CEREM

CENTRAL EUROPEAN REVIEW OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT

WSB University
in Wrocław

Wyższa Szkoła Bankowa
we Wrocławiu

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CENTRAL EUROPEAN REVIEW
OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT

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Editors:

Katarzyna Kulig-Moskwa and Joost Platje

Vol. 1, No. 2

CONTENTS

The world in the post-truth era or how too much love of TINA will kill you

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Abstract:

Aim: The temptation to provide simple answers to complex problems exists for politicians and scientists alike. This essay attempts to briefly outline the complexity of present day problems at global level, taking as a starting point the question "how quick will the EU collapse?"

Design / Research methods: The nature of the topic calls for a holistic interpretative approach rather than a systematic reductionist one. Brief discussions are given of separate yet interconnected, causally related and overlapping natural and social research domains, illustrating the need for qualified multidisciplinary spokesmen able to separate facts from "alternative facts."

Conclusions / findings: Making the simple anthropological observation that people can choose policies that are self-destructive does not make social science politicized or value-biased. A society that considers global warming, depletion and pollution caused by fossil fuels as mere externalities makes a demonstrable erratic choice. Because one of the major goals of science is to establish (in)validity of "common sense," it is the duty of academics to tell our students that societies, including entire scientific departments, can make consistent erratic choices.

Originality / value of the article: This essay may help scholars and practitioners to start to look at their research domain in a (much) wider global context.

Keywords: monetary system, market system, inequality, climate change, depletion

JEL: P10, P28, P36, Q20, Q40, Q50.

1. Introduction

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

— William Yates, "The Second Coming" (1919; also, see Toulmin 1990: 66)

I wish to thank the editor of *Central European Review of Economics and Management* for the invitation to contribute to the subject "Disintegrating Europe - how quick will the EU collapse?" This essay is to explain why I have to decline on such assignment. The main reason is that I lack the scientific authority to write in this area. Admittedly, I have published on governance (Kampen 2009), economy (Kampen 2012), sociology (Kampen 2010), ecology (Marwijk et al. 2012), public management (Kampen et al. 2006, 2003; Kampen, Snijkers 2003) and climatology (Kampen 2011), sometimes in major, sometimes in minor journals, but that doesn't make me an authority on the possible decline of Europe. Allow me to elaborate on my reasons a little.

In March 2003, together with my spouse, I visited the USA in order to attend a conference. At customs of Dulles airport, Washington DC, first my spouse was interrogated about the purpose of her visit, and her statements were then cross-referenced with mine. The fear of US customs that we intended to stay as illegal immigrants was totally unjustified, we're both very fond of Europe, but how could they know. So they fired a number of questions. Was it my first visit to the US? Yes. What was the reason of my stay? I explained that I came to attend a conference on public administration, and would present a paper about the reasons why people distrust government. After an uncomfortable pause, during which I tried to figure out in what way I contradicted my spouse's statements, the person from customs said: "What took you so long?"

So we were cleared to enter the Promised Land. Arriving on a Saturday, we had time to visit the city center, and witnessed a mass of people near the Mall protesting against the planned invasion of Iraq (protests about which you would not learn on CNN). The next evening, on Sunday, while in the hotel restaurant, the invasion was officially announced by Bush Jr., and while we were close to tears, the American guests actually enjoyed the news, some men dressing in stars-and-stripes ties, making us feel totally alien. We stayed for two weeks, a first week for the conference (and visiting DC), and a second driving around in Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, and North Carolina, in a rented Chevrolet. During this sightseeing tour we were consistently confirmed in our notions that we would never feel at home in the USA. At a bed-and-breakfast in Kentucky, the owner showed us an enormous gun (was it a Colt Single Action Army Peacemaker?) that he kept in a drawer, supposing that it would make us feel safe in his place. The supermarkets had 50 different kinds of Cheddar but not a single piece of Dutch, Danish, or Swiss cheese. The city centers were ugly, abandoned with white washed windows, the look and feel of Bruce Springsteen's *Nebraska* album all over the place, and with few exceptions simply not worth visiting. On the roads and highways, people would open the windows of their SUVs and throw the garbage of their fast food diners out on the street, a behavior we witnessed everywhere except in the Reserves which were impeccably clean. Outside the reserves, any spot that looked interesting on the map (a waterfall, a river bank, a viewpoint of some kind) was private owned and fenced off. In conversations with the local people, we were criticized for not fighting Saddam Hussein (recall that Germany, France, and Belgium, where we live, were not part of the "coalition of the willing"). People upheld the notion that the USA should adopt an isolationist policy using their own unlimited resources, and leaving the world to its own problems (not acknowledging of course, that the USA was an active player in the creation of many of these problems). In short, we were happy to be Europeans, and to be going home soon.

But we are 14 years later now, a relatively short period of time during which Europe has changed to become near unrecognizable. Simultaneously my career has changed direction. I was once a psychologist, became a social scientist with a degree, was active as a postdoc for several years in public management studies, went

on to become a political scientist, compiled Dutch official statistics for a while, only to become an assistant professor teaching research methodology at BSc, MSc and PhD level, in a multidisciplinary context (see Tobi, Kampen 2017). In order to be fully convincing that the task to address the question "how quick will the EU collapse?" is beyond my capacities, I provide an outline of the topics and scientific fields that need to be covered in order to intelligently arrive at an answer. The nature of the topic calls for a holistic interpretative approach rather than a systematic reductionist one, because the topic concerns separate yet interconnected, causally related and overlapping natural and social research domains, and requires qualified multidisciplinary spokesmen able to separate facts from "alternative facts." A layout of these topics is in Figure 1, which will convince you that I'm not the multidisciplinary centipede that you're looking for. I hope the diagram helps you in finding someone apt to the job. In the next sections, I will briefly discuss the elements in the diagram, along with the little I know about these things, in order to arrive at a highly preliminary conclusion in the final section.
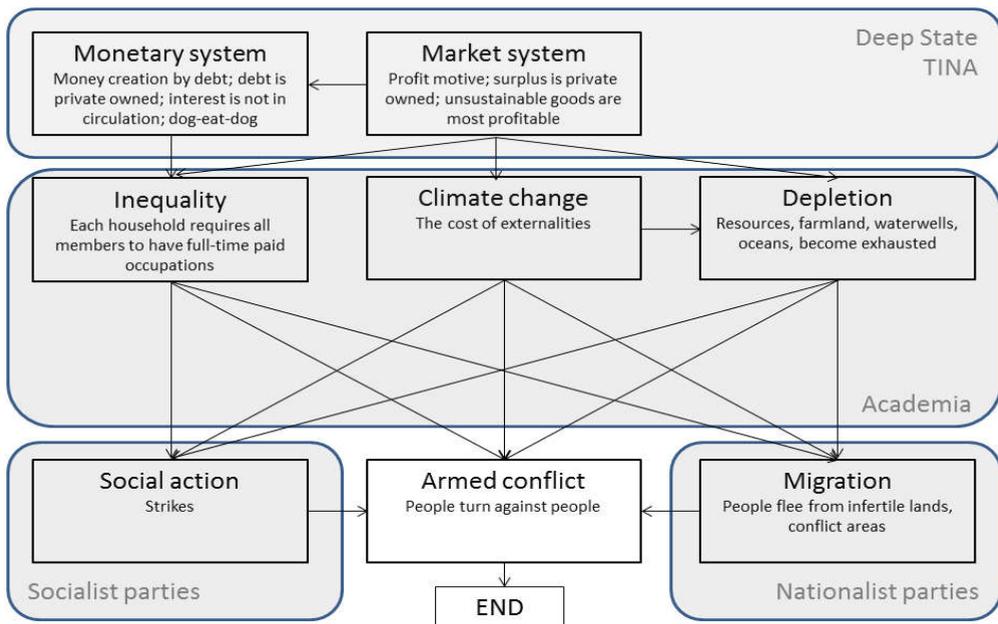
Figure 1. The global system
Source: author's own contemplations

2. There is no alternative

The monetary system

"There is no alternative (shortened as TINA) was a slogan often used by the Conservative British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher."

— Wikipedia

"No-one would remember the Good Samaritan if he'd only had good intentions; he had money as well."

— Margaret Thatcher

"The debt limits have to come down. The whole world of debt has to be changed as far as this country is concerned. We have to create jobs and we have to create them rapidly because if we don't things are just going to head in a direction that's going to be almost impossible to recover from."

— Donald Trump

The purpose of money as the means to pay prices of commodities and services is to allocate labor. For example, I need bread today and in the future, but the baker may have no need for a course in statistics and methodology for years to come. So I pay the baker money, which he can cumulate or spend on other items paying other people, some of whom may have a use for the labor that I happen to sell. Money came into being as an aid not an aim. Accumulating money is an aim of many people because it gives the owner power to allocate labor. If you accumulate a lot of money, you can allocate a lot of labor – ultimately enough labor to force entire nations into self-selected directions (invariably those that will make one accumulate more money and power). An institution that has the monopoly to create money has of course, unlimited power. Nowadays, money is introduced to the market by means of bank credit (Grazania 2003: 11). In other words, in our monetary system, money is debt, the debt is owed to the banks, and the banks are owned by its shareholders (mainly from the private sector).

Elsewhere I have tried to analyze how monetary systems (including so-called Islamic banking) invariably create unserviceable debt: sums of money that have to be repaid to the bank owners in kind (Piketty 2013: ch. 15; Kampen 2011). The periodic shake-ups of the financial system are those moments when society at large has to cough up the unserviceable debt. Financial crises facilitate the quick accumulation of money. For instance, stock market crashes make high volumes of stock change hands from the middleclass to the upperclass, so that today the rich 1% have the ownership papers of 50% of all assets worldwide (Oxfam 2015). Such crashes have no apparent origin in the real economy (ignoring all posterior explanations by financial experts), but are caused by a demand for money by lenders which forces borrowers to liquidate their stocks, bonds and real estate. For instance, prior to, during, and posterior to the financial crises of 1929 and of 2007 all resources for production were in place. There was no pandemic that flattened the labor force, nor were there any important collapses or fires in factories or mines. Scientific literature provides no evidence that there were issues with the labor force, transportation infrastructure, or with the materials needed to produce. Everything was in place, except for a shortage of money. The public had overborrowed. Already in the 18th century, overborrowing money was the major reason for the disappearing of the small landowner (Johnson 1909: 118). But why have sophisticated, profit-maximizing lenders so often overlent, askes Joseph Stiglitz (2006). *Lenders encourage indebtedness because it is profitable*, he replies (p. 216, italics added).

The reason why governments had no money to continue economic activity in 2007 (and at the next crisis) was the monetary system in general, and interest on loans in particular. Interest means that banks try to extract more money from society than it puts into society, so with *mathematical certainty* society remains with debt that periodically has to be repaid in kind (Grazania 2003: 31). And realize that someone's profit is someone else's debt. For governments from the 1980s on, paying in kind meant surrendering public goods to privatization (Kampen 2009). Today governments have no other source of income than taxes, and they have to borrow money like any ordinary person in the street and on the same conditions. This means that governments depend on the courtesy of the lenders. Among many

other nations that preceded their fate, the Greek people can tell you what that courtesy entails.

The market system

"There are significant differences between the American and European version of capitalism. The American traditionally emphasizes the need for limited government, light regulations, low taxes and maximum labor-market flexibility. Its success has been shown above all in the ability to create new jobs, in which it is consistently more successful than Europe."

— Margaret Thatcher

"We will make America strong again. We will make America proud again. We will make America safe again. And we will make America great again."

— Donald Trump

A profitable business not only sells products for more money than they're worth. It has to sell these products on a continuous basis. And in order to be able to sell products continuously they must be manufactured with the lowest quality possible, so that they are in need of continuous replacement. A product that can be repaired will not be replaced, so the products must be irreparable too. If in addition, governments continue to value economic productivity over environmental pollution, the business is a goldmine to its owners, who use the profits to allocate labor to make more profit, until they literally own the entire free market. That is, the entire Planet Earth including you and me. Did not Erasmus advise Charles I already in 1517 that people good in collecting wealth are not necessarily good in formulating policy? Perhaps he should have told that to the people of the USA .

The market system is designed for people interested in making profit, that is, interested in accumulating money in order to have power over people's labor. Why people want more money than needed to maintain a comfortable life beats me. For the few times that I fly I don't need to own an airplane. I can drive only one car, live in one house, look at one TV, cannot tell cava from champagne, and don't like caviar. I have no interest in converting people to my religion or in exercising power

over them. Of course every now and then, I want my car faster, my house more comfortable, my TV screen bigger, my phone smarter, my sparkling wine pink, my children to obey without commenting – but these things, as you well know, are ridiculously unimportant when compared to the health and happiness of you and your loved ones. It will be easy to let some if not all of these materialistic desires go. It is a pity in this respect that health care is increasingly privatized (read: made available to the privileged only).

The monetary system and the market system are the best systems ever invented and any apparent shortcomings are the fault of government intervention. Even when they are the direct cause of the social and environmental externalities that I discuss below, there is no alternative. There. Is. No. Alternative. So we might as well love Tina.

3. Social and environmental externalities

Inequality

> *"I think we've been through a period where too many people have been given to understand that if they have a problem, it's the government's job to cope with it. 'I have a problem, I'll get a grant.' 'I'm homeless, the government must house me.' They're casting their problem on society. And, you know, there is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women, and there are families. And no government can do anything except through people, and people must look to themselves first. It's our duty to look after ourselves and then, also to look after our neighbor. People have got the entitlements too much in mind, without the obligations. There's no such thing as entitlement, unless someone has first met an obligation."*

― Margaret Thatcher

> *"I don't like losers."*

― Donald Trump

There was a short period in Europe when a single income was sufficient to maintain a family. This period is over. Real income has been dropping since the seventies onward (the "long downturn"; see Brenner 1998). Despite all robots, automation, industry, mass agriculture, etc., servicing a mortgage for an apartment or house requires both partners to have payed occupations. In other parts of the world, still much worse off, child labor is normal. These children make the trousers and dresses for our own children. Access to education and healthcare is a fiction in the "developing" part of the world, and is becoming history in the "developed" part. The banks are consuming all money once reserved for the retired, the sick, the unfortunate, and the youth. For many people, life is simply becoming unbearable, which drives them to social action, migration, or worse.
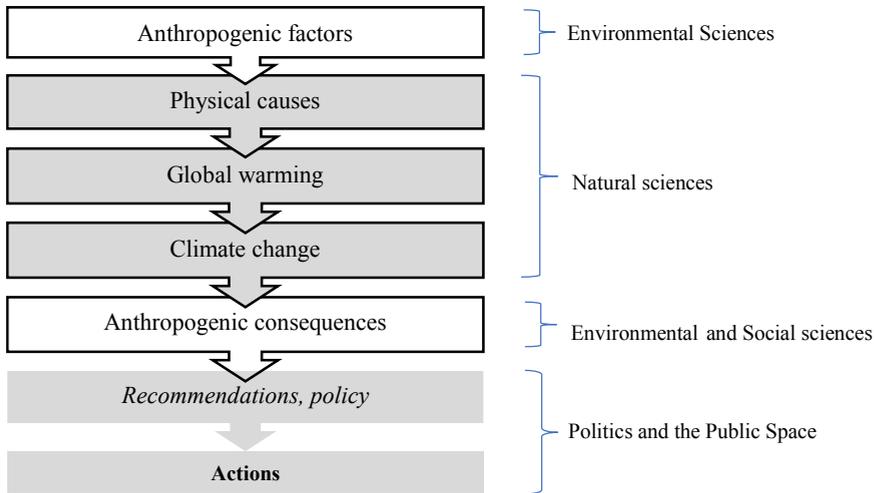
Figure 2 – The interdisciplinary nature of the debate on AGW
Source: author's own contemplations

Run-away greenhouse
   "An atmosphere of that gas would give to our earth a high temperature; and if as some suppose, at one period of its history the air had mixed with it a larger proportion than at present, an increased temperature from its own action as well as from increased weight must have necessarily resulted."

— Eunice Foote (1859), American Journal of Science and Arts

"Watch your thoughts, for they will become actions. Watch your actions, for they'll become habits. Watch your habits for they will forge your character. Watch your character, for it will make your destiny."

— Margaret Thatcher

"Windmills are going to be the death of Scotland and even England if they don't do something about them. They are ruining the countryside."

— Donald Trump

Knowledge of the warming effect of CO_2 dates back to experiments conducted by John Tyndall in the nineteenth century. And since the evidence that humans are changing the composition of the Earth's atmosphere by increasing greenhouse gas levels (including CO_2) and decreasing oxygen levels is cumulating (e.g. Stuiver et al. 1984; Quay et al. 1992), the anthropogenic global warming (AGW) theory can be considered to be firmly grounded in solid verifiable scientific theory. The only question that cannot be answered straightaway is exactly how much of fluctuations in the Earth's temperature can be attributed to anthropogenic factors. But AGW is without doubt very inconvenient for our beloved Tina.
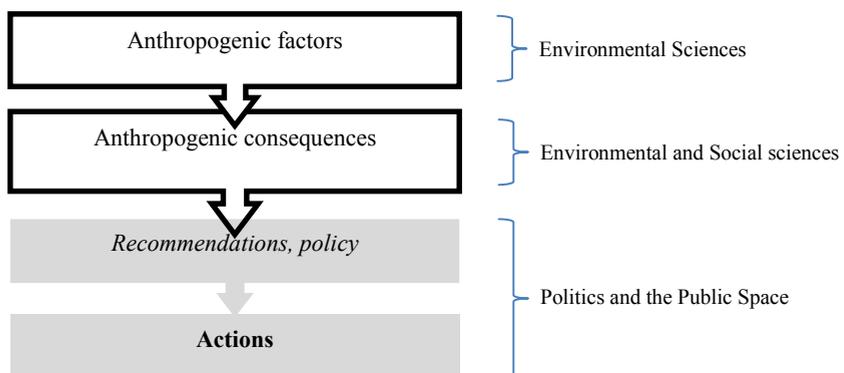
Figure 3 – The simplistic debate on AGW
Source: author's own contemplations

Nobody knows whether we have already reached the point of run-away green house, but status quo will make it certainty whereas radical changes make it a probability. However, even this probability is contested by high ranking politicians, who refer to apparent and fictitious debate in science. The complexity of AGW arises from the fact that it presupposes a chain of interrelated phenomena, each requiring different expertise for studying (e.g. Corner et al. 2012; see Figure 2). The core of the theory is within the realm of the natural sciences: notably (quantum) physics, cosmology and climatology. The natural sciences are well in a position to determine physical causes (e.g. characteristics of GHGs, solar activity, etc.) of warming, and in measuring, estimating and predicting effects of global warming on the Earth's climate (e.g. droughts and floods, vanishing of Polar ice caps, etc.), up to a certain level of detail. However, when it comes to determining the relative impact of anthropogenic factors that contribute to physical causes of AGW (e.g. industrialization, cement production, transportation, deforestation), in part or in whole the natural sciences must rely on other scientific disciplines (geography, economics, environmental sciences) for the supply of data. Also, other disciplines than the natural sciences are responsible for establishing anthropogenic consequences (e.g. changed or decreased biodiversity and fertility, soil erosion, etc.). And finally, a group of specialists succinctly different from scientists altogether is responsible for formulating adequate remedial policies and follow up on the public debate.

Elsewhere I have argued that when the debate becomes more focused on falsification rather than verification of the AGW hypothesis, the case for validity of the latter theory could become stronger (Kampen 2011). Whereas natural scientists tend to believe that criticism of AGW, if at all possible, should be directed at the causal chain "physical causes → global warming → climate change" (in short, PGC), some social scientists and many politicians believe that PGC is part of a belief system that can be rejected or accepted at will. At the level of a society, ultimately the taxpayers decide what is to be taught in public schools and how public money is to be spent, says Feyerabend (1987). At the level of scientists, consensus is accepted as a proxy for the truth (Swanborn 1997). Because social scientists and politicians have unsubstantial understanding of natural sciences, their focus is the

simplified chain going from anthropogenic causes to anthropogenic consequences (Figure 3). Possible critique of AGW can thus be directed at the presupposed human causes (do they exist?), the presupposed effects (do they exist?), and the presupposed causal link (does it exist?).

If the existence of the causal link (PGC) is rejected, no amount of empirical evidence gathered on either side of the causal link (cause or effect) will change the conviction that AGW is invalid. Any claim that more cause or more effect points in the direction of validity of the AGW theory will be dismissed (*post hoc ergo propter hoc*). Because the underwriting of the causal link is derived from support of the natural sciences, and because this support in turn is vested on trust of natural scientists rather than the understanding of natural scientific theory, validity of AGW is granted only in so far as individual natural scientists are trusted. In a post-truth era, and remembering that politicians are among the least trusted people in Western nations, the engaging of natural scientists in political debates is not helping in this respect. Scientists should categorically refuse political debate and scientific activism if they want to maintain their credibility.

Ideology is not about fact, but about faith, said Joseph Goebbels (Longerich 2010). So if *you* believe that global warming is a myth, and *I* believe that global warming is a myth, and mainstream media confirms that the *science is uncertain*, then we can safely maintain status quo and our love of Tina. Forever?

Depletion

> *"It is not the creation of wealth that is wrong, but the love of money for its own sake."*
>
> ― Margaret Thatcher

> *"I saw a report yesterday. There's so much oil, all over the world, they don't know where to dump it. And Saudi Arabia says, 'Oh, there's too much oil.' They – they came back yesterday. Did you see the report? They want to reduce oil production. Do you think they're our friends? They're not our friends."*
>
> ― Donald Trump

Tina believes that she should fill the Earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the Earth. Still, natural resources (like fertile land, oceans, forests), mineral resources (like rare earths, uranium, silver) and fossil fuels are in limited supply (McKibben 2007). Most of them are not renewable. Depletion of oil resources is inevitable and is announced by the event called Peak Oil (e.g. Strahan 2007; Roberts 2004). Deforestation of ancient tropical woods is irreversible. With present fishing quota we must fear for extinction of tuna fish, and the rapid depletion of oceans of other fish for consumption.

Because Tina demands that products are of inferior quality, in *real time* she not only fills up the garbage and scrapheaps all over this planet, pollutes the natural environment (water, soil and air), and produces social inequalities, but she also leaves an inhabitable world depleted of all resources needed for human survival (MEA 2005). And available evidence strongly suggests that the Earth has so many unique combined features that it proves to be the only place in the entire universe where complex life forms, such as ourselves, are possible (Ward, Brownly 2000). Or should I say, *were* possible?

4. The political playing field

The socialist route

> "The problem with socialism is that eventually you run out of other people's money."
>
> — Margaret Thatcher

> "We can't let people down when they can't get any medical care, when they're sick and don't have money to go to a doctor. You help them."
>
> — Donald Trump

Most socialist parties focus on the social externalities (e.g. inequality) but accept Tina as unalterable. Socialists myopically attempt to redistribute wealth without

noticing its source and nature. This is comfortable for Tina, in particular when socialists accept delaying retirement age, decreasing unemployment support, decreasing wages, selling public goods, etc., in the bargain. Support of socialist parties is evaporating all over Europe. In a sad but understandable confusing of anti-establishment with anti-socialism, voters turn to nationalistic anti-migrant parties that promise to listen to the voice of the people. Anticipating plebiscite response to paternalistic governance, during the late 1990s and in the 2000s, Western governments sponsored social scientific research that tried to identify the reasons why people in democracies increasingly distrusted their governments (e.g. Kampen et al. 2006). Some political parties responded to the deficit of public trust by advocating increased public participation. Even when scholars better suited than me have identified the main deficiencies of (national) referenda (Weimer, Vining 1989; but see also Kampen, Snijkers 2003), the Netherlands, UK and Italy conducted referenda in 2016 with highly inconvenient outcomes. But with all public goods in the hands of Tina, one begs to wonder what the votes were about in any case. Good governance means decreasing the scope of public influence whilst increasing the channels of participation (Kampen 2009).

The nationalist route

> *"In the end, more than freedom, they wanted security. They wanted a comfortable life, and they lost it all – security, comfort, and freedom. When the Athenians finally wanted not to give to society but for society to give to them, when the freedom they wished for most was freedom from responsibility, then Athens ceased to be free and was never free again."*
>
> ― Margaret Thatcher

> *"The American People will come first once again. My plan will begin with safety at home – which means safe neighborhoods, secure borders, and protection from terrorism. There can be no prosperity without law and order."*
>
> ― Donald Trump

Support of nationalist parties is booming all over Europe. Nationalists share with socialists the love for referenda. And like socialists, nationalist parties and populists don't discuss Tina. Sometimes unwittingly, nationalists protect her with their policies by consistently tempting the people to identify the source of their problems as either immigrants or lack of national sovereignty. Most nationalists also deny climate change and categorically ignore externalities. In fact, their policies are designed by finding detractors of the consequences of Tina by claiming that societal struggles are caused by irreconcilable differences of cultures (e.g. Islam contra Christianity). "Greed is good." The natural state of man is being materialistic, and a nation can only try to protect the materialistic interests of its own people in general (and oneself in particular). From prior experience I must recommend against the act of economically (using "economy" in its original meaning of "efficiency") combining "socialism" and "nationalism" in a single term "national-socialism" to denote such policies. One need only remember that nationalists leave Tina in her virgin state.

5. The future of the European nations

"Europe was created by history. America was created by philosophy."
— Margaret Thatcher

"I was in Brussels a long time ago. Twenty years ago. So beautiful, so – it's like living in a hellhole right now."
—Donald Trump, FOX news, January 2016

Among others, Slavoj Žižek claims that the greatest enemies of the European Union are the nationalist anti-migrant parties. The return to protectionist nationalist nation states (Brexit, USexit, Frexit, …) are of course not helping Europe's integration: these moves close windows for dialogue, and when diplomacy fails Clausewitz becomes relevant again. But whether the EU disintegrates or not, with the present monetary and market systems in place the only foreseeable future is war

between regions, nations, and continents. TINA legitimizes unlimited global looting. The global system will end in violent collapse, and if Hegel is right, start right over again. Recall Albert Einstein's famous quote when he claimed that "I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones." But perhaps he too, was optimistic.

One of the major goals of science is to establish (in)validity of "common sense." We have a civil duty to tell our students that societies, including entire scientific departments, can make consistent erratic choices. The love for Tina drives people crazy. When a society considers global warming and polluting caused by fossil fuels as mere externalities, this is an aberration, and maintaining such situations is pathology. This does not make social science politicized or value-biased in any way: it is a simple anthropological observation that people can choose policies that are self-destructive (see Diamond 2005).

People can also further other policies, of course. If people want to allocate their own labor, money must be nationalized or abandoned altogether. We can chose to use a token money (i.e. money that has no assets like gold backing its value, i.e. money like euro, dollar, yen, yuan, etc.) and have a periodic ritual each 4 years or so when both the accumulations and the deficits (debt) are deleted and the game starts over. If people want to fight climate change and depletion, they must re-allocate their resources, which means abandoning the individual profit system in favor of a collective profit system based on renewables and repairables. Exercising your power as a consumer (Reich 2007) is an important non-violent, non-cooperative way by which anyone can fight Tina. After all, concern of citizens about the ozone layer and the choice of consumers for alternatives forced industry to abandon CFKs in the 1980s (see Oreskes, Conway 2011). Decreasing meat consumption is well within your powers. Another interesting possibility is the decision to sell your goods and services only to people who can prove that their income is lower than the average national income. With these re-allocations in place, the need for migration and social action, and of course war, will gradually disappear.

But I don't see any of this happen. We are too much in love with Tina. And Tina fights back, for instance, by abandoning cash (so you have no way of holding capital outside banks who already own and spend your savings any way it pleases), by

passing legislation making it illegal to consume homegrown vegetables, by banning "fake news sites", and by a million other unforeseen ways. As for myself, having been held hostage by Tina for all my life, I've learned to love her because of Stockholm syndrome.

> *"I don't think there will be a woman prime minister in my lifetime."*
>
> — Margaret Thatcher

> *"The point is that you can't be too greedy."*
>
> — Donald Trump

Acknowledgements

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Jarl K. KAMPEN

Świat w erze postprawdy lub w jaki sposób zabije cię zbyt dużo miłości TINA

Streszczenie

Cel: Zarówno politycy, jak i naukowcy zmagają się z pokusą, aby udzielać prostych odpowiedzi na skomplikowane pytania. W artykule tym podjęto próbę zwięzłego zarysowania dzisiejszych problemów na poziomie globalnym, a jako punkt startowy przyjęto pytanie: „Jak szybko upadnie Unia Europejska?".

Układ / metody badawcze: Natura tematyki wskazuje raczej na holistyczne podejście interpretacyjne aniżeli na systematyczne podejście redukcjonistyczne. Przedstawiono krótkie dyskusje dotyczące oddzielnych, aczkolwiek powiązanych wzajemnie i nachodzących na siebie naturalnych i społecznych domen badawczych, ilustrujące potrzebę wykwalifikowanych multidyscyplinarnych mówców, zdolnych rozróżniać fakty od „alternatywnych faktów".

Wnioski / wyniki: Zwykłe antropologiczne obserwacje, zgodnie z którymi ludzie są w stanie wybrać politykę polegającą na samodestrukcji, niekoniecznie czynią nauki społeczne upolitycznionymi bądź nastawionymi na wartość. Społeczeństwo uznające globalne ocieplenie, wyczerpywanie się i zanieczyszczenia spowodowane przez paliwa kopalne za zaledwie efekty zewnętrzne, dokonuje demonstracyjnego nieobliczalnego wyboru. Ponieważ jednym z podstawowych celów nauki jest ustalenie (nie)zasadności „wspólnego sensu", akademicy mają obowiązek mówienia studentom, że społeczeństwa, włączając całe środowiska naukowe, mogą dokonywać ciągłych nieodpowiedzialnych wyborów.

