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Management Concepts in the Paradigm of Spiral Dynamics: a Comparative Analysis of BRICS Countries' Practices

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Abstract

Paradigm shifts in management, reflected in new management concepts, have become common in the modern world. According to some of these concepts, human relationships have taken over the fundamental role in the organization, the corporate structure is becoming more flexible and there is no longer room for tight control. This paper aims to analyze management paradigm shifts in terms of spiral dynamics. It follows from the literature that the generally accepted management concepts can be related to the levels of spiral dynamics. Evidence from the BRICS countries shows that, as the level of spiral dynamics increases, management concepts tend to become more people-oriented or humanistic. The paper contributes to the theory of management; its findings are also intended for practical use in managing change and issues related to organizational culture.

Keywords

Corporate culture, management concepts, organizational development, organizational changes in BRICS countries, paradigm shifts, spiral dynamics model, BRICS countries approach.

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Introduction

In today's business environment, managers need to constantly review corporate strategies and look for new ways of solving managerial problems. Russia is now in the process of building a knowledge-based economy, which requires advanced development and innovative approaches within the country's economic framework. (Sukharev, 2024). Management is no exception, as technologies and digitalization call for changes in the system of industrial relations. These in turn should be based on a thorough analysis of the new working conditions and the knowledge gained from previous management experience (Gurtskoy et al., 2022). The latest shift in management paradigm is reflected in new concepts such as pearl enterprises (Adizes, 2017; Kuzin, 2014; Petriglieri, 2020a; Kleiner, 2020), humanistic management (Kleiner, 2018), spiritual energy management (Kuzin, 2014) and others. The purpose of this article is to study management concepts and their changes in terms of spiral dynamics, to identify current management trends and thus contribute to management theory. The results of the research will help today's managers to lead their organizations effectively. To do this, it is essential to have a basic understanding of the concept of Spiral Dynamics (SD).

Spiral Dynamics is a model for understanding why people think in a certain way based on their priorities and values. It can help explain the evolutionary path of mankind and describe how people's thinking adapts to the conditions of life. It can be found at every level of human existence: that of a nation, society, organization, group of people or an individual. This model is not a typology, because the values that people adhere to are a different set of systems that tends to change depending on conditions and time. The model is useful because it is capable of describing changes in society through the stages of evolution that never stops. It is popular with trainers, leadership developers, organizational change practitioners and social architects (SDI, 2024). Some researchers believe that spiral dynamics is the first large-scale ordered conceptual and integral system of ideas about the so-called big picture (Beck et al., 2018). In order to examine the validity of this assumption in more detail, it is necessary to return to the origins of spiral dynamics.

The theoretical origins of Spiral dynamics date back to the work of K. Graves in 1952 (Butters, 2015) dedicated to understanding the differences in people's responses and motivations. The empirical results allowed the scientist to build a certain model, which he later called the "theory of the levels of human existence". For thirty years K. Graves collected data, his main subjects of study being his students. During this time, he continued to work on the model and in 1974 published an article in The Futurist magazine in which he described it in great detail. It was now an eight–level system consisting of two main tiers: the first had six levels of existence, the second - two (Butters, 2015). The theory is based on the assumption that an adult person is constantly changing and morally growing in spiral leaps with fluctuations, moving from subordination to lower-order behavioral systems and then to higher-order systems. These systems either relate to the inner world of a person and its evolution,

or to the outside world and attempts to change it. Some of the existential problems can cause a person to spiral backwards.

A description of the original theory of Spiral dynamics is presented in Table 1 below. The first six levels from A-N to F-S give an idea of the simplest human being who is not devoid of animal instincts. The last two levels, G-T and H-U, relate to the use of knowledge once the primary problems of human existence have been stabilized on the previous levels. The first letters of the codes have to do with the neurological system of the human brain, which is the basis of the psychological system. The second letters refer to the priority (main problem) of existence at this stage. (Graves, 1974).

