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The 3rd International Scientific Conference on Positive Management and Leadership in Socially Responsible Organisations

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The 3rd International Scientific Conference on Positive Management and Leadership in Socially Responsible Organisations was conducted on 13 September 2018 at the Faculty of Economic Sciences and Management (FESM), Nicolaus Copernicus University (NCU) in Toruń. The aim of the conference was to establish the discussion platform for the researchers dealing with the aspects of positive management traditionally cultivated by the research community of the FESM NCU (cf. Stankiewicz (Ed.), 2010; Stankiewicz (Ed.), 2013). In 2018, similarly to previous editions of the conference (cf. Lis, 2016; Lis, 2017), the focus was given to the issues associated with:

- “positive management including: interpersonal relationships, intra-organisational communication, trust, organisational citizenship behaviours;
- leadership including: contemporary concepts of leadership, roles played by top, middle and first line managers, challenges (both external and intra-organisational) faced by leaders in business organisations, the public sector, and non-profit organisations;

- corporate responsibility to employees and other stakeholders, organisations in business environment, society and the natural environment”.

The conference was opened by Prof. UMK dr hab. Jerzy Boehlke, the Dean of the FESM NCU and Prof. dr hab. Robert Karaszewski the Head of the Department of Business Excellence, FESM NCU and the editor-in-chief of *Journal of Corporate Responsibility and Leadership*. Prof. Karaszewski awarded Dr Jolanta Maj representing Opole University of Technology for her contribution to *Journal of Corporate Responsibility and Leadership* as an author and an issue editor in 2017.

The first paper session, chaired by Prof. dr hab. Robert Karaszewski and Dr Andrzej Lis (both FESM NCU), related to the issues of leadership and CSR in contemporary organisations. Dr Jolanta Maj discussed availability and structure of CSR information disclosed by Polish organisations. The aim of her study was to find out “to which extent Polish organisations report on corporate sustainability” and “which sustainability indicators they report on most willingly”. The paper is a continuation of her earlier research on social reporting by Polish companies (cf. Maj, 2016a; Maj, 2016b; Maj, 2017). Non-financial reports of 430 Polish enterprises listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange were the subject of analysis. Dr Maj discovered that “the vast majority of organisations listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange do not disclose non-financial information”. In her opinion, in regard to the structure of available reports, “the reporting of the general information may be assessed as satisfactory, [however] the disclosure in the other categories has a lot of potential for improvement”. Prof. dr. Guennadi Khatskevich, the Dean of the Faculty of Business Administration, Belarussian State University in Minsk presented the research and educational potential of his Faculty. For the conference, he submitted the paper co-authored with Dr Tatiana Proharava and Dr Yury Karaleu (both Belarussian State University) discussing education of business leaders in the digital economy. They analysed the case study of developing leaders in the School of Business of Belarussian State University. In his second speech, Dr Yury Karaleu discussed the aspects of social responsibility in companies insolvency, which is one of the areas of his research interests (cf. Karaleu, 2015; Karaleu, 2016). His study aimed at providing the answer for the following research questions: (1) “What is the practice of disclosing social and employee-related matters in corporate reports in accordance with different requirements?”, (2) How do companies

implement those requirements in real practice?” and (3) “What is the interaction of social responsibility and companies’ insolvency?”. He analysed employee-related aspects disclosed in non-financial reports and CSR issues in insolvency legal regulations in various countries, focusing on priorities and preferences for employee claims (or lack of them) in the case of insolvency procedures. He concluded his speech with recommendations for changing key performance indicators of non-financial social and employee issues required by law and reporting standards.