Oryginalność / wartość artykułu: Artykuł może wspomóc naukowców i praktyków w rozpoczęciu spoglądania na ich obszary badawcze w (o wiele) głębszym globalnym kontekście.

Słowa kluczowe: system monetarny, system rynkowy, nierówność, zmiana klimatu, wyczerpienie zasobów naturalnych

JEL: P10, P28, P36, Q20, Q40, Q50.

Between development and sustainability: symbiotic synergy or irreconcilable duality

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Abstract:

Aim: This paper studies the concept of sustainable development, which has been overly present in recent times on global arena of debates about issues most pressing to humanity in variety of contexts, political, legal, social and environmental. It has been appropriated by governments and NGOs alike. It is being advocated to promote both, continuous growth and reversal of unsustainable pattern of limitless growth. The aim of this paper is to follow the history of the concepts of development and sustainability, its evolution and current status and question whether future developments in the area of sustainable development are likely to support "development" part of it, through drive to maximum economic growth, increase of financial flows and investments, consumption and production; or whether the "sustainability" part of the agenda, with protection of environment, human rights and climate as a priority, will prevail.

Design / Research methods: The article follows the historical origins and developments of the concepts of development and sustainability, since industrial revolution of the eighteenth century where progress has been linked with economic growth and material advancement. The concept of sustainability on the other hand is closely connected with human relationship with nature, which went through a profound change when people started to make permanent settlements, domesticate animals and farm the land. This paper explains how sustainable development term rose to political prominence following publication of the Brundtland report in 1987 and how subsequent global political initiatives, like Agenda 21, Johannesburg Declaration and 2030 Agenda, gradually reaffirmed the place of sustainable development as an important element of international agenda and broadened the meaning of the term.

Conclusions / findings: The role of business partner is present in 10% of the examined enterprises, with the source of capital and the entity size being of minor importance. Projects play a key role in the development of contemporary undertakings. Moreover, the primary role in terms of the implementation of any organizational activities is exercised by people. Thus, the opportunity emerges to implement and modify the concept of HR business partnering. This will lead to a greater professionalization of staffing, which will ultimately affect positively the implementation of strategy of the organizations under discussion.

Originality / value of the article: The publications on project management as well as those concerned with human resources management have so far not addressed the issue of the development of the HR business partner role in the organizations under discussion. The considerations, of both theoretical and practical nature, contribute to the theory of management, being much relevant owing to the ever growing popularity of the concept of management through projects.

Implications of the research: project management, project-oriented organization, HR department, HR business partner

Key words: project management, project-oriented organization, HR department, HR business partner

JEL: M12

1. Introduction

Sustainable development concept has been widely used and is often evoked, in variety of contexts political, legal, social and environmental. The phrase "sustainable development" has been overworked and it seems to suit all, regardless of the agenda. It has been appropriated by governments and NGOs alike. It is being advocated to promote both continuous growth and reversal of unsustainable pattern of limitless growth. It potentially has so many meanings that it risks being meaningless. The phrase is so ambiguous that it is not far from defying logic. It is an oxymoron in itself. "Development" stands for increase, expansion, extension and always seeking more. In a world of finite resources, such infinite augmentation is not sustainable. The two words together "development" and "sustainable" are contradictory. This article aims to analyse the historical origins and evolution of the concept and its place in the modern globalized world to understand whether any future developments in the area of sustainable development are likely to support "development" part of it, through drive to maximum economic growth, increase of financial flows and investments, consumption and production; or whether the "sustainability" part of the agenda, with protection of environment, human rights and climate as a priority, is likely to prevail.

2. Early developments before Brundtland Report

A good starting point would be to understand how development, or progress, has been understood throughout human history. Studying the human understanding and vision of the idea of progress will help to understand whether it needs to be sustainable. It was the Hebrew and Christian theology, giving expression to the linear conception of time as a directed succession of events, that transformed the way of thinking about history and progress (Du Pisani 2006: 84). The linear and continuous path of progress was supposed to lead to continuous improvements of human condition, first understood in spiritual sense and later on also in material dimension. During the period of Western modernity, linear dimension of progress was linked with science as a way to achieve human potential. Only during industrial revolution, from the eighteenth century, progress was also linked with economic growth and material advancement. In pursuit of maximization of economic production, people saw it right to dominate and exploit the nature. Nineteenth century brought optimism and belief in scientific and technological advancement that would lead to continuous progress of human kind and improvement of human life. The idea of progress, which had its final breakthrough during the Enlightenment, can rightly be regarded as a secularized heir to the Christian ideal of salvation story (Von Wright 1997: 5). However, industrial capitalism, growing gap between poor and rich and unprecedented scale of exploitation of raw materials, led to increasing concerns about the sustainability of this particular idea of progress.

That leads to the second aspect of the term "sustainable development" – concept of sustainability. Human relationship with nature went through a profound change when people started to make permanent settlements, domesticate animals and farm the land. The nature started to be exploited, shaped, utilized and subordinated by man, albeit firstly on a small scale of first settlements. Ownership of land and notions of material wealth as a source of power transformed human thought and allowed unprecedented success of human race. As early as in the ancient Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Greek and Roman civilizations environmental problems such as deforestation, salinization and loss of fertility of soil occurred, which we would today refer to as sustainability problems. Plato in the 5th century BC, Strabo and

Columella in the 1st century BC and Pliny the Elder in the 1st century AD discussed different types of environmental degradation resulting from human activities such as farming, logging and mining (Du Pisani 2006: 85). Industrial revolution brought concerns of degradation of nature into a sharp focus, mainly in wood industry, as the wood was the primary source of energy and main raw material. Overpopulation was another raising concern noted in the eighteenth century by Thomas Malthus in the most influential book on population of his era, "Essay on the principle of population as it affects the future improvement of society". His theory suggested that, as the population grows, it leads to a rising supply of labour and, consequently, results in lower wages. Malthus claimed that continually growing population would eventually end in poverty. He is considered the first economist that foresaw limits to growth due to absolute scarcity of resources. The Malthusian theory of "environmental limits" may be considered a precursor to the concept of sustainable development (Mebratu 1998: 499). As the energy production shifted from wood to coal in the nineteenth century, new concerns have arisen, regarding preserving of coal reserves. Among the works which contributed to the later development of the concept named sustainable development were "Principles of political economy" of 1848 by John Mill, which advocated "stationary state" of world's population, "Man and nature" of 1864 by George Marsh advocating conservation efforts and "Our wonderful century" of 1898 by Alfred Russell Wallace, which included chapter on the plunder of the earth and which themes were later covered in the Brundtland Report of 1987.

Twentieth century, with its industrial and commercial expansion, destructive global wars and extraordinary technological advances, brought the ideas of growth, development and sustainability into attention again. The propositions of a "stationary state" were rejected in favour of progressive economy and faith in advances in technology providing solutions to the problems of limited resources (Hicks 1941: 32). Against the backdrop of the widening gap between rich and poor countries and colonisation, a theory about development focused around two approaches, modernization and dependency theory. Modernization theory was based on liberal values and encouraged free market economy model, which would lead to continuing economic growth and eventually even out wealth distribution.

Modernization was the early sociocultural equivalent of neoliberalism. According to this theory, development meant assuming the mental models of the West (rationalization), the institutions of the West (the market), the goals of the West (high mass consumption), and the culture of the West (worship of the commodity) (Peet, Hartwick 2009: 132). This line of theory is an important element that links the idea of what is considered a development with the Western neoliberalism and globalization. Dependency theory of development on the other hand proposed the solution opposite to the modernization theory. As the Third World countries become more and more dependent on Western countries, leading to further underdevelopment and bankruptcy (So 1990: 108), developing countries should sever their linkages with Western capitalist countries in order to follow an autonomous, independent path of development based on socialism (So 1990: 262). These two theories evolved and adapted, but their basic principles remained influential in the evolution of sustainable development and are still present nowadays.

From around late 1960s new realization came to light, that of an impossibility of continuous linear progressive development. The collateral damage of such development was being evident in technologies being used in destructive ways, colonial exploitation, pollution, unchecked population growth, resource depletion and ravaging of nature. Two aspects of the theory of continuous growth were being questioned. Firstly, environmental damage due to extraordinary industrial and commercial expansion led to few major works on the subject (Carson 1962; Ehrlich 1968; Goldsmith 1972, or Schumacher 1973) and creation of first green movements (Friends of Earth and Greenpeace being the main ones). Secondly, worldwide crisis of the 1970s brought about the realisation of the limits to growth and questioned the possibility of continuous unlimited economic growth. As a result of the growing awareness of these issues, in 1968 the Club of Rome was founded, consisting of current and former heads of states, UN bureaucrats, high-level politicians and government officials, diplomats, scientists, economists and business leaders. In 1972 the Club of Rome released a report "The Limits to Growth", which has sold 30 million copies in more than 30 translations, making it the best-selling environmental book in world history. The publication received considerable public

attention and is regarded as the key moment in the transformation of disparate anxiety about environmental problems into more focused discussion of an alternative to present-day society (Kenny 1994: 229). The book warned of a sudden and uncontrollable decline in human population and capacity and inevitable catastrophe, if the exploitation of earth resources continues to grow at the same pace. The raising voices questioning whether the continuing growth is desirable or possible were met with the advocates of growth, who believed in human potential to develop solutions and counter the damage. The remedy to these evils is then seen in furthering scientific research and technological development, in the evolutions of various "anti-technologies" to counteract the damage caused by industrialization and wasteful consumerism (Von Wright 1997: 12).

From these two counter positions, one opposing unlimited continuous growth and the other warning of an imminent disaster resulting from exceeding limits of exploitation of earth resources, came a compromise proposition of a growth that is sustainable. At the start of the 1970s the term "sustainable development" was coined, probably by Barbara Ward (Lady Jackson), founder of the International Institute for Environment and Development (Du Pisani 2006: 91). It was becoming clear that the pattern of growth cannot simply follow the Western formula of high consumption, as this would be simply unsustainable for the planet. The growth had to change trajectory to include realisation of finite non-renewable resources of the earth. The focus would need to shift from the quantity of growth as a measurement of progress to the quality of it. In his book "Small is Beautiful" Schumacher introduced a concept of appropriate technology that takes into account population levels, skills, natural resources available and most important social needs. Some experts believe that the concept of appropriate technology is the immediate precursor to the concept of sustainable development (Mebratu 1998: 500).

3. Brundtland Report and its legacy

The following years brought more focus on the environment, eco-friendly development and conservation. However, sustainable development term rose to

political prominence following the publication in 1987 of the UN-sponsored World Commission on Environment and Development report "Our Common Future" (WCED 1987), also known as Brundtland report (named after its chair, Gro Harlem Brundtland, then prime minister of Norway and later head of the World Health Organization). It contained key statement that "*humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*" (Brundtland Report 1987: par. 27). This is still the benchmark definition for the term. It was recognized that the concept of sustainable development "*does imply limits - not absolute limits but limitations imposed by the present state of technology and social organization on environmental resources and by the ability of the biosphere to absorb the effects of human activities*" (Brundtland Report 1987: par. 27). The report highlighted three fundamental components of sustainable development, known as the triple bottom line, environment, economy, and society. The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, known as the Stockholm Conference had introduced environmental concerns to the political development discussion. On the other hand, it also introduced political dimension to previously environmental concept. The definition proposed by the Brundtland Report is sufficiently vague and wide, that it allows for variety of interpretations as well as misuse of the term. There is some truth in the criticism that it has come to mean whatever suits the particular advocacy of the individual concerned (Pearce et al. 1989: 1). Brundtland Report was a significant moment in the evolution of sustainable development idea. Sustainable development entered onto a political arena, as it fits nicely into political sound-bites compared with its predecessor´s "eco-development", it sounds like something we should all approve of, like "motherhood and apple pie" (Mebratu 1998: 502). The Brundtland Report's discussion of "sustainability" is both optimistic and vague. The Commission probably felt that the discussion had to be optimistic, but given the facts, it was necessary to be vague and contradictory in order not to appear to be pessimistic (Bartlett 2006). The formula proposed in the report was a vague slogan behind which first world politicians with green electorates to appease, and third world politicians with economic deprivation, could unite (Brenton 1994).

Brundtland Report marks the beginning of an extraordinary political career of the concept of sustainable development. The political dimension of sustainable development concept reached global ambit at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED or Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, on the twentieth anniversary of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. The significance of the summit was in the fact that it was the largest environmental conference ever held. More than 100 heads of state and representatives from 178 nations, NGOs agencies and other interested parties (approximately 30,000 in total) attended the conference. The objective was to build upon the Brundtland Report legacy and respond to the global environmental challenges and to reach global agreement on measures reconciling economic development with sustainability. The major outcomes of the conference were several documents: the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Framework Convention on Climate Change, Principles of Forest Management, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (the "Rio Declaration") and the Agenda 21, which together cover all aspects of sustainable development. The Rio Declaration was in fact a short document, containing twenty seven principles of humanity and sustainable development. It contained several important statements. "*Human beings are at the center of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature*" (Rio Declaration 1992: Principle 1). "*The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations*" (Rio Declaration: Principle 3). "*In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it*" (Rio Declaration 1992: Principle 4). The Agenda 21 complemented the Rio Declaration with 800-page blueprint for sustainable development. It emphasised economic and social development and environmental protection as basic foundations of sustainable development. The main goal of the Agenda 21 was to ensure that development proceeds in a sustainable way through the system of incentives and penalties to motivate economic behaviour. Other goals were elimination of poverty and sustainable use of global and regional resources such as atmosphere, oceans, seas

and fresh water, and marine life. In the end however, despite the environmental focus, the biggest arguments at the summit came down to a matter of money, consumptions rates and population growth. The developed countries were calling for sustainability and environmental protection. The developing countries demanded resources to meet the environmental tasks and advocated for their own right to development in order to level out with the developed world. The tensions between North and South and the financial conflicts underlined every major negotiation. Maurice Strong, the Secretary General of the UN Conference said in its closing statement: "It is not a final and complete action programme, and was not intended to be, but one which must continue to evolve. And, I have to say, we still don't have all the means, by any measure, to carry it through. On finance, we have agreement, but not yet sufficient commitment. We have made a start on finance but we must recognize that we are a long way from meeting the needs for full implementation of Agenda 21". Sustainable development was now firmly on the political agenda and as a principle visible globally. However, apart from that, there was a dichotomy, differences in interests between developing and developed world and lack of financial or legally binding commitment. "Strong, secretary-general of the event, was torn. Was he bound by a promise to admit to failure if that was the outcome? Or was completion of the negotiations – the largest assembly of world leaders in history – in itself a success to be acclaimed?" (Pearce 1992: 4). The road to alignment between economic progress and sustainable development proved to be a difficult one.

A parallel agenda had been ongoing within the United Nation forum, which found its expression in the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals ("MDGs") established following the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration during Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000. Among the main goals of the MDGs, like eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, achievement of universal primary education, promotion of gender equality, improvement of maternal health and reduction in child mortality as well as combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases were also environmental sustainability and global partnership for development. The main theme of the MDGs was reduction of various dimensions of poverty in the developing countries, with the

focus being directed on human wellbeing, rather than long term sustainability in global terms. Therefore, even though they aimed to address global challenges to development, MSGs did not emphasise sustainable development as its underlying concern.

Ten years after Rio Earth Summit, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development (the "Johannesburg Declaration") was adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, also known as Rio +10 Earth Summit. The understanding of sustainable development concepts was broadened and its place as an important element of international agenda was reaffirmed. The Johannesburg Declaration reconfirmed commitment of nations to sustainable development and recognised the interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development - economic development, social development and environmental protection - at the local, national, regional and global levels (Johannesburg Declaration 2002: par: 1 and 5). Interestingly, it also acknowledged link between globalization and sustainable development: "*Globalization has added a new dimension to these challenges. The rapid integration of markets, mobility of capital and significant increases in investment flows around the world have opened new challenges and opportunities for the pursuit of sustainable development. But the benefits and costs of globalization are unevenly distributed, with developing countries facing special difficulties in meeting this challenge*" (Johannesburg Declaration 2002: par. 14). The Johannesburg Declaration was followed by an Annex containing the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, a 65-page document stating targets and commitments in various targeted areas. Overall however, the Johannesburg summit did not achieve much apart from general goal setting declarations and political statements and no practical steps or commitments to carry out those declarations or fulfil promises. While much of the Plan's language may be grammatically unsatisfactory, there is nothing in it that is accidental. When the carefully drafted pronouncement of a major international meeting is left fuzzy, the reason usually is unresolved differences over policy (Anderson, Morgenstern 2003). The Unites Nations process generated great criticism for its gap between pledges and promises and actual performance.

The follow up initiative took place in Rio in 2012 (Known as Rio + 20 Earth Summit), organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The conference was to ensure that the Agenda 21 and commitments from previous earth summits were being reaffirmed. It also linked Millennium Development Goals with the sustainable development efforts. Paragraph 246 of the outcome general assembly resolution called "The Future We Want" states: "*We recognize that the development of goals could also be useful for pursuing focused and coherent action on sustainable development. We further recognize the importance and utility of a set of sustainable development goals, based on Agenda 21and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation [...] The development of these goals should not divert focus or effort from the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals*" (The Future We Want 2012: par. 246) It is worth noting that, even though the conference was held to be the biggest even ever organized by the United Nations, several key global leaders, like Barack Obama, Angela Merkel or David Cameron, representing G20 countries, did not attend.

4. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Beyond

Finally, the latest development on a global scale was a resolution adopted on 25 September 2015 by all 193 countries of the United Nations General Assembly called "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" ("SDGs Resolution"). The resolution outlines 17 sustainable development goals ("SDGs") and its associated 169 targets. It is considered a successor to the MDGs, which expired at the end of 2015, but also builds on the principles of the resolution The Future We Want. As such, the sustainable development goals have been merged with the development targets into one common, global initiative (SDG Resolution 2015: par 249). The opinions about the SGDs range from unfettered support (Ki-Moon 2015) to hard critique (Hickel 2015). The new goals are more ambitious than their predecessors. They seek to eliminate rather than reduce poverty, and include challenging targets on health, education and gender equality. They are also universally applicable to all countries and all people, unlike the MDGs, which were

focused on improving the situation in poor countries. They also include new issues that were not in the MDGs such as climate change, sustainable consumption, innovation and the importance of peace and justice for all. What is also significant about the new goals is the success of the process of getting 193 member nations to agree on them in the first place. "Sustainable development" term appears about 110 times in the SDGs Resolution. Goal 17 is entirely dedicated to strengthening, implementation and revitalization of the global partnership for sustainable development. Without the doubt, sustainable development has become a flagship for largest global political initiatives. And this is where the ambiguity and contradiction of the term, of its meaning and understanding, becomes evident. Even the SDGs Resolution itself recognises that there are different approaches, visions, models and tools available to each country, in accordance with its national circumstances and priorities, to achieve sustainable development. It is truly impossible to extract a single definition of sustainable development from a 35-page document of the SDGs Resolution. It appears as everything from the "consumption and production", "economic growth", "human habitats", "energy", "agriculture", "industrialisation", "transport systems", "management of natural resources", "tourism", "lifestyles", "public procurement practices", "forest management", "livelihood opportunities" and "debt levels" should be sustainable. Even fish stock should produce maximum yield that is "sustainable". Just about everything needs to be sustainable. Generally, it is needed to shift the world on to a sustainable and resilient path (SGDs Resolution 2015: Preamble). However, this path seems to rely on the existing model of pursuit economic growth and the actions proposed are in support of "sustainability" of such growth. This is the mortal flaw at the heart of the SDGs. How can they be calling for both less and more at the same time? (Hickel 2015). Goal 8.1 calls to sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries. The SDGs reinforce current pattern of human development albeit acknowledging that planet Earth and its ecosystems are our common home and that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature (SDGs Resolution 2015: Preamble). The conclusion could be potentially

confusing. As mentioned in the opening remarks of this article, the "development" stands for increase and always seeking more but such infinite expansion is not sustainable given the limited resources of the planet. "Development" and "sustainable" contradict each other. SDGs call for protection of water ecosystems, biodiversity, fish stocks, forests, climate on one hand and set ambitious growth targets on the other hand. Therefore, what appears to have to be sustained is production, consumption and economic growth. Proliferation of SDG targets is not an indication of reservoirs of opportunity, but rather a form of desperation as to how the economic in its current formulation can be maintained (Moore 2015).

Year 2015 was rounded up with the latest initiative in the field of sustainable development, United Nations Climate Change Conference, as part of the annual session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the annual meeting of the parties to the Kyoto Protocol. The most important outcome of the conference is a global agreement on the reduction of climate change negotiated and agreed by the 196 parties attending the conference. The parties agreed to make efforts to limit the temperature increase of the planet to 1.5C and achieve zero net anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions in the second half of the 21st century. Sustainable development principles are strongly emphasised in the Paris agreement. The signatories recognise social, economic and environmental value of voluntary mitigation actions and their co-benefits for adaptation, health and sustainable development. The role of sustainable development in reducing the risk of loss or damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change has also been recognised. However, the agreement also stresses the critical importance of innovation as an effective, long-term global response to climate change and promotion of two parallel goals, economic growth and sustainable development. The agreement is to be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, recognising different national capabilities and circumstances.

During 2015, being a golden year for sustainable development global initiatives, leaders of G20 emphasised growth as their main focus in the announcement following their latest summit in Turkey. They reaffirmed their commitment to lift collective G20 GDP by an additional 2 percent by 2018. They

also resolved to remain resolute to continue collective action to lift actual and potential growth of economies, support job creation, strengthen resilience, promote development and enhance inclusiveness of policies. On sustainable development itself, G20 leaders merely acknowledged that the year 2015 was crucial and reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring inclusive and sustainable growth.

5. Conclusion

Sustainable development message appears to be projected globally loud and clear, but, as illustrated in this paper, on a closer inspection the scope and meaning of sustainable development becomes ambiguous. Despite or perhaps because of being discussed considerably and frequently and introduced into main global political initiatives, sustainable development is an indefinite concept, wide open for interpretation, agreeably resonating and curiously uncontroversial. Sustainable development is the product of many stories, worldviews, values, actions and perspectives, it is a collage or kaleidoscope of shapes, colour and patterns, that change constantly (Blewitt 2008: ix-x).

The aim of this paper was to study the concept of sustainable development, to understand whether it is more linked with the "development" part of it meaning maximizing economic growth, capital flows, investments and consumption; or whether the "sustainability" part of the concept and protection of environment, human rights and climate is a dominant theme. On the basis of the analysis presented in this paper, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that, given current political and economic global background, the main context of sustainable development remains focusing on sustaining economic growth. Economic growth remains the main global objective and growing awareness of the ecological threats to the planet serves as a background in which such continuing economic growth needs to the sustained. We are on an unsustainable trajectory, and we do not seem to know how to get off. Since the 17th century, our economic models and social and political institutions have promoted a version of human flourishing and prosperity synonymous or concurrent with the growth of material wealth (Moore 2015).

From the Malthusian theory of the environmental limits and from calls for change from quantity to quality as a measure of progress in "Small is Beautiful" by Schumacher, sustainable development has made an extraordinary political career, has grown into prominence, has outgrown itself and ultimately has been watered down by being attached to just about everything.

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Pomiędzy rozwojem a zrównoważonym rozwojem: symbiotyczna synergia czy dwuznaczność nie do pogodzenia

Streszczenie

Cel: Artykuł prezentuje koncepcję zrównoważonego rozwoju, która w ostatnim czasie jest silnie obecna na globalnej scenie debat nad kwestiami najważniejszymi dla ludzkości, w rozmaitych kontekstach politycznych, prawych, społecznych i środowiskowych. Koncept został przywłaszczony przez rządy i organizacje pozarządowe. Postuluje on promowanie zarówno ciągłego wzrostu, jak i odwrócenie tendencji nieograniczonego wzrostu. Celem niniejszego artykułu jest prześledzenie historii koncepcji rozwoju i zrównoważonego rozwoju, jego ewolucji i aktualnego stanu oraz kwestionowanie, czy przyszłe zmiany w obszarze zrównoważonego rozwoju przyczynią się do wspierania „rozwoju", poprzez dążenie do maksymalnego wzrostu gospodarczego, przepływów kapitału i inwestycji, konsumpcji i produkcji; czy ważna jest kwestia „zrównoważenia" i uwzględnienia ochrony środowiska, praw człowieka i klimatu jako priorytetu.

Układ / Metoda badawcza: Artykuł przedstawia historyczne pochodzenie i rozwój koncepcji rozwoju i zrównoważonego rozwoju, od rewolucji przemysłowej z XVIII wieku, gdzie postęp utożsamiany był ze wzrostem gospodarczym i postępem materialnym. Z drugiej strony koncepcja zrównoważonego rozwoju jest ściśle związana z relacjami człowieka z naturą, która to przeszła głęboką zmianę, gdy ludzie zaczęli zakładać stałe osady, udomowiać zwierzęta i uprawiać ziemię. W tym artykule wyjaśniono, jak koncept zrównoważonego rozwoju urósł do politycznego znaczenia po publikacji raportu Brundtland w 1987 roku i jak kolejne globalne inicjatywy polityczne, takie jak Agenda 21, deklaracja z Johannesburga i Agenda 2030 poszerzyły znaczenie tego terminu i potwierdziły, że koncept zrównoważonego rozwoju stanowi ważny element międzynarodowego porządku.

Wnioski/wyniki: Artykuł podsumowuje, że główny kontekst zrównoważonego rozwoju koncentruje się na utrzymaniu wzrostu gospodarczego, który nadal pozostaje głównym celem globalnym, ze wzrostem świadomości ekologicznych zagrożeń dla planety jedynie jako tło, na którym ciągły wzrost gospodarczy wymaga podtrzymania.

Oryginalność / Wartość artykułu: Niniejsza praca ilustruje, w jaki sposób koncept zrównoważonego rozwoju urósł w skali globalnej, a tym samym stracił na znaczeniu, będąc utożsamiany niemal ze wszystkim.

Słowa kluczowe: zrównoważony rozwój, rozwój, raport Brundtland, Agenda 2030
JEL: O44, Q56

The concept of preventing negative consequences of work overload based on positive interactions between work and life, and promotion of workers' healthy behaviors

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Abstract:

Aim: The main aim of this article is to identify negative health consequences resulting from work overload and lack of work-life balance, as well as to present characteristics of positive healthy behaviors in the workplace as counteracting strategies. The paper is a part of the discussion on the concept of corporate wellness which forms the basis for the development of organization's health culture.

Design / Research methods: The paper is based on a review of literature concerned with the factors influencing worker welfare. Moreover, it presents two case studies on comprehensive health programs implemented by Mars Poland and the Belgian branch of Protect & Gamble.

Conclusions / findings: Based on the review of foreign and domestic literature, the authors propose a model describing the relationship between individual variables impacting worker welfare. In this model, it is assumed that the interaction between work and life, and workers' healthy behaviors such as physical activity and rest after work (sleep) are crucial to workers' regeneration.

Originality / value of the article: The value of the paper lies in the interdisciplinary approach to the development of worker well-being. Apart from the perspective of human resources management, the outlined concept also takes into account the issues relating to workers' mental and physical health.

Implications of the research: The theoretical assumptions presented in the paper will become a starting point for a research project to be conducted on Polish enterprises. Its objective will be to identify the possibilities of counteracting the negative effects of workload congestion through the promotion of healthy behaviors in the workplace and support of workers in their creation of a positive work-life interaction.

Key words: work overload, worker well-being, work-life balance, healthy behaviors, workplace health promotion, workplace health program, enterprises, corporate wellness

JEL: M54, I12

1. Introduction

The workplace is one the most important factors determining the physical, mental, economic and social welfare of employees which ultimately impacts their families' health, immediate environment and thus the overall society. According to statistics, over half of Poles spends 30-40 hours at work per week, 36,6% works over 40 hours, with those working less than 30 hours accounting for 12,6% (European Commission's Communication 2007: 3-5). Considering the fact that we are spending increasingly more time at work, the workplace creates an opportunity to offer special facilities and infrastructure with a view to advocate the promotion of health of a relatively large portion of society (Chu et al. 2000: 155). It is worth pointing out that workers' health is not exclusively determined by the factors relating to the workplace, but it is also dependent on the conditions unrelated to one's occupation.

As early as in the 70s of the last century, it was demonstrated that life style was the main determinant of human health, allowing us to take control over it to a large extent. In reference to LaLonde's "health field" (1974), life style determines health in approximately 53%, while physical and social environment in about 21%, genetic predispositions account for approximately 16%, with the healthcare system at about 10%. Thus, the system determinants (infrastructure, quality of medical services, specialist staff) do not guarantee good health and high quality of life. On top of that, in the developed countries of Western Europe and in the United States no observations have been made as to the improvement of human health along with more funds being spent on healthcare (Nowak 2010: 24). In many instances, the employers' care for their employees' health consists mainly in financing sickness benefits or providing healthcare to company's work crew. Although those services are needed, they do not yield tangible results – an easy and fast access to specialists does not reduce absenteeism, number of disease incidences, nor does it lead to an increase in productivity (Malińska, Namysł, Hildt-Ciupińska 2012: 21).