Table 1. Levels of spiral dynamics (Graves, 1974)

Level Group	Code	Problem of existence	Characteristic of thinking
existence	A-N	Satisfaction of basic physiological needs	Absence of cause-and-effect relationships
existence	B-O	Ensuring stability	Naturally grounded concept of time and space. Autistic state of thinking. No awareness of causality, but a belief in mystical phenomena instead.
existence	C-P	Upholding the rights of assertive individualism	Based on the prerogatives of the "haves" and the duties of the "have-nots", loyalty, service, and nobility, control by force.
existence	D-Q	Suffering from torments of existence in order to be worthy of a future life	Established rules determine the behavior of existence
existence	E-R	Heartless use of knowledge for oneself and attempts to earn respect of others	Thinking is objectivist, positivist. The perception of time "here and now". Concentration on the outside world and the ability to analyze it, but weak analysis of the inner world.
existence	F-S	Restoring the life balance previously disrupted by individualistic, self-centered existence.	Centrally concerned with both the world and the inner self and with the relationship between one's inner self and inner self of others, on which harmony is built.
being	G-T	Knowing what to do so that «everything could be and could continue to be» and doing it	Ethical behavior, the acceptance of «anything can be.» The level of «separation» from the animal.
being	H-U	Stability and natural balance that need to be protected at a new level of knowledge	Humanity combined with knowledge and human faith.

Don Beck and Chris Cowan followed K. Graves in his endeavors. They described and at the same time simplified the primary system of naming the levels of spiral dynamics, invented by K. Graves. Thus, the authors introduced the concept of "CMem" – a system of values and worldviews inherent in each level of SD. Table 2 below allows a comparison of K. Graves' levels with the modified version of his followers.

Table 2. Modified spiral dynamics (Graves, 1974)

The Graves Level	The locus of control	CMem	Examples
A-N	internal	Beige is a survivor	First people, babies
B-O	external	Purple is magical	Gangs, sports groups
C-P	internal	Red is impulsive	Difficult teenagers
D-Q	external	Blue is purposeful	Code of Honor, charities
E-R	internal	Orange is a conservative	Middle class of the population, fashion
F-S	external	Green is spiritual	Fight for animal rights
G-T	internal	Yellow-Integrating	Organizations by Peter Senge
H-U	external	Turquoise is holistic	Globalism

The authors also introduced another spiral turn – coral - and noted that at the time of writing its characteristics were not clear to them. Depending on the level of spiral dynamics, the authors identify an external or internal locus of human control.

The use of SD in management has become more popular since the publication of F. Laloux's book "Reinventing organizations"(Laloux, 2016). The author applies spiral dynamics to management. He compares each level with a specific characteristic of the organization:

1. Beige. Organizations do not exist: people are engaged in gathering; there is no division of labor, no leadership as such, and no subordination.
2. Purple. Tribes and communities appear, but the distribution of responsibilities is limited and everyone believes in mysticism. There are still no organizations at this stage.
3. Red. This is where the first organizations appear, characterized by aggression and, above all, power. Examples: the first armies, street bandits and various criminal groups.
4. Blue or amber. It represents organizations that use medium- and long-term planning, such as those that built the pyramids and the Great Wall of China. These may also include large corporations during the industrial revolution. Today they are schools and state-owned enterprises.
5. Orange. Its main characteristic is competition. Examples: large international corporations with competition at their center.
6. Green. Its pluralistic paradigm is typical of organizations with "green" principles and values.
7. Turquoise. Organizations with holistic understanding of life and nature that see themselves as living organisms in which self-governance and evolutionary purpose prevail (Laloux, 2016).