The second paper session, chaired Dr Yury Karaleu was centred on challenges in business operations of contemporary companies in regard to innovations and social responsibility. Dr Andrzej Lis (NCU) presented the findings of the bibliometric descriptive study aimed at mapping the scientific productivity related to the issues of responsible and sustainable innovations. In the study co-authored with Prof. UMK dr hab. Agata Sudolska (NCU) and Prof. WSB dr hab. Monika Chodorek (WSB University in Toruń), he conducted research profiling of the research field, including general publication profiling, subject area profiling and topic profiling. The project is continuation of earlier studies realized by the research team (cf. Lis and Sudolska, 2018). Dr Piotr Bębenek (Opole University of Technology) presented the findings of his research of using external funding opportunities to develop innovative potential of companies operating in Opolskie voivodeship. The study proves that companies benefitting from the EU funds change their innovation policies in order to meet the criteria required in bidding procedures, which in consequence positively stimulates their competitiveness. The issues related to the role of EU funding for innovativeness of Polish companies and their adaptability to bidding criteria (cf. Bębenek, 2016) initiated a very hot debate among the audience. Mateusz Mierzejewski representing Cracow University of Economics investigated whether the implementation of CSR strategy increases the stability of long-term operations in case of macroeconomic turbulences. His statistical study employing the method of cross-spectral analysis based on the data of price indexes, stock exchange indexes and stock exchange indexes of socially responsible businesses. He analysed five exogenous variables such as: USD/EURO exchange rates, changes of oil prices, inflation, short- and long-term interest rates. The main conclusion derived from this study seems to be a little bit astonishing: it shows that the companies listed on socially responsible indexes (e.g. FTSE4Good US 100,

FTSE4Good Europe 50, FTSE4Good UK 50 or RESPECT) are more vulnerable than those in SnP500, Euro Stoxx50, FTSE or WIG20. The differences in size and potential of listed companies (those in regular indexes are generally larger) may be one of possible explanations of this situation. Nevertheless, the results are very interesting and the further studies in the field are recommended.

The third paper sessions aimed at searching of effective leadership was chaired by Dr Jolanta Maj. Dr Agata Rudnicka-Reichel and Dr Janusz Reichel, both representing the University of Łódź, discussed business orientation in social enterprises managed by women focusing their attention on characteristics of successful leaders. Although the social economy sector in Poland engages only 3% of all employees, it is on increase and plays a significant stabilising role on the labour market due to the fact it often provides employment to the underprivileged. What is interesting, leadership in the sector is characterised by a high participation of females. Supported by their experience in researching the social economy sector (cf. Reichel, 2010; Rudnicka, 2017), the authors presented the findings of their qualitative research (interviews with female managers of social enterprises) related to the key success factors of social economy businesses, barriers of developing social entrepreneurship and management styles of female leaders. In the second paper presented in the session, Tomasz Rajfura in co-authorship with Prof. dr hab. Robert Karaszewski (both FESM NCU) made an attempt to answer an intriguing question “what can leaders learn from horses?”. Recognising emotional intelligence as one of the most required qualities of contemporary and future leaders, he analysed the possibilities of employing equine-assisted learning to develop emotional intelligence. He supported theoretical discussion with the presentation of a short case of the equine-assisted learning session delivered to the students of the MBA programme at the FESM NCU (Rajfura and Karaszewski, 2018).

The fourth paper session chaired by Dr Piotr Bębenek explored the various aspects of positivity in contemporary organisations. Patrycja Gulak-Lipka (FESM NCU) presented her research findings on the qualities of leaders who used to practice sports professionally. Martyna Żak (Cracow University of Economics) outlined the main assumptions, role, antecedents and benefits of organisational citizenship behaviours. Her presentation triggered a very interesting discussion on bright and dark sides of organisational behaviours (cf. Turek, 2016) and paradoxical

co-existence of organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs) and counterproductive work behaviours (CWBs) (cf. Klotz and Bolino, 2013; Glińska-Neweś and Lis, 2016) In the presentation concluding the session, Jakub Garncarz (Cracow University of Economics) outlined the history of the concept of good in relation to modern economic thought in the context of interpersonal relationships.

Summing up, the conference provided the opportunity to exchange the research findings and ideas related to main topics of interest of *Journal of Corporate Responsibility and Leadership*. It also contributed to the development and promotion of the idea of positive management cultivated by the research community associated with the Faculty of Economic Sciences and Management, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń.

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