



# Mentality as A Factor of Innovation and Anti-Corruption Behavior in The Social Management System

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**Abstract:** *In the article, the authors consider global grounds for social management and corporate ethics. Special attention is paid to the prevention of negative social phenomena in corporate management with a focus on the peculiarities of national mentality.*

**Keywords:** *mentality; corruption; social management; national psychological type; corporate ethics.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the present paragraph, we review the methodological basis for performing a theoretical analysis of innovation and anti-corruption behavior of social management bodies and revealing the peculiarities related to the practical implementation of managerial decisions, in which mentality resources are used. Primary notions, which constitute the core of the problem under review, are public psychology, mentality and psychological type.

Public psychology is seen at three levels:

- *public psychology* of the first (lowest) level as an elementary reflection of fundamental living conditions of the society and separate individuals in it, namely technical-technological, natural (including demographic), and specific historical (including ethnic);
- *public psychology* of the second level as a reflection not only of the above fundamental factors but of economic relations that shaped up with the assistance of the first level of public psychology;
- *public psychology* of the third level, the content of which is substantially determined by the reverse active influence on the part of the political and spiritual superstructure

## II. METHODS

Mentality is the most fundamental and deep phenomenon, and therefore it is the least changeable in public psychology of a big social group [1]. Mentality includes phenomena of the first and second levels of public psychology.

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Mentality is determined as world outlook and worldview that are formed at a deep psychological level of individual and collective awareness. It emerges in the depth of culture, traditions, social institutions, environment of a person and constitutes an aggregate of psychological, behavioral settings of an individual or a social group. This aggregate of specific mentality and feelings, value orientation and settings, views about the world and oneself, beliefs, opinions, stereotypes and prejudices is characteristic of an individual or a certain social community [2].

To a large extent, mentality determines the lifestyle of a person and a social community, adds some specific features to national character and is closely connected with the national psychological type (temperament, mentality, national feelings and mood, habits and traditions).

**National character** is a historical aggregate of stable psychological traits that determine the habitual demeanor and the typical line of action in one nation or another, which are revealed in attitude towards social conditions, the outside world, labor, the ethnic community and other communities.

**National temperament** predetermines emotional expressional distractive features of behavior and actions taken by people as representatives of a certain ethnic community and characterizes peculiarity of their behavioral activities.

**National mentality** is the peculiarities of cogitation that is typical for a majority of representatives of one nation or another.

**National feelings and mood** are the emotional attitude of people towards both the ethnic community, its interest, values and forms of life, and other nations.

**National traditions and habits** are rules, regulations and behavioral stereotypes, forms of personal communication, observance of which became everybody's public need. They shaped up on the basis of long life experience of a nation and took substantial roots in everyday life, and they are passed down to new members of an ethnic community [3].

We will review some distinctive features of the Russian psychological type that reveal themselves in modern society and influence theory and practice of social management.

Having several permanent traits, the Russian national psychological type is transmitted in modern conditions while absorbing new characteristics under the influence of objective factors [4]. It is the national psychological type that reflects the main traits of mentality and was transmitted to subsequent generations by means of family upbringing among relatives.

It determines ideals, values, related conflicts, ways and forms of direct experience of conflicts in values, ways and forms of a person's struggle to preserve basic values of life.

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Taking into account views about Russianness as a socio-cultural phenomenon, which is predetermined by peculiarities of the people's lifestyle and mental culture, we rely on the assumption that the content of this phenomenon is always historical, and is connected with a complex of real conditions and circumstances [5].

Most scientists recognize the dialectical and multi-component nature of the Russian character. In this case, the difference in views is seen in the way things are emphasized, ranging from absolutization of negative to idealization of positive. We that modern Russianness is certainly associated with archetypicity, which has been typical to the phenomenon of the Russian psychological type in all times. However, in the modern world, the Russian psychological type is exposed to an active prolonged influence, the beginning of which should be referred to as the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (the emergence of revolutionary conditions and the eve of social shocks).