In 2020, Kleiner G. B. proposed an eighth level of SD, which he called "mother-of-pearl". Its main organizational characteristics, a soft informal and a rigid formal

structure, make up the company's culture. The formal structure is the system of subordination in an organization, its technologies, and administration. The informal structure is about values, human relations and informal links. These two parts are perfectly integrated into each other and can influence each other; this harmony is achieved with the help of the so-called system office in the form of a department. The main task of such a department is to maintain and build a balance between the company's processes, infrastructure, design and organizational focus, identifying changes in these structures and introducing them into the culture through coordination with all stakeholders. (Kleiner, 2020).

The concept of pearl organizations and their culture are described by Kuropatkina (2023). She highlights some of their key characteristics:

1) An inclusive management system;
2) Intellectual, or knowledge, management;
3) Application of ESG principles;
4) Unifying informal and formal institutions within the organization;
5) Creating an emotional connection between employees and the organization.

In her work, Kuropatkina also lists the four components of the system office:

- object office oversees the organizational structure;
- process office is responsible for information management, innovation, logistics;
- project office manages innovative projects;
- environment office maintains a good organizational climate, manages infrastructure, and promotes the employees' potential development.

Table 3 below combines ideas of the three authors.

Table 3. Organizations in spiral dynamics, combined approach (Laloux, 2016; Kleiner 2020; Kuropatkina, 2023)

Stage name	Examples and attributes of an organization
Beige	Does not exist
Purple	Does not exist
Red	The first armies, street gangs
Blue	Large corporations during the industrial Revolution, today they are schools, state-owned enterprises
Orange	Large successful competitive organizations
Green	Principles of sustainable development and caring for the world around us
Turquoise	Organizations are like living organisms in which self-governance and evolutionary purpose prevail
Pearl	A combination of soft informal and rigid formal structures. System Office

Today, there are many publications that advance knowledge about Spiral dynamics in management. One of the important areas is organizational behavior. Differences in

the types of organizational culture can be related to different levels of the spiral model. It should be noted here that there is always a dominant level, which may change over time within the company. The color designation and the main characteristics of the SD can be used in branding when creating and interpreting an organization's logo, which is described in the study by Kovalev and Leshchenko (2024). The model can also help interpret the development of management concepts from different perspectives. This approach is be described below.

Methodology

The methodological basis of the paper is formed by the methods and tools appropriate for this type of theoretical research. These are: comparison of spiral dynamics and management concepts, abstraction and instantiation of management theory, generalization, formalization, analogy and modeling a new approach to the perception of organizational change. A comparative analysis of the BRICS countries and their organizations in terms of people-centered approach to human resources management is based on the results of the theoretical analysis.

Results

Changes are reflected in the emergence of new management concepts and tools proposed by various authors. Their emergence and popularity can be explained using Spiral dynamics although organizations do not always develop from stage to stage, moving sequentially up the spiral. Table 4 below compares the levels of spiral dynamics with management concepts.

Table 4. Correlation of all stages of spiral dynamics (SP) with management concepts

Relation to the management paradigm	Levels of SP	Dominant management concepts (authors)
Mechanistic (inanimate/old)	Beige/ Infrared	–
Mechanistic (inanimate/old)	Purple/Magenta	–
Mechanistic (inanimate/old)	Red	–
Mechanistic (inanimate/old)	Blue/Amber	F.Taylor, F. Gilbert, G. Gantt, G. Ford.
Mechanistic (inanimate/old)	Orange	H.Fayol, M.Weber.
Organic/Human-oriented (live/new)	Green	E. Mayo, M. Follet, K. Levin, M. Belbin, Pirson, Lawrence, Petriglieri ,D. Kuzin, Roberson
Organic/Human-oriented (live/new)	Yellow	P. Drucker, Maciarello, Joseph Organic (live/ new) Turquoise Beck et al., F.Laloux
Organic/Human-oriented (live/new)	Pearl	G.Kleiner, E. Trist, F. Emery, K. Bamforf

