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DISCOURSE ON ORGANISATIONAL MEMORY IN EVIDENCE-BASED MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

At the turn of the nineteenth century in the United States, Frederick W. Taylor (1856–1915) initiated a pragmatic movement aimed at increasing efficiency in the organisation by measuring employees' performance. He proposed that entrepreneurs, who wished to increase their efficiency in the organisation, take detailed measurements of employees' activities. On this ground, Taylor outlined a scientific approach to management based on direct evidence. A fitting reference by James Hoopes says that 'mechanical engineering specialists' (Hoopens 2011: 87) wished forever greater work results for their employees, as they were urged by the investment in specialised equipment which they had made. The resulting evidence-based and performance management was designed to accurately measure employees' performance from the scientific perspective. The answer is the essence of the so-called *evidence-based management*. Therefore, the question arises what the premises in the area of management are so that efficiency is the highest in the intensity of decision making. Answering this question, Andrew A. Bennet, Sven Kepes, Michael A. McDaniel come to the conclusion that an entrepreneur should carry out tasks in accordance with the following levels: Level I: Concentration on a given problem; Level II: Obtaining data from a problem analysis; Level III: Reliable analysis of the evidence provided; Level

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IV: Detailed solutions based on data analysis; Level V: Analysis of the effects and modification of solutions (Kepes, Bennet and McDaniel 2014: 446–466).

This concept slowly breaks the paths in evidence-based management, although intuitive errors are visible. Hence, unable to disagree, Prokokowicz writes:

> There is something unsettling about people, who would probably never board an airplane built on the basis of intuitive physics, but often have no problem deciding about the fate of others only thanks to intuitive knowledge about recruitment and selection (Prokopowicz 2016: 18).

It is surprising that there is certain resentment towards evidence-based management, the source of which lies in the medical community as evidence-based medicine. In his book *Fundamentals of EBM, i.e. medicine based on scientific evidence for doctors and medical students*, Andrzej Szczeklik states that this approach becomes the basis for medical procedures and the British Medical Journal, analysing over 150 years, presents it as a novelty and the main principle of our times (Szczeklik 2008: 11–12). Therefore, it can be presumed that management is close to medicine, and a manager's duties, although varied, have a common denominator in making rational decisions. An analysis of the factors that are derived from the historical turn of organisational memory in a discursive interpretation provides even more evidence to support this thesis.

Tomasz Ochinowski (following Booth and Rowlinson) considers the dilemma of 'historicizing subjectivity' among research topics in the context of the history of organisational remembering. That means analysing subjective feelings in the area of management (Ochinowski 2013: 117).

The use of the historical approach by giving the example of Europeanistic issues based on evidence-based management and organisational remembering interpreted in a controversial way is a new space for discursive initiation of questions, originating in a broadly understood analysis of traditional organisations. These are questions about not only evidence-based management but also values by means of remembering organizational competencies.

Historical thinking within the management of its processes in a changing reality has stimulated the environment of managers or entrepreneurs to analyse the factors and to reflect on this topic. The present considerations are a theoretical suggestion on the cognitive use of the future. It is important to note what happened at the beginning of this century, namely, the relationship of organisational past through the present with the future. The new dimension was given a special intellectual approach in Western countries through the

media expert Craig E. Carroll. The organisational history initiated in the environment of management scientists and practitioners, who reflected on new interdisciplinary areas of interest, emphasises and extends it by rich histographic reflection. Tomasz Ochinowski believes that

> broadly understood histographic reflection is a rational reflection on the study, writing and teaching (also taking into account popularising activities) of history in the theoretical (theory of histography) and historical (history of histography) aspects (Ochinowski 2013: 170).

The interest in the past in the organisational space expressed by means of historiographic analyses goes back to the nineteen nineties in the so-called managerial thought of Mills, Suddaby, Foster, and Durepos, where a radical cognitive organisational reorientation can be pointed at, aiming to 'historicize' this field (Mills, Suddaby, Foster, and Durepos 2016: 67–76). The ongoing theoretical and partly methodological evolution in the course of the humanistic approach to management has its supporters and promoters in Polish science, headed by Tomasz Ochinowski from the University of Warsaw, through the managerial ideas of Tadeusz Oleksyn from the Warsaw University of Finance and Management or Jan Jążak from the University of Łódź.

