p. 61.

²³ K.R. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies*, Vol. I, George Routledge and Sons, London 1947, p. 152.

²⁴ Cf. A. Jabłoński, op. cit., p. 488–489.

²⁵ Cf. Ibidem, p. 575.

and circumstances.²⁶ Considering values connected to a human being in open society the key ones are the following: human dignity and freedom. The human dignity in the concept of open society, states T. Barankiewicz, does not derive from any philosophical theory but it has a common culturally rooted sense. Ontologically human dignity means a specific internal construction of a man thanks to which he exists as a person able to self-disposal and self-constitution through the acts of will and mind. Being a human is an inalienable value *per se*. Any person nor any community can deprive a man of dignity. The fundamental value in open society is also freedom which is a significant feature of human activities and distinguishes human actions from any other facts, events and processes in the world. A person might take actions only on condition that he or she wants to do it, without any constraint.²⁷

4. Motivation, transgression and proactive personality in psychology

There are many psychological theories considering human subjectivity and it would be impossible to write about all of them in such a short article. That is why the author chose only a few ones which correspond with concepts shown in the paper and are useful in the terms of management. One of them is the theory of motivating employees which derives from psychology. In that field of science motivation ‘can be defined as any condition that might energise and direct our actions.’²⁸ Classical motivation theories enumerate various things that trigger human reactions but in general, we may distinguish between ‘intrinsic motivation, which refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable, and extrinsic motivation, which refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome.’²⁹ Through work, a person can achieve personal and organisational goals as well as the aims that are useful for the society. On the one hand, employees get rewards for accomplished tasks which enables them to fulfil their needs, on the other, work is demanding and lets people to use their abilities and competences³⁰ in order to realise their subjectivity in the workplace which in consequence leads to the job satisfaction. In the context of employee’s subjectivity, the most appropriate motivation theories seem to be a classic – Maslow’s need theory and McClelland’s theory of needs.

²⁶ Cf. R. Rorty, *Przygodność, ironia, solidarność*, Warsaw 1996, p. 74.

²⁷ Cf. T. Barankiewicz, *Wartości gospodarcze a porządek prawny społeczeństwa otwartego*, „Annales. Etyka w Życiu Gospodarczym” 2005, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 302.

²⁸ R.L. Crooks, J. Stein, *Psychology. Science, behaviour and life*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York 1988, p. 286.

²⁹ R.M. Ryan, E.L. Deci, *Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations: Classic Definitions and New Directions*, “Contemporary Educational Psychology” 2000, No. 25, p. 55.

³⁰ Cf. W. Klinkosz, *Motywacja osiągnięć osób aktywnych zawodowo*, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2013, p. 94–95.

Humanistic psychologist Abraham Maslow proposed putting human needs into a multilevel hierarchy that consists of five stages, ranging from the psychological needs, through safety, belongingness and esteem needs to self-actualisation needs.³¹ Carrying out work a person can fulfil needs from all those groups but respecting employees' subjectivity requires such work conditions in which they can reach the top of the hierarchy – self-actualisation. According to the humanistic approach, self-actualisation 'is the ultimate goal of every individual, and in organisational context the idea is often linked with job satisfaction.'³²

McClelland divides human needs into three groups: a need for achievement, need for affiliation and need for power. People with high need for achievement are motivated by completing challenging tasks in which they can use their competencies in comparison to organisational performance standards. Moreover, they often reveal a personal initiative at work, including voluntary proactive behaviour like consistency with organisational goals, orientation on actions or persistence in task completion.³³ The need for power means that a person wants to influence and control others and it is more important than task realisation. The last but not least is the need for affiliation which is connected to building relationships with others, being accepted by the group members, working with others and preferring cooperation rather than competition.³⁴

It is really a difficult task for a manager to get to know at least the most important factors that drive people to take actions for the organisational common good but their identification is the best way of subjective approach to the employees. Motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, leads people to take voluntary and intentional actions in order to realise their tasks. In general, it might be said that the striving for subjectivity aims at the limitation of external determination of human faith and actions as well as at the increase of self-determination.³⁵

One of the theories that consider the concept of a human individual subjectivity is Józef Koźielecki's transgressive model of man.³⁶ *Homo transgressivus* takes different actions to find the truth about both himself and the world.³⁷ The analytical model assumes the following: an individual can take decisions freely and thanks to that she or he becomes a creator; an individual takes decisions about aims and means to their realisation; an individual is the main reason of her or his actions; an individual is oriented on internal and external development.³⁸ In a transgressive concept

³¹ Cf. R.L. Crooks, J. Stein, op. cit., p. 289.

