

INSTITUTIONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS OF THE POLISH ARMED FORCES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF INTANGIBLE ASSETS

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Abstract

The management of intangible assets is a new concept in organisations in Poland, especially when it comes to its implementation in practice, mainly in relation to public organisations. This is a new topic for the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland, especially in the systemic approach. The study reveals what barriers, mainly organisational and institutional, constitute a difficulty and an obstacle to the implementation of the concept of management of intangible assets in the Polish Armed Forces. The aim of the study is to present the mentioned barriers and difficulties, as well as outline their conditions in relation to the specificity of military.

Key words: Knowledge management, intangible assets, Polish Armed Forces, national security, institutional and organisational barriers

Introduction

Modernity, has forced the organisation to improve itself on an everyday basis, with continuous learning, increasing the efficiency of its operations and continuous development requiring constant control of changes and their introduction on a regular basis, sometimes anticipating further incidents on the market, social and political arenas. The business vigilance of these organisations in relation to the requirements and changes that take place in the environment is very important. Only when organisations can keep up, and sometimes even anticipate the progress and its consequences, are they able to remain on the market in the role of leaders and play a significant role among other individuals and the competition (and also when talking about public organisations that determine the strength of the state and its position in the world). this behaviour and the way of functioning necessary nowadays for an effective modern organisation requires the spontaneous introduction of modifications, modernisations, implementations of newer tools, methods and implementations

of subsequent management concepts as well as changing the approach in the field of managing people. The conditions above do not affect the armed forces of many countries in the world, where the issues described are of interest to military and civil institutions.

As can be seen from the practice, deep organisational and structural changes may meet with various barriers when an attempt is made to implement them. These may be psychological and mental barriers related to the ambitions and fears of individuals, including those related to finances, resources and intra-group barriers related to their functions and responsibilities. Those related to the structure and organisational solutions as well as the nature of the organization and the environment are also important. These barriers create resistance and difficulties, which should be successively reduced in a calm and consistent manner and resistance should be softened, thus avoiding the forcing of changes on the strength and despotic imposition of a new order.

On the basis of the factors set out above, it can be assumed analogically that similar problems for the armed forces do not only exist in our country. The literature review as well as observations made and direct interviews with the Polish Armed Forces prove the validity of the presented thesis. Leading western militaries started their efforts with management of intangible assets, mainly in the field of knowledge management back in nineties of the twentieth century¹. Nowadays, well established systems supporting management of intangible assets exist in armed forces of such states like the United States, United Kingdom, Canada or Australia, to name just a few². One must however observe that the problems of knowledge management has been recognized also in the armed forces many other countries and has been widely discussed in military and scientific periodicals³.

The management of intangible assets is still a new concept in organisations in Poland when it comes to its implementation in practice and it has been broadly theoretically described and is known in management and managerial circles in the sense of its assumptions, but few organisations actually introduce and implement it. Speaking of public organisations, awareness and knowledge of this concept is unfortunately poor compared to commercial organisations. For this reason, there is no consent for implementing new solutions in the area of non-material resources management in the armed forces. This is a new subject, especially in the systemic approach to the complexity of its solutions.

1 S.G. McIntyre, M. Gauvin and B. Waruszynski, *Knowledge Management in the Military Context*, Canadian Military Journal, Spring 2003, pp. 35-36.

2 S.S. Hasnain, *Military Knowledge Transfer Mechanisms: A Passage to Academic World*, European Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies, January-April 2017 Volume 3, Issue 2, p. 42.

3 J. Raudeliuniene et al, *Factors influencing knowledge retention process: Case of Lithuanian Armed Forces*, Technological and Economic Development of Economy, 2018 Volume 24 Issue 3, p. 1120.

Due to the management approaches and styles and the specificity of the organisation, the armed forces, many managers are using traditional management styles that have been known for years, while being reluctant to introduce any major changes in the management and command system. The interest in new trends in leadership only exists in the field of theories, such as reading or listening to the recommendations of specialists and reports. Unfortunately, in the long-term perspective, this is not reflected in practical activities undertaken with the intention of implementing the recommended tools, methods and especially comprehensive concepts. This thesis is shared by officers who are participants of studies and courses conducted at the National Defence University, and now the War Studies University.

