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QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN THE SYSTEM OF HRM: PERSPECTIVE OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Abstract: *The growth of the quality of products and processes in the 2020s is connected with improving human resources' readiness to use new technologies. This readiness is ensured primarily due to the existing HRM system and corporate social responsibility strategy, which create attractive conditions for human development. The creation of an effective system of HRM is impossible without coordination and agreement with the policy of quality management and the goals of the company's strategy of corporate social responsibility. This conclusion comes from the results of the comprehensive analysis of the mutual dependence of three components by the example of leading companies in various world markets.*

In this paper, we distinguished and substantiated four models of the management of product quality (processes), one of which is a proprietary model. Analysis showed that all four models of quality management can be used separately or simultaneously in corporate activities. The choice of the models depends on the strategy of the company's development. The focus on the maximum support of customer expectations in this issue could be decisive in ensuring competition and economic growth.

The scientific novelty of this paper is predetermined by the establishment of optimal variants of the management of quality and personnel for companies and the implementation of the strategy of corporate social responsibility by the example of leading innovative companies.

Keywords: *quality management, HRM system, corporate social responsibility, labour resources, sustainable development, environmental sphere.*

1. Introduction

The system of HRM in modern companies, including companies functioning in the production sector, is built based on the strategies of development. Large and certain medium companies adopt obligations in the sphere of corporate social responsibility, which stimulate employees to demonstrate high working efficiency and initiative. These

measures become widespread in the business environment at the global level. High parameters of corporate social responsibility are also a sign of high requirements for competencies, knowledge, and skills of personnel. A socially-oriented system of HRM is also a factor in keeping talented and promising employees. In this case, the effectiveness of social measures is determined by mutual dependence and

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interest in the success of each party, company and employees. The company is oriented towards high-quality functioning, which allows manufacturing competitive products (services), with high demand in the market. Employees demonstrate work efficiency and, in the case of a horizontal structure of management, can manifest initiatives in the creation of innovations.

Management of the quality of products (services) is actions performed during their development, production (provision), or realisation (consumption) to form, ensure, and retain the established level of quality. The system of quality management is a part of the system of governance of an organisation (company), aimed at the achievement of results according to the goals in the sphere of quality to meet the demands, expectations, and needs of interested parties.

Companies that declare and implement high social standards usually determine them based on the strategy of corporate social responsibility. Their strivings in this sphere may have different natures. This could be the focus on HRM system's allowing effective quality management at the level of all processes of the company, including achievement of competitive advantages by the indicator of product (services) quality. A marketing strategy that involves the attraction of customers who work with companies that seek the Sustainable Development Goals in the social and environmental sectors could be used. The focus on attracting consumers can be the addition to the main approach, connected with the achievement of results in quality management.

Different approaches could be used to retain high results in quality management in the system of HRM. Some companies may support quality management during the financing of factual expenditures for wages, training, and other HRM costs. Other companies create conditions, which, apart from financial support of personnel in real-time, will provide them with guarantees of

protection in case of dismissal, closure, or restructuring of the company. Other companies attract personnel with high wages compared with rival companies, which might overrun the advantages of social packages. Countries with high economic development are always more attractive for personnel with any qualification and level of skills and talents. This is due to the high level of social standards, the limit of which allows supporting the quality of life of human resources.

The goal of this paper was to identify the features and perspectives of corporate social responsibility which ensure quality management in the HRM system. To reach this goal, we tried to determine the specific of the formation of quality management in the system of HRM, reveal the level of influence of corporate social responsibility on the management of the quality of products and processes, and formulate the perspectives of corporate social responsibility which will allow ensuring competitive quality management.

2. Methodological basis of the research

The experimental setting of this research is comprised of approaches and methods that allow achieving the objectives posed.

Content analysis was used to assess the data on the considered companies. We processed internal and external open information, which allowed determining the character and features of quality management and systemic HRM.

The comparative method was used to compare the results in the context of time and subjects.

Statistical analysis was utilised to reveal official data on the efficiency of quality management, the HRM system, and corporate social responsibility.

The forecast method enabled us to determine the perspectives of corporate social

responsibility as the basis for raising efficiency in the management of the quality of main processes in companies in various sectors.