³² C. Brain, *Advanced Psychology: Applications, Issues and Perspectives*, Nelson Thornes, Cheltenham 2002, p. 132.

³³ Cf. G. Hertel, M. Wittchen, *Work Motivation* [in:] *An Introduction to Work and Organizational Psychology: a European Perspective*, ed. N. Chmiel, Blackwell Publishing, Malden 2008, p. 31.

³⁴ Cf. C. Brain, op. cit., p. 132.

³⁵ Cf. B. Wiernek, *Podmiotowość pracownika w procesie pracy* [in:] *Formy władzy w przedsiębiorstwie przemysłowym i jej wpływ na kształtowanie się podmiotowości pracownika w procesie pracy*, eds. J. Bugiel, B. Wiernek, Kraków 1990, p. 194.

³⁶ Cf. O. Urban, op. cit., p. 55.

³⁷ Cf. M. Tański, *Joseph Koźielecki's Concept of Transgressive Man and the Problems of Sustainable Development*, "Problems of Sustainable Development" 2015, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 62.

³⁸ Cf. O. Urban, op. cit., p. 58–59.

of a man, people are able to surpass their possibilities through intentional and autonomous activity. 'Transgressions are innovative and creative activities. They let man go beyond the limits of his/her previous functioning, thus allowing acquisition of new areas of activity, or the formation of new values.'³⁹ Although an individual creates reality, in the enculturation process he or she learns some cultural norms (analogy to the socialisation process in sociology). In that process a man is not an object but the subject of actions, takes initiative and adjusts gained knowledge to his or her needs and abilities. Only when the culture becomes an element of a man's internal experience, he is able to take efficient actions within the world.⁴⁰

Another psychological concept that supports employee's subjectivity is the proactive personality theory. It derives from interactionism in which one may see reciprocal causal links between a person, environment and behaviour. Proactive people are not passive but tend to change their environment through conscious and motivated behaviour directed on stated goal.⁴¹ They feel that they can influence the reality and are really efficient. In addition to that they have strong self-motivation and strong internal determination to pursue stated goals. In general, proactivity means a tendency to initiate and maintain actions that change the environment.⁴² An individual high in proactive personality will anticipate and search for the opportunities rather than wait for the change; make a plan to create better circumstances than wait for any ready solution. What is more, a proactive person would have his or her own vision of reality and engage in behaviour that will lead to making it true.⁴³

In organisations proactivity manifests itself in more effective and dynamic professional development because an employee high in proactivity is able to anticipate qualifications that will be needed in foreseeable future and makes an effort to gain them in order to be promoted. Additionally, proactive employees have a strong need of being prepared for the changes which is combined with life-long learning. They easier adjust to a new workplace, integrate with the group and get to know new people. They are good at prioritising tasks and thanks to that are able to maintain work-life balance.⁴⁴ It seems that to respect subjectivity of proactive employees the leaders should let them develop and not hinder their enthusiasm to create organisational reality although in some cases it might be difficult to manage people with so high expectancy of autonomy and will to change whole organisation.

³⁹ M. Wróblewska, *Creativity in management – correlates symptoms as determinants of success*, "Economics and Management" 2015, Vol. 7, No. 4, p. 35.

⁴⁰ Cf. O. Urban, op. cit., p. 66.

⁴¹ Cf. T.S. Bateman, J.M. Crant, *The proactive component of organizational behavior: A measure and correlates*, "Journal of Organizational Behavior" 1993, Vol. 14, p. 104; S.K. Parker, U.K. Bindl, K. Strauss, *Making things happen: A model of proactive motivation*, "Journal of Management" 2010, Vol. 36, p. 830.

⁴² Cf. *Podmiotowość człowieka w organizacji*, p. 81–82.

⁴³ Cf. S.K. Parker, U.K. Bindl, K. Strauss, op. cit., p. 830; J.S. Horng, Ch.Y. Tsai, T.Ch. Yang, Ch.H. Liu, D.Ch. Hu, *Exploring the relationship between proactive personality, work environment and employee creativity among tourism and hospitality employees*, "International Journal of Hospitality Management" 2016, No. 54, p. 26.

⁴⁴ *Podmiotowość człowieka w organizacji*, p. 84–87.