The problem situation under discussion proves that it is even more reasonable to consider what barriers, mainly organisational and institutional (apart from purely financial ones that are obvious today), constitute a difficulty and an obstacle to the implementation of the concept of knowledge management and intangible assets management in the Polish Armed Forces.

The aim of the study is to present the mentioned barriers and difficulties and outline their conditions in relation to the specific environment of the military. The study includes preliminary considerations and presents the results of a diagnostic survey, including opinions arising from observation of the military environment, activities carried out in the military, numerous conversations and informal interviews while maintaining the anonymity of the interlocutors. A synthetic, thematic summary of conclusions and reflections on the subject of existing difficulties in shaping intangible assets in the armed forces has been included in this study.

Multifaceted management of non-material resources

The path to adopting a universally new way of managing is still long in Poland and requires a lot of effort to reorient the style of management. Society, the economy, market and politics are constantly changing, power systems in the environment modify, alliances are transformed and challenges and threats that must be met all the time become more difficult and more complicated (e.g. weakening social ties and communication difficulties, and intellectual laziness as a result of flooding, unnecessary information, broadly understood cyber threats, the risks associated with the development of technology and the creation of transgenic organisms, including nuclear energy and new types of weapons along with very complex hybrid conflicts etc.). This phenomenon has been noticed in academic discourse related to the public management, which includes also management of and in the armed forces⁴.

4 K. Krukowski, J. Sasak (red.), *Tendencje we współczesnym zarządzaniu publicznym*, Studia i Monografie Instytutu Spraw Publicznych UJ, Kraków 2016, pp. 136–145.

As a result, one must modify one's own behaviour and learn how to manage modern organisations, but most changes cause resistance to them, regardless of the nature of these organisations (because the basics of functioning, the nature of human behaviour and feelings are similar everywhere). The key reasons for resistance to change can be summarised in a few points⁵:

- lack of understanding of the need for change as a result of the absence of specific information;
- tendency to stick to proven solutions;
- not very positive experiences related to the past implementations of changes;
- insufficient trust in the superiors as to the effects of changes,
- fear of losing position, prestige and social status as a result of changes;
- the nature of introducing changes that are enforced, imposed and not copied;
- an authoritative way of implementing changes that does not take into account the current order and principles.

The management of intangible assets includes the need to shift priorities from those addressed so far to financial and physical resources rationally and towards invisible resources that take on an intangible form, in particular knowledge, organisational culture, brand, reputation, image, innovation and relational capital. The aforementioned factors are important for the armed forces that are required to immediately counteract a threat. Therefore, both knowledge and organisational culture and relational capital will determine the reputation of the army and its image in society. This aspect determines the importance of the subject and its impact on the subject of research.

Although the resources in question are invisible and their value difficult to estimate, their importance and role in effective operations is primary. The immediate and physical consequences of management of these resources are not visible, they appear in a minimum time period of a few months, when they are clearly translated into the overall functioning of the organisation. In the case of the armed forces, the effects of the use of military units in crisis situations are not detectable until after the end of the operation. Without increasing attention on the management of these resources, it is currently impossible to create an organisation that responds to the requirements of a knowledge-based economy, such as a learning organisation, let alone an intelligent organisation. The need for increased speed of learning and retaining knowledge in military was voiced in Polish Armed Forces when the system of lessons learned was being introduced several years ago⁶. So one may argue that the problem of management of intangible assets in armed forces has been at least recognized and the circumstances at that time were conducive to implementation of the concepts related to such management in Polish Armed Forces.

⁵ J. Penc, *Sprawne kierowanie zmianami*, in: *Annales, Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska. Sectio H, Oeconomia* 34, Lublin, 2000, pp. 190.

