

The Necessity of the Philosophy of Spiritual Exercise for Responsible Innovation

Prof. Xavier Pavie

ESSEC Business School, France

Abstract

Innovation is crucial because it has triggered each major revolution in the history of mankind and each time, it has allowed a significant improvement in the quality of life. However, does it create added value when it enables a material improvement of the quality of life but is harmful in the long term. Do innovators take responsibility for the potential consequences of their innovation and their decisions? Are the innovations dedicated to society? Our hypothesis is that the innovator who adopts the way ancient philosophers see things and live and who practices spiritual exercises can become a “responsible” innovator.

This study is a MCQ survey in which managers are asked about their perception of spiritual exercises and which measures the perceived correlation with responsible innovation and five areas of society: economy, political issues (e.g., better & inclusive democracy), human species (e.g., health, transhumanism, gene editing), environment, humane and caring society.

Generally, participants agree with a correlation between the practice of spiritual exercises and society, but this correlation is much stronger for those who practice spiritual exercises. However, the respondents are skeptical about the correlation between spiritual exercises, and this is even more true for those who do not practice. This stark contrast between those who practice and those who do not suggests that the latter are less able to see their actions in the long term and find it hard to link those with society.

This study highlights the link between the practice of spiritual exercises and responsible innovation, although, at the first sight, it is hard to establish such a link. Therefore, the results of this study can be used by innovators and managers to convince themselves and others of the importance to take time for spiritual exercises and to incorporate philosophy in one’s everyday life.

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