Discussion

One of the earliest teachings in management was Frederick Taylor's scientific management (Taylor, 1911). He saw people as mechanisms capable of performing operations set in advance. Taylor believed that even a highly skilled worker could not perform at his best without constant supervision, and that the solution to the problem of inadequate productivity lay in the systematization of work, not in the search for an exceptional personality. (Taylor, 1911). Taylor was an engineer, and only then a manager, so the main task for him was to increase productivity through scientific organization of labor. In his view, the task of employees was not to think, but to work according to standards. Tailor's principles of management also included the study of time and effort spent on a specific operation, piece-rate pay and a large number of functional managers who control workers in their functional areas in order to achieve greater productivity (Vikhansky & Naumov, 2022). F. Gilbert, G. Gantt and G. Ford embraced the ideas of scientific management, which became the epitome of the amber stage of spiral dynamics. In addition to scientific management, the amber stage is characterized by strict adherence to standards and established rules. Secondly, it implies a strict hierarchy, in which ordinary employees are not allowed to "dissent". Frederick Taylor divided employees into two types: those who control and optimize tasks and those who execute them. Thirdly, the amber stage, like scientific management, assumes that a person is lazy and therefore incapable of being independent and thus very easy to replace.

In parallel with Taylor's theory, there was an administrative or "classical" school of management, founded by Henri Fayol. He was the first to divide management into five main functions: planning, organizing, commanding, coordination and control. He also identified 14 principles of management (Fayol, 1916). Administrative management, unlike scientific management, focuses on the management processes in the organization, on their debugging and control. Max Weber, a proponent and follower of the administrative school of management, wanted the company to run like a machine. He considered the bureaucratic type of organization to be an ideal (Vikhansky & Naumov, 2022). The ideas of A. Fayol and M. Weber have common features with the orange stage of spiral dynamics: it also emphasizes internal efficiency, with greater control over processes than over people; the organization is regarded as a machine. In organizations of the orange type, the main goal is the result, which must be achieved by all means; employees are given more freedom to display their talents (Laloux, 2016). A. Fayol calls for debugging the processes and highlighting the management functions so that the organization could produce best results. He is also in favour of moderate encouragement of initiative: "it takes a lot of tact and personal valor to excite and support the initiative of all within the limits prescribed by respect for authority and discipline" (Fayol, 1916).

The green stage of Spiral dynamics is represented by the following authors and their concepts: E. Mayo, M. P. Follett, K. Levin, M. Belbin. The combination of these concepts is called the school of human relations in management. Since Elton Mayo's

Hawthorne experiment, people have become the main focus of research, with growing attention to the study of group dynamics. These and other studies lead to gradual changes in the understanding of the organizational culture. Human relationships are becoming increasingly important. At a certain point, the shift towards human relations becomes so obvious in the world of organizations that researchers begin to notice it. For example, Peter Robertson notes the shift from a competitive paradigm to a paradigm of cooperation. He points out that it is important for the collaboration paradigm that companies improve the collective ability of people to achieve growth and development in a sustainable manner (Robertson, 2000). This proves the expediency of referring behaviorists to the green stage of spiral dynamics. Within the framework of a general human-centered approach, the concepts of humanistic and energy management can also be considered (Kuzin, 2014; Petriglieri, 2020b; Pirson & Lawrence, 2010). According to Pearson and Lawrence, humanistic management assumes that people work and live not just to satisfy their personal needs, but that they are constantly searching for meaning in life and would not want to exist without it. These authors believe that the paradigm of "economism" is being replaced by the paradigm of "humanism", which, unlike the former, assumes that human qualities and needs tend to change throughout life (Pirson & Lawrence, 2010) and people today think more about deeper questions than the researchers used to think. One example is Kuzin's concept of "energy of spiritual management". In his view, the answer to the question of why some businessmen become successful and others don't lies in the spiritual energy of successful people, their belief in their business and the strength of spirit. Kuzin thinks that management is primarily a spiritual process based on four components: physical, mental, emotional and spiritual energies (Kuzin, 2014).