⁶ F. Kochanowski, *System zarządzania wiedzą*, 08.01.2013, <http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/5997?t=System-zarzadzania-wiedza#>, accessed 15 June 2019.

Discovering what is associated with the effort of conscious management of non-material resources is worth further consideration. Like any complex action, one should start with the most basic activities and gradually add consecutive ones in order to create a coherent whole and an efficient management system. In this case, it would be reasonable to pay attention to changes in the belief in the importance of continuous improvement, continuous learning and training adapted to the skills and talents that people possess and develop them in the desired direction at the very beginning, and also to discover gaps in knowledge and immediately fill them with current knowledge. An important assumption could be the assumption of kaizen and continuous improvement philosophy, where CI (Continuous improvement) can be perceived as the organisation's ability to constantly transform itself in response to changes, to adapt and create unique abilities and features in terms of key competences about its competitiveness and uniqueness among other market participants. It is also the elimination of unnecessary processes that absorb the time and energy of the staff instead of focusing its attention on the most important and distinguishing organisational skills that build institutional intelligence. This is connected with involvement in improving communication channels, information transfer processes and building solid knowledge bases. In the opinion of many representatives of the army, the current communication system regarding knowledge management, including the exchange of experience in the armed forces, is not smooth and transparent, and internal procedures are incoherent and incomprehensible.⁷ Shaping of intangible resources is also associated with investment and teaching personnel openness to modern ICT solutions, networking and using flexible solutions for remote communication along with the elimination of unnecessary, time-consuming paper-based bureaucracy (perceived as needed for the so-called "just in case situations"; here are classified documents, whose formula and character imposes a paper, traditional form). It is necessary to secure the bases in such a way as to minimise the multiple creation of materials in printed form and then acquire the signatures of all superiors by personal means, because it takes a lot of time, introduces unnecessary chaos and does not cause any order⁸. However, it is a perfect example of waste, not only of materials, but also of energy, time and staff know-how, when they could be dealing with the key developmental issues of the organisation, and arranging paper documents electronically. With regard to the armed forces, it is worth showing an interest in the 3M waste philosophy, where it is important to remove all unnecessary, trivial activities that do not add value to the core activity. It eliminates everything that

⁷ Own research in the form of informal interviews with representatives of the Polish Armed Forces while maintaining the anonymity of interlocutors and anonymous surveys among soldiers of the Polish Army.

⁸ On the subject of 3M philosophy see more in: P.F. Drucker, *In a nutshell*, in: *The Lean Six Sigma Black Belt Handbook: Tools and Methods for Process Acceleration*, (ed.) Frank Voehl, H. James Harrington, Chuck Mignosa, Rich Charron, CRC Press, Taylor & Francis Group, LLC, 2013, p. 53 and R. Schonberger, *Japanese Manufacturing Techniques: Nine Hidden Lessons in Simplicity*, The free Press, New York, 1982, p. 44.

is extra and in excess, also overloading the cumbersome work that does not improve the organisation, removes irregularities and inequalities, and the lack of rationality in decisions mean that energy is wasted for unnecessary activities. Such activities are related to the adoption of different values and principles and an open organisational culture with elements of permissivism. Therefore, in the context of changes in the armed forces, introducing the implementation of the concept of intangible resources management, it would be necessary to adopt more flexible structures (e.g. hypertext, task teams, and ad hoc structures⁹). It would be more difficult to establish so-called talents and hidden competences and to create opportunities and encourage sharing of hidden knowledge. In such a case, everyday life should become continuous learning, focus on innovation and exchange of information and experiences, creating a network of mutual connections with the mutual transmission of knowledge to improve all subsystems of organisations that create complex solutions in the army that strengthen the defence system¹⁰.

