

# EMOTIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND INTELLIGENCE DYNAMICS

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## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this paper is to present the importance of emotional knowledge and intelligence dynamics in the organizational intellectual capital. Western culture put the emphasis on the rational, cognitive knowledge and intelligence, ignoring almost completely the emotional knowledge and intelligence from the decision making process in science and in management. Descartes stressed the fact that mind is more important than the body, and he promoted the dualism of mind and body. By contrast, the Eastern culture put the emphasis on the oneness of body and mind, and thus the emotional knowledge and intelligence became at least as important as the cognitive one. Emotional knowledge can be transformed into cognitive knowledge based on relation we do not know at this moment. However, emotional knowledge is not the same with emotional intelligence. While emotional knowledge reflects a field of existing emotions and feelings, emotional intelligence reflects the capacity of processing both emotional and cognitive knowledge.*

**KEYWORDS:** *emotional knowledge, cognitive knowledge, intellectual capital, emotional intelligence, intelligence dynamics*

## Knowledge management challenges

One of the most important challenges knowledge management faces today is to explain organizational knowledge dynamics, and to find valid correlations between transforming knowledge forms, and then integrating them by means of different organizational integrators (Bratianu et al., 2007). Knowledge has been conceived in many ways, since the early philosophical works. However, in time there were different perspectives for Western and Eastern cultures to conceive knowledge creation and knowledge as a product of this process (Andriessen, 2006; Andriessen and Van den Boom, 2007). Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) identified two streams of semantic evolution: the Cartesian dualism of body and mind, and the Japanese oneness of the body and mind. In the first case, mind creates knowledge, and thus, knowledge is rational. According to this stream of thought, *“It follows that we cannot know things through the senses alone, since through the senses alone we cannot know that things exist. Therefore knowledge consists in reflection, not in impression, and perception is not knowledge, because it has no part in apprehending truth, since it has more in apprehending existence”* (Russell, 1972: p.153). In conclusion, according to the Western culture there is only cognitive knowledge.

In the Japanese tradition, there is a strong emphasis on the oneness of body and mind. They are integrated into one entity and knowledge can be acquired through direct experience of the body. According to this tradition samurai had to develop their wisdom through physical education. Physical exercises contributed not only to the building and

strengthening samurai bodies but also to the formation of their character, which included a certain way of thinking. In his famous *Book of five rings*, the legendary Miyamoto Musashi emphasizes the importance of developing understanding and strategy in martial arts through direct experience: “*In order to be able to determine the possible outcomes of combat situations you must constantly maintain the proper attitude by practicing diligently. You can only fight the way you practice. By maintaining the proper attitude, you will always practice diligently with the proper spirit and ensure your ability to become that much stronger*” (Kaufman, 1994: p.13). In conclusion, according to Japanese philosophy there are two co-existing forms of knowledge: emotional and cognitive.

The first idea of this introduction is that knowledge in Western culture is considered to be cognitive in nature. We have to think in order to create and understand knowledge. Knowledge is associated with a virtual space of meanings. The second idea is that knowledge in Eastern culture is considered to be both cognitive and emotional in nature. Knowledge is associated with a virtual space of meanings and feelings. The third idea we would like to put forward in this introduction is that knowledge can be considered as *a field of meanings and feelings* in a continuous dynamic (Bratianu and Andriessen, 2007). The knowledge field is strongly nonlinear, nonuniform and nonhomogeneous, and contains different forms of knowledge which can transform themselves one into another. Thus, tacit knowledge can be transformed into explicit knowledge, and explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge, respectively. Cognitive knowledge can be transformed into emotional knowledge and emotional knowledge into cognitive knowledge, respectively.

### **Cognitive knowledge and intelligence**

For the Western culture knowledge and intelligence are cognitive in nature. Plato was one of the first to suggest that knowledge is not perception. He pointed out that we perceive through eyes and ears, rather than with them, and he showed that some of our knowledge is not connected with any sense-organ (Russel, 1972). We perceive hard and soft through touch, but it is the mind that judges that they exist and that they are contraries. Only the mind can reach existence, and we can not reach truth if we do not reach existence. According to the Descartes dualism, mind is more certain than matter, and our existence is a direct result of the fact that we think. “*If I ceased to think, there would be no evidence of my existence. I am a thing that thinks, a substance of which the whole nature or essence consists in thinking, and which needs no place or material think for its existence. The soul, therefore, is wholly distinct from the body and easier to know than the body; it would be what it is even if there were no body*” (Russel, 1972: p.565).

Cognitive knowledge is made up of *tacit* and *explicit* knowledge. This dyad tacit knowledge-explicit knowledge has been introduced by Polanyi (1983). He defined the knowledge obtained through a direct experience of life as tacit knowledge. The other type is defined as being explicit knowledge. Tacit knowledge means experience gained through direct interaction with other people and environment, and from this point of view is valuable. We don't know how much we know since tacit knowledge is a very fuzzy concept and limitless from the consciousness point of view. Tacit knowledge can be transformed into explicit knowledge through a process called *externalization* (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). However, there is no correlation between how much tacit knowledge can be transformed into explicit knowledge. Conversely, explicit knowledge can be transformed into tacit knowledge through a process called *internalization* (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). Same situation from quantitative point of view. Bratianu and Andriessen (2007) suggested a metaphor of knowledge with energy, and in this analysis the tacit-explicit knowledge dynamics can be better understood considering the parallel with the potential energy-kinetic energy dynamics. Thus, tacit knowledge is a potential

for explicit knowledge, and explicit knowledge is related to the decision making process, which means also action. It means that knowledge becomes a new factor that shape the characteristics of leaders thinking and actions (Năstase, 2009), besides the classical ones that include the social and cultural norms, the economic power of organization a.s.o. It is a mechanism that will have powerful consequences on the organizations changes, on the design as on the content of these adjustments.

