

THE STRUGGLE FOR HIGHER JOB POSITIONS AS AN ETHICAL PROBLEM

^aMARIÁN AMBROZY ^bZUZANA KUBĚNOVÁ

*College of International Business ISM Slovakia in Prešov,
Duchnovič Square 1, Prešov, 080 01, Slovakia
email: ^aambrozy@ismpo.sk, ^bzuzana.kubanova@lxmgroup.cz*

This paper was supported by institutional grant IG-KSV-ET-01-2021/12 "Ethics in the context of its implementation into society".

Abstract: Competition for working positions at the workplace constitutes one of the real problems frequently encountered in business and management ethics. Despite its frequent occurrence at the workplace, as literature research shows, theoretical reflection on the issue within applied ethics is relatively rare. The present paper aims to provide a scholarly reflection on the unfair competition for positions, which is not in compliance with the ethical rules of competition. Furthermore, significance will also be placed on providing a definition of unethical job competition, identifying the features of this pattern of behavior, as well as describing the impact of this undesirable phenomenon. The present paper contributes to the underlying reflection on the issue from the point of view of applied ethics as applied in Economics. The main task of the study is to delineate the various features of unfair competition for higher work positions and the terminology related to this issue, possible ethical theoretical apologetics, and to describe the negative consequences of such conduct and practices.

Keywords: competition for work positions, personnel management, managerial ethics, workplace relations

1 Introduction (Times New Roman, Bold, Font 8)

"Despite the best efforts of corporate compliance officers, boards of governance, auditors, and regulators, corporate misconduct continues to plague our markets" (Hess and Broughton 2014: 541). Honest, fair, ethical competition to fill leadership positions is a *conditio sine qua non* for maintaining a favourable ethical climate in any enterprise. Violation of this principle in any sense (nepotism, corruption, etc.) creates a potential basis for the emergence of a bad organizational culture in an organization. An ethical audit conducted in time after such a distorted outcome of the selection process is unlikely to register significant positive values in the organization. A successful attempt to secure any leadership position in an unethical manner means, first and foremost, a shattering of trust in the selection mechanism in a particular organization. The negative consequences of a successful candidate using the unethical mechanisms mentioned above to influence selection are numerous. Ultimately, it not only means a deterioration of the ethical climate and a weakening of the functions of the organizational culture in the company, but it can also often bring about a real decline in the performance of the organization or a sub-organization. This is a problem at the intersection of managerial ethics, business ethics, business management and personnel management, which also needs attention at the level of theoretical reflection. Insofar as the unethical filling of leadership positions is associated with corruption, it is also true that widespread corruption in the public sector also affects ethical behaviour in firms (Oliveira et al. 2019). In the V4 area, according to research conducted by Zvaríková et al., the best situation in terms of real implementation of business ethics with results in Hungary and the worst in the Czech Republic (Zvaríková et al. 2023).

2 An attempt at a definition and description of the unethical struggle for leadership positions

The first aim of the present paper is to define the unethical struggle for leadership positions. A regular struggle for a specific job position means that it is a way of struggle without lateral manoeuvres, ensuring the condition of transparency and selection on the grounds of real competencies and results achieved by the candidate. On the contrary, an unethical struggle for a particular position, for a post, means a violation of transparency and principles based on competence, education and the results obtained by the candidate. If we want to define unethical competition for senior posts, we must characterise it as competition with the decisive influence of factors other than qualitative factors (based on merit, results, competence and education) (Šeben Zařková 2015). These factors are based on other factors, which can be defined demonstratively as follows:

personal relationships, violence or the threat of violence (in whatever form), the offer of an undue advantage (cash, a gift in kind, an advantage in the workplace, a *quid pro quo*), discrediting the opposing candidates, and others. In principle, an honest competition for a job differs from an unethical one by using the above-mentioned unlawful means of struggle. "Struggling through lying, intimidation, and disrespect is not ethical. A struggle is also unethical when it is motivated by unethical reasons (such as revenge), aimed toward unethical goals, or when the struggle is merely an end in itself" (Kaptein 2017: 355). We can distinguish two basic situations of struggle for jobs: a) efforts to obtain a new, usually hierarchically higher job position, and b) efforts to keep the current job position in the upcoming periodic selection procedure. The situation is even more complicated if it occurs under conditions of job insecurity (Bacile and Ferreyra 2012).