5. Employee subjectivity in management science

Above analysis reveals that human subjectivity can be understood in many different ways depending on the field of science that analysed theory belongs to. Collecting those thoughts and looking at them out of management perspective permits to distinguish two related dimensions of employee subjectivity. The basic level means respecting rights and dignity of each organisation's member, independently from the post they have and the task they carry out. More pragmatic aspect is connected with the range of autonomy and responsibility in the workplace.⁴⁵ Employees can realise their subjectivity through their influence on the organisation, organising their work in a way that is convenient to themselves and using their cognitive potential for the common good.⁴⁶ Having an opportunity to participate in management, people identify with the organisation and perceive its success as their own one.

Tadeusz Borys writes about the subjective models of personnel policy whose features are the following: perceiving a human being as a person who consists of three spheres physically-materialistic, mental and spiritual; partnership and creativity as a fundamentals of work; management based on releasing of employees' positive emotions; holistic peoples' development in their professional role of employee; broad usage of motivational methods which is the combination of 'soft' and 'hard' incentives; positive interpersonal relations; real leadership/cooperation/empathy; mutual communication without barriers and feeling of receiving full information as well as real partnership; investments in values of both organisation and employee including mental and spiritual aspects of human life.⁴⁷

Many features of this model were included in presented above theories. What is missing or not enough outlined is the dualism of a person who is able to learn some norms and values and adjust to the workplace and its culture but at the same time can be the active individual who intentionally introduces changes to create organisational reality and achieve stated goals in her or his own original way. The important things are the balance between realisation of individual and organisational aims and at least partial congruence of those aims.

Striving for their subjectivity people act consciously in accordance with individual standards and values and are able to react to their environment in order to create and change the reality in an aware and intentional way.⁴⁸ On the other hand, in management people are often perceived as members of different organisations which have their own culture that is manifested in unique values, norms and behavioural patterns. It means that if a person wants to work in a company, he or she has to adjust to its culture and accept common goals, shared norms and values that leads to focus on organisational goals rather than individual ones and to resignation from

⁴⁵ Ibidem, p. 18–19.

⁴⁶ B. Wiernek, op. cit., p. 203.

⁴⁷ Cf. T. Borys, *Pracownik w systemach zarządzania – aspekty aksjologiczne*, "Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu" 2013, No. 301, p. 20.

⁴⁸ Cf. M. Orłowska, M. Jaworowska, H. Ciążęła, *Różne oblicza podmiotowości we współczesnej Polsce. Analiza wybranych problemów w aspekcie pedagogicznym, socjologicznym i aksjologicznym*, Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogiki Specjalnej, Warszawa 2001, p. 10.

at least a part of the influence on reality. B. Kozusznik names that situation ‘deinfluencing’ and perceives that resignation as the basis for the subjectivity of a work team.⁴⁹ At the same time, she states that ‘true human autonomy lies in the fact that people are able to deprive themselves of their influence on reality and don’t perceive this as losing their own autonomy.’⁵⁰ The resignation from an individual influence on organisational reality is possible because of the unique hierarchy of individual values. K. Wojtyła distinguishes from three kinds of good that can be realised by a person: the good of entity, objective excellence of a person; the good of the world to which a person belongs and engage in taking actions; the greatest good – the good of God because a person who acts reveals the excellence of the Creator.⁵¹ Obviously, not all people think of the greater good in regard to God but all have the values hierarchy according to which they act. People are able to subordinate their individual values to a greater good also within the organisation but usually it has to be at least partially connected to fulfilling their own needs. In order to encourage employees to perceive organisation goals as congruent with their own ones, managers have to treat them as responsible individuals who can act intentionally. They also ought to respect their dignity, rights and needs which is equal with concerning employees’ subjectivity. Conscious acting to change the organisational reality on one hand and acceptance of company’s values and goals on the other is directly reflected in new interactionism as well as in the transgressive model of a man and proactive personality characterised above. In management, subjective approach to employee seems to be the most acknowledged in concepts of participation and empowerment.

Participation in an organisation enables employees to realise their subjectivity through expressing their individuality and striving for self-actualization.⁵² Working in an organisation which is a community, people want to engage in management practices in order to build the common good of that community. That is why they should be enabled to participate in taking decisions within the organisation. In organisations that respect human subjectivity employees are entitled to full participation that means that each and every person has an inherent right of participation. Because of high congruence of employee’s goals with organisational ones in long-term perspective this involvement results in a constant and positive influence on achieving organisational aims.⁵³

⁴⁹ Cf. B. Kozusznik, *Podmiotowość zespołu pracowniczego w organizacji*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, Katowice 1996, p. 10.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 120.

