

Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi

EMBEDDING JAPANESE OMIKOSHI MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES INTO A TRADITIONAL WESTERN MANAGEMENT APPROACH: DOES IT WORK?

Can BİÇER¹ , Hatice UZUN² 

ABSTRACT

This conceptual research study provides a framework on whether Japanese Omikoshi management principles can be applied in traditional Western management approach or not and aims to foresee its potential effects. The Industrial Revolution began in the 18th century in Great Britain, and it spread rapidly to other countries in Europe and the U.S and then to other parts of the world. Though some Eastern countries, including Japan, began undergoing industrial revolutions and process of economic transformation later than the West, it's obvious that Japanese companies have dramatically brought their competitive challenge to the early-industrialized the Western states within the concept of organizational management and superior manufacturing management systems since 1960s. In sum, this study gives an insight into the main principles in the Western management and Japanese management techniques by comparing their major notions and argues Omikoshi management principles and its prospective outcomes when it is embedded to the today's Western management style. And, in conclusion section, it has been found out that Omikoshi management principles can be applied to the Western management style and so it has been claimed that it will become more encouraging, visionary, democratic, and creative.

Keywords: Omikoshi Management, Western Management, Organization Theory.

JAPON YÖNETİM SİSTEMİ OMIKOSHI YÖNETİMİ İLKELERİNİN GELENEKSEL BATILI BİR YÖNETİM YAKLAŞIMINA EKLENMESİ: UYGUN OLUR MU?

ÖZET

Bu çalışma Japon Omikoshi yönetim tekniklerinin geleneksel Batılı yönetim tarzına uyarlanabilir uyarlanamamasını hakkında bir çerçeveye ve olası sonuçları hakkında öneride bulunmaya odaklanmaktadır. Sanayi Devrimi Büyük Britanya'da 18. Yy. da başlamış ve Avrupa'daki ülkelere ve daha sonra dünyanın her yerine hızlıca yayılmıştır. Her ne kadar, sanayi devrimlerini ve ekonomik dönüşüm süreçlerini, Japonya'yı da kapsayan bazı doğu ülkeleri Batılı uluslara göre daha geç yaşamaya başlamış olsa da, 1960'lı yıllardan bu yana Japon şirketleri, erken sanayileşmiş Batılı uluslara karşı, rekabet gücünü örgütsel yönetim ve üstün üretim yönetim sistemleri bağlamında son derece artırmıştır. Kısaca, bu çalışma Batılı ve Japon yönetim ilkeleri ve teknikleri hakkında karşılaştırma yaparak açıklayıcı bilgi vermekte ve Batılı yönetim sistemine Japon omikoshi yönetim sisteminin ilkelerinin uygulanabilirliğini

¹ Assoc. Prof., Karabük University, Safranbolu Şefik Yılmaz Dizdar VS, Karabük, Turkey, canbicer@karabuk.edu.tr

² Asst. Prof., Karabük University, Safranbolu Şefik Yılmaz Dizdar VS, Karabük, Turkey, haticeuzun@karabuk.edu.tr

ve ortaya çıkacak sonuçları irdelemektedir. Sonuç bölümünde ise Omikoshi yönetim ilkelerinin Batılı bir yönetime uygulanabilirliği bulunmuş ve böylece de Batılı bir yönetimin daha teşvik edici, vizyoner, demokratik ve yaratıcı olacağı ortaya konmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Omikoshi Yönetimi, Batılı Yönetim, Örgüt Kurumu.*

1. Introduction

Why management? First, it can be inferred that after human beings started living in groups in ancient times, coordinating the group members to arrange the necessities of their daily lives was needed. They also realized that they could augment their abilities by working with others in harmony and depending on some rules and then, they found out that they better met their needs more efficiently. Additionally, especially owing to the quick rise of the mass production from the late 1700s through the early 1900s, the main goals of the companies were to increase outputs by meeting more demands and growing into bigger establishments. More importantly, through increased productivity goals, it was needed that organizations should explore new processes, products, and technologies to survive and thrive through technological breakthroughs and a leader in an organization was regarded as that one, great individual. On the other hand, various problems emerged due to the vast changes of the production techniques and with the employees. Though enormous changes in technology were experienced in this period, professional management was needed to solve the problems in organizations. Originally, management models and principles were initially developed as top-down, bureaucratic paradigms with the introduction of industrial revolution, which brought dramatic changes to the workplace and transformed the way organizations operate. In fact, in the early-20th century, most organizations operated just like dictatorships. The managers assigned the work, and the employees did it.

However, Frederick Winslow Taylor, who wrote “The Principles of Scientific Management” in 1911 in the United States (U.S.), was one of the earliest pioneers of management and organization theory in the world. He is still accepted as the “The Father of Scientific Management”. He was a mechanical engineer, and his theory was mostly based on the simplification of jobs, and he argued that by keeping things simple, the productivity could be improved by if managers and employees would work together. Basically, he divided manufacturing tasks into skilled and unskilled jobs. Hence, this was a new idea in the history of management, and it has also been regarded as the most significant step in the evolution of the professional management theory (Taneja et al., 2013:60). Frederick Winslow Taylor’s “The Principles of Scientific Management” was then translated into French, German, Dutch, Swedish, Russian, Italian, and Japanese and it soon became popular in the U.S., Europe, and Japan. In conclusion, the message was global, and it focused on the improved utilization and conservation of human and physical resources in establishments (Wren, 2011:11). French industrialist Henri Fayol was one of the significant classical management theorists and was the major contributor to western management thought as well. His book, “General and Industrial Management” (1916) included fourteen principles of management aiming at enabling managers in settling what can be done to manage an organization more effectively (Edwards, 2018:42). Hence, Western management ideas have been developed through the classical, the behavioral, the quantitative and the systems approaches since 1900s. On the other hand, the different management principles employed by Japanese organizations just appeared after the defeat in World War II. Addition-

ally, until the 1960s, Japanese management thought comprised of three main elements which were lifetime employment, seniority wage system and enterprise unions. Then, various techniques have been developed in Japanese labor management and industrial relations since 1970s (Hayashi, 2002:190-191).