For Polish people, health represents the highest value in life – as the GUS [Central Statistical Office] most recent studies focusing on personal lives of our country's population suggest (GUS 2015). Further in the ranking came: the need of

love, friendship, earning money and professional growth. It turns out that although the vast majority of Poles reports caring for their own health, the actual actions aimed at staying fit are still not that widespread. A decisive majority of Polish population (88%) does not do any sport professionally, nearly three fifths (58%) never or hardly ever do physical exercises, and no aerobics; and over one third (37%) takes up no sports whatsoever, such as running, swimming, cycling, team sports, etc. Furthermore, one fourth of the population (25%) smokes cigarettes on a daily basis, and a barely smaller percentage of the surveyed (23%) is at risk of stressful situations at least once a day, with one seventh (14%) having fizzy drinks every day. Almost half of respondents (49%) sleeps less than six hours per day at least once a week, with every twelfth (8%) sleeping, as a rule, less than six hours a day (CBOS 2016). On top of that, people go the GP or a specialist doctor only when become ill. Our fellow-countrymen clearly pay less attention to prevention. These findings could provide guidance for those Polish employers who have so far failed to take care of their employees' health, seeing it as one of the basic needs (Olędzka 2016: 35).

By promoting health in the workplace, employers can not only raise workers' health awareness, but they can also deepen the bond between employees and enterprise, thus motivating them to taking on the responsibility for the organization's destiny. A special tool applied in the enterprise's health policy are workplace health programs, such as, e.g. work-life balance or wellness programs. Apart from numerous benefits for the employees, they are also of key importance to employers, providing such benefits as, for example, fewer incidences of sickness-related absence among workers, better motivation to work and greater job satisfaction, increased productivity and decreased stress level at work and home. On the other hand, the implementation of the workplace health programs involves considerable costs for the organization, yet, in the long term those costs are paid back.

Work overload and stress thus-related are one of the major challenges in terms of health and safety in Europe – with nearly one in every four employees complaining about that. Studies show that work stress is the underlying reason for 50%-60% of working days lost. The stress implications are then felt not only in health dimension but also in terms of the economy (European Agency for Safety and

Health at Work 2016). Moreover, in the USA 25% of the work force indicates professional work as the primary factor generating stress, with 75% reporting that workers of today are more stressed by their work than was the case with the previous generation. Those employees who took medical leave due to stress, fear or other job-related disorders were on sick-leave for about 20 days (NIOSH 1999; Koh, Tar-Ching 2015: 871).

Referring to the observations outlined above, the aim of the article is to identify negative health consequences resulting from work overload and lack of work-life balance, as well as to present the characteristic features of positive pro-health behaviors in the workplace, seen as the strategy for counteracting the negative effects mentioned above. On the basis of foreign and Polish findings, the relevance of the individual elements of health-promoting activities to be introduced in enterprises will be identified, countering or minimizing the negative consequences of being overworked. To this end, the examples of two health programs implemented in foreign and Polish enterprises will be examined.

Following that, on the basis of the review of foreign and domestic literature, the authors propose the model describing the relationships between individual variables impacting worker welfare. In this model, the assumption is that the interaction between work and life, and workers' healthy behaviors such as physical activity and rest after work in the form of sleep are crucial for their regeneration.

The theoretical assumptions presented in the paper are the starting point for the studies designed nationwide on Polish enterprises. Their aim is the identification of possibilities to counter the negative consequences of work overload through the promotion of healthy behaviors in the workplace and supporting employees in creating work-life balance.

2. Theoretical basis

2.1. Demand – resources - support model

One of the key theories showing the negative consequences of work overload is the „demand – resources– support" model. Robert Karasek, who is the author of this

concept, focused on the development of worker welfare by referring to the relationship between the demands faced in the job and workers' sense of having control. The situation where there are high demands while the sense of having control is lacking engenders work overload with negative psychosomatic consequences. The demand-resources-support model assumes that the negative consequences felt by employees are the result of a huge work overload and a low sense of control (arising from both insufficient competences and lacking decision-making capacity) (Karasek 1979). At the same time, a job that places low demands on employees leads to their being passive or feeling work underload. Only in the situation of many resources and much control can we encounter an active worker, meaning, one that contributes to organization's greater efficiency, without having to be exposed to negative consequences of the demands (see Figure 1). The negative implications relating to high demands and little control refer to both physical and mental health.

Figure 1. Demand-control model

Source: The authors' own study based on Karasek (1979).

Among the negative health consequences related to work overload, psychosomatic illnesses are named in the first place, as being the negative outcome of feeling stressed over a long period of time (Karasek et al. 1981). However, the attention is being drawn to the fact that worker welfare is not exclusively linked to their physical well-being, as their mental health and social relationships are equally valid (Grant et al. 2007). Hence, the model developed by R. Karasek is not only

employed to predict the consequences of too much work overload in terms of employees' health, but also to predict the negative consequences relating to employees' attitudes such as: lack of satisfaction, absenteeism, the wish to leave the organization or decreased engagement (Hakanen et al. 2008; Presseau et al. 2014).

In the course of the further work on the demand-control model, the importance of yet another area was discerned, which was the social support employees can count on in their organization (Karasek, Theorell 1990). On the basis of the three dimensional model, "demand-control-support", it is possible to reduce the negative stress the worker experiences through the organizational actions seeking to give the worker the necessary support. On the other hand, leaving employees to themselves when the job is highly demanding, with them having no sufficient opportunities to have control over the situation, will contribute to a greater risk of negative consequences. In view of the interactions occuring between the physical and mental health, it is to be expected that in implementing the management practices to improve the employee's functioning within the mental sphere, the organization has a chance to help improve the employee's physical health, too (Grant et al. 2007). Yet, it needs to be emphasised that not all studies confirm the importance of social support in eliminating the negative consequences of work overload (Pelfrene et al. 2002). The survey conducted on a sample of over 20 thousand Belgian employees found that all the three dimensions outlined had an impact on the job satisfaction felt by employees; however, the stress is primary caused by feeling too much work oveload which is not eliminated even though there is much support offered to the employee by the community (Pelfrene et al. 2002).

2.2. Work-life balance

Another significant area touched upon in the discussions is the relationship between occupational functioning and personal life. The balance between work and life tends to be defined as a feeling of achieving a sense and harmony across different domains of life (Clark 2000). Christopher Higgins and his team workers define this concept in the same vein, as for them the work-life balance consists in achieving satisfaction arising from the ability to cope with the demands placed by the different domains in which an individual functions (Higgins et al. 2000: 19). The

satisfaction arising from the relation between work and family encompasses both the cognitive and emotional element (Drobnic, Beham 2010). In the cognitive aspect, the sense of balance depends on the extent people perceive their possibilities to reconcile the various tasks involved in pursuing their goals relating to work and family. How these possibilities are perceived results directly from one's experiences which might be seen as positive or stressful and disproportionate to one's abilities. Moreover, the emotional component is the result of a cognitive assessment, representing a positive or negative emotional response to the situation (Beham, Drobnic 2010). Therefore, it is not so much the objective factors like work conditions or family situation but rather how these factors are felt subjectively (Boyar et al. 2008; Moore 2007). Keeping this in mind, if we want to talk about the importance of work-life balance as the element shaping the well-being of an individual, we should refer to employees' subjective feelings. Taking part in these two social roles involves transferring emotions, skills and attitudes from work to home and vice versa (Pleck et al. 1980).

The most likely implication of the lack of balance between work and life is employees' sensing conflict. It occurs when an individual perceives the demands of one role as interfering, failing to harmonize with those involved in the other social role (Greenhaus, Beutell 1985). When this happens people encounter substantial problems in fulfilling one specific social role, since they are being engaged in meeting the demands posed by the other role (Ballout 2008). Two kinds of conflicts can be distinguished; one relating to work having impact on family and the other to family situation affecting work (Greenhaus, Beutell 1985). Keeping work separated from family and family separated from work arises from the fact that both domains are linked to various consequences and are determined by different factors (Rotondo, Kincaid 2008). Moreover, the scholars have increasngly highlighted that the simultaneous fulfilment of both social roles not only brings about the risk of conflict, but it also presents the opportunity for having positive outcome in that both domains are enhancing each other (Lourel et al. 2009). Further to that, functioning in both domains of life is conducive to synergy effect taking place where one domain influences positively the other (Beutell, Wittig-Berman 2008). Thus, in analyzing

the meaning of the work-life relationship in the context of fostering welfare, four aspects should be taken into account:

- positive impact of work on non-working life,
- negative impact of work on non-working life,
- positive impact of private life on work,
- negative impact of non-working life on work.

Given the complexity of the relationship that occurs between performing occupational role and undertaking other social roles, the organization's personnel policy should concentrate on diminishing the negative impact while fostering the positive ones. The rationale behind accounting for work-family balance in the personnel policy is confirmed by research underscoring the importance of the above domain in the functioning of an individual in the workplace. The way we feel satisfied with both roles influences emotions, attitudes and behaviors of employees, and ultimately organization's efficiency (Eby et al. 2005). The implications stemming from the impact of functioning in both domains can be positive as well as negative. When people feel work-life balance lacking and sense work-family conflict, a number of negative consequences can emerge. In such a situation we can expect the following from employees: increased absence, being late for work, wish to quit their job, occupational burnout or other negative behaviors (Ballout 2008; Boyar et al. 2008; Hughes, Bozionelos 2007; Saif et al. 2011). Offering support on the part of the organization may then contribute not only to mitigating the conflict, but also to strengthening the positive relationship and better results, as expected by the organization such as job satisfaction, greater engagement in and attachment to the organization, as well as improved civic behaviors in the organization (OCB) (Kossek, Ozeki 1998; Lambert 2000; Thompson, Prottas 2006).

What appears of key importance in the analyses is, on the one hand, the close relationship between feeling burdened by work and consequences arising in the form of the work-life conflict (Butler et al. 2005; O'Driscoll et al. 2004), and, on the other hand, the importance of the positive work-life relationship for worker wellbeing (Allis, O'Driscoll 2008).

2.3. Promoting healthy behaviors in the workplace

There are many ways of coping with work overload-related negative consequences and thus resulting stress; those that should be mentioned include individual, group and organizational strategies (Dewe et al. 2010: 15; Dewe, Cooper 2012: 10; Dewe 2014: 74). Moreover, studies suggest that there exists a deep and continuous relationship between worker stress, level of physical health and wellbeing (Quick, Bennet, Hargrove 2014: 175). Therefore promoting positive healthy behaviors in the workplace, and in particular, improving employees' awareness and changing their attitudes in this respect by deploying comprehensive health programs could provide an interesting example of an enterprise's organizational strategy aimed at eliminating the negative implications of work overload.

Health promotion as a concept of strategies designed to facilitate people's making healthy choices and then sticking to them, ultimately strengthening their health has been firmly established in the health policy of the developed countries (Maastricht Treaty: Health Promotion Program 1996–2000, 2001: 2). A particularly favorable place for putting this kind of programs in place are businesses, where not only is it possible to design healthy life styles relatively most effectively, but also to support such life styles among adults (Parish 1996: 53-63; Dugdill, Springelt 2001; Korzeniowska, Puchalski 2002: 361-368). In its classic approach, health promotion at the workplace focused mainly on influencing employees' health behaviors (also in terms of health and safety at work) and the physical conditions of the work environment, while improving the availability of health benefits, too. The measures at play comprised in the first place screening, health education, skills training aimed at developing healthy behaviors among individual members of the work crew, with the company seen as a favorable place for the implementation of those kinds of actions (Schroer 1997: 7).

Currently there has been a shift in the thinking in the EU towards what has been referred to as "workplace health promotion", where the main objective is to build sustainable socio-organizational mechanisms, inducing employees to take interest in health issues, facilitating their making more healthy choices and stimulating

organization's development so as to make it more human friendly. What is being increasingly emphasized is the importance of psycho-social aspects of human functioning and the role of the organizational environment in generating and sustaining health-conscious transformations (Korzeniowska 1999: 604). In applying this approach, the enterprise (that is the physical, and socio-organizational environment) is becoming the object of influence more than individual employees. The desired outcome within this approach is to integrate health-related issues sustainably in the logic of company's functioning, which, in turn, is to form the basis for fostering worker wellbeing and responsible approach towards health (Korzeniowska, Puchalski 2002: 364).

Thus, health behaviors decide for the most part whether or not people are healthy. Health behaviors are such behaviors which "in light of the contemporary medical knowledge trigger specific (positive or negative) health effects in people who implement them" (Gniazdowski 1997: 22; Nowak 2010: 25). These actions may be deliberate (intentional), conscious, planned, yet, they may also be completely by chance, occasional and unconscious. The strong relationship between life style and health has led to evaluating life styles. We can talk about a positive (healthy) life style, that is, a model worth emulating, as well as the negative (unhealthy, pathological) one which threatens psycho-physical wellbeing, possibly diminishing the quality of human life. A healthy life style implies "patterns of conscious health-related behaviors, being the result of choices made by people on the basis of alternatives available to them and determined by their life situation" (Cockerham 1995 after: Woynarowska 2008: 51). The healthy life style encompasses a variety of behaviors whose priority hierarchy is somewhat difficult to establish (Table 1).

Table 1. Health behaviors as elements of healthy life style

	HEALTH BEHAVIORS
IMPACT ON MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH	• taking care of one's body and immediate environment; • physical activity; • sensible diet; • hardening; • proper quality and duration of sleep; • using and giving societal support; • avoiding stress and the ability to cope with it; • self-health check and self-examination; • preventive examination; • safe behavior in daily life (e.g. work and transport safety); • safe sexual life; • non-smoking tobacco; • limited alcohol consumption; • non-overusing medication non-prescribed by the doctor; • non-overusing other psychoactive substances.

Source: Authors' own study based on Woynarowska (2008).

The findings of the studies conducted by Krzysztof Puchalski and Elżbieta Korzeniowska (2003: 4) over the period of 2000-2001 suggest that in Polish medium-sized and big enterprises the implementation of the pro-health policy in a business promoting health mostly takes the form of single interventions aimed at prevention or health protection, focusing especially on introducing healthy solutions in the physical work environment (e.g. ergonomic characteristics of working place, social needs equipment), and offering non-obligatory medical services (vaccination, additional diagnostic examinations, therapeutic treatments). Actions aimed at encouraging healthy behaviors among staff, and thus improving their activity are considerably less frequent.

In the United States, Canada and Western Europe, on the other hand, this type of actions tend to take the form of a health program which may be directed at specific assistance like, for example, work-life balance program – whose goal is to improve employees' balance between work and home, physical activity promotion program comprised of sporting and fitness activities, or programs of comprehensive nature.

Health promotion in the workplace concentrates in general on promoting worker health by reducing individual risk behaviors such as tobacco smoking, psychoactive substances use, sedentary life style, poor diet, reactions to stress and ways of coping with stress, reproductive health risks and other health behaviors (La Montagne 2004; O'Donnell 2002; Quintiliani et al. 2007: 6).

Health programs in companies can either cover most of their employees or focus on a specific target group showing greatest problems or deficits in this respect. Further, they can vary in scale and structure (Ammendolia et al. 2016: 2). The term of a comprehensive health program in the workplace is not that clear either. Kenneth R. Pelletier (2001: 108) defines it as a „program which encompasses continuous and integrated strategies aimed at health promotion and disease prevention, taking into consideration detailed elements (e.g. smoking cessation, stress management, body fat reduction, etc.) in the form of a program that is especially designed and continuous, in line with enterprise's corporate goals, and which is equipped with evaluation measures". According to the American Initiative Healthy People 2010, the comprehensive programs should contain five components: 1) health education; 2) supportive physical and social environment for worker's health improvement; 3) integration of health promotion program into organization's culture and structure; 4) links to related programs and services offered to employees (Quintiliani et al. 2007: 23).

It is worth emphasizing that the effects (healthy, economic, humanistic) expected to arise from health promotion can be achieved by organizing health activities in company in the form of a social change project (Grossman, Scala 1999: after Puchalski, Korzeniowska 2003: 2). It means, among other things, that the initiatives should be linked to enterprise's basic interests and subjective needs of personnel, while at the same time being incorporated into the enterprise's organizational mechanisms and structures. Winning strong support of the board and significant groups of employees, recording the initiatives in documents specifying the company's policy, clear assignment of roles, tasks and competences in terms of health promotion in the company's organizational system serve all this purpose. Further to that, it involves the need of planning, systematic implementation of the plan, monitoring and evaluating activities, including their effects, as well as drawing

conclusions from the evaluation for possible modification of the plan. Moreover, it is also about mitigating staff's natural resistance to changes by stimulating them and securing their involvement in this process, as well as deploying methods encouraging healthy behaviors which do not confine themselves to educational or restrictive activities (Puchalski, Korzeniowska 2003: 2-3).

It is possible to influence workers' health behaviors at different levels of influence (Stokols 1996: 139); through direct strategies such as: health education and greater availability of healthy foods and physical activity; or indirectly by social support and introduction of norms promoting healthy behaviors in the company. Another possibility in this respect is to link the health promotion efforts with actions at work on a wider scale, with a view to support workers' health, for example, through OSH initiatives (Sorensen et al. 2002: 495), disability management programs (Williams, Westmorland 2002: 87), and employee assistance programs (DeJoy, Southern 1993: 1222). In the workplace, one can plan programs with employees' participation who can determine priorities based on their own evaluation of needs and/or on the basis of the most frequently diagnosed risks: mortality and morbidity, types of disability, lower work productivity or potential for cost saving relative to health impact (Quintiliani et al. 2007).

The research findings also show numerous economic advantages for enterprises arising from the emergence of company's health culture. According to ADP study Workforce View in Europe 2015/2016, persons engaged in their work generate more income by 26% compared to those less dedicated to their company (ADP 2015: 23). Employees who are actively disengaged approach their job and employer with disrespect, do not care about the opinions held about the company, often considering employment to be a transitory period, while persons who are not engaged in their work simply come to work, do their job and leave, failing to be interested in taking an active part in the company's growth. Based on the Gallup Institute data collected across 140 countries among 180 million employees (Gallup Institute 2013: 14), engaged employees make up only 13% of the workforce, with the actively disengaged accounting for 24%, and not engaged making up as many as 64% of all workforce, which suggests that the majority of workers represent unused potential

which if motivated and expanded effectively, could translate into organization's growth and profit.

On top of that, there are also costs related to sick leave, occupational diseases and increased costs of turnover of employees who suffering from job burnout often experience depression and not infrequently quit their job. In 2002 the European Commission calculated the costs of work-related stress in 15 EU member states at EUR 20 billion annually. In 2013 the costs of work-related depression in the EU countries were estimated at EUR 617 billion annually. The total costs were made up of: costs incurred by employers resulting from absenteeism and presenteeism (EUR 272 billion), loss of productivity (EUR 242 billion) healthcare costs (EUR 63 billion) and social welfare costs in the form of disability benefit payments (EUR 39 billion) (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work – EU-OSHA 2014: 7) .

3. Analysis of the selected case studies

This part of the paper presents two case studies demonstrating a successful implementation of comprehensive health programs in big corporations[1]: The case study belongs to qualitative research methods, mostly applied to gain in-depth understanding of the examined phenomenon (Wójcik 2013). In management sciences, the case study is used to gain insight into separated organizational functions and processes, as well as the overall context of organization's functioning. Although this method does not provide the basis to generalize findings, it can still represent an important source of information, allowing for rendering research hypotheses more precise (Matejun 2011). Given the determinants involved in the method application, the selection of entities to be examined is of paramount importance. For the purpose of this study, two organizations were chosen: Mars Poland and Protect&Gamble in Belgium, which have implemented health programs in their organizations. The material gathered is presented taking into consideration: the program's goals, detailed features of activities and implementation effects.

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[1] The case studies of the practices were developed based on the materials available on the website of European Agency for Safety and Health at Work EU-OSHA: Procter & Gamble Program (2009a), Mars Wellness Program (2009b).

Mars wellness program – Mars Poland

One of the more interesting and comprehensive health programs created and implemented in the company Mars Poland is Mars Wellness Program (Mars Central Europe (MCE) - Wellness Program). Mars Poland is one of the subsidiaries of the family-owned business originating in the USA, Mars Incorporated. Mars Poland was founded in 1992 and today is one of the largest and fastest growing economic operators producing consumption goods in the country. The company employs over 1400 workers in the following departments: marketing, sale, research and development, finances, IT, HR and organization, logistics, engineering, production, commercial and corporate affairs.

The European Commission has been monitoring Mars Wellness Program since 2007 and for a few years now the program has received the highest scores among other 160 European programs. The program's goal is to aid workers in staying in good health, both mental and physical. Following the program's successful implementation at Mars Poland, it was introduced in other parts of Europe where Mars is operating: in the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Hungry. There are also plans for the program to be implemented in Estonia, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Albania, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and Macedonia.

Based on the survey assessing employees' exposure to health risks, the company decided to put emphasis on improving their physical state and general wellbeing. To this end, a special program was introduced. It is largely based on workers' needs, with the program's scope covering such issues as: stress, physical activity and nutrition. The program's watchword is: "Sustainability for our Employees to work, enjoy life and perform at their best". MCE Wellness is an operating scheme in which the concept of "wellness" is viewed in terms of mental, physical and social health. It is to change visibly employees' and their families' attitudes towards health and to improve worker general wellbeing.

The MCE Wellness program was created by Przemysław Duchniewicz – a Health and Wellness manager at Mars Central Europe (MCE). It consists of three major parts called MCE Wellness program's pillars. These are:

• 7 steps to health
• Mars balance

• Enjoy

Within the framework of the project Sport and Nutrition, the program is complemented by actions targeting employees' physical health. That is why Mars Poland always provides fresh vegetables and wholegrain bread to its workers. Also, information is given on a daily basis as to the nutritional value of all meals served in the company's canteen, including their percentage of the recommended daily intake. Every worker can use the company's gym, football pitch, participate in aerobics classes, yoga courses, free of charge massages and nutritionist consultation. In addition, employees have access to over 1700 sport centers as part of additional benefits co-financed by the company. Employees pay only about EUR 10 per month for an unlimited access to all activities offered by the centers. Taking into account the physical aspect of worker's health, Mars not only encourages its employees to take up sport, since the company also pays attention to safe and healthy work setting. Employees are provided with, for example, innovative furniture increasing work ergonomics.

The first pillar of the program – the *„7 steps to health"* project is one of the most crucial component of the overall wellness strategies, focusing on raising the "health level" of every employee. It encompasses a set of actions which help all employees in assessing their health condition while raising their awareness of making healthy choices regarding their life style. For each employee, the "7 steps to health" program starts with a voluntary participation in workshops which consist of 3 parts:

- the first part is concerned with providing basic information on health and involves defining such indicators as: weight/height/waist/hip ratio, blood pressure, cholesterol level, etc. At this stage, employees are given access to software which provides all information on the program, and which allows them to learn how to deal with stress and musculoskeletal load.
- the second part focuses on a personality analysis using Myer-Briggs Type Indicator®. This tool allows people to identify their "personality type", making it possible to find their own area of comfort, to understand their own way of communication, decision-

> making or life style. Further to that, it involves finding an area of work, tasks or place where people work under less strain, "recharge their batteries", as well as the areas which might pose a certain challenge to them.

- The final part is an open discussion under the watchful eye of an experienced couch, concentrating on individual potential for improvement and on practical steps to be undertaken in this respect. The discussion revolves around 4 domains of worker life: career, family, the individual and society.

Having gone through the workshops, employees enter the practical aspect of the activities of the "7 steps to health" program, which involves:

- Acquiring basic information – based on worker diagnosis and information materials:

  > Step 1: Online coaching system for workers, ex-workers (both pensioners and those who changed their employer) and their families comprising the following: estimation of the quality of nutritional habits, description of actions seeking to improve those habits, information on physical health indicators and necessary regular checkups; diagnosing stress and depression symptoms by questionnaire; information on where to find help in case of feeling stressed or depressed.

  > Step 2: on the basis of the personal information obtained during the previous stage, each employee receives a personalized guidebook.

- Monitoring – a review of parameters relating to physiological and biometric aspects, diet or physical activity:

  > Step 3: The company encourages each employee to monitor three physical indicators: cholesterol level, blood pressure and BMI coefficient (body mass index), this also involves consultations.

  > Step 4: Nutrition awareness. This is done through workshops, "healthy weeks" and meetings with nutritionists, which motivates employees to change their eating habits.

  > Step 5: Physical activity. Fitness trainers test physical condition of those employees who show interest. Twice a year, the company runs a

campaign encouraging employees to test their potential in terms of physical activity.

- Change introduction - this comprises a few actions encouraging workers to make healthy changes in their lives, with step 6 at an individual level and step 7 inspiring to other activities:
  - Step 6: it consists of several types of activities aimed at making employees feel responsible for their own health. The step comprises: voluntary discussions and talks on health held during working hours. Trainings and workshops on stress covering such issues as: coping with stress, whether or not and how to manage complex demands. Moreover, there are trainings in communication and anti-stress techniques (breathing, massage, relaxation); all employees are provided with a guidebook on dealing with stress techniques.
  - Step 7: it attempts to develop social responsibility. Mars wants the positive effects of its internal workshops to be shared with the community. To this end, the company encourages its employees to spread the information on healthy habits and techniques to improve one's own mental state.

Mars Balance is the second pillar of the Mars Wellness program. Its primary objective is to ensure mental health of the employed. Bearing this in mind, several solutions have been devised with a view to make it easier to reconcile work with private life:

- flexible working hours; the company offers flexible working hours during the day, wherever it is possible. The requirement is to be present between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. (including lunch break). Employees may come to work at 8 a.m. and work until 4 p.m. or from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. as well. Naturally workers ensuring continuity of operations in factories cannot be included in the program.
- Telework; Mars makes working from home possible, as long as this arrangement does not impede the demands placed by a particular job.
- mothers and pregnant women; the company puts a particular emphasis on maternity. Apart from paying for giving birth in private clinics, the company

also runs a special program whose objective is to provide mothers with information on possibilities and solutions in terms of returning to work. They are also offered the opportunity to work part-time.

- fathers-to-be; Mars Poland takes care not only of future mothers but also of future fathers. There is a campaign organized especially for them devoted to issues of childbirth, raising a child, with offering other pieces of relevant advice, too. This type of help is called "be closer" and "7 steps to active fatherhood"

The third pillar is the Enjoy program, seeking to support employees' personal passions and hobbies which are not associated with work. The company gives its employees paid free time during the week to develop their own interests. This is governed by specific rules with those workers being able to get it who have been much engaged in the company over the last three years, and whose performance has not been below average over that time. Supervisor's recommendation is also valuable here. In addition, the company provides the opportunity to apply for financial grant for special kinds of actions: e.g. building a playground in the neighborhood or organizing a campaign in the local community (cleaning river banks, etc.).

Numerous various outcomes have been achieved through the program (Table 2), of which the most significant are as follows: all 1400 employees are aware of the program, 833 employees assessed their health risk by the online tool (step 1 in 7 steps to health program), with all employees taking part in one or another sport activities, although to a varying degree in terms of their engagement. 500 employees are currently using the Mars Balance program, and sickness-related absence fell down by 0.72%.

The program has been very well received by the employees, who nominated it five times to "Make The Difference Award" in the innovation category. This distinction is a form of the internal award at Mars International. In 2009, 7 000 projects entered the competition which was held in Washington, with 75 reaching the final (including Mars Wellness). Today it is perceived as an inextricable part of worker remuneration.

Table 2. Summary of the Wellness program's effects at Mars Poland so far

Measure	Goal Mars Poland	Current level
completion of the online estimation of health risk factors	80%	833 employees/ 59.5% in total
% of employees with low risk indicator relating to life style- risk health factor from 0 to 20 assessed using the online tool	65%	48% employees had a low risk factor
Number of employees who took advantage of having their blood pressure checked	80%	89% knows their own blood pressure
Number of employees who took advantage of the opportunity to check their current cholesterol level	70%	19% knows the overall cholesterol level 9% knows HDL level

Source: self-reported data based on European Agency for Safety and Health at Work – EU-OSHA (2009b).

Program from project to well-being policy – Procter & Gamble Belgium

The second example of the good practices in terms of comprehensive health programs is "From Project to Well-Being Policy" program implemented by the Belgian branch of Procter & Gamble company (P&G). The corporation was founded in the USA and currently employs 138.000 workers worldwide, with its branches situated in 180 countries. Procter & Gamble Campus located in Strombeek-Bever in Belgium is the biggest Research and Development Center in Europe (BIC) at Procter & Gamble, employing around 1800 workers from 50 different countries.

Procter &Gamble started its health program with the assessment of workers' satisfaction. This survey is conducted on a yearly basis for all the company's employees worldwide. It consists of several categories (relationship with manager, learning and growth, personal wellbeing, engagement, etc.). The survey from 2006 found that there was a drop by 7% in the worker's perception of personal wellbeing and there was a 2% decrease regarding the balance between work and private life. In light of those findings and further growth of the company, the initiative was taken to create a comprehensive health program in cooperation with the HR Department,

Prevention Department, Works Council, and representatives of the employees and employer. A working group devised the aims and was responsible for developing the program. Apart from the workers' needs, another important reason behind creating the program was the change in the long term strategy of P&G, its policy of values and its attempt to adapt to the three important social trends of the third millennium: aging population, increased healthcare costs and corporate social responsibility.

The goal of the health program was to improve employees' personal wellbeing and health. In this way Procter & Gamble wants to ensure sustainable peak efficiency of workers and to improve their engagement. Also, it aimed at integrating the employees' wellbeing awareness with their daily activities. As the sickness-related absence was at a low level, it was not considered to be a priority.

The Wellbeing Program offers the employees to participate in numerous activities. The program has been based on a holistic approach to health, regarding all its aspects which are attributable to individual welfare and work-home balance. The concept of the program encompasses activities designed for the body and mind so as to encourage an employee and thus enable him/her to make healthy choices. The classes conducted within the project aim at protecting mental health, at healthy diet, sport, social activity and physical health.

