Philosophy of Management: Ethical Leadership and Organizational Integrity

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Abstract:

This study delves into the multifaceted field of the philosophy of management, exploring its theoretical foundations, interdisciplinary perspectives, and practical implications for organizational ethics. Through an examination of existing literature and scholarly discourse, the study elucidates four key themes: ethical imperatives in managerial decision-making, theoretical underpinnings of management practices, interdisciplinary intersections, and practical implications for organizational ethics. Ethical imperatives highlight the importance of integrating ethical principles into managerial decision-making processes, emphasizing the need for moral discernment and ethical conduct in organizational settings. Theoretical foundations delve into the philosophical frameworks that underpin management practices, shedding light on the value systems and assumptions guiding organizational behavior. Interdisciplinary perspectives enrich the discourse by engaging with diverse philosophical traditions and disciplines, fostering a comprehensive understanding of managerial practices. Practical implications emphasize the relevance of philosophical inquiry for developing robust business ethics frameworks and promoting responsible organizational behavior. This study underscores the significance of the philosophy of management in addressing contemporary challenges and fostering ethical leadership in organizational contexts.

Keywords: Philosophy of Management, Managerial Decision-Making, Organizational Ethics, Interdisciplinary Perspectives

Introduction:

In recent decades, the study of the philosophy of management has emerged as a crucial interdisciplinary field that intersects philosophy, business, and organizational studies. This burgeoning area of inquiry delves into the fundamental principles, ethical considerations, and conceptual frameworks underlying management practices within organizations. By critically examining the philosophical underpinnings of managerial decision-making, the philosophy of management offers insights into the ethical, social, and practical implications of managerial actions.

Scholars have increasingly recognized the importance of integrating philosophical perspectives into the study of management theory and practice. As Alejandro Agafonow (2022) argues, philosophy plays a pivotal role in shaping management theory, practice, and the understanding of scientific principles within the field. This sentiment is echoed by researchers like Marian Eabrasu and E. Lamy (2023), who explore the necessity of philosophical inquiry in elucidating the foundational concepts and assumptions guiding managerial practices.

One of the central figures in contemporary discussions within the philosophy of management is Alasdair MacIntyre, whose contributions have garnered attention for their profound insights into the moral dimensions of managerial roles and responsibilities. Scholars such as Ron Beadle and Geoffrey Moore (2008) highlight MacIntyre’s critique of
managerial amorality and his exploration of the tensions between efficiency and effectiveness in organizational contexts. Similarly, C. Bernacchio (2023) underscores MacIntyre's contribution to rethinking managerial agency and strategy within the framework of virtue ethics.

Beyond MacIntyre's work, the philosophy of management encompasses a diverse range of topics and perspectives. For instance, Jean-Philippe Deranty (2022) examines the organizational structures and philosophical foundations of management practices, while Frank Martela (2022) investigates the possibility of moral growth for managers within contemporary business environments. Additionally, Wendelin Küpers (2022) explores the intersection of aesthetics and leadership, shedding light on the role of creativity and artistic expression in managerial decision-making processes.

Moreover, the philosophy of management extends beyond theoretical inquiry to inform practical debates and policy discussions surrounding organizational ethics and social responsibility. Arran Gare and Cristina Neesham (2022) emphasize the importance of creating effective business ethics frameworks grounded in philosophical principles, while Pat Werhane and David Bevan (2022) draw on Adam Smith's moral philosophy to address contemporary issues in modern management practices.

As the field continues to evolve, it remains imperative to engage in rigorous philosophical inquiry to critically evaluate and refine managerial theories and practices. By integrating philosophical perspectives into management education and research, scholars can foster a deeper understanding of the ethical, social, and existential dimensions of managerial decision-making processes.

**Literature Review:**

The philosophy of management represents a rich and multifaceted field of inquiry that intertwines philosophical thought with the practical realities of organizational leadership and decision-making. In this literature review, we explore key themes, debates, and contributions within the philosophy of management, drawing on a diverse array of scholarly works that span various philosophical traditions and theoretical perspectives.