In sum, the U.S., Japan, and the countries in the Western Europe are highly developed countries as they have solid economic infrastructures and well-established financial markets. Besides, in 2020s, both Western and Japanese business worlds still dominate the modern global economy since many of the world’s largest multinational corporations are located in these regions. In brief, this study aims to scrutinize the main notions of Western management thought and Japanese management principles and quests for the idea of embedding the Japanese Omikoshi management technique, which refers to the knitting the middle-level management together with the top-level management to reach the organization’s goals, into the traditional Western top-down management techniques and focuses on whether it works or not.

2. The Fundamentals of Western Management Thought

From a historical point of view, Okolies & Oyise (2021) maintained that managers have tried hard to cope with issues and problems almost facing executives until today. For example, circa 1100 BC, the Chinese had already applied the four basic management techniques of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. Again, between 400B.C and 350B.C, the Greeks thought that management was just like a way of art and it must be applied as a scientific approach to work. Besides, it has also been mentioned that the Romans decentralized the management of their vast empire before the birth of Christ. However, Joullié (2016) argued that the evolution of the philosophy of Western management has developed within six important philosophical stages. Figure 1 shows the six major philosophical themes and their emergence in Western management thinking:

Figure 1: Major Philosophical Themes that Affected the Emergence of the Western Management Thought

Philosophy	Representative author(s)	Important themes	Psychological emphasis
Heroism	Homer; Niccolò Machiavelli; Friedrich Nietzsche	Roles; rules; reward; power; performance	Perform!
Rationalism	Plato; René Descartes; Karl Popper	Reason; rulership as a body of knowledge; truth; deduction; universals	I deduct.
Positivism	David Hume; Auguste Comte	Facts; laws; induction; determinism	I induct.
Romanticism	Johann Gottlieb Fichte; Friedrich Nietzsche	Will; inspiration; passion; resistance; subjectivity	I will.
Existentialism	Jean-Paul Sartre	Freedom; responsibility	I am free and responsible.
Postmodernism	Michel Foucault; Paul Feyerabend; Jean Baudrillard	Narratives; knowledge as socially constructed; absence of foundations; interpretation	I am without certainties.

Source: Joullié, J. E. (2016). The Philosophical Foundations of Management Thought. Academy of Management Learning & Education, Vol. 15, No. 1, p. 159.

All in all, the latest Western management thought depends greatly on three major theories and these are classical management theory, neo-classical theory and modern management theory chronologically and the classical management theory dates back to eighteenth century and some of the principles of these theories are still applicable in the modern-day management (Hussain et al., 2019:157-165).

2.1. Major Classical Management Theorists and Thoughts

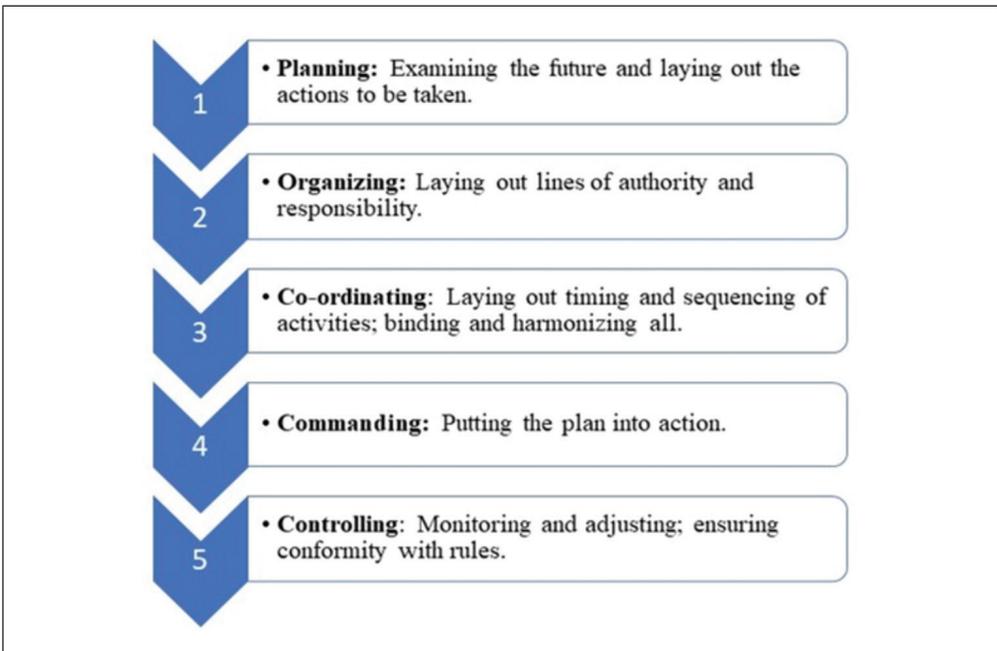
Initially, command-and-control management is often regarded as the basis of the emergence of the Western management style and Adam Smith (1723-1790), who wrote 'The Wealth of Nations' (1776), was popular in the era and with the trend of the "Scottish Enlightenment" and he emphasized the division of labor as the means to productivity. His book, "The Wealth of Nations", was mainly about the rationality about trade, commerce, and public policy, and he re-defined them associated with wholly new principles that are still used effectively now (Butler, 2012:4). In addition, Scottish-born American railroad engineer, Daniel C. McCallum, who was a manager at the Erie Railway from 1850s to the 1860s, wrote "The Superintendent's Report" (1856). In his book, he proposed the basic principles about the major principles of general administration to develop an efficient system of operations in an organization. Thus, he is also regarded as a significant figure of a modern system of management (Takashi, 2017:85).