⁵¹ Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Elementarz etyczny*, Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, Lublin 1999, p. 65.

⁵² Cf. R.A. Styskał, *Power and Commitment in Organizations: A Test of the Participation Thesis*, “Social Forces” 1980, vol. 58, No. 3, p. 925.

⁵³ Cf. R. Stocki, P. Prokopowicz, G. Żmuda, *Pełna partycypacja w zarządzaniu. Tajemnica sukcesu największych eksperymentów menadżerskich świata*, Wolters Kluwer Polska, Kraków 2008, p. 314.

A person may participate in management indirectly or directly. An indirect form of participation is connected to trade unions that guard and defend employees' rights as well as negotiate work conditions with employers.⁵⁴ Direct participation in management requires cooperation for the common good of the organisation and sharing power with employees in task delegation that is a practical realisation of the subsidiary principle. Undoubtedly, the managers are responsible for the realisation of vision and strategy in their company but, as stated above, employees also want to influence the shape of organisation and work conditions in order to achieve their own aims and fulfil their needs. For that reason, the managers should delegate not only duties but also entitlements and responsibilities which will enable chosen employee to carry out delegated tasks. In that way, they treat subordinate as an independent and responsible person who is entitled to take decisions and act intentionally to achieve both organisational and individual goals and somehow allow them to feel as the co-owners of the organisation.

J.A. Conger and R.N. Kanungo say that empowerment might be perceived as 'a process by which a leader or manager shares his or her power with subordinates' and in this understanding can be equated with employee participation. At the same time, they state that it is not the full definition of the concept because empowerment is also connected to employee's motivation and correspond with McClelland's theory of needs. In that light empowerment is defined as 'a process of enhancing feelings of self-efficacy among organisational members through the identification of conditions that foster powerlessness and through their removal by both formal organisational practices and informal techniques of providing efficacy information.'⁵⁵ According to M. Marghany empowerment through participation is only one of four kinds of empowerment. The other three types are the following: empowerment through involvement, empowerment through commitment and empowerment through delayering.⁵⁶ Empowerment is not a simple task delegation or letting employees participate in setting organisational goals. It means much more as it requires creating autonomous working groups responsible for particular projects, sharing knowledge and experience among employees including also the managers. In some situations, empowerment results in reducing managerial hierarchy going even to the organic leadership in which each person is the leader in her or his field of activity. It might also lead to a 'can-do' attitude, proactive behaviour and to increase in job satisfaction.⁵⁷ Empowered employees are more self-confident and highly likely to be innovative on the way to success. They also are motivated to accept tasks beyond responsibilities and create work circumstances.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ *Laborem exercens*, No. 20; Z. Sekuła, *Motywowanie do pracy. Teorie i instrumenty*, PWE, Warsaw 2008, p. 46.

⁵⁵ J.A. Conger, R.N. Kanungo, *The Empowerment Process: Integrating Theory and Practice*, "The Academy of Management Review" 1988, Vol. 13, No. 3, p. 473.

⁵⁶ Cf. M. Marghany, *Effects of Empowerment on Employee Performance in the Workplace*, <http://www.researchgate.net/publication/280053427> (accessed: May 4, 2016).

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁸ S. Dehghani, A. Gharooni, A. Arabzadeh, *Staff Empowerment, Entrepreneurial Behaviors and Organizational Efficiency in Iranian Headquarter Education*, "Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences" 2014, No. 109, p. 1133.

6. Conclusions

To sum up, organisational success vastly depends on employees' knowledge, competencies and their engagement into company's actions. The ethical value of work lies in the fact that it is carried out by a person, a conscious and independent subject of work. Through work people can develop themselves as well as change the world. Because of the fact that the management is a relatively new branch of science, it derives from other social sciences such as psychology, sociology or Catholic social teaching. That is why theories like new interactionism, open society, proactive personality or transgression can be helpful for contemporary managers in creating such work conditions that enable employee's potential development. Concepts present in those theories are reflected in the managerial practice of employees' participation and empowerment. People who feel respected and appreciated in their workplace are able to put more effort to achieve organisational goals and have higher satisfaction from their job. Respecting human subjectivity is beneficial for both employees and employers as satisfied and motivated person will achieve better results and is more likely to use his or her potential in the workplace.

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