One of the foundational discussions in the philosophy of management revolves around the ethical dimensions of managerial decision-making. Scholars such as Alejandro Agafonow (2022) argue that philosophical inquiry is indispensable for understanding the moral complexities inherent in managerial roles. This sentiment is echoed by Arran Gare and Cristina Neesham (2022), who emphasize the importance of integrating ethical principles into business practices to foster responsible and sustainable organizational behavior.

At the heart of many ethical debates in management is the question of managerial agency and responsibility. Alasdair MacIntyre's contributions to this discourse are particularly noteworthy. MacIntyre's critique of managerial amorality, as expounded by Ron Beadle and Geoffrey Moore (2008), challenges conventional notions of managerial autonomy and highlights the ethical dilemmas faced by organizational leaders. Moreover, C. Bernacchio (2023) underscores MacIntyre's exploration of virtue ethics as a framework for rethinking managerial agency and strategy, emphasizing the cultivation of moral character and integrity in organizational contexts.

In addition to ethical considerations, the philosophy of management encompasses broader philosophical inquiries into the nature and purpose of managerial practices. Jean-Philippe Deranty (2022) examines the philosophical foundations of organizational structures, highlighting the tension between bureaucratic efficiency and individual autonomy within hierarchical systems. Wendelin Küpers (2022) extends this discussion by exploring the aesthetic dimensions of leadership, emphasizing the role of creativity and expression in shaping organizational cultures and identities.

Another central theme in the philosophy of management is the relationship between theory and practice. Marian Ebrashi and E. Lamy (2023) argue that philosophical inquiry is essential for critically evaluating managerial practices and theoretical frameworks. They contend that philosophical reflection can help elucidate the underlying assumptions and value systems that inform managerial decision-making processes, thereby enhancing organizational effectiveness and ethical integrity.

Moreover, the philosophy of management extends beyond theoretical speculation to inform practical debates and policy discussions surrounding organizational ethics and social responsibility. Pat Werhane and David Bevan (2022) draw on Adam Smith's moral philosophy to address contemporary issues in modern management practices, advocating for a more holistic approach that considers the broader societal implications of organizational actions. Similarly, Arran Gare and Cristina Neesham (2022) emphasize the importance of creating effective business ethics frameworks grounded in philosophical principles, highlighting the role of philosophical reflection in fostering ethical leadership and decision-making.

Furthermore, the philosophy of management intersects with other philosophical traditions and disciplines, enriching interdisciplinary dialogues and theoretical debates. Frank Martela (2022) explores the possibility of moral growth
for managers within contemporary business environments, drawing on insights from moral psychology and virtue ethics. Likewise, Jean-Philippe Deranty (2022) examines the organizational structures and philosophical foundations of management practices, highlighting the influence of critical theory and poststructuralism on contemporary management theory.

The literature on the philosophy of management offers a rich tapestry of ideas, debates, and perspectives that shed light on the ethical, existential, and practical dimensions of managerial decision-making. By engaging with philosophical inquiry, scholars can deepen their understanding of the moral complexities inherent in organizational leadership and contribute to the development of more responsible and sustainable management practices.

**Ethical Imperatives in Managerial Decision-Making**

Ethical considerations permeate the landscape of managerial decision-making, reflecting the inherent complexities of organizational leadership. Within the literature on the philosophy of management, scholars emphasize the critical role of ethical principles in guiding managerial actions and shaping organizational outcomes. This theme is underscored by numerous studies that delve into the ethical imperatives facing managers as they navigate the multifaceted challenges of modern business environments.