Furthermore, Henry Robinson Towne (1844–1924), who was born in Philadelphia, the U.S., wrote an article titled "The Engineer as Economist". In his paper, he presented his thoughts, focusing on the management role for the engineer. He is also known as one of the pioneers of the modern system of scientific management for combining the production and engineering of goods with management and economics for higher productivity (Dixit et al., 2017:130). However, Kipping (1999) argued that especially in the late nineteenth century, companies demanded professional advice on various fields such as engineering, accounting, and advertising for more organized and profitable establishments from independent experts. It was no more than the birth of managerial consulting, and it was also the about the emergence of scientific management in the U.S. around the turn of the nineteenth century. It has also been mentioned that Frederick W. Taylor (1856-1915), who developed the approach to shop floor management, depending mainly on the systematic observation and optimum organization of workers' activities, became widely well-known first in North America, and finally throughout the world.

More importantly, the French engineer Henri Fayol together with the American Frederick Taylor and the German Max Weber are assumed as the major creators of Western Management. Taylor has initiated scientific studies to set the ground in management, Fayol has determined the management activities and Weber emphasized the importance of having a specialist in the concept of management (Ionescu, 2016:3). Also well-known as Taylorism, the principles of Frederick W. Taylor have enlightened the path to Western management dynamics. Taylor's major four principles propose as first, examining the elements of a job scientifically, second selecting, training, and developing every, worker systematically, third working cooperatively with every worker to ensure that the job is being carried out efficiently, and fourth, letting the manager to have the responsibility to define how the job must be carried out, also giving the worker the required responsibility to do the job (Blake & Moseley, 2011:348). Henri Fayol (1841-1925), who was a French mining engineer, mining executive, writer and director

of mines, developed a general theory of business administration which is called “Fayolism”. Widely acknowledged as a founder of modern management methods, Fayol remarked major principles in his management thought such as, division of work, authority and responsibility, discipline, order, unity of command and direction, equity, esprit de corps (group spirit), centralization, and span of control. Fayol also argued that the principles should be flexible and adaptable to every need. In 1916, Fayol published a book titled “Administration Industrielle et Generale” (General and Industrial Management), in which he outlined five essential functions of management. These five “elements” or “processes” of management also formed his “rules of his administrative doctrine” (Fells, 2000:346). Figure 2 monitors the Fayol’s five main functions of management:

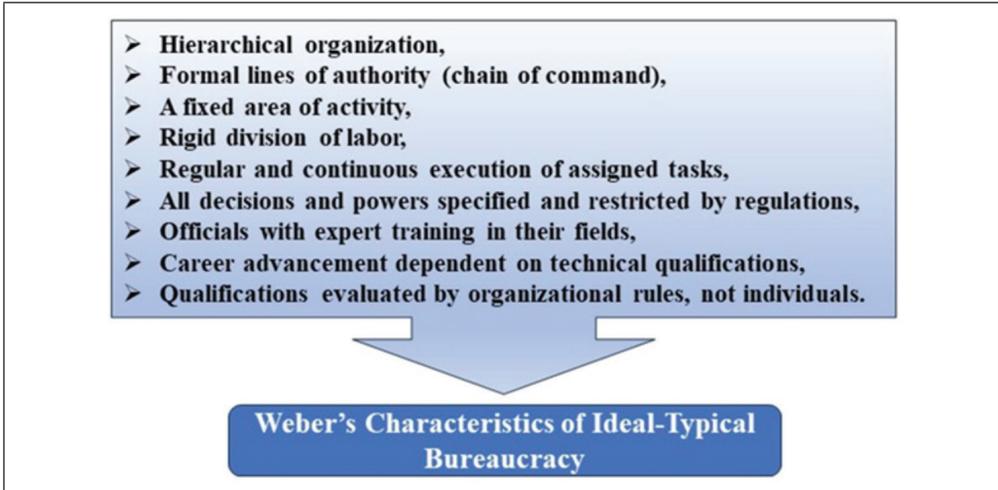
Figure 2: Fayol’s Five Main Functions of Management



Source: Fells, M. J. (2000). Fayol stands the test of time. *Journal of Management History*, 6(8), p. 346.