The opening of the organisational studies to the humanities is particularly developed with great research consistency by Monika Kostera. It distinguishes an archetypal approach to managerial reality through qualitative analysis of an organisation in the panorama of building metaphors from Jungian cultural archetypes (Kostera 2012). Kostera's western approach corresponds with Zygmunt Kubiak's, who, by seeing archetypes grounded in ancient culture, encourages an essayistic approach to evidence-based management (Kubiak 2003).

1. ORGANISATIONAL MEMORY IN A DISCURSIVE APPROACH

Organisational Memory Studies create a remarkable problem when one wants to include it within the humanities of the historicization process. Therefore, Michael Rowlinson and Charles Booth, Peter Clark et al., created an opportunity to enter the management and development of this field (Rowlinson, Booth, Clark, Delahaye and Procter 2010: 69–87).

The historical and sociological fusion with the issue of an organisational and social memory, suggested by the authors, is based on the concept of Barbara A. Misztal, who explains

the social aspects of remembering and the results of this social experience, that is, the representation of the past in a whole set of ideas, various types of knowledge, cultural practices, rituals and monuments through which people express their attitudes towards the past and which construct their relationship with the past (Rowlinson, Booth, Clark, Delahaye, and Procter 2010: 71).

A discursive view of social remembering, through narratives and discussions, can be a source of new evidence in the making of history. Epistemological reflection, which developed in the nineties in Great Britain and the United States among economists (Deirdre McCloskey), sociologists (Michael Billig) and psychologists, led to the conclusion that both society and the human psyche get to be known not only through experimental and mathematical models, but also thanks to analyses using rhetoric (Billig 2006: 26–47). It can be noticed that the reality in social science research is not only stochastic in nature but also more and more attention is paid to the rhetorical approach. The conviction about social and psychological processes, as well as metaphorical discussions conducted verbally or non-verbally, unconsciously and consciously, can be considered to be manifestations of persuasion of a person's 'internal' conversations (Waldenfels 2014). Subjecting the scientific analysis of the process of remembering, even before examining the data, through the created verification mechanism, one should look at these relations as a certain product understandable in rhetorical terms, meeting the persuasive and pragmatic goals of groups and individuals relating to the organisation within their functioning. The phenomenon of remembering, bringing back or forgetting is changeable and dynamic, therefore one cannot speak about one version of an individual's memorization, and it is even more difficult to capture it in a group that changes in space and time. The evolution of images from the past, as well as a certain negotiation of an individual with himself, others, and with non-personal entities in the context of organisational reality, causes a continuous cycle of changes understood by Derek Edwards and Jonathan Potter as *discursive remembering* (Edwards and Potter 1992: 187–215).

Derek Middleton and his namesake, Edwards, in their collaborative work *Collective Remembering* published in 1990 that became a classic study of discursive pre-orientation, citing the term 'discursive remembering', sought to precisely define the understanding of social memorization as acts of *here and now* communication (Middleton and Edwards 1990).

Jeremy Gingers and Robert Cairns write that 'social representations contain both knowledge and emotional evaluation of this knowledge' (Ginges and Cairns 2000: 1345–1370) treated as a mechanism instead of a result

of remembering, not understanding it as a cognitive message. Therefore, discursive remembering, or, in other words, recalling the past, creates its own separate identity along with a certain amount of information. The line of the horizon outlined in such a discussion defines the present and is oriented towards the future. Bogdan David writes:

> Landscapes of history and social memory are the main forces in the construction and human preference (David 2012: 66–71),

which may be the basis for the social idea. An instrument of social remembering, which is discursive in nature, thus creating ideologies, the resulting discussion of worldviews, makes the formation of views on the future possible.