Based on the formulated tasks, we determined companies with experience in the management of the quality of products and processes due to an effective system of HRM. We also determined these subjects' declaration of corporate social responsibility. The methodological framework of this research includes a range of methods, analytical and statistical data, and scientific works. The research basis includes companies performing quality management in the system of HRM and declaring the goals of corporate social responsibility.

Scientific (theoretical and empirical) materials are presented by works on the HRM system, corporate social responsibility, and quality management.

Iwamoto and Suzuki (2019) presented a practical and empirical analysis (by the example of Japanese companies) of the relationship between corporate social responsibility, HR management, and quality management in the company.

Ritchie et al. (2024) studied the role of quality standards in the management of the strategies of corporate social responsibility of companies. The authors note the strategic importance of the correct choice of approach to quality management based on the specifics of the policy of human resource management and the focus on their involvement in the creation of innovations. An important aspect of this research is the provision of the underrun of standards of management from standards of quality. According to scholars, the creation of standards quality at the national and sectorial levels is not accompanied by the simultaneous development of recommendations for corporate management regarding their implementation.

Tuczek et al. (2018) analysed the existing theories of management and focused on the absence of adaptation for such spheres of the

activities as management of voluntary corporate social obligations and voluntary environmental obligations of the company. According to scholars, despite modern companies' striving towards the creation of their effects in the environmental and social direction, the scientific community and international research sectorial organisations were not able to create the necessary standards of these processes management. The researchers determine theories that could be most successfully adapted for these directions, namely theories of external perspective and theories of corporate nature.

Todaro et al. (2020) performed a systematisation of the theories of management of implementing environmental corporate responsibilities, which are used within the general system of HR and processes management. The authors also demonstrate the relationship between the effectiveness of selecting the approach in management based on a certain theory (synthesis of theories) and the efficiency of functioning. This work presented the specifics of building the systems of personnel management in the context of the focus on the achievement of environmental results, which could be adapted to the management of corporate social responsibility.

Attention should be paid to the provisions of the work by Turginbayeva et al. (2020), which substantiated the relevance of using flexible methods of personnel management, which are most optimal and allow quick reaction to problems. The authors state that there are sectors in which it is impossible to focus on the traditional vertical approach to management. According to scholars, in some cases, there is a necessity for a quick change in the tactics and strategy to retain the attention of customers and potential consumers. Implementation of these measures is possible with a focus on non-standard flexible management, which is connected with a horizontal approach. The emphasis on this approach is used by the example of the considered leading

companies in quality management; analysis of theoretical aspects of the horizontal approach to personnel management allows for more complex analysis of problems.

Kalfaoğlu (2023) elaborated on the influence of an increase in the quality of work life of women within the indicator of social sustainability. The author analysed the advantages of improving the quality of women's work in all spheres and sectors and showed that implementing measures in this direction would be effective not only for women but also for companies (increase in labour efficiency) and the state (increase in employment and well-being). The value of this work is that when analysing the experience of companies we studied the examples of supporting gender equality when hiring and managing personnel. Examples of advantages of women's work and improvement of the quality of their work life allowed for a more systemic assessment of the features of the HRM system.

Sarwar et al. (2024) proved the direct dependence between corporate social responsibility and the system of HRM in companies. The authors substantiated the necessity of creating new approaches to the formation of adequate systems of HRM that would conform to the changing priorities established within the strategies of companies' corporate social responsibility.

3. Results

Improvement of product quality is one of the decisive factors in the intensification of economic development. Improvement of the quality of raw materials and equipment contributes to more effective satisfaction of needs due to resource saving. The quality of products is decisive for ensuring their competitiveness in the world markets. Product quality is the most precise indicator of the level of applying the achievements of technological progress in the economy and the effectiveness of functioning of all its components. Systems of quality management

are a set of structures and procedures, processes and resources that are necessary for implementing quality management. It must be a component of the organisation's system of management and must contribute to the organisation's management and consumers' confidence in products or services conforming to the established demands for quality.

Corporate social responsibility is a notion that defines the company's position towards its country, society, employees, and environment. A modern company understands its responsibility. In a wide understanding, CSR could be presented as a system of values, measures, and processes aimed at disseminating the positive influence of the company's activities in the economic, environmental, and social spheres. Implementation of socially oriented strategies must focus not only on the reduction of negative consequences of the activities but also on the achievement of economic, environmental, and social effects, which could be treated as the basis for raising the competitiveness of certain companies and the national economy on the whole.