Additionally, one of the most significant management theorists is certainly Max Weber (1864-1920), who has been regarded as one of the world’s great economists, sociologists, social science theorists, and public administration scholar for the last 100 years. Moreover, he is usually acknowledged with “Weberian bureaucracy” that is mainly about hierarchical, career-organized, competence-based, rules- and files-based public administration of the present traditional type which he argued in his notes titled “Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft” that was published after his death in 1922 (Drechsler, 2020:219). Weber also developed and presented his thoughts in an essay titled as “Bureaucracy”, in which he emphasized that the management principles he quested for suit well into both public and business administration (Weber, 2015:1). Figure 3 demonstrates the main features of “Weberian bureaucracy”:

Figure 3: The Main Features of “Weberian Bureaucracy”



Source: Allan, K. (2005). Explorations in classical sociological theory: Seeing the social world. Pine Forge Press. pp. 172–76; Outhwaite, W. (2016). Weber's Rationalism and Modern Society: Max Weber Studies, Vol. 16, No. 2. pp. 262-265.

Mentioned as most significant western classical management-organization theorists above, Luther Halsey Gulick (1892–1993), who wrote and published “Notes on the Theory of Organization” in 1937, also contributed Western management notion as well. He mentioned in his article that the most important elements in management are as follows (with the acronym POSDCORB):

- 1.Planning
- 2.Organizing
- 3.Staffing
- 4.Directing
- 5.Co-ordinating
- 6.Reporting
- 7.Budgeting (Hammond, 1990:143-148).

Meier (2010) underlined that Gulick was a reform advocate who studied both the future status of public administration and how the present status could be changed via certain reforms. It has also been argued that Gulick treated the science of administration as a design science, associated not only with how things are but also with how they might be in the future.

2.2. Major Neoclassical Management Theorists and Thoughts

Within the context of the classical management approach, the principles developed depending on the job and the machines, and Neoclassical Management Theory focused not only on raising the production but also understanding of individuals in organizations. Two

important thoughts had been evolved as “human relations and behavioral management” during 1920s and 1930s under the Neoclassical Theory and Elton Mayo has been regarded as the father of the human relations thinking. Besides, Elton Mayo’s Hawthorne experiments (1927-1933), which took place at Western Electric’s factory in Hawthorne in Chicago and mainly dealt with the role of psychological and social factors of the employees to be more productive, have been the foundation stone of behavioral science in management and Abraham Maslow, Douglas McGregor, Chris Argyris, Frederick Herzberg, Rensis Likert, Kurt Lewin are some of the most significant scientists in behavioral management school (Sridhar, 2017:8-12).

Australian-born psychologist, organizational theorist Professor George Elton Mayo (1880-1949), who is, even today, regarded as the father of human relations movement, focused on organizational humanism, humanistic organizations, and humanistic philosophy in organizations. Mayo was the first theorist who applied psychology thinking to managerial and organizational concepts, additionally, he contributed too much to the subfields of management such as human nature organizational behavior, organization development and human resource management (HRM) by making propositions through his works (O’Connor, 1999:223). American sociologist George Caspar Homans (1910–1989), who was the founder of behavioral sociology, and one of the leading scholars of social exchange theory, influenced greatly by Mayo as well. Homans was also inspired by Mayo’s ideas on his studies that individuals make decisions depending on economic, psychological, and sociological factors in organizations (Muldoon & Zoller, 2019:3). American psychologist and philosopher Abraham Harold Maslow (1908-1970), who argued that some of the complexities of motivation in his publication, “A Theory of Human Motivation” (1943), believed that motivation is identified by both internal and external factors. Moreover, he was heavily influenced by Gestalt psychologist Max Wertheimer and anthropologist Ruth Benedict, and he became one of the founders of thought known as humanistic psychology. Besides, his theories on the hierarchy of needs, self-actualization, and peak experiences have become the fundamental topics in the humanist idea. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is arranged as follows, “1st, the physiological needs, 2nd, the safety needs, 3rd, the love needs, 4th, the esteem needs, 5th, the need for self-actualization” (Navy, 2020:17-18; Trivedi & Mehta, 2019:38-41). Last but not least, from a human resource theory or the organizational behavior perspective, Douglas Murray Mc Gregor and Irvin L. Janis were the significant theorists in neoclassical management thought.

American management professor Douglas Murray McGregor (1906–1964), who also was a student of Abraham Maslow, made too many contributions through his principles and ideas to the development of the management and motivational theory. He is also widely known for his “Theory X and Theory Y” which he argued in his book “The Human Side of Enterprise” (1960). According to his theory X and theory Y, corporate thought is divided into two main groups and the theory X stands for the employees who are inherently reluctant to work and must be strictly controlled and the theory Y refers to the employees who should be trusted and empowered as well (Adeoye, 2023:92). Yet, American research psychologist Irving Lester Janis (1918–1990), who was the founder of theory of “groupthink”, defined the systematic errors made by groups when making collective decisions in organizations. He also developed and contributed the idea of group dynamics. His widely known book, “Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiasco” (1972) also argued a set of detailed studies of foreign policy decisions (Hart,1991:247-248).

2.3. Major Modern Western Management Theorists and Thoughts

First of all, one of the Modern Management Theory, quantitative management approach heavily relies on the development of mathematical and statistical data as a simplified identification of a system, the quantitative management approach applies statistics, optimization models, information models, computer simulations, and various quantitative techniques to the management process in organizations (Hatch, 2018:10). Pindur & Rogers (1995) stated that the quantitative management, which was first used by the British, originated from the development of mathematical and statistical solutions to overcome military problems encountered during the World War II. and many of the quantitative techniques which had been utilized to solve the military problems were applied to the private business sector and industrial organizations in the later years.