Such actions, however, create resistance among staff. Therefore, training would be required, revealing the need for changes in management and leadership, and showing subordinates how much needs to be done, how to learn, how long it takes for the new solutions to take effect so there is no delay in implementing them. It would also be valuable to show the solutions discovered by allied armies as examples, such as the US military, which is trying to be an intelligent organisation, defining itself prospectively as the army of the future¹¹. It is also worth initiating the introduction of systemic thinking that puts emphasis on the mutual relationships between all elements of the institution, mutual influences, dependencies and effects, and the orientation of processes and solutions permeating all organic functions instead of spot events and simple linearity of activities. With reference to systemic thinking, it could be invaluable to start introducing changes to the management of intangible assets, implementing the five pillars of the learning organisation of P. Senge, where this systemic thinking is a key element. The cognitive effects obtained in the course of the research are the basis for stating that it would be helpful to create a common vision of the future, which would not be imposed in advance, and needs to be shared. On the other hand, it would be created with participation or at least while respecting the opinions of subordinates in relation to its shape, which would make it more acceptable and the staff would identify themselves with it more quickly and implement it with greater commitment. It is important that staff become participants in the change instead of simply observers. Apart from systemic thinking

⁹ See more: A. Szczygielska, *Organizational structure of public organizations improving the flow of knowledge*, in: Society, economy, armed forces - relations and challenges, AON Publisher, Warsaw: 2015.

¹⁰ Russo, *Information Knowledge Management. A Mission Essential Asset*, 2015, <https://www.japcc.org/information-knowledge-management/>, accessed 10 June 2019.

¹¹ S.E. Bartczak et al, *Assessing Knowledge Management Education Across The U.S. Department of Defense: A Multiple-Case Study*, in: Journal of Knowledge Management Practice, Vol. 11, No. 4, December 2010, <http://www.tlaine.com/articl243.htm>, accessed 30 May 2019.

and a shared vision, the so-called thought models are the third pillar. It would be important in the current situation to discover them, eliminate patterns of thinking and actions of individuals and groups, existing stereotypes and templates that block initiative, creativity and innovative action, and do not allow for an innovative view of running an organisation. The clearing of minds from a schematic, narrow perception of many phenomena following the usual paths does not allow for the implementation of new concepts and, at the same time, causes fear of the unknown. This aspect seems particularly important in the process of educating candidates for officers, as well as officers during professional military education. The above action would also increase the ability and inclination to experiment, rational risk taking and greater identification with new goals and intentions of the organisation. Another, fourth important foundation for the gradual transformation of the organisation towards an open, change-oriented learning organisation is the implementation of the principle of team learning. This is not only about group learning, but also extensive cooperation, exchange of experiences, developed solutions, sharing possessed knowledge, open discussions, seeking constantly better practices and learning from each other. It undoubtedly requires overcoming the deeply rooted barriers associated with opening up to the surroundings, individuals or groups and presenting their knowledge. Learning in teams is also associated with operational trust, which is of particular importance in military organisations. Operational trust means that every team member is aware of the actions of all other participants and knows that he can count on his actions to complement the actions of the others. In this way, the learning team constantly supports and influences other teams, providing them with their developed tools, techniques and skills. Team work is the domain of the armed forces, where decisions are made at headquarters¹². It is the experience and operational knowledge that determines the value of organisational and functional solutions adopted, not only on the battlefield, but also in daily business¹³.

The last, fifth foundation important for creating a learning organisation is the so-called personal mastery aimed at a given person. The assumption is rational self-criticism and self-analysis, discovering one's own flaws and weaknesses, skill gaps and knowledge gaps, arousing the conviction that continuous development and uninterrupted learning are a panacea for improvement and achievement of increasingly ambitious goals and objectives. They also offer opportunities to provide stronger support for the group with the chance to become a leader. It should be emphasised that it is not so important that there is always one unchangeable leader in a team or unit, but that in relation to current events, the subject of challenges, taking

¹² G. Mazurkiewicz, *Educational leadership, Responsible education management in the face of contemporary challenges*, Grzegorz Mazurkiewicz & Publishing House of the Jagiellonian University, I Edition, Kraków, 2011m pp. 248.

