

NECESSITY OF INTRODUCING MEDICAL CONCEPTS IN MANAGEMENT PROFESSION



RADOSAVLJEVIĆ Dragana
dragana.radosavljevic@fppsp.edu.rs

Faculty of business studies and law, University Union - Nikola Tesla, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

Cara Dušana 62 - 64, 11000 Beograd, Srbija



ANĐELKOVIĆ Aleksandar
aca.andjelkovic@fppsp.edu.rs

Faculty of business studies and law, University Union - Nikola Tesla, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

Cara Dušana 62 - 64, 11000 Beograd, Srbija



RADOSAVLJEVIĆ Milan
milan.radosavljevic@fppsp.edu.rs

Faculty of strategic and operational management, University Union - Nikola Tesla, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

Cara Dušana 62 - 64, 11000 Beograd, Srbija

It is a fact that management as a science had emerged in the sixties with establishment of over a hundred and sixty institutions of higher education for the education of professional management, i.e. persons trained to manage organizational systems. The five-decade period has shown that management is inevitable, and that it is up to now the most successful modality of leadership. But neither this nor any other concept is immortal, which is only logical because in the world of high technology, of organizational, social, political and other changes, management too must evolve in all its elements.

The introduction of natural sciences, and above all of biology and medicine in the management, can increase the success of managing organizational systems. This is a logical conclusion, bearing in mind that laws of nature are more objective than social regulations, that they get activated regardless of our will, and regardless of whether they are recognized or denied. In this context, this paper seeks to establish that it is necessary to implement certain scientific medical knowledge into management. This paper further seeks to highlight what it is that management should not take from medical science, i.e. from medicine as a profession, as well as to point out the danger of politicization of management that actually does exist in countries in transition, and in Serbia.

Key words: *Medical concepts, management science, politicization of management*

Introduction

The emergence of new concepts is evident in the management science. However, the question remains what is meant by the new management concepts, new organizational forms and even new approaches, given that the life of each control concept is becoming shorter and shorter. The classical theorists of organization and management in the first half of the twentieth century had created a scientific organization, although it remains unclear whether and to what extent this concept was scientific, since it was based on practicality, mechanistic and deterministic basis; it was a model for achievement of greater efficiency rather than a scientific concept.

Instead of a mechanistic deterministic

approach, it is necessary for us to model management after biological - medical sciences, and it is necessary to bring in the medical approach in explaining business problems and finding concepts for solving them. This is a logical conclusion, as it is a science which is at an advanced age, whose teachings largely do not correspond to modern trends, and further shall not be able to meet future trends. On the other hand, we must keep in mind that management belongs among the most complex and most difficult professions. Managing organizational systems is one of the most complex processes and is based primarily on mental energy, which creates first a mental process, and then a management decision. Therefore, everything that exists in the natural

and social order is the result of (self) organization and management. If we want to improve the functioning of the economy and society, we must primarily affect the cause, which is man's intelligence and wit. The functioning of man, and in particular the relationship between brain and executive parts of the body, can be analogously applied to management. Brain, or top management has the ability to think and make mental constructions, i.e. create real alternatives and make decisions; body, or executives in the organization, realize what the brain has created. We see, therefore, that man operates by reaching a decision first, and then he approaches the implementation of management decisions. Body and executive parts (muscles, arms and legs), dutifully carry out the decisions of the brain. Arms, legs and other executive parts do not get to choose what they should perform; brain does that. Orders are one-way and go from brain to executive body parts, and in the opposite direction flow the current information on implementation of management decisions.

The highest quality mode of management of organizational systems could be conceived if the analogies and relationships between the human brain and the executive body parts were transferred to companies, institutions and other organizational forms. Obviously, man has not yet met secrets of functioning of the brain, particularly the relations between the conscious and the unconscious, and the relations between the brain and other parts of the body. However, what we do know and what medical science has established is that analogies and metaphors from the functioning of the human organism can be applied into managing organizational systems.