Analysis of theoretical and empirical materials (Todaro et al., 2020; Tuczec et al., 2018; Ritchie et al., 2024) allowed us to establish that modern management has specific features in quality management and the related development of the HRM system. These scholars elaborate on the three models of management in this sphere:

1) Coercive model, which involves the necessity for achievement of quality parameters based on requirements for the safety of products (services). These requirements are set by the government regarding certain products and services. Striving towards economic sustainability, governments level the aspect of constraint even in spheres that might pose a threat in the environmental and food sectors. An example is the experience of the USA, in which the period from 2000-2020 saw the formation of a comprehensive legislative

framework for the regulation of food product quality. In the 2000s, when the quality of food products was first regulated, there was a lot of legal action from consumers regarding the quality of products. Therefore, legal acts were adopted, which regulated monitoring and reporting on viral infections among livestock and poultry, certification and safety of production, and requirements for livestock production according to the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (Sustainabilityalliance.us, 2024). Though HACCP is not a legislative act, it is a document which provisions are mandatory for manufacturers and sellers of food products (Ehaccp.org, 2023). The system of food products quality management in the USA is not limited to checking organoleptic indicators; it is multi-level management, which involves federal control bodies, state control bodies, and companies.

Let us determine the specifics of the HRM system within the companies's adherence to the coercive model of quality management by the example of US companies.

Tyson Foods, Inc. is the world leader in the processing of poultry meat and the key player among US producers of poultry (Essfeed, 2024; Tysonfoods, 2024). The company declares its support of the UN SDGs in human resources management, the environmental sphere, and responsible production. The company uses the horizontal structure of management, which is ensured by constant training of personnel. The personnel masters new methods, approaches, and techniques and can take advanced training and retraining to receive new positions (career growth) (Tysonfoods, 2024).

Directions of corporate social responsibility of Tyson Foods, Inc., as envisaged for 2024, include the following range of privileges and subsidies (Tysonfoods, 2024):

- Discounts for company products sold by branded outlets;
- Possibility of 100 % coverage of education costs for employees;

- Possibility for coverage of costs due to short-term and long-term incapacity (e.g., childbirth or disease);
- Life insurance covered by the company;
- 401k plan (pension savings for personnel paid for by the company);
- Possibility for purchase of company's stock;
- Separate account for additional medical services;
- -Programmes of support of well-being and quality of life of labour resources;
- Financing of telemedicine services;
- Financing of ophthalmological and dental insurance.

We can note the effectiveness of the company's focus on the established frameworks of corporate social responsibility, which allow ensuring high quality of processes and products. This, in turn, influences demand for them at the national and world markets. The company's revenue was \$ 52.93 billion in 2023. Despite its certain decrease compared to 2022, the company is among the leaders in the market. Its revenue is expected to reach \$ 53.09 billion as a result of 2024 (Companiesmarketcap, 2024).

2) Regulatory model, which involves the establishment of quality standards the implementation of which allows manufacturers to compete in sectorial markets.

Standards of quality are set nationally and at the international level. Standards are not legislative documents in the sphere of quality. For example, ISO 22000 (standard in the system of food safety management could be used by any participants of the chain of creation, production, supply, etc. (Weber, 2024). Most companies that function in the food industry use this standard.

Compliance with standards of quality for different types of products is mandatory in

some countries and voluntary in other countries. For example, standardization of the quality of clothing and footwear in the USA is mandatory. There are eight standards and norms for the quality of clothing. Manufacturers and sellers will not be able to sell clothes without compliance with these standards (Liu, 2024). Manufacturers and importers of textile products in the EU member states must comply with quality standards as well. Apart from traditional standards, the EU uses standards regarding environmental safety as well. These standards and norms are created based on the European Green Deal. Documents regulating the approach to environmental management of the quality of textile products include the EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles (European Commission, 2024). This document concerns the production and import of clothing and footwear manufactured of cyclic textiles, which allows using them in the process of recycling and avoiding waste. Norms of standards of clothing and footwear involve less pressure on companies from regulators. However, their rejection is a barrier to successful competition.

Let us consider examples of HRM system management in companies that use the normative model of quality management (EU companies).

