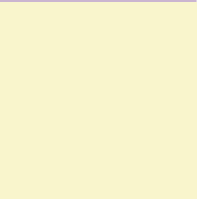
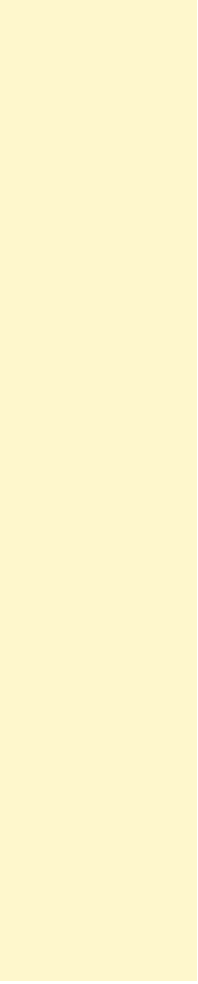


Unlocking
the Potential
of Employees
in the Context
of Organizational
Diversity

Edited by

ANNA RAKOWSKA

ToKnowPress



Unlocking the Potential of Employees



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*Unlocking the Potential of Employees
in the Context of Organizational Diversity*

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Published by ToKnowPress
Bangkok · Celje · Lublin
www.toknowpress.net
2018

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ToKnowPress is a Joint Imprint of
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Chatuchak Bangkok 10900, Thailand
International School for Social and Business Studies
Mariborska cesta 7, 3000 Celje, Slovenia
Maria Curie-Skłodowska University
Pl. Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej 5, 20-031 Lublin, Poland

Print-Run 100

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Subsidized by the National Science Center in the framework of the project
Competence Potential of Selected Employee Groups in Terms of Diversity Management
in Innovative Enterprises, project No. 2013/09/B/HS4/01307.

ISBN 978-83-65020-20-8 (printed)
ISBN 978-83-65020-21-5 (pdf)
ISBN 978-83-65020-22-2 (html)

Available at
www.toknowpress.net/ISBN/978-83-65020-21-5.pdf
www.toknowpress.net/ISBN/978-83-65020-22-2/flipbook.html



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Preface

We are pleased to present a book resulting from four years of studies in the framework of the project titled Competence potential of selected employee groups in terms of diversity management in innovative enterprises. Even though diversity management practices have been in operation in organizations in several countries for nearly two decades, in Poland they are still rare. When such diversity-related initiatives are undertaken, they are usually of image-building character focused primarily upon sending the fair treatment message to the surrounding environment.

At present, due to rapid changes occurring on labor market, including the one in Poland, diversity management in organizations, understood as a business strategy, has become a necessity. It is motivated primarily by the fact that, on the one hand, Polish labor market is experiencing workforce ageing, and on the other hand, the share of international workers is on the rise. A particularly strong influx of migrant workforce was observed in the past three years. This is a relatively new phenomenon for Polish employers due to the fact that, over the years, Polish labor market was relatively homogenous. The issue of globalization only adds to the complexity of the situation. The business case approach to diversity management seems to be supported by the fact that employers are increasingly voicing problems with finding employees possessing suitable competences. The issue is complicated further by the war for talent. All these make the management of employee diversity potential a current and pressing matter and one responsible for present challenges. All the above became the driving force behind the present book.

The book is composed of two fundamental parts – theoretical and empirical. The former contains six chapters which discuss issues and outline conclusions emerging from the review of literature in the context of the presented research model. The latter part consists of two chapters, one of them being a summary of studies.

We hope that this book opens with the discussion pertaining to approaches to the significance of diversity associated with the concepts of diversity. The evolution of the concept associated with diversity and diversity management in organizations was presented. In addi-

tion, the hitherto academic contribution in the field was summarized. Based upon the above, the conclusion can be drawn that the management of human resources in the context of diversity is still an unchartered field in Poland.

The second chapter offers answers to challenges posed by workforce ageing and associated problems, which have already begun to be recognized by Polish HR specialists and managers. Conclusions emerging from studies in age management were presented. The discussion includes discrimination and the opportunity to apply age-diversified potential of employees and indicates HR practices open for implementation.

The next chapter discusses the role of values in human resources diversity management in the context of generating innovation. In addition, differences in the values preferred by employees representing various generations, i.e. generations X, Y, and Z were outlined. This constitutes a broader approach towards diversity and follows the present rationale that diversity is not merely associated with employees' socio-demographic characteristics, but presently, pertains to all features employees may differ in.

The fourth chapter synthesizes and summarizes conclusions emerging from the literature linked with job satisfaction, work engagement, job involvement and organizational commitment, which constitute the key areas of the research model. These areas are also significant from the point of view of the search for a better application of employee potential. On the basis of these conclusions, key determinants applied in the optimization of diverse employee competence potential management were presented.

Chapter five pertains to the development of employee potential in the context of diversity management with special emphasis upon the cognitive style. A premise was made that the cognitive style constitutes an element of employee potential. Therefore, it may be treated as a component diversifying employees. The familiarity with learning styles is of particular importance as far as the management of diversified teams is concerned. Moreover, the chapter discusses the problem of matching development methods in the context of employees' age and gender.

The final two chapters present results of studies conducted among 2076 respondents from 50 innovative companies. Chapter seven characterizes research premises, objectives, hypotheses, and model,

along with results associated with the realization of detailed objectives. The hypotheses were tested. The book concludes with the chapter summarizing results in relation to the objectives and discussing results of other authors. Venues for prospective studies were also offered.

Authors are aware of the limitations of the presented research. These were somewhat minimized by conducting a twofold examination, i.e. the evaluation of the perception of organizational practices displayed by employees, and by conducting a study regarding the formal organizational programs in the group of HR specialists. However, not all limitations were eliminated. We do hope that owing to experiences gained in the course of the study and book-writing, it will be much easier to minimize these in prospective studies.

In conclusion, we sincerely hope that the present results and recommendations will offer guidelines for both scholars and practitioners in the field of human resources. We believe that results outlined in the current book will stimulate a change of approach towards diversity management in organizations.

The book and study were subsidized by the National Science Center in the framework of the project titled ‘Competence potential of selected employee groups in terms of diversity management in innovative enterprises,’ project No. 2013/09/B/HS4/01307.

Anna Rakowska

Chapter One

From Diversity to Human Resources Diversity Management: An Overview of Concepts

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Diversity and Diversity Management: Review of Concepts

Diversity is a reality in labor markets and customer markets today. Diversity management (DM) gained popularity two decades ago, and was associated with the necessity of managing a growing diversity of issues and problems modern organizations and societies faced. It constitutes an answer to emerging challenges and is reflected in an increasing number of solutions, approaches, models, methods, and theories developed in order to manage these.

Social phenomena, such as a shift in women's role in societies, a growth in women's participation in organizations and management, migration, and population ageing, contributed to the popularity and development of the idea of diversity, and later on diversity management. In addition, technological advancements, and globalization stimulated changes in labor markets, changed employers' perception of the market, and sparked off the pursuit of talents. Such phenomena, along with political changes (e.g. the EU's enlargement), were accompanied by the promotion of diversity as a critical value of modern societies. Employees' diversity began to be perceived as a common attribute of modern organizations.

The term 'diversity' first appeared in the context of natural systems theory where it pertained to the diversity of all living creatures and biodiversity (Kramar, 2012, p. 245). The concept of biodiversity and ecosystem diversity management was adapted in the 1970s by the scientific society of environmentalists. Several years later, diversity management appeared in theories of organization management as one of the opportunities for ensuring company survival.

Diversity in a workplace, including employees' diversity, seems interesting from management's point of view. Employees' diversity has been widely discussed in the USA due to historical and political factors present in the country. US citizens form the greatest multicultural melting pot in the world. Diversity emerged in the 1960s and was associated with racial issues, defense of civil rights, primarily the Black's. Next, the issue of equal rights for women in the USA, who began to change their role in the society in the 1960s, emerged. Women started to flow into the labor market, but organizations treated them as a minority. As a consequence, women started their battle for equal rights, equal job opportunities to key positions, and equal salaries for men and women occupying equivalent positions. Therefore, initially, it was race/ethnicity and sex which constituted key aspects of diversity. Further aspects, such as religion, age, sexual orientation, and others, were subsequently included, which will be discussed later on.

First models of diversity management emerged as a result of the recognition of issues associated with employees' diversity in organizations. These models may be labeled as reactive models, i.e. ones constituting an answer to actions expected by societies which would prevent the emergence of negative phenomena in organizations. Reactive models focus upon defense of equal rights and opportunities of organizations' employees and citizens, access to organizations, to employment and key positions, regardless of race, sex, and other aspects of diversity. Reactive models fit into the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy (EEO).

Issues undertaken by the Equal Employment Opportunity are encompassed by Critical Management Studies. Equality, legality, and discrimination in a workplace (pertaining to women, other minority groups, e.g. employees discriminated against due to race, religion, disability, LGD sexual orientation) are among issues discussed by these studies. The field included the following matters: unequal treatment of employees, obstructing access to authority, unfair promotions, and ill use of organizations' resources. Actions of the European Commission may be considered as an example of the reactive model. In 2010, the Commission adopted an equal opportunities strategy for the benefit of women and men working at the European Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu>). In addition, the following initiatives may be included under the label: The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) under the auspices of the Euro-

pean Parliament, the committee responsible for monitoring and legislating on issues related to women's rights, gender equality and the elimination of all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination (www.europarl.europa.eu).

The literature of the subject does not feature a single widely accepted definition of diversity. In addition, the definition also evolved over the past years. In general, broad and narrow approaches exist. The narrow approach to diversity denotes that usually one or two aspects diversifying human resources, e.g. sex, age, are considered. The broad approach encompasses several aspects. In light of the above, diversity may encompass 'all, i.e. those visible, innate and acquired features of employees determining similarities and differences among them' (Jamka, 2011, p. 229). According to another definition, 'diversity of workforce encompasses a spectrum of factors which diversify employees, such as age, sex, marital status, social status, degree of disability, sexual orientation, religion, personality, moral standards, culture (religion, values, worldview)' (Kossek, Lobel, & Brown, 2005, p. 54). The most frequently emerging aspects featured in studies conducted by agendas of the European Commission include: age, sex, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation. The recent tendency regarding the issue is to consider diversity in organizations more broadly. As a consequence, employees' diversity may pertain to any feature or behavior employees may differ in. The new concept of diversity goes well beyond the traditional EEO. It calls for the recognition of contributions of individuals with diverse backgrounds.