The Russian psychological type has been corrected many times (as a result of government reforms, economic and political crises), but in terms of results, the period when Christianity was adopted can be compared with the modern period. The spiritual world of a Slavic heathen demonstrates all peculiarities of severe nature, conditions of survival in the worrisome neighborhood with nomadic nations, organic connection with natural and supra-natural forces whose sympathy or antipathy sometimes depended on a chance. At that time already, the archetypical symbiosis of Russianness (solidity of vital forces, the largeness of heart, spirituality, carelessness and laziness) shaped up.

A simple enumeration of these traits gives a view of the combination of positive and negative qualities of Russianness. However, it is also possible to see more intricate dialectical relations in the famous contradictions. Carelessness, i.e. optimistic fatalism, fearless credulity about the future, but with hopes for the better, do not prevent people from surviving when overly tragic feelings about a situation are unnecessary, but when it is necessary to take decisive measures to rectify it. Laziness, if understood not just as a refusal to work, but as a refusal to take excessive non-creative efforts, can be measured as a sign of good sense and an attempt to save energy in a time of uncertainty. Moreover, one should remember that for a long time in national history most people who really produced anything helpful for the society were enslaved and deprived of the possibility to manage what they produced, to make a profit and accumulate even minimum tangibles, so laziness can be considered as a protective mechanism that took monstrous forms because workers were treated badly.

On producing a little effect on carelessness and laziness (in all the above forms), Christianity exerted a noticeable impact on the content of Russian spirituality, although it added some humility and obedience, signs of which can be measured as excessive. Nonetheless, the interaction between the Christian influence and the effect of Russianness on Christianity was

transmitted into quite an original and nationally favorable phenomenon. On the one hand, stoic values and ideals in the Russian character gained a conscious footing. On the other hand, Russian orthodoxy emerged as a special form designed to express the people's character.

The basic layer of the Russian national ethnic archetype includes phenomena of "sinewiness of life", largeness and tumult of heart [5]. The terms need explaining. Sinewiness should most likely be understood as the ability to perform intensive, long, wearisome, thorough gradual work, bit by bit making some progress, overcoming fatigue and without complaining about the small efficiency of the efforts taken and the remote future of a positive result. Largeness of heart most likely means the ability of Russian people to forgive offences and injustice, to lend a helping hand to everybody in need (former enemies, new friends, close friends or unknown people who are far away) regardless of any chance for gratitude, the ability to be sincerely interested in problems of life and to take ethical and esthetical problems close to heart. The tumult of heart most likely implies a Russian person's aptitude to express feelings in a vivid and emotional form. At issue are feelings that reached a critical level, as for other feelings, there is nothing to talk about because they are kept secret, hidden and guarded.

Ideals of Russian consciousness have such a high degree of clarity that some movement towards them, direct experience of connection and understanding of the meaning of these ideals should spark in a person a storm of emotions, demonstration of which (against the backdrop of previous long humble silence and patience) looks violent. The thesis of tumult of heart is often confirmed by statements of A.S. Pushkin that a Russian riot is meaningless and ruthless, implying that tumult of heart shows brutality, barbarity, and disgust in principle for rules of order and discipline.

However, Puskhin's expression reflects more than what can be said with two words. The meaningless nature of a Russian riot can be understood as the absence of any plans in the actions taken by rioters to gain any advantage or benefits, but it only shows the act of sacrifice for the sake of justice. From the viewpoint of Western people who lived at that time, such behavior is really meaningless. The mercifulness of a riot, i.e. demonstration of Russian violence of heart, includes not only brutality against opponents of justice, but stringent requirements for advocates of justice, who are required not to dream about how they will live after everything is done, but to think about what should be done to sacrifice one's life for the sake of one's ideals.

Ideals that fill Russian national consciousness strike by boundedness focused on a person (to achieve a goal it is necessary to spend a whole life on working on it) and the altitude of heights set (only worldwide justice, only absolute truth, only complete victory).

When some researchers say that Russians are an original nation, implying their spirit of messianism, perhaps they are not right. The messianic psychology is more or less characteristic of any nation who has an ideal that it strives to spread all around the world. As far as Russia is concerned, at issue should be not the presence or absence of messianism, but peculiar forms of its demonstration.

