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EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS AS A MEANS OF CREATING VALUE IN EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

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The article considers issues related to the implementation of value-oriented methodology in the context of the educational projects. On the basis of the introduction of modern project-based learning, the model of value creation in educational projects has been further developed. The article examines how value is created in project teams by looking at two educational projects. The article discusses recent theoretical developments that propose to link value creation and project communities. It identifies the need to further improve the level of project competencies of individuals involved in the project development and target documents in communities. The article also considers the use of case-based learning in the field of project management, which allows gaining new knowledge and developing a culture of collegial decision-making. This approach will contribute to the development of initiative, higher-level subconscious thinking skills necessary to solve systemic problems in regional communities. The conclusions focus on how values are created; how this is done by identifying four key value of creation processes: mindset change, project management processes, structure development, and knowledge creation.

Introduction

Problem formulation. In modern project management, it is widely recognised that the main goal of projects is not only generation of financial profit, but to create new human values [1]. While in the last century, project management standards were mainly based on the commercial aspect of projects: making a profit. Nowadays, a project is increasingly seen as a commitment to create human values [2]. However, the general principles and tools of value-based project management are not well developed yet.

Analysis of recent researches and publications. The systems approach and systems analysis is a fairly broad separate field of knowledge that is widely used in project management, while the project approach to implementing development strategies is increasingly used at the tactical level. For a long time, the resource-based approach remained the most popular in system development [3–5]. However, over time, experts have come to the conclusion that enterprises that pay less attention to financial approaches and focus more on creating organisational value get better results [6, 7]. In recent years, the category of "value" has been increasingly used as a criterion for the effectiveness of enterprise development through projects, while the concept of "value" itself is changing with the development of human civilisation.

A number of studies consider the "value of project management" from an organizational point of view [8, 9]. However, the project portfolio management literature

pays little attention to value management concepts. More and more often expressed the opinion about the need to expand the concept of portfolio value [10]. To form and plan a strategic development portfolio based on the value approach, a special project structure is needed that tracks the implementation of corporate strategy through project portfolios. Such functions in portfolio management can be performed by a special organizational platform that supports the project management environment in order to maximize the company's values. Studies have shown that in the context of the development of commercial products and services, a strong or exclusive focus on financial performance is associated with a weaker development strategy of the organization [11].

A significant step in the process of value-oriented development of the system based on the P2M standard [2] is the description of the mission, which defines the vision of the dominant organizational value, on the basis of which an appropriate strategy is developed. Over time, the evaluation of the intangible components of projects has become increasingly important, especially for educational projects.

While scientific publications focus most often on commercial value, research points to a growing need to include non-profits value issues that can be measured at a time.

The article is aimed at studying the manifestations of value-oriented project management in the sphere of education, methods of effective communication and ways to improve the practice of project management.

Methodical materials of the study

Presentation of methodology. In the 60s of the XX century, the development of systems theory led to its division into a "hard" and "soft" system approach [12]. The "hard" methodology allows for a single interpretation of the objective system essence and is effective in modelling technical systems, technological subsystems and certain aspects of organisational functioning. "The soft methodology allows for a multiplicity of reality interpretations, in which individuals and project teams with their own goals act largely independently. In particular, according to the soft modelling methodology, an organisational system model is a set of explicit and implicit models of its management [5]. Thus, the soft system approach deals with uncertain requirements of the future system transformation, important subjective factors, and the free use of tools to solve problems.

Hard and soft system approaches are most often distinguished by the nature of the presence of a person in the system. The main difference between "soft" systems and "hard" is determined by the fact that "soft" systems include a person as the most important fuzzy element of the system [12]. If all the factors of the task are rigidly

formalized, determined, then in this case the situation is presented as "hard". At the same time, everything that is not formalized is not taken into account. The soft systems approach associated with intangible categories concerns such poorly formalized concepts as motivation, dynamic leadership, hierarchy of values, dedication to organizational values. Such poorly understood factors associated with human behaviour, as a rule, are not taken into account in the rigid formulation of management tasks. But these factors are often the only cause of failure in project management, which requires the efforts integration of all stakeholders [12]. The area of most effective application of the soft systems approach is the development of decision-making methods, solving organisational design problems and designing changes in the system. However, the "hardness" or "softness" of a systems approach is not a property of the problem situation to which it is applied, but rather a way of thinking and methods. Neither approach is right or wrong, but rather different ways of thinking. The main differences between the hard and soft systems approaches are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Main differences between hard and soft systems approach