Center for Talent Innovation (www.talentinnovation.org) divides diversity into inherent (e.g. sex, race, age, religion) and acquired diversity (cross-cultural skills, familiarity with other generations). Urbaniak (2014, pp. 63–64) indicates that 'diversity in organizations encompasses numerous aspects including non-identity of suppliers, clients, employees, and representatives of regulatory bodies. Diversity is considered as an opportunity for the improvement of effectiveness.'

Three forms of diversity in organizations emerge in studies of the issue (Son Holoien, 2013). The forms include: structural diversity, curricular diversity, interactional diversity. The first one – structural diversity – refers to the proportion of diverse individuals in a given setting. It can cover, e.g. women to men ratio in banks' supervisory boards. Curricular diversity refers to classes, workshops, seminars, and other programmatic efforts that expose individuals to diversity-

related content. Interactional diversity refers to interactions which may occur horizontally via contacts with peers and other equals, or vertically via contacts with diverse superiors or subordinates.

The fact that the perception of employees' diversity remains under a large influence of social, cultural and economic factors, ought to be highlighted (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2015). Gotsis and Kortezi (2015, p. 49) emphasize the necessity of including social context when assessing actions regarding diversity. In addition, according to Kramar (2012), the fact that diversity is understood in very different ways in different countries and in different organizations, ought to be kept in mind. The way diversity is perceived by researchers and practitioners is decisive as far as the development of diversity management concepts and associated practices are concerned. As mentioned earlier, the initial, reactive models, focused upon anti-discriminatory and equality aspects. Urbaniak (2014) labels these models as adaptive because they were developed as an outcome of the necessity of adapting organizations' actions to comply with anti-discriminatory regulations and enforce equal opportunities.

Key studies regarding 'diversity management' emerged in the USA in the 1990s, and pertained to the issue of competitive advantage. The idea of diversity management was perceived in the USA as a survival opportunity for organizations facing threats associated with demographic changes. In *Beyond Race and Gender: Unleashing the Power of Your Total Workforce by Managing Diversity*, Thomas (1991) observed that the time when diversity management became significant for corporations arrived. Therefore, they ought to recognize that employees' diversity is not a burden, but may offer an advantage to organizations, provided suitable mechanisms are introduced.

Cox's (1994) model became a pioneer model of employees' diversity management with regard to benefits for organizations. Organizational culture (diversity as added value) plays a critical role in the model. The model focuses on HRM diversity in the following areas: recruitment, development, evaluation, reward systems, promotion, and assistance in developing careers of hitherto excluded employees, recognition of heterogeneous character of teams, introduction of educational programs and dissemination of knowledge regarding benefits of cultural diversity. When applying Urbaniak's classification, the Cox model (1994) can be considered consolidating in character. According to Urbaniak (2014), the consolidating model applied diversity

in various aspects of organizations' operations, including workplaces, in order to develop employers' image, design and implement diversity programs, especially recruitment, development trainings and pursuit of talents. Thomas and Ely's (1996) model constitutes the second classical model. It focuses on processes by which diversity management affects the relationship between workforce and diversity. The model maximizes every individual's potential as a source of competitiveness by creating a culture and environment of respect. It draws attention to three areas: discrimination-and-fairness, access-and-legitimacy and integration-and-learning (learning opportunities in order to gain benefits of diversity).

The development of diversity management models in the 1990s is associated with strategic management and incrementalism. In light of the above, organizations ought to utilize their resources in order to adjust to changes in their surrounding environment and gain competitive advantage. The advantage can be gained owing to the utilization of diversified workforce's potential. In order to achieve such an objective, appropriate structures and processes encompassing diversity management ought to be introduced in organizations. In addition, organizational culture's impact upon the development of diversified resources and significance of management in knowledge management have gained appreciation (Boxall & Purcell, 2003).

Bairoh (2007) identifies three categories of approach that shape the theoretical and practical foundation of the discipline of diversity management. The approaches are classified as:

- the practitioner/consultant approach,
- the mainstream approach, and
- critical approaches.

The practitioner/consultant approach. According to the author, the first approach encompasses the perception of diversity management in business case logic categories. Therefore, it can be assumed that diversity management can have a positive impact upon organizational performance, effectiveness, as well as the anticipated economic benefits. The need for diversity management is justified by high demand of organizations for qualified and talented employees who can be found in the hitherto neglected segments of labor market. In addition, the need for meeting diversified client needs is also satisfied. The essence of diversity as the business case is reflected in Litvin's

(2006) observations who believes that the objective of business is to focus on more effective diverse workforce not because it is the legal, ethical or moral ‘right’ thing to do, but because it is the intended, bottom-line-focused, pragmatic, self-interested ‘right’ thing to do. Diversity management of human resources, in this case, constitutes both an element of competitive advantage and a stimulus of innovation. This may materialize as a result of a specific combination of strategy, tactics, and operations, at least for a particular group of undertakings (Urbaniak, 2014).

Despite the fact that the impact of diversity on innovation has been broadly discussed, the literature on diversity in organizations is limited and even fewer studies investigate its impact upon innovation. Studies by Díaz-García, González-Moreno, and Sáez-Martínez (2013) support the assertion that gender diversity within R&D teams generates certain dynamics that foster novel solutions leading to radical innovation. Their results indicate that gender diversity is positively related with radical innovation. They noticed that the positive relation occurs under particular conditions, as different types of innovation might require different skills for their effective performance.

Whether diversity management can have a positive impact upon organizational performance depends on the effectiveness of diversity policy and associated programs. As a consequence, new concepts and diversity management models, which integrate diversity management with other organizational processes, are developed. As a result, these become even more complex (Mor Barak, 2016). In addition, the role of organizational culture as one facilitating learning by using employees’ diversity, is highlighted. Gadomska-Lila (2017) discusses diversity management in the context of shaping the organization’s identity.

The second approach, labeled the *mainstream approach*, encompasses the following concepts: social identity theory and self-categorization theory, and macro and micro models of diversity management. The former two, i.e. social identity theory and self-categorization theory, fit in the social identity approach, which is a highly influential theory. It is rooted in social psychology. Social identity theory predicts individual behavior based on the individual’s perceived membership in a social group. Social identification is not simply an attitude towards a group but, rather, an incorporation of the group into the self-concept. These concepts refer to

group processes and intergroup relations, having redefined how we think about numerous group-mediated phenomena (Hornsey, 2008; Korschun, 2015).

On the other hand, the macro or organizational-level approach and the micro approach in the *mainstream approach*, focus upon psychological models of discrimination and intergroup relations (Dietz & Petersen, 2006). A premise was made that at the organizational level, diversity management moderates relations between employee diversity and organizational performance. In turn, at the micro level, cognition, understanding and managing stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination, constitute critical elements of diversity management (Dietz & Petersen, 2006).

The third approach, the *critical studies*, Bairoh (2007, p. 31) distinguishes:

1. *Discursive Approaches*. Such authors as Lorbiecki and Jack (2000) ought to be made a reference to at this point. They use critical discourse analysis to examine certain definitions of diversity management. In addition, Prasad, Pringle, and Konrad (2006) insist that power is one of the issues that mainstream researchers keep neglecting. Moreover, the social context constitutes another important issue in this field.
2. *Postcolonial Theory*. A premise is made that diversity management initiatives can immortalize rather than reduce or eradicate inequalities in the organization, or diminish the legacy of discrimination against historically repressed minorities. This perspective offers problematic dualisms when conducting organizational change (Lorbiecki & Jack, 2000).
3. *Critical Theory including Critical Race Theory*. CRT recognizes that racism is finite in the structure and system of the American society, and power structures are based on white privilege and white supremacy, which perpetuates the marginalization of people of color.
4. *Gender theories*. This is a field for the interdisciplinary study devoted to gender identity and gendered representation as central categories of analysis. This field includes women studies (women, feminism, gender, and politics), men studies and queer studies.

The practical approach (also referred to above as the practitioner/consultant approach) gained the greatest popularity in the USA among numerous other approaches. The practical approach denotes a concentration of diversity management resources upon the business case model. It also remains under the influence of history and socio-political determinants in the USA and conclusions emerging from critical studies of diversity.

The spread of diversity management perceived, most frequently, as the business case, to countries outside the United States, has involved the application of a variety of policy responses. However, according to Kramar (2012, p. 249), in some countries, e.g. in Swiss organizations, diversity is not seen solely as the business case. On the other hand, in France, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom, diversity management is closely aligned with equality at work, anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity legislation. Danish organizations promote the ideas of diversity management which are incorporated into corporate social responsibility (organizations are to serve interests of organizations and increase wealth of numerous stakeholders in its surrounding environment), or a focus on equality at work (Galbreath, 2016). In this case, diversity management constitutes an element of CSR. Organizations are to serve not only the interests of the organization but are to increase wealth of numerous stakeholders of its surrounding environment. However, in diversity management, organizations in Denmark have, for some time, applied corporate social responsibility discourse as well as the financial performance and professional development of employees discourse (Boxenbaum, Gjuvsland, & Leon, 2011; Atan, Razali, Said, & Zainun, 2016).

Syed and Ozbilgin (2009) assume that diversity management models are conditioned by factors originating from three levels: macro (national), meso (organizational) and micro (individual). These authors underline the role and impact of the state structure, law-making institutions, social organizations, culture and religion.