Within the framework of the program, the employees can take advantage of a range of relaxation and motion classes, such as: yoga, pilates, autogenous training (meditation to reduce stress) and laughter therapy. "Worker Assistance Program" is yet another element of the program which is provided by an external supplier for employees with personal problems. Interesting is that employees can use those services as frequently as needed, including free psychological help. The program provides for a complete anonymity and confidentiality of information. P&G only receives information on the total number of visits and number of problems solved. Moreover, after lunch break, there is a variety of physical activities offered: jogging, team Nordic walking, stretching during healthy walks.

P&G offers flexible working hours and therefore the employees can participate in the activities during their working hours, as long as it does not interfere with their tasks. The company implements management by objectives, where employees' performance is assessed through the prism of objectives met and not the time spent

at work. This flexibility is also demonstrated in the work organization (flexible working hours, work from home, an option to take holidays for religious reasons or in order to look after children).

The program is annual, and has been implemented successfully since 2007 at P&G in Belgium. It was launched in the form of a three-day information campaign showing the advantages of taking part in the program. Workers were encouraged to participate in various activities through information leaflets, small advertising gadgets, e.g. an apple bearing a label with the program's logo and multimedia classes. In addition, line managers encouraged their workers to participate in the activities, being also responsible for identifying employees whose health awareness was high and whose life style was active. These employees became ambassadors of the entire program, often playing the role of healthy life style mentors for those who entered the project voluntarily. Over the whole term of the project the employees could also use psychological consultation.

Another key element of the health program at P&G is the organization of sessions for line managers and managers showing them how to detect stress signals among employees, how to cope with employees under strain and how to solve stress-related problems in the organization. Employees are encouraged to communicate openly their problems. This is yet another way of combating stress factors and creating open communication culture at P&G. The company's leadership is also encouraged to participate actively in any other initiative of the program together with employees to overcome possible communication barriers.

Each year the program is evaluated by monitoring its results through the worker satisfaction questionnaire. The employees can also send their own recommendations to the program using specially prepared idea boxes or online. It is worth pointing out that the company's management assess the program's results as very well. Each employee participates in at least one activity a year and the wellbeing program has by now become recognizable, becoming not only a tool for worker's growth but also an element of the strategy of the whole organization. That the program has been successful is further attested by voluntary participation and the freedom in choosing from a wide range of activities. In summing up, it is worth indicating the selected effects of the P&G health program in Belgium (Table 3).

Table 3. Worker satisfaction questionnaire at Procter & Gamble – comparison of results

Indicators	Results 2006	Results 2009	Change compared to 2006
wellbeing			
My work setting supports my productivity	57%	68%	**+11%**
I take the initiative to be healthy and feel fit	76%	82%	**+6%**
work life balance			
My work organization is flexible enough for me to keep balance between my work and personal life	68%	76%	**+8%**
After work, I have energy enough to do the stuff I like	46%	58%	**+12%**

Source: Self-reported data based on European Agency for Safety and Health at Work – EU-OSHA (2009a).

Over the period of 2006-2009 worker's satisfaction results improved both in terms of worker wellbeing and in terms of work-home balance. In light of the above, sickness-related absenteeism ratio also decreased over that period from 1.9% to 1.6%. However, this decrease cannot be considered directly attributable to the program, for that was not diagnosed by a direct method.

4. Summary and conclusions

Referring to the conclusions drawn from the literature analysis, the findings of the secondary research, as well as the case studies, the authors made the attempt to develop the theoretical assumptions of the model describing the interdependencies between individual variables impacting worker welfare.

The theoretical assumptions of the „demand-resource-support" model show that the main threat to the achievement of the mutual benefits (employer and employee) in the form of satisfaction, intention to leave, absenteeism and worker's health state

is work overload. Work overload, which is the primary source of stress, can originate in the three main areas (Mościcka-Teske, Potocka 2014: 10):

- work content (number of tasks, working conditions, deadlines, task complexity),
- work context (organizational culture, interpersonal relations, personal growth opportunities),
- and pathological behaviors in the workplace (mobbing, discrimination).

Thus, the level of work overload will be an *independent* variable in the proposed model (measured in the three separate areas), while *dependent* variables will include: satisfaction level, loyalty, absenteeism and worker's state of health. It should be underscored that although the variables characterize an employee, they are paramount to the functioning of the entire organization.

However, key to our discussion is to capture the role of the two additional factors such as work-home interaction and worker behaviors in terms of physical activity and rest. Hence, in the model proposed, *intervening variables* (mediating variables) have been distinguished:

- the level and type of work-home interaction,
- pro-health behaviors: employees' level of physical activity and resting time (number of sleep hours).

The character of the interdependencies examined is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Theoretical model of the studies
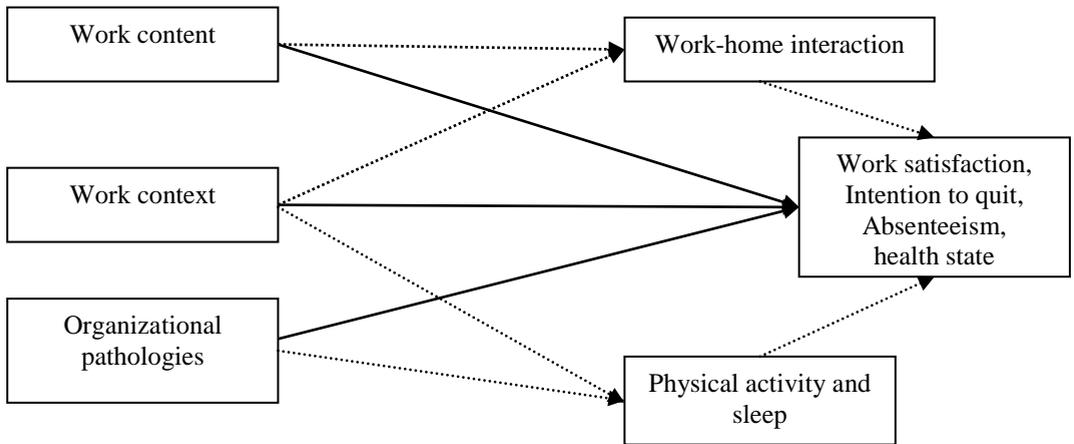
Source: Authors' own study

In order to verify the above model, a number of research hypotheses was advanced which indicated the predicted direction of the interdependencies in question:

H1: Excessive work overload contributes to diminished satisfaction and feeling of wellbeing and increased absenteeism

H2: Positive work-home relationship and positive home-work relationship will reduce the negative consequences of excessive overload relating to work content and context

H3: Negative work-home relationship and negative home-work relationship will increase the negative consequences arising from work overload

H4: Physical activity and rest (hours of sleep) counteract the negative consequences of work content and context-related overload

H5: Physical activity and rest will reduce the negative consequences of the excessive overload arising from work content and context

H6: Neither physical activity nor positive interaction between home and work, and work and home will reduce the negative impact of organizational pathologies.

The empirical verification of the interdependencies investigated will form the basis for drawing conclusions as to the importance of healthy behavior promotion and support in terms of building a positive work-home interaction, seen

as the tools for devising an effective corporate wellness policy. In reference to the research assumptions, surveys have been designed which will be conducted in 2017 on employees from a number of different enterprises. The surveys will be carried out nationwide, taking into account various lines of business, according to Polish Business Classification. To conclude, a skilful selection of tools supporting employees in their coping with excessive work overload is crucial in a setting when its reduction is not possible, in particular, regarding the so called "hard" area, that is, work content overload.

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Koncepcja przeciwdziałania negatywnym konsekwencjom przeciążania pracą w oparciu o pozytywną interakcję praca – dom oraz promocję zachowań prozdrowotnych pracownika

Streszczenie

Cel: Celem artykułu jest wskazanie negatywnych konsekwencji zdrowotnych wynikających z przeciążenia pracą, braku równowagi praca – dom (work-life balance), jak również charakterystyka pozytywnych zachowań prozdrowotnych w miejscu pracy jako formy przeciwdziałania im. Artykuł wpisuje się w dyskusję nad koncepcją *corporate wellness*, która tworzy podstawy kultury zdrowotnej organizacji.

Metody badawcze: Praca opiera na się na przeglądzie literatury przedmiotu z zakresu czynników kształtujących dobrostan pracownika. W artykule zaprezentowano także dwa studia przypadków w zakresie kompleksowych programów zdrowotnych, realizowanych w spółce Mars Polska oraz w belgijskim oddziale Procter & Gamble

Wnioski: Bazując na przeglądzie literatury zagranicznej i krajowej, autorki proponują koncepcję modelową opisującą zależności pomiędzy poszczególnymi zmiennym mającymi wpływ na dobrostan pracownika. W niniejszym modelu zakłada się, że dla powyższej regeneracji pracownika kluczową rolę odgrywać będzie interakcja praca – dom oraz podejmowane przez pracownika zachowania prozdrowotne, takie jak aktywność fizyczna i wypoczynek w formie snu.

Wartość artykułu: Wartość artykułu związana jest z interdyscyplinarnym podejściem do kształtowania dobrostanu pracownika. W prezentowanej koncepcji oprócz perspektywy zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi uwzględniono również problematykę zdrowia psychicznego i fizycznego pracownika.

Implikacje badań: Założenia teoretyczne przedstawione w artykule staną się punktem wyjścia do projektowanych badań w polskich przedsiębiorstwach. Celem tych badań będzie identyfikacja możliwości przeciwdziałania negatywnym skutkom przeciążenia pracą poprzez promocję zachowań prozdrowotnych w miejscu zatrudnienia oraz wspieranie pracownika w budowaniu pozytywnej interakcji praca – życie.

Słowa kluczowe: przeciążenie pracą, dobrostan pracownika, równowaga praca - życie, zachowania prozdrowotne, miejsce pracy promujące zdrowie, program prozdrowotny w miejscu pracy, przedsiębiorstwa, wellness korporacyjny

JEL: M54, I12

The concept of HR business partner in a project-oriented organization

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Abstract:

Aim: The paper seeks to supplement the theory of HR business partnering by presenting the concept of the role of HR business partner in project-oriented organizations. To this end, the intermediate stages of the study encompass the discussion how the role of HR department as a business partner is being formulated against other roles, and the description of the current role of HR experts in the organizations analyzed.

Design / Research methods: The research process employed the literature research and author's own study carried out over 2014-2015 in project-oriented organizations.

Conclusions / findings: The role of business partner is present in 10% of the examined enterprises, with the source of capital and the entity size being of minor importance. Projects play a key role in the development of contemporary undertakings. Moreover, the primary role in terms of the implementation of any organizational activities is exercised by people. Thus, the opportunity emerges to implement and modify the concept of HR business partnering. This will lead to a greater professionalization of staffing, which will ultimately affect positively the implementation of strategy of the organizations under discussion.

Originality / value of the article: The publications on project management as well as those concerned with human resources management have so far not addressed the issue of the development of the HR business partner role in the organizations under discussion. The considerations, of both theoretical and practical nature, contribute to the theory of management, being much relevant owing to the ever growing popularity of the concept of management through projects.

Implications of the research: project management, project-oriented organization, HR department, HR business partner

Key words: project management, project-oriented organization, HR department, HR business partner

JEL: M12

1. Introduction

The contemporary conditions in which enterprises operate may be described as changeable, unstable or downright turbulent. Competitive advantage is possible when an undertaking responds quickly to changes occurring in the surrounding environment, introducing smoothly changes to its processes and products – also in the form of innovation (see more in Drucker 1995: 65; Turner 2009: 1; Borowiecki 2010: 33). Management through projects is gaining in importance, being considered to be the method of the organization's strategy implementation through employing the project approach, which is reflected in the appointment of interdisciplinary project teams and deployment of specific tools characteristic of the project management. Enterprises employing this kind of approach are referred to as project-oriented organizations. The project-oriented organizations are not only those which derive their income from the implementation of projects for their external clients (such where projects are products), but also those which manage projects for their internal needs. Nowadays, projects are playing an enormous role even in organizations associated with a repetitive activity – e.g. mass production companies.

In the conditions outlined above individual generic functions of an enterprise are being shaped, including the staffing function defined through the prism of actions taken in relation to the present and potential employees. How this function is designed and realized is the responsibility of an organizational unit called a personnel department, staff department or HR (human resources) department.

In the scholarly literature there are different classifications of the roles of HR departments (see more in Ulrich, Brockbank 2008: 206-226; Relly, Wiliams 2009: 93-112). In this respect, attention is drawn to the fact that today there has been an overall shift from the strictly administrative role towards the development role and even towards the function of business partner, which is determined by the already mentioned continuous changes in the company's environment which, in turn, influence the creation of the new needs of receivers of the work performed by the HR experts. The discussions that are taking place are concerned with so called traditional organizations, that is, having stable, hierarchical structures. Here the importance of cooperation between the HR department and line managers is

highlighted. Yet, in the project-oriented organizations the central role is played by project managers.

The aim of the paper is to fill the gap in the theory of management indicated above by presenting the author's own concept of HR business partner in a project-oriented organization. Within the framework of the intermediate stages devised to realize the paper's objective, it is shown how the role of the HR department as a business partner is being "delineated" against other roles, also outlining the present role of the "experts in people" in the organizations covered by the study. The study employed the literature research and the author's own survey carried out over the period of 2014-2015 on a 100 project-oriented organizations. The project was funded by the National Center of Science (DEC-2013/09/D/HS4/00566).

2. HR business partner compared to other roles performed by HR departments

The operations of the HR units target both the entities within the enterprise and those on the external labor market. On the external labor market, the HR departments provide services largely for job candidates. The internal stakeholders in terms of the operations performed under the HR function mainly include the employer (the board), line managers, bottom-level staff – and also project managers in the project-oriented organizations included in the study.

If we divide the internal clients of HR departments into three groups in terms of their expectations, the largest group will be made up of clients of the basic services (administrative), i.e. all employees. The second group encompasses persons who expect help in solving problems or expect to be provided with tools used in the implementation of the HR function (in the case analyzed that would include line managers or project managers). The third group is represented by the employer (the board) who asks about future strategy, definition and development of people's key competences, advanced HR tools (Berłowski 2004: 92-93; Piwowar-Sulej 2012:

263). It is worth noting that employers' expectations with respect to HR departments are closely linked, for example, to the situation on the labor market[1]

Providing basic services involves keeping social records, providing assistance in the interpretation of the provisions of the labor law and calculating salaries. The execution of these tasks is consistent with the role of the HR department as an administrator or –putting emphasis on the professionalism of operations – functional expert. The above corresponds to the first or second maturity level of the HR structures (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Maturity levels of HR structures.

V/Change management	Constant improvement of work methods and employees' potential		Coaching/development of employees' personal competences	
IV/Human potential management	Management of the inventory of the company's competences	Link with the strategy and the organization's performance	Building teams	Mentoring
III/Management of competences	Employment planning	Career development/HR tools based on competences	Participatory culture	Development of competences
II/People management	staffing	Wages/work performance management	Communication	Training
I/lack of coherency of actions	Meeting the basic requirements of the labor law			

Source: The author's own study based on (Curtis, Hefler, Miller 2001: 18-28); http://kadry.infor.pl/kadry/hrm/zarzadzanie/683074,3,Kim-jest-HR-biznes-partner.html, [7.08.2016].

The unit under discussion can also act as a spokesman for employees or as a developer of human capital (concentrating on the development of key competences), which corresponds to the third maturity level of the HR structure. Further roles harmonize with the fourth and fifth maturity level. The literature also points to the role of a change maker, which involves active participation of the HR unit in the change management process, and the role of the HR leader, designer and implementor of tools devised to perform the HR function (see more in Sierociński,

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[1] More on the changes on the labor market in Poland and thus transformed expectations of employers regarding HR departments see in (Piwowar-Sulej, Król-Jasińska, 2015: 305-313).

Berłowski 2006: 16; Ulrich, Brockbank, 2008: 208-226; Pocztowski 2008: 83-88; Piwowar-Sulej 2016: 142). Moreover, the tasks within the strategic dimension the HR deportment performs within the HR business partner role. Although this role has many names, it is defined in a similar way, to which the information contained in Table 2 attest.

Table 2. The HR business partner role through the optics of selected authors

Author	Name of the role	Description of the role
M. Armstrong	Partner in business	• to integrates one's actions with those of the board, seeking to achieve the strategic goal • to address long-term issues concerned with employment and employees' growth, using employees' key competences
D. Ulrich and W. Brockbank	Strategic partner	• to contribute to the creation of company's development strategy through providing knowledge on staff management, consultancy and organizational learning • to show experience and knowledge of a particular industry, thus helping senior managers and line managers to achieve jointly their goal • to help implement the strategy in such a way as to help the organization achieve its mission and vision.
P. Reilly and T. Williams	Strategist	• taking part in strategic decision-making and ensuring that employees are perceived as the enterprise's primary resources (participation in board meetings, in committees)
A. Stabryła	HR business partner	• HR manager who knows and understands the business of his/her company , providing real support for his/her internal clients

Source: The author's own study based on (Ulrich, Brockbank 2008: 206-220; Armstrong 2007: 76-80; Reilly, Williams 2009: 93-112; Gołembski 2012: 258).

The literature highlights the fact that HR business partnering (the method of performing the HR function in that HR business partners are placed in individual business units) provides tangible support to the company in achieving its goals (Gołembski 2012: 258). It comes, then, as no surprise that large enterprises implement this measure and search for people for the job of HR Business partner. However, do the tasks performed on this job fit in with the characteristic features of the HR department role as described above?

On 16 June 2016, on the recruitment site pracuj.pl we found 41 active job offers for HR business partners. Based on the analysis of the content of those offers, the following conclusions were drawn:

1) In some organizations, HR business partners are just staffing experts, performing such tasks as recruitment and staff selection, training, supervision of interim evaluation process and compliance with labor law in a specific unit, providing support to line managers (in a branch office, region).

2) The title HR business partner is also referred to the managers of HR divisions of company's subordinate units (daughter companies, foreign subsidiaries), which are responsible for budgeting and supervising staff costs, the implementation of tools, standards and processes in line with the HR management policy adopted by the superior unit and tailored to the local market, supporting managers in the application of HR tools and standards. From such an angle, the HR business partner is not the only an "expert in people" in a specific business unit. He/she brings together the work of persons responsible for the specific HR processes.

3) In only five out of 41 offers there was a reference to the concept of strategy. The HR business partner was then described as a person who:
   - performs operational and strategic tasks,
   - discusses the strategy of development of organizational values, mission, business planning,
   - is responsible for the implementation of business strategy within the scope of HR management in a daughter company,
   - supports managers in building the engagement of staff in the implementation of the organization's strategy,
   - co-creates, communicates and pursues the HR strategy of a business unit in line with the overall strategy of the organization.

In summing up the issues addressed above, the conclusion is that there is no uniformity in defining the role of HR business partner in economic units. People who are hired for this job can, in practice, perform tasks which are assigned rather to a functional expert or HR leader. The author's past experience of the discrepancies between science and practice in terms of how the numerous issues relating to the discipline of HR management are being defined induced her – while conducting her

own research – to inform respondents unambiguously what the individual roles of the HR departments involve.

3. The role of personnel department in project-oriented organizations – the author's own findings based on research

In the empirical studies carried out between 2014 and 2015, which employed structured and unstructured interviews conducted together with project team members and employees of the HR units[2], respondents were asked to describe the current and desired role of personnel departments in the project-oriented organizations. In light of the fact that there exist no objective registers identifying the entire population of project-oriented organizations, which would allow drawing a representative sample, purposeful sampling was used. In conducting the survey and analyses, the author cooperated with the Research and Analysis Center at University of Economics in Katowice. Enterprises were examined having sustainable organization units – including HR department – and interdisciplinary project teams, and where positions or functions of a project manager have been established, and tools employed which are characteristic for the project management field. The sample encompassed 100 organizations, of which 80 were medium and 20 big sized. 85 sampling units were made up of Polish enterprises, and the other 15 of foreign-invested companies.

The role that is most frequently performed by the HR units of the surveyed organizations – according to the project team members – is the HR leader, which makes up 44% of sampling units. Considering the breakdown of the organizations by size or source of capital, the conclusion to be made is that the HR leader role is present in 67% of foreign-invested companies and in 50% of big organizations. Detailed findings are demonstrated in Table 3.

In the Polish organizations, the HR department performs the role of an administrator or change maker more frequently than in foreign-invested companies.

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[2] More on the methodological aspects of the studies see Piwowar-Sulej (2016: 92-98).

Similar differences occur between medium and big companies. The role of business partner which concerns us here occurs in 10% of surveyed enterprises, with the source of capital or the enterprise size being of minor importance.

Moreover, the information obtained in the course of the interviews was that the role of the HR department in the organization under study was similar to that performed by this unit in the superior enterprise (if there are multi-level business structures). In 10% of organizations (only foreign entities, the size of the enterprise being of no relevance) the role of the HR department corresponds to that in the superior company. 36% of surveyed entities is independent from their parent company in terms of staffing policy (of which 29 medium and 7 big companies, 31 Polish and 5 foreign companies).

Table 3. The role of HR departments in project-oriented organizations – empirical study findings

Dominant role of HR department	Total N = 100 (100%)	Polish organization N=85 (100%)	foreign organizations N=15 (100%)	medium-sized enterprises N=80 (100%)	Big enterprises N=20 (100%)
Functional expert	26 (26%)	24 (28%)	2 (13%)	22 (28%)	4 (20%)
Change maker	15 (15%)	14 (16%)	1 (7%)	13 (16%)	2 (10%)
Spokesman for employees	5 (5%)	5 (6%)	0 (0%)	3 (4%)	2 (10%)
HR leader	44 (44%)	34 (40%)	10 (67%)	34 (43%)	10 (50%)
HR business partner	10 (10%)	8 (9%)	2 (13%)	8 (10%)	2 (10%)

Source: The author's own study.

Unstructured interviews provided additional information on the way respondents assigned a specific role to the HR departments. Respondents were guided by the insights in connection with the solutions introduced by HR experts for the sustainable structures of the enterprise. The HR departments implement tools designed to perform the HR function, including devising procedures which must be observed by the managers of functional units. That projects are being implemented in the organization is most frequently reflected in the remuneration regulations

developed by the HR department managers. As far as the participation of HR department employees in projects is concerned, it confines itself to assistance predominantly in the implementation of training for team members.

Although – as indicated before – the HR business partner is the most developed role that a HR department can perform, one cannot state categorically that, for example, HR leader or change maker represent lesser roles. Critical assessment should be preceded by an in-depth analysis of the situation of a given economic operator, including its stage of development, market position, changes implemented (their number, strategic relevance), forms of staff employment (or how popular it is to use outsourcing), organizational culture, etc. The evolution of the HR department position towards business partner requires changes in the employers' consciousness and employees themselves of the HR units in terms of the advantages arising from deploying a strategic approach to people management.

Management through projects as a method for the implementation of the enterprise's strategy triggers changes in the organization structure (temporary teams, new roles/positions such as, e.g. project manager, contractor carrying out work in the project, project office employee), affecting the nature of work (temporary participation in a team, variability of tasks/roles, employees being doubly subordinated). The implementation of this method of strategy in an organization with a stable structure, where employees are used to perform constant, planned or even routine work can have negative psycho-social implications. Furthermore, the HR function comprises all actions taken with respect to employees conducting work within a sustainable structure of the enterprise, as well as actions addressed to project team members. It is key that the "two-way" architecture of the HR function stays cohesive internally. In such circumstances the role of the HR business partner gains in particular importance.

4. HR business partner as the solution proposed in the examined organizations

In line with the scientific characteristics of HR business partner outlined earlier in the paper, the personnel department should provide assistance in the strategy

implementation (implementation of management through projects) in such a way as to help the organization achieve its mission and vision. The specific tasks of the HR unit at the stage of implementing management through projects encompass the following (cf. Piwowar-Sulej 2016: 189-190):

- providing the board with information on employees' project competences and characteristic features of organizational culture (in the breakdown by factors stimulating the management through projects positively and negatively),
- reviewing and possibly modifying the HR strategy,
- estimating possible costs and time needed to ensure that the organization has competent people for project work (e.g. external recruitment of project managers or employees training),
- tailoring the tools of the HR function performance to the specificity of management through projects and creating transparent regulations pertaining to project works (e.g. the rules for granting premiums for project participation depending on the project category),
- determining, together with other decision-makers, i.e. at least with the board, functional unit managers and project managers, the allocation of powers with respect to people management,
- paying close attention to internal communication (a campaign on the idea itself of management through projects and the rules devised on project participation, the method of evaluation and granting of premiums for such work, participation in project management training etc.),
- assistance in providing solutions to social problems.

The main task of the HR business partner at the stage of sustaining and developing the management through projects is to monitor the cohesiveness of the "two-way" personnel function (i.e. actions directed at employees working within the company's sustainable structure and actions addressing project team members), to examine employees' sentiments regarding the implementation of management through projects and to raise employees' project consciousness and thus building "project" organizational culture.

The role of personnel department as HR business partner in project-oriented organizations was outlined above. It is also possible to use HR business partnering,

as already defined in the paper, in the entities under discussion. Persons in the position of HR business partner are usually situated in individual business units such as branches, regions, daughter companies. In the project-oriented organizations it is possible to "deploy" the employee of the personnel department as a business partner in a particular project – treated as a micro-organization. Such person's task would be to ensure that the HR practices are consistent in all the organization through his/her support of the project manager.

It is worth emphasizing that performing the role of HR business partner requires from the employees of personnel units high competences. According to the findings of the think tank Corporate Executive Board © 2008, the theoretical knowledge acquired at university can at best be helpful while performing this role, but it is not sufficient – its impact on the employee's effectiveness is at 5%. The key here are specific competences covering the borderline areas of business, HR and controlling (66%), and some experience too (24%) (http://kadry.infor.pl/kadry/hrm/zarzadzanie/683074,Kim-jest-HR-biznes-partner.html [7.08.2016]). In the case in question it is about combining the knowledge of project management (including teams) with the knowledge in terms of personnel function performance.

This clearly shows that it is worth developing project competences among HR experts which are understood as a set of characteristics of a given person conducive to an efficient and effective project implementation. Many of these competences can be found in the general classification of the human potential characteristics required by the contemporary labor market (see more in Piwowar-Sulej 2015: 41-51). Gaining practical experience is becoming immensely important and that implies participation in projects before taking the role of HR business partner. It is about being engaged in the HR projects actively, as well as participating in other projects that are being realized in the enterprise – even if it is just as an observer at first.

5. Conclusion

The HR function is present in every enterprise. The differences in the way this function is performed – including the role assigned to HR units – are determined most strongly by the beliefs of people who manage the organization. On the market there are still many entities where HR departments deal solely with personnel and wages matters. The role of HR business partner is considered to be the most developed role of the units examined. Although this role has been described in detail in academic literature, there are discrepancies in its definition in the enterprises' practice.

The objective factor influencing the changes in the structure of the personnel function (being of a two-way structure) is with no doubt the implementation of management through project as a method to realize the enterprise's strategy. It is believed that in such conditions the HR department should be close to business, which, in the case discussed in the paper, implies being "close to projects". This provided a basis for devising a list of actions a HR unit should undertake in project-oriented organizations. The paper also demonstrated how HR business partnering can be applied in practice in the organizations analyzed.

Considering that the idea of management through projects is becoming increasingly popular, it is to be hoped that the concept of the HR department role illustrated in the paper will find its reflection in practice, which would certainly influence the professionalization of the way the personnel function is being performed.

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Katarzyna PIWOWAR-SULEJ

Rola HR biznes partnera w organizacji zorientowanej na projekty

Streszczenie

Cel: Celem artykułu jest uzupełnienie teorii HR biznes partneringu poprzez zaprezentowanie koncepcji roli HR biznes partnera w organizacjach zorientowanych na projekty. Etapami pośrednimi służącymi realizacji tego celu było omówienie, jak na tle innych ról kształtuje się rola działu personalnego jako partnera biznesu oraz określenie obecnej roli specjalistów HR w analizowanych organizacjach.

Metoda badawcza: W procesie badawczym posiłkowano się studiami literaturowymi oraz badaniami własnymi, przeprowadzonymi w latach 2014-2015 w 100 organizacjach zorientowanych na projekty.

Wnioski: Rola partnera biznesowego występuje w 10% badanych przedsiębiorstw, przy czym nie ma istotnego znaczenia źródło pochodzenia kapitału oraz wielkość podmiotu. Projekty mają kluczowe znaczenie dla rozwoju współczesnych przedsiębiorstw. Jednocześnie główną rolę w realizacji wszelkich aktywności organizacyjnych pełnią ludzie. Tym samym pojawia się możliwość implementacji i modyfikacji koncepcji HR biznes partneringu. Dzięki temu zwiększy się stopień profesjonalizacji funkcji personalnej, co z kolei dodatnio wpłynie na realizację strategii analizowanych organizacji.

Oryginalność / wartość artykułu, wkład w rozwoju nauki: W publikacjach z zakresu zarządzania projektami, jak i w pozycjach poświęconych zarządzaniu zasobami ludzkimi nie podejmowano dotąd problemu kształtowania roli HR biznes partnera w analizowanych organizacjach. Podjęte rozważania o charakterze zarówno teoretycznym, jak i aplikacyjnym stanowią wkład do teorii zarządzania, mając istotne znaczenie z uwagi na rosnącą popularność idei zarządzania przez projekty.