However, in the 1970s, the thought of a contingency theory of management has been developed. It was mainly about that the organizational effectiveness can only be increased by fitting characteristics of the organization to contingencies that reflect the situation of the organization. This approach, also known as the situational approach, focuses on that there is no single, standard rule for the perfect way to manage an organization so, management teams in organizations should strive to develop their productivity by enhancing fit and alignment with their identified number of contingency variables by minimizing and controlling the occurrence of external risks (Mc Adam et al., 2019:196). Another well-known notion is that the systems theory of management which depends on that an organization is a single, unified system which comprises of interrelated parts or subsystems and every part of the whole system relies on others and will not operate at its best without them. The systems thinking assesses the organization within its whole environment and focuses on the developing of multiple channels of interaction among them. The systems approach also sees the organization as a whole and depends on the study of the organization within the concept of the interactions between technical and social variables within the system. Namely, a change in one part, technical or social influences other parts and eventually the whole system (Chikere & Nwoka, 2015:335).

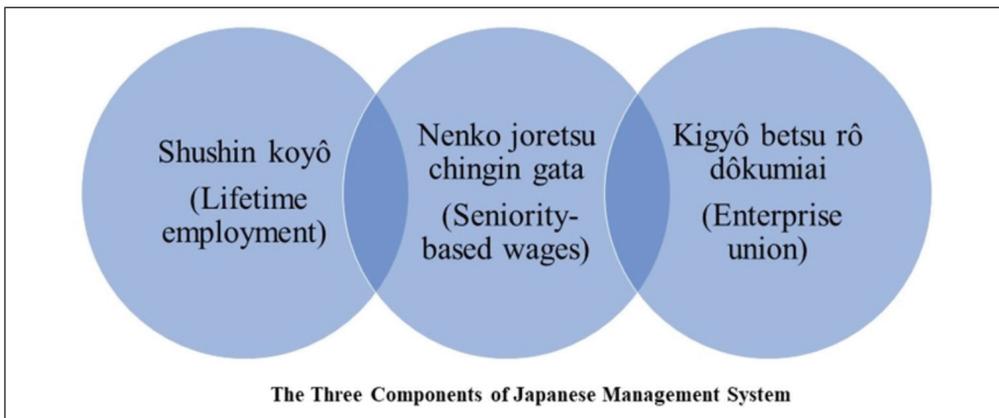
Furthermore, one of the significant modern management theorists, Alfred D. Chandler Jr. (1918-2007), who has been called as “the doyen of American business historians”, studied on the scale and the management structures of modern companies. His works redefined business and economic background of industrialization. Besides, Chandler’s “Strategy and Structure” (1962), which was one of the earliest studies in strategic management, helped develop the thought of strategic management researches (Teece, 2010:298-300). Consequently, Peter Ferdinand Drucker, (1909-2005), who was an Austrian-American management consultant and author, often argued decentralization and simplification in organizations in his works. In 1954, after Drucker became a management consultant at General Motors, which was the world’s largest company at the time, he got the chance to experience the firsthand analysis of management processes (Turriago-Hoyos, et al., 2016:4). In his book “The Practice of Management and later in Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices” (1973), Drucker emphasized the fundamentals of how the modern organization, which he saw as a “social institution”, could best be functioned and managed. He also argued that the essential facts of the dual relationship that is part of all organizational life is just like “the person as a whole” and “the organization as a whole” (Kurzynski, 2012:9).

3. The Fundamentals of Japanese Management Thought

The Initially, Confucianism, which originates from ancient China, have deep effects on traditional Japanese management principles. For example, the philosophy and political economy of Confucianism were highly supported in Japan by the Tokugawa shogunate that ruled Japan from 1603 till 1868 and by the Meiji state (era) (1868-1912) and teachings of Confucianism provided Japanese management culture a worldview and a fit range of values for organizational management and social interactions relying on a basis of mutual respect and hierarchy as well as a profound commitment to education, hard work, and harmonious relationships among co-workers. Besides, not only Confucianism influenced the development of Japanese business corporations, but also Buddhism has also affected Japanese management system through its main values of harmony, learning, hierarchy, helpfulness, and loyalty (Vaszkun & Tsutsui, 2012:370). From a philosophical point of view, Firkola (2006) also stated that the Japanese management system was heavily under the influence of Confucian philosophy, doctrines of Buddhism and as well as Bushido which emphasizes the principles on obligation, duty and honor. However, it is argued that the major changes in Japanese economy and management thinking were first emerged from the effects of fast industrialization at the beginning of Meiji era and especially much of the changings appeared after the defeat in the 2nd World War when the American management principles were beginning to introduced into Japan and much of them were adapted by the Japanese corporations after the 1950s.

In fact, James C. Abegglen, who was a former U.S. Marine and came to Japan in 1955 as a Ford Foundation scholar to do research on Japanese corporations and their workplace organization, is often called as the father of Japanese management. In his book, “The Japanese Factory” he argued that the process of industrialization in Japan is highly under the influence of Japan’s unique social and cultural values, and it is too much different from the processes of industrialization of the United States or Europe. Furthermore, he underlined in his book that there are three major characteristics that refer to the classical definition of Japanese management even to this day (Olejniczak, 2013:25). Figure 4. shows the three main characteristics of the Japanese management thought:

Figure 4: The Three Main Characteristics of the Japanese Management Thought



Source: Olejniczak, T. (2013). Japanese management: 50 years of evolution of the concept. *Acta Asiatica Varsoviensia*, (26), pp. 25-26.