In many cases, latent or overt violence is tied to a particular selection procedure, or threats are themselves a form of violence. The goal is to obtain benefits in terms of getting a job and keeping a post. The perpetrator of the violence in question is the person who is one of the candidates for the position or someone who is servilely devoted to the candidate. If this person is willing to go to the stage of violence, it indicates a high preference for the incriminated job in their value ranking. Engaging in any kind of violence in a struggle for a job involves a high degree of unethical struggle.

While the Anglo-Saxon references use the terms Organisational, political tactics and political behaviour, the term chairing also occurs, signifying the same in Czechia and Slovakia. In the Anglo-Saxon research literature, organisational, political tactics and political behaviours refer to a conscious effort to gain personal benefits (status, power, prestige, money, etc.) (Kapoutsis et al. 2012); (Tripathi and Tripathi 2023). The terms may often have the same basis, but their semantic scope and function may differ (Kačmarová et al. 2016). Chairing, however, is a label for a very different concept in the Anglo-Saxon reference literature. It signifies leadership in the sense of presiding over something or managing something. It would be desirable to unify the terminology and use it uniformly in English in applied ethics and science in general.

Promotion to a senior position is a common practice in the labour field. Clear and transparent rules for promotion to senior positions reflect a developed and progressive organizational culture. The promotion policy should provide a transparent way of tracking promotion procedures. The pathways to leadership positions involve a variety of mechanisms. In any case, they should not only be transparent but also conducted under the elementary principles of managerial and business ethics. Each organization has an organizational culture of a different quality. A sound organizational culture automatically makes it possible to compete freely for jobs on the grounds of ethically sound, transparent rules and in close compliance with them. Control mechanisms ensuring transparency and compliance with ethics in the promotion mechanisms are the *conditio sine qua non* of a healthy organizational culture. Indeed, it is the failure of organizational culture that causes the undesirable phenomena of unethical behaviour in job promotion and advancement mechanisms. Namely, it is the consideration of factors that mean nothing in terms of competence, merit, and education yet can make a decisive difference in the outcome of a selection among several candidates.

3 Searching for the causes of the unethical struggle for leadership positions

To answer the question of what causes unethical competition for jobs, the answers must be sought in candidates who use factors other than professional and occupational factors to influence the outcome. The main cause can be identified, first and foremost, as an over-hyped, over-emphasised interest in obtaining a job by

any means. This egoistic form of careerism is very far from Aristotle's centre (μεσότης). A candidate running for a position in this way grasps primarily selected aspects of the leadership position as their major priority. These include social status, a management premium, decision-making competence, or other benefits. The aforementioned aspects of the position are of such importance to the candidate that the desire to obtain them is, in fact, hierarchically superior to ethical values and ethical invariants. Sacrifice (free time, energy) and responsibility are, to a greater extent, inextricably bound up with the exercise of leadership in the workplace. Nevertheless, the desire to perform a position is only evaluated negatively if it is associated with means that influence the promotion outcome in a way other than related to competence, education, and job performance.

The answer to the cause of unethical struggle in the sense discussed lies primarily in the personalities of the particular candidates whose struggles exhibit the characteristics of unethical practice. Various typologies of personalities have been identified. An interesting definition of a personality who consciously and deliberately uses unethical means of action was proposed by Krupa and Masarik. They consider a person with such traits to be a pleonectic personality. They define it as follows: "A pleonectic personality is a person who, at the time of their actions, convinces themselves and others that a dishonest means of achieving an advantage is common and acceptable, and often the only way to achieve success" (Krupa and Masarik 2009: 86). Such a personality does not help others; they consider people with competence, results and knowledge as potentially hostile persons. If such a person possesses multiple competencies, they naturally do everything possible to occupy high positions, especially if these bring cumulative benefits. The worst circumstance is that a pleonectic personality will violate ethical rules at any time, as long as, by doing so, they potentially gain a competitive advantage in the competitive selection process for a senior position.

Excluding the condition of latent mental disorder, narcissism can be indicated. It was described by Sigmund Freud in 1914. Freud defines narcissism as the transformation of the investment of the libido towards the self. Freud divides narcissism into primary and secondary. Primary narcissism is a condition with the libido centred on the self. Secondary narcissism, on the other hand, is an excessive focus on one's benefit, on making one stand out at any cost. Such a person has an unnaturally intense craving for the attention of others; they do not have the capacity to care for other people to the extent that a person without the aforementioned pathological condition does. Considering the issue under discussion, people with secondary narcissism are potentially susceptible to workplace behaviours, exhibiting signs of unethical struggle for higher job positions since primary narcissism is referred to as childhood narcissism. Such a personality poses an increased risk of manifesting itself in the abovementioned sense.

