

Research on the Management Thought of “the Top-Grade Doctor can Govern the Country” in Huangdi Neijing

Li Wen^{1, a}, Dingding Yang^{2, b}, Jinzhan Shen^{3, c}

¹School of management, Hefei University of Technology, China

²Department of Canon of Medicine, Anhui University of Chinese Medicine, China

³Department of Canon of Medicine, Anhui University of Chinese Medicine, China

^awenli581@sina.com, ^b1062340273@qq.com, ^cshenjinzhan@126.com

Keywords: Huangdi Neijing , analogism with natural phenomena, “the top-grade doctor can govern the country”, management, big data

Abstract: Huangdi Neijing not only has historic, practical and post-modern significance on medical guidance but also has scientificity in natural and social attributes. When we explore the wisdom of Huangdi Neijing from the perspective of modern management, we can find the existence of some problems in present academic researches of management field with its directions, which prevents its practice from achieving harmony as a whole. Based on the historical influence on country governing of the theories of qi, Zang-Fu (viscera and bowels) and five elements in Huangdi Neijing, this article proposes some ideas for the present human resource theory, the power partition of state administrative areas and the construction of top executive team, with the hope to cause some thinking and consideration among scholars of traditional Chinese medicine and management.

Introduction

Sci-tech Daily on June 2, 2011 reported that two classics of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in China--- Huangdi Neijing and Compendium of Materia Medica (Bencao Gangmu) has been successfully selected into Memory of the World register in the tenth meeting by international advisory committee of world memory engineering of the united nations educational, scientific and cultural organization held in Manchester, England from May 23 to 26 the same year. The review committee has given full affirmation and high evaluation to the two original documents for their historic, scientific and cultural values. This indicates that Huangdi Neijing is not only an ancient Chinese encyclopedia combining humanities and science, but also reflects the profound oriental culture background and unique thinking, which is getting more and more wide attention and acceptance from scientists all over the world. On February 15, 2015, Xi Jinping, chairman of China, when he investigated in Xi'an, he said: I like TCM[1]. This not only praises the effectiveness of TCM, but also reflects the well-liked emotion and sincere faith to TCM. He often introduces the ideas and terminology of TCM into his policy thoughts[2], for example, he said that politics and law system is the country's immune system, and it plays an important role on supplying blood and preserving qi, eliminating pathogen to support vital qi and guaranteeing the social body healthy.

The famous American management guru Peter Drucker[3] (Peter F.D rucker 1999) argues that there are similarities between medicine and management. Lyden, Mario(4,5) (2000,2008) and other scholars quote the idea of world health organization (WHO) that human health resembles the health of an enterprise, and analogize the functions of organs as the functions of its divisions and organization. They apply the diagnostic thinking of western medicine to enterprise diagnosis. Nowadays, enterprise diagnosis has become an important direction for scientific research of management, reflecting that the cross and reference studies between western medicine and management science tend to be mature [6].

Medicine and country governance in Huangdi Neijing

Huangdi Neijing uses the Chinese character ‘zhi’, which means to treat, manage or govern, to relate people’s diseases to national chaos by the concept of analogism with natural phenomena. “Saints treat before diseases taking place rather than after, and manage before chaos happen rather than after.” (Treatise on Cultivating Spirit According to Seasonal Qi). The medical saint, Sun Simiao, in Tang dynasty pointed out in QianJin YaoFang (Essential Prescription for Emergency) that for those who are proficient in medicine, the top-grade doctors govern (yi) the country, the middle maintaining (yi) life and the third-grade treating (yi) diseases (Chapter One, Diagnostics). Later on, people changed the verb “yi” in the sentence into “zhi”, which share the similar meaning and this is used to evaluate the level of TCM treatment. Today it can be viewed as: the top-grade doctors can not only use the country-governing rule of managing before chaos happens to realize treating before diseases taking place, but also use the preventive medical theory of treating before diseases taking place to stop national chaos before it happens. The middle-grade doctors can not only treat people’s psychological and physical diseases with the concept of holism, but also regulate the moral cultivation of life (which is called in modern words ‘development and management of human resources’). While the third-grades can only treat patients in a local perspective as prescribing after diseases come into being, and in the same way, when governing a country they can only solve problems after national chaos has already happened. The character “zhi” in the sentence means to treat or govern, while the ancient Chinese word “zhili” or “governance” embodies the meaning of nowadays ‘management’ from exotic vocabulary, which is 2000 years earlier than the concept of “risk management” [7] and “crisis management” proposed in western developed countries. Thus we can see that the idea of analogism with natural phenomena in TCM can guide people to find those problems which seem to have nothing to do with each other on the surface but have similarity relation and connection internally[8]. When we try to understand and grasp the changing rule of management practice through the description of explanation of nature and life with the idea of analogism with natural phenomena, we can be reasonable, sober and agile.