The expression of ideals and values of the national psychological type, and efforts to bring them to fruition, with a varying degree of difficulty, become a duty of the current generations that are represented by different personality types with aspirations of their own. As claimed by some scientists who divide personality types into three main groups (passionaries, entrepreneurs and liminaries), the main personality type in Russia that determined the essence of the Russian psychological type and the Russian orthodox civilization is liminary. What makes a Russian person a liminary is his/her high expectations of the society as he/she is not satisfied with any forms of hierarchy because a liminary is committed to approving a communitaristic model in the society and achieving the condition of ideal justice [6].

So, liminality can be considered as both an advantage and disadvantage. The absence of positive emotions, the appearance of which is related with the maternal participation, paternal care and attention from older generations, gives rise to liminality of the lower type. The aspiration to constantly change social conditions and boundaries for the achievement of high human ideals results in liminality of the upper type, and by its content, this type approaches passionarity as Nikolay Gumilev understood it.

Traits of the national character are transmitted in the modern conditions against the backdrop of a moral and cultural crisis when many core values are criticized, laughed at and revised. The time of building new socio-economic relations activates other personality types or new personality traits [7].

However, basic traits of Russian national consciousness reveal themselves in the modern public life and are activated in response to situations associated with the special tension of individual and collective forces. The present time is characterized by the emergence of national traits that are firstly connected with the aspiration of permanent movement, secondly with goals of movement set as high as possible and thirdly with the permanent connection with the initial point of the movement [4].

There is no efficient social management without applying innovation on a large-scale basis. The need for innovation is objectively driven by demands of the time and gets activated by processes of globalization, informatization and diversification in the economic field [8, 9].

For the execution of any type of innovation, all members of the society are required to be more socially active, broadly apply their creative approaches, understand the ability to mobilize efforts and to demonstrate discipline. To a certain extent, these requirements can be met if one talks about representatives of various cultures [3]. Western, Eastern and specific Russian cultural traditions can be compared in several aspects, analyzing how much representatives of these cultures are ready to execute social innovation. Here is a comparison by the degree of commitment to tradition given the fact that most traditions in the society are usually connected with public distrust in the innovation of different types. Every specific society creates a certain balance of traditions and innovation in public consciousness and activities.

A person of the Western culture executes his/her potential of innovation in line with the traditions related to the prestige of individual labor efforts to achieve results that are

important for a person and the society. The aspiration to take joint measures to solve personal problems makes a person of the Western culture responsive to innovation.

A person of the Eastern culture acts within other traditions, with interests of the society recognized as dominating over personal interests. This activates such a property as a discipline, creates a focus on the attainment of positive results for the whole society by means of all available methods and ways. If innovation can become the very method, a person of the Eastern culture makes active use of innovation.

So, for different reasons and on grounds representatives of the Western and Eastern cultures are active advocates and conductors of innovation.

A person of the Russian culture, who also lives in the conditions of a balance between traditions and innovation, is to a large extent tied to traditions that restrain innovation. Such mental peculiarities of Russian consciousness as laziness, carelessness and self-will formed quite a long time ago as a response to the long suffering of social difficulties of economic and political nature. Being implemented in the modern conditions in a new way, these peculiarities become especially noticeable in the situation when "ethnic energy collapses" due to demographical, socio-economic and socio-cultural problems. The above mental peculiarities even become the basis of national self-identification, but in the strata which are per se marginal. Against this backdrop, the aspiration towards innovation among representatives of social groups with the low social status reveals itself as a drive to actions which portend very fast improvement of the financial situation without long and intensive labor efforts.

In order to assess prospects in principle of innovation in the society it is necessary to study innovation potential, the human component of which includes social strata and groups with relevant interests, education, social and professional experience. In most cases, such groups include intellectuals and managers as people who earned university degrees in technical and humanitarian sciences and are high-qualified employees. In certain conditions, government employees can also be classified as potentially innovative social groups [10].

The Western society holds substantial innovation human potential as most representatives of the middle class (determined by income, relevant possibilities and interests) are representatives of high-qualified professions who drive strong demand for innovative approaches. The Western middle class is ready to cooperate with authorities and major businesses, is able to protect its interests by legitimate and non-opposition methods, is interested in innovation, is focused on private (personal) initiative while solving problems. This makes one the best creator and conductor of innovation.