This approach makes it possible to assume that a statement is a constitutive element as a basic narrative premise, coming from ethnomethodology and the theory of Michael Foucault (Taylor, and Wetherell 1999: 39–58). The social idea is constructed, modified and maintained throughout the narrative as permanent property. Such an approach to narrative memory highlights the discursive approach as a process occurring in dialogue at the interpersonal, organisational and institutional levels. That results in a performative understanding of identities: constructed and found in statements (Jackie, Stokoe, and Billig 2004: 180–192). According to Rowlinson's guidelines, through broadly understood organisations, the consideration of social memory is subject to constant and dynamic changes, where particular attention is paid to places of remembrance, which are: events, which mean all celebrated jubilees of the century; artifacts, including souvenirs as well as rooms and their arrangement; an organisation's documents, which are all official forms in the company, announcements, customer stories, communications, reports and correspondence (Rowlinson 2010: 79–80). At the same time, work on examples of memorial sites is a reference to the identity of the organisation, which is an ongoing project involving the construction of a biography. Social identities derive their source from broad interpretations that function in the cultural context of the storyteller. Interest in social memorial sites focuses on what the implications are and how people structure explanations from past experiences as well as present and future courses of organisational life (Mishler 2004).

The discursive approach to memory evokes incentives to recreate the past through museums or memory rooms; hence the activity with social remembering is much richer than the organisation and everyday life. Discussions that recall reality from memory have a discursive point of view, as the past, necessary for communicating the identity of the organisation and its biography in a personal and social dimension, becomes evident.

It is not exactly that whoever controls the past controls the future. But whoever controls the past controls who we are (Middleton, and Edwards 1990: 10).

This position corresponds to the concept of expression, which is shaped by interactions, that identities are complex. On the basis of this, postmodern theorists, reducing people to the category of identity in a single approach, marginalised the interpenetration of individuals within an organisation (Rattanasi 1995: 250–286)[1].

Charles Anatki and Sue Widdicombe as discourse analysts and psychologists found that identities are occasioned with a particular emphasis on how people are positioned in speech (Anaki, and Widdicombe 1998). Other researchers, when considering the narratives of organisational memory, focus their goals on the extended interactions of participants during their story, combining the discursive approach into threads, treating it as work on the identity of an individual. Margaret Wetherell, presenting a synthetic approach, assumes that everyone is *positioned*, possessing distinctiveness and exposing distinctiveness, but also positions himself against the background of others in the organisation (Wetherell 1998: 387–412). This approach, admittedly, places a *person in a situation*, but not a personal biography in the sense of the connections between a series of *temporally related situations* that constitute an individual's unique experience. The *positions* of the subject are made available and adopted in subsequent conversational exchanges (*turn-by-turn*) into direct interaction. That is why the broadly understood discursive narrative, which is necessary for getting to know the identity and thus positioned by who they already are, is necessary and indispensable. In this approach, we look not only for narration in the *stretch of talk*, but we focus on *sequential* and *consequential* structuring of a personal version of a biography created in a specific situation. Thus, the narrative reveals itself in the details of the utterance, for example in short references to the past and the future, memories and the *unfolding* of the analysis of life history. As a result, discursive resources are investigated,

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[1] It is noteworthy that some of the research by Wetherell and Potter (1992) highlighted common customary meanings and ongoing narratives as part of discourse analysis, including political disagreements. That represented both the broader context of speech and the resources available for use in any particular interaction. In this kind of work, the term 'discourse' is used in strong connection with Foucault's approach (Foucault 2014; Foucault 2018). Other works in discursive psychology directed towards Edwards and Potter's ethnomethodology and conversational analysis and emphasized the context constituted by the turn-by-turn exchange, prompting a sociolinguistic understanding of the term 'discourse' in the sense of a speech or conversation, hence Wetherell (1998) combines both variants, proposing a sort of 'synthetic' approach.

which establish possibilities, but also limitations for work on the identity of an individual in the organisational structure (Taylor 2005: 45–50).

Charlotte Linde points out that personal narratives are shaped by organizational, collective narratives. She writes:

> the story of life (...) consists of the most significant narratives about the storyteller's life, which are retold many times, reinterpreted and re-shaped in various situations (Linde 1997: 283).