Many ancient theories and ideas about top-grade doctors governing the country, the middle maintaining life and the third-grade treating diseases have been reflected in Huangdi Neijing’s wisdom of Saints knowing everything in heaven above, of earth underneath and about human activity in the middle during the period of Qin and Han dynasties. When we analyze the two-way influence of ancient human medicine and social management on each other from the perspective of historical materialism, and explore the interconnection of governing country, maintaining life and curing diseases based on the concept of analogism with natural phenomena, we can understand in depth the great wisdom in “zhi” of ancient Chinese, and also can inspire the present management scholars who are engaged in the study of Chinese management situation. Life maintaining in TCM is a connecting transition between country governance and treatment of diseases, and its rule can be transferred to these two fields. The wisdom of “zhi” lies in regulating qi. Qi can be divided into invisible qi and tangible qi, reflected by ‘spirit’ and ‘shape’. If we can introduce the concept of realism and post modernity of medicine in Huangdi Neijing to the analysis of current management situation, some orientation problems can be found in academic researches of present management. For example, when studying the regularity of economic management, overall big data is emphasized in finding the changing law and inter-connection between things in order to get approach to anticipation and decision rather than probe the common regularity of the relation of TCM and management to get innovative approach to anticipation and decision by analogism with natural phenomena and similarity thinking. In the economic market, competitive strategy of antagonism is encouraged, and local governments are scrambling to sell lands, enterprises in the industry competing with lower price, ignoring the systematic strategic role in option, regulation and management as a whole. Theoretically, an idea of qualitative and quantitative mode as in TCM that is based on the unique Chinese phenomena thinking and can directly lead philosophical thinking to

specific management thinking, the epistemology of natural world to the specific management methodology for individual organization as its main thread is lacked. In human resource management, we introduce the study mode which separates management psychology and health psychology from developed countries, while ignoring the original indigenous TCM psychology that emphasizes humanism and integrates the unity of nature and human and the unity of spirit and body, which is a pattern of management psychology organized by health psychology. Visibly, academic research of management neglects holism of similar systems, which causes the entity and non-entity functions of management to lose contact gradually. Take the present so-called big data culture[9] as an example. The overall big data is firstly gathered and calculated to find out interrelation among things, and then management decision can be put forward. This is feasible theoretically, but in reality the ‘overall’ big data can be hardly get, which makes it not easy to find the real “connection” between each other, making the interrelation finally reflected distorted. However, if we can first get the regular connection between things according to analogism with natural phenomena or similarity thinking and take the conclusions as assumed conditions, and then purposively collect relevant data to calculate, and finally propose management decisions after being verified, we can avoid the difficulty in getting the “overall” big data, as well as the distortion of the reflected connections. Therefore, combining the concept of “analogism with natural phenomena”, as well as “qi”, “zang-fu” and “five-element system” in Huangdi Neijing, we propose some ideas for solving the problems of authority corruption, the power partition of state administrative areas and the construction of top executive team in Chinese management situation.

“Qi” in Huangdi Neijing and human nature in human resources theory

Since ancient time there is a concept in TCM that top-grade doctors govern the country, the middle maintaining life and the third-grade treating diseases. Among the three levels, maintaining life is the intermediary connecting the other two, realizing stepping into the top level to govern the country and going for the basic to treat diseases. Meanwhile, the wisdom of ‘zhi’ is embodied by ‘qi’ in Huangdi Neijing. There are more than 200 terms composed with the word ‘qi’ in Huangdi Neijing, and “qi” appears singly in about 3000 places, with which the broad and profound elucidations showing the extensive and deep impact of qi monism on TCM physiology, pathology, diagnosis, treatment, and so on[10]. At the beginning of Treatise on Vital Qi Conforming to Natural Rules, chapter three of Su Wen in Huangdi Neijing, it’s pointed out that for beings conforming to natural rules; life is based on yin-yang. For human on earth, qi of his nine parts, nine orifices, five-zang and twelve joints all conform to natural qi. Here it shows that yin qi and yang qi in nature merging into a whole keep ascending and descending continuously in space-time. Living in this environment, human relies on the natural qi in the outside world and exchange with it through respiration. Normally zheng qi (right qi) of external environment in normal conditions is a basic requirement for human survival, growth and development as well as life activities. Evil qi in abnormal cases is the cause of various diseases in human. However, for individuals, qi exist in different forms. In the book of On Balance written by Wang Chong, the materialistic ideologist in Qin-han dynasty, it’s stated that all the things on earth naturally happen with the interaction between heaven-qi and earth-qi, just like the intercourse between couple creating human beings. From the aspect of materialistic epistemology, the heaven and earth mentioned here are solid natural substances of no will, and the generation and change of all the things in space derives from substantial qi, thus qi is the common substantial element[11]. For health preserving, Wang Chong stressed maintaining life by cultivating qi, eating properly and drinking little, keeping indifferent to external affairs to preserve life essence and taking proper medicine and exercising regularly, with the hope to live longer and delay death. He also stated his view of human nature, which is different from Mencius, Xun zi and Gao zi in the Warring States Period and the famous philosopher and litterateur Yang Xiong in late Western Han Dynasty. Based on yuan qi (original qi) theory, Wang Chong held the