In several European states, a shift has been observed from the Equal Opportunity approach towards a more systematic, positive, organizational approach of diversity management, towards the appreciation of diversity and the conscious pursuit of a scientific, as well as ethical and results-oriented approach. Such premises are made in the DEMS model (Diversity and Equality Management System). It incorporates objectives associated with equality and an opportunity for a more effective realization of business goals owing to the ap-

plication of employees' diverse potential (Armstrong et al., 2010). In general, it can be observed that despite differences among several countries, numerous European organizations, at least formally, emphasize and promote social justice, equality, consensus and individual freedoms through a range of co-operative arrangements (Shen, Chanda, D'Netto, & Monga, 2009).

This contrasts with the approach present in the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia, where Friedman's (1970) view that management should serve the 'best interests of his principal' is dominant and establishes an economic rationale for diversity management. Culture, social arrangements and legislation exert significant influence upon the approach towards diversity management (Jonsen, Maznevski, & Schneider, 2011). In many European companies, social responsibility was the most common discourse that informed on diversity management (Kramar, 2012).

The diversity management model considered as an element of Corporate Social Responsibility (Ferrero-Ferrero, Fernández-Izquierdo, & Muñoz-Torres, 2015) constitutes an example of a more holistic view of diversity. It refers to the concept of the organization as an open system where an exchange between the organization and its surroundings occurs. Results achieved by the organization depend upon its internal and external environment, but primarily upon stakeholders. The participation of various groups of stakeholders at various levels is crucial for the achievement of good results. A premise is made that the organization's surroundings assume some responsibility for the organization via e.g. educational programs, or facilitation of skills' development in minority groups. It also stems from the fact that diversity management initiatives have moved beyond clear legal compliance with equality legislation to accepting and valuing differences, learning from diversity, towards the full and equal utilization of capabilities through empowerment and inclusion.

Based upon the review of literature, Urbaniak (2014, p. 65) distinguished the following approaches and associated scopes regarding diversity management in organizations:

- The process of change understood as a deliberate and premediated process offering added value to the company (Walczak, 2011);
- Employees' empowerment program aiming to boost engagement and reliance upon values such as justice, equal opportunities

shaping identification and cooperation, which constitute significant determinants associated with the degree of employees' engagement (Juchnowicz, 2010);

- Method of human capital development and knowledge management in the organization;
- A set of actions corresponding with the field of CSR;
- Method of organizational structures' assessment based upon methods of analysis and improvement of processes, behavioral methods, and learning methods;
- A factor of competitive advantage;
- A stimulus of innovation.

To sum up the above mentioned approaches and concepts, it can be said that over the past two decades, the approach to diversity management evolved. Modern diversity management constitutes a broad concept which may include several aspects, including those associated with ethical, social, strategic and business matters. A shift from equality-, justice-focused approach towards one based upon business rationality and one referring to CSR, occurred. The business rationality approach is dominant in some countries. There are those who are skeptical and critical regarding this approach. They believe that the focus solely upon business gains may be disadvantageous for some employees from the point of view of justice. According to Bendick, Egan, and Lanier (2010, p. 468), the 'classic example of diversity management in the USA denotes matching demographic features of sellers with buyers in order to improve results achieved by the organization. Such an approach translates into the application of actions and practices discriminating some groups in the field of employment.' Similarly, Noon (2007, p. 270) argues that diversity is 'essentially a concept that marginalizes the importance of equality and suppresses the significance of ethnicity in the workplace.'

The approach focusing upon both business and social responsibility, also one understood broadly in terms of CSR, has become increasingly popular in Europe. The comprehensive, modern approach to diversity management involves the inclusion of responsibility for the community, undertaking educational programs at schools, helping in educational development of disadvantaged groups, or recognizing the influence of organizational actions upon a number of stakeholders. With regard to diversity management, not only economic, but also so-

cial outcomes are increasingly significant. Organizations which want to be successful in working with and gaining value from such diversity require a sustained, systemic approach and long-term commitment.

Over 50 years have passed since anti-discriminatory actions occurred in the USA. Several changes emerged in terms of diversity in organizations. In addition, numerous studies of the issue were compiled. The literature highlights that on the basis of both the current state of the art and practical experience, the fact that diversity management has always been associated with tangible benefits to organizations, cannot be unequivocally acknowledged. What can be acknowledged though, is the fact that diversity may bear both positive and negative consequences for organizations.

Human Resources Diversity Management: Does It Indeed Pay off?

Researchers and practitioners have been asking the following questions:

- Does diversity management offer benefits and to whom?
- What potential benefits does diversity in organizations offer?
- Does an increase of diversity improve performance?
- In which circumstances may diversity management be beneficial for organizations?

The above questions are critical, primarily to the advocates of diversity management as the so-called business case, and to practitioners as well. As mentioned earlier, approaches to diversity and perceived positive/negative effects of diversity in organizations may differ depending on the country, which means they are conditioned by historical, political, social and economic factors. For example, in the USA, diversity management is primarily based upon economic, not moral premises, which is reflected in the strategic orientation aimed at searching for diversity of employees and searching for talented employees (Kramar, 2012, pp. 246–247). Therefore, organizations require a strategic approach which would enable weaknesses to be minimized and benefits of organizational diversity maximized.

The literature of the subject mentions the following as the most frequent benefits of organizational diversity: easier access to new markets, synergy effect in teams, new and better solutions, innovation,

and the acquisition of corporate behavior. In addition, it is stressed that, owing to the communication of diversity policy, the image of the employer may be shaped, which may attract talented workforce. On the other hand, it has been observed that if the company lacks a thought-through diversity management strategy and a proper spirit, negative outcomes for the organization, such as conflicts, reluctance for cooperation, diminishing cohesion of groups, problematic communication, insufficient application of employees' potential, and redundant costs of ineffective trainings, may arise.

Syed and Ozbilgin (2009) underline, that the concept of 'diversity management' was created in the USA and has been widely adopted in the developed western countries, including the UK, Canada and Australia. This means that diversity management concept was shaped by the socio-cultural, demographic and economic realities of those countries. The authors observe that a US-centric approach towards diversity management may not be so well-evaluated in other national contexts due to differences in socio-economic conditions, national legislation, culture, demography, history, and other factors.

They recognize that the concept of diversity management must be clarified in order to improve its efficacy – not only in countries where it originated in but also in an international context (Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009, p. 2436). Namely, it means that effective diversity management is most likely to be realized in contexts where there is a multilevel, structural and institutional support for the inclusion and participation of all individuals and groups. Therefore, given single-level conceptualizations of diversity management within the territory of legal or organizational policy fail to capture the relational interplay of structural- and argentic-level concerns of equality (Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009, p. 2436). They offer the relational approach towards diversity management to be introduced. This means that considerations pertaining to diversity management ought to take factors from the following three levels into consideration:

- macro (national),
- meso (organizational),
- micro (individual).

At the macro-national level, the significance of national structures and institutions (e.g. laws, social organization, religious structures, gender and race relations) is of particular importance. At the meso-

organisational level, organizational processes, rituals and routinized behaviors at work that establish the rules of meso-level gender and race relations, ought to be taken into account.

The absence of egalitarian traditions at work means that meso-level relationships may reflect a hierarchical organization of discriminatory practices, embedded within the broader social relations. At the micro-individual level, we consider issues related to individual power, motivation, and agency to affect change, all of which are gendered and racialized phenomena (Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009, p. 2436).

Such considerations lead to the conclusion that when assessing potential benefits and threats associated with the introduction of diversity management in the organization, three levels of the analysis ought to be kept in mind.

There is a dominant economic approach in the USA, Great Britain or Australia, offering that business should primarily serve interests of its owners. Therefore, it can be assumed that in many countries in Europe, despite certain differences between individual states, there is a common trend which promotes values of social equality and respect for personal freedom (Rakowska, 2014, p. 14). In the European Union, there is a particular interest in organizational diversity in the context of: age (ageing, demographic changes, generations, generational differences/diversity); disability (physical/mental/psychic (dis)abilities); ethnicity (ethnic/cultural/migrational background, race, racial differences), religion (religious beliefs, worldview), and LGBT (sexual orientation/identity, gender identity/expression). A good example one of the European Commission's initiatives is diversity charters. These are a series of voluntary diversity initiatives aimed at encouraging companies to implement and develop diversity policies. A diversity charter consists of a short document voluntarily signed by a company or a public institution. It outlines measures it will undertake to promote diversity and equal opportunities in the workplace, regardless of race or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability and religion (<http://ec.europa.eu>).

One of such diversity charters, the so-called *Charte de La Diversité en Entreprise*, was developed in 2004 in France. Members (organizations) who signed the charter make a declaration in writing that they will enforce the ban on discrimination in the workplace, promote diversity and be ready to involve every employee, business and social partners in these actions. The charter was signed by 33 sig-

natories. In subsequent years, the charter was introduced in new EU member states. The diversity charter was also introduced in Poland. In addition, up to 2017, the charter was signed by 192 organizations (<http://odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl/karta-roznorodnosci/sygnatariusze-karty/>).

As mentioned earlier, the idea of diversity as a business case emerged in the USA. In the 1980s, it became evident that legal regulations will not suffice as far as the achievement of benefits of diversity management are concerned. The application of these regulations without other changes, resulted in organizations indeed becoming more employment diversified. However, their organizational culture remained unchanged and the atmosphere did not work in favor of minorities. At that time, American consulting companies began to convince companies that the situation may be remedied by cross-cultural trainings and programs. As a consequence, these became more popular in corporations. However, they were not successful in every case (Hemphill & Haines, 1997).

The lack of straightforward successes of diversity management in organizations, as well as in the implementation of diversity in teams, may be justified by Allport's (1954) theory. In the 1950s, Allport developed a hypothesis making a premise that people from various groups will create more positive relations with others provided that suitable conditions are offered. His theory states that, under appropriate conditions, interpersonal contacts constitute one of the most effective ways of reducing prejudice between majority and minority group members. This may explain why, despite trainings, DM has not always been effective. It is highly likely that in numerous organizations managers neglected to facilitate the emergence of such conditions.

The conditions include:

- Equal status of both sides;
- Common goals;
- Intergroup cooperation;
- Support of authorities, law or customs; The contact should encourage friendly, helpful, egalitarian attitudes and condemn ingroup-outgroup comparisons;
- Personal interaction; Members of conflicting groups need to mingle with one another.