Interests focus on narratives *of a bounded collective*, such as those discussed by Linde in relation to institutional memory; then, we also notice the emphasised *re-telling* (Linde 1997: 281–289). By examining this through a specific organisational interaction, we find in the interlocutor's life story how interpretations function in a broader social context.

The interesting social aspect in the context of organisational memory in Rowlinson's works builds a bridge between the archetypal and histographic approach in the cognitive area, along with maintaining distinctiveness. The memory area perceived rhetorically can be an ezample. Therefore, the discursive approach in contemporary humanities shows a certain manifestation of a postmodern atmosphere. The result of deconstructionism is the use of rhetorical analysis as a method in social sciences;, hence the epistemological emphasis of rhetoric in a discursive connotation causes a return to the roots, constituting a tool of analysis in management (Rowlinson 2010: 69–87). In such an approach, historical memory constructs a certain mechanism in its cognitive efforts, recalling the past. This is indicated by Thomas Gannon and George Trabu's research belonging to the areas of the sociology of culture and the history of ideas (Gannon, and Traub 1999). Showing such an approach among professional researchers of the past shows the novelty of the relational perspective

> regardless of the subjective perception of the reality in which we live and which surrounds us; the reality itself does not change (Waldenfels 2014: 76).

Referring to the traditional thinking about the memory of an individual in *The New School for Social Research*, Ross Poole also analyses social memory, which aims to 'claim to truth' as a perspective of aspirations. By presenting Friedrich Nietzsche as an exemple of collective memory, it implies responsibility in the heritage of the past (Poole 2008: 149–166).

A particularly interesting aspect of the representation of the past in collective memory is a narrative, but also a discursive presentation by scientists-historians in a dimension that is not only cognitive. Hence, the main

motive of historical analyses in collective remembering is the construction of certain rules that the past applies to the present (claim of the past). The role of the normative character in social memory shows the efforts of researchers in their responsibility towards the past. Polle, allowing such a relationship, concludes that in some situations collective memory sees and formulates the historical truth in a scientific way (Poole 2008: 155).

Referring to Charlotte Linde and agreeing with Ross Poole that personal narratives are shaped by collective memory, focusing on the collective memory that she discusses in relation to institutional memory,

> the history of life consists of the most significant narratives about the storyteller's life, which are retold, interpreted and re-shaped in different situations (Linde 1997: 283).

This enormous cognitive, as well as axiological, venture is spanned between two horizons focusing on the organisational history based on the analysis of remembering. Apart from the challenges of the present, the horizon of truth can be noticed, depending on various ideological conditions and experiences of historians of historiography; it shows a reference to the mystery, which also teaches cognitive humility in historical reality. According to Rubie Watson, such situations, based on ones' experiences, create a kind of sanctuary of memory through collective remembering on the basis of some environmental resistance and contestation of the past (Watson 1994).

Another special area of organisational memory is worth considering as an area of extensive cooperation between management and organisational history, with emphasis on the archetypal view. Orientation to the discursive approach sheds new light on the past and at the same time becomes rooted in the present. Histographic analyses in discursive orientation come up with a new proposition of a number of interpretations in practical organisational management. The contemporary initiator of the renewal of the historical perspective in organisational research, Roy Jacques claims in *Manufacturing the Employee* that without history reference we do not find ourselves in the changing present. Therefore, in order to have a vision of the overall reality, one should follow the past:

> following the construction of systems in time, researching how relations [...] were fabricated as responses to the past problems that are now forgotten. Considering the conflicts at the root of these problems and what other possibilities have been ruled out through their implementation, one can find fresh insight into the present-day problems (Roy 1996: 11).

Bill Cooke, a British historiographer of management, shows in historical research a significant value that puts the future straight because science was

subject to ideological influence at all times. Analysing this thought, Tomasz Ochinowski emphasises the constructive and creative value of an organisation in the past as a contextual one. Playing an organisational and inspiring role – the open awareness of managers to a new relationship with the past,

> while these discussions are not about recreating history, but about understanding it, so that it can be used as a tool to analyse the current situation and inspire good practices to help overcome crises (Roy 1996: 7).