¹³ A. Lis, *Knowledge Creation and Conversion in Military Organizations: How the SECI Model is Applied Within Armed Forces*, Journal of Entrepreneurship Management and Innovation (JEMI), Volume 10, Issue 1, 2014, p. 60.

into account exceptional skills, successive prominent specialists occupy a leading position in showing the desired way of action and motivating subordinates for the next stage of changes¹⁴. In an organisation managing intangible resources, everyone should have a personal mastery, and then the implementation of the other four foundations would be easier and, at some point, change into a natural consequence of the actions taken. Unfortunately, despite the various efforts undertaken by the armed forces to educate leaders tailored to the needs of the 21st century, the results of these activities are unsatisfactory. The main reason indicated by the respondents is dynamic staff changes and lack of continuity of command. The phenomenon of a young officer learning not only organisational solutions from his older colleagues not, but substantive arguments determining military activities is disappearing. This situation also causes a lack of trust in subordinates who are directed to new positions without proper experience and professional education.

Barriers and difficulties in the armed forces of the Republic of Poland in relation to the management of intangible assets

A significant barrier resulting from the different nature of the armed forces in relation to traditional organisations is its organisational culture manifested by its values, principles and deeply rooted, unwritten rules. Some of them are not uttered, but obvious and passing from generation to generation, for example, respect for the superior, execution of orders from senior officers, and time availability. There is also a strong hierarchy in the organisational structure, level and customary multi-stage path of positions in the case of consenting to various undertakings or breaking through with the initiative from the bottom of the structure. This strong multi-level nature and sometimes fragmentation of the organisational structure sometimes causes discomfort to subordinates and opinions about the unclear division of tasks and the lack of a specific order of responsibility, which overlap several positions or even departments falling within the scope of competence. As a result, in the event of failure or unwillingness to take action, the work is transferred to others and there is no clarity as to the person responsible for the task. An additional barrier to the introduction of the new method of management are current changes in military structures and large staff turnover, and hence the uncertainty of employment and occupation of current positions. This increases the employees' feeling of uncertainty and instability. Fewer and fewer people are willing to make any decisions that involve risk or cause any controversy.

Another barrier is related to the organisational aspect of the work, which is mostly obsolete equipment, inconsistent systems and outdated tele information solutions

¹⁴ It is a difficult element of work in a modern, well-coordinated team using the principles of cooperation and group trust from the world of sports, for example from the peloton or the relay.

and, of course, the state of military equipment, which in is not satisfactory and does not strengthen the sense of security in the face of the country's threat according to many. In this respect, the respondents pointed to the limited operational capabilities of the air defence system or difficulties in gaining sea control. Also important are barriers at the level of the Armed Forces' concept itself, related to ambiguity regarding the vision and development perspectives of the Armed Forces, future modernisation activities, intentions and organisational undertakings in the national arena, which are manifested in gaps and loopholes in documents. For example, the "National Security Strategy", the 2014 document loses its relevance and its amendment is necessary. There are a lack of important arrangements that would be clear, precise and understandable for the entire Armed Forces e.g. in the subject of command system or defence strategy. Therefore, it is difficult for the cadre to identify themselves with the perspective vision of the Armed Forces and implement its intentions if its image is unspecified and inconsistent.

In this situation, in the opinion of respondents, it is more difficult to accept somebody willing to share their knowledge and the experience gained over the years, because there is a sense of uncertainty and anxiety that someone could use this knowledge better. This applies especially to situations where the armed forces are used as a special instrument of influence, in the case of securing the European Football Championships (2012), World Youth Day (2016), the NATO summit (2016) and other events affecting the security of the country. The knowledge possessed only by the given unit gives them the feeling of being irreplaceable and exceptional. However, looking more broadly, the act of sharing it with other participants in the organisation does not have a major impact on the stability and certainty of that person taking a given position. This conservative action weakens the team in which it operates with this lack of support, which consequently weakens this unit through this type of autonomous action¹⁵.