In this sense, we consider the value orientation of the personality to be a key indicator of whether they adopt the reported undesirable behavioural patterns. Fundamental human values, regarded as basal, were introduced independently by the psychologist Abraham Maslow and the philosopher Sün-c. Both deny innate qualities and innate ideas, such as Locke. Both Sün-c and Maslow postulated the idea that innate desires exist, such as the desire to be safe, the fear of death, the desire to have sex, and the desire to eat and drink. These innate desires can be regarded as fundamental human needs.

Dupkala argues that there is no value in the world that every organised social group can agree on (Dupkala 2018). Certain common boundaries of behavioural patterns necessary for coexistence need to be respected within the workplace. If there is at least a framework alignment of personal values with certain values held in the workplace, there are no major ethical problems in terms of managerial and business ethics. "The hierarchy of values is considered the most reliable prognostic sign that expresses whether a person can behave in accordance with his environment" (Králík 2023: 249). Ethical value orientation is

already formed during preparation for work in the form of education (Michvocková et al. 2023).

Egoistic value orientation tends to be a source of various conflicts, but also of unethical behaviour, if it permeates and dominates behaviour patterns. "The literature on personality traits and defence mechanism suggests individual differences in two self-favouring tendencies, which we label "egoistic bias" and "moralistic bias" (Paulhus and John 1998: 1025). This creates two personality constellations, labelled Alpha and Gamma. While Alpha embodies self-deception, artificially inflating personal competence, Gamma is, in turn, associated with another self-deception that denies social deviant impulses and claims exaggerated honours. Under the influence of the aforementioned self-delusions, the personality undergoes an extremely inflated self-assessment, unrealistically evaluating qualities such as intellectual competence, creativity, personal stability, boldness, etc. If given the opportunity, such a dedicated person will likely aspire to leadership positions in the workplace. Unless these can be achieved by ethically relevant means, there is a reasonable danger of choosing ethically contaminated practices. Such a danger exists both in seeking to occupy a particular leadership position and in seeking to retain it. Other adverse social consequences are associated with this (damage to image, deterioration in the quality of the organisational culture, disruption of workplace relations, etc.). The radicalization of the language of selected political parties does not contribute to the increase of altruistic orientation - compare (Kumorová 2022).

4 Identification of the roots of egoistic value orientation in the history of ethics

The egoistic value orientation is reflected in the history of ethics. Plato considered such an orientation undesirable since his orientation was national and directed towards positive virtues. These were also manifested in the state as a metaphor for somatic representation (Hasanifar and Alavipour 2021). Older and younger sophistry did not take a particular stance on egoism. However, the ambivalent approach of the relativists also allowed for the egoistic use of what the sophists called the stronger logos (Adrados 1984). In the traditional interpretation, Thrasymachos recognized the right of the stronger as the definition of justice - if Plato is to be trusted - yet other existing interpretations challenge this (Hourani 1962). Aristotle, as is well known, recognized the primacy of the whole over the part in both ethics and ontology. Individualism resonates especially in some Hellenistic schools. Epicurus, outspoken in his focus on pleasure as the goal of bliss, did appeal to the exploitation of what the possibilities of life bring, but certainly not in a hedonistic sense. Still, he adored an egoistic value orientation less. The Cyrenaic school may be regarded as the ideological source of ethical individualism and egoism. The fundamental value is happiness. This hedonistic axiological position perceives happiness as a value so significant that it should be sought and prioritized. A prominent school representative, Theodoros, did not even recommend the interruption of pleasure should it be to help a friend. In the ancient philosophical tradition, this is the only school oriented principally towards hedonism. The earliest accounts identify its representative, Aristippus, as a follower of Socrates (Suvák 2022). Any speculations about the hedonistic orientation of the ancient Indian Lokayata movement are unfounded, primarily because of the almost complete absence of primary texts that can be plausibly attributed to the school's representatives. "All the modern academicians invariably looked at it from the point of view of materialism and as a fitting response to Brahminism" (Kanchi 2016: 404). More recent research reveals a rather prominent role for meditation and spirituality in this school, challenging its previous materialist image. There is little to conclude about the ethics of Lokayata; future results from historians of Indian philosophy must be awaited.