view that qi in human varies from thick to thin, so the human nature varies from good to evil. Visibly, his proposal of good or evil nature in humanity comes naturally under the influence of yuan qi theory. He also viewed that human nature depends on habit, and good habit leads to behaving fine while evil one leads to behaving evil. We can infer that human nature can be changed by learning and cultivation, so zhen qi (authentic qi, which is similar to yuan qi and zheng qi) can also be changed. This is different from either the good-nature theory held by Mencius that human are born good-natured or the evil-nature theory held by Xunzi that human are born evil-natured, neither the Gao zi's viewpoint as no goodness or evil in human nature nor the Yang xiong's as good and evil natures mixing together. Moreover, his idea is also different from the X or Y theory proposed by the famous American management psychologist D. McGregor and the super Y theory proposed by J. Morse and J. Morse in 1970. It can be seen that research on the relation between qi and development and management of human resource has never been conducted neither in ancient Chinese good-evil human nature theory nor in the assumption of human nature proposed by modern western world as economic human, social human, self-realizing human or complex human.

From the above, we try to think if the wisdom of qi monism can be applied to the field of Chinese management to build a blend system of human psychology and praxiology, which is based on the TCM people-oriented qi cultivation theory to adjust individual qi and morale in groups to alter the evil qi in individual nature and improve right qi of a group. We can restrain evil qi through anti-corruption measures to expel the toxin of vested interest and corruption conduct by people with management power, and to reduce the competition-oriented incentives from western countries that can cause psychological pressure and bring negative impacts. We also can support right qi through anti-corruption measures to promote social service by people with management power and to establish Chinese incentive mode of yin and yang harmony in human resource development and management [12].

Zangfu in Huangdi Neijing and the power partition of state administrative areas

Comparing the words of “the twelve organs should not fail to coordinate with each other, if the heart is normally functioned, the other organs are fine, otherwise the twelve organs will be endangered.” in Ling Lan Mi Dian Lun (Treatise of Preciousness), the eighth chapter of Plain Question in Huangdi Neijing and “all the eleven organs depend on gallbladder.” in Liu Jie Zang Xiang Lun (Treatise on Yearly Visceral Manifestation), the ninth chapter of Plain Question, the description of each organ's manifestation and function of both chapters are basically the same. However there're two apparent different points. One is the difference between the numbers of organs that in the eighth chapter the number is twelve, including heart, lungs, liver, gall bladder, pericardium, spleen, stomach, large intestine, small intestine, kidney, triple energizers, and urinary bladder, while in the next chapter the number is eleven, including heart, lungs, kidney, liver, spleen, stomach, large intestine, small intestine, triple energizers, urinary bladder and gall bladder without pericardium and its manifestation. The other one is that the systematic functions of heart and gallbladder have different significance. Treatise of Preciousness says that heart is the sovereign organ, which governs spirit, meaning heart is of the most importance. But the ninth chapter stresses that all the eleven organs depend on gallbladder, meaning exertion of the functions of the eleven organs depend on the growing and dispersing effect of gallbladder. The reason can be analyzed by the cause of the symptom of bitter taste in mouth of the disease gallbladder heat in Huangdi Neijing. “Liver is the general organ, and its function exertion depends on gallbladder, with pharynx being the messenger. Patients with this disease have considered repeatedly while still hesitated to make decision, thus the gallbladder is weak and qi goes up inversely causing bitter taste in the mouth.” (Odd Diseases, Plain Question) Here it puts that liver is the general organ which governs considering, while gallbladder is the judge organ which governs decision making. When one considers and plans for several times with no ideal final decision and practice, this emotional matter will affect gallbladder in the