Therefore, formulating the main thesis that understanding the organisation as a historical phenomenon can be owed to historical narratives,

> the reconstruction of good business practices and organisational values contained in selected traditions of Polish entrepreneurship provides intellectual tools to optimise the activities of contemporary organisations (Roy 1996: 12).

So defined histographic sensitivity in the organisation of management harmonises with the humanistic approach, where there

> is interest in all phenomena from the point of view of a person and his place in organisations (Kociatkiewicz and Kostera 2013: 9–19).

For this reason, it is important to define the

> organisational [history] as a relatively autonomous segment (...) of the science of management, saturated with histographic reflection, examining what the past does to organisations and its environment, and what organisations do to the past (Kociatkiewicz, and Kostera 2013: 117).

2. The Concept of Evidence-Based Management

Ignaz Philipp Semmelweis (1818–1865), a doctor of Hungarian origin, is considered a pioneer of the evidence-based management approach in medicine (Żurawski, Strya, and Szczepański 2010: 173–177). In the 1940s, he associated the high epidemic mortality of children and women with the work of doctors performing autopsies, and thus he presented evidence that there is a cause of higher mortality among doctors. As a preventive measure, he initiated hand disinfection for all people entering and leaving the disease unit, which resulted in a more than six-fold reduction in mortality in the ward led by Semmelweis. In order to find the source of these infections, he analysed factors inside the hospital, such as the type of bedding, diet, ventilation, as

well as external factors, e.g. atmospheric ones. Likewise, observation of the women who had no symptoms resulted in the conclusion that they were from wealthy families who gave birth at home, and their mortality rate was lower than in the hospital. Some preferred to give birth on the street rather than in the hospital, and their mortality was also lower. He wrote: 'it made me so unhappy that life seemed worthless' (Starczewska-Wojnar 2016: 218). The turning point was the death of his closest associate Jacob Kolletschka, who was stabbed accidentally by one of his colleagues during an autopsy in the dissecting room and died of infection. Semmelweis noted directly as evidence that doctors who performed an autopsy and then, without disinfecting their hands, examined patients in gynaecological departments, transmitted the infection to healthy women who died of puerperal fever (Smith 1976). That led to the mandatory hand disinfection for doctors and students with the use calcium hypochlorite prior to other medical procedures and examinations. The Semmelweis' evidence met with substantial scepticism in the medical organisational environment. The professors and their superiors ignored the obligation to wash their hands, becoming a source of infection and death for many women and children, so Semmelweis cited the evidence in his 1861 publication *Etiology, definition and prevention of puerperal fever.* The book, based on evidence, was left out in the medical community, which made him mentally devastated, and in 1865 he was placed in an insane asylum where he died (Żurawski, Strya and Szczepański 2010: 173–177).

At the end of the last century, the notion of evidence-based medicine appeared at the McMaster University in Hamilton, Canada. Gordon H. Guyatt, assuming the post of director of the Specialist Training Program in Internal Medicine, describes in book, *Basics of EBM*, the factors behind making decisions based on the understanding of the history of medical literature. The development of an appropriate basis for diagnosis based on knowledge from scientific data required that Guyatt change the medical staff education programme:

> I proposed the term scientific medicine for this new approach. Previously hostile people were outraged and disturbed by the suggestion that their practice so far was unscientific. My second attempt to name our philosophy of practicing medicine – evidence-based medicine – turned out to be catchy (Guyatt 2008: 19).

Piotr Prokopowicz in his publication *Recruitment and selection based on evidence. 33 principles of efficient employee recruitment* writes:

> The practice and philosophy of management results from the recognition that the scientific method offers unique tools for understanding and predicting reality, including

organizational reality, compared to other cognitive perspectives. This approach is based on three foundations, which are: critical thinking, scientific knowledge, and experimental practice (Prokopowicz 2016: 43–44).

In critical thinking, verifiability, validity, and usability are compelling, which requires knowledge of concepts and the aptitude to apply methods based on intuitive solutions. That requires defining the subject of the study in a specific task-oriented, counter-productive or contextual effectiveness. Critical thinking in this way allows you to properly assess the effectiveness of individuals and organisations (Prokopowicz 2016: 44). When we base managerial decisions on scientific knowledge, the question arises to what research attention should be paid and about its reliability and credibility. When trying to answer, a hierarchy of evidence should be indicated, where meta-analyses are at the top – as statistical analyses of research conducted defined in a specific topic, and at the bottom of the hierarchy of evidence, there are opinions of people with experience in the field.