Hard systems approach	Soft systems approach
The problem has a definite solution	Too many problems need to be solved
The problem has a number of achievable goals	Achievement of goals is difficult to measure
The problem answers the question "How?"	The focus of the problem focuses not only on the question "How?", but on the question "Why?"
The problem has deterministic complexity	The problem has unforeseen, non-deterministic complexity
It is likely possible to determine the parameters of failure	The problem is very difficult to deal with
The solution to the problem does not depend on the values of system	The decision depends on the system values and mentality of the staff
Logical sequential connections	Intuitive metaphorical connections

Since any system develops according to certain laws, the implementation of the development strategy of any organization requires consideration of these laws, namely determining the current state of the system, the level of its dominant values and its ability to create new values structures through the use of project management. The logical-structural approach to the development of the system allows us to analyse the spatial-temporal and morphological properties of systems taking into account the main components as follows (Figure 1).

The expansion of the project approach to the intangible sphere of social activity has led to the emergence of value-oriented management. In the new standards for project management, more and more attention is paid to the fuzzy relationships of the basic project concepts and the values they create. At the same time, the constant increase in complexity changes the perception of the activities of organizations and shifts the focus of attention from rigid material concepts to soft fuzzy categories. Today, the scientific literature on project management continues to form a unified methodology for value-oriented management of the organizations' development. This methodology is based on the concept of spiral dynamics of the development of organizations and takes into account the dominant organizational values in the system [13].

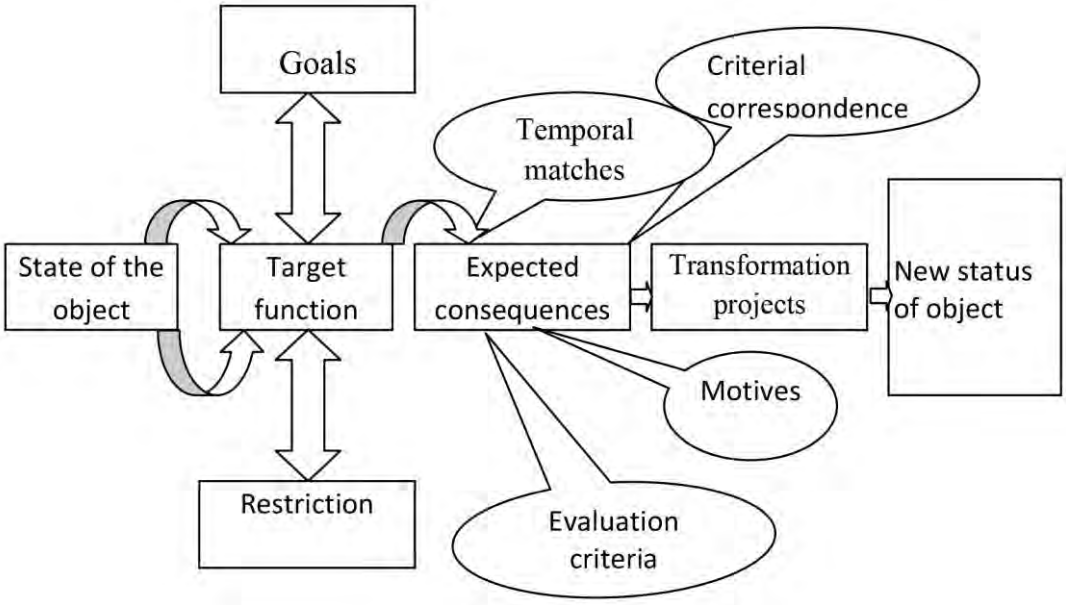

Fig. 1. Logical-structural approach to managing system development

In the practice of value management, the following three functions are considered: discovering value, creating value, evaluating value [14]. Identifying the value of a project's product or outcome often means simply copying the others organizational values. Imitation and copying of a valuable product is a path that many well-known companies have taken [15]. Organizations that use a system methodology to achieve certain goals are considered as organizational and technical systems with the following common features:

− objectives reflecting their mission, the types of products and services they produce to meet the needs of society;

– division of labour, which takes place in accordance with the professional qualification characteristics of each specialist and ensures rational structuring of relevant works;

– communications, or different types of connections, formal rules of actions are also necessary for employees in the course of performing joint work.