At the same time, in the armed forces, it has been declared that there is no perceptible and clear motivation to educate successors, transfer knowledge to less experienced people, share it in the group and disseminate experiences over a wider area. The staff simply expects profits for such actions, or even incentives in the form of inspiration or positive effects, which would show them that their actions increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation. An example of a tool that was supposed to be a flagship example of a base used for information exchange, knowledge creation and preservation in its original plans could be the Lessons Learned System. As an IT database, according to the opinions heard, it does not fulfill its tasks, it is rarely used, and hardly anyone supplies it with new pieces of information. In addition, people who could actually learn from it do not have access to these resources. In the LLS document, it is even emphasised that for the LLS to function efficiently and effectively, "all those serving and working for

15 Naturally, this does not apply to secrets and proprietary information, because their possession is intended for dedicated people only and the prohibition of dissemination is obvious in this case.

the defence of the Republic of Poland should feel the need to engage in the system¹⁶”. Unfortunately, the phenomenon of retaining lessons learned and not sharing them outside of a group is really perceptible, which creates the phenomenon of internal competition and creates an artificial autonomy, which additionally strengthens the barrier for the exchange. These activities make it even more difficult to create a coherent network of experience exchange and a system for managing intangible assets in the entire armed forces. Therefore, it would be important to show the advantages of being involved in the development of this system and training in this topic. The weakness in the form of leakage of knowledge and the failure to use long-term, well-established lessons learned is also noticeable and underlined in direct interviews. The reconversion among experienced soldiers causes dissatisfaction and a sense of loss, because valuable knowledge is not used further, it is not recovered - on the contrary, it is allowed to simply disappear with people who leave¹⁷.

The organisational inertia may be a great difficulty in implementing the principles of intangible assets management. The previously emphasised attachment to stability, peace, well-known solutions and the lack of willingness and felt need to implement something new, which is completely unknown and it is not known when and to what extent it will bring hope in and be effective, is an extremely strong brake on the path of change in military structures. Innovative activities, especially in the management sphere, are often perceived as putting the current organisational system at risk. In addition, among the higher levels, there is a fear of losing a good image if something is not successful, so they leave time for implementation of these changes for the final moments (when it will be bad and nothing is known of already known solutions, then the new antidote will be used and it will be a good time for experiments, then there will be little to lose and much will be saved). However, this is not right from the managerial point of view, because the actions taken are often reactionary and are greatly behind the past events in their effects, and the goal is to overtake and prevent crises rather than react to them. An example is the “Strategic Defence Review” - a document prepared for the analysis and forecast of changes in the armed forces, the provisions of which constitute organisational and technical guidelines for the modification of the state’s defence system. Despite the efforts made in many aspects, the document’s records remain only on paper, thus deepening the frustration of the commanding staff. For any changes to take place, it is necessary to adapt to the new conditions, to the new order, and in particular to the lower level staff, who

16 Instructions for the Use of Experience System, Ministry of National Defence, Bydgoszcz 2014, p. On page 8, one can find the assumption that „SWD is one of the organisational learning tools integrating knowledge management processes (...) and change management.” In practice, unfortunately, it is not yet such a tool, but it can be the nucleus of something on the ground that can create a significant support for the exchange of knowledge, but so far it has not received recognition and is not seen as a help by many soldiers.

17 A. Lis, *Knowledge Creation and Conversion in Military Organizations: How the SECI Model is Applied Within Armed Forces*, Journal of Entrepreneurship Management and Innovation (JEMI), Volume 10, Issue 1, 2014, p. 60.

unfortunately find out about the changes at the latest. Therefore, there is a lack of communication in the flow of current information.