H&M Group (Sweden) is among the top 10 clothing manufacturers in Europe. The company also sells its products in Asian and American markets (Ninghow, 2024). Analysis of the materials of corporate reporting (including in the context of sustainable development) of H&M Group allowed us to determine the specific features of the HRM system and implementation of the strategy of corporate social responsibility (Hmgroup, 2024):

- Priority in the stimulation of personnel for compliance with the established standards of the quality of products and processes and initiatives in this sphere (including the creation of environmental

innovations). All employees receive remuneration consisting of five components, namely salary as per contract; long-term variable payments which size depends on the long-term result of the company and employee (three years); short-term variable payments which size depends on the short-term result of the company and employee (up to one year); financing of employees' pensions (their size is calculated individually based on work experience, position, and contribution to development); other categories of payments (disabilities, etc.).

- Application of the horizontal structure of management, which involves flexible approaches to management and adoption of employees' initiatives. The total number of company personnel is 150,000 in administrative and trade sectors and 1,300,000 employees in the production spheres, hired by companies of the group. The management is performed at the level of managers of various levels, each of whom monitors employees' striving for improvement of knowledge, skills, and responsibility. The results of the monitoring contribute to decision-making on delegation of responsibilities. The most efficient and experienced employees receive new authority and responsibilities within their departments;
- Training and career growth. Each employee can build their career and achieve professional success. This is facilitated by the possibility of training, financed by the group of companies. A separate form of studying is an online study of inclusiveness in teamwork, which contributes to mutual understanding between employees. This direction

is particularly important for personnel who are oriented towards career growth. The creation of attractive conditions of inclusiveness for personnel is a topic of frequent forums at the level of the group's management;

- Transparent and unbiased procedure of hiring, which helps achieve the goal envisaged by the strategy of corporate social responsibility – provision of decent working conditions for citizens. The group of companies declares all conditions of hiring, without hidden requirements, etc. Within the corporate approach, aimed at diversity in work groups, formation of teams with the focus on ensuring rights for employment for different age groups, stimulation of comprehensive interaction between employees of different generations, and employment of people with special needs and their integration into personnel takes place;
- The policy of creation of conditions for growth for inclusive employees. If people with special needs desire to develop professionally and build careers in a group of companies, they are given this opportunity;
- Attraction of all employees to the achievement of the SDGs in the sphere of environmental protection. The most initiative employees receive an opportunity to take the corresponding training.

This approach to management allows the group of companies to ensure effective management of product quality (including in the context of environmental parameters) and achieve the goals of the strategy of corporate social responsibility.

Let us analyse to what degree the strategy of corporate social responsibility and the corresponding system of HRM ensure the effectiveness of quality management in

H&M Group. Analysis of corporate reporting of Hmgroup (2024) and statistical data (Statista, 2024) allowed for the following conclusions:

- The indicator of Net Sales equalled SEK 80.08 billion; in 2010, it grew by 58.4 % compared to 2006, equalling SEK 126.9 billion; in 2015, the growth was 65 % compared to 2010, with new sales equalling SEK 209.9 billion; in 2017, the numbers were 10.8 % and SEK 232.7 billion; 2020 saw the reduction of net sales down to SEK 187.03 billion due to the COVID-19 pandemic; in 2023, net sales equalled SEK 236.04 billion. We see a significant growth in sales despite high competition and crisis phenomena in the economy. This growth could be explained by the high quality of products and transparency and efficiency of implementing the strategy of corporate social responsibility;
- The indicator of profit grew by 144.6 % in 2023, compared to 2022, equalling SEK 8.7 billion. This is a sign that the high quality of products ensures high profitability. Also, the focus on corporate social responsibility and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the environmental sphere are an additional factor in attracting customers;
- Territorial stability of product promotion. Since the company's products are of high quality, their priority consumers are the population of Western Europe and countries of North and South America. There is a stable demand for the company's products by consumers from Southern Europe (around 13 %) and Asia, Oceania, and Africa (around 13 %).

3) The mimetic model, which is connected with the focus on achievements in quality management and processes implemented by other companies in the same sector or adjacent sectors of the economy (Ritchie et al., 2024). The focus on this model of quality management could be used in the case of factual striving towards high parameters of quality (including the production of cyclic products, the use of environmentally clean materials, etc.). Certain aspects of implementing the goals of corporate social responsibility are difficult to check, which leads to a wide range of imitation of optimisation measures. The information policy of the government and international, national, and global organisations in explaining the importance of retaining high parameters of quality and advantages for companies could stimulate the improvement of business subjects' policy in this direction.