liver-gallbladder system, preventing gallbladder from functioning normally, gallbladder qi going up in the opposite way, the bile also going up through meridian, thus the patient will feel bitterness in the mouth. Therefore, we can see from this that in the body system, the decisive function of gallbladder plays a very important role, as the definition of modern management “management is decision making.” (Note: We can’t find the book of The Duty Divisions of Twelve Organs of Yin-yang that mentioned in Huangdi Neijing, thus the present study is hindered with the inference). Reviewing the Qin and Han dynasties, in early Western Han Dynasty Liu Bang inherited the centralization system from Qin dynasty and attempted to forcibly cut down the kings’ territories. He adopted the proposal of “security policy” and “military leader diminishing policy” by Jia Yi (200 B.C to 168 B.C) and Zhao Cuo, and when the decisions had been carried out, the battle between the central government and local kings became intenser. Later Emperor Wu of Han learnt the lessons from this, adopted the proposal of ‘kindness spreading policy’, and implemented “kindness spreading order”, which only allowed the first son of the lineal descents to inherit the kingship after the king died, while the other sons could partition the original realms and get part of them to be marquis, governed by local counties. In this way descendants of these kingdoms were very pleased to respond to the ‘kindness spreading order’, actively participated in partitioning their fathers’ rights, so that greatly reduced the power of the kingdoms and they could be never able to contend with the central government, thus the central regime and centralization have been strengthened. Here it reflects that when making choice one should be not only farsighted and prudent, but also decisive, because the best decisions are dependent on the decisive courage. That is why it’s said “depend on gallbladder”.

Based on those above we think if we can consider the problems of central and local governments when dealing with the relations between economic, technological and cultural affairs from the perspective of harmonious relationship among Zang-fu functions in Huangdi Neijing. For example: currently governments of some of the provinces, cities and autonomous regions excessively pursue their all-round development, causing great waste in resources with duplication of similar projects. We wonder if we can base on the present regional economic advantages formed after the reform and opening-up, reallocate land resources[13] ,and redive the national administrative areas, increase the number of provinces, cities and autonomous regions moderately and undermine the conduct of competing and selling out lands among local governments^[11] in order to realize harmonious governance with stealthy centralization of power through apparent separation of power, highlighting the regional characteristic resources and capacity advantages of each unit. We can improve the efficiency of resource allocation in the process of population and economy gathering propelled by the flow of human qi naturally formed in market in order to naturally and easily realize urban-rural integration, thus to improve the country's overall economic, technological and cultural power.

Five-element system in Huangdi Neijing and construction of the top executive team

Huangdi Neijing uses the five-element system to illustrate the mutual promotion and mutual restraint relations of things in the universe. From the full text of Huangdi Neijing, we can find that there are five chapters that obviously use analogism with natural phenomena to compare the five-zang functions in human body to the administrative duties of top national management, and the comparison of heart and liver to sovereign and general and minister of a country appears repeatedly. For example, in Impartment from Masters (Shi Chuan) of Miraculous Pivot (Ling Shu) it’s said that lungs are the canopy, ... heart is the sovereign, ... liver is the general, ... spleen takes charge of guarding, ... kidney governs the outside. This let the author associate Emperor Wu of Han who established the Eastern Han Dynasty in Qin and Han Dynasties. Before Emperor Wu of Han, the top national management team consisted of four persons who were the emperor, the Prime Minister, the imperial counselor and the grand commander. The combination of the latter three under the emperor

has been called the three grand dukes and within this bureaucracy each took his own responsibility. The emperor controlled the power of national politics, economy, military affairs, and judicature. The prime minister directly assisted the emperor, presiding over the country's administrative affairs (including financial economy). The imperial counselor was the deputy of the prime minister, assisting the prime minister in managing national administrative affairs, and took charge of national supervision job (including supervision of revenue and expenditures). The grand commander was in charge of the armed forces of the country, equal to the prime minister in status. Liu Xiu, the founder of East Han dynasty, reformed the structure of the top management during the thirty three years of his reign, and expanded the power of imperial secretariat which was formerly the institute of official documents issuing with certain administrative power, making it an imperial decision-making institute as well as the central department that ordered to the external. The head of the imperial secretariat was directly under the control of the emperor, increasing the number of the members in the top national management team to five, thus a complete five-element management system of the top national management on a five-person scale has been formed.