In addition, a growing focus on diversity may bring about the feeling of being threatened and spark off defense reactions. As a consequence, this may have contributed to managers' unwillingness to stimulate the emergence of the necessary conditions. On the other hand, managers favoring the idea of DM assume that improved diversity may result in higher engagement, motivation, or reduction of conflicts. However, even in this case, if favorable conditions do not emerge, positive outcomes are unlikely. In addition, negative results stimulated by growing diversity may arise.

As a consequence, in the 1990s, a new rhetoric emerged. It stipulated that convincing managers that effective diversity management is a business necessity not only because of the nature of labor and product markets today, but primarily because more diverse workforce (relative to a homogeneous one) produces better business results, constitutes the key issue of the matter. As a result, Dass and Parker (1999) distinguished the following strategic responses for managing diversity: proactive, accommodative, defensive, and reactive modes.

A 1998 speech of Lew Platt, former CEO of Hewlett Packard, constitutes an example of actions corresponding with such a rhetoric. In the speech, he attempted to convince his managers towards organizational diversity (Kochan et al. 2003, p. 5). He indicated the necessity of viewing 'The Business Case for Diversity' by observing (p. 5): 'I see three main points to make the business case for diversity:

1. A talent shortage that requires us to seek out and use the full capabilities of all our employees.
2. The need to be like our customers, including the need to understand and communicate with them in terms that reflect their concerns.
3. Diverse teams produce better results. This last point is not as easy to sell as the first two, especially to engineers who want the data. What I need is the data, evidence that diverse groups do better.'

When analyzing the message of the speech, one cannot disagree with the observation that diversity management is valid even today. If, three decades ago, Lew Platt perceived diversity as an opportunity for surviving in difficult markets, then the message is valid today as well. Social changes and growing market participation of wealthy women may be considered as an example. In 2010, in the

USA, women's choice impacted up to 85% of purchasing decisions, women accounted for \$4.3 trillion of total US consumer spending of \$5.9 trillion, which makes them the largest single economic force not only in the United States, but in the world (Kenney, McElroy, & Leatherberry, 2010). It is estimated that globally, in 2009, women accounted for about \$20 trillion consumer spending per annum, and that figures could climb even higher – up to \$28 trillion in the next five years. As a consequence, women represent a growth market bigger than China and India combined, more than twice as big in fact (Silverstein & Sayre, 2009). These trends cannot be ignored. The ongoing changes create opportunities for creating new products, well-suited to women's needs. It is possible as a result of implementing a thought-through diversity management strategy (Rakowska, 2014, p. 11).

Therefore, it is worth considering why organizations do not always focus upon recognizing diversity management benefits, or what relations between diversity and organizational performance exist, which may exert impact upon the effectiveness of diversity management programs.

Dobbin, Kalev, and Kelly (2007) attempted to answer the question of why diversity management programs are not effective for organizations in all cases. The authors conducted a meta-analysis based on data from studies encompassing 829 firms over the period of 31 years between 1971 and 2002. They concluded that DM programs were frequently ineffective, which was largely the outcome of the attitude of managers themselves. According to these authors, it seems that, between 1971 and 2002, diversity management focused primarily upon the realization of appropriate policies and ensuring adequate statistics, i.e. the objective encompassed the implementation of 'adequate' employment structure and facilitation of new employees' 'survival' in organizations. Williams, Kilanski, and Muller (2014) reached similar conclusions. They observed that since the 1980s, major US corporations have embraced diversity as a management strategy to increase the number of women in top jobs. The activity encompassed actions such as: recruitment and selection, promotion policies, mentoring programs, affinity groups, diversity training. However, despite their widespread popularity, only few of these programs proved effective in achieving gender diversity in corporations. As a consequence, the undertaken actions' contribution to boosting the share of women

among the management was low. Corporations which did it, used it for marketing purposes to create its image of a pleasant place, a place where differences are welcomed. Nowadays, diversity becomes a PR aim, a form of organizational marketing. And corporations' commitment to diversity does not in itself translate into more opportunities for women. Dobbin et al. (2007) concluded that instead, diversity policies reinforce gender inequality.

The fact that diversity management may stimulate the emergence of serious problems for managers is noteworthy. This may happen when the necessity of realizing objectives without the development of appropriate mechanisms in diversity management of organizations is forced upon them. It is true in case of, e.g. recruitment of employees solely for meeting requirement of diversity policy. Managers may experience difficulties in finding employees who will manifest diversified characteristics which would be sought after or required from the perspective of the organization's objectives. If the organization lacks a clear diversity management strategy, managers find it difficult to determine the type of the most suitable diversification. As a consequence, they may recruit diversified employees only to prove that their organizations meet legal requirements and prevent discrimination. In order for recruitment to be effective, a system which enables the desired diversity in the organization to be determined, ought to be developed. Only then should the search for employees follow. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. When DM is introduced, numerous organizations experience considerable problems associated with stereotypes concerning the so-called minorities. As a consequence, when talented employees representing minority groups are employed, after a while, usually shorter than in case of other workers, they leave the organization because they do not feel well being a part of it. As a result, unfavorable attitude of managers towards diversity in organizations consolidates. Therefore, the diversified potential may not be fully utilized.

On the other hand, based on some researchers' opinions (Jayne & Dipboye, 2004; Madera, 2013) and the observation of practice, it was acknowledged that if organizations approach DM in a deliberate and strategically valid manner, and are able to focus upon a particular, specifically selected, and beneficial type of diversity, they thrive. Diversification opens doors to new markets, contributes to the improvement of the organization's effectiveness, and boosts innovation.

For example, ‘supplier diversity programs help support the estimated 10.4 million women and minority-owned businesses in the United States which generate more than \$1.5 trillion in sales revenue and employ 11.7 million people (Madera, 2013, p. 3). However, a considerable number of organizations have not recognized the significance of diversity; more than 75% of organizations present some type of supplier diversity initiative, but these initiatives are not always communicated or implemented effectively (Madera, 2013, p. 3).

When discussing the issue of evaluating organizational diversity, the fact that a large number of researchers focuses upon the assessment of its outcomes on the level of teams, is noteworthy. Characteristics of team members that influence team performance have attracted interest of researchers and practitioners for many years. The way diversity regarding team member demographic variables (e.g. sex, race, age, educational background) is related to team performance has been of particular significance.

As justified earlier, due to the complexity of conditions, the search for direct relations between demographic diversity and organizational performance is difficult (Guillaume, Dawson, Otaye-Ebede, Woods, & West, 2017). Therefore, the analysis of relations between diversity of team members and outcomes of the team’s work is simpler because such effects are easier to be observed. However, in such cases, arriving at a straightforward opinion is problematic because as research accumulates, there has been growing recognition that paths linking work team diversity to team functioning and performance outcomes are complex.

As far as positive outcomes of diversity in teams are concerned, it was proved that diversity in education and gender regarding the likelihood of introducing innovation (Østergaard, Timmermans, & Kristinsson, 2011), or cultural diversity, is correlated with team performance (Pieterse, Knippenberg, & Dierendonck, 2011). However, using data from 8 757 teams in 39 studies conducted in organizational settings, Joshi and Roh (2009) found that contextual factors at multiple levels, including industry, occupation, and team, influenced performance outcomes of relations-oriented and task-oriented diversity. Therefore, despite potential positive effects for team diversity regarding some attributes, several theories suggest that increased diversity can lead to decreased cooperation, coordination, and cohesion among team members, and ultimately, decreased team per-

formance (Milliken & Martins, 1996). Webber and Donahue (2001) found no support for the demographic diversity-team performance relationship for highly job-related or less job-related diversities. Similarly, Webber and Donahue (2001), or Horwitz and Horwitz (2007) found that task-related (i.e. highly job-related) demographic diversity is positively related with the quality and quantity of team performance, whereas bio-demographic (i.e. less job-related) diversity has none. Sacco and Schmitt (2005) observed that the improvement of diversity among employees in a chain of restaurants was even correlated with lower profits.

Bell, Villado, Lukasik, Belau, & Briggs (2011) revisited the demographic diversity variable and team performance relationship using a method of meta-analysis. They noticed that functional background diversity variety had a small positive relationship with general team performance as well as with team creativity and innovation. 'Educational background diversity variety was related to team creativity and innovation and to team performance for top management. Race and sex diversity variety had small negative relationships with team performance, whereas age diversity was unrelated to team performance regardless of diversity conceptualization' (Bell et al., 2011, p. 709). The authors conclude that despite the quantity and quality of existing research on team diversity, based on well-known psychological theories and paradigms of team behavior (e.g. Byrne, 1971; McGrath, Berdahl, & Arrow, 1995, as cited in Bell et al. 2011), the impact of demographic diversity upon team performance is not clear. Inconclusive results permeate the literature, which constitutes a problem both for researchers and practitioners. Bell et al. (2011) conclude that the simplification of the term 'team diversity' constitutes the fundamental problem. Considering team diversity as an inherently complex construct is required. This means that deciding whether team diversity is beneficial or not is impossible.

Similarly, Joshi and Roh (2009) believe that discussion on whether diversity is positive or negative ought to be abandoned. Instead, we ought to become closely familiar with and understand which contextual factors exert impact upon these relationships. Their meta-analysis revealed that accounting for contextual moderators increases the size of the relationship between team performance and relationship and task-oriented diversity. In addition, Harrison, Price, Gavin, and Florey (2002) draw attention to the necessity of viewing team diver-

sity broadly, and highlight that over the years, attention was directed at ‘surface-level’ or ‘high visibility’ demographic differences among team members, such as age, sex, or race, to reactions towards team-level functioning (e.g. team social integration) and performance. They believe that underlying such differences can evoke individual prejudices, biases, or stereotypes. For some time, researchers have applied a complementary paradigm. They investigated a deep-level of less readily apparent diversity.