Słowa kluczowe: zarządzanie projektami, organizacja zorientowana na projekty, dział HR, HR biznes partner

JEL: M12

Employee's personal determinants of fitting the job characteristics

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Abstract:

Aim: Over the last twenty years there have been numerous studies showing significant relationships between personality dimensions and predisposition to doing a job of a specific character. The aim of this research is to examine the relationships between personality, job characteristics and perceived job satisfaction with a view to demonstrate the rationale behind the application of personality tests as the tool for predicting the employee's fitting the job specification in the recruitment process.

Design / Research methods: In order to verify the selected relationships, a quantitative study on a group of Polish workers (N = 302) was carried out. It correlated five personality dimensions (tested by the NEO-FFI questionnaire) with the level of employee's satisfaction and the work characteristics (questionnaires made by the author were used).The satisfaction level was determined based on employees' job assessment and professional career development, while the character of the job was examined according to seven scales: individual vs. team work, complexity of tasks, application of new technologies, procedures, customer contact, influence on customer's emotions, dependence on supervisor.

Conclusions / findings: The results of the analyses showed that each personality dimension was significantly different for respondents satisfied with their performance of work of a particular nature. This can confirm the use of personality tests in the recruitment process; however, some factors need to be taken into account, including, among others, organizational environment or specific job demands.

Originality / value of the article: The article is an attempt to link comprehensively different studies focusing on the association between personality and the type of work performed, with this objective being expanded by adding a moderate variable - job satisfaction, which allows one to determine the extent to which the type of work fits a particular dimension of personality.

Implications of the research: The implicational value pertains to recruitment and selection processes, justifying the validity of the personality test application in recruitment processes.

Limitations of the research: In the future, it would be useful to enlarge the group examined in order to be able to generalize the results and add other moderate variables, such as, for example, organizational demands shaping the character of work.

Key words: job satisfaction, work specification, five-factor model, neuroticism, extraversion, conscientiousness, openness to experience, agreeableness

JEL: L29, J24, J28

1. Introduction

The essence of the recruitment process is to select and choose people who meet the expectations posed by an employer, and who will, owing to their competences and resources, contribute to company's increased profits. Hence the paramount importance of the accurate choice of employees. Many enterprises operating in Poland tend to decide on a job interview as the selection method, followed by knowledge and skill tests, and an assessment center (Chirkowska-Smolak, Grobelny 2014: 135). However, job interviews are likely to contain predictable questions, allowing a candidate to prepare the answers in advance, and thus failing to reflect his/her real competences or character traits (Hogan et al. 1996: 473). Employees' productivity and engagement depend on the competences tested during a job interview, as well as on organizational and individual factors, including one's personality (Chirkowska-Smolak, Grobelny 2014: 126). That has been the reason behind exploring the significance of the application of personality tests in the recruitment processes. Since the start of the last century the relationships between personality and work productivity have been examined extensively by organizational psychologists. Until the 1980' it was argued that personality had no links with occupational aspects (which might have resulted from lacking the personality dimension classification and transparency of the tools applied). Moreover, since the mid 1980', standardized tools and concepts have begun to be employed to test personality, which allowed for the conclusion that indeed some personality traits correlated with work efficiency (Barrick et al. 2001: 9). Although some experts are rather skeptical about testing the personality of job candidates or employees, a well designed tool to measure personality is a significant indicator of functioning in the workplace and may be useful while conducting a fair recruitment process (Tett et al. 1991: 727; Hogan et al. 1996: 470). Also, personality testing helps predict counterproductive behaviors, that is, intentional behaviors which harm, or are supposed to do so, organization and people associated with it, e.g. theft, or damaging goods, making enemies (Ones et al. 1993: 680). In choosing a candidate, another important element is his/her professional growth, understood as work engagement, climbing the career ladder or professional fulfillment in the workplace

(Czarnota-Bojarska 2009: 41). Hence the assumption that the level of perceived job satisfaction is crucial, too.

The aim of this paper and the study is, therefore, to analyze the relationships, identify the level of interdependencies between personality dimensions and the job characteristics chosen among a group of Polish employees. Moreover, the decision was made to investigate the association between the personality dimensions, job characteristics and job satisfaction in order to examine whether there was the matching of personality to job's specific nature. Satisfaction represents a moderate variable which allows for the degree of employee's fulfillment in a particular work setting to be assessed. Examining this kind of dependency can indicate the rationale behind the application of personality tests in the process of employees selection. In order to achieve the aims set, the author formulated seven hypotheses on the job satisfaction level depending on the strength of individual personality dimensions and the character of work. In order to verify the hypotheses, the author conducted a quantitative study on a group of 302 working respondents using four tools: the NEO-FFI questionnaire and three author's questionnaires with the first one examining the characteristics of work, the second, job satisfaction evaluation and the third one career development. The results thus obtained were subject to statistical analyses, with the hypotheses being verified on their bases; conclusions were formulated on the basis of the study and the literature analysis, which allowed the level of the dependencies between variables to be identified, and also to find out whether the application of personality tests in the recruitment process can be a source of valuable information.

2. The five-factor model of personality

Personality has been intriguing psychologists of various streams, hence it has been explored and defined in a variety of ways. H.J. Eyseneck, a renowned scholar of personality, described personality as a relatively stable organization of character, temperament and various intellectual and physical properties determining how an individual adapts to the environment, and which may assume four levels of

organization: the level of theoretical constructs (they can't be observed directly), the level of traits to be observed in experiments, the level of habitual behaviors and the level of attitudes (Brzozowski, Drwal 1995: 9). Today's personality concept most commonly used is the five-factor model of personality by Costa and McCrae, which stems from the correlative methods of personality exploration, focusing on the statistical relationships between the traits making people different from one another (Pervin 2002: 30). Against the studies on personality, the five-factor model by Costa and McCrae seems to be the most developed in terms of the methodology and psychological content (Zawadzki et al. 2010: 8). Costa and McCrae created a tool to examine the five factors of personality – the self-descriptive NEO-PI-R questionnaire consisting of 240 statements, which measures personality hierarchically using a top-down approach, beginning with the five main dimensions (neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience) and dividing them into six sub-scales (Costa, McCrae 1995: 46). The authors also proposed a shorter version of the NEO-FFI questionnaire comprising 60 statements, allowing for personality to be examined in a concise way, which is useful in a variety of contexts (not only the clinical one), making it possible to test the personality of people of different cultures (Costa, McCrae 2004: 592). The NEO-FFI questionnaire is also applied on a wide scale in the employee recruitment process. The five-factor model is the construct that has been tested best in the context of choice and selection of employees, and a number of studies and metaanalyses point to significant statistical correlations between the individual dimensions and an accurate match between the employee and the job (Chirkowska-Smolak, Grobelny 2014: 131).

The five-factor personality model distinguishes five personality dimensions: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness. Neuroticism is a dimension specifying emotional unbalance versus emotional balance. Being placed high on this scale implies a tendency to feeling negative emotions more intensively, such as anxiety, anger, sense of guilt or helplessness. Persons who are neurotic have difficulties in overcoming stress or their own drives. They often have irrational ideas and react impulsively in a situation stirring their emotions. Within this dimension six facets are distinguished: anxiety,

understood as tension and nervousness occurring in a variety of emotional situations; angry hostility, that is, the propensity to feel angry and frustrated, which an individual can direct inward; depression, i.e. being susceptible to feeling sad, lonely and powerless; impulsiveness expressed as the difficulty to control one's impulses; vulnerability, that is, being susceptible to stress and unexpected, even panic reactions in difficult situations, and the last facet which is self-consciousness manifested in having a low opinion of one's worth, feeling shy and embarrassed in the presence of others (Zawadzki et al. 2010: 12-13). People who are highly neurotic can also be described as frightened, feeling self-pity, cranky, unstable emotionally, constantly worrying about something (McCrae, John 1992: 183).

Extraversion is a dimension reflecting the level of activity of an individual and his/her optimistic attitude towards people and life experiences, openness to others, striving for being in a group, making new friends. Extraverted people are characterized by a friendly attitude, high activity and high level of energy, which they are likely to direct outwards. Their opposites are persons ranking low on this scale, so called introverts, who direct their energy towards themselves, do not need to build many relationships, they are less gregarious and active than the extraverted people. Furthermore, they keep a distance in their social contacts, look to the future less optimistically and have no need to look for a lot of stimulations and new challenges in life. The extraversion dimension consists of six facets: gregariousness, defined on the basis of the number and depth of one's relationships with others; warmth, which signifies the ability to maintain close relationships with others and which is further characterized by a friendly attitude towards others; assertiveness, that is the ability to lead others, expressing one's views, being able to manage people; activity illustrates the level of one's life energy; excitement-seeking, which is the propensity to take risks, searching for stimulations; and positive emotions meaning feeling positive emotions, expressing life optimism and a friendly attitude towards people and life (Zawadzki et al. 2010: 13). People who are highly extraverted tend to be active, assertive, enthusiastic, talkative, merry, enjoying meeting other people (McCrae, John 1992: 182). However, a high score on this scale is also associated with higher impulsiveness and the need of being constantly active,

as well as lesser insight into one's own behavior and self-analysis (Watson, Clark 1997: 769).

Openness to experience is a dimension specifying the degree of openness to new experiences; it shows whether an individual seeks stimulations, is cognitively curious and whether he/she is tolerant to the new and the other. People with a low score on this scale prefer to stick to the established schemes, their way of thinking is more conventional, and they evince less tolerance for novelties and controversial views. People who are open to experience are often creative, absorbing new knowledge, in addition, being skeptical of the prevalent norms and authorities. The six facets of this dimension are made up of: fantasy; aesthetics, which is being sensitive to beauty, being interested in art or poetry; feelings specified as openness to other people's emotions; actions signifying actively seeking new stimulations; ideas understood as cognitive curiosity and taking interest in the nature of other things and laws; values which identify the capability to analyze and even undermine present social, religious and political norms (Zawadzki et al. 2010: 14). High openness to experience goes hand in hand with broad interests, rich imagination, curiosity and inquisitiveness, and openness to original ideas and various intellectual stimulations (McCrae, John 1992: 183).

Agreeableness is a dimension reflecting the strength of a positive attitude towards other people and the wish to help them; it is also the degree of trust and sensitivity to the needs of the other. People scoring low on this scale show more antagonistic than agreeable attitudes, whose degree of trust and openness towards people is smaller, and who are not keen on being altruistic, preferring to compete and approach other people's intentions with skepticism. Moreover, people with high agreeableness tend to be cooperative, helpful, warm to people, believing that others show similar attitudes. Extremely high agreeableness can lead to social dependency on others and to becoming a person who is taken advantage of as someone who is always ready to help, even at his/her own cost. Extremely low agreeableness, on the other hand, can be associated with anti-social behaviors, egoism and narcissism. The agreeableness dimension also consists of six facets: trust expressing the belief that other people have honest intentions (or quite contrary, that they are dishonest and capable of manipulation); straightforwardness, that is, on the one side, honesty,

simple-heartedness, social naivety, and on the other, a tendency to manipulate and take advantage of others; altruism signifying consideration for the needs of other people and fulfilling those needs even at one's own cost vs. egocentrism and egoism; compliance is yet another facet, which is restraining aggression, a tendency to mitigate conflicts, being submissive and forgiving, and, on the other hand competitive behaviors, feeding conflicts, showing aggressive behaviors. The other two remaining facets include modesty, that is, a realistic picture of oneself vs. a tendency to look down on others; and the last facet – a tendency to tender-mindedness expressed as honesty, proclivity to support charitable actions or, on the other hand, being guided by rational thinking and low sensitivity to the needs of others (Zawadzki et al. 2010: 15). People scoring low on the agreeableness scale are cynical, suspicious, more likely to behave immorally, having no qualms about that; they prefer to compete rather than cooperate, they might be arrogant and narcissistic due to lacking in modesty and well-developed empathy, which is characteristic of the agreeable people (Costa et al. 1991: 888-889). People who are highly agreeable are easy to forgive others, they are more generous than people scoring low on the scale; in addition, they are kind, trustworthy and capable of being compassionate to others, supporting them at a difficult time (McCrae, John 1992: 182).

The last dimension in the five-factor model by Costa and McCrae is conscientiousness, which is mostly characterized by people's attitude towards work and striving for growth. People with a high level of conscientiousness are organized, characterized by endurance, determination in achieving their goals, as well as by meticulousness and reliability. A high score on this scale predisposes people to being dedicated to work, to professional growth and competence enhancement. The six facets of conscientiousness are: competence which is the belief in one's own resourcefulness or lacking the ability to cope with tasks and challenges; order, a tendency to keep things in order, in other words, a degree of being organized and orderly; dutifulness reflected in one's reliability and rule following, or in contrast to that, unreliability; achievement striving which is having high ambitions, being highly motivated and engaged in work vs. having no clear aims, low work motivation. Another facet is self-discipline, i.e. the ability to self-motivation, even to do difficult and arduous tasks vs. abandoning work before it has been completed;

deliberation which is a rational analysis of decisions and well-thought out action vs. spontaneity, making decisions impulsively, but also choosing solutions under time pressure (Zawadzki et al. 2010: 16-17). Conscientious people could be described as those who are effective in their operations, reliable, organized, capable of postponing pleasure, and in addition, those who respect rules and ethics, and who can be relied upon as reliable and trustworthy individuals (McCrae, John 1992: 182). A high level of conscientiousness is associated with inward control and a high standard of the tasks performed, which does not stem from high morality but from dutifulness and rule observations (Costa et al. 1991: 889).

3. Personality dimensions and work characteristics

The many years of research on the links between the five-factor personality model and the functioning in the workplace allow the conclusion to be made that there are certain correlations between the individual dimensions and the selected aspects of work (Barrick et al. 2001: 9). The metaanalyses of the studies have shown that conscientiousness and emotional stability indeed correlate with a variety of work parameters in nearly every profession, whereas the other dimensions (openness to experience, agreeableness and extraversion) have a significant link with some work aspects and professions (Barrick et al. 2001: 11; Salgado, Tauriz 2014: 3).

Considering that professions and workplaces vary in terms of demands and specificity, it is difficult to state clearly to which occupation a particular personality dimension predisposes an individual. However, it is possible to find a common denominator between various professions and that is the character of work, i.e. the conditions of work and task specificity. We can work in a team or individually, regardless of the workplace or occupation. Therefore the decision was to estimate the relationships between the personality dimensions and the work character. The nature of work (e.g. team work, independent decision-making or task complexity) is assessed by an individual through the prism of different schemes, values and also personality dimensions, having impact on job satisfaction (Judge et al. 2000: 239). Therefore, the decision was to examine the relationship between the work

characteristics and personality dimensions and employee's satisfaction. Examining the level of job satisfaction allows one to check whether an individual feels fulfilled with the particular characteristics of work, and what follows, whether an individual's personality complies with the work performed. Locke (1976: 1319) when referring to job satisfaction talks about achieving values which are important to an individual and the fulfillment of needs. Somewhat different than meeting one's needs, is Spector's (1997:2) definition of job satisfaction, as he focuses on the cognitive component of the attitude relating to the evaluation of one's own work. The satisfaction from the work performed can be a predictor of, for example, greater work engagement (Albrecht et al. 2015: 11-12), while diminished job satisfaction correlates with increased absenteeism and turnover of employees (Chmiel 2002: 348).

According to the literature and research, each personality dimension correlates with certain factors characterizing work. A high score on the conscientiousness scale correlates positively with the work performance practically in every profession, as conscientiousness people are organized, determined, responsible and can work assiduously, which is conducive to task execution in nearly every job (Barrick, Mount 1991: 5, 18). Moreover, a higher level of conscientiousness correlates negatively with the counterproductive behaviors such as theft or failing to show up to work (Ones et al. 1993: 680, 693). People with a high level of conscientiousness appear to prefer a job that is complex enough to achieve further goals (Tett, Burnett 2003: 512) and individual rather than team work, for then they can organize their duties independently (Neal et al. 2012: 180). The metaanalyses have also found that significant correlations occur between the employee's overall productivity and the level of conscientiousness and extraversion, while high neuroticism reduces the employee's efficiency, as the only one doing so out of the five personality factors (Barrick, Mount 1991: 5, 18; Tett et al. 1991: 730). Strong neuroticism is not conducive to high work performance owing to such traits as insecurity, anxiety, being prone to depression and hostility (Barrick et al. 2001: 11). People who are very neurotic have difficulties in autonomous functioning, particularly when being under pressure as this triggers their neurotic character traits, which reduces their work productivity (Barrick, Mount 1991: 20). Changes at work and complex tasks

requiring that some expectations should be met can evoke negative emotions and cognitive schemata in neurotic persons, which will diminish their work productivity (Neal et al. 2012: 180). Spector (1982, after Judge et al. 2000: 239) observed that a high level of anxiety present in neurotic people at the moment of performing complex tasks was conducive to their having the feeling of performing worse, with those feelings of anxiety being less acute when performing simple tasks. In light of this we can conclude that they feel better doing relatively less complex tasks. Studies also show that a low level of neuroticism, i.e. a high level of emotional stability correlates positively with work productivity, being the second, following conscientiousness, most significant dimension in the occupational context (Dunn et al. 1995: 501).

A high level of extraversion predisposes one to a job requiring contacts with others, e.g. as a sales person or a manager, for it allows one to demonstrate such traits as gregariousness, talkativeness, activity and assertiveness (Barrick, Mount 1991: 19). People who are highly extraverted are fulfilled professionally in that they build effective interpersonal relationships and feel more energetic working in a group, hence the assumption that they feel more comfortable working in a team than individually (Neal et al. 2012: 179). Extraverted persons are more likely to evaluate their experiences and themselves positively, having an optimistic approach to challenges, which translates into their preference of complex tasks and work offering diversity (Judge et al. 2000: 237). Openness to experience corresponds to cognitive curiosity and the need of new stimulations, hence people scoring high on this scale derive much from trainings, opportunities of professional growth and complex tasks that can be done without clear directives, for this allows them to demonstrate their range of skills and stimulates them cognitively (Barrick, Mount 1991: 19). However, openness to experience is a dimension failing to be a clear predictor of professional efficiency, as every job varies in terms of demands and specificity, and openness to experiences is strongly correlated with situational demands (Tett et al. 1991: 725). Moreover, people with high scores on the agreeableness scale are pro-active, so it seems that they should prefer team work and tasks in the interest of organization (Neal et al. 2012: 179).

In order to examine the links between the personality dimensions and the selected factors of the work character and the level of employee's job satisfaction the following hypotheses were advanced on the basis of the literature analysis:

H1. Respondents with a higher level of conscientiousness feel satisfied with their job working individually rather than in a team.

H2. Respondents with a higher level of conscientiousness feel satisfied with their job doing complex rather than simple tasks.

H3. Respondents with a higher level of extraversion feel satisfied with their job working in a team which requires being in contact with another person.

H4. Respondents with a higher level of neuroticism feel satisfied with their job doing simple tasks rather than complex ones.

H5. Respondents with a higher level of openness to experience feel satisfied with their job doing tasks without clearly formalized procedures.

H6. Respondents with a higher level of openness to experience feel satisfied with their job doing complex rather than simple tasks.

H7 Respondents with a high level of agreeableness feel satisfied with their job doing team work rather than working individually.

4. Methodology

4.1. Tools and the surveyed group

In order to verify the hypotheses, a quantitative study was conducted on a group of 302 working respondents, among whom 140 women (43.8%) and 162 men (56.2%) were examined. The quota-sampling was made on the basis of the working population distribution in Poland. Among those surveyed were people between 19 and 71 years of age (persons working on retirement), having varying education levels, and pursuing different occupations, e.g. jobs in the commercial services sector, e.g. sales person, customer advisor, hair dresser, tailor, occupations relating to taking care of others or teaching, such as a nurse, teacher, policeman, as well as

jobs involving working with data or machines (IT programmer, mechanic, machine operator).

Table 1. The dimensions of the questionnaire examining the character of work performed

Please indicate the character of your work by marking with an X the most accurate description.

At my work:

I mostly perform individual work								I mostly perform team work
I use modern technologies at work								I do work which does not require being familiar with new technologies
I do simply and repetitive tasks								I do complex and extraordinary tasks
I have to comply to strictly defined rules and procedures								I haven't got clearly formalized procedures of conduct.
I have a direct contact with customers or service recipients								I have no direct contact with customers of service recipients
I influence customers' or service recipients' emotions								I don't influence customers' or service recipients' emotions
I'm dependent on decisions made by my supervisors								I have much freedom in making decisions

Source: Author's own study.

Four tools were employed in the survey. The first one was the NEO-FFI questionnaire comprising 60 statements to which respondents respond by choosing one of the five options: 1 I strongly disagree, 2. I disagree, 3. I have no opinion, 4. I agree, 5 I strongly agree. Three other tools include three questionnaires devised by the author. The first examining character of work consists of seven dimensions: individual vs. team work; work with modern technologies vs. work requiring no

knowledge of the new technologies; simple vs. complex tasks; work according to strict procedures vs. lack of formalized procedures; working in direct contact with customers vs. without direct contact with customers; influencing client's emotions vs. no influence on client's emotions; and being dependent on supervisor's decision vs. independent decision-making. The formulation of the questions in detail is presented in Table 1.

The other two questionnaires examined job evaluation and career development. From each survey questionnaire two items were included in the study: from the first one relating to work evaluation, the first two items were correlated: "I like my job very much" and "If only I could, I would change my work"; and also two items from the career development questionnaire: "The job I'm doing does not allow me to use my potential", and "I'm satisfied with my career development". Respondents could respond to the first two statements on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 meant I strongly disagree and 5 I strongly agree; to the other two statements they responded by marking answers on a 6-point scale, where 1 meant I strongly disagree; 2- I disagree; 3- I rather disagree; 4- I rather agree; 5- I agree; 6- I strongly agree. In order to analyze the level of job satisfaction and career development (i.e. overall job satisfaction), the results of the responses to the 4 statements were added up (for two statements a reverse scale was used, where one signifies 5 or 6 points) and the mean result was taken to the analyses.

4.2 Statistical verification of the hypotheses

In order to verify the hypotheses statistically, the raw scores obtained in the study using the NEO-FFI tool were converted to sten scores, thus receiving the distribution of the levels of personality dimensions in the sample examined. Sten scores from 1 to 3 signify low strength of a particular dimension, sten scores from 4 to 6 show moderate strength, with sten scores between 7 and 10 signifying high and very high strength. The descriptive statistics of the personality dimensions are illustrated in Table 2.

Next, the mean ten scores of each dimension in terms of work character and job satisfaction were compared. The aim of this analysis was to verify the dependencies between the strength of a particular personality dimension (low, moderate, high) and

the chosen character of work. A moderate variable was introduced – job satisfaction to determine the interdependencies between personality and the work character which gives the worker satisfaction. It was assumed that the satisfaction level should be equal to 4 or more, which means that respondent had to obtain in four statements the mean score of at least 4 points, implying that he/she rather agrees, agrees or strongly agrees with the positive statements, and in terms of the negative statements, he/she rather disagrees, disagrees or strongly disagrees. Thus the score equal or higher than 4 indicates job satisfaction at the level that is at least moderately high. Following that, the correlations between the temperament strength expressed in sten intervals and the satisfaction level (equal or higher than 4) achieved at performing work of a particular character were compared. The results of the comparisons of the mean scores and their statistic significance are presented in Table 3. The scores show at what strength in terms of the individual personality dimensions respondents feel job satisfaction that is higher or equal 4 while performing work of a particular character.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the five personality factors in the sample.

	Neuoroticism (sten standard)	Extra-version (sten standard)	Openness (sten standard)	Agreeable-ness (sten standard)	Conscientious ness (sten standard)
N	302	302	302	302	302
medium	4.4073	6.2924	4.9967	5.3642	6.2583
Median	4	6	5	5	6
Dominant	4	5.00	5.00	5	6
Standard deviation	2.04021	2,11051	2.11387	2.22186	2.08447
Skewness	0.272	-0.156	0.166	0.151	-0.055
Standard error of skewness	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14
Kurtosis	-0.365	-0.414	-0.381	-0.391	-0.459
Standard error of kurtosis	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28

Source: Author's own study.

Table 3. Comparing correlations between the respondents' personality dimensions and satisfaction derived from the character of work performed

Work character	Dimension	Neuroticism	Extraversion	Openness	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness
		Mean sten score				
Work form	individual	3.82	6.64	5.48	5.75	6.55*
	team	3.24	7.32	4.8	6.68	8.16*
New technologies	Using new technologies	3.65	6.81	5.42	5.75	6.9
	No new technologies	3.83	6.67	5.31	6.25	6.87
Tasks	simple	4.22*	6.4	4.94	5.6	6.3*
	complex	3.34*	7.04	5.62	6.18	7.3*
Procedure formalization	present	3.79	6.81	5.01*	5.94	7.07
	Lack of f.p.	3.51	6.7	6.08*	5.95	6.46
Contact with customers	direct	3.51	7.13*	5.67*	6.05	6.77
	Lack of or indirect contact	4.14	5.97*	4.59*	5.7	7.24
Influencing customer's emotions	Influence	3.57	7.13*	5.57	6.08	6.85
	Lack of it	3.91	6.2*	4.96	5.72	6.93
Dependence on supervisor	dependency	3.98	6.53	5.0	5.9	6.89
	independency	3.44	7.02	5.66	5.98	6.9

*Correlation significant at 0.05 (both sides). Based on these comparisons we can adopt or reject the hypotheses advanced earlier.

H1. Respondents with a higher level of conscientiousness feel satisfied with their job working individually rather than in a team.

H2. Respondents with a higher level of conscientiousness feel satisfied with their job doing complex rather than simple tasks.

The comparison of the correlation of the satisfaction level with doing work individually or as a team indicates that respondents with a higher conscientiousness score feel satisfaction at the level of at least 4 from team work. On the basis of this finding the hypothesis H1 should be rejected, since the score is the reverse of what was assumed before the statistical verification. Moreover, looking at the correlations of task complexity with satisfaction we can see that respondents whose satisfaction was at 4 or higher while performing complex tasks showed a higher level of conscientiousness, which confirms hypothesis no. 2

H3. Respondents with a higher level of extraversion feel satisfied with their job working in a team which requires being in contact with another person.

Looking at the extraversion dimension, the analyses suggest that there are no significant differences between the extraversion level and satisfaction from team or individual work; however, significant differences occur for direct contact with customers and having influence on their emotions and comfort. The surveyed who are satisfied with work involving direct contact with customers, and where they can influence their emotions showed a higher extraversion level. Hence, hypothesis no. 3 was confirmed only partly. This could be the result of the specificity of respondents' work, of whom many have autonomous jobs, e.g. customer advisor, yet their work is based on interpersonal contacts.

H4. Respondents with a higher level of neuroticism feel satisfied with their job doing simple tasks rather than complex ones.

Looking at the neuroticism dimension, we can observe that there is a significant dependency between job satisfaction at the level of at least 4 and performing simple tasks instead of complex ones, for a higher level of neuroticism. Thus, the findings confirm hypothesis no. 4 and the research conducted by other authors.

H5. Respondents with a higher level of openness to experience feel satisfied with their job doing tasks without clearly formalized procedures.

H6. Respondents with a higher level of openness to experience feel satisfied with their job doing complex rather than simple tasks.

Respondents feeling satisfied with their jobs and performing tasks without strictly defined procedures indeed showed a higher level of openness to experience. The analyses showed similar findings for contact with customers - job satisfaction for people working in direct contact with customers went hand in hand with a higher level of openness. No significant dependencies were verified for openness to experience and task complexity. This means that hypothesis no. 5 was not confirmed, yet hypothesis no. 6 was.

H7 Respondents with a high level of agreeableness feel satisfied with their job doing team work rather than working individually.

Agreeableness is the only dimension of all the dimensions tested which showed no significant correlations between the character of work and job satisfaction, whatever the strength. Thus hypothesis no. 7 should be rejected.

5. Conclusions

The statistical analyses which were conducted allowed the strength of four out of the five personality factors to be compared: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience and conscientiousness in terms of the character of work and perceived job satisfaction. The analyses showed no statistically significant differences between the strength of agreeableness and the other examined variables in the sample. For neuroticism the analyses revealed that persons with a higher level of neuroticism felt satisfied with their jobs at the level equal to or over 4 (i.e. moderately high satisfaction) doing simple tasks. That was the only statistically significant correlation for this dimension. Those findings confirm the reports coming from other research (Neal et al. 2012: 180; Spector 1982 after: Judge et al. 2000: 239) where it has been observed that complex tasks burden an individual, evoking negative

thoughts and cognitive schemata. Complex tasks are more satisfying to respondents who are more conscientious. This could be explained by the desire to have more accomplishments, which is more likely to happen with complex tasks (Berg et al. 2003: 336). This is complemented by the findings made by Gerhard Blickle and his co-workers (2013: 1158), showing that people with high conscientiousness are more productive in doing complex and demanding tasks. In the sample analyzed, people with high job satisfaction and who were working in a team more often than individually showed a higher level of conscientiousness, which was inconsistent with the findings published by foreign scholars (Neal et al. 2012: 180). This could be dependent on the group surveyed and the interpretation of the term "team work". Meanwhile, the analyses confirmed that respondents with higher extraversion felt satisfied with the job which required direct customer contact. This most likely allows for interpersonal skills to be developed and the need of social contacts to be fulfilled (Barrick, Mount 1991: 19; Neal et al. 2012: 179). The last of the dimensions to be tested was openness to experience. The analyses show that this dimension is stronger among people who feel satisfied with the job where there are no clearly formalized procedures and, in addition, there is the possibility to be in direct contact with customers. A similar dependency was, however, not confirmed for complex tasks, which, according to Barrick and Mount (1991: 19) should attract people open to experience as the complexity of tasks stimulates them cognitively and enables them to display their range of skills. The satisfaction stemming from doing less formalized work can, meanwhile, correspond to unconventionality and divergent thinking of persons with high openness who are also ready to undermine authorities and search for new stimulations (Zawadzki et al. 2010: 14).