Results of the study

Presentation of results. The next section presents an overview of two educational projects: one project of DOBRE program for community training and the Caser Competition project. We present the activities in these projects that create certain values, and their implications. The Decentralization Offering Better Results and Efficiency (DOBRE) Programme had as its main goal the professional development of civil servants within the framework of the project "Management of Amalgamated Hromadas for Managers", based on the Cooperation Agreement with the Krakow University of Economics [16].

The DOBRE program began working in Ukraine in 2016, and 75 communities from seven regions of Ukraine were selected to participate in it. The main goal was to help the communities take advantage of the Decentralization opportunities and cope with the tasks set before them by the reforms. After five years of this activity, the donors noted the great success of the initiated project and it was decided to increase the assistance. Therefore, the DOBRE Program expanded to 25 communities from more three regions, and in total, before the beginning of the Russian invasion, covered 100 communities from 10 regions of Ukraine. And even with these new communities, despite the difficult challenges, they managed to complete all the projects [16].

The second project concerns one of the largest Ukrainian caser platforms for holding a case championship for the development of territorial communities, which was attended by a team of students of NTU "Dnipro Polytechnic", which reached the finals with the "Project of the freelance school creation in the territory of the Bilozirska' community". The project clearly highlighted the advantages and possibilities of using the Case-study for teaching students by solving specific tasks (cases) and developing specific projects based on them.

These two projects have been successfully implemented, and in the next section, we show the four value-creating activities identified in our analysis: mindset change, project management processes, structure development, and knowledge creation. Data analysis was based on feedback received during surveys and data collection from project participants. The bulk of the analysis took place after data collection, followed by a process of categorization and establishing the values of the results. The followed inductive approach of finding values formation processes and their definition shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Values formation processes and their definition

Value formation example	Category	Project DOBRE	Project Casers Championship
They worked alongside each other for many years, but there was no one who took the initiative to create shared knowledge.	Creating new knowledge	Implementation phase	Conceptual phase
When a scenario approach is applied in a project team, everyone can agree on the best and worst possible scenarios.	Rethinking habits	Conceptual phase	Conceptual phase
If you're just rethinking something you've done before, but just haven't thought about it, it's a process of the values rethinking.	Rethinking habits	Planning phase Implementation phase	Planning phase
For effective communication, it is necessary to discuss who makes decisions, how it will affect decisions, and whether they are majority decisions.	Rethinking habits	Implementation phase	Conceptual phase
For practical and logistical reasons, it is advisable to report the results of the project to other partners or other staff.	Communication in the media space	Completion phase	Completion phase
Teams are hired to do specific tasks, and if they want to do more tasks and we don't have the money for it, they do the work for free.	Change of mindset	Implementation phase	The entire project life cycle

Table 2 illustrates the relationship between situations data and examples of values creation. The table also includes structures and organizational principles served as input to determine the values created. Values creation tools are presented in the next section after a detailed review of the projects progress. Both projects are engaged in the search for new solutions; for the Dobre project, it is development projects for communities, and for the casers' championship, it is a presentation of their solution.

Scientific novelty. At the centre of both projects is a change in thinking, habits, and how people work and act. Public education and storytelling are some tools of communication used in both projects. DOBRE project is engaged in changing

often familiar thinking among the regions of Ukraine, disseminating knowledge about project development to a wide public audience through open events for stakeholders.

The Caser Championship seeks to promote innovative thinking in community employees to encourage them to think about innovative development, and not just about survival. Consequently, all project participants are always updated and essentially expand their vision of development opportunities. Both projects focus differently on stakeholder values, but both are interested not only in achieving the project outcome but also in the post-project development of the values obtained. Changes, new values knowledge for each of the communities were the focus throughout the duration of the project, building trust and allowing the resources and commitments of the parties to be discussed upon completion of projects, which is the determination of who will receive these values. We summarized the value-creating activities in Table 3.