Given the analysis of the practice of large companies' activities in various sectors of the economy, it is possible to distinguish the fourth model. This is an initiative model, which involves companies creating new standards and parameters of product quality (the model proposed by the authors). This model is peculiar to innovative products, which have recently entered the market, and the companies are pioneers in the products' development and manufacturing. These companies may set high parameters of quality, at which the consumer can be oriented. Examples of companies that use this model of quality management include companies producing solar panels, mini power stations, and components to them. As of early 2024, there were seven leading companies in this sector in the world, of which six were registered in China, and one in Canada (Lebreton, 2024).

Let us analyse the aspects of quality management and the strategy of corporate social responsibility and HRM system in a Canadian company Canadian Solar. Indicators of product quality are a system of technical and technological parameters guaranteed by the company: 100 %

environmental friendliness of materials used in production; non-acceptance of forced labour or low wages in Canadian factories, etc. (Canadian Solar, 2024).

Given the presented structure of governance and data of the sustainable development report, Canadian Solar uses a horizontal model of human resources management (Investors.canadiansolar.com, 2024). The company uses an exchange of experience, informal communication, and support of inclusive employees and focuses on financing training and advanced training.

Analysis of the influence of the HRM system and implementation of the goals of corporate social responsibility on the efficiency of quality management demonstrated the following:

- New sales revenue was \$7.6 billion as a result of 2023, which was 2.7% higher compared to 2022. Growth of demand due to quality, reliability of products, and correspondence of product quality to its price ensured the increase in this indicator;
- Since 2001, the company supplied solar photoelectric modules that produced more than 125 GWt of energy. This is a sign of the company's contribution to the achievement of national goals in green energy transition. Another important contribution of the company is its activities in energy storage in batteries. The company implemented projects on the creation, connection, and maintenance of high-capacity batteries used in the industry and housing and utilities sector.

4. Results

The main methods of human resources management that are implemented with the help of the HRM system are economic (material stimulation and sanctions, financing and crediting, wages, profit, etc.);

organisational and managerial (discipline, responsibility, etc.); and socio-psychological (motivation, moral encouragement, etc.)

Corporate social responsibility cannot be isolated from the strategy and operative activities of business. Care for consumers, personnel, environment, and society must be integrated into the mission, vision, strategy, and activities of the business. The corporate social responsibility of the company is reflected in its values and is integrated into all types of its activities.

Based on the conducted research, we presented a list of perspectives on corporate social responsibility of companies from various sectors of the economy, the implementation of which will contribute to an increase in competitive quality management and growth of economic efficiency, namely:

- Creation of a system of bonuses for employees who demonstrate high commitment and productiveness in mastering innovative technologies, which are used or will be used shortly and share their experience with other personnel;
- Companies that use the initiative model of quality management can retain or raise their competitive positions due to close interaction with consumers and employees. Constant openness to new ideas and parameters of product quality may help find innovative solutions that contribute to competitive and economic growth;
- Constant audit of the quality of all processes of the company is necessary to receive information that can be used by neural networks to forecast unique innovative solutions.

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5. Conclusions

The effective functioning of the company depends on competitiveness, the decisive factor of which is product quality. In modern conditions, the company can ensure its competitiveness if the quality of its products coincides with consumers' expectations or exceeds them. Each product or service is a carrier of different properties that reflect its usefulness and conform to certain needs of the consumer.

Having considered the above models of product quality management, we may state that they could be used in isolation or combined with each other. The companies can use coercive, normative, mimetic, and initiative models at the same time. The presented models of quality management are peculiar to modern companies which function in various sectors of the economy.

The described features of the HRM, characteristic of the leading companies in product quality management, allow determining the type of strategy of corporate social responsibility and revealing companies' commitment to the achievement of certain goals of sustainable development. The approach to quality management and strategy of corporate social responsibility are components of the company's development strategy. Companies that strive towards integration into international markets and manufacture products or services with high value-added have these components agreed with each other and influence each other. Thus, to ensure the effectiveness of their management, there must be a balance. In the case of the formation of clear rules and tasks, it is possible to achieve the expected result and synergy in the form of an increase in demand from consumers.

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