Comparison of decision making in medicine and management

Our experience shows that there are many ways to achieve the defined objectives. Each method has its own general, but also specific characteristics that can be compared to each, or they can complement each other. It is possible to transfer the positive experience of one business into another through objective comparison of specific concepts. This also applies to research and analyze of decision-making in medicine, and the possibility of

applying the same in the management and organization. Nevertheless, we must keep in mind that there is no ideal method of research and design of an ideal concept, and mechanical transfer from one activity into another, or transfer of experience from one time to another, or transfer from one to the other socio-cultural area is extremely dangerous and often harmful. Excessive presence of subjectivity in management and organization leads to nothing but partial knowledge about the subject of research and analysis, which calls into question the integrity, completeness and finality of research.(1)

It is known that medicine as a science deals with the man, and his life and health as the ultimate values. Medical decisions making is dominated by the two problems: speed of decision - making on the one hand, and the quality of its implementation, on the other hand. Hence the conclusion that the medical profession is very stressful, because time is a limiting factor, and errors in this profession are paid in human lives. The above raises the necessity of a scientific approach evident in rapid diagnosis, then prescribing appropriate therapy, treatment, and follow-up postoperative course. In other words, each stage of medical treatment is critical and must be performed by experimentally validated and scientifically verified processes, procedures and standards.

The situation is similar with the management. This science also deals with people, but in so far as it relates to their efficient and effective utilization of business processes. Quality of life and health status of employees undoubtedly do have a high level of correlation with work performance and organizational success. Management is increasingly faced with considerable uncertainty, lack of time and nonsystemic problems. In such conditions it is necessary for management to base their management decisions on scientifically confirmed methods and techniques. This would increase the scientificity of management as a profession, but it would also affected the increase in business success as the ultimate goal of any organization.

Comparison of decision making in medicine and management is relatively well shown in the following table 1.

Table 1

Comparison of decision making in medicine and management

Decision making in medicine	Decision making in management
High level of professionalism and strict control of admission to the profession	Lower level of professionalism and less control of admission into the profession
Strict application of scientific knowledge and procedures	Lack of scientifically verified methods/ techniques
There are a lot of professional researchers and extensive use of scientific knowledge	Decisions are based more on practicality and intuition
There is high level of decision objectification	Decisions are subjective and vary from case to case
Decisions based on facts – evidence	Decisions often lack factual basis
Decisions supported by new technologies	Decisions not supported by new technologies
Same cure, same success	Same cure – different success; different cure – same success
Decisions accompanied by medical ethics	Decisions dominated by the philosophy of profit
Emphasis on prevention	Emphasis on control
High level of autonomy in decision-making	Decisions conditioned on the socio-economic factors
Decisions based on holism	Partial decision making

The high level of professionalism in the medical profession is logical, given that it is a profession where errors cannot be corrected, or can be very difficult to correct. That is why medical profession is practised by individuals trained in the profession, i.e. people with medical, dental, veterinary, pharmaceutical colleges, which also imposes the need to set very high standards so that this area should not be entered by people who do not have proper certification for the job. In the management profession there are no such requirements, and in the countries in transition and in Serbia one can often hear that the business management can be performed by just about anyone, regardless of the level and type of education. Accordingly,

the entry into the profession has been liberalized to the extent that it poses a serious threat to the degradation of the profession. (2) Another important difference in decision-making between medicine and management profession is that medical decisions are based on standards, processes and procedures that had been scientifically validated, approved and validated by the World Health Organization and national authorities and organizations responsible for public health. In the medical profession there is a large number of experts trained and enabled to carry out the prescribed procedure. This greatly facilitates the work of the medical profession, because if there is timely and proper diagnosis, if the proven standards had been applied, there is

high probability that the patient will be cured, or the quality of his life and work shall be improved. Any deviation from the above is risky, and often can lead to legal and ethical practices where individuals may be charged for violating the established principles of operation. This practice is not present in the management profession, because there are no clearly defined and scientifically verified principles, which leaves ample room for the application of different approaches and concepts, with the presence of subjectivity and intuition, i.e. sense of future events.

The medical profession is probably the activity that is most advanced in the application of new technologies. Today there are technologies that can with high probability offer diagnosis, recommend the appropriate treatment and monitor recovery. Every hospital bed is provided with appropriate technique which monitors the functioning of the body, where the medical experts are able to monitor the patient's condition even from a remote position. In other words, today in the medical profession rather than observing the patient himself, experts observe and analyze data provided by medical equipment, such as: laboratories, scanners, X-rays, etc. Even surgical procedures are performed by the computer, and there is research about performing complex surgical procedures remotely. In the medical profession there is high awareness of the importance of new medical and other technologies, so the medical staff is continuously trained to successfully use these apparatus. In the management profession, at all the hierarchical levels, there is no application of either any new technology or information technology. It turns out that management is the area least affected by computerization and information technologies, which means that, despite the existence of expert systems and other systems that contribute to management decisions, the old and traditional organizational structure and management do not allow for their use. In other words, according to all estimates, the intensity of the application of information technology is inversely proportional to the hierarchical level of the organization. The higher the hierarchical level, the smaller the

implementation of new IT equipment. It is not necessary to explain the meaning of this in the world of rapid information that is at the same time at the very the core of every decision.