While defining the experimental practice in the evidence-based management approach, we notice that each organisation is considered to be a prototype in the specificity of the company. That is due to the difference and distinctiveness as well as the complexity of the tasks. Therefore, there is no 'average' organisation and no 'average' patient. That results in a critical benchmarking analysis where the best solutions are open to criticism when they do not fit the canon of the organisation. Therefore, before implementing such activities, ask yourself the questions whether there are any logical premises that show the success of the organisation; whether the strategy, organizational structure, and people employed in it are similar to the nature of the organisation; whether a given idea, a particular practice may influence the results of the outcomes; and finally what the disadvantages of the conducted evidence-based management analysis may be (Pfeffer and Sutton: 2008: 79–94). A thorough analysis of these issues is a spectrum of answers and expected benefits.

In 1999, Dominic Fitzgerald and David Isaacs published the article *Seven alternatives to evidence-based medicine*, in which they present the organisational foundations of doctors who reject evidence-based management (Isaacs, and Fitzgerald 1999: 18–25). In relation to the belief that leadership actions are important for success or failure, the result is an analysis of the impact of management on physicians and their effectiveness. For a manager in an executive position, the following functions brought into the organisation are important: knowledge and skills, high competencies, and strong motivation (Żukowski 2008: 25–40). Sometimes there are differences

in nomenclature resulting from the penetration of the English language into Polish nomenclature due to the development of the market economy (Listwan 1993). Therefore, the word management covers both direction and leadership (Sułkowski 2001: 189–209). Using the terminology of Fitzgerald, and Isaac, the following attempt was made to evaluate management:

- Eminence-based management – accomplishment-based management. The higher the manager is in the hierarchy, the more meritorious in his organisational achievements, and the less scientifically based. Having the experience he is convinced of, the more he 'repeats the same mistakes for many years with more and more conviction' (Isaacs, and Fitzgerald 1999: 18–25).
- Vehemence-based management – management based on the violence and impetuosity of speech. A method based on the manager's conviction of his impeccable skills, thus not allowing people who are more delicate and subtle to speak.
- Eloquence-based management – oratorical management. The eloquence of the statement is accompanied by the lack of scientific premises. Instead, there is the orator's external elegance and the exclusivity of the appearance.
- Providence-based management – provident management. Managers using this style of leadership rely on providence through the determination of higher forces.
- Diffidence-based management – management based on the lack of self-confidence. Self-confidence is inseparably linked with self-esteem, as well as with a belief in the strength of one's abilities. It is crucial in public speaking, as well as when conducting sales processes. A characteristic feature of such management is the inability to make decisions by the manager in the organisation.
- Nervousness-based management – management based on the fear of organisational failure. Actions are taken to insure and protect the manager's position. It is noteworthy that this is not the same as a social engineering propaganda strategy based on the use of fear emotions in order to control and manipulate the organisation.
- Confidence-based management – management based on self-confidence. Fitzgerald and Isaacs note that this approach in medicine characterises surgeons. Thanks to this trait, managers feel comfortable in their own skin, accept themselves with a whole set of imperfections, and support and appreciate who they are and whatever decisions they make without looking at other evidence.

Evidence-based management can be expanded with new elements, thus showing the practice of managing persons and pointing to other organisational alternatives. There is a conviction that each year of work of a manager in a position in the organisation his management competencies increase. Observations indicate that 'some people make the same mistakes for twenty years and call it work experience' even when the consequences are catastrophic for the company. Such activities lead to a clichéd approach to people, manifested in routine and professional burnout. Managers sometimes make a mistake of transferring behaviour patterns from one organisation to another, leading to the absurd situation described below. Robert Sutton and Jeffrey Pfeffer referred to it as an example. An IT company that produces computer software hired a compensation manager who introduced the same compensation scheme as was used in the previous organisation. He disregarded differences in companies such as size, type of software assigned to age groups, market, distribution, and the like. As the chief manager and chairman of the remuneration committee, he did not bother other members. Therefore, one should agree with the view of the cited authors that prestige and power are weakened by evidence-based management. That is a problem for managers who in turn reject this style of management. That is reflected in the words of James Barksdale, the president of Netscape:

> If a decision is to be based on facts, all the facts presented – as far as they relate to the merits of the case – count equally. If a decision is to be based on opinions, my opinion counts much more than others.