The Eastern society currently promotes government employees to the vanguard of social innovation because their activities accumulate public interest and government orders. Furthermore, there have lately been sizeable returns on investment in sciences, technologies and education in various countries which can be classified as the Eastern culture. Consequently, innovation potential of intellectual strata increases substantially.

The unity of interests in these social groups only contributes to innovation potential of Eastern societies.

In the Russian society, people who are highly qualified professionals as a whole and belong to one and the same profession are part of quite various financial strata, their attitude towards authorities is sometimes opposite, and they identify themselves with contrary intellectual ideological groups. In Russian society, managers have to act in fast-changing legal and economic conditions and are corruptive. Given these properties, these strata cannot act as a conductor of innovation or create innovation.

The implementation of social (and other) innovation in Russian society is hindered by several factors (socio-economic, political, ideological, etc.). However, when defining reasons with mental grounds, it is necessary to mention the following:

- Most Russians are convinced in the dominance of people who are on the top of power which they gain from unexplainable sources and which allegedly provides these government employees with the “right” to violate public morality. Confidence about the sacral nature of public authorities influences requirements for oneself as a person, dampening real initiative but sets higher requirements for authorities whether or not they comply with the ideal.

- Most Russians are a priori convinced about the weakness of the middle and lower link of state authorities, their corruption that cannot be forgiven or understood because government officials from these links do not have any noticeable personal advantages or abilities. The public thinks that nothing depends on decisions made by municipal authorities or actions taken by local deputies, and if anything depended, things would be much worse.

- Some Russians are convinced that there is a “simple” way to attain any socially important and big goal. In this case, the simple way means confidence that any really important goal requires substantial, but one-time efforts – a burst – and does not imply long-term efforts. This viewpoint substantially reduces the value of constant labor efforts, deprives laborious efforts of any prestige and does not imply the creation of a self-control system. This also impacts the ability towards social innovation.

- Some Russians are convinced that other people should take a substantial part of actions to achieve the above ambitious target. More often responsibility is passed on to the authorities that (despite criticism on all sides) are recognized as more competent in decision-making, and “are simply obliged” to do this given their occupation.

- The bulk of Russians are sure that nothing depends on “an ordinary person” because everything is cut and dried in advance by authorities that organize various events (election, referenda, congresses and meetings).

The above peculiarities of Russian crowd consciousness are stipulated by the situation that dominated for a long time and, in some elements, has persisted until now. Does this mean that innovation is not possible in Russian society? Or is it necessary to change mentality to be able to successfully develop? By sample intrinsic to the Western or Eastern society, innovation is not possible. To bring innovation to Russian society models should be created which would minimize negative peculiarities of mentality and activate its positive traits.

Such positive traits which solidify the Russian society’s innovation potential include the following:

- deep-rooted nature of some methods of social organization – a neighbor-tribal territorial commune and a productive (labor) team of a mid-sized corporation. In these cases, one deals with an aggregate, in which real informal contacts are maintained, the morality of behavior is under control and joint actions are directly organized [11].

- widespread conviction that lower-class people who have not yet come to power hold huge creative potential and capabilities to manage and organize large-scale projects.

It is also essential to take into account such properties of the contemporary crowd consciousness as comparatively poor knowledge of the law in the field of social initiatives and authority of the civil society, close attention paid to ideas which are in opposition with authorities.

In addition, the degree of innovation is also influenced by the fact that innovative initiatives come from the top, quickly turn into a campaign, with a gap emerging between plans of higher authorities and the possibilities of lower authorities to bring these plans to fruition. For this reason, decisions on innovation to be introduced should be transmitted by professionals who are specially trained for this kind of work. On top of this, it is necessary to take into consideration that conductors of managerial decisions also have the same mental properties as the rest of Russians [12].

Any type of innovation, execution algorithms of which take into account the mental peculiarities of a nation, can be successfully carried out and subsequently innovation itself can influence the content of mental presentations. However, as efforts taken do not immediately yield positive results in the course of innovation the authors and those who execute managerial decisions can experience moral transformations which include the burnout syndrome, intolerance, and corruption [13].