The emergence of such leadership concepts as leadership-service can be correlated with the green level of Spiral dynamics. Robert Greenleaf describes this type of leadership as follows: first of all, a person is driven by the desire to serve, not the desire to have or gain power. The servant leader always shows empathy and understanding, accepting others as they are and tolerating their imperfections (Greenleaf, 2015).

The yellow level of Spiral dynamics is determined by two key parameters: human knowledge and organizational flexibility. Peter Drucker is one of those whose ideas correspond to this level, but he also takes into account the experiences of the green and orange levels. For him, human knowledge is the most important resource of public life. Drucker introduces the concepts of the knowledge economy and the knowledge worker who has become so flexible that nothing can stop him from changing jobs. He notes that, at this level, particular attention should be paid to information technologies, on which the speed of knowledge transfer depends, and that organizations must constantly adjust their plans to changes, many of which are difficult to predict, and, if necessary, abandon yesterday's plans. (Drucker et al., 2010).

This level of Spiral dynamics can be compared to the transformational type of leadership that was first proposed by B. Bass. A transformational leader, according to the author, has several characteristics. Firstly, he is charismatic, quickly gains respect and trust, and people want to be like him. Secondly, he encourages all members of

the organization to learn and stimulates their thinking. He also values intelligence, rationality and careful problem solving. Thirdly, this type of leader has an individual approach to employees, he is able to pay personal attention to each person and be a mentor. In some cases, it was this type of leadership that most stimulated the development of technology in the company. Such leaders can challenge the existing organizational culture or even quickly change it (Bass, 1990). People at the yellow level of Spiral Dynamics strive for self-knowledge and learning new things; the "I" concept prevails, so the most appropriate type of leadership is the individual approach.

The turquoise level of the Spiral dynamics is an extension of the yellow. At the yellow level, the management hires smart people who do not need to be controlled because they organize themselves. Now, at the turquoise, you need to choose the methods of managing these workers. Intuitively, management understands that the hierarchical structure of the organization is not suitable for such employees, so more and more matrix or project structures are created. In 2001, amid explosive technological development, people of the new turquoise paradigm, tired of classical management methods, proposed a new way of working called Agile development. The method was first described in the Agile Software Development Manifesto (Beck et al., 2001), where, in addition to the method itself, its 17 authors proposed a set of new values. First, they establish that people are more important than processes. Second, the main thing is the product, not the amount of documentation describing it. Third, the relationship with the customer is more important than the terms of the contract. Fourth, the plan is not as important as the changes that sometimes need to be made to it. The authors of the Manifesto believe that self-organizing teams are the best at generating product requirements and designing solutions (Beck et al., 2001). The method consists of 7 stages: analysis, design, coding, testing, delivery of partially implemented software, feedback from the customer and again analysis (first stage) (Sharma et al., 2012). The author of the turquoise management concept was F. Lalu; he introduced it in 2014.

An example of a turquoise organization is the Russian Vkusvill company. The main values of the company are people and customers, there are no KPIs inside the organization. Moreover, it spends money on development, improvement of working methods, and introduction of new standards (Kobyakov, 2018).

Another example of the turquoise stage of Spiral dynamics is the company Zappos, currently following the principles of holacracy, i.e. self-organization of the workers, expressed in the absence of any traditional organizational structures. Holacracy is built on circles – groups of people, each performing a specific function for the benefit of the organization (Businessrevisor, 2019).

The newest and highest level of Spiral dynamics, proposed by Kleiner, is the pearl level. In a broad sense, Kleiner understood an enterprise as a combination of two trends in organizational dynamics: humanization and digitalization. In this case, the enterprise is perceived as a system of four subsystems that need to be managed (Kleiner, 2020). The pearl level correlates well with the theory of the sociotechnical system of organization, which was first proposed after the Second World War by Eric Trist, Fred Emery and Ken Bamforf. It suggests that in an organization, human

resources and technology should be integrated into each other, not isolated. This is the key to the successful functioning of the company. The concept equally values social and technical sides: they exist together to achieve the best result. Attention is paid to both high quality and job satisfaction. The theory integrates the six key components of a company: goals or metrics, people, infrastructure, technology, culture and processes (Janse, 2021), that is both the "soft" and "hard" parts of the organization. In one of his works, Kleiner describes the systems management, which corresponds precisely with his idea of pearl organizations and is a combination of functional, humanistic, and social management subsystems (Kleiner, 2018).