Such studies of relations between team composition and results of its work encompass studies pertaining to top management team (TMT) diversity and diversity of supervisory boards. However, even in these cases, a unanimous opinion regarding whether a greater diversity of such teams is associated with benefits for the organization or not, was not reached (Davidson, 2011, pp. 21–24). For example, some researchers proved that diversity of top management teams was associated with greater innovation (Talke, Salomo, & Rost, 2010; Martin, 2016) and exerted positive impact upon the quality of strategic decisions (Steinbach, Holcomb, Holmes, Devers, & Cannella, 2017). However, it may also bear negative consequences (Ou, Seo, Choi, & Hom, 2017).

Based on the review of literature, and primarily, findings offered by meta-analyses, it is difficult to arrive at unequivocal conclusions regarding the direction and strength of relations between organizational diversity and results of the organization or teams. Kochan et al. (2003) emphasize that it stems from the fact that few researchers have searched directly for relations between effectiveness of organizations and human resources diversity.

On the basis of the meta-analysis, Kochan et al. (2003) concluded that one of the problems is that ‘while there are a large number of laboratory experiments testing specific diversity-performance hypotheses, few such studies have been conducted in real organizations and still even fewer that assess this hypothesis using objective performance measures’ (Kochan et al., 2003, p. 5).

Another issue associated with the evaluation of DM’s effectiveness is the fact that diversity constitutes a difficult field to study because it frequently pertains to sensitive, social, and political issues.

A further factor hindering the objective assessment of DM’s benefits is seen in the problem of acquiring information regarding outcomes of DM programs and assets for organizations. This stems from

the fact that organizations compile such information rarely, and even if it is compiled, it is not disclosed readily. The literature review shows that there is a gap between the scientific research area and the evaluation of use of DM practices in enterprises. Although, very often, companies declare positive effects of DM, but actually tend to implement it because they improve employer's brand, and also due to legal reasons. Results of the research on factors affecting diversity performance are ambiguous because a great number of these factors deals with a big role played by situational ones. Therefore, because the relationship is more complex than is implied by the popular rhetoric, it is difficult to evaluate the relationships. In general, opinions on whether diversity is beneficial to organizations vary.

In light of the above, conclusions emerging from studies by Kochan et al. (2003) are interesting. The team intended to test arguments regarding the 'business case' for diversity based both on the analysis of the current state of the art, as well as on own studies conducted by means of the case study approach. The realization of such a task proved the existence of such difficulties. The team encountered methodologically significant issues. It was observed that corporations selected for studies rarely collected information regarding outcomes of diversity management. A further problem revolved around the fact that, initially, a premise was made that the same kind of data will be collected in each company, and the use of the same instruments for measuring the group process and context variables will be possible. However, in the course of studies, it proved problematic because 'each company had its own particular ways of collecting and storing human resource data and three out of four firms indicated a strong preference for using their own internal survey measures to capture variables in the model' (Kochan et al., 2003, p. 8). Therefore, opinions regarding difficulties associated with studies regarding the argument for DM as the business case were confirmed.

As a consequence, results of studies by Kochan et al. (2003) proved ambiguous. Only a few positive or negative direct effects of diversity upon performance were observed. Despite the above, additional conclusions seemed interesting. Authors observed that impact upon the relation between diversity and performance is exerted by aspects associated with the organizational context and some group processes which moderated diversity-performance relationships. On such a ba-

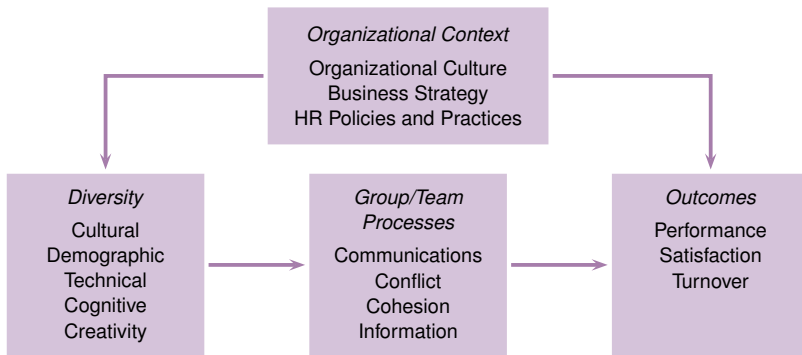


FIGURE 1.1 The Model: The Effects of Diversity on Group Processes and Outcomes (adapted from Kochan et al., 2003, p. 6.)

sis, the complexity of diversity vs. organizational performance was explained.

Kochan et al. (2003) postulated that organizations which seek to apply diversity management strategies effectively cannot focus exclusively on profitability, but must modify the way they frame the argument. They should start by recognizing that there is virtually no evidence to support the simple assertion that diversity is inevitably either good or bad for business. In other words, focus on the conditions that can leverage benefits from diversity or, at the very least, mitigate its negative effects, ought to be placed. Kochan et al. (2003) believe that there were few direct effects of diversity upon performance – either positive or negative. Their findings suggest that this is likely because the context is crucial in determining the nature of diversity’s impact upon performance. The model of effects of diversity upon group processes and outcomes (Figure 1.1) emerged from their considerations and analyses.

Another author to take up the synthesis of the literature on the relationship between diversity management and the essential organizational and team outcomes (organizational performance, job performance, organizational commitment, turnover) is Turek (2017). His meta-analysis of the relationship between diversity management and organizational and team outcomes has proved significant overall relationships between diversity management and organizational performance, job performance, organizational commitment, and turnover. The author concludes that creation of diversity policy and imple-

mentation of HR practices is related to higher performance and overall effectiveness of organizational functioning, as well as to the performance of individual employees. Moreover, it influences stronger commitment and lower turnover.

According to him, ‘companies and institutions which offer fair and equal work and remuneration, and which additionally create intended to support and integrate marginalized groups, note better work outcomes, higher commitment to the organization and lower personnel turnover’ (Turek, 2017, pp. 20–21). However, the author is aware of restrictions associated with the formulation of conclusions based upon the meta-analysis. He observes that, among others, the analysis and conclusions were based upon a sample of selective publications of studies’ results. Moreover, he states that in studies included in the meta-analysis, various policies of diversity management were quantified (some are general, others are detailed, some cover, e.g. only age or gender diversity), which does not provide sufficient grounds for general inference on the whole phenomenon. Therefore, final opinions must be made very carefully. This is convergent with conclusions drawn by previously cited authors and means that there is much space for discussion regarding the field of diversity management. It also confirms opinions that test arguments regarding the ‘business case’ for diversity constitute a complex issue. This is especially true if conclusions of Syed and Ozbilgin (2009) are to be taken into consideration. They suggest that when assessing diversity in organizations, the inclusion of conditions at three levels (macro, meso, micro), stipulations of the Kochan et al. (2003) model (consideration of the type of diversity, group processes, and organizational culture, business strategy, HR policies and practices), make the assessment of outcomes regarding diversity in organizations very complex. The comparison of similar cases, or defining problems and their determinants narrowly seem much easier. On the other hand, such an approach restricts the perspective and limits conclusions, but offers more room for the comparison of results emerging from various studies. For example, the evaluation of the impact of age-inclusive HR practices on firm-level outcomes constitute such a problem.

Olsen and Martins’ (2012) theory-driven framework seems interesting and worth further exploration. They offer new directions of inquiry for management scholars as well as guidelines for practitioners in the area. Their framework provides a better understanding of the

effects of DM efforts, potentially reconciling inconsistencies in prior research and integrating the existing practice-driven typologies of DM programs. According to Olsen and Martins (2012), DM approach can be seen as a cultural construct, i.e. as an overarching set of norms and values related to diversity in the organization.

An organization's DM practices will ultimately be manifested as a combination of an acculturation strategy and value type, and the successful adoption of a particular DM approach will depend on how well it catches on with other characteristics of the organization and its members (Olsen & Martins, 2012). According to these authors, organizations may vary in how strongly they value diversity. For example, weak value for diversity is also likely to manifest itself in the form of unclear or inconsistent communication about DM objectives and strategies. As a consequence, organizations explicitly or implicitly hold diversity-related values and strategies that underlie their various DM programs, and this affects the diversity-to-performance relationship. They proposed the model and typology of DM approaches based on values, instrumental and terminal values (Rokeach, 1973, as cited in Olsen & Martins, 2012) and on acculturation (Berry, 1984; Cox & Finley-Nickelson, 1991, as cited in Olsen & Martins, 2012). They propose that the type of value placed on diversity acts as a contextual moderator of the relationship between an organization's workforce diversity and work outcomes.

Leveraging Diversity to Improve Business Performance

As mentioned above, research examining the impact of diversity on workgroup performance, as well as overall organizational performance has produced mixed results. Therefore, what it means for HR researchers and HR specialists? Jayne and Dipboye (2004), Davidson (2011), Fujimoto and Härtel (2017), or McKay, Derek, and Avery (2015) view the issue rather optimistically and observe that organizations should devote resources to diversity initiatives. They believe that diversity is a business imperative and is good for the bottom line. This relates to what was said approx. 30 years ago by Lew Platt, former CEO of Hewlett Packard, who observed that it emerges from practical reasons. Constant pursuit of talents and competent employees forces organizations to reach out and embrace an increasingly diverse labor pool. In addition, global economy creates diverse workforce and necessity to answer the needs of increasingly diversified

clients. The lack of diversity in the workforce can lead to a shrinking market share. Finally, market requires innovative solutions, and diversity can be of assistance in the process. However, the management's approach to organizational diversity is critical.

In the book titled *The End of Diversity As We Know It: Why Diversity Efforts Fail and How Leveraging Difference Can Succeed*, on the basis of conclusions drawn from studies, and based upon own practical experience, Davidson (2011) highlights that a new approach towards diversity management is necessary. He argues that companies need to move from today's practice of 'managing diversity' to a new diversity paradigm based on 'leveraging difference.' It stems from observations of problems associated with diversity management in numerous American organizations. Davidson claims that instead of bringing positive outcomes, the hitherto approach to diversity management may lead to differences being further marginalized. The traditional approach, labeled by Davidson as diversity management, which revolves around many organizations focusing upon the indicators of whether diversity efforts are successful, i.e. observing how many people from one diverse group are hired, promoted or made redundant, or how much product is sold to another diverse group, is rarely effective. Therefore, a need for a new approach he labeled 'leveraging difference' arose.