Neither late antiquity nor the period of medieval philosophy produced even hints of an ideological foundation for ethical egoism. Nor is the apparent promotion of individualism in Erasmus of Rotterdam's Praise of Folly a real philosophical

endorsement of imbued egoism in its pure form. To the ethicists and philosophers of early Christian philosophy, scholastic philosophy, and Renaissance philosophy, the egoistic value orientation was very distant.

Mill's utilitarianism differs from Bentham's commitment to the importance of a religious sensibility in the moral agent (Heydt 2006). The change comes only with the philosophy introduced by Bernard Mandeville, who viewed utility as an economic and social benefit. He regarded egoism and its goals as the primary driver of action and decision-making. Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees* is well-known. At this point, the author reminds us "that capitalism created wealth while necessarily relying on vicious impulses" (Bragues 2005: 179). For Mandeville, man is ruled precisely by the passions. Although the said philosopher protracted the importance of self-love, he spoke about the possible connection of egoism with the interests of society. He drew attention to the possibility of the connection of the general interest with the interest of the individual, which he considered to be the potentiality of a functional morality. The field of law can help morality to make sense of rules. In the case of perfect law, he does not foresee major problems with compliance with legal directives. Claude Adrien Helvetius held similar but somewhat more moderate views. The opposite of some egoistic goals is recognized by Kierkegaard, whose ethics is based on the love of neighbour and love of God (Martín, Rojas and Rabbit 2021). Seemingly, John Stuart Mill's voice could also be heard as a promoter of egoism. He considers a person's actions right and wrong directly proportional to his promotion of happiness and his prevention of paths to it. Utility, which utilitarians recognize as a guiding ethical principle, cannot be equated with egoism since it is a utility that is not reducible to what one individual finds useful. Mill's utilitarianism differs from Bentham's in his commitment to the importance of a religious sensibility in the moral agent (Heydt 2006).

In this context, it is worth noting the ethics of F. W. Nietzsche since it involves a return to the original ancient values reflected in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. A significant component of his ethics is the will to power. However, it does not refer to complete egoism in the strict sense. "Nietzsche is asking whether morality in its present state is good for human beings, where what counts as good has to do with the kind of creatures we are, and so what it takes for us to flourish" (Harris 2015: 327). The values of the Homeric epics included strength, youth, wisdom, self-sufficiency, and nobility. The beautiful young Achilles in full armour, more godlike than human, is the bearer of the ideal. To some extent, the ancient hero acts as he pleases; ultimately, he, too, is obliged to keep his duties. However, he holds them only towards his peers, not towards people. The model of Mother Teresa's behaviour would have been incomprehensibly alien to Nietzsche. In an egoistic way, she applies the morality of the masters to the detriment of the weak. "Nietzsche is commonly thought as a perfectionistic consequentialist, as an ethicist who thinks we should promote the good, but who has a distinctive and controversial view of what that good is" (Slote 1998: 23). Nietzsche had a justification for egoism if one's behaviour in this way led to an enhancement of the creative component of the human subject. He considered the morality of slaves, or appeals to Christian values, to be harmful. In contrast, the morality of masters aims to enforce a will to live where the strong triumph over the weak.

The ethics of classical pragmatism is also related to the issue under study. Here the rule of action is postulated rather vaguely, what is right is what is currently considered useful, what brings some benefit. Pragmatism thus has no clearly defined values. In essence, the pragmatist creates their values ad hoc, according to what is useful to them at the moment. The pragmatist theory of truth carries its vagueness into axiology and thus into ethics (White 2010). Thus, the subject makes a choice of values. The value may not be the subject themselves and their experience of themselves, but it is the subject themselves who creates the values for themselves. This is not directly about egoism, as the subject can choose values other than self-centered ones. The neo-pragmatist Rorty looks at values antiplatonistically. "Many

philosophers have worried about Rorty's giving up on absolute values, and the same concern arises in business ethics" (Pouryousefi and Freeman 2021: 576). On the other hand, the positive role of American pragmatism in shaping business ethics should be highlighted, as a key step in its development took place in the milieu of American pragmatism (Heinrichs 2018). Modern non-utilitarian consequentialism, ethics of social consequences can be linked in terms of the analysis of the subject of morality through the optics of C. G. Jung's fundamental psychological forms (Petrufová Joppová 2017). Kalajtzidis clarified that ethics of social consequences might be considered as a hybrid ethical theory (Kalajtzidis 2019).