Elements of the pearl stage of Spiral dynamics can be seen in Sberbank. For example, since 2016 the organization has been using the Run-Change-Disrupt approach. The first module, Run, is based on a systematic approach and support of the organization's processes and products. This includes employees with a 'run' mindset, who are mainly involved in 'routine' tasks to ensure that the organization's systems function without interruption. The second module, Change, involves responding to changes in the environment, analyzing it, and testing it. Employees of this unit make changes to the organization's system, analyze market trends, test hypotheses and implement changes in the organization's processes. The third module, Disrupt, involves the introduction of new innovations and ideas. Employees of this type are innovators and leaders who are engaged in intra–corporate entrepreneurship (Bitobe, 2021). This approach illustrates that the company strives to manage at least two subsystems (out of four) that Kleiner identified: project and process (Kleiner, 2020).

Spiral dynamics can therefore be superimposed on management concepts related to paradigm shifts. Organizations in their development do not necessarily go through all the stages of spiral dynamics; the chosen stage largely depends on the organization's leader, his or her skills, knowledge and psychological character, on how carefully and according to what criteria the company selects staff, and many other things. Nor can it be argued that a particular organization fully corresponds to only one stage of the Spiral dynamics. The decisive factor in the formation of a certain "style" and choice of tools of the organization is the paradigm. That is, if a company plans to change, first of all it needs to change the "paradigm" of management thinking, and then the tools. For example, in one of their companies, two owners decided to undertake a transformation, planning to 'update their understanding of the paradigm', feeling that it was time for change. Contrary to typical ideas about changing the organization, the owners decided not to touch the organizational structure in the early stages. Instead, they talked to employees about these changes, about their values, about what was important to them, about what really 'touched' people emotionally. They also set up two groups of subordinates to discuss ideas for changing the organization and its values. Over time it became clear that the old structure of the organization was beginning to interfere with building a new paradigm, so it was gradually changed together with the staff, but there were staff losses. (Hartikainen & Virtanen, 2019).

The main limitations of this research are connected with, firstly, the relatively small number of management concepts studied. Secondly, the method of systematizing

the concepts using spiral dynamics is not the only way to study managerial shifts. Furthermore, this study needs qualitative and quantitative research to verify its theoretical approach.

The results of the theoretical analysis suggest that the dominant management paradigm is about to change. There appears to be a smooth transition from the "old/inanimate" (mechanistic) to the "new/living" (organic) management principles.

BRICS organization and countries

Founded in 2006, the BRICS organization is still quite young, but it has already managed to gain the trust of many countries. The paper applies the Spiral dynamics to the analysis of its values and principles, which include transparent dialogue and cooperation, serving the common interests of emerging market economies and developing countries, and building a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity. In political and cultural, economic and financial, humanitarian and security spheres, the relations between the BRICS partners are based on the principles of equality, respect, openness, pragmatism, solidarity, and non-aggression (BRICS, 2024).

These values and principles may indicate that the BRICS organization has been created according to a new management paradigm (see Table 4). One can see the similarity between its principles and values and the main attributes of the organic or living management concept, which were compared with the green, yellow and pearl levels of the spiral dynamics. For instance, one of the main principles of the green level of Spiral dynamics is caring of the world around us, which is close to the "yellow" idea of the supremacy of evolutionary purpose and to the BRICS principle of building a harmonious world.