In relation to that, in the 19th century, Japan industrialization process depended on both Japanese social organization and Western economic competence principles not by refraining from her traditional institutions, but by evolving them into factors of power to form a unique modern economic structure. Hence, there are three significant indicators of Japanese management system such as, the entire dedication of the individual to the organization, the noncompetitive style of interactions between individuals and the real trust to work groups in organizations (Miller, 1963:59-60). In the 1950s, the Japanese management and quality scholars studied on to raise the quality level of Japanese products with the notion of “made in Japan” that signal superior manufactured goods. After American consultants W. Edwards Deming and J. M. Juran advised Japanese authorities about usage of statistics and quality control techniques, they quickly put the techniques including zero defects and value engineering into effect in the industry and business (Keys & Miller, 1984:344). Additionally, in 1981, R.T. Pascal and A.G. Athos argued in their book “The Art of Japanese Management” that Japanese management system developed through encouraging greater use of diverse managerial tools, defining managerial blind spots caused by American culture and society, and considering what outstanding U.S. corporations do differently from them. However, they also highlighted the “Seven S’s”: strategy, structure, systems, staff, style, skills, and superordinate goals” and the first three are the “hard’ S’s”-facts managed well by both Japanese and American managers and the other four are the “soft’ S’s” which are managed better by Japanese executives and less effectively than by American managers (Perry, 1982:84).

Indeed, one of the most widely known Japanese management notion is associated with the Toyota Production System (TPS) which is developed between 1948 and 1975 Japanese industrial engineers. It is also called as “just-in-time production” which is created by the founder of Toyota, Sakichi Toyoda. The major fundamentals of the Toyota Production System (TPS) are the reduction of cost through elimination of waste, optimization of machine, consideration for workers safety and human capabilities. Besides, TPS is the basis for lean management and production thought which focuses on reducing cycle time and waste in processes (Black, 2007:3644; Anoop et al., 2020:2507). In fact, Masaaki Imai (1930–2023), who was a well-known Japanese organizational theorist and management consultant, is widely known for his studies on quality management, especially titled as “Kaizen”. “Kaizen” is a Japanese word which refers to continuous improvement involving all individuals, such as managers, and workers in any organization. Imai published “Kaizen, The Key to Japan’s Competitive Success” in 1986, in which he proposed the “lean management philosophy” and “Kaizen” was first wholly implemented in the automotive company Toyota. Likewise, in his book, he emphasized his research specifically referring to his close relations with Shoichiro Toyoda and Taiichi Ohno and he unveils the secrets behind the success of Toyota and other great Japanese corporations (Androniceanu et al., 2023 4). To be more precise, Toyota has become the world’s leading auto manufacturer and according to Reuters (January 2023), “Toyota Motor Corp. sold 10.5 million vehicles all over the world and Toyota defends title as world’s top-selling automaker in 2022”.

Moreover, Total Quality management (TQM), which is one of the best models in business world’s, first emerged in 1949, when the “Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers” gathered a committee of scholars, engineers, and government officials aiming at improving Japanese productivity, and promoting their post-war quality of life and indeed, American corporations began to take serious notice of TQM around 1980s (Martínez-Lorente et al., 1998:380).

Also, William Edwards Deming (1900–1993), who is known as the father of the quality movement and was hugely influential in post-World War II period in Japan, was a management guru. Japanese relied heavily on his advice on statistical process control and problem solving in 1950s. And, Romanian-born American engineer, management consultant Joseph Moses Juran (1904–2008), who had a dramatic influence on Japanese quality management, proposed five main dimensions of quality as qualities of design, conformance, availability, safety and field use. Juran's book "Quality Control Handbook" which was published in 1951, gained recognition and appreciated by the "Japanese Union of Scientists and Engineers" (JUSE), which then invited him to Japan in 1952. Juran, afterwards, met executives from ten Japanese manufacturing companies to consult about quality management and gave lectures on quality management (1954). He majorly focused on the top and middle management in organizations in Japan. (Artemis and Garvin, 1990:1-4).

Consequently, one of the main thoughts of the Japanese management system is the "Ringi" system, which refers to the type of a communication network in Japanese organizations that are highly formal and informal systems with top-down, bottom-up, horizontal, and diagonal channels. Contrary to the widely used linear communication and information flow through the decision-making process, within the concept of the Japanese "Ringi" approach, which is a common way of managerial decision-making in Japan, communication flow in organizations and the decision-making process is circular. It also involves the pre-meeting stage which is called as "Nemawashi", in which, the ideas, projections, plans and the decisions that will be made are discussed, improved, and reviewed in the informal meetings among the employees. To sum up, "Ringi" system just reflects the major notions of Japanese culture and management system as it plays a role in gluing together as many individuals as possible into the main functions of the organizational decision-making process (Sagi, 2015:10).

Last but not least, today's one of the well-known theorists William G. "Bill" Ouchi (1943), who is an American professor, has become popular for his studies of the differences between Japanese and American corporations and management styles. His first book in 1981, "Theory Z: How American Management Can Meet the Japanese Challenge" emphasized his major ideas. According to his theory, "Theory Z", it's essential to raise employee loyalty to the organization by presenting a job for life with a strong focus on the well-being of the employee, both on and off the job. In sum, Theory Z management thinking aims to provide stable employment, higher productivity, and higher employee morale, commitment and satisfaction. Besides, after the studies he conducted in 1974 with Richard Johnson, it was found out that Japanese corporations were highly superior to the American ones within the context of productivity, and it was found that Japan's economy increased very quickly, and profoundly as Japanese cultural and social factors affects its productivity and motivation positively (Setiawan et al., 2020:342).