Davidson emphasizes that companies which indeed benefit from diversity are not ones which merely attract talented employees with diverse views of the world. Instead, companies which are able to recognize key differences and apply these in business, those which engage diverse employees to learn from one another, which involve all stakeholders associated with the business, are the ones which thrive. Therefore, diversification pertains to all stakeholders: employees, clients, partners, local communities (Davidson, 2011, p. 11). As a consequence, the following conclusions were drawn (Davidson, 2011, pp. 43-44):

1. The traditional approach to DM in organizations is not enough on the global market.
2. A greater diversity in organizations does not always offer good results.
3. In case of teams, benefits from diversity can be observed more frequently than in case of organizations, but only for certain

kinds of diversity. Diversity related to work task – diversity of function, expertise, or tenure – leads to greater team productivity and stronger rapport than diversity of race, sex, and age.

4. If people feel being diversified with regard to differences among them, they are not willing to enter into cooperation automatically. The introduction of various types of diversity may diminish employees' engagement and result in some of them leaving the organization.
5. Recruitment solely for the purpose of meeting organizational diversity may prove difficult because positions may not always be ready, and may not always be properly described from the perspective of DM. Another problem is the fact that the recruiter may not always know which features of employees are sought after in light of DM and benefits to the organization.
6. Attracting and employing diversified employees may pose challenges because organizational culture and practices may not always accept and support behaviors of new employees. A defense reaction may occur. Employment of new labor may be perceived as a threat to the interest of the 'majority.'
7. Trainings which aim to decrease resistance and reluctance towards new employees may have opposing results and entail needless costs of ineffective trainings.
8. Traditional diversity management approaches have not succeeded in delivering better outcomes for a number of reasons. For example, such actions were frequently limited to supporting a certain group of people (minorities). As a consequence, much attention was devoted to stereotypes, which aggravated the situation. Strong focus upon differences may damage good relations between various groups of employees. Moreover, such diversity management rarely offers long-term benefits.
9. Traditional approach to diversity management rarely enables the development of effective mechanisms for managing resistance in organizations.

Due to these shortcomings of the traditional approach, Davidson (2011, pp. 70–71) offers another approach he calls leveraging difference. It is characterized with the following:

1. Leveraging difference means undertaking actions in organiza-

- tions which serve to utilize differences manifested by employees. As a consequence, they facilitate the achievement of strategic objectives. The term ‘difference’ must go beyond the typical parameters of diversity and ought to be viewed broadly. In this approach, it may pertain to all stakeholders of the organization.
2. Leveraging difference provides another way of perceiving diversity. Today, diversity constitutes a necessity, primarily due to growing globalization and increasingly complex business environment. However, diversity cannot automatically enhance the success of a company, but on the other hand, leveraging difference can have a major impact on its success.
 3. The traditional view of diversity management stopped being satisfactory, which has been confirmed by hitherto outcomes. In light of the observed changes, a new approach is required, one which would offer organizations more benefits by the appropriate utilization of employees’ and all organizational stakeholders’ diversity.
 4. Traditional diversity management, and the so-called leveraging differences differ in the following: context, leadership orientation, strategic attitude, scope and level of change (Table 1.1).

The greatest difference is that the traditional approach focuses upon actions concerning human resources management, whereas leveraging differences revolves around actions in all areas which fit in the strategy. In the leveraging differences approach, the starting point of the entire process is to define the organization’s overall business and strategic goals. Moreover, Davidson observes that, nowadays, a broader view of diversity is required. It cannot only encompass differences based upon demographics, but must also include other employees’ characteristics like functional differences, personality, attitudes and values, cognition, or emotional states. He gives an example of a ‘different’ employee where ‘different’ may mean someone having experience working for competitors. In addition, significance is attached to the fact that ‘the real value of diversity emerges when exploring differences becomes standard operating procedure. Organizations that excel in the global marketplace are not thinking of diversity as a tangential activity handled by HR department. Instead, diversity is mission critical’ (Davidson, 2011, p. 4).

The goal of traditional diversity programs is to attract a diverse

TABLE 1.1 Managing Diversity vs. Leveraging Difference

Category	Managing Diversity	Leveraging Difference
Context (historical, social, political)	Embedded in the US cultural and business context.	Applicable to multiple cultural and business contexts.
Leadership perspective	Diversity is a problem to be solved.	Diversity is an opportunity to be seized.
Strategic focus	Emphasis on HR management to drive activity linked to differences; activity in diversity linked to short-term results.	Emphasis on enterprise strategy to drive outcomes related to difference; activity in diversity linked to short-term and long-term results; focus on building strategic capability for leveraging differences.
Scope of differences engaged	Narrow set of differences is relevant.	Broader scope of differences is relevant.
Impact of change processes	Learning for some individuals; increase in the presentation of target differences; higher levels of resistance to diversity.	Learning for a broader set of individuals; increase in the representation of strategically relevant differences; lower levels of overall resistance to difference-based change; organization positioned to leverage other differences in the future.

NOTES Adapted from Davidson (2011, p. 47).

workforce and help them work well together. Such diversity is seen as a human resources mandate instead of a chance to create value for the company. Davidson also emphasizes that the traditional approach is embedded in the US cultural and business context. Therefore, objectives in European DM may differ slightly, which has already been hinted at.

In the new model, the key to leveraging difference is the starting point of the entire process. A company's strategy must define what 'difference' it seeks to add to its workforce. The author proposes three stages in the leveraging difference cycle. The first stage is to 'see difference,' that is identifying differences relevant to the company's strategy. The second stage is 'understand difference,' i.e. gaining a clear appreciation of nuances and implications related to the difference. The last one is 'engage difference,' i.e. finding ways to

leverage difference to enhance the organization. However, leveraging difference should not be used as an excuse to ignore the traditional differences addressed by previous diversity programs. A compelling leveraging difference strategy could very well require leaders to deal exclusively with difficult challenges of gender, race, or age. But the leveraging difference frame never includes these as the only differences that matter.

Applying Davidson's (2011) model to practical examples is interesting. In the USA, lists of companies boasting the implementation of diversity management policies and practices are compiled every year. In many cases, these constitute PR actions which focus upon developing a message that the particular organization implements equal opportunities, proper employment structure, that it organizes seminars or other events confirming the significance of diversity and the fact that employees are treated fairly. Cases where it indeed constitutes the search for organizational diversity opportunities are rare (Olsen, Parsons, Martins, & Ivanaj, 2016). However, the list also features organizations which do apply leveraging differences model principles, which is reflected in their reports and results they achieve.

Procter & Gamble (Davidson, 2011, p. 2) constitutes an example of such a corporation. The company boasts a broad approach towards the concept of diversity, innovative culture, well-developed strategy for attracting talents. P&G's philosophy of diversity was suitably explained by John Pepper, Chairman & Chief Executive: 'Our success as a global company is a direct result of our diverse and talented workforce. Our ability to develop new consumer insights and ideas and to execute in a superior way across the world is the best possible testimony to the power of diversity any organization could ever have' (Ross, 2012, p. 126). P&G website features information on how the organization perceives diversity: 'Everyone at Procter & Gamble is united by the commonality of the Company's values and goals. Diversity is the uniqueness each of us brings to fulfilling these values and achieving these goals' (www.pg.com). The broad approach to diversity encompasses not only employees but also stakeholders, clients the company cooperates with and attempts to discover diverse needs in. In case of P&G, it is not only about appropriate employment structure, but about actual application of diversity as a resource and as a means for creating innovation. The corporation pays attention to the role of differences and discovering differences among employ-

ees, suppliers, local communities and organizations operating in the corporation's environment.

When considering lists of companies which evaluate diversity in organizations, the Diversity Inc. Top 50 Companies for Diversity ought to be discussed. The competition began in 2001 as corporations were beginning to understand the business value of diversity management initiatives. In 2017, in its 18th year of existence, more than 1 800 companies participated. Even though the Diversity Inc. Top 50 ranking is based upon empirical data obtained through organizations filling out the survey, when analyzing results, it may be observed that this data pertains primarily to employment statistics and the implementation of equal opportunities practices. The data pertains primarily to women's representation in corner offices, women in management positions, Blacks and Latinos getting promotions into management, manager accountability for promoting diversity. In addition, reports regarding demographics outside of employers' internal workforce, tracking primary and secondary supplier diversity as a reflection of a larger diversity commitment (<http://www.diversityinc.com/diversityinc-top-50-methodology/>), are also included.

In 2017, EY (formerly Ernst & Young) occupied the first place on the 'Top 50 Companies for Diversity' (<http://www.diversityinc.com/2017-top-50-facts-figures/>). In addition, the following made the first 10: EY, Kaiser Permanente, AT&T, PwC, Johnson & Johnson, Sodexo, MasterCard, Marriott International, Wells Fargo, Abbott. In 2017, Procter & Gamble ranked 13th.

The year 2017 was EY's 9th consecutive year it ranked in the top 10, and the 14th time on the list. Stephen R. Howe, US Chairman and Managing Partner, concluded it in the following manner: 'Across EY, we recognize that our strength comes from our diversity. We also know that an inclusive culture that values our people's unique perspectives is critical to drive quality and innovation for our clients – and a better working world for all of us.' EY's web pages (<http://cdn.ey.com>) feature diversity management principles, which include:

- Differences matter. EY people share their perspectives on diversity and inclusiveness.
- The ability to invite and learn from different perspectives is fundamental to driving innovation, building strong relationships and delivering the best approaches for our clients.

When evaluating the above principles, and primarily, financial and innovation results of the organization, it may be assumed that diversity offers tangible benefits to the organization.