Another barrier that is difficult when implementing the concept of systemic management of knowledge-related resources is the situation that in the case of the new, young staff, attention is not paid and innovative and innovative ideas are not taken seriously. They are often valuable insights that should be considered as improvements to everyday functioning and implemented into practice. Thus untalented young people are often promoted, but those for whom the so-called time has ripened, not according to the commitment to work and achievements, but according to the ladder of hierarchy and positions. Skills, brilliance, and an open mind are not sufficiently appreciated. An opinion has been formed that often the authority of some is not based on expert knowledge but only results from the position held. This is due to the fact that no attempt is made to recognise the talents of younger staff and their key skills and does not emphasise their development. Unfortunately, in many situations, training is approached in a skewed way and according to temporary, universal needs, does not recognise who to educate and improve in order to have cohesive groups of outstanding specialists instead of the general average of universalists. A good argument that proves the validity of the presented thesis is the periodic change in the way personnel are assessed in military units. The assessment is based on a template layout indicating the discretionary level of engagement of soldiers. The evaluation is dominated by the issues of availability, character, and quality of service, but there are no indicators that identify the intellectual ability of the person being evaluated. The barrier described above is related to other things, i.e. reluctant cooperation with research and development centres. In the opinion of the respondents, of course, we hear opinions, recommendations, analyses and conclusions; however, not much of this is actually used to improve everyday functioning, and even less developed specialist technological, managerial and conceptual-theoretical solutions are implemented in the armed forces. Researchers are specialists in their fields in discovering gaps and irregularities that are noticeable in the market reality. Staying in the environment, they see the possibilities of improvements using the methods and tools known to them. However, it is up to the representatives of the armed forces whether they will continue this started path and take subsequent decisions on the implementation of the mentioned and recommended specialised solutions. Experts and reports created are very labor-intensive, insightful, and professional in many cases and constitute a valuable set of theoretical recommendations with clear indications for inflammatory points in given units. However, as was emphasised by the decision-makers of individual institutions, it depends on whether anything is practically done in this area, and the work of specialists in a given field is appreciated. So far, the percentage of translations of solutions developed in expertise into practice is negligible.

In connection with the above, one sometimes has the impression that a large barrier is the language itself and terminology that may be misunderstood or not known at all. Introductory training in the subject of modern management concepts related to non-material resources or even the creation of a lexicon of terms dedicated to the discussed ministry would be more valuable. It would contain concepts and

issues explained in a clear way and related to the realities of the Polish Armed Forces. Such a lexicon of concepts, constantly updated, exists in the US armed forces, thanks to which there is no ambiguity to the basic concepts of knowledge management. In addition, the necessary definitions are clarified in subsequent doctrines referring to the knowledge management system, which is improved according to the requirements of the environment and the current needs of the local armed forces. The poor understanding of terminology related to the management of intangible assets has plagued not only Polish Armed Forces, but has been experienced also by other militaries. For example, in the U.S. Army there was quite common misunderstanding between information and knowledge management that confused day to day activities related to the management of intangible assets in this organisation¹⁸.

In our armed forces, a barrier may also be the so-called information fog, which is associated on the one hand with insufficiently fluid channels of communication and on the other hand with too many sources from which information is received. Very often they are unnecessary and excessive, often not checked and creating only unnecessary information confusion. A selective policy of inflow of information and messages would be valuable here, so as not to disturb the clarity of perception of reality and not to hinder objective decision making.

These barriers are related to the hierarchical structure, organisational specifics, the nature of the institutions and principles prevailing in the armed forces. However, it is worth emphasising the barriers related to the perception of intangible assets, perceptual and awareness barriers related to the difficulties in abstract and unconventional thinking. In organisations that are traditionally managed for many years using classic forms of guidance, such obstacles and misunderstandings are natural. In many spheres of activity, it is difficult to understand how to manage resources that cannot be accurately estimated and measured. Perhaps, at a given specific moment, it would be possible to estimate the value of information or knowledge available, but it is enough to change the balance of forces in the environment, change of conditions or personal shifts, and the given estimate loses its relevance. For this reason, still more attention is paid to measurable and financial indicators than to those that show the studied phenomena or processes in a vivid way. It should be remembered, however, that they do not show the causes and further consequences of the phenomenon being studied, they are only a point or number showing the past state of affairs, quantified without further visions in the message. Unfortunately, as the research results show, less attention is paid to indicators and measurements of a qualitative and descriptive character, and unfortunately it is still treated with distance, without serious consideration in further planning, and in essence they are able to show much more by outlining the background of the phenomenon and further outlining its effects. Measurements of this type are often made only for the very fact of their