4. The Combination of Japanese Omikoshi Management Principles and Traditional Western Management Approach: Does it Work?

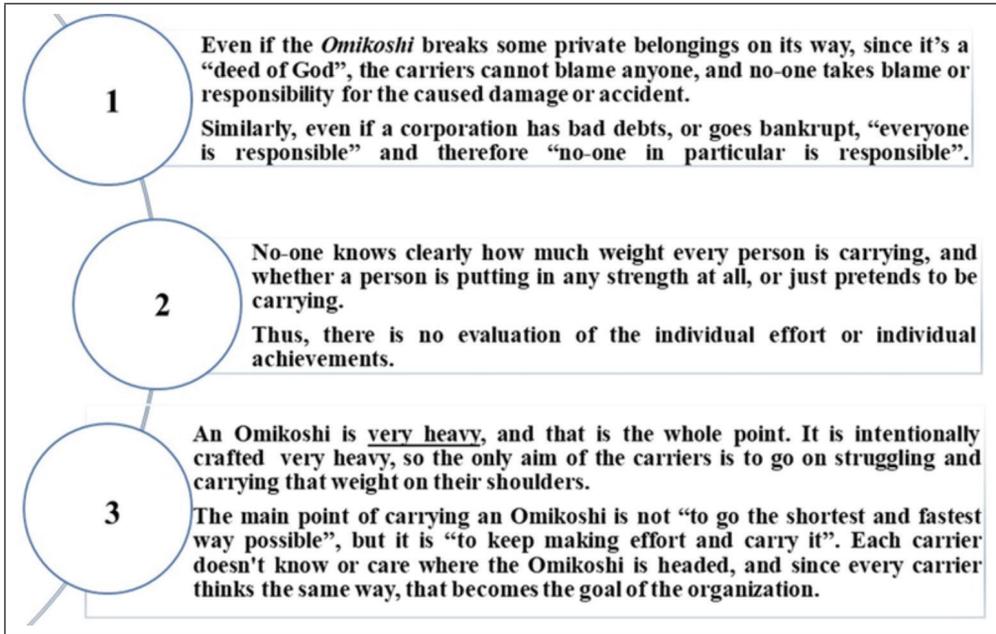
Table from the geographical point of view, as the subject matter of the study, the term "Western" is associated with the countries located in Europe and North America. Thus, it's certain that there are distinct features that affect the managerial principles of corporations in Japan and Western countries within the context of cultural, traditional, and mental features.

For example, according to Li (2018) Japan is one of the major representatives of oriental management ideas, which depend on its traditional culture, philosophy, humanistic thought that enhances organizational culture, harmony, job commitment and a strong sense of belonging to the organization. Yet, it is maintained that western management depends on the philosophy of ancient Greece and it is rather important for western management thought to reckon upon the development of science and technology especially since the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Primarily, “Mikoshi”, which the term “Omikoshi” management was originally inspired from, is a palanquin, a portable shrine, containing Shinto gods and spirits inside and it is used to transport them on people’s shoulders from one temple to another. Today, Mikoshi only comes out during festivals once a year as a symbol of pride, honor, and tradition in Japan and it is also called as “matsuri mikoshi”. Besides, since a mikoshi might be very heavy, indeed, it might weigh 500-1,000kg, thus, more than thirty people should come together to carry the mikoshi (Hori, 2020:8; Sasaki et al., 2022:202). During the “Sanja Matsuri”, which is the largest shinto festival in Tokyo, three mikoshi are voluntarily carried through the streets by the young men who are anonymous contributors to the group, meanwhile, because of the bustling crowd, no one knows the accurate direction to be followed, therefore, the carriers must find the determine the path that they should follow (Zarina & Marvarid, 2023:11).

To start with, Omikoshi management mainly focuses on the knowledge system, group responsibility, constant job-rotation and collective-consensus decision making and the ways to form a harmonious environment in which every individual of the group efficiently makes contributions to reach group and organizational goals (Jayantha, 2021:300; Bhatt & Subashbabu, 2006:171). According to Kurkute (2012), Omikoshi management refers to the recruiting of young employees at lower level of management and creating teamwork under their bottom-up supervision, so, it enables active participation of the young individuals in decision-making process. Hence, the young employees are given autonomy and participation to make any decision or action. It also means that it may be hard to define the person who is the manager and one who is a junior-level employee, and it is challenging to determine the leader or those who are, or are not, carrying their heavy load “mikoshi” on their shoulders voluntarily. Namely, it can also be inferred that Omikoshi management is associated with the process, in which the middle-level management works together with the top-level management to reach organizational goals and success. What’s more, Gulchin (2016) maintained that in most of the Japanese corporations, the CEOs or the members of the top management do not usually have too much authority or enforcement over the organization, however, middle-level management usually communicates directly to the lower-level managers and employees as well. Thus, the middle-level management obtains the required information from both ends, and finally they usually make decisions on what must be done or not by getting in touch with the higher levels of management. Because, from the perspective of Omikoshi management, just like in Mikoshi parade, higher levels of management don’t supervise or check the middle-level management or employees unless the “Omikoshi carriage” gets too unsteady. In sum, Omikoshi management deals with the middle management and individuals which supports “carries” the top management on their shoulders, just like a portable shrine, and drives an organization collectively. Figure 5 monitors the three main features of Omikoshi management:

Figure 5: The Three Main Characteristics of the Japanese Omikoshi Management Thought



Source: Olejniczak, T. (2013). Japanese management: 50 years of evolution of the concept. *Acta Asiatica Varsoviensia*, (26), pp. 25-26.