However, as mentioned earlier, a significant group of organizations implements diversity programs for good PR, which may influence the lack of conformity regarding diversity management being beneficial for the organization. If researchers cannot agree on whether diversity is beneficial, it is difficult for HR specialists and managers to introduce diversity-associated strategies in organizations. As a consequence, the lack of unequivocal conclusions results in the emergence of research-practice gap. Some researchers have expressed concern about the research-practice gap in diversity management (Jonsen, Maznevski, & Schneider, 2011, p. 36, as cited in Kulik, 2014) and criticized diversity management researchers for not being ‘market-oriented enough.’

Kulik (2014) explains that an HR professional asked her assistance because her organization was considering giving managers bonuses for their diversity management performance, and requested Kulik to direct her to the latest research (Kulik, 2014, p. 130). This obviously proved difficult.

Kulik (2014, p. 123) draws attention to the fact that the following can be distinguished in studies concerning diversity management:

- ‘Above-the-line research,’ a formal organizational programs research examining the impact of formal organizational diversity management activities as reported by senior managers or documented in organizational records.
- ‘Below-the-line research’ that measures employees’ perceptions of diversity management activities. This research demonstrates the impact of diversity management on employees’ reactions and identifies unit-level factors (e.g. leader behavior) that impact the effectiveness of diversity management activities. The HR field has actively encouraged below-the-line research, and the argument for this is that employees can respond only to practices they experience, and asking senior HR executives to indicate practices has less validity than asking employees themselves. However employees’ perceptions may not be sufficient to evaluate the success of diversity initiatives from an organizational perspective. In addition, ‘HR professionals seek answers

to questions about *which* diversity management activities should be adopted, and *when*, and so the research-practice gap develops.²

As a consequence, we are dealing with two types of gaps:

1. ‘Knowing gap.’ It emerges from insufficient knowledge of specialists and managers regarding diversity management. Despite the fact that managers are frequently under strong pressure to manage diversity, it is simply difficult for them to implement something they know little about (practitioners cannot implement what they do not know). On the other hand, there is a shortage of clear academic research conclusions on diversity management for practitioners. This creates a ‘knowing’ gap. In particular, ‘knowing’ gap refers to selection processes and performance management practices. Moreover, practitioners may possess knowledge of research findings and fail to implement it. This ‘knowing-doing’ gap may be particularly visible in training, where managers frequently express agreement with training best practices while reporting that their organizations do not use those practices (e.g. Perry, Kulik, & Bustamante, 2012). Failure to implement research-based best practice may also result from organizational politics or scarce resources.
2. The second gap pertains to the insufficient knowledge of scholars regarding, e.g. the type of knowledge they are missing, types of the most pressing problems they face. More studies deepening practitioners’ perception are required, more academic awareness of practitioner issues or concerns is needed. There is a need to specify which diversity programs will affect which organizational outcomes as clearly as possible.

Kulik draws attention to the fact that in order to bridge the gap, research that investigates cross-organizational program effects on organization-level outcomes is crucial, and this poses difficulties for researchers. The two approaches are required, i.e. the above-the-line, and below-the-line research. The above-the-line diversity management research will provide the most value-added contribution to HR professionals.

Naturally, this requires the interest of senior decision makers to be engaged and strong relationship maintenance strategies to be de-

veloped. In addition, HR professionals are fully capable of collecting below-the-line data in their own organizations and making cross-unit comparisons. However, procedures of academic research ought to be maintained and appropriate benchmarks to evaluate its rigor developed. There is a need for more in-depth research that incorporates a longitudinal focus to see how diversity management effects accumulate.

Another reason behind the emergence of the gap between the scientific research area and practice is the fact that effects of DM practices are sporadically measured, which may stem from several factors, but also from managers' lack of conviction. As a consequence, a vicious circle emerges. Researchers cannot collect reliable information and practitioners do not see convincing arguments.

According to Tatli (2011), conclusions from many studies are too narrow and they encompass only a limited number of factors that occur in organizations. Therefore, it is very hard to apply them in practice. In particular, this refers to social processes connected with employees' perceptions and social phenomena in organizations. On the other hand, studies that have wider range and include multiple factors rarely relate to practice and may be too complicated for practitioners (Tatli, 2011, p. 239). Moreover, researchers may represent different approaches. In the critical approach, they focus on anti-discrimination practices and in rational approach - on efficiency of an organization without encompassing seriously (or at all) social results. Some researchers try to combine both approaches that encompass a wide range of variables, including the equality of rights (Tomlinson & Schwabenland, 2010).

Therefore, at the current stage, it is difficult to assess clearly the benefits of diversity management. In addition, researchers do not share a common view on results of DM. However, today's global environment of organizations and associated changes in labor market leave no doubt as to diversity being a valuable asset for organizations and the reason for them achieving strategic objectives. Diversity and organizational change are inextricably linked, and these two elements must be integrated sufficiently to meet demands of today's fast-paced economy. Due to the fact that Europe is experiencing population ageing, the issue of age management has gained significance. Problems associated with this field will be discussed in the next chapter.

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Chapter Two

Management of Age-Diversified Workforce

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Introduction

Advancing population ageing entails several problems which will need to be managed by governments, organizations, and people alone. Social policies need to be redefined. Such an approach is inextricably linked with changes in economic policies. Forecasts pertaining to the increase of expenditures associated with retirement benefits, long-term healthcare, and the provision of care to the elderly, pose structural challenges for economy. This, in turn, will exert impact upon, e.g. legislative changes which necessitate the introduction of modifications in the way businesses operate. Growing fiscal and parafiscal burdens levied in order to provide financing for social security systems will result in businesses needing to achieve higher effectiveness and profitability. Workforce will become older. The management will need to revisit the way they win employees and design workplaces because traditional models for workers entering labor markets, career development and employment termination will change. Finally, population ageing contributes to the emergence of changes in human resources management. Organizations will need to implement creative practices of attracting, motivating and retaining ageing employees. At the same time, requirements regarding costs generated by actions ensuring the essential level of employment for organizations' objectives to be achieved is maintained, will need to be balanced by requirements posed by the shrinking pool of employees.

Demographic, social, and organizational determinants regarding the management of age-diversified employees are presented below. The situation of such employees in organizations was also analyzed. A further section of the study pertains to age management, i.e. solutions

encompassing the management of age-diversified workers which are to facilitate every employee's efficient and effective functioning in the organization regardless of their age.

Demographic and Social Changes as Determinants of Age-Diversity Management

Population ageing constitutes a global phenomenon and pertains to virtually all regions and countries worldwide. The process has left a clear mark in Europe characterized by the lowest rate of natural increase since the beginning of the 20th century. As a consequence, demographically speaking, the region constitutes the oldest continent in the world (Żołądowski, 2012). According to Żołądowski (2012, p. 31):

Low rate of natural increase and relatively rapid population ageing in Europe stem from several economic and socio-cultural factors characteristic for well-developed societies. The factors encompass those associated with improved life expectancy, e.g. high value placed on health and popularity of health improvement, modern healthcare and eldercare systems, and those connected with procreation being limited, e.g. prolonged education, women's high professional activity, consumption- and career-based lifestyles.

Therefore, factors exerting a negative impact on Poland and other European states' demographics are relatively diverse. It can be said that these constitute a network of co-related phenomena, trends and processes justifying the need for solutions alleviating outcomes of demographic changes to be developed.

Long-term prognoses offered by Eurostat (see <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>) indicate that in 2060 the median age for men will amount to 45 and 47 for women (in 2013, the median amounted to 40 for men and 43 for women, respectively). People aged 0–19 will constitute only 20% of the total population. Significant changes regarding older age groups will emerge. The share of 20–64-year-olds in the EU (28) will decrease to 51% (from 61% in 2013). People aged 65+ will constitute 28% of the population (18% in 2013). The percentage of 80-year-olds will amount to 12% (5% in 2013). Therefore, the future will witness a rapid built-up of the elderly in the European

population and a significant decline in the share of the young and the working age.

Of all EU member states, Poland is the most exposed to depopulation and demographic elderhood. Polish labor market and organizations will be significantly influenced by the expected decline in the total population, by the structure of population regarding economic age groups, and the change of age dependency ratio (the number of persons in non-working age per 100 persons in the working age). The age median of the Polish population will increase from 39 in 2015 to 45 in 2030. In 2050, it will reach 50 years of age. This will constitute the fifth highest in the EU. In addition, in 2050, it is forecast that there will be only two people aged 15–64 per each 65-year-old. It is estimated that the number of people aged 15–64 will decline by 11% between 2015 and 2030, and by 28% between 2015 and 2050 (Lewandowski & J. Rutkowski, 2017, p. 3). According to estimations of the Central Statistical Office of Poland (<http://stat.gov.pl/en/>), Polish population will reach 33 951 thousand at the end of 2050. This constitutes 88.2% of the population in 2013. It is forecast that by 2050, potential workforce will constitute 56% of the population (in 2013, 63% of the population were of working age). In addition, a significant difference between non-working age populations will emerge. The share of the older population (post-working age) will be twice higher than the younger one (pre-working age). The total age dependency ratio will grow from 42 in 2013 to 81 in 2050. The fact that Poland is among European countries with the lowest employment rate of 55–64-year-olds is noteworthy. In 2014, the employment rate for the age group amounted to 42.5% (the rate for EU 28 amounted to 51.8% in the same year). In comparison, in Iceland, the rate for 55–64 age group amounted to 83.6%, Sweden 74%, and Norway 72% (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>).

The anticipated changes clearly indicate that people ought to work longer. European countries where retirement age is relatively high include: Belgium (65 for both women and men), Cyprus (63 for both women and men), Ireland (65 for both women and men), Luxembourg (65 both for women and men), Sweden (61–67 both for women and men). Finland can also be included in the group with retirement age set at 63–65 for women and men. Several countries have introduced legislative initiatives to prolong working age. Since 2012, retirement age in Bulgaria has been increased by 4 months per annum,

so that it reaches 63 for women and 65 for men in 2021. In Denmark, retirement age of 67 will be introduced between 2019 and 2022. An important observation must be made that apart from institutional reforms postponing retirement, numerous European countries offer solutions facilitating life-long learning so that senior employees are able to adapt to requirements of modern labor markets. In Poland, the bill of 11 May 2012 introduced retirement age of 67 for women and men. Men were to enter the age in 2020, women – in 2040. However, in light of new regulations, on 1 October 2017, retirement age returned to the pre-2012 state and amounts to 60 for women and 65 for men. Therefore, the remediation of outcomes of demographic changes by retirement being postponed was blocked. The lack of rational migration policy and prevailing reluctance towards other nationalities do not paint an optimistic picture as far as Polish labor market is concerned.