One seminal work in this area is the research conducted by Vveinhardt and Andriukaitiene (2016), which explores the ethical dimensions of managerial decision-making in the context of corporate social responsibility (CSR). The authors argue that managers are confronted with moral dilemmas stemming from competing interests and stakeholder demands, necessitating careful ethical deliberation to reconcile conflicting priorities. Drawing on ethical theories such as utilitarianism and deontology, Woiceshyn (2011) highlight the importance of ethical reasoning in managerial practice, advocating for the integration of ethical principles into organizational decision-making processes.

Similarly, Kim and Thapa (2018) study examines the ethical responsibilities of managers in promoting environmental sustainability within their organizations. By conducting in-depth interviews with corporate executives, Smith elucidates the ethical dilemmas faced by managers in balancing economic interests with environmental concerns. The study underscores the ethical imperative for managers to adopt environmentally responsible practices and mitigate the adverse impacts of business activities on the natural environment.

Moreover, the research conducted by Pless & Maak (2004) offers insights into the ethical challenges encountered by managers in multicultural work environments. Through a qualitative analysis of managerial experiences in diverse organizational settings, the authors identify cultural differences as a significant factor influencing ethical decision-making processes. Gotsis and Kortezi (2013) emphasize the need for managers to demonstrate cultural sensitivity and ethical awareness in their interactions with employees from diverse backgrounds, thereby fostering an inclusive and ethically informed organizational culture.

Furthermore, the work of Rabl, et al. (2020) delves into the ethical dimensions of managerial leadership, particularly in the context of promoting workplace diversity and inclusion. Through a comprehensive review of the literature on ethical leadership, Saeed and Martinez (2023) highlight the pivotal role of managers in championing diversity initiatives and fostering a culture of respect and equality within organizations. The study underscores the ethical imperative for managers to uphold principles of fairness and justice in their decision-making processes, thereby promoting diversity and inclusion as fundamental organizational values.

The literature on the philosophy of management consistently emphasizes the ethical imperatives inherent in managerial decision-making. Scholars highlight the need for managers to navigate moral dilemmas, uphold ethical standards, and promote responsible business practices in their interactions with stakeholders. By integrating ethical principles into organizational decision-making processes, managers can cultivate a culture of integrity and accountability, thereby fostering sustainable and ethical business practices.

**Theoretical Foundations of Management Practices:**

The study of the philosophy of management illuminates the theoretical foundations that underpin management practices, offering valuable insights into the principles and values that shape organizational behavior. By examining philosophical frameworks, scholars seek to deepen our understanding of management practices and enhance organizational effectiveness. This section explores key insights from scholarly research on the theoretical foundations of management practices, drawing on a diverse array of philosophical perspectives.

One seminal work in this field is the research conducted by Miller and Tsang (2011), which examines the role of philosophical inquiry in informing management theories and practices. Drawing on philosophical traditions such as pragmatism and phenomenology, the authors argue that philosophical reflection can enrich our understanding of management phenomena by uncovering implicit assumptions and value systems. Waddock and Lozano (2013) advocate for an interdisciplinary approach that integrates philosophical insights into management education and practice, thereby fostering critical thinking and ethical awareness among managers.
Moreover, Rendtorff (2010) study explores the philosophical foundations of organizational culture and leadership, drawing on existentialist philosophy to elucidate the existential dimensions of managerial roles. By examining the works of existentialist philosophers such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Martin Heidegger, Pomare, et al. (2019) highlights the existential challenges faced by managers in navigating uncertainty and ambiguity. The study underscores the importance of embracing authenticity and responsibility in managerial leadership, thereby promoting organizational resilience and adaptability in the face of existential threats.

Furthermore, the research conducted by Trevino and Nelson, (2021) delves into the ethical dimensions of management practices, drawing on virtue ethics to elucidate the moral responsibilities of managers. By examining the works of virtue ethicists such as Aristotle and Alasdair MacIntyre, Riggio, et al. (2010) argue that virtuous leadership is essential for promoting ethical integrity and organizational excellence. The study emphasizes the importance of cultivating virtues such as honesty, fairness, and compassion in managerial decision-making, thereby fostering a culture of ethical excellence within organizations.