If we are to trust the conventional interpretations of the Cyrenaic school, its representatives were relatively strong advocates of the principles of egoism in antiquity. The ethical values of egoism were to some extent supported by Mandeville, yet he associated them with the union of the interests of the individual and society. Even the undeniable egoistic charge in Nietzsche can be weakened by the duty of the powerful to their fellow individuals. Pragmatism contains only the potentiality of egoistic understanding. In each of the schools of thought, philosophies that contain a certain rational core compatible with the egoistic viewpoint in the form of the network of Quine's statements, there is a danger that the educated egoist might use them to defend their actions, indifferent either to other individuals or to their conscience.

5 Signs of the unethical struggle for leadership positions

Unethical struggle for higher positions has its characteristics, allowing for identification. This phenomenon is based on using unauthorised, unethical means of influence in the struggle for a senior position. The negative is not the effort to gain or retain a senior position but how it is fought for. The use of illicit means constitutes a fundamental difference from standard competition. We can present the most commonly used illicit means in the above context.

Fraud in its various forms is a common illicit means occurring in the acquisition of various leadership positions. Fraud in getting a certain lucrative job position can be carried out differently. The most commonly used is the provision of false information. Simply, a potential candidate for a position operates with information not based on the truth. In some cases, they may use forged official documents. More often, it is a matter of providing information that is difficult to confirm or deny. A candidate for a position fabricates attributes not attributed to them, such as attendance at events and scientific conferences, artificially exaggerating their years of experience. In addition to outright fabrication, the candidate may falsely interpret otherwise true facts concerning the job description, the manner of participation in the stated events, etc. Sometimes, it may be a modification of the results obtained, deliberately and artificially improved. Prudence is an appropriate virtue in this context (Nemec and Blaščíková 2021). Prudence is more appropriate here than forgiveness (Sucharek 2017).

Attacking competitors is another manifestation of grabbing leadership positions in an unethical manner. Attacking competitors can be covert or overt. In terms of overt attacks, these can take place both in and outside the workplace. If the candidate is not outsourced, it is mobbing or bossing and staffing. Different circumstances arise when the attempt is made to obtain a management position and when the effort is made to retain it. A simple assault in the form of a display of brute force is rarely a form of a struggle for a job, as it is most likely to be turned against the person of the aggressor. Therefore, in this context, mobbing is more likely to be sophisticated. The point of this sophistication is to mask the perpetrator of mobbing. Covert mobbing is more difficult to detect. It takes the form of vicarious mobbing, ideally without witnesses, over the telephone or on social networks. Even if there is the eventuality of a physical attack, it is usually carried out with the help of a hired person. These are various forms of influence on a particular person to be exhausted, tired, or disgusted.

The signs of an unethical struggle for a leadership position include direct influence on decision-makers. Influencing the direct key decision-makers on the outcome of the process is a frequent and potentially the most effective sign of unethical competition for positions. In a more primitive form, it involves attacks through anonymous letters, emails, and phone calls, but this is hardly effective. Direct, targeted slander is more effective since it can damage the candidate's credibility, especially if carried out indirectly, seemingly without any links to the person who ordered it. It is a targeted campaign against specific decision-makers about the outcome of the process, whether in the company's organisational unit or its management circle. A well-targeted anti-campaign against a candidate tends to be directed at the decision-makers and is conducted covertly through third parties so the victim does not find out about it. If this feature of unethical competition for positions is met, it generally has the highest chance of being effective compared to other features mentioned.

Another sign is an attempt to obtain information that would give the potential candidate an undue competitive advantage. It can be obtained by disclosure from a third party, hacking, or physical theft of the contents of documents (by photographing them, scanning them, etc.). Subtle information can sometimes be the key to success; in this case, it is obtained unethically. Influencing the members of the decision-making committee does not have to be conducted by the candidate only through denunciation of the opposing candidate. The candidate may also use bribery to corrupt the committee members by utilizing undue advantages and counter-benefits or in return for material or financial remuneration. Such serious ethical misconduct, if proven, may be grounds for a final conviction on the merits of criminal offences in most countries.