In the medical profession, the same cures lead to same outcome, that is, almost the same results. We say almost the same results because in medicine, as in other sciences, nothing takes place on the basis of established science, which is one of the misconceptions of classic science, but it all takes place on the basis of probability. This is because humanity in the whole of its genesis has managed only to "partially learn about the natural order, and therefore all the laws established by science are subject to rebuttal and changes, i.e. they are subject to supplementing, improving and changing, which leads to new scientific information and new science and scientific principles. (3) Naturally, in the management profession the same cures can produce different results, completely opposite results, just in the same way that various cures and strategies can produce same outcomes. The basis of this difference is that the management profession and its activities are more susceptible to socio-economic, political, religious, customary and other influences and forces. Because of this we often question the scientificity of management as a science as there is no stable basis for making management decisions.

Other specifics of the decision-making in medicine and management are just a result of the specifics of the activities in which the system operates. Higher presence of ethics and morality in medicine compared to management is natural because ethics is always something more than legal and other norms. In this context national medical ethics committees had been formed whose opinion is much more important than the conclusions or decisions of judicial authorities. The medical code of conduct in the performance of medical affairs had been developed, and its implementation is a priority. The management profession is concentrating on profit, while ethics is not enough spoken of, even though corporate social responsibility has been heavily promoted. It is clear that ethical and responsible operation of business in the long run increases the effectiveness of the

organization, and that the increased presence of ethics in management is welcome both for organizations and for other stakeholders.

In the medical profession prevention has a special place, i.e. we seek to prevent the occurrence of a disease, or to identify it as soon as possible and prevent its further spreading, which is why various diagnostic services, or departments for diagnosis had been developed. This is not so in the management profession, or at least it is not sufficiently developed, and which is also evident in practice because a large number of management teams is measured by how many business and other problems solved and in what way, and not by whether it has prevented the emergence of a problem. In the future we are likely to highly appreciate the ability of people to prevent, rather than to solve problems.

The medical profession has implemented a holistic concept of decision-making, which is much more advanced compared to the classic and traditional approach that has long existed in medicine, and today is kept in the management profession. It turns out that in making adequate decisions it is important whether this decision solves a partial problem and if at the same time it does not jeopardize other parts of the body. Every part of the body is important indeed, but the whole itself is much more important. That is why medical professionals in making partial decisions have to estimate what effects these decisions shall have on the patient as a whole. It would be useful if this method of decision-making would be exported to the management profession and beyond, i.e. we should assess the effects of a certain decision on the organization as a whole, but also on the environment in which the organization operates. Any decision that would be acceptable for both a certain part of the organization and the organization as a whole, but would at the same time be harmful to the environment would not be sustainable and as such would cause the reaction of the environment in which the organization operates.

Previous comparisons are significant and represent an important tool for academic evaluation. They show that in the biomedical,

technical, agricultural and other sciences, there is a relatively generalized research base for many professions, and it provides a strong foundation for making high quality and rapid management decisions. In contrast to the above, loosely defined and highly heterogeneous group of social sciences, which include the management is oriented to make decisions that are not based on evidence and experiment, and with a greater degree of subjectivity, which frequently leads to the suspicion that there are a number of science and management really based on scientific postulates and principles. (4) If you want to increase the business success of managing organizational systems, it is necessary to apply the medical concept in management.

Certain weaknesses of decision making based on factual medicine

There is no ideal system of decision-making, i.e. there is no decision-making system that is perfect, because in all decisions, even in those that are based on scientific postulates, there is a risk when it comes to the final outcome. This realization has come to the fore half of the twentieth century, when it was determined that there is no absolute truth and that it is realistic to accept the principle of probability. In relation to the above, prof. Vučenović states: "In the middle of the twentieth century the principle of probability was intensively introduced in scientific method and other studies. The results of modern scientific research, based on the principles of probability, claim that any knowledge in the natural and social order is still only partly likely, and is also subject to change." (5) Therefore, we can also object to documented as well as factual decision making.

Using proven and in practice certified processes and procedures reduce innovation atmosphere, as it prevents us to try out new ideas that arise in business or any working process. Experience shows that humanity has progressed thanks to those people who did not obey strict procedures, but who sought new ways and methods of performing certain activities. Most certainly, there had been certain mistakes along the way, but those were a function of progress, because we see that the more errors man makes in his

experiments, the closer he is to his and the solution of certain problems. The above is particularly evident if you learn from mistakes, and specially if you learn from mistakes made by others.