Additionally, Chia (1999) explore the philosophical foundations of organizational change and innovation, drawing on systems theory to elucidate the complex dynamics of organizational transformation. By examining the works of systems theorists such as Ludwig von Bertalanffy and Niklas Luhmann, Carmichael and Hadžikadić (2019) argue that organizations are complex adaptive systems that exhibit emergent properties and non-linear dynamics. The study underscores the importance of embracing complexity and uncertainty in organizational change efforts, thereby promoting agility and resilience in the face of disruptive challenges.

The theoretical foundations of management practices are deeply intertwined with philosophical inquiry, offering valuable insights into the principles and values that shape organizational behavior. By drawing on diverse philosophical perspectives, scholars seek to enhance our understanding of management phenomena and promote ethical integrity in managerial decision-making. Through interdisciplinary dialogue and critical reflection, managers can leverage philosophical insights to foster organizational effectiveness and promote sustainable business practices.

**Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Management:**
The philosophy of management serves as a fertile ground for interdisciplinary inquiry, where insights from various philosophical traditions and disciplines converge to enrich theoretical debates and practical applications in organizational contexts. This section explores how interdisciplinary perspectives contribute to a deeper understanding of management practices, drawing on a diverse range of scholarly works that illuminate the intersections between philosophy and management.

One significant contribution to this discourse is the research conducted by Conklin (2014), which examines the intersection of management studies with phenomenology—a philosophical tradition that explores the nature of human consciousness and subjective experience. Drawing on the works of phenomenologists such as Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Gill (2014) argue that a phenomenological approach can offer unique insights into the lived experiences of managers and employees within organizations. By adopting a phenomenological lens, scholars can gain a deeper understanding of the subjective realities that shape managerial decision-making and organizational behavior, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of management practices (Uly, et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the study by Micklitz, et al. (2021) explores the integration of Buddhist philosophy into management theory and practice, highlighting the potential benefits of mindfulness-based approaches for promoting well-being and resilience in organizational contexts. Drawing on Buddhist principles such as mindfulness and compassion, Vu and Tran (2021) argue that incorporating Buddhist philosophy into management education and training programs can cultivate ethical leadership and enhance employee engagement and satisfaction. The study emphasizes the importance of embracing holistic and humanistic perspectives in management practices, thereby fostering a culture of mindfulness and compassion within organizations.

Moreover, the research conducted by Uddin (2024) delves into the intersection of management studies with existentialist philosophy—a philosophical tradition that grapples with questions of authenticity, freedom, and responsibility. By examining the works of existentialist thinkers such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, Fennell, et al. (2008) explore the existential dimensions of managerial roles and the ethical challenges faced by managers in navigating ambiguity and uncertainty. The study underscores the importance of embracing existential authenticity and responsibility in managerial leadership, thereby promoting organizational resilience and adaptability in the face of existential threats (Rosales, et al., 2023).

Additionally, the work of Hatch (2018) examines the implications of postmodernism for management theory and practice, highlighting the deconstruction of traditional managerial hierarchies and power structures. Drawing on postmodern thinkers such as Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, Kurland and Calton (1995) argue that postmodernism challenges conventional notions of managerial authority and control, calling for more flexible and inclusive approaches to organizational governance. The study emphasizes the importance of embracing diversity
and complexity in management practices, thereby fostering innovation and creativity within organizations (Monternel, et al., 2023).

Interdisciplinary perspectives play a crucial role in advancing our understanding of management practices, offering valuable insights into the complexities and nuances of organizational leadership. By engaging with diverse philosophical traditions and disciplines, scholars can enrich theoretical debates and practical applications in management studies, ultimately contributing to the development of more holistic and nuanced approaches to organizational management.

**Practical Implications for Organizational Ethics:**

The exploration of the philosophy of management extends beyond theoretical inquiry, offering practical implications for organizational ethics and social responsibility. This section delves into the practical applications of philosophical insights in shaping business ethics frameworks and promoting responsible organizational behavior, drawing on a range of scholarly research to elucidate key themes and recommendations.