Table 3

Four key values created in projects processes

Four key values of processes	Project DOBRE	Casers Championship
Mindset change to…	Strategic thinking	Consensus thinking
Project management	Classical project processes	Agile project processes
Management structures	Matrix, delegating	Horizontal, levelling
Collaborative intelligence	Creative innovative projects	Environmental, socially oriented projects

After conducting additional research, we determined that in project DOBRE, the participants relied on the values of the 5th level, and in the Caser Championship project, the values of the sixth level on a scale of spiral dynamics dominated [13]. Both projects create new knowledge by demonstrating how changes can be implemented in the external environment. Because both projects explore community development and serve two purposes: training partners in project management and collaboration based on effective communication. Collaboration between representatives of different external organizations serves as a way to integrate professional competencies that can promote creativity and lead to new, unexpected solutions. We suggest that the two presented projects are implementing with the values of different levels could be examples of educational projects. We summarize the four phases of values creation with project life cycle, which are considered in the figure 2.

The model is related to the existing understanding of values creation, in the process of implementing projects. Managing development through projects has been a major source of inspiration in the DOBRE project. After receiving the results of the

project, communities understood that changes should be actively managed, measured and implemented. One at the time our research shows that the value of learning and competencies is a source of values creation, meaning it benefits for stakeholders. The collaboration and created project team allow us to create future value both during the project and after the completion of the project.

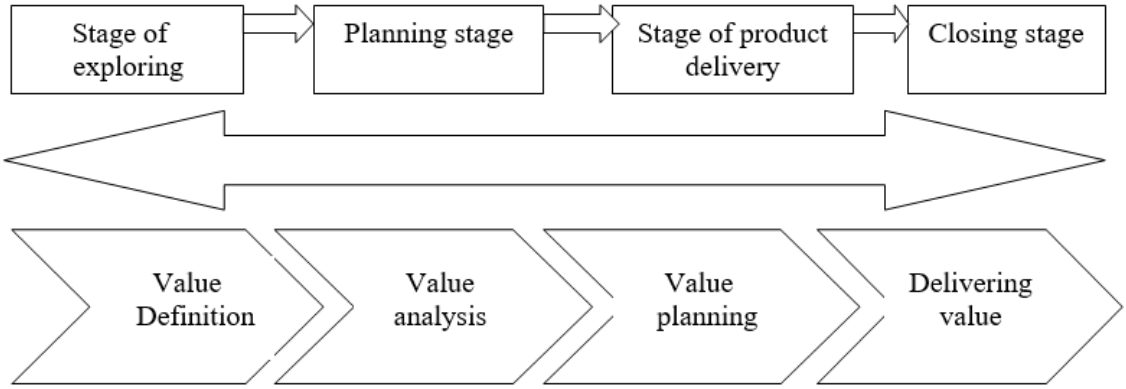

Fig. 2. The relation between the projects' life cycle and values management

In addition to the implications of the model for theory, our research has implications for project values creation practice: for the DOBRE project, the management group has secured a commitment to the steering committee to continue managing the development after project implementation. As for the second project, students intend to expand their participation in the Caser Competition. This is a strong approach to engaging students to gain specific experience in projects. Our main assumption about this activity is that it can lead to better and innovative values propositions.

Conclusions and perspectives of further research

Conclusions. This article presents the results of a study that explores design tools for values creation. The projects we studied were drivers for creating new organizational values through the collaboration of participants that combine their competencies in projects. Thus, if two systems want to start collaborating, they can start with mutual project. Our contribution to project management research presents there are four processes that create values. The article presents a model of project values creation, which focuses on the stages of the project life cycle and outlines the types of created values.

Future Research. Since the two presented projects may not be very revealing, we suggest further exploration of value creation in other types of educational projects. When value is created in different types of projects, it would be interesting to explore its further transformations, as this may affect the definition of the project success and, in turn, can change the picture of determining failure rates for projects. We also propose to investigate how public perception of values effects publicly funded projects or sponsors.

Further research is needed on the methodological basis for cooperation between public organizations and the tools for initiating such collaboration, and obstacles along the way.

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