To paraphrase these words,

> the facts and the evidence are great *levelers* of the hierarchy. Relying on checked and proven practices changes the balance of power; data counts more than authority, reputation and intuition. That means that leaders in high positions (…) may, to some extent, lose their status as their intuition will have to give way to, at least from time to time, judgments referring to data available to every educated employee. The lesson here is: leaders need to make a fundamental choice whether they want to be right at all times or prefer to lead organisations that actually perform well (Pfeffer, and Sutton 2008: 79–94).

3. Discourse on Organisational Memory based on Management

A manager who treats sources professionally can be an effective cognitive vaccine in managing with scientifically formulated, substantiated inputs (such categories are typically applied to understand the historiography of organisational memory). A researcher dealing with management, like

a representative of social sciences cognitively grasping a source, is forced to criticise first the method with which they conducted the research, and only then the content contained therein. The theory of historiography, as a discipline particularly sensitive to sources, can effectively improve the management effects of executives who are mindful of the income context and focus on pragmatic outcomes (Ochinowski 2013: 160).

Some authors of historical sciences implied principles for management, writing that

> from Marxist historical laws and regularities one can derive knowledge about events that are not confirmed in the source, and it will have an equal status to that obtained with the traditional source method. This type of work with the past was postulated by an ideologically encapsulated and ideologically justified imperative that a researcher should always choose such an era, an assurance, a topic that has clearly still vivid connections with the struggle that is taking place today (Wierzbicki 2010: 131–140).

Postulating with certain proportions, it is worth replacing historical laws and regularities with the principles of modern organisational management and current managerial practice. There is a remedy for getting to know historical reality in the creation of social remembering from evidence-based management. There must be a decision link in the mind of the researcher, which will become a source of analysis and scientific discourse. The concept of Robert Java Lifton can be a methodological help in practice (Grzywacz, and Ochinowski 2003: 233–246).

The discursive approach to evidence-based management also distinguishes the analysis of managerial knowledge in the language convention. It is characteristic not only of what is said but also of how it is said, introducing creative and repressive functions. The development of the described evaluation in a situation of managerial action based on evidence is a special phenomenon of forgetting, based on the research into the anthropology of organisation of the methods of ethnographic interviews conducted by Monika Kostera (Kostera 2010). Referring to the archetype of the Late River (flowing through Hades, whose waters cause memory loss), she outlined the cognitive perspective of forgetting as the archetypal antinomy of organisational learning. In this way, she distinguishes two levels of obliteration of memory: a single loop of forgetting based on the loss of memory ofgood organisational practices and a double loop of forgetting concerning the loss of memory of the organisation and the fundamental principles and values that make it up (Kostera 2012).

The double forgetting loop applies not only to the members of the organization but also appears in evidence-based management, adopting

the formula of the ahistoric programme. The starting point is a certain focus in management based on history and on formulating questions that arise in past experiences and confronting them with new challenges. The cognitive reference of historical management gives a novel approach within the organisation, by minimising the single forgetfulness loop, and with the second value loop through evidence-based management. Questions that arise in the course of environmental and interdisciplinary discussions, also understood metaphorically, as well as theories with management practice and the past and present, play a fundamental role in the discursive process. The development of intentional and dynamic initiating and questioning in the context of evidence-based management is called organisational memory. The course of such action, among the wide spectrum of manifestations of the past in organisations, constitutes a set of organisational reminders by creating images from the past and gives the possibility of direct application to managerial practice (Ochinowski 2013: 119-122).