Sometimes, a particular form of the signs of unethical job competition is specifically linked to bossing. It refers to the situation in which a manager intends to defend their position in a new selection procedure. Bossing can be used as an intimidation manoeuvre by the manager, but it is a risky tactic that can easily backfire on the actor. Rather, we encounter the practice that the tendency towards bossing is stronger, especially in the period after taking or defending the position and the goal in such a case tends to be the elimination of possible competitors and possibly disagreeable workers (Birknerová, Zbihlejšová and Droppa 2021).

In applied ethics, the term whistleblowing has mostly positive connotations. However, it also refers to the monitoring and carrying of information to inform a manager or a candidate for a position about individual employees' opinions and current settings. Likewise, secretly obtaining information from third parties gives an undue advantage that a candidate for a position can take advantage of, especially if they currently hold a senior management position. With the help of dedicated co-workers, an intelligent executive can use the information obtained as an unjustified competitive advantage, allowing them to plan and anticipate in the first place.

Attempts have been made to list some behaviours exhibiting signs of an unethical way of competing for a leadership position. Means such as deception, illicit acquisition of information, manipulative interference in the decision-making process, corrupt patterns of behaviour, etc., are certainly not among the repertoire of ethically acceptable and benign instruments for obtaining a senior position.

6 Possibilities of impact of the described behavioral models on the organization

"The business environment has been very turbulent in recent years and businesses need to be able to respond flexibly to different changes and situations in this environment" (Mišún, Paprskárová and Mišúnová Hudáková 2019: 210). The impact of the described behavioural patterns on the organization can be highly negative. If such phenomena occur in the workplace, they drain the necessary energy and time to deal with work tasks, etc.

"Work ethics has the highest implications for improving employee performance" (Hasibuan and Azmy 2022: 56). Forces that can be used more economically from the organization's viewpoint are allocated unnecessarily. Entropy in the organization is increased, which can be displaced into the environment when the elements that cause it are identified in a standard situation (Lysá et al. 2019). The second consequence is a possible deterioration of the corporate culture. The third negative consequence is mainly the deterioration of workplace relationships. If the described phenomena occur in the organization, mobbing or bossing associated with the situation can disintegrate workers, disgust them, and weaken their loyalty to the organization. Another negative consequence can be a deterioration of the corporate image. Negative references have a bad impact on the company's external PR. The very negative consequence is the eventual victory of the candidate who uses unethical means of competition. Potentially, there are other series of unethical behaviours such as bribery, bossing, unauthorized use of company finances for personal gain, rewarding employees for work other than meritorious, losing out on tenders, etc. Corrupt behaviour can lead to profitable black market business (Eidam 1996). The worst possibility is a person with signs of recurrence of unethical behaviour and without the necessary competencies for a managerial position. In a knowledge economy, skilled workers play an important role in innovation and economic growth (Castro-Silva and Lima 2022), i.e., the mentioned possibility negatively affects the influential economic factor. Kaizen technology can be applied in organizations, but people with toxic behavior are an obstacle to progress (Trubavina et al. 2021).

7 A few recommendations for practice

Finally, several recommendations may be formulated and applied in the practice. Firstly, it is advisable to implement the topic of unethical struggle for positions in corporate ethics education as a problem that is not insignificantly frequent in organizations. Secondly, it is necessary to implement the topic in both classical and modern tools for applying business ethics to organizations. Thirdly, it is also recommended to work on prophylaxis of the pertracted phenomenon in the sense of effective controls of superior bodies, administrative bodies, and relevant commissions, which could reveal the mentioned ethically incorrect phenomenon and combat it. The measures taken may also lead to the disqualification of the perpetrator of the undesirable behaviour from the competition. Eventually, the issue could be shifted by appropriate legislative amendments, especially if they are favourable to the application of effective sanctions. Last but not least, it is also necessary to intensify awareness of the issue under consideration.

8 Conclusion

The present paper aims to define, describe, and identify the basic features of unethical competition for senior positions and recommend certain countermeasures for its elimination. Unethical struggle for senior positions differs from the correct one simply by the use of means. We have also endeavoured to clarify the issue terminologically in terms of using terms in the English language. The Anglo-Saxon literature prefers the terms organizational political tactics, political behaviour in the issue under discussion. The causes of this kind of behaviour can be observed in an egoistically oriented personality, while it may also be secondary narcissism, as described by S. Freud. The basic issue lies in the inappropriate value emphasis given by a particular person to a higher job position. In order to obtain it, they will also choose an unethical course of action. We have endeavoured to identify the ideological sources of egoism and individualism in the history of ethics, which has been partly successful in the Cyrenaic school and B. Mandeville. Some features can also be observed in the work of other ethicists. We believe that strong control mechanisms, effective sanctions in case of violation of ethical rules of the selection process, and exclusion of the actor of unethical behaviour from the competition are ways to prevent unethical competition for work positions.