The individual characteristics of some companies from the BRICS countries also correspond to the "living", more humanistic, group of management concepts, which is mainly manifested in a human-oriented approach to management. Experts have predicted a move from a traditional HRM approach to a people-centered one in the BRICS countries. (The Council on Business & Society, 2024)

Today, successful Brazilian firms use human resources policies that emphasize the cultural sensitivity and development of their employees to achieve competitiveness. These include training programs that help employees to continually improve their skills, facilitate knowledge transfer and promote quality management, which in turn leads to an overall improvement in these firms' performance.

The Brazilian company Itaú Unibanco, for example, takes a human approach. By April 2025, it reached a market capitalization of USD 56.18 billion (CompaniesMarketcap.com, 2025). The company has a special integrity and ethics programme that includes human relations with employees. The company encourages continuous learning among its employees, looks for opportunities to develop people and creates an atmosphere of trust and honesty. "Itaú Unibanco has also developed a

special KPI programme and its employees regularly participate in volunteer activities. (Itau, 2024).

In the Russian Federation there are two types of firms: some that meet ILO standards for a people-centered approach, and those that are more in line with the Russian government bodies, which can either support or resist development. Leading Russian companies have begun to move from individual improvements to more comprehensive and structured HRM systems, using digitalization and ICT to improve efficiency and manage the employees. Such companies serve as role models for mainstream enterprises and emerge as "knowledge centers" for disseminating best HRM practices in the Russian Federation (Council on Business & Society, 2024).

"Kaspersky Lab"| is one of Russia's most people-oriented companies, and one of the most internationally recognized. The company complies with the UN's Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and its development goals include maintaining respectful relationships within teams. Its human resources department has a special section specializing in compensation and benefits, which carries out an assessment of the market salary level for each position. (Kaspersky Lab, 2025).

India's companies are using many human-centered strategies: they retrain their employees, hire new permanent staff with the required skills and create in-house staff development programs. Indeed, many Indian companies have strategies that follow the ILO's human-centered agenda (Council on Business & Society, 2024).

"Reliance" is one of the most successful Indian companies that does a lot for its workers. It provides the employees with an opportunity to participate, contribute and grow within the firm. The company has a special gender inclusion program called "R-Aadya" to help women employees at every stage of their personal and professional lives. The program aims to create a more inclusive environment by addressing gender-specific needs and challenges. Another interesting program is Reliance's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) that provides both preventive and curative mental health and counselling services to employees and their family members to help with their overall psychological well-being. There are also other programs to support and educate employees (Reliance Industries, 2025).

In China successful firms are pragmatic, flexible, and use a bottom-up approach, underpinned by human-centered policies, including flexible employment and automation aimed at creating higher-skilled jobs and aligning HRM strategies with employee requirements and desires (Council on Business & Society, 2024).

The Chinese company Tencent is a world-renowned investor in high technology. The company places great emphasis on the training and development of its employees, offering them opportunities for vertical and horizontal career growth. This approach allows employees to develop their skills in a more targeted and focused way, and to receive clear and timely recognition for their contributions through the company's appraisal system. (Tencent, 2025)

South Africa has struggled to maintain substantial employment in the face of global competition and policy constraints. Global pressures have caused fragmentation of HR

practices, resulting in a dichotomy between labour-repressive and people-centered firms. The existing regulatory system is only partially effective and there is no clear path to improvement. However, the pandemic has shown that the government has a wider range of policy tools for more inclusive HRM (Council on Business & Society, 2024).

An example of a company that takes good care of its employees in South Africa is the gold mining company Harmony. The company has proven its sustainability and resilience largely due to its people and their values: safety, performance, teamwork, honesty. (Harmony, 2025).

The following table compares people-centered approaches to human resource management in the BRICS countries (Table 5).