The analyses did not confirm all of the previous findings presented in the literature. This could be linked to certain factors like, for example, specificity of analyzed group, tools applied or researcher's interpretation of statements. Furthermore, the comparison of the Polish research findings to the US or European ones should be done with a distance, for the personality measures are more sensitive than, for example, the measures of cognitive functioning, and their usefulness depends on the demands of a specific job (Czarnota-Bojarska 2009: 54). Also, it is worth creating a model of employee's personality instead of concentrating on one

personality dimension. The best selective predictions are based on the combination of the personality dimensions, therefore, focusing on the score of one scale, e.g. conscientiousness, might not be accurate (Hogan et al. 1996: 472). Looking at the respondent's entire personality structure, it might appear that he/she shows high strength of more than just one dimension, and then the correlations between a particular factor characterizing work and job satisfaction may result from a different variable. It is worth expanding the studies on the links between personality and the choice of character of work with directional analyses, which will allow for determining how variables impact each other. Moreover, it would be useful to include the analysis of organizational and situational factors (Tett, Burnett 2003: 513).

With a view to continue this area of research in the Polish setting, it is worth duplicating the study on a bigger sample or focus on some occupational groups and identify clearly individual factors influencing the character of work. Confining the research to a particular group or industry will allow one to avoid inaccurate generalization and to select the personality dimensions which are important in specific recruitment processes. As suggested by Hogan, Hogan and Robert (1996: 475), it is worth classifying work by occupational types and demands (e.g. one could employ Holland's occupational types), and then compare them with employee's personality dimensions, as only thus devised model increases the selective accuracy. Although the analyses conducted in this study do not allow the findings to be generalized for populations, nor do they indicate the significance of particular dimensions for a specific job, they still provide the findings which confirm the important role of the personality of a candidate or employee in performing work of a specific character. Therefore, when employers want to use personality tests in the recruitment process, they should consider what tool to choose and the particular nature of the job for which they hire a candidate. If they look for a customer advisor who will be in contact with many people (not always showing a friendly attitude) during the day, they should, as the findings suggest, pay more attention to the level of extraversion or openness to experience. By combining the personality test with other recruitment methods we can obtain a broad picture of candidates and increase the accuracy in the selection of the right workers.

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Karolina OLEKSA

Osobowościowe uwarunkowania dopasowania pracownika do charakteru pracy

Streszczenie

Cel: Na przestrzeni ostatnich dwudziestu lat przeprowadzono wiele badań, które wykazały istotne związki między poszczególnymi wymiarami osobowości a predyspozycjami do pracy w określonym charakterze. W badaniach własnych postanowiono zbadać związki między osobowością, charakterem wykonywanej pracy oraz odczuwaną satysfakcją z tej pracy, w celu wykazania zasadności stosowania testów osobowościowych w procesie rekrutacji jako narzędzia prognozującego dopasowanie pracownika do charakteru pracy.

Metoda badawcza: W celu zweryfikowania wytypowanych związków, przeprowadzono badania ilościowe na grupie polskich pracowników (N = 302), w których korelowano pięć wymiarów osobowości (badane za pomocą kwestionariusza NEO-FFI) wraz z poziomem satysfakcji pracownika i charakterem wykonywanej pracy (kwestionariusze własne). Poziom satysfakcji określono w oparciu o ocenę pracy oraz przebieg kariery zawodowej pracownika, natomiast charakter pracy badano na siedmiu skalach: praca samodzielna vs zespołowa, złożoność zadań, stosowanie nowych technologii, występowanie procedur, kontakt z klientem, wpływ na emocje klienta, zależność od przełożonego.

Wnioski: Wyniki analiz pokazały, że natężenie wymiarów osobowości istotnie jest różne u respondentów usatysfakcjonowanych z wykonywania pracy o danym charakterze. Przemawia to za stosowaniem testów osobowości w procesie rekrutacji, jednak z uwzględnieniem pewnych czynników, m.in. otoczenia organizacyjnego czy konkretnych wymagań stanowiska.

Wartość artykułu: Artykuł jest próbą kompleksowego powiązania wyników różnych badań skupiających się na zależności między osobowością a typem wykonywanej pracy, dodatkowo pogłębioną o zmienną pośredniczącą – satysfakcję zawodową, która pozwala określić, na ile typ wykonywanej pracy jest dopasowany do danego wymiaru osobowości.

Implikacje badań: Wartość implikacyjna odnosi się do procesów rekrutacji i selekcji pracowników i uzasadnia słuszność zastosowania testów osobowości.

Ograniczenia badań: W przyszłości warto powiększyć grupę badawczą, w celu generalizacji wyników oraz dodać kolejne zmienne pośredniczące, np. czynniki organizacyjne kształtujące charakter pracy

Słowa kluczowe: pięcioczynnikowy model osobowości, satysfakcja z pracy, charakter pracy, neurotyczność, ekstrawersja, sumienność, otwartość na doświadczenie, ugodowość
JEL: L29 J24 J28

Managing age diversity in the workplace – a challenge for contemporary organizations and managers

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Abstract:

Aim: Considering the progressing demographic changes triggering ever larger generation diversity of today's organizations, the paper aims at identifying: how do intergenerational relations develop in the workplace and what is the manager's role in the process of the organization of work and atmosphere creation in an age diverse staff?

Design / Research methods: An analysis of the secondary research (Polish and foreign) on inter-generational relations in the workplace was carried out. Also, findings made on the basis of the author's own research are presented: quantitative studies (a survey carried out among 103 students of the University of the Third Age at Częstochowa University of Technology and 100 students of Częstochowa University of Technology), and qualitative studies (focus groups comprising students and in-depth interviews conducted among 3 of the UTA students and 2 members of Alumni Association of Częstochowa University of Technology)

Conclusions / findings: On the basis of the research analysis, the problem of intergenerational isolation between different generations was revealed and also a lack of common ground which affects the creation of work atmosphere and the organization of work and which arises, among other things, from stereotypical thinking, prejudice, fear, lack of knowledge. The possibility of a cross-generational cooperation is not determined by the actually existing differences in terms of values, motivation or the expectations of representatives of the different generations (which would render the cooperation and the priorities alignment impossible). Thus, it is feasible to build a productive cooperation within intergenerational staff, with managers playing a significant role in this process. In the first place, they should ensure an appropriate atmosphere in an age-diverse staff. To ensure that each employee feels respected and treated equally (in this context the manager's attitude is important). In organizing work for their employees, managers should seek to create chances and opportunities of mutual cooperation among people of different ages, so as not to deepen intergenerational isolation, and instead create opportunities of getting to know one other. This, in turn, can contribute to fewer prejudices and stereotypes which tend to arise from not knowing the other person well enough. An element of specific integration could be encouraging employees to fulfill the organization's goals by commonly striving for them.

Originality / value of the article: The research analysis was employed to determine the factors which may have impact on the creation of intergenerational relations in a workplace, with this providing the basis for defining the manager's role.

Implications of the research: The identification of factors impacting the creation of relations in the workplace allowed for specific recommendations and guidelines for managers to be formulated which may be useful in creating proper relations in age-diverse organizations in Poland.

Key words: manager, generation, intergenerational relations, age diversity.

JEL: M12; M14

1. Introduction

The progressing demographic changes within the Polish society[1] (cf. GUS 2016), including changes in terms of engineering , technology, culture and economy influencing its evolution may play a significant role in the development of worker teams in organizations (cf., e.g. Parzonko 2015). The changes unfolding in the widely understood environment are important in terms of how attitudes, values, specific communication styles and people's conduct are being shaped – which indeed may affect their behavior in the workplace. What is more, the dynamics and pace of those changes in Poland are all contributing to the differences among people of diverse upbringing, growing up in different settings. Today various generations are functioning on the labor market. Moreover, it is worth pointing out that in the context of the change dynamics, the term "generation" acquires a somewhat different meaning. "Once generations used to change every 25-30 years, following one after another; yet, nowadays different generations are identified already every 10 years" (Imiołczyk 2012: 6). The literature concerned with this subject shows that currently the following generations are functioning on the labor market: baby boomers (born between 1949-1963); X (born between 1964-1979), Y (born between 1980-1994) (Baran, Kłos 2014: 924), Generation Z (those born after 1994) (Koc 2015; Finch 2015; Żarczyńska-Dobiesz, Chomątowska 2014). Some literature also distinguishes Generation C (Morbitzer 2012: 295).

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[1] The age median of Polish population in 2015 was 38.2 for men and 41.6 for women, Chile 10 years before those values were at, respectively: 34.7 and 38.9. The percentage of people over 65 of age in the Polish population in 2005 was 13,3%, while in 2015 it was 15.8% (GUS [Central Statistical Office] 2016). According to the GUS demographic forecast, the age median in Poland in 2020 will be 40.3 (men) and 43.6 (women), and over the subsequent years, i.e. until 2050 it can at 50.1 (men) and 54.8 (women) (GUS 2014)

Interesting is that the criterion for distinguishing the subsequent generations is no longer only their date of birth, but also the life style they manifest. This can be exemplified by the just mentioned Generation C, which some scholars identify as a group of people who tend to have a similar lifestyle and behavior – whatever their age (Żarczyńska-Dobiesz, Chomątowska 2014).

As Milena Gojny and Przemysław Zbierowski emphasize, „in the context of the huge technological leap our civilization has been experiencing over the last decades and the development of IT ideas at an ever greater pace, the chasm between the generation of people not yet 35 years old and those over 50 has been wider than ever before, creating additional barriers" (Gojny, Zbierowski 2013: 160). Those barriers may play a significant role in the development of relations between people of different ages, including the relations in the workplace, and further, they can influence the organization of work in the Polish enterprises. Bearing this in mind, it appears that the peculiar diversity of generations poses an exceptional challenge for contemporary managers who should, in the management process, account for the context of age diversity among employees.

It would therefore be worth starting discussions on how the relations between employees working in the contemporary work teams characterized by age diversity have been developing, and what factors play a significant role in this process – in order to identify the manager's role and define the recommendations for being better equipped in dealing with the challenges engendered by the generational diversity in organization. Thus, the aim of this paper is to show the following (based on the analysis of the findings of the selected secondary studies and author's own studies):

- how intergenerational relations develop in the workplace – does the employees' age diversity impact the work atmosphere and if so, how does it do it; and how does it influence the organization's functioning?
- what is the manager's role in the process of the organization of work and creation of atmosphere in the workplace in an age diverse staff?

2. Intergenerational relations in the workplace – the research context

In attempting to answer those questions the decision was made to review some secondary studies (Polish and foreign) and author's own studies on the development of relations among different aged people.

At the planning stage of the author's own research, it was assumed that the attitudes towards other generations could have an influence on the intergenerational relations. Taking into account the components of the attitude (cognitive, emotional/affective and behavioral), it was assumed that what could impact the intergenerational relations and work atmosphere could be, among other things, the way different aged employees perceived one another (what they knew of and thought about one another), their views on the intergenerational relations, willingness to cooperate and previous experiences.

The above elements became the object of the author's own studies (quantitative – a survey and qualitative – focus groups and in-depth interviews) conducted among representatives of the different generations (students – including those working, students of the University of the Third Age, members of the Alumni Association of Częstochowa University of Technology – including employers). The objective of the studies was to show a certain general tendency in the development of the relations between people of various ages.

In order to complement the findings of the studies (and to have them embedded in the realities of the organization of work), the selected secondary research on intergenerational relations in the workplace was used. Those studies were largely chosen whose description allowed for the formulation of the conclusions regarding the areas which were to be analyzed, according to the arrangements made at the planning stage (i.e. perception of each other, views held on people of different ages, willingness to cooperate and previous experiences).

In light of the fact that the analysis was based on the description of surveys carried out on a variety of respondents (in a workplace, university, in Poland and across our country's borders, among representatives of various lines of business) the conclusions formulated show some sort of tendencies in the development of the relations between the different generations. On this basis, general recommendations were outlined for contemporary managers pertaining to shaping the relations amomg the intergenerational

staff. The level of generality of the formulated recommendations makes it possible for them to be adapted by managers operating in a variety of industries. However, it should be underscored that the specificity of every organization requires more detailed characteristics of the relations between different generations functioning in the work setting, factors impacting those relations (including the role of the specific manager), as well as identification of strategies aimed at creating the intergenerational relations.

3. Intergenerational relations in the workplace – the employees' views

The survey conducted, among others, on 700 employees within the framework of the project „Generation Dialogue – efficient management of generations in an enterprise" (HRP Perspective: 2-30) found that in general employees reported their willingness to cooperate with different generations. Further to that, over half of the surveyed employees from each age group even reported that they preferred working in an age diverse team (such response was given respectively by: 61.3% of baby boomers, 59.8% of Generation X, and 53.1% Generation C). In addition, the majority of respondents did not agree with the statement that "people are unable to cooperate in an age diverse staff" – 2/3 of the surveyed disagreed with this statement. Considerably fewer respondents agreed with this statement, since that was only 17.4% employees (other persons did not make a clear statement in this respect). Moreover, employees highlighted the advantages that could arise from the age differences of people employed in the organization, pointing out that, "different aged workers come up quicker with solutions than workers at a similar age" (67%) and were more open to customers' needs (77.3%). One can therefore acknowledge that the views on intergenerational relations held by respondents are positive, with their willingness to cooperate being high, too.

Still, although being convinced that the intergenerational cooperation is possible and beneficial, and declaring their willingness to such cooperation, 36.5% of respondents reported that the age diversity was conducive to conflicts in the workplace. What is more, almost 1/3 of each of the generations answered positively the question whether they had ever experienced conflicts in the workplace arising from the generational differences. Employees from Generation X were most likely to experience this kind of

conflicts (37.6%), followed by baby boomers (31.5%) with Generation C being the least likely to make this experience (27.9%). This answer distribution can present the intergenerational relations in a slightly different light. It suggests that, in line with what respondents reported, contacts between different aged employees are possible, advantageous and evaluated positively, yet, as it turns out in practice, they can generate some difficulties (among others, in the process of building relations), which can even have the effect of causing conflicts in the workplace.

Similar findings came from the studies on intergenerational relations in the workplace carried out among employees under 35 years of age and those over 50, as presented in the report "Organizational and psychological determinants of monitoring for sustaining workers of age 50+ on the labor market" (Misztal et al. 2006). In the course of the study, neither group indicated directly the problems existing within the intergenerational relations. Like in the study cited before, the majority of respondents expressed their willingness to intergenerational cooperation. However, based on the detailed analysis of all responses (both those given by employees in the quantitative and qualitative studies), the authors of the report conclude that although there is no open conflict between the employees participating in the study, we can still talk about some sort of generational isolation which influences how the relations are being shaped. In the qualitative study (metaplan) both age groups (-35, 50+) had the opportunity to report on possible intergenerational problems. The highest number of problems indicated by the -35 employees was concerned with them being discriminated by the 50+ workers. In their views, the source of problems lies also in the features characteristic for the 50+ group, "mainly including their resistance to change and a low level of knowledge (mostly lacking language and IT skills; however, in terms of their expertise, experience and knowledge of the company the 50 + employees are highly estimated by the -35 employees). In the group of answers given by the 50+ employees as to the problems in terms of intergenerational relations, "the problems ranking highest, according to the 50+ employees, were those arising from the character flaws of the -35 persons, such as: superficiality at work and lack of responsibility.

The respondents place much importance on those problems, yet they still believe that "this is solvable" through, e.g. education, exerting influence on younger colleagues –for which the older employees express their readiness.

As can be gleaned from the above, the findings show that on a declaratory level intergenerational relations are evaluated positively by employees, with employees expressing their willingness to cooperate. What is, however, of significance in the studies presented above is that they suggest that some barriers exist across the mutual contacts between employees of various age – although initially none of the surveyed reported them in a straightforward way. Yet, it appears that those barriers, intergenerational problems can largely stem from the way employees perceive one another. It turns out that different aged employees see the sources of problems predominantly in the faults and negative approaches of the other age group. The young ones feel discriminated by the older ones, highlighting the faults of the older employees, which they believe can have a significant impact on their cooperation. The older employees, meanwhile, see the faults of the young ones, wishing to change them, on top of that (Misztal et al. 2006). This can be of significant relevance to shaping the intergenerational relations (and it can strengthen the young employees' sense of being discriminated or unaccepted by the older staff).

The outcome of the other studies on intergenerational relations provide similar findings. After all, the studies in question were conducted among students of the University of the Third Age (UTA) operating at Częstochowa University of Technology, students of that university and members of the Alumni Association of Częstochowa University of Technology – in other words, not in the working environment. Still, the representatives of the different generations took part in the studies and their conclusions can also be translated into the relations in the workplace. The research was conducted in 2014, encompassing quantitative studies – survey (carried out on 103 students of the UTA and 100 students of whom 50 studied management and the other half technological sciences), qualitative studies – carried out in 2 focus groups (each made up of 7 students) and in-depth interviews conducted among 3 UTA students and 2 representatives of the Alumni Association of Częstochowa University of Technology, who were also employers encountering the different generations in their professional work. Representatives of each of the surveyed group (like respondents from the studies cited before) all agreed that the intergenerational cooperation was possible, with them being ready to embrace it. Over 90% of students and the UTA students expressed their openness to working together with the other group. As a crucial benefit coming from this

cooperation the respondents indicate the opportunity to learn from each other and knowledge exchange (Łazorko, Zając 2015: 190-192). Still, both groups underline current communication problems between the different generations. Interesting is that the younger generation reports that these problems are to be identified largely on their own part (25%), as well as being due to the prejudices/stereotypes regarding their mutual perception (21%), with 15% of respondents seeing "a tendency to moralizing" evinced by older persons as a problem. In the focus interviews, this very moralizing by older people was pointed as a significant barrier making young people feel anxious and fearful of forming intergenerational relations. This anxiety, in turn, can to some extent explain "the barriers identified by the younger generation on their own side", which could be understood as the reluctance to start working together with other generations. In light of the findings of the studies presented before showing the older persons emphasizing and confirming their wish to change their younger colleagues, this problem may be much relevant to the intergenerational relations.

Older people also see some barriers in the cooperation with the younger ones. They perceive it predominantly in the employment of different language codes (this was recognized by over 30% of respondents), yet also in prejudices and stereotypes in thinking about each other (nearly ¼ of respondents), mutual reluctance to cooperation (around 15%) and the cooperation reluctance mainly on the side of the young (15%). A very small percentage of older people sees barriers only on the side of the old ones, or does not see them at all.

Once again then we come across a situation where declarations made of the mutual cooperation and views on the intergenerational cooperation (including those referring to benefits associated with such cooperation) fail to be reflected in actual behaviors (being anxious about the cooperation, a sort of unwillingness leading to isolation).

Interesting findings in terms of those peculiar fears provide responses given by both students and the elderly on how those groups perceive each other. The UTA students asked how they perceived young people, in general, evaluated them as: full of energy (34%), concentrating mainly on having fun (23%), being optimistic (18%), creative (16%), lacking in life as well as professional experience (14%). These very character traits are typically associated with young age and have in themselves no pejorative meaning. However, what might be interesting is the fact that only a very small minority

of the elderly evaluated young people as: wise (7%), polite (3%) or kind (3%). This data distribution can therefore point to some stereotypical perception of the young by the elderly. This perception is not downright negative (for such traits as energy, optimism, thinking about having fun are rather positive character traits); however, the traits that are positively evaluated do not refer to young people's competences to be used in the workplace, nor are they important from the perspective of building mutual relations. What is more, not seeing young people as kind and polite can engender a specific attitude toward them in terms of interpersonal contacts – e.g. avoiding such contacts, or assuming a "defensive attitude" right from the start.

Students evaluate the elderly mostly as: experienced, wise, prudent, having a wealth of expertise, attached to tradition, hard-working; yet neither polite, kind, nor open. Thus the interpretation of the results is similar to that based on the analysis of the elderly people's responses to the same question. Students in general also evaluate the elderly positively, mainly seeing them through the prism of the character traits which are typically associated with old age (life's and professional wisdom), yet they fail to evaluate positively those traits which are essential in human contacts such as: kindness, politeness, openness. Given that a similar tendency was present in the elderly people's responses, it could be of considerable relevance to shaping the intergenerational relations – this could be the reason behind mutual dislike, fear of working together and it may generate barriers. It further reveals that both the young and the old follow stereotypes, having no knowledge of one another.

The specific problems indicated by respondents which can get to be revealed in the intergenerational contacts appear to arise from mutual unacquaintance, failing to see their own strengths by people of different generations and stereotypical thinking – in other words, from, as it were, one's consciousness and manifested attitudes and not necessarily from the facts and actual disparities. Only the aspect of language differences is indeed related to factual generational differences – which are the manifestation of the socio-cultural changes cited in the paper's introduction. As it turns out, for some elderly people accepting those changes proves to be very difficult. For the young, on the other hand, this is a norm (they do not see any kind of "otherness" –therefore they do not see why it is necessary to adapt their communication – both in terms of its content and form – to the needs of the recipients of different ages). These observations may be of key

significance to the process of creating consciously the intergenerational relations in the workplace. Realizing the source of the possible problems makes it easier to solve them, which could involve, in terms of shaping the intergenerational relations, showing to people of various ages their mutual potential, displaying their strengths, creating a common ground for mutual cooperation (in an atmosphere marked by cooperation, kindness, and not rivalry), as well as educating people of different ages on, among other things, changes and differences that may have an influence on building the relations (e.g. cultural, language, health changes, etc.).

The conclusions cited above confirm the research conducted in the UK by CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development 2014: 11). In the course of the research, the challenges workers identified as being associated with a diverse age staff include:

- lack of common interests and common ground for understanding (32% of employees);
- misunderstandings arising from the age differences (29% employees);
- lack of mutual values (28% employees).

This is precisely this lack of common interests and common understanding that could be the reason for people having no knowledge of one another, superficial judgment of one another, misunderstanding and thus fears, dislike and ever deeper isolation. All this can, in turn, have an impact on the creation of work atmosphere, mutual work productivity, information exchange and knowledge among employees (or lack thereof) – and what follows, on the organization of work.

Summing up the first part of the discussion, on the basis of the data collected we could conclude that:

- employees report a positive attitude towards undertaking cooperation with employees of different ages;
- most of them report that they would be most keen on working in a team diversified in terms of employees' age;
- employees discern advantages of working together;

The above statements (revealed in each of the cited studies) allow for seeing optimistically the issue of cooperation between employees of different ages. The generational diversity involves a great potential. However ,on the other hand, the further

findings show that this potential is likely to be used inappropriately by organizations, which has the effect that the generational diversity may even turn into a problem for the organization. On the basis of the analysis of the studies, it should be indicated that:

- the statements made by employees surveyed allow one to observe that there are intergenerational conflicts and that there exists the phenomenon of generational isolation;
- employees report lacking common ground, no common values and interests – as the factors generating problems in establishing a satisfactory cooperation;
- a tendency to think stereotypically about each other can be gleaned from the respondents' statements. Both the old and the young discern only few strengths in people of a different age which are important in building a relation and establishing cooperation. They judge each other very superficially, not knowing much about one another;
- the elderly declare their willingness to change the bad habits (in their view) of young people. The young, on the other hand, fear the elder people's moralizing (which represents a barrier to them in establishing relations in general);
- the older people report that the different language codes used by the young create a communication problem.

As can be gleaned from above, a clear majority of the barriers is the result of lacking the awareness, of stereotypes and lacking knowledge of one another. Thus, one can conclude that those barriers could be eliminated by employing, by managers and HR experts, an appropriate approach to the management and creation of the intergenerational cooperation. In this context it is then worth finding out how they view the generational diversity in organization.

4. Intergenerational relations in the workplace – managers and HR experts' approach

According to the studies on 200 managers and 100 HR representatives within the framework of the project „Dialogue between generations – effective management of generations in enterprises" (HRP Perspective: 2-30), both HR representatives and employers express their positive attitude towards an intergenerational cooperation in

organization. Most of them disagree with the statement indicating that employees of different ages cannot cooperate with one another (61.6% of HR; 61.1% of managers). At the same time, however, nearly 1/3 of HR experts (29.6%) believes that the age diversity of employees is conducive to conflicts in the workplace, with almost half of them thinking that reconciling the expectations of employees of different ages poses a challenge to HR departments (46.9%). Moreover, 59% believes that managing an age diverse staff requires additional competences from the manager. Interestingly, managers themselves are somewhat more sceptical in this respect and see more challenges in managing age diversified teams. The majority of them highlighted that reconciling the expectations of employees of various ages posed a challege for them (73.5%) and required having additional competences (71%). On top of that, 41.3% of managers (i.e. more than HR representatives) emphasize that in their view the generational diversity in an organization is conducive to conflict situations (which, as one might assume, in themselves could pose a management challenge).

In line with the above, one could argue that employees are not the only ones who see some sort of barriers in the intergenerational contacts – managers and HR experts also appear to be reporting them, i.e. persons who have the opportunity to observe the mutual cooperation between employees from a slightly different perspective; further to that, one could even suggest that they are sometimes responsible for some aspects of this cooperation. The opinions of managers and HR experts confirmed the finding, referred to in the first part of the paper, stating that creating relations between employees of different ages can produce some difficulties and certainly represents a challenge for contemporary organizations.

It may be interesting to see how managers interpret possible difficulties while shaping the intergenerational relations and where they believe the source of those problems is. The employers taking part in the comprehensive study described in the report cited earlier, "Organizational and psychological determinants of monitoring for sustaining workers of age 50+ on the labor market" (Misztal et al. 2006) see the source of misunderstandings, isolations or even conflicts mainly in the rivalry which they think is taking place between the employees of different generations. These observations represent yet another important finding in the discussion on the creation of intergenerational relations in the workplace. An incidence of some sort of rivalry can

determine the mutual relations, deepen the isolation and even generate conflicts. It is therefore valid information for managers. It is worthwhile for them to consider how they could prevent this rivalry or how to manage it; how to increase the productivity of the entire organization, e.g. creating a cooperation plane between individuals of different ages whose task would involve achieving a specific goal. It is worth remembering that having a mutual goal can foster integration and cooperation.

Greater awareness of both chances and possible problems, and thus arising challenges can allow managers to be better prepared to manage age diverse staff. One could conclude that the managers' role should be to encourage employees to cooperate, to arrange this cooperation, creating a common ground, making individual groups of employees aware of the each generation's qualities, seeking to identify and diminish possible feelings of anxiety relating to the intergenerational cooperation (such as the fear of the -35 against the moralizing on the part of the +50; older employees' fear of sharing knowledge with the younger ones; fear of the +50 of having to accept the role of a student taught by the young, etc.) as well as making others be aware of the common goals and values.

Interestingly, in this context it is extremely important for the managers (who are responsible for creating the relations, information transfer, educating employees, combating stereotypes, etc.) to have sound knowledge of employees of different ages – their strengths, preferences, expectations, needs, etc. However, it appears that managers themselves on more than one occasion use stereotypes, instead of deeper knowledge of their employees, pointing out, for example, that the problems in the intergenerational contacts are generated by lack of common interests or values (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development 2014: 12). A number of studies shows that e.g. the differences relating to the prized values in the workplace, factors motivating employees of different ages to act, expectations in terms of the organization of work are not that entirely different for the various generations as some wide-spread stereotypical thought constructs would like us to believe. Following that, based on the research review one could, for example, argue that (see Zając 2015):

- „Demographic changes (including age) are not particularly important in the development of an individual hierarchy of factors influencing employees' satisfaction" (Springer 2011: 172).

- There are no statistically significant differences in the factors motivating to work, which are valued by employees of different ages. Small differences can only be discerned for such factors as "job security" and "work safety and comfort". These factors are slightly more appreciated by young employees (Wziątek-Staśko 2014: 693), (which might somewhat be contrary to the stereotypical thinking suggesting that the young people tend to be more flexible than the older ones, and have no problems frequently changing their jobs).

- The employees' age does not determine significantly the values prized in the workplace. Generally, the representatives of different age groups appreciated work-life balance (Baran, Kłos 2014: 926), despite the fact that this value is stereotypically assigned to Generation Y. Employees of all ages value respect and expect it from their fellow coworkers and supervisors (Montana, Petit 2008: 35-49).

- A significant number of people (of all ages) would like to develop professionally and be promoted (HRP Perspective: 22). Thus, this is not a goal characterisitc only of young people.

In light of the above, we can argue that these are not the real differences (in terms of prized values or work motivation) between employees of various ages that can generate problems in intergenerational contacts and management of age diverse stuff, but lacking awareness and knowledge of the expectations of one's fellow employees. Managers should then seek to gain a better insight into their employees (their motivation, values they prize in their job, their aims, expectations) – so as to be able, on the one hand, to select effective methods and tools of management (including creating relations in the workplace), and, on the other, to inform workers and make them aware of their potential and their fellow coworkers' resources.

5. Summary

In the course of this discussion the attempt was to show how the intergenerational relations are being shaped in the workplace (whether and how the employees' age diversity impacts the creation of work atmosphere, and how this influences the organization's functioning), and what the manager's role is in the process of

organization of work and creation of atmosphere in a workplace that is diverse in terms of employees' age.