Literature:

1. Adrados, F. R.: 1984. Greek ethics from its beginnings to the sophists and Plato. *Revista De Occidente* 35, pp. 23-47, ISSN 0034-8635.
2. Bacile, E. J., Ferreyra, Y. M.: 2012. Job insecurity on productivity self-administration. Ethical implications and its link to the Corporate Identity. *Revista Gestion De Las Personas y Tecnologia* 5 (15), ISSN 0718-5693.
3. Birknerová, Z., Zbihlejšová, L., Droppa, M.: 2021. Assessment of abusive supervision - boss methodology. *Journal of Business Economics and Management* 22 (1), pp. 197-216, ISSN 1611-1699.
4. Bragues, G.: 2005. Business is One Thing, Ethics is Another: Revisiting Bernard Mandeville's Fable of the Bees. *Business Ethics Quarterly* 15 (2), pp. 179-203, ISSN 1052-150X.
5. Castro – Silva, H., Lima, F.: 2022. The struggle of small firms to retain high-skill workers: job duration and the importance of knowledge intensity. *Small Business Economics* 60 (2), pp. 537-572, ISSN 0921-0913.
6. Dupkala, R.: 2018. *Education in contexts of integration of muslim immigrants*. Medzináboženský dialóg a migračná kríza, Trnava: TU, pp. 69-79, ISBN 978-80-568-0134-5.
7. Eidam, G.: 1996. Corruption as a form of business - Business ethics and criminal law as sufficient instruments for fighting corruption. *Kriminalistik* 50 (8-9), pp. 543-547, ISSN 0023-4699.
8. Harris, D. I.: 2015. Nietzsche and virtue. *Journal of Value Inquiry* 49 (3), pp. 325-328, ISSN 0022-5363.
9. Hasanifar, A., Alavipour, S.: 2021. Platonic methodological alterations: elenchus, dialectics, and diaeresis. *Philosophia – International Journal of Philosophy* 22 (2), pp. 260-274, ISSN 2244-1875.
10. Hasibuan, E. P., Azmy, A.: 2022. Improving Employee Performance Affected by Leadership Style, Organizational Culture, and Work Ethics in Technology Service Company. *Quality – Access to Success* 23 (189), pp. 56-66, ISBN 1582-2559.
11. Heinrichs, B.: 2018. The Origin of applied Ethics from the Spirit of American Pragmatism. *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 125 (2), pp. 199-219, ISSN 0031-8183.
12. Hess, M. F., Broughton, E.: 2014. Fostering an ethical organization from the bottom up and the outside in. *Business Horizons* 57 (4), pp. 541-549, ISSN 0007-6813.
13. Heydt, C.: 2006. Narrative, imagination, and the religion of humanity in Mill's ethics. *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 44 (1), pp. 99-115, ISSN 0022-5053.
14. Hourani, G. F.: 1962. Thrasymachus' Definition of Justice in Plato's Republic. *Phronesis* 7 (1), pp. 110-120, ISSN 0031-8868.
15. Kačmarová, A. et al.: 2016. On the degree of equivalence of Latinate terms in English and Slovak linguistics. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* 231, pp. 61-68, ISSN 1877-0428.
16. Kalajtžidis, J.: 2019. Ethics of Social Consequences as a Hybrid Form of Ethical Theory?. *Philosophia* 47 (3), pp. 705-722, ISSN 0048-3893.
17. Kanchi, V. S.: 2016. Was the Original Lokayata a 'Live-in-the-Present' Spiritualistic School?: An Alternative Perspective. *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research* 33 (3), pp. 385-405, ISSN 0970-7794.
18. Kapoutsis, I. et al.: 2012. The role of political tactics on the organizational context-career success relationship. *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 23 (9), pp. 1908-1929, ISSN 0958-5192.
19. Kaptein, M.: 2017. The Battle for Business Ethics: A Struggle Theory. *Journal of Business Ethics* 144 (2), pp. 343-361, ISSN 0167-4544.
20. Králik, R.: 2023. The influence of family and school in shaping the values of children and young people in the theory of free time and pedagogy. *Journal of Education Culture and Society* 14 (1), pp. 249-268, ISSN 2081-1640.