¹⁸ P. K. Sullivan, *The Difference that Makes a Difference: Distinguishing Between Knowledge Management and Information Management in the U.S. Army*, Fort Leavenworth, KA 2011, pp. 34-35.

implementation, and not in order to show the actual state, which would underline and highlight the indispensable need for changes. In the opinion of respondents of direct interviews, an example of such an action is the entire system of management control in the armed forces, in which few participants of the proceedings are aware of the nature of the actions taken¹⁹. Measurements are also not carried out in places requiring restructuring but where they will be carried out most quickly and easily and will be marked in the plan as implemented. The challenge is also difficult to determine and discover how much and what resources of hidden knowledge a given person has²⁰. Such a discovery would be extremely valuable in shaping competences, managing talents and creating an individual training programme aimed at strengthening the personal mastery philosophy mentioned in the previous section of the study.

Opinions of respondents submitted in the course of interviews indicate that in the scope of understanding the concept of shaping intangible resources, another difficulty is to determine and assess namely to what extent efficient management of the discussed resources affects the implementation of objectives and achieving intentions, to what extent it creates the image, increases the efficiency of operations, and to what extent it is the result of classic methods and tools. However, it should be remembered that the discussed management is not a visionary, hitherto totally unknown and incredibly difficult method using spectacular tools and formulas. It is only, and at the same time as much a reformulation of current priorities, shifting attention to other directions, raising higher values, updating the way of management with new practices, and only the so-far rich management skills²¹. At some point in organisational maturity, this will become an everyday, ordinary management that will eventually result in positive outcomes for the entire organisation.

Conclusions

The specificity of the Armed Forces definitely does not facilitate the implementation of all characteristics and activities according to the principles of intelligent organisation management of intangible assets. However, it is important to introduce key, significant assumptions that will clearly redirect the current management trajectory to the vision of a future military, fully network-centric, in which the management of intangible

19 Decision No. 138 / MON of the Minister of National Defense of May 17, 2013 on the organization and functioning of management control in the government administration department - national defense.

20 Understood according to the original definition as deeply conscious, made and used reflexively, difficult to transfer, and more difficult to translate into the language of characters, and a lot of effort is required to modify it. Therefore, with its transmission, it is important to build a trust and freedom environment, and a discussion to accept it in the form of imitation and mapping.

21 M. Wrzosek, *Wiedza w zarządzaniu organizacją wojskową*, Organization & Management Scientific Quarterly, ISSUE No. 4 (12), 2010, pp. 98-100.

assets is gradually developed and improved. Network-centric warfare is generally understood as the ability of geographically dispersed forces to create a high level of common operational awareness, which can be used through self-synchronisation and other activities focused on the core of the network to achieve the commander's purpose. It can significantly contribute to the integration of tactical, operational and strategic objectives in the event of conflict. The concept of socio centricity is not limited to technology, but generally to the emergence of military reactions related to the challenges of the information economy era. Therefore, automation of command systems is purposeful, but cannot be implemented without proper preparation of the personnel of the armed forces to new challenges.

It is important in the current conditions of the information and knowledge economy, new challenges and new threats that the ability to learn many issues is developed, then learned again in another form. In the aspect of the armed forces as an organization, it is a difficult and time-consuming undertaking, but it is necessary due to the dynamics of changes in the environment of national security. It is equally important to learn how to gradually acquire skills and the ability to use knowledge fully, so that the knowledge used leads to the higher quality and competitiveness of the defence sector.

The issues of relieving resistance, reducing barriers, and the more their final removal accompanying a key issue, discussed in brief, is a complex and extensive issue, all the more so with regard to such a multilayered organisation as the armed forces. For this reason, it seems reasonable to undertake a separate study that focuses on this issue in the context of the existing institutional and organisational barriers outlined.

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