In summing up the discussion on how the intergenerational relations are being shaped in the workplace – on the basis of the cited research – one can suggest that the development of relations between employees of different ages is largely determined by the way people of various ages perceive each other and by the experiences regarding intergenerational contacts. It appears that neither the young nor the old know much about one another, having no opportunities to getting to know and work with one another, being guided by stereotypes, which form the basis for their opinions with regard to employees of other ages. Nearly all the studies cited in the paper reveal the problem of intergenerational isolation, and lack of common ground. This suggests that although respondents report their willingness to cross-generational cooperation, having expressed positive views in this respect, it is hard to conclude that these relations are being shaped in a satisfactory way, having a positive impact on the atmosphere and organization of work. Quite the contrary, the persons surveyed reported conflicts in the workplace, fears and even rivalry. What is, however, important is that what causes this situation to emerge might be eliminated by a management process that is appropriately designed – which is a quite a challenge mainly for managers. As it turns out, the possibility of cross-generational cooperation is not determined by the actually present diametrical differences between the values, motivators or expectations as represented by the various generations (which would make the cooperation and reconciliation of priorities impossible). Thus, it appears that the problems revealed by respondents can be eliminated by education, transferring knowledge, combating stereotypes, creating chances of cooperation.

It is then possible to indicate the challenges and the manager's role in the process of organization of work and creation of work atmosphere in a team made up of employees in a wider range of ages. The challenges the manager is certain to face are as follows:

- Combating stereotypes, prejudices, making employees aware of strengths of those of different ages. Managers can seek to achieve this by e.g. organizing and conducting training, workshops for employees on intergenerational cooperation. During such meetings it is worth showing different aged employees' potential, dispelling stereotypes, but also concentrating on things that employees of various

ages could have in common in order to work out a common ground. For this to be possible, managers themselves should be aware of their employees' potential, their strengths, resources, as well as goals and individual strivings, so that having insight into those matters would form a base for preparing such workshops.

• Arranging cooperation, creating a common ground for actions, chances of mutual knowledge exchange. In this context, managers should strive for creating intergenerational teams; selecting people of different ages for one team seeking to realize a common goal. Here of essence is the manager's encouraging workers to exchange knowledge with one another. Managers should provide opportunities for knowledge sharing, awarding employees for this. They should also create an atmosphere of mutual trust (so that no one would be anxious about passing their unique expertise to others). In order to achieve this, managers themselves should be willing to share their knowledge with others, thus providing a good example to emulate. Moreover, given that there are some intergenerational differences in terms of the communication form, language expressions used, etc. (which, according to research, are a source of fear of working together with people of different ages) – the manager's role is to devise a strategy and communication rules that are known to and respected by all employees. To this end, the manager should become familiar with the specific ways of how the various generations communicate and propose solutions which make the combination of those ways possible.

• Making employees aware of common goals and benefits arising from their achievement so that employees could sense and have the need of cooperation, coactions (but not rivalry),

• Mitigating possible anxiety associated with cross-generational cooperation (e.g. fear of losing knowledge to the benefit of the young and thus becoming less valuable for organization). In this respect it is crucial for the manager to treat his/her employees equally, showing respect to each and everyone, highlighting their contribution to the organization so as to make everybody feel needed and valuable. Preventing any behavior which might appear to be age discriminating.

• On-going review of needs and expectations of employees of all ages and tailoring work methods and tools to them – of key appears here an individual approach to workers, and respecting their needs in the process of work organization. Moreover, it

is unacceptable to assume that those needs are, for example, the same for all other representatives of a particular generation. The analysis of needs and expectations, an individual approach to staff helps managers to abandon their possible stereotypical approach to workers of different ages.

The challenges outlined above and the manager's role arising from them allow one to conclude that the process of creating the right atmosphere in a team made up of employees of various ages managers should start by working on their own attitudes towards people of different ages. Managers should foster their communications skills and learn how to adapt to their employees' ways of communication. It is paramount to seek to gain insight into their workers – their expectations, needs, goals and, based on this knowledge, choose appropriate strategies and tools. Another important element is also educating all employees with a view to battle the stereotypical approach towards fellow workers.

Considering the findings of the studies presented above, including also the fact that nowadays we encounter a large generational diversity functioning on the labor market, with society having entered the stage of an aging population, which might in future engender the problem of staff shortages, thus making it necessary to encourage people already at the age of retirement to continue work (which will contribute to the generational diversity even more so) – it is becoming a considerable challenge for today's organizations to develop the right approach towards the issue of managing age diverse staff, as well as shaping employees' attitudes towards one another.

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Marta NOWACKA

Zarządzanie zróżnicowanym wiekowo zespołem pracowników – wyzwaniem dla współczesnego menedżera

Streszczenie

Cel: Z uwagi na postępujące zmiany demograficzne, których efektem jest coraz większe zróżnicowanie pokoleniowe współczesnych organizacji, celem artykułu jest określenie, jak kształtują się relacje międzypokoleniowe w miejscu pracy oraz jaka jest rola menedżera w procesie organizacji pracy i kreowania atmosfery w różnorodnym pod względem wieku zespole pracowników.

Metoda badawcza: Dokonana została analiza badań wtórnych (polskich oraz zagranicznych) dotyczących relacji międzypokoleniowych w miejscu pracy. Przedstawione zostały również wnioski z badań własnych: ilościowych (badanie ankietowe przeprowadzone wśród 103 słuchaczy Uniwersytetu Trzeciego Wieku Politechniki Częstochowskiej oraz 100 studentów Politechniki Częstochowskiej) oraz jakościowych (grupy fokusowe, w skład których wchodzili studenci, oraz wywiady pogłębione przeprowadzone wśród 3 słuchaczy UTW oraz 2 przedstawicieli Stowarzyszenia Wychowanków Politechniki Częstochowskiej).

Wnioski: Na podstawie analizy badań wskazać można, że w relacjach pomiędzy pracownikami w różnym wieku ujawnił się problem izolacji międzypokoleniowej oraz braku płaszczyzny porozumienia, który wpływa na kreowanie atmosfery w pracy i organizację pracy, a wynika m.in. z stereotypowego myślenia, uprzedzeń, obaw, braku wiedzy. Możliwość współpracy międzypokoleniowej nie jest determinowana realnie istniejącymi różnicami pomiędzy wartościami, motywacją czy też oczekiwaniami przedstawicieli różnych pokoleń (które uniemożliwiałyby współpracę i pogodzenie priorytetów). Istnieje zatem możliwość kreowania efektywnej współpracy w zespołach międzypokoleniowych, a dużą rolę w tym procesie odgrywać może menedżer. Powinien on przede wszystkim zatroszczyć się o kreowanie odpowiedniej atmosfery w zróżnicowanym wiekowo zespole pracowników; zadbać, aby każdy pracownik czuł się szanowany i równo traktowany (w tym kontekście ważna jest zatem postawa menedżera). Menedżerowie organizując pracę swoim pracownikom, powinni dążyć do stworzenia szans i możliwości wzajemnej współpracy pomiędzy osobami w różnym wieku, tak by nie pogłębiać izolacji międzypokoleniowej, lecz stwarzać szansę na wzajemne poznanie się. To z kolei może przyczynić się do zredukowania uprzedzeń i stereotypów, które na ogół wynikają z braku wiedzy. Elementem swoistej integracji może być zachęcanie pracowników do wspólnego dążenia do realizacji celów organizacji.

Oryginalność / wartość artykułu, wkład w rozwój nauki: Analiza badań posłużyła do określenia czynników, które mogą mieć wpływ na kreowanie relacji międzypokoleniowych w pracy, by na tej podstawie określić rolę menedżera w tym procesie.

Implikacje badań: Zidentyfikowanie czynników mających wpływ na kreowanie relacji w pracy pozwoliło na sformułowanie swoistych rekomendacji oraz zaleceń dla menedżerów, które mogą być przydatne w kreowaniu poprawnych relacji w zróżnicowanych wiekowo organizacjach w Polsce.

Słowa kluczowe: menedżer, pokolenie, relacje międzypokoleniowe, zróżnicowanie wiekowe.
JEL: M12; M14

Diversity management in Polish firms – a review of studies

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Abstract:

Aim: The aim of the paper is to present the state and possible future directions of the research on diversity management in Polish firms.

Design / Research methods: The author selected 20 state-of-the-art articles in the field of diversity management in Polish firms. Analysis of these articles allowed for identifying a starting point as well as possible directions for future research in this field.

Conclusions / findings: The author argues that even though scholars find the issue of diversity management important and still valid, there also exist clear gaps in the research. Some areas (e.g. management of groups diverse in terms of age or gender) are preferred, while others appear to be neglected (e.g. management of people of a different sexual orientation). Scholars clearly tend to choose a specific group and research methodology.

Originality / value of the article: The author conducted a review of existing studies on diversity management in Polish companies, and presented the state and directions of possible further research. The paper could inspire others to start further and more in-depth studies on diversity; a greater number of explorations in this area may yield interesting findings from the point of view of the diversity concept. Taking into account the directions proposed by the author may contribute to enriching the theory of management diversity, as well as provide practical recommendations for business managers.

Key words: diversity management, desk research

JEL: J80, M12, M14, M50

„Every person we meet along the road and across the world is in a way a twofold. First there is a person like the rest of us, who has his joys and sorrows, does not like to be hungry or…cold, feels pain as as suffering and good fortune as satisfying and fulfilling. Now there is the second person, who overlaps with the first. He is a bearer of racial features and a culture, beliefs, conviction. These two entities coexist and incessantly interact."

R.Kapuściński

1. Introduction

„Varietas occurrit satietati – diversity prevents satiety" (a Latin maxim)

Diversity management in a workplace assumes that there exists a balance between the characteristics of employees and the needs of employers (Rawluszko 2007: 28). The latter ones are putting an increasing emphasis on the professionalization of management which takes into account a wider range of human traits. Moreover, international integration, globalization, and what follows, a growing labor mobility make the importance, role and awareness of diversity while managing it increase (Rakowska 2014: 353). A similar observation could be made with respect to science, particularly to the management theory, as, from the scientific point of view, it is a topic that is as much popular as it is inspiring and complex, demanding a particular sensitivity and an open mind.

The paper encompasses the findings of over a dozen studies devoted to diversity management in Polish companies. Despite it being an important and current research topic, so far, there has not been a publication analyzing diversity in Polish companies on the basis of available literature and research. Such an analysis provides this paper, which might be a voice in the discussion on the determinants fostering the acceptance of differences perceived as a potential for business growth. Also, it can help managers and employees understand the essence of diversity and the importance of an informed diversity management, while for scholars – research awareness.

2. Diversity and diversity management in the workplace (diversity management)

Intuitively, diversity can refer to accounting in management for issues relating, among other things, to gender, age, culture, health, disability, religious convictions or belief – so it is also likely to be defined through the prism of the following dimensions: primary, secondary and organizational (Table 1).

Table 1. Diversity dimensions

Diversity dimension	Primary	Secondary	Organizational
Examples of traits	Gender	Place of residence	Additional privileges for employees
	Age	Material status and income	Place and hierarchy in the organizational structure
	Physical fitness	Education	Decision-making powers assigned
	Sexual orientation	Work experience	Membership in an organization in the workplace
	Nationality	Habits, hobbies, interests	Job seniority
	Character traits	children	Prestige of the position held
	(Dis)ability	Marital status	Inclination to sharing knowledge with others

Source: Author's own study based on Stankiewicz (2013: 488); Kubicka (2010: 61) and Gajek (2014: 128-129).

Diversity in the primary dimension concentrates on the immanent characteristics of an individual. Those will include psychophysical characteristics, propriety and the way of thinking, which all are formed mainly in the family or during the education process. Diversity in secondary and organizational dimension relates to the position of an individual in social hierarchy: his/her role in both family and society. Among those three, the organizational identity is shaped to the greatest extent by factors stemming from the organizational culture of the workplace: motivation and reward schemes, human resources management strategy or values espoused by managers.

Diversity in organizational dimension is a derivative of the place in the organization, as well as the outcome of decisions made by those in charge of shaping the strategy of human resources management.

The factors differentiating people can also be defined as (Gajdzik 2015: 100):

- basic (e.g. race, gender) and secondary (e.g. work experience, beliefs),
- visible (e.g. race, gender) and invisible (e.g. religion, illnesses),
- noticeable (e.g. race, gender) and unnoticeable (e.g. habits, ways of communication),
- demographic (e.g. gender, age) and non-demographic (e.g. attitudes, values).

Diversity can also be defined from the point of view of paradigms. Not noticing differences, the need of harmony and uniformity determine the assimilation paradigm (fairness paradigm). Diversity paradigm (access-and-legitimacy paradigm) denotes acceptance and diversity promotion[1], the integration paradigm (learning-and-productivity paradigm) promotes equal opportunities while at the same time noticing the differences thanks to which an organization has a chance to grow (Durska 2009: 11). Of all the paradigms mentioned, the integration paradigm internalizes diverse values to the highest extent.

Diversity, regardless of the approach presented with respect to the definition, refers to aspects in relation to which people are similar or different from one other. This includes all inborn, acquired, visible, invisible aspects making people different or similar to one another (Rawluszko 2007: 28). These characteristics are either visible (gender, age) or not (position at work). These differences will be found to a varying degree in every workplace where people are employed. Not every company will see them as significant and a source of competitive advantage[2]. This may have the effect that the company will not pay attention to diversity management.

One[3] of the definitions of diversity management says that it is the process of management and communication, which involves noticing differences between

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[1] M. Durska (2009) calls it "*celebrating diversity*".
[2] The analysis of the available online data disseminated by Diversity Charter signatories suggests that the perception of diversity management and values, organizational culture and competitive advantage varies. See more in Gajek (2014).
[3] For a review of approaches to diversity management, see Kupczyk, Oleszkiewicz, Kubicka (2014).

people. Further to that, it is an informed development of strategies, programs and policies seeking to create the climate where differences are respected (Brdulak 2009: 1-2). The goal of the diversity management is an informed use of diverse potential of all workforce combined with making opportunities more equal, in the first place by creating a friendly workplace, which also poses an ever greater challenge for the management of companies.

Diversity management emerged in the 1980' (Rakowska 2014: 353) and has developed mainly because of:

* increased globalization
* reduced national and trade barriers,
* aging population,
* increased migration,
* change of family roles,
* women's increased professional aspirations

Management diversity brings advantages, yet it also puts barriers and challenges for managers. Practicing diversity in management improves communication effectiveness, increases mutual understanding thus influencing open attitudes, better atmosphere and increased job satisfaction (Borowska 2008: 332-338). In addition, better team work performance in the short perspective is the organizational outcome of diversity management (Łukasiewicz 2014: 236-237). Adjusting company's procedures to the implementation of a diversity management program, building awareness among managers and employees are among some of the challenges. The efficiency and productivity of diversity management will depend on the proper structure of solutions facilitating it. Furthermore, the process of diversity management will have to be monitored on an ongoing basis (Kopeć 2014: 183). Building an atmosphere where diversity is respected seems to be the most difficult, since that might prove demanding particularly in Polish organizational cultures (e.g. stereotypical thinking). We should bear in mind that the implementation of diversity management programs often generates costs. This barrier may prove to be impossible to overcome for smaller companies, struggling everyday with financial difficulties.

3. Research procedure

Before starting the review of the literature, certain assumptions were adopted which provided the focus and a specific structure to the study. First of all, the decision was to carry out an analysis of the texts concerned with companies from the private sector, which have a greater freedom in shaping the strategies, policies and procedures than public entities. Both Polish companies and international companies' branches based in our country were taken into consideration – the latter ones have the right to take up and pursuit a business across Poland's territory, with the same rules applying to them as is the case for the Polish entrepreneurs. The line of business of the companies was of no significance to the study.

With a view to find articles written by Polish scholars which would be interesting from the point of view of the aim set, the following two databases were used: "bibliotekanauki.ceon.pl" (based on yadda platform) and worldcat (the world's largest library catalog). These are catalog collections of various scope, reflecting a range of scientific publication volumes. A key word, "diversity management" (both in Polish and English) was used for each of the databases (in Poland, some people use the English phrase). The study concentrated on placing these phrases in the papers' titles, their key words and also in their content. Also, a time limit was set: only publications released after the year 2000[4] were taken into account.

The entire research process involved two stages. During the first stage, a 100 papers in total on diversity management in the workplace were found. Only these papers were selected to the second stage in which scholars presented their quantitative and qualitative results. Moreover, those papers were taken into account in which the authors defined closely the group under study (Polish entrepreneurs/employees/management staff). This approach allowed a certain picture to be obtained of the state of the Polish research on diversity management in Polish enterprises.

Overall 20 items were included. Their analysis was carried out at a later stage at three information planes. The first one comprised the group under study: enterprises

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[4] Before, it was referred to as e.g. equal opportunities policy or equalization measures rather than the concept of diversity management.

from the SME sector[5] or big organizations[6]; the second: the diversity dimension (primary, secondary and/or organizational), it being the subject of the study, and as the third plane, the type of a study (quantitative and qualitative) was used.

4. Analysis results of the papers' content

The analysis of the content of the papers selected to the second stage was conducted according to three criteria of analysis:

1) the group of companies under study
2) diversity type,
3) type of studies conducted

Considering the first information area we notice that the texts analyzed referred to companies varying in size (measured by the number of employees), thus including micro, small and medium enterprises (jointly defined as the SME's sector) and large companies to which the majority of papers (total of 10) was devoted. Only few studies were concerned solely with diversity management in SMEs (merely 2 papers). 8 analyzed articles focused on both groups (i.e. the group under study covered entities from the SME sector and large firms).

The type of diversity was another aspect of the analysis. On the basis of the review, the conclusion drawn is that most studies have been devoted to the management of workforce diverse in terms of age, culture and gender. Within the primary dimension, the types of diversity most likely to be examined include age (Baran 2015; Berłowski 2012; Radzka, Trochimiuk 2014), gender (Gajdzik 2016), cultural identity (Mazur 2011) and disability (Guryn 2012). The majority of studies are made up of those which do not concentrate on a selected diversity aspect, being rather concerned with describing the diversity policy adopted in the company (Brdulak 2009; Rogozińska-Pawełczyk 2016; Klimek-Michno 2013; Wawer 2014; Kupczyk, Kubicka 2014; Michalak 2014).

[5] The sector of micro-, small- and middle-sized enterprises; this sector is sometimes also defined as MSME.
[6] The papers did not state the classification criteria for micro, small and medium enterprises, or they were based only on the employment criterion.

The last analysis criterion was the type of research employed by the authors of the selected papers. In the second stage of the analysis there were 6 quantitative and 14 qualitative studies. Among the latter ones one of the method employed to collect information was an interview (mainly a structured one) which was used in the studies outlined in three publications (Mazur 2011; Baran 2015; Radzka, Trochimiuk 2014). With respect to the other papers, as many as 11 referred to a study where the perspective of description was a case study (almost 80% in total of the texts analyzed).One of the cases analyzed and to which two papers were devoted was ArcelorMittal Poland, a company engaged in steel industry. The objective of the first paper was to analyze actions undertaken by this organization in terms of diversity (Gajdzik 2015: 91-106), the second publication presented what practical measures could be deployed for women (gender diversity management) (Gajdzik 2016: 110-111). Likewise, age management was what another analysis was concerned with, aiming at describing the management of age diverse workforce in the company Universal McCann (Berłowski 2012: 36-39). Moreover, the analysis of good practices in terms of cultural diversity was presented on the example of the IBM company (Wiśniewska 2016: 9-24). Other studies show mentoring as the method of diversity management (Wawer 2014). In yet another study a question was posed, „*Does the management of work engagement requires that the workforce diversity be taken into consideration?*" (Michalak 2014).

Some of the texts were dedicated to a specific industry (Lesiewicz 2015) or targeted respondents living in specific region (Lower Silesia, Podlasie). The aim of those last papers was to check whether companies based within Podlasie area were aware of the benefits arising from diverse human resources (Mazur 2011). Meanwhile, the state of diversity management implementation was evaluated in Lower Silesia (Kupczyk, Oleszkiewicz, Kubicka 2014).

5. Conclusions based on the analysis of the papers

The analysis shows that the research on diversity in Polish enterprises is mainly concerned with large rather than small businesses. Also, the studies are most likely to concentrate on the primary dimension of diversity. Thirdly, researchers predominantly focus on studies of qualitative nature, with case study being the main perspective of description. The synthetic overview presented below (Table 2) includes data on the papers analyzed, referring to the three information planes already mentioned.

Table 2. Review of studies – detailed data

Group under study	Number	Share [%]
SME sector	2	10
Large firms	10	50
Large firms and SME sector	8	40
Total	20	100
Diversity dimension	**Number**	**Share [%]**
Primary	8	40
Secondary	0	0
Organizational	0	0
Mixed (or not indicated directly, or encompassing a range of diversity aspects)	12	60
Total	20	100
Research type	**Number**	**Share [%]**
Quantitative	6	30
Qualitative	14	70
Total	20	100

Source: Author's own study based on the analysis conducted.

In view of the criterion referring to the group under study, the conclusion to be made is that too few studies have been conducted on diversity management with the SME sector as a group under study. It is the author's opinion that diversity management is a particularly difficult challenge for this sector, especially given its numerous problems and barriers, which, in addition to that, are increased on account

of the specificity of their management. On the other hand, clear contacts between employees and a high flexibility of operations can help in managing diversity in the SMEs. The companies from this sector should open up to diversity; the diversity which will help to utilize the differences present in labor market or among customers. Hence, it seems worthwhile for the research to use this very group as its target, especially in light of the fact that relatively many publications are devoted to SMEs, with their main focus being the specificity of their management.

There could be some doubts about whether a relatively great number of studies focusing on a mixed group is appropriate. The "mixed" group thus constructed could distort the research findings (different conditions in terms of the functioning of both groups of enterprises, management approach, possibilities, etc).

What the papers are lacking is focusing on other diversity aspects, above all on the organizational and secondary ones. Although relatively numerous publications are devoted to the primary diversity, still some areas are clearly preferred in this respect (age, gender) while others are notoriously neglected (e.g. sexual orientation and LGBT persons[7]). One should not confine oneself only to some aspects of diversity management, even though certain aspects of the diversity concept may be less relevant (e.g. cultural diversity management in family business).

The last analysis criterion was the type of research employed by the authors of the selected papers. Most of the studies focused on gaining insight into good practices of the enterprises, while failing to mention the bad ones[8]. On the one hand, that could suggest (at the same time coming as a surprise) that the companies' conduct in terms of management diversity is always proper. On the other hand, no company will admit to failing from time to time to apply the rules involved in diversity management. Describing bad cases based on facts, yet without the company's knowledge may lead to the researcher's facing a moral conflict. The only solution for being able to describe real cases of bad practices is to use information provided by whistleblowers. However, it is likely that people speaking out about bad

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[7] Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender.
[8] Likewise, business good practices taking into account the diversity factor in management are discussed at the time of a variety of conferences, as e.g. "Diversity Management – Basis for Building Human Capital" or a regular conference, "Diversity Congress".

practices in their company may not be willing to talk about abuses taking place in terms of diversity management. The issues relating to bad practices are awkward and sensitive, often being a taboo topic in organizations. Employees are afraid to talk about these situations because they might later be subject to mobbing, which has a bearing on the studies conducted in this field.

None of the studies analyzed was conducted from the perspective of data description using the grounded theory method. Owing to its procedures, researchers can discover phenomena which they did not look for while starting their research. This kind of approach allows new phenomena to be explored, of which diversity management is certainly one. Likewise, there were no studies where the authors would use the methodological triangulation of studies.

The analysis findings suggest that there are "favorable" subjects within diversity. The empirical studies are largely conducted as a qualitative study. This proportion is at 2:1 to the benefit of the qualitative studies. The main perspective of description employed by these is a case study, largely demonstrated as examples of good practices. In terms of the group under study, in the majority of cases diversity refers to large enterprises, with the SME sector making up only 10% of all the research analyzed. In Poland, diversity is mostly examined from the point of view of the primary diversity or in a way that is more general, i.e. the perception, how diversity is viewed, or a reference is made to the solutions applied in the diversity policy. The other method adopted was viewing diversity through the prism of another phenomenon (e.g. communication).

The analysis suggests that the SME sector, encompassing micro, small and medium enterprises, should be examined from the perspective of diversity management more frequently. In the future it would be worth conducting studies using the grounded theory methodology, and also to illustrate the cases of bad practices, whose analysis could provide useful findings and information. The reason why researchers eschew some topics within diversity management may be their fearing their illusiveness, or their *a priori* assumption that they are not interesting. However, the analysis conducted found no evidence that would make these hypotheses probable. The author believes that the future comprehensive studies on

diversity will enable one to gain a thorough and in-depth insight into the management process of this phenomenon.

6. Concluding remarks

Diversity emerged mainly as the result of the increased awareness of the social and demographic changes, complexity of the economic processes, and growing importance of human capital. Diversity management is often associated with countering discrimination, which, in line with the provisions of law, is the objective of the policy of equal opportunities (Burzyńska, Kłos 2015: 5). Diversity management is inextricably linked to building the awareness of the diversity that exists in organizations. The effect are actions undertaken to allow for these differences to be used to the benefit of organizations.

The aim of the paper was realized based on reviewing the scientific research concerned with diversity management in Polish enterprises, and suggesting further directions of studies within this field. The analysis indicated that it was necessary to conduct further research in which different diversity dimensions would be treated equally.

In attempting to suggest further research directions, it is worth reflecting on the state of research within this area in Poland. Despite numerous publications on the subject of diversity management, the number of challenges for research is not getting any smaller, which may be due to researchers taking little interest in some of the diversity dimensions. It is also worth considering the need to carry out interdisciplinary studies (e.g. management – finances; management – sociology), as they would allow for certain nuances of diversity management to be grasped, especially given that the previous studies focusing on this issue have failed to dispel all the dilemmas and doubts.

In summing up, the review of the literature confirms scholars' ongoing interest in diversity management. It is very likely that this interest will not wane in the upcoming years. Diversity is worth promoting and not only in the workplace but also as a field of research. Such research should not be seen as a "curiosity" but a

response to the real needs arising from the ever growing importance of diversity management in Polish companies. Managing diversity, although costly, allows for an informative use of the potential of all employees, designing modern solutions and creating a level playing field for all employees. Thus, it is worth promoting, especially considering that human resources management, which also involves managing diversity, appears to be gaining in importance (as the result, among other things, of seeing human resources as business partner).

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Zarządzanie różnorodnością w polskich przedsiębiorstwach– przegląd badań

Streszczenie

Cel: Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie stanu oraz możliwych przyszłych kierunków badań nad zarządzaniem różnorodnością w polskich przedsiębiorstwach.

Metodyka badań: Zgodnie z przyjętą wcześniej procedurą badawczą autorka do analizy wybrała w sumie 20 artykułów z zakresu zarządzania różnorodnością w polskich przedsiębiorstwach. Przyjęta procedura badawcza zapewnia zrozumienie dotychczasowych badań i stwarza solidny punkt wyjścia dla dalszych badań w tym kierunku. Ostatecznie została ona wybrana, aby zidentyfikować kierunki badań nad zarządzaniem różnorodnością w Polsce.

Wnioski: Autorka wykazuje, że choć tematyka zarządzania różnorodnością jest ważna dla badaczy i wciąż aktualna, występują także wyraźne luki badawcze. Pewne obszary (np. zarządzanie grupami zróżnicowanymi pod względem wieku czy płci) są preferowane, inne zaś wydają się być zaniedbywane (np. zarządzanie osobami o odmiennej orientacji seksualnej). Badacze mają wyraźną skłonność do wybierania określonej grupy i metodyki badawczej.

Wartość artykułu: Autorka dokonała przeglądu istniejących badań nad zarządzaniem różnorodnością w polskich przedsiębiorstwach oraz przedstawiła stan i kierunki możliwych dalszych badań. Artykuł może stać się inspiracją do podjęcia dalszych, pogłębionych badań nad różnorodnością więcej badań w tym obszarze może przynieść ciekawe wyniki z punktu widzenia koncepcji *diversity*. Uwzględnienie kierunków proponowanych przez autorkę może przyczynić się do wzbogacenia teorii zarządzania różnorodnością, a także dostarczyć praktycznych rekomendacji dla zarządów firm.

Słowa kluczowe: zarządzanie różnorodnością, analiza danych zastanych

JEL: J80, M12, M14, M50

The importance of cultural differences in international business

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Abstract:

Aim: The aim of this study is to systematize the knowledge on the characteristics and classification of cultures, which will allow national representatives to be assigned to their respective types of cultures, and to present the characteristics of selected countries in some business areas.

Design / Research Method: The applied research method is the analysis of the literature in the field of cross-cultural determinants of business and the description of the findings observed and analyzed in the process of deductive conclusions.

Conclusions / findings: The main conclusion of the research is confirming the view that cultural differences in today's global economy can significantly affect the business in an international context. In order to eliminate or actually to minimize the cultural factor of entrepreneurs, those operating on the international market should diagnose the culture of the country with which they will enter into business relationships and they should develop strategies in different markets taking into account the diagnosis made.

Originality / value of the paper: The paper is a voice in the scientific discussion on the impact of cultural differences on international business; it can provide guidance and inspiration for entrepreneurs, helping them to understand the complexity of the issue, and for students interested in cultural diversity and its impact on business. The paper comprehensively connects the characteristics of national cultures with different areas of international business and shows the relationship and complexity of the issue. Such a presentation of the problem shows how important it is to know these differences for proper management of the company.

Implications of the research: This paper focuses on the overall functioning of the company on the international market and discusses the cultural differences associated with the negotiation process. It may be the beginning of further research related to cross-cultural communication and management of transnational corporations and international marketing.