Table 5. Human-oriented approaches in BRICS companies. (The Council on Business & Society, 2024)

Country	Attributes of human-centered approach
Brazil	training programs to develop people, cultural sensitivity policies, knowledge transfer, promoted quality management
Russia	compliance with ILO standards for a human-centered approach, shift from individual improvements to more comprehensive and structured HRM systems, emergence of "knowledge centers"
India	retraining of employees, in-house staff development programs, companies have strategies that follow the ILO's human-centered agenda
China	firms are pragmatic, flexible, and have a bottom-up approach, underpinned by human-centered policies, including flexible employment, HRM strategies with employee requirements and desires
South Africa	Global pressures cause fragmentation of HR practices, resulting in a dichotomy between labor-repressive firms and human-centered firms

Differences in the people-centered approaches to management in the BRICS countries are primarily explained by their different economic conditions. For instance, in countries with a high level of services, people-centered management may be more developed because such a market will be dominated primarily by knowledge workers who are interested not only in the amount of money they earn, but also in comfortable working conditions. Such conditions presuppose concern for the health of the staff, the presence of general emotional intelligence, ongoing personal development and other aspects of humanistic human resource management. On the other hand, in an economy where the sphere of primary labor (production and collection) prevails, the introduction of humanistic personnel management will not be a primary and important task, since it may contradict the needs of management to produce effectively and the needs of employees whose main goal will be the desire to earn as much as possible.

A comparison of the BRICS countries' approaches to human resource management reveals that even those countries that are gradually developing are introducing the principles of a new living management paradigm, and use the approaches that correspond to its green, yellow, pearly and turquoise stages from the point of view of Spiral dynamics. This unification of countries creates a symbiosis between the development of their economies and the evolution of management. For example, the people-oriented approaches of some countries can be adopted by others thanks to the open dialogue between the participants. The experience of using these approaches can also be shared, allowing countries to implement approaches as quickly and accurately as possible and to join the global trend of humanization.

Conclusion

Summarizing the results of this study it can be said that Spiral dynamics can be superimposed on some of the management concepts presented above. The resulting comparison can show conceptual changes in management approaches, which can also be seen in the example of the BRICS countries' organizations with their humanistic principles.

The first conceptual change manifests itself in the moving locus of control in the spiral dynamics from "I/you/he/she" to "we" in the turquoise and pearl stages. From the green stage onwards, there is a shift towards the study and analysis of the individual employee, groups of employees within organizations, and interpersonal relationships. Individuals and their development, understanding the world around us and our relationships with the world are becoming more and more important. The extent to which this trend can be seen in the BRICS countries and their organizations, depends on the countries' social and economic development and the industry in which the companies operate. For example, a manufacturing firm is likely to use scientific management in order to maximize efficiency and minimize costs.

Second, recent management concepts can be seen as heralding the emergence of an organic paradigm. Many papers describe changes in human relations in organizations, their movement towards humanism, even attempts to give the management paradigm a 'face' and a certain energy, suggesting that a 'living' paradigm is emerging. Indeed, the focus is shifting from the individual to the deeper questions of the meaning of life and work.

The third change is taking place in certain companies whose leaders are building their organizations in a way that resembles certain levels of Spiral dynamics, starting with Green. The tools they use and the attitudes they have towards people also correspond to the new management concepts discussed in this section.

Applying the spiral dynamics to the study of the BRICS countries allows managers to navigate the environment more accurately, using appropriate humanistic management tools and methods. It is important to note that this approach also requires taking into account the cultural characteristics of each BRICS country.

Based on these facts, it can be concluded that the changing paradigms acquire the characteristics of a "living" (organic) system through the evolution of ideas about the organization and its employees. This conclusion is based on the systematization of management concepts according to the levels of Spiral dynamics. It is supported by evidence from the BRICS organization and its member countries, but some questions remain unanswered. Do the described regularities manifest themselves in the behavior of the BRICS leaders and business executives? How do they interact with people? How do they relate to their subordinates? How do they see their people, the organization and themselves within it? To answer these questions, qualitative research should be conducted.

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