Imposing the use of verifiable evidence underestimates the professionalism and ignores differences. If an expert is forced to exclusively use the procedures and standards that are experimentally confirmed, he does not think that certain work could be performed in a different, and more efficient and effective manner. Practice shows that there is a general effort to make processes more determined and mathematics-like, including those related to the treatment of people, organization, etc. It turns out that human behavior and action can not be automated and programmed, and even if someone should succeed in it, man would be turned into a robot, unable to reflect and give ideas, and find new ways to perform activities. Experience reveals a stunning fact that it was the little, almost trivial things that had changed lives and strategies, which corresponds to the old folk wisdom that "life consists of details." Greater flexibility would significantly increase the success of the medical profession.

Research results that are reached in scientific procedures are not absolutely, but probably true. They can often be less or more erroneous because there is nothing that exists in the absolute sense in this world. For example, some types of drugs for many years had been applied based on the evidence of their effective action; eventually they had been withdrawn from use because it was determined they had an adverse impact on certain parts of the body of man. Instead of those, certain other drugs had been used, more effective and less harmful to the organism. In the field of social sciences, uncertainty is more present in relation to the natural sciences, and strategic management must take into account higher risk in the outcome of management decisions.

The evidential or factual medicine denies alternative medicine, although it is clear that this was the dominant mode of treatment in most of human history. Here, as in other areas, the questions have always been more or

less the same, but the answers are different in each new time dimension. In other words, people used to be treated in monasteries, through magic, by fortune-tellers, etc., and such a therapy is utterly unacceptable today. Still, we see that alternative medicine is also useful, especially if based on natural healing through water, plants, pure air, etc. Instead of denying alternative medicine, we should combine it with the official medicine, in such a way that alternative medicine is subordinate to mainstream medicine. That way new combinations and alternatives would emerge, and with them new quality which would increase organizational success.

It should be borne in mind that the classical medicine has also suffered significant and radical changes. The general demand for increase of quality of health services and reduction in health care costs has led to the rationalization and redesign of jobs and tasks in the health systems of developed countries. For example, the National Health Service in London in order to reduce costs had redesigned all elements of the work process, from receiving patients to their dismissal, observing all the time the principles of respecting the patients. Through interviews, observations, performed surveys of leaders, a more successful functioning of health system had been reached. They adopted the principle that doctors are general practitioners and specialists in private practice can be employed only for highly qualified and specialized jobs. The National Health Service even recommends that local health services can switch some of the clinical and administrative tasks to nurses, technicians, nurse practitioners and assistants. In this context new training programs had been created for all the employees in the clinics and for senior managers to lead change and improvement. (6)

All the above indicates that, despite the above weaknesses, introducing medical natural science approach into management has greatly increased organizational effectiveness. It is evident that it is particularly important for the management science to introduce holistic approach to organization and management, as this concept is the most developed and heavily used in medical

decision making. Naturally, this concept should be supported by digitization, and digital platforms and sharing of knowledge and information, which requires no additional funding being often the limiting factor for certain action or lack of action. (7)

Resume

This paper points to the need to eliminate or marginalize the classical management and organization created by the classical theorists of the organization. This modality of collective work used to put emphasis on efficiency, and on strategies through which this efficiency can be achieved. We witness the necessity of introducing a new, more natural and apparently more successful concept, and that is the medical concept of organizational systems. This concept is based on the postulates of medical decision-making, and those are verifiability and documented decision-making, research into the causes of a phenomenon or process, the use of scientifically verified and experimentally confirmed findings and monitoring of their outcomes. In addition to efficiency, attention is paid to the question of doing the right thing. This concept is acceptable because every organization possesses all those things that exists in humans, as the most perfect forms of

self-organization. In other words, just like any man, organizations have: inputs, transformation processes and outputs. Further, organizations have directors which could be thought of as brains of each company; they have financial bloodstream equivalent to man's circulation; marketing as a metaphor of organs of hearing; planners as the embodiment of eyes, etc. In these circumstances it is possible to use analogies that exist in humans in terms of self-organization and in organizational systems. In the future we should expect greater presence of biological - medical concepts in management and organization, which is caused by the discovery of secrets that exist in the functioning of the human brain and in particular the relationship of the conscious and the unconscious, and the relationship between the human brain and the executive body parts. These findings can to a large extent be transferred to the management of organizations, but we must always be aware of all the negative aspects listed in this paper. Finally, we should keep in mind the famous quote by T. Lasorda: 'Managing is like holding a dove in your hand. If you hold it too tightly you kill it, but if you hold it too loosely, you lose it.'

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