Keywords: Culture, cultural differences, international business, intercultural communication, intercultural competence

JEL: F23, M14, Z10

1. Introduction

The transformations in the world's economy, whose start dates back to the middle of the twentieth century, have forced enterprises to expand their activities and management by adding the international dimension. This development has been followed by a greater openness of national economies and trade liberalization, which has led to the emergence of foreign and international companies on a number of internal markets. A vast majority of enterprises operates in the international environment, where the cultural factor is of tremendous importance, exerting a major influence on the success of transactions and maintenance of good relations between counterparties or employees of different cultural background employed in one enterprise (see Kendlik 2009; Ball, McCulloch 1999; Brdulak, Brdulak 2000).

Cultural differences can become a particular barrier in the business communication (see Nowakowski 2005; Hofstede 2000). Therefore it is crucial for business managers, lower rank employees, as well as representatives of smaller companies who engage with foreign countries to become familiar with different cultures in order to eliminate this barrier. In the literature, it is often highlighted that those people are not sufficiently prepared to work on culturally diverse markets and to communicate with people of other cultures (see Hofstede 2000; Matsumoto, Juang 2004; Bartosik-Purgat 2006; Gesteland 2000).

The identification and understanding of cultural differences is one of the most significant skills of the world's economy in our times, indispensable for gaining competitive advantage on the global market (see Nowakowski 2005; Bartosik-Purgat 2006).

Culture influences numerous aspects of the international business communication, not only such as business relations, negotiations, international management, but also marketing communication strategies, decisions concerned with the brand or consumer behaviors (see Nowakowski 2005; Bartosik-Purgat 2006; Matsumoto, Juang 2004; Budzanowska-Drzewiecka et al. 2016).

The aim of this paper is to characterize and classify cultures, thus allowing the representatives of particular countries to be assigned to their relevant types of

cultures, and to present features characteristic for some nations in certain business areas which can be of use particularly during negotiations.

The paper is comprised of three parts. The first part outlines the concept of international business, the second one the concept of culture and diverse types of cultures. The third part shows the international issues relating to business operations in selected countries.

2. International business – its essence and entities

The notion of international business is defined as a business activity that extends beyond other countries or which is conducted across national borders (Nowakowski 2005: 17). Taking into consideration the cultural aspect, international business encompasses transactions concluded and realized across national and cultural borders in order to meet the needs of individual consumers and organizations (Ball, McCulloch 1999: 9).

International business entities encompass international enterprises (in particular, transnational corporations (TNCs)) and domestic enterprises engaging in international relations. We should draw attention to the fact that behind those entities are people working in those enterprises, and it is precisely them who are the most important factor, having to make the effort to understand the cultural differences so as to become capable of communicating skillfully with other cultures. International business is also depicted as an area where several disciplines are combined: international management, international logistics, international marketing, international trade and finances. These disciplines partly overlap and partly complement one another (Nowakowski 2005: 19).

The area of international business is thus very wide and so the managers must have a very extensive knowledge on all of the disciplines mentioned. Moreover, the issue of cultural differences is present in each of those areas. Nowadays, enterprises seeking to be successful and win competitive advantage on the global market also, if indeed not most crucially, have to take into account this aspect.

One of the aspects of globalization and international business is a cross-cultural contact understood as a meeting between individuals from different cultures, having different traditions and hierarchies of value, who act as salesmen and consumers, negotiators, superiors and subordinates, coworkers, project or task group participants. In this context two concepts appear significant: international competences and communication (Budzanowska-Drzewiecka et al. 2016: 28-29). The cross-cultural competences could be seen as a set of three components linked to each other (Spitzberg, Changnon 2009: 7-8): ability to understand members of other cultures, ability to work with others, ability to stay in the world of intensive cross-cultural contact.

Cross-cultural communication, on the other hand, is a social process unfolding between the participants of the cross-cultural contact. The essence of this process is to create communications pertaining to people, phenomena and situations using different codes.

There are many barriers in the cross-cultural communication. The most likely to be mentioned include (Kendlik 2009: 12): time (in terms of punctuality and length of time devoted to talks), language, currency, political system and the governing law in a particular country, choosing the place for negotiations, choosing negotiators, differing ideology. cultural differences, different mentality.

Today's world of international business requires that companies and their workforce should acquire and improve occupational and intercultural competences (Matsumoto, Juang 2004: 552). In order to acquire the latter ones, the intercultural communication needs to improve.

3. Culture – definition and types

The term „culture" is used in a variety of meanings in everyday life and in common language. In the literature, it was first defined by E.B Taylor as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by a human as a member of society" (Kroeber 2002: 152).

Culture refers to the range of different aspects of life which were outlined by Murdock, Ford and Hudson and ordered by Barry. We can distinguish 8 categories (Matsumoto, Juang 2007: 22): general characteristics, food and attire, housing conditions and technology, economy and transport, local community and government, social care, religion, science, sex and life cycle.

Culture is all the achievements of a particular society which are transmitted from one generation to the next. This includes a set of rules, concepts, terms defining specific behaviors. The characteristic features of the concept of culture are the following (Matsumoto, Juang 2007: 26-27): dynamic nature – culture changes over time, it evolves; it refers to the system of rules, behaviors, values and attitudes, which are present in the minds of all the people living within a particular culture; it refers to both an individual and a group; its aim is the group's survival; it is accepted, to a varying (not uniformly) degree, by individuals within a group; it is passed on from one generation to the next – thus it has a relatively enduring nature.

Hofstede distinguished the elements which are responsible for the cultural differences existing among societies. He illustrated them using an "onion" diagram, which consists, starting with the outer side, of symbols (language, gestures, signs having a meaning for the entire society), heroes (figures to emulate, valued by a particular culture), rituals (showing respect to others, ways of greetings, religious ceremonies), values (ability to define what is good and what is bad) (Hofstede 2000: 43).

A layer-like structure of culture was also demonstrated by Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars. They distinguished three layers. The first one is the visible layer, also referred to as the outer layer, which can comprise such elements as language of a particular community, buildings, cuisine, monuments, the way of dressing and art. The second layer is the middle layer covering norms and values respected by a particular community. The last layer is the core referring to the basic existential assumptions (Trompenaars, Hampden-Turner 2002: 21).

Hofstede further notes that people learn culture, get to know its values and behaviors acceptable in the particular culture in the first 10 up to 20 years of their lives. At that time they draw on the knowledge of their parents, grandparents, teachers, social group, and while approaching the end of this period, they start to

move gradually on to another way of conscious learning, focusing mainly on new practices (Hofstede, Hofstede, Minkov 2010: 9-10).

Every culture and every nation has its characteristic behaviors in the communication process, be it during negotiations or any other situations, as well as specific values to refer to. Therefore, culture is perceived as a peculiar impediment in conducting negotiations and concluding international transactions. When negotiators come from different cultural backgrounds, the risk of negotiation failure increases significantly, which is due to mistakenly understood words, actions or gestures. It is therefore crucial while preparing for talks with a foreign counterpart to familiarize in the best way possible with his/her country's culture and culture classification models based on cultural orientations (Table 1).

Table 1. Selected cultural orientations

Authors	Classification criteria	Cultural orientation
F. Trompenaars, Ch. Hampden-Turner	Attitude towards an individual and group Manner of behavior Manner in which social status is accorded Attitude towards time	Individualism/communitarism Neutral/emotional Achievement/ascription time perspective – future/present time/past oriented Sequential orientation (linear culture)/synchronic orientation (non-linear culture)
K. Kluckhohn F.L. Strodtbeck	Relationship with time	Orientation towards future/the present/past
E.T. Hall	Relationship with time Context Space	Monochronic/polychronic Low context/high context Intimate/personal/communal/public
R.R. Gesteland	Manner of behavior Attitude towards time Attitude towards etiquette, hierarchy and expressing respect Attitudes toward strangers	Expressive/reserved Formal/informal Transaction-oriented/relationship-oriented Monochronic/polychronic
G. Hofstede	Attitude towards an individual and group Attitude towards hierarchy Attitude towards new situations Goal oriented	Individualism/collectivism Power distance (low – high) Uncertainty avoidance (low-high) Short-term/long-term

Source: Bartosik-Purgat (2006: 30).

The many types of culture can be distinguished based on different criteria. The tables below demonstrate those types together with their locations, that is, the

countries where they are present within a particular culture. A different understanding of a transaction and diverse attitudes towards business can be observed depending on the culture within which people function. Americans, Europeans or Asians behave differently; however, belonging to one continent does not in itself determine all the cultural characteristics. Within one continent, there may exist significant differences between individual countries.

Table 2. Culture classification according to the attitude towards relations and business

Type of culture	Characteristics	Countries within a given culture
Transaction-oriented cultures	They concentrate on achieving the goal, paying little attention to the relations with their partners.	Scandinavian, Germanic nations, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand
Moderately trans action-oriented cultures	Their priorities include transaction, business profit, achievement of the goal set.	The UK, South Africa, Romance countries in Europe, Central and East European countries, Chile, southern Brazil, northern Mexico, Hong Kong
Relationship-oriented cultures	People with a relationship-oriented attitude pay considerable attention to the manner in which mutual contacts are maintained. Transaction takes second place. The highest emphasis is put on maintaining good human relations. What counts are recommendations and connections.	The entire Arab world, most of African countries, Latin American and Asian countries

Source: Author's own study based on: Gesteland (2000: 46) and Bartosik-Purgat (2006: 138-139).

In terms of the attitudes towards relations and business, we can distinguish transaction-oriented and relationship-oriented cultures (see Table 2). In transaction-oriented cultures, the most important objective is to conclude transaction, gain profit while paying little or no attention to the relation with the trading partner. We observe a reverse situation in relationship-oriented cultures, where to establish and maintain good relations between people is paramount, with the transaction itself taking the second place.

In terms of the attitudes towards etiquette, hierarchy and expressing respect, we encounter formal and informal cultures (see Table 3). Formal cultures are characterized by great adherence to hierarchy, respect for the elders and those in high positions, while informal cultures treat people equally, whatever their position.

Table 3. Classification of cultures according to the attitude towards etiquette, hierarchy and expressing respect

Type of culture	Characteristics	Countries within a given culture
Informal cultures	Egalitarian attitude, not paying much attention to social hierarchy. Low power distance. Small differences in social status. People are equal regardless of the position they occupy. Money is seen as the way to freedom. Superiors are considered to be older colleagues.	Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands
Formal cultures	Underscoring the importance of social-occupational status and thus applying rules. It is based on clear hierarchies. High power distance. Great respect towards the elderly, the more experienced.	The majority of European and Asian countries, Mediterranean countries, the Arab world, Latin America

Source: Author's own study based on: Gesteland (2000: 46) and Bartosik-Purgat (2006: 155-157).

Table 4. Classification of cultures by the manner of behavior

Type of culture	Characteristics	Countries within a given culture
Reserved cultures	Quiet and calm manner of speaking. They avoid a close contact, they do not accept being touched. Eye contact is moderate or not even a direct one (fleeting). They keep large spatial distance between interlocutors. They do not reveal their emotions.	countries of South Asia and South-East Asia, Nordic and other Germanic countries of Europe
Expressive cultures	They show their emotions and affections using a wide range of elements of nonverbal communication. They keep small spatial distance between interlocutors. Being touched is broadly accepted. Intense eye contact. Speaking in a loud tone, being highly expressive.	Romance European countries, other Mediterranean countries, Latin American countries
Cultures with a varying degree of expression	They are between the reserved and expressive cultures. They evince less intense versions of these characteristics.	USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Eastern European countries, South-Asia countries, African countries, Poland

Source: Author's own study based on: Bartosik-Purgat (2006: 93-106).

From the point of view of the manner in which people behave, we distinguish reserved and expressive cultures (see Table 4). In the countries with expressive culture people show their emotions and feelings, using a range of nonverbal means, while in the countries with reserved culture, emotions and feelings are not shown.

In terms of the attitude towards time we can distinguish monochronic and polychronic cultures (see Table 5). Representatives of polychronic cultures perceive time as a renewable resource (e.g. they are not in a hurry), while representatives of monochronic cultures perceive time as one of the most important resources, putting much emphasis on punctuality and schedule.

Table 5. Classification of cultures by their attitude towards time

Type of culture	Characteristics	Countries within a given culture
Monochronic cultures	Negotiators from monochronic cultures view time as linear and as one of the most essential non-renewable resources. Emphasis is put on punctuality, accuracy, drawing up plans and consistent compliance with them. Schedules are used to coordinate activities. Work and private life are clearly separated. Breaks and personal time are sacred	Nordic and other Germanic European countries, North American countries, Japan
Moderately monochronic cultures		Australia, New Zealand, Russia and most of Eastern European countries, South-European countries, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, South Korea, South Africa
Polychronic cultures	Representatives of monochronic cultures view time as renewable resource which passes in multi-faceted way, sometimes it is cyclic. Meeting time is flexible, less emphasis is put on punctuality, timeliness. The time of negotiation commencement may be postponed even a few hours. People often depart from the main topic of the conversation. People do not hurry and one should not rush them.	the Arab world, most of African countries, Latin American countries, the countries of South Asia and South-East Asia

Source Author's own study based on: Gesteland (2000: 46) and Bartosik-Purgat (2006: 141-143).

4. Cross-cultural issues relating to conducting business in selected countries

Depending on the cultural background people come from, they can react differently to different situations, they may perceive business in a variety of ways, and differ in their approach to time, deadlines, emotions, etc.. They can also espouse diverse attitudes towards others owing to hierarchy. Some behaviors of people from different countries are outlined below, representing diverse cultural backgrounds in typical negotiation situations or in communication.

4.1 Counterparties from Asian countries

The Asian manner of negotiations is characterized by cultural and religious complexity, and adherence to tradition. The key to success is patience. At every stage of the negotiation process the consent of the entire group is required (collectivism). This is a reserved culture, relationship-oriented, polychronic and formal. In conducting negotiations with Asians, "saving face" is extremely important, which means showing respect, and not undermining the negotiator's authority. Relations between parties, good interpersonal relationships are paramount. Asians are reserved in showing their feelings and emotions, they are not too keen on keeping eye contact. Politeness, formality, and following the protocol are important (Podobas 2011: 68-69).

In China, the most important thing to bear in mind is harmony– in this country everything has its place and one mustn't introduce any distortions or conflicts (Kendlik 2009: 53). The country has a system of protocol relations establishing gestures which correspond to every age, gender, social status and specific situation (Brdulak 2000: 175).

Greeting is governed by specific rules, which are as follows (Podobas 2011: 69-73). A slight bow and a slow nod of the head. The oldest or the most important person in the group is greeted first. Handshakes are also common, but one has to wait for their Chinese counterpart to initiate it first. Titles are important for them – the more well-known the company or person with titles, the better partner for business talks. While greeting, the ritual of handing out business cards is essential – one needs to have many business cards, for they are presented to everybody; the best

if they are two-sided, with one side printed in Chinese and the other in English; the highest prestige enjoys Chinese text printed in gold ink; the business card should be offered using both hands and it should be received in the likewise manner, accompanied by a slight bow; one should read the business card attentively, and the best is to hold it in front all the time; one should not put it away.

Business meetings are characterized by the following (Kendlik 2009: 53-57). The Chinese never negotiate single-handedly, but only in groups, therefore one should also come to a meeting in a group. The Chinese, before getting down to business, want to get to know their business partner. They meet up several times their counterparts for meals, trips or meetings and only later move on to business talks. They conduct businesses based on establishing friendly relations with their counterparts based on acquaintances (*gaunxi*). They enjoy bargaining. One has to be patient and persevering. If they sign an agreement, then it is binding, yet they tend to keep on renegotiating it, even in trivial matters.

Another Asian country which has in recent years become an international financial and trading center is Hong Kong. Greeting in Hong Kong looks as follows (Sabath 2002: 112). A handshake and a small nod of the head. The oldest person is to be greeted first, giving him/her a slight bow. If the person's title is known, the person should be addressed by this title. In presenting your business card using both hands, we should ensure that one side contains the Chinese translation.

Punctuality is highly valued in this country. It is considered to be fine manners to keep appropriate distance from your interlocutor (two steps) and keeping your feet down on the floor – one does not show the soles of one's shoes (this is viewed as rude).

The Chinese in Hong Kong are polite, courteous and very composed, keeping distance, not easily giving in to emotions. They pay huge attention to proper attire – for business talks they always wear suits and they require the same from their counterparts (Brdulak 2000: 176).

Japan is yet another Asian country with similar customs to those of the other two countries; nevertheless, it has its own specific cultural characteristics. In this country, a particular attention should be given to greeting. The Japanese greet by bowing. The more important the person, the deeper the bow. If we do not know what

their position is, it is better to bow slightly deeper than our counterparts. A lower-rank person bows first to the person with a higher rank. Japanese businessmen can behave in two ways: they either shake hands while at the same time bowing, or first they bow and then shake hands. While greeting we do not look people in the eye, for this denotes lack of respect. If we want to honor somebody, we should lower our eyes while greeting.

Business cards, just like in all other Asian countries, play a significant role. One should bear in mind a few important rules. We should always carry business cards and exchange them with everyone we meet. One side of the business card should be in English, the other in Japanese. While presenting your business card, make sure that the writing faces the person the card is being presented to, so he/she can read it. The business card should be presented using both hands. After being presented with a business card from a Japanese, we should look at it carefully, we should not put it away, but instead we should place it on the table in front of us. We mustn't put the business card into the wallet or pocket, but only in a business card holder.

Conversation topics with the Japanese can cover food, sports, Japan and other places which the interlocutor visited. One should eschew talking about one's career, the Second World War, prices and personal life. The Japanese believe that "silence is gold", which for them means peace.

Punctuality must be observed. Unlike in other Asian countries, time is very precious in the Japanese culture.

Social meetings are important for concluding deals with the Japanese. The goal of such meetings is to build friendships. One should be prepared for a long meal. Being invited to a Japanese home should be considered an honor. Shoes must be taken off at the front door. The food is eaten using chopsticks. Good manners require putting chopsticks on the chopstick rest when not in use, and not in the food. The ritual of drinking tea is important in Japan, which consists in serving and drinking green tea, but also in admiring the room in which one is staying, adjacent garden, cutlery and serving tea utensils, as well as the interior decoration (Podobas 2011: 74-78)

For American and European negotiators, the language barrier is the cause of many difficulties, and particularly the wide-spread usage of the word "yes", which

does not imply agreement, but merely the fact that a Japanese person has listened and understood. Moreover, one should bear in mind that the Japanese actually never refuse so as not to offend their business partner. Refusal is usually shown by a gesture (right hand movement) or by drawing a breath through one's teeth saying *sah*, which in itself does not mean anything (Brdulak 2000: 181)

4.2 American counterparties

The country which is most frequently described in great detail in the literature is the United States of America, being one of the largest economies in the world, with this country's companies making businesses virtually with every other country and marking their presence on most foreign markets. The American culture is completely different from that discussed above. This is a culture which is transaction-oriented, monochronic, with a varying degree of expression and informal.

Greeting among Americans looks as follows (Jarczyński 2010: 25). A handshake which is firm, strong and vigorous. The greeting should be accompanied by eye contact, otherwise we will be considered insincere/double-faced. One of the most common greetings will be "How are you", to which we reply – regardless of how we actually feel – "Fine, thanks". Even if things are bad, we refrain from talking about it, otherwise we will commit a faux pas. Americans like most to address their counterparts by their first name.

Regarding business meetings, Americans like quick negotiations, they do not prolong talks, following their motto "time is money". While negotiating, they have a sense of power, they are quick and consistent, and they always cooperate with lawyers. Signing an agreement is paramount. They pay huge attention to schedules and deadlines. They treat everybody equally, whatever their social status, age or religion. Only individual achievements count. In business, they do not take liberties with their counterparts, separating private life from that of business (Podobas 2000: 77-79).

4.3 European counterparties

The European countries are much diverse culturally, with the Mediterranean countries being different from those located in the north of Europe, and with the countries from the central part of Europe differing from the rest, too. There are no features characteristic for all the European countries, so each and every has to be discussed separately. The following countries will be presented: France, Germany and the UK – each located in a different part of Europe and each having a different culture.

France represents the Mediterranean countries; its culture is expressive, moderately transaction-oriented, formal and moderately monochronic. Greeting in France has the following characteristic features (Sabath 2002: 111). We greet people by shaking hands with everybody in the room. The French handshake is not too vigorous. When greeting persons who have the tile of a professor or an engineer, we need to use this title while greeting them. These titles are considered to manifest one's exceptional achievements. Many directors and managers should also be addressed by their title. Women always shake hands first, while among men, the person of a higher rank shakes hands first. Presenting business cards whose one side is in French is welcomed.

A good conversation topic with the French is the place from where their interlocutor comes, his/her interests, cuisine, culture of other countries and sport. Conversation about prices, sources of income, wages and questions about families should be avoided.

The French like to talk in their own language, therefore the best thing is to have an interpreter while discussing business. Moreover, being familiar with French expressions and making attempts at using them are welcomed (Kendlik 2009: 111). In France, contacts are crucial; it is good to be introduced on the business stage through some kind of institution, e.g. an embassy. The French style negotiations are full of tricks and of putting on; the French care only about their own interests, if they can take advantage of some oversight, they will do so.

Germany is the country with the strongest economy in Europe, and it is the main trading partner for Poland. Polish companies doing business with German companies should, therefore, familiarize especially with the German culture and its

customs. Greeting in the German culture is relatively similar to that in Poland; however, it is worth noting a few details (Sabath 2002: 118). When meeting a group of people, we should greet and shake hands with everybody. Instead of presenting your business card to a German client, it is better to attach it to the materials in the file containing the offer. If such materials are not handed out at the meeting, the business card is presented shortly before leaving. The handshake should be firm and cordial. In southern Germany, and also in small towns, people who work in positions requiring a higher education degree (lawyers, doctors, clergymen, etc.) are addressed as *Herr Doktor*. When a woman is introduced, we say *Frau* (Mrs) or *Fräulein* (Miss) and then her surname. When the woman works in the profession requiring a higher education degree, she should be addressed as *Frau* (or *Fräulein) Doktor*.

Suitable topics for conversation encompass hobbies, football, places you visited while in Germany, length of your stay in this country. One should avoid touching upon subjects relating to the Second World War or personal questions. Punctuality is one of the most important characteristics of the contacts with Germans.

Business meetings are characterized by the following elements (Podobas 2000: 96-97). Germans value a high organization of work and order. They are down to earth, precise and responsible. They are perfectly prepared. They do not like to pay compliments. They follow the chain of command. They do not tolerate failing deadlines. They represent a rigid negotiation style. They are self-confident in negotiations. They pay much attention to good manners. They refer to experts when the situation calls for it. They value honesty and reliability. They use psychological pressure. They rarely smile.

The United Kingdom is a country where the business culture is clearly monochronic, reserved, moderately formal and transaction-oriented. Greeting is similar to that in Poland; however, one should remember to keep distance of about two steps. If the interlocutor has an honorary title, he/she needs to be addressed as such – even among acquaintances. Punctuality is valued in the UK (Sabath 2002: 121).

Negotiations with the British have the following characteristics (Podobas 2000: 90-91): During negotiations, they are competent, disciplined, attached to their traditional etiquette. They are sincere and diplomatic. They check their

counterparties very carefully. Their time is well organized. They value highly oral arrangements. They appreciate fair play. They do not tolerate a lack of competence, unreliability, aggressive behavior.

4.4 Counterparties from the Arab countries

Today the Middle East is comprised of the countries whose population is in majority made up of Arabs. The group of Arab countries is made up of 22 countries. Their culture is expressive, formal, relationship-oriented and polychronic.

Greeting among the Arab people are very effusive. It starts with *Salam alejkum* (peace be upon you), then comes the handshake, followed by *Kif halak (*How are you?). If you have met this person before, you may be kissed on both cheeks. An Arab client may take your hand in his hands, thus implying: "It's good to see you". Moreover, it should be noted that this refers only to men, for Arab women are lower in the hierarchy and do not participate in negotiations.

Conversation can be about the country, the other person's family (but never about the Arab client's wife, for that could be misunderstood as taking a more personal interest in her), the countries your interlocutor visited, and the likes. Any discussion on politics is to be avoided. One mustn't talk about women's social role in Saudi Arabia. One should avoid making any critical remarks, even those which seem entirely insignificant (Sabath 2002: 109).

Punctuality is valued on the part of counterparties, while Arabs themselves do not observe timeliness and punctuality, affording little attention to that.

Bon ton poses particular demands in Arab countries (Podobas 2000: 85-86). If you reach out for something or if you give something to an Arab, you should remember to do it using your right hand. Using the left hand is forbidden, as the left hand is considered to be impure. While in a sitting position, feet must be kept on the floor. Showing one's soles is frowned upon, being viewed as offensive. Arabs talk a lot, they tend to repeat themselves, shout and gesture a lot. They keep a very small distance between themselves and their interlocutors. They maintain a very intense eye contact.

While negotiating with Arabs one should keep in mind to avoid conducting negotiations during Ramadan. The higher floor a company's seat is located on, the higher prestige it enjoys. The purpose of your visit should never be stated at the start, this should be left altogether to your host. Negotiations with Arabs are a bit similar to an open-market bargaining, and we need to remember that the first offer made is always excessive, yet you should not undercut it and instead ask your counterpart to reconsider it. Every arrangement made with Arabs should be recorded in writing (Kendlik 2009: 122-123).

In order to reduce to minimum the number of mistakes committed while contacting with people from other cultures, it is useful to remember a few important guidelines (Guang, Trotter 2012: 6462). One should be sensitive and empathic towards the representatives of other cultures in terms of business communication. One needs to recognize, understand and respect another culture along with its differences. One should remain neutral culturally – the otherness does not imply anything better or worse. One should not assume that things which work in one culture will do so in another. It is worth using knowledge and market insight or the culture of local entrepreneurs.

5. Concluding remarks

The impact of cultural differences on international business is very frequently not appreciated in the process of business management. Today's economy is highly globalized, trading has been much liberalized, with enterprises operating both on the local and global market, having numerous links with entities from different countries. In this context, knowledge of the culture of other countries is crucial for successful business transactions. Knowing foreign languages is no longer sufficient, and although the language barrier is one of the most difficult to overcome, one needs to know customs, body language, values, symbols and other elements of culture.

As outlined in the paper, there are many types of cultures. Countries situated on one continent have a number of common characteristics, yet even countries neighboring with each other can be characterized by a different culture. A particular

attention should be given to those cultures which differ significantly from our own, for we may make many mistakes while meeting people coming from such cultures, which will influence our business relations.

In establishing business relations with foreign enterprises, regardless of their size, one should budget expenditures on the research on the business partner's culture. This will allow for gaining insight into cultural differences, existing customs, shared values, gestures used, management styles, rules applicable in marketing and other elements of culture (Guang, Trotter 2012: 6458). These expenditures should be tailored to the size of an enterprise, its engagement in foreign markets and the value of contracts concluded. The higher the involvement and value, the more information an enterprise should gather. In such a situation, it is worthwhile for an enterprise to create a foreign trade department which will collect the necessary information on foreign markets. If an enterprise operates on a small scale, then it is possible to use companies specialized in foreign trade as agents. This will allow for the mistakes on the foreign market to be avoided and to reduce the costs relating to servicing foreign trade. The choice of the method of operation on the foreign market is a very important strategic area, and that is why it should be preceded by appropriate analyses and calculations. This provides companies with a better chance to be successful in business, to win a new market or gain sustainable competitive advantage.

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Małgorzata ADAMCZYK

Znaczenie różnic kulturowych w biznesie międzynarodowym

Streszczenie

Cel: Celem niniejszego opracowania jest systematyzacja wiedzy na temat charakterystyki i podziału kultur, która pozwoli na przyporządkowanie przedstawicieli poszczególnych państw do odpowiednich dla nich rodzajów kultur oraz przedstawienie cech charakterystycznych dla wybranych państw w niektórych obszarach biznesowych.

Metodyka badań: Zastosowana metoda badawcza to analiza literatury z zakresu międzykulturowych uwarunkowań biznesu oraz opis zaobserwowanych i przeanalizowanych w procesie dedukcji wniosków.

Wnioski: Głównym wnioskiem badań jest potwierdzenie tezy, że różnice kulturowe we współczesnej gospodarce światowej mogą w znaczący sposób wpływać na biznes w kontekście międzynarodowym. W celu wyeliminowania, a raczej zminimalizowania czynnika kulturowego przedsiębiorcy działający na rynku międzynarodowym powinni dokonać rozpoznania kultury kraju, z którym będą wchodzić w relacje biznesowe oraz powinni opracować strategie działania na różnych rynkach, uwzględniając dokonane rozpoznanie.

Wartość artykułu: Artykuł jest głosem w dyskusji naukowej na temat wpływu różnic kulturowych na biznes międzynarodowy, może stanowić źródło wskazówek i inspiracji dla przedsiębiorców, pomagając zrozumieć złożoność zagadnienia, oraz dla studentów zainteresowanych kwestiami różnic kulturowych i ich wpływu na biznes. Artykuł w sposób kompleksowy łączy charakterystykę kultur narodowych z różnymi obszarami biznesu międzynarodowego oraz pokazuje powiązania i złożoność zagadnienia. Taka prezentacja problemu wskazuje, jak ważna jest znajomość różnic kulturowych w odpowiednim zarządzaniu przedsiębiorstwem.

Implikacje badań: Artykuł koncentruje się na ogólnym funkcjonowaniu przedsiębiorstwa na rynku międzynarodowym i omawia w szczególności różnice kulturowe związane z procesem negocjowania. Jednocześnie może być początkiem dalszych badań związanych z komunikacją międzykulturową, zarządzaniem w korporacjach transnarodowych i marketingiem międzynarodowym.

Słowa kluczowe: Kultura, różnice kulturowe, biznes międzynarodowy, komunikacja międzykulturowa, kompetencje międzykulturowe

JEL: F23, M14, Z10