Demographic changes are usually accompanied by social ones. The impact of demographic changes upon organizations' operations cannot be evaluated without social transformations being analyzed as well. Observations of Van de Kaa (2003, as cited in Jamka, 2013) which verge upon demography and social changes, characterize the above-mentioned changes in 6 dimensions:

1. Transition from the era of the royal child with parents to the era of the royal couple with a child.
2. Transition from the golden age of marriage to the dawn of cohabitation.
3. Transition from preventive contraceptives to conscious procreation.
4. Transition from uniform to multiple forms of family and household.
5. Transition from life determined by socio-economic conditions to the threshold of biological death.
6. Transition from emigration to accepting immigrants.

Such a metaphorical representation of demographic changes primarily highlights changes in fertility models and marriage, which facilitate the growth of women's professional activity and employability (21st century has become universally known as the age of women), increasing population ageing, and develop the image of modern and

prospective workers as individualists, much less anchored by familial obligations, focused upon self-realization (Jamka, 2013).

Social changes occur as a result of a series of various conditions emerging from progressing globalization and its outcomes (not always positive and predictable). One cannot disagree with the observation of Makuch (2014, p. 34) who claims:

Globalization has become increasingly unethical: economic profits above all, even at the expense of men (employees, clients). Societies increasingly associate the process with job loss, decreasing salaries, and working conditions being worsened. Even though it was acknowledged that globalization is not associated with a general decline in net employment ratio, the adjustment of economic structures entails several costs emerging from the redistribution of resources among businesses and sectors.

The second determinant impacting labor market is a swift development of technologies which enables new, non-material forms and means of work to emerge. Bauman (2006) coined the term ‘immaterial’ to describe work in the era of IT dominance. The immaterialness enables the physical workplace to be separated from work itself (e.g. telework, offshoring). In addition, it allowed long-term contracts to be replaced by short-term ‘service’ contracts. Apart from numerous benefits for employers, such mode of work results in the emergence of a new social class, the precariat. The term was introduced by Standing (2011, p. 43), who observed that it constitutes ‘a fragile and insecure existence which has become a part of worldwide population’s existence [...]. It pertains to the temporarily unemployed, supporting themselves by means of odd jobs, employed in the framework of short-term contracts, migrating in search of employment opportunities, working part-time [...]’. The precariat is determined by unstable working conditions, work’s temporariness and short-term character. According to Standing (2011, pp. 85–100), millions of people worldwide have already been forced into precariat, and the process will continue. The precarious primarily encompass the young, those at the onset of their careers, but also the senior, those who do not possess skills sought after on modern labor market.

The analysis of demographic and social changes taking their toll upon organizations would be incomplete if the idea of generational-

ity was not discussed. A generation is a ‘specific span of birth cohorts manifesting characteristic features – differing it from their previous groups, considered as a chain in cultural genealogy – aspirations, attitudes and activities, which may be considered as new elements of value systems, responsible for changes in the structure and culture of the society’ (Gołębiowski, 1980, p. 15). The description may be considered as belonging to the group of demographic definitions. The term ‘generation’ is descriptive with regards to birth cohorts, which implies the existence of differences between workers of various ages (e.g. the classification of employees under ‘young’ and ‘senior’ labels) and intergenerational comparisons. Scholars developed conceptual birth cohorts which categorize vital social, political and economic events as a means for explaining generational identity (Twenge & Campbell, 2008). The premise regarding generational differences is treated as a starting point for any research in the literature pertaining to generations’ functioning on labor market. The most frequently discussed issues in the field include: work ethics, work-life balance, application of technologies (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Weeks, Weeks, & Long, 2017). Another group of studies pertains to the identification of characteristic features of individual generations. In this case, research on Generation Y (also known as the Millennials) is significant. The generation is considered as exceptional when compared with their predecessors (De Hauw & De Vos, 2010; Deal, Altman, & Rogelberg, 2010). Publications in human resources management feature three generations most frequently. The differentiation is based upon the date of birth. The generations include: (1) Baby Boomers – born between 1945 and 1964, (2) Generation X – born between 1965 and 1980, and (3) Generation Y (Millennials) – born after 1980 (Reisenwitz & Iyer, 2009, pp. 91–103; Smolbik-Jęczmień, 2013, p. 194).¹

Baby Boomers (BB) encompasses those born between 1945 and 1965. Their life motto is the following: ‘We live to work.’ Representatives of this generation are characterized by life wisdom originating from various experiences. They are responsible, able to work flex-

¹ Various sources in literature categorize these differently. The fact that these typologies frequently originate from English sources, thus may not fully reflect Polish conditions, is noteworthy. As a consequence, caution is advised when discussing employees’ generational identity.

ible hours, and loyal towards their employers. They are motivated primarily by salaries and fear of losing employment. Their weaknesses include: low mobility, lack of flexibility, and tendency for work-alcoholism (Smolbik-Jęczmień, 2017). The next generation to be discussed is *Generation X*. It covers people born between 1965 and 1980. They are considered to be distrustful towards corporations of individualists, and to manifest low loyalty towards employers. Smola and Sutton (2002) indicated that representatives of this generation are focused upon themselves, expect promotions and high salaries, and consider work as an important part of their lives much more rarely than the previous generation. Becton, Walker, and Jones-Farmer (2014) proved in empirical studies that representatives of *Generation X* are less likely to work overtime when compared with previous generations. They are motivated by high position in organizational hierarchy and by prestige (Smolbik-Jęczmień, 2017). The youngest generation present on labor market is *Generation Y* and encompasses those born between 1980 and 1992/1995. Three terms are characteristic for the generation: choice, options, and flexibility. These pertain to work, finances, and living conditions. Changes and variety in all spheres of life are also significant for representatives of the generation. Therefore, this last generation are mobile both psychology- and career-wise – they transfer from company to company, city to city, country to country (Cewińska, Striker, & Wojtaszczyk, 2009). Representatives of the Y's prefer teamwork, are objectives-oriented, multitask well and successfully employ new technologies (Shih & Allen, 2007, pp. 89–100). In addition, the Y's possess high expectations regarding work environment, are focused upon swift and positive feedback regarding their actions, do not cope well with criticism (Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Campbell, & Bushman, 2008). They expect organizations to offer professional growth opportunities, life-long learning, and will utilize their talent to the fullest extent (Kim, Knight, & Cruisinger, 2009, pp. 548–556). Should these conditions remain unfulfilled, the Y's will readily make a decision to change work.

Researchers studying intergenerational differences formulate a series of HRM recommendations. It is noteworthy that methodological premises of the majority of generational studies are not based upon clearly articulated and generally accepted: (1) definitions of the term 'generation;' (2) generational determinants (i.e. indication which fac-

tors, apart from the date of birth, decide upon generations becoming isolated); (3) establishment of the scale of the generations' influence, i.e. deciding whether the generation is indeed comprised of individuals classified as belonging to it) (Zielińska & Szaban, 2011; Twenge, 2010). Further questions which remain without an answer are offered by Zielińska and Szaban (2011, p. 35):

What isolates a generation – a historical event, educational changes (changes of curricula), generational experiences, change of living conditions (civilizational, technological, economic changes), or other factors? [...] Does generational identity exist and what determines it? Does generational partnership of experiences exist? How is it manifested? Which theoretical concepts (classical and modern) carry the most weight as far as explaining the role of generations is concerned?

Similarly, on the basis of studies regarding the impact of stereotypes upon the actual workplace behavior ($N = 8,404$), Becton et al. (2014) postulate caution when applying advice offered by some researchers while implementing HR strategies targeting exceptional hierarchies of values and features characteristic for various generations. According to these authors, the popular belief that generational differences constitute a major challenge for managers, ought to be approached with caution. The belief is not equivocally grounded, and the basis of the belief is built upon contradictory results of studies. The authors discovered that behaviors manifesting generational differences in organizations do exist. However, results of the hierarchical and logistic regression analysis, even though statistically significant, were very low. As a consequence, Becton et al. confirm previous observations that the cost of adjusting HR practices to the needs of every generation may exceed potential benefits (Kowske, Rasch, & Wiley, 2010, as cited in Becton et al., 2014). Therefore, the conclusion can be made that organizations may achieve more by making HRM practices more flexible so that these respond to needs and values of various employees, rather than by introducing solutions targeting particular generations.

Organizational Situation of Age-Diversified Employees

Age seems to be a simple, commonly applied and understandable construct. This seeming ease in determining age and characterizing

features of individuals whose age has been established result from the application of chronological age category. It is understood as the number of years, months, weeks, and days which have passed since birth. When the progressing diversity of physical and psychological condition of individuals is considered, assessments based solely upon chronological age become less and less reliable. This is especially true for functioning in the workplace (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004; Kooij & Van De Voorde, 2015). The review of studies which emerged over the last 20 years offers proof for the increase of interest in changes associated with ageing in workplaces (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004; Gaillard & Desmette, 2010; Baltes & Finkelstein, 2011; Hedge & Borman, 2012; Taneva, Arnold, & Nicolson, 2014; Armstrong-Stassen & Templer, 2005; Kooij, De Lange, Jansen, Kanfer, & Dijkers, 2011; Weigl, Müller, Hornung, Zacher, & Angerer, 2013). It results directly from the outcome of demographic and social changes, and these will only deepen. As far as the looming shortage of skills which will afflict many OECD countries is concerned, employers will become increasingly dependent upon knowledge and experience of senior employees (Kulik, Ryan, Harper, & George, 2014). The implementation of