In fact, both Western and Japanese management approaches aim to employ more engaged employees, experience lower turnover and better business outcomes. Hence, top-level management executive figures, such as a CEO, CFO, president, and vice president play a vital role for setting main organizational goals and the overall direction of an organization in Western style management and supervise that if the major organizational goals are reached. However, Gotsch et al. (2022) conducted a study on the top-down and bottom-up approaches for implementing sustainability at company level, and it was found that the company which was directed by the Western style, top-down management approach, in which the decisions were only made by company leaders and managers, also implements a strong bottom-up management approach, in which employees can also participate in making decisions, enabled a corporate culture that gives the possibility for employees to participate in the sustainable organizational strategy. Accordingly, Kim et al. (2014) argued in their study that one of the most distinguishing aspects of Western management style is the management approach of top-down action plans and they usually reflect the top management's strategic intentions within the concept of organization's specified priorities, and it has also been maintained that the more the organizations decentralized, the more the organizations might become more productive than centralized organizations do. Accordingly, Mergel et al. (2021) argued in their study that strict bureaucratic Western management, top-down, zero failure concept means that employees are trained to follow the hierarchy principles and they are ordered to obey a command-and-control structure without questioning the legitimacy of its decision-making model, on the other hand,

organizational change process and keeping up with the latest business improvements will be hard. Besides, it has been underlined that newer management culture look turns traditional organizational principles of the bureaucracy into upside down, thus it promotes much flexibility in organizational procedures and principles.

In sum, Omikoshi management style facilitates to create a positive and cooperative team culture and corporate loyalty both by engaging even the employees in decision-making process and by building trust, mutual understanding, and solidarity among the individuals. However, since Western management style usually places more emphasis on databases and statistics and resists intuition and Western management principles are more productivity-oriented than people-oriented, the productivity and profit rates will surely increase if the principles of Omikoshi management style are imported into the Western management thought. Thus, it will not only lessen conflicts and power struggles which are common in organizations by promoting dialogue, empathy, and compromise but also it helps increase employee morale, productivity, job satisfaction and commitment.

5. Discussion and Solutions

In this conceptual research study, the Western management and the Japanese management styles have been outlined through an evolution of management organization theory perspective and tried to find the possible answers on what happens if the Omikoshi management principles are installed in the traditional Western management thinking. First of all, newer trends associated with management have been commonly discussed since the 2000s and heroic individualistic leading from the front has lost its popularity nowadays. In addition, decision-making has become decentralized, and the leaders are now expected to motivate, enforce, and inspire their subordinates. Furthermore, today, the CEOs are no longer regarded as the most powerful members of the top management in organizations, so they've had to give up their dominant role and considerable control on individuals lately. So, it can be inferred that the Omikoshi management notion, which mainly highlights the middle-level management in organizations, will be compatible with the Western management thought.

Moreover, according to Peter Drucker's theory of management, an employee is an asset, not a liability and their skills should be managed well, and as skills management is an ongoing process so employees should be motivated and trained by the management all the time (Drucker, 2002:1). Besides, as Omikoshi management style is more paternalistic and refrains from "hire-and-fire" option, the Western management system will be more efficient, as long as it adopts the basic principles of the Japanese Omikoshi management thinking. Thus, common values and interests, harmony, collectivity, and egalitarianism will be highlighted in organizations and employees will think that they and their ideas are valued so they will be more motivated and productive. In fact, Duerr & Duerr (2003) pointed out that "group" or "teamwork" is very important in Japanese management thinking and the individual is supposed to promote his/her personal plans or desires for the sake of the group in organization. Besides, the position and income of the individuals are directly associated with the success of the organization. So, since Western management is often characterized more by individual initiative than by group consensus, Omikoshi management will surely help Western management become more successful by group acts rather than individual ones. Besides, Heyden et al. (2017) argued that top

managers and middle managers rely on employee support to realize planned organizational goals and organizational change process because these can only be achieved by taking the whole support of the employees and so middle level management will directly be responsible for directing and redirecting resources according to a plan of action, and also reshaping organizational structures and systems so that they can create a productive visionary organization and can also address technological opportunities and competitive threats.

In conclusion, Omikoshi management principles present humane values as well as professional efficiency roles in organizations. According to these principles, just like in the “Mikoshi” parade in festivals in Japan, if individuals should do their business with their hearts as much as they do with their heads, both personally and professionally, they will assist middle-level management better. Hence, the Japanese Omikoshi management approach will bring the middle level management and the full support of the employees into the forefront in organizations and so, it will help top management create more encouraging, visionary, democratic, and creative organization and avoid counterproductive work behaviors and the formation of a stressful organization. Therefore, the Western management approach will be more efficient if the individuals in organizations think that they are accepted and valued for who they are, so they feel better, work and sustain better, and above all live better without regarding how heavy the “Mikoshi” is.

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Author Contributions

The authors confirm sole responsibility for the following: study conception and design, data collection, analysis and interpretation of results, and manuscript preparation.

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