*The burnout syndrome* (payment for compassion) is a conflict between reality and illusion. This is a psychic disease because when it progresses it affects the emotional world of people, but in separate periods of the disease, the behavior of such employees looks like a deviation from moral standards, demonstration of boorishness, intolerance, etc. [14].

The second form of moral transformation is *intolerance*. It demonstrates intolerance towards someone’s opinions, which differ from of one’s own, xenophobia and nationalism.

The third form of moral transformation is *corruption* (from the Latin verb *corrumpere*, “to corrupt”). This term is usually used to describe the use by an officer of his/her official duties and vested rights for the purpose of personal benefit, which contradicts the law and moral settings [15].

The public danger of corruption is too big. Corruption is well-known to pose a threat to the rule of law, democracy and human rights, undermines the basics of proper public administration, violates principles of equality and social justice, distorts competitive conditions, curbs economic development and jeopardizes the stability of democratic institutions and public morals.

Various forms of corruption have a different ethical assessment, with some actions considered criminal, while others – just immoral.

The latter, as a rule, includes nepotism and patronage on the basis of political orientation.

It is necessary to differentiate between corruption and *lobbyism*. In the case of *lobbyism*, an officer also uses his/her power to increase his/her chance for re-appointment or to climb the career ladder in exchange for actions in the interests of a certain group. The difference is that *lobbyism* satisfies three conditions:

- the process of influencing an officer is competitive and follows the rules that are known to all participants;
- no secret or side payments;
- clients and agents are independent of one another to the extent that no group gains a portion of profit earned by the other group.

The most dangerous forms of corruption are classified as crimes. Above all, they include embezzlement (stealing) and bribes. Decentralized (external) corruption is the most widespread form of corruption, with deals struck individually between an officer and an individual. However, internal corruption – among members of an organization – adds some signs of organized crime.

Although Russia is not in an enviable position in the corruption rating, Russian leaders have shown their initiative to fight against international forms of corruption. According to information from the press service of the Inter-regional public organization “Anti-Corruption Committee”, which was posted in the *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* in July 2011, Russia launched the World without Corruption program. Nowadays World without Corruption is the first initiative of the Russian network of the United Nations Global Compact, with which it came out worldwide. This program was represented at a meeting held by the working groups of the United Nations Global Compact’s European networks on May 17, 2011, and to United National Global Compact officials.

Some authors, Alexander Dugin, a professor at Moscow State University, in particular, believe that due to peculiarities of Russian mentality, which took centuries to shape up, the direct struggle against corruption is pointless, and for this reason, it would be more reasonable to let it do good to the state. “Our society has perfectly adjusted itself to corruptive processes, learned to live in the condition of demoralization, all the more since the mass culture currently contributes to this process more than ever, with primitive humorous TV programs, degenerative series and narrow-minded entertainments constituting the core of information environment, especially on television. This is “telecorruption” of some kind, bringing prosperity to perverts and liars, narcissist egoists and sharks of show business. To uproot corruption means to swim against the stream, to deprive a huge number of ugly, but aggressive and voracious beings (ranging from oligarchs to TV producers and political technologists) of their habitat” [16].

It can be recognized that mental basics of corruption are

- traditions and customs;
- crowd psychology;
- ideas of ordinary consciousness (their mythological nature).

Traditions and customs that potentially include corruptive components are unevenly spread in Russian society. Traditions of hospitality, gift exchange, mutual responsibility and respect towards people of power (as respect to the elder)

are characteristic of all ethnic groups but are determinative for the style of a person’s behavior only within certain ethnic groups. Not in all situations the consistent execution of all above traditional standards results in corruption. However, the negative potential of these traditions should not be ruled out when considering reasons behind corruption [17].

Crowd psychology of an overwhelming majority of the modern Russian society is damaged by such phenomena as laziness, carelessness, self-will, disgust to any limits or restrictions, and the lack of confidence in the idea that problems can be solved legitimately.