Tadeusz Oleksyn, defining the term managerial competencies and showing the functional and contextual side, presents the process of remembering as knowledge, experience, dispositions, and skills useful for the functioning of members and organisations. He warns against an excessive bureaucratic approach in the description of managerial competencies, causing the expansion of documents and paying attention to the flexibility of the organisation, assuming a discursive nature. By focusing the attention of managers on the reliability of knowledge, that points at social competencies related to shaping the company's relationship with the external and internal environment and ethics (Oleksyn 2014).

It is not difficult to notice that organisational memory understood discursively in evidence-based management is not only an independent component of the organisation but also corresponds closely to the management strategy.

Conclusions

This article is a proposal for further discussion of evidence-based management in the context of organisational memory. From this perspective, evidence-based management is a procedure of organisational memory, through the cognitive historical discourse of managers and the reflectiveness of practitioners. When postulating the implementation of the proposed approach, it is worth referring to other disciplines, especially historical ones.

The story of Ignaz Semmelweis, described in the article, and his drive to introduce evidence-based anti-infectious precautions, aroused resentment in the environment. Medicine teaches not only evidence-based practice but also an ethical approach and humility. Louis-Ferdinand Celine aptly captured this approach when he wrote:

> There is a hateful wave around his name. The words used to describe his attitude no longer fully reveal the hatred he evokes. These official scholars were not just stupid. They were both hypocritical and noisy and above all beastly and evil. Bad for Semmelweis, whose health collapsed amid unbelievable suffering. Never before has human conscience been more ruthlessly disgraced, nor has it fallen lower than during those months of hatred of Semmelweis in 1846 (Bela 2016: 234).

The current COVID-19 epidemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus raises the question

> whether in the 21st century, in which the risk of iatrogenic infections is still very high, unambiguous logical and statistical arguments would prove sufficient to change medical procedures if the biological factor remained unknown (Żurawski, Strya and Szczepański 2010: 173–177).

In this situation, an important cognitive function of evidence-based management is the return of historical remembering and the improvement of the breath of history in management science. The discursive analysis aimed at the synthesis of the described process concerning specific organisational research can be very interesting also for contemporary management practitioners. The comparison of management models in terms of organisational memory and the identification of today's actions against the aforementioned archetypes might be an inspiration for innovative solutions.

The aforementioned proposals in the discursive approach could create a certain platform for experienced managers and researchers so that through historical, systematic, and critical analysis focused on organisational needs in order to increase the level of ones' own competencies through evidence-based management.

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Discourse on Organisational Memory in Evidence-Based Management

Abstract

The article focuses on highlighting the approach of historical evidence-based management on the plane of organisational memory. The author treats the subject as a discursive interpretation. Based on the analysis of the literature on the subject, he presents an analogy between evidence-based management and management in the context of turning the past into the present. He describes his proposals as historical remembering, open to the reflections of practitioners and questions originating in medicine. The figure of the Hungarian doctor Ignaz Philipp Semmelweis, a forefather of evidence-based medicine, shows that ignoring scientific evidence in everyday practice can lead to a double loop of forgetting about values.

Key words: evidence-based management, organisational memory, managerial competences

Dyskurs o pamięci organizacyjnej w zarządzaniu opartym na dowodach

Streszczenie

Artykuł skupia się na wyeksponowaniu podejścia historycznego zarządzania opartego na dowodach w płaszczyźnie pamięci organizacyjnej. Autor ujmuje temat jako interpretację dyskursywną. Na podstawie analizy literatury przedmiotu przedstawia analogię między evidence-based management a zarządzaniem w kontekście zwrotu przeszłości do teraźniejszości. Swoją propozycję określa jako pamiętanie historyczne w otwarciu na refleksje praktyków i pytań mających swoje źródło w medycynie. Ukazana postać prekursora evidence-based medicine, węgierskiego lekarza Ignaca Philippa Semmelwaisa pokazuje, że ignorowanie dowodów naukowych w praktyce codziennego działania, może prowadzić do podwójnej pętli zapominania w zakresie wartości.

Słowa kluczowe: zarządzanie oparte na dowodach, pamięć organizacyjna, kompetencje menadżera