### **Emotional knowledge and intelligence**

*Emotional knowledge* and *emotional intelligence* are relatively new expressions, although their importance in management has been recognized from the beginning of the last century through the works of industrial psychologists. Emotions are states of our body and mind which are characterized by the following generic constituents (Hill, 2008: p. 78):

- a feeling component – physical sensations, including chemical changes in the brain;
- a thinking component – conscious or intuitive ‘thought’ appraisals;
- an action component – expressive reactions (like smiles or scowls), as well as coping behaviors (think fight or flight).
- a sensory component – sights, sounds, etc., which intrude and serve to trigger the emotional response.

According to Hill (2008: p.79) “*Emotionality is distinguished from rationality because the latter only involves one of these four components: thinking. Unlike an emotion, thinking may, but is less likely to, have a sensory component*”. However, emotionality does not contain rationality. Rational thought involves conscious, deliberate, evaluative assessments. Emotions, on the other hand, are existential states of body and mind generated by feelings. Due to their direct short-cuts to the mind, emotions are always faster than thoughts in the decision making process, and thus they are able to mobilize the body in case of emergency. Emotions work very well with the adaptive unconscious, and they are able to yield a snap judgment based on so called “thin-slicing”. This mechanism refers to the power of our unconscious to discover patterns in situations and behavior based on very narrow slices of experience (Gladwell, 2005). According to author of *Blink* we should acknowledge the fact that there can be as much value in the blink of an eye as in hundreds of days of thorough rational analysis. Leaders have developed this competence of using successfully thin-slicing in judging people and their actions in time of seconds.

Emotional knowledge has two dimensions: time of existence, and intensity of manifestation. The first dimension is a quantitative one and it can be measured easily in a psychology laboratory. The second dimension is qualitative in nature and it can be measured more difficult. By contrast, cognitive knowledge has only one dimension which is closely related to a metrics. Thus, the quantity of cognitive knowledge should be evaluated in a different way than the quantity of emotional knowledge. However, at this moment knowledge evaluation is in its early trial and error phases, without any workable method and metrics.

Psychology research revealed the fact that our facial muscles may express seven core emotions, regardless of race, ethnicity, age or gender. One is essentially neutral – surprise. Five emotions are negative – fear, anger, sadness, disgust and contempt. The remaining emotion is positive – happiness. Sometimes, contempt is incorporated into disgust, and thus there remain only six basic emotions. Those six fundamental emotions can be combined in the real life and get a larger spectrum of emotions, carrying with them a larger spectrum of emotional knowledge. Also, the basic emotions can be extended by taking into account higher and lower intensities. For instance, for happiness

the higher intensity generates joy, and the lower intensity generates satisfaction. For surprise we have high – amazement, and low – curiosity. For anger, we have high – rage, and low – annoyance. For disgust, we have high – loathing, and low – boredom. For sadness, we have high – grief, and low – pensiveness. For fear, we have high – terror, and low – worry (Hill, 2005). Knowing all of this spectrum we can use emotional knowledge in management and marketing decisions with very interesting results.

### **Knowledge and intelligence dynamics**

Our assumption is that there is a continuous transformation of one form of knowledge into another one, until the level of decision making is attained and used. Our decisions are clearly influenced by the quality and quantity of emotional knowledge we have, although we are not able at this moment to explain how. However, just recognizing this dynamics it is a first condition to advance our research. Many people consider this idea impossible, being unable to imagine how emotional knowledge can be transformed into cognitive knowledge and then into a decision, leading to direct action. It is like in physics where potential energy is transformed into kinetic energy, which means mechanical work. For instance, when we are happy we tend to take a risk even if the reward is low, which means that the emotional knowledge transforms into cognitive knowledge, and then into a decision.

Using the metaphor *knowledge as energy* we may approach knowledge dynamics using as a source domain thermodynamics (Bratianu, 2008a, 2008b). Thus, the transformation of heat into mechanical energy, and mechanical work, respectively, we may consider transformation of emotional knowledge into cognitive knowledge by using cognitive work. In this dynamics we should remember the fact that emotional knowledge has two dimensions like heat, and cognitive knowledge only one dimension like mechanical energy. Since we do not have yet specific concepts to describe these dimensions we may use the concept of *temperature* to define different levels of emotional knowledge intensity. Thus, we get a larger quantity of knowledge if the emotional temperature is higher and the lasting time is higher. Although this analogy is purely qualitative at this very moment, it is useful to accept and then to perform further research.

### **Conclusions**

Emotional knowledge does exist, although the Western culture ignored it systematically. Eastern culture developed a different perspective, of integrating both cognitive knowledge and emotional knowledge into oneness of body and mind concept. Emotional knowledge is associated to our emotions and feelings, and most of it goes to the adaptive unconscious of our mind. Thus, although we may not be fully aware of its content, we have to admit its power especially in decision making. Research demonstrated in many fields of activity that emotional knowledge and emotional intelligence act much faster than any cognitive analysis in making decisions. Our supposition is that emotional knowledge can be transformed into cognitive knowledge and vice versa, although we have no data to prove it. We have just used in our research the analogy with energy transformations and basic ideas from thermodynamics.

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