Ordinary consciousness is full of contradictory and even mutually exclusive ideas:

- upper class knows everything better;
- local authorities cannot do anything;
- everything is cut and dried for the society;
- people know better what is better for them;
- authorities should be strong;
- authorities should help all people.

At the same time, the above traits can be successfully offset by other characteristics of the Russian mentality [18]

Mental grounds of anti-corruption behavior:

- commitment to justice for the sake of all;
- priority of personal properties over wealth;
- conviction that every person can improve himself/herself.

Does religiousness protect a person against corruption? The viewpoint that morals of a religious person will withstand much more challenges is not absolutely reliable. There is a dialectic interrelation between religiousness and morals, but this interrelation is not always direct. In addition, neither religiousness nor morals of a person can be measured by accurate indicators. For this very reason, religiousness cannot be a criterion of professional suitability and guarantee of morals [7].

#### IV. CONCLUSION

There are some practical recommendations of how to suppress corruption behavior among government employees, the essence of which can be easily transmitted to the rules of conduct for executives at any level of responsibility. If at issue is such a phenomenon as gifts presented by customers or partners, as a rule, it is recommended to consider any present of monetary value as a gift. It is prohibited to accept gifts from people or organization who are simply “prohibited sources”, e.g. those that have or attempt to establish business relations with a person’s department, seek any official decision from it or carry out activities that are regulated by the person’s organization. It is prohibited to accept gifts from these people or groups regardless of the fact whether or not people or organizations deal with them while fulfilling their official duties. A person should also refuse to take gifts from those whose interests can substantially depend on his/her official duties because they are also classified as “prohibited sources”.

When it is necessary to make things clear about gifts or exchange of gifts among employees of an organization,

with rare exceptions the general rule is that a person has no right to give money or to collect money from other employees to buy a present for a superior officer. Superior officers include a person's immediate superior and any person who holds a higher position in the management hierarchy of the person's department. Moreover, an employee has no right to accept a gift from another employee who is paid a smaller wage unless the gift-maker is not his/her subordinate and the fact of a gift is a reason of solely personal relations between them.

In a situation that can be classified as a "conflict of financial interests", a person has no right to be involved in government issues that one way or another affect his/her personal financial interests. Holding shares of a company, the business of which depends on a person's performance, is just one example of these interests. Consequently, a person is prohibited from being involved in problems, a solution of which will allow him/her to participate personally in the awarding of a grant or a contract to be provided by the government because in this case he/she will be in a position of a person concerned. Furthermore, a person should take into account the financial interests of his/her spouse, his/her dependents and strangers or companies that hire him/her to do this or another job. A person should take measures so that any job which he/she does will not affect these interests.

Impartiality is another indicator showing the presence or absence of corruption during the fulfillment of official duties, and this means that a person has no right to be busy with the solution of a problem if a reasonable person who is familiar with the circumstances of a specific situation can reasonably question his/her impartiality. Accordingly, a person's impartiality can be reasonably questioned if he/she works on a project, execution of which will bring direct benefit to any of his/her relatives.

The obvious abuse of official duties indicated the necessity to check corruptness. A person has no right to use his/her position to generate benefits for himself/herself and other people. Other people include members of his/her family, friends, neighbors, and people and organizations with which he/she is one way or another connected beyond official duties.

Even activities taken out of office are subject to regulation. A person has no right to be employed on the side or engage in any other activities if they run counter to the duties he/she is in charge of. This can result in a conflict of interests because such side activities require his/her forces and time necessary to do much work in the office.

Additional measures to fight corruption can include the following:

- with regard to staff, it is recommended to change areas of activities and regions of service more often (in case of a semiannual change forward-looking services lose sense);
  - gathering places (real and virtual) can be established to receive messages with employee complaints, but caution should be exercised here because one can face vengeance;
  - executives are the most difficult group to deal with because they themselves contact representatives of firms to provide their employees with extra benefits. Firms are glad to deal with them, and executives gradually become dependent on them;
- the maximum protection against corruption comes from the

policy of transparency and openness when making managerial decisions, the legitimacy of all procedures for administrative regulations, feedback arranged with employees and clients.

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