Based on those above we wonder if we can establish top management team with the five-element system in 'Huangdi Neijing'. For example: at present, power and right of the top management team in many departments and units are excessively concentrated within certain members, preventing the members from being restrained by each other, which leads to the common occurrence of corruption by high officials in governmental departments or senior executives in state-owned enterprises taking advantage of their post rights. So we can try to highlight the advantages of personal ability and system functions according to the five-person scale set by the Organic Law by State Council, and combine it with the five-images personality theory of the 25 kinds of yin-yang human in Huangdi Neijing to build highly efficient and harmonious top management team of five-element generating-restraining management system[14]. In this way, we can inhibit corruption of governmental officials and corporate executives, and reconcile the conflict between team members with the five-element theory.

Conclusion

If we only use the physical index and data to judge a person's health condition, we might fail to grasp the comprehensive condition of both psychological and physical health, which prevents us from treating people by TCM, much less treat before diseases taking place. If we only use the material economic index and quantity of subsistence to evaluate the degree of civilization of a country, the country will lose the overall harmony and resources shortage, ecological degradation and environmental pollution may be caused. In that case we can only solve those problems after the mess having been formed. With studying the interaction and dual-impact between the encyclopedia of Huangdi Neijing and the country governance at that time, we attempt to discover the materials that can inspire and be inherited by the modern management and medicine in China by digging/studying in depth the concept of "the top-grade doctor can govern a country" in history. Of course, when we do academic research on the dual-impact of ancient human medicine and social management, we still need to refer Historical Records, History of Han, History of the Later Han Dynasty, History of the Later Han Dynasty by Seven Scholars, Records of the Three Kingdoms, Miscellany of the Western Capital, Records of Huayang State, General Mirror for Aid in Government and other related historical material and study further in depth in order to better illustrate the management concept of "the top-grade doctor can govern a country". In short, we hope that this study will cause profound thinking for TCM and management academia in the future.

Notes

Zhou Li· Spring Officer---For "Tianfu" (top office), Jia Gongyan annotated that where things gather

is called 'Fu'. The place where officers gather is 'Guan Fu' (governmental office or mansion). The place where food and drink gather in body is 'Six Fu' (six bowels or six fu-organs). Thus we can see that "Fu" is the place of gathering. In modern Chinese characters, there are 'Fu' that with the moon radical meaning inner organs of body and without the moon radical meaning a place. Here within this term the 'Fu' that without the moon radical is used to emphasize the interrelation between governing a country, maintaining life and treating diseases.

References

- [1] ZhangXiaodong , Kongqun.“I like traditional Chinese medicine”[N].CHINA NEWS OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE.2015-2-18(1) (In Chinese)
- [2] WuXiaoxiang.“the top-grade doctor can govern the country”——written in “read the TCM concept of XiJinping(chairman of China)’s speech” Series of articles published [N]. CHINA NEWS OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE.2015-1-23(1) (In Chinese)
- [3] Peter Drucker.The Practice of Management[M]. Beijing: Mechanical Industry Press .2011: 15,156
- [4] Lyden J A,Klinge W E.Supervising organizational health[J].Supervision.2000, 61 (12) :3-7
- [5] Mario Ivan Tarride , R.Ariel Zamorano , S.Nicolas Varel , M.Julia Gonzalez.Healthy organizations: toward a diagnostic method[J].Kybernetes.2008,37(8):1120-1150
- [6] ChengXiandong,WenLi. Research on Enterprise Diagnosis under Medical Perspective.Value Engineering. 2010 (4) :58-59(In Chinese)
- [7] Wen Li, Sun Chaoping, Yang Zhengdao. Analysis of risk management theory and application status, [J]. Science and Technology Review.2003(In Chinese)
- [8] WenLi. Analogism thinking model embodied in ‘Huangdi Neijing’[J]. Chinese Journal of traditional Chinese Medicine(former China Medical Journal).2010(12):2320—2322(In Chinese)
- [9] Viktor Mayer-Schonberger,Kenneth Cukier. Big Data: A Revolution—That Will Transform How We Live, Work and Think[M]. Hodder & Stoughton. 2013-10-01
- [10] Wangjian,Huanghui.Chinese medicine and Chinese traditional culture(B)[J]. Clinical Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine, 2011,23 (02): 95-105(In Chinese)
- [11] Ren Jiyu. History of Chinese Philosophy Book II [M]. People's Publishing House .1966(In Chinese)
- [12] Wen Li. ‘Huangdi Neijing’ thought and modern business management[D]. Hefei University of Technology.2011(In Chinese)
- [13] Zhou Qiren. Urban and Rural China[M]. CITIC Publishing House.2013:163--166(In Chinese)
- [14] Wen Li,Zhang Ruixue,Bai Qinhu.On management construction at high levels inside enterprises by applying China ancient theory of the five elements[J]. Journal of HeFei University of Technology (Social Sciences).2002(5):42--47(In Chinese)