Introduction: Responsibility for innovations and pseudo-innovations

The concept of innovation plays a pivotal role in management - it means an ideal and a right direction of change in the economy. For this reason, the term 'innovation' and its derivatives ('to innovate', 'innovative,' 'innovativeness') have a positive connotation. They suggest that anything marked with them is valuable, useful, worth implementation and investment. These terms are fancy and are used in promotion, for example, in advertising. However, when they are overused, they can become ambiguous, and because of their ambiguity – they can become useless for management theory and practice (Berkun, 2007). To preserve the root meaning of innovation, some authors distinguish innovations in the strict sense from pseudo-innovations, which get the name ‘innovation’ but are not innovations: Innovations are new and useful. Pseudo-innovations have only the appearance of innovation. They create a false impression of novelty because they replicate already known solutions or are new but bring more losses than benefits. (Haustein & Maier, 1979; Mensch, 1979; Tchernev, 2017; Walshe, 2009) During the conference, we are going to discuss the following questions about the difference between innovations and pseudo-innovations: What is the utility and usefulness of innovations? What are the benefits of innovations that pseudo-innovations do not bring about? What are the losses and risks of pseudo-innovations, which innovations do not generate? One can further specify these questions by referring to peculiar aspects of efficiency assessment. For instance: What should be taken into account when estimating the usefulness of changes: the benefits and losses of individuals, a social group, some organisation, or should one consider the benefits of all the players involved? Can a homogeneous quantitative measure determine profits and losses, or should this measure accompany some quantitative criteria of evaluation? How should predictions of opportunities and risks be taken into account when calculating the expected utility of innovations?

This conference is also to be a place for exchanging viewpoints on the social responsibility for the future, which innovations create. This responsibility has limits because the consequences of innovation are not entirely predictable and manageable. According to the control principle of ethics, 'we are morally assessable only to the extent that what we are assessed for depends on factors under our control' (Nelkin, 2019). Therefore creators and promoters of innovation do not bear full responsibility for its consequences. Nevertheless, these agents can know the probability of consequences, which the innovation can generate and are not without any control about its consequences. Therefore, these agents can be partially
responsible for the future, which the innovation creates. Therefore, whenever innovations 'turn a new leaf' towards the future, their creators and promotors face responsibility for this future.

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Literature