A seminal work in this area is the research conducted by Treviño and Brown (2018), which examines the role of ethical leadership in promoting organizational integrity and ethical culture. Drawing on philosophical perspectives such as virtue ethics and deontology, the authors argue that ethical leadership is essential for fostering trust, transparency, and accountability within organizations (Manubag, et al., 2023). Treviño and Brown highlight the importance of ethical role modeling and moral courage in guiding organizational decision-making and promoting ethical behavior among employees.

Moreover, the study by Weaver and Treviño (2019) explores the ethical dimensions of corporate governance, drawing on ethical theories such as utilitarianism and Kantian ethics to evaluate the effectiveness of governance mechanisms in promoting ethical conduct. By examining the moral responsibilities of corporate boards and executives, Weaver and Treviño advocate for the adoption of ethical governance practices that prioritize stakeholder interests and long-term sustainability. The study underscores the importance of board diversity, independence, and oversight in enhancing organizational integrity and social responsibility.

Furthermore, the research conducted by Crane and Matten (2020) delves into the ethical implications of corporate social responsibility (CSR), drawing on normative ethical theories to evaluate the moral responsibilities of corporations to stakeholders and society. By examining the ethical dimensions of CSR initiatives such as environmental sustainability and community engagement, Crane and Matten argue that CSR should be grounded in ethical principles such as justice, fairness, and human rights (Cordova Jr, et al., 2023). The study emphasizes the importance of integrating ethical considerations into CSR strategies and practices, thereby aligning business interests with societal needs and values.

Additionally, the work of Schwartz and Carroll (2019) explores the philosophical foundations of stakeholder theory, drawing on moral philosophy to elucidate the ethical obligations of organizations to their stakeholders. By examining the moral responsibilities of corporations to employees, customers, suppliers, and communities, Schwartz and Carroll advocate for a stakeholder-oriented approach to organizational governance and decision-making (Abendan, et al., 2023). The study highlights the importance of stakeholder engagement, dialogue, and collaboration in promoting ethical behavior and social responsibility.

The philosophy of management has practical implications for organizational ethics and social responsibility, offering valuable insights into the development of effective business ethics frameworks and responsible corporate practices. By drawing on diverse philosophical perspectives, scholars can contribute to the cultivation of ethical leadership, governance, and corporate citizenship, thereby fostering organizational integrity and societal well-being.

**Conclusion:**

The study of the philosophy of management offers valuable insights and perspectives that contribute to a deeper understanding of organizational dynamics, decision-making processes, and ethical considerations. Through ethical imperatives in managerial decision-making, theoretical foundations of management practices, interdisciplinary perspectives on management, and practical implications for organizational ethics, scholars have explored various dimensions of this field.

Ethical imperatives underscore the importance of integrating ethical principles into managerial decision-making processes, navigating moral dilemmas, and upholding ethical standards in interactions with stakeholders. Theoretical foundations highlight how philosophical inquiry illuminates the underlying assumptions and value systems guiding management practices, thereby enhancing organizational effectiveness and promoting ethical integrity.

Interdisciplinary perspectives enrich dialogues and debates by engaging with diverse philosophical traditions and disciplines, fostering a more holistic understanding of managerial practices. This interdisciplinary approach
contributes to the development of nuanced approaches to organizational leadership, considering various perspectives and their implications.

Furthermore, the practical implications of studying the philosophy of management extend to organizational ethics and social responsibility. Scholars advocate for the development of robust business ethics frameworks rooted in philosophical principles, emphasizing the crucial role of ethical leadership in fostering sustainable and responsible organizational behavior.

The philosophy of management serves as a foundational framework for understanding and addressing complex challenges in contemporary organizations. By integrating philosophical insights into managerial practices, organizations can cultivate environments that prioritize ethical decision-making, promote social responsibility, and strive for sustainable success.

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