21. Krupa, S., Masarik, A.: 2009. Pleonektická osobnosť. *Evanjeliálny teologický časopis* 8 (1), pp. 5-15, ISSN 1339-3685.
22. Kumorová, Z.: 2022. Radicalization of language in political speech and its position in media communication. *Politické Vedy* 25 (2), pp. 54-81, ISSN 1335-2741.
23. Lysá, L. et al.: 2019. Entropy - A Tool for Measuring the Quality of Human Potential. *Quality – Access to Success* 20 (170), pp. 94-99, ISSN 1582-2559.
24. Michvociková, V. et al.: 2023. Teachers in the private and public spheres: ethical orientations in educational interactions. *Journal of Education Culture and Society* 14 (1), pp. 76-84, ISSN 2081-1640.
25. Mišún, J., Paprskárová, P., Mišúnová Hudáková, I.: 2019. Relationship between perceived importance of control(-ling) in organizations and attitudes to control(-ling). *Ad Alta – Journal of Interdisciplinary Research* 9 (2), pp. 210-214, ISSN 1804-7890.
26. Nemeč, R., Blaščiková, A.: 2021. Two perspectives on the issue of prudence (prudencia): Thomas Aquinas and William of Ockham. *Konštantínove Listy – Constantines Letters* 14 (2), pp. 51-60, ISSN 1337-8740.
27. Oliveira, D. S. et al.: 2019. The Impact of Anxiety and Depression on the Outcomes of Chronic Low Back Pain Multidisciplinary Pain Management—A Multicenter Prospective Cohort Study in Pain Clinics with One-Year Follow-up. *Pain Medicine* 20 (4), pp. 736-746, ISSN 1526-2375.
28. Paulhus, D. L., John, O. P.: 1998. Egoistic and moralistic biases in self-perception: The interplay of self-deceptive styles with basic traits and motives. *Journal of Personality* 66 (6), pp. 1025-1060, ISSN 0022-3506.
29. Petrufová Joppová, M.: 2017. *(Moral) agent of the ethics of social consequences: A philosophical-psychological analysis*. Etické myslenie minulosti a súčasnosti (ETPP 2017/18): Človek v súčasnej etike, vol. 7, pp. 65-76, ISBN 978-80-555-1860-2.
30. Pouryousefi, S., Freeman, R. E.: 2021. The Origin of applied Ethics from the Spirit of American Pragmatism. *Business Ethics Quarterly* 31 (4), pp. 572-599, ISSN 1052-150X.
31. Slote, M.: 1998. Nietzsche and virtue ethics. *International Studies in Philosophy* 30 (3), pp. 23-27, ISSN 0270-5664.
32. Sucharek, P.: 2017. Reconciliation is not forgiveness Praise of forgiveness. *Filozofia* 72 (6), pp. 417-429, ISSN 0046-385X.
33. Trubavina, I. et al.: 2021. *Content substantiation of the regional advanced training educational program "Kaizen Technology"*. Second International Conference on History, Theory and Methodology of Learning (ICHTML 2021), Volume 104.
34. Suvák, V.: 2022. Aristippos and the birth of Socratic hedonism. *Filozofia* 77 (3), pp. 151-164, ISSN 0046-385X.
35. Šeben Zat'ková, T.: 2015. *The new VET Professionals - Entrepreneurship Trainers for VET*. Proceedings from IX. International Conference on Applied Business Research (ICABR 2014). Brno: Mendel University in Brno, pp. 977-988, ISBN 978-80-7509-223-6.
36. Tripathi, S., Tripathi, D.: 2023. Investigating the mediating role of political will in the relationship between organizational characteristics and use of political tactics. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis* 31(4), pp. 1105-1121, ISSN 1934-8835.
37. White, H.: 2010. William James's Pragmatism: Ethics and The Individualism of Others. *European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy* 2 (1), pp. 89-99, ISSN 2036-4091.
38. Zvaríková, K. et al.: 2023. Empirical research on business ethics of SMEs in the V4 countries. *Ethics & Bioethics* 13 (1-2), pp. 51-63, ISSN 2453-7829.

Primary Paper Section: A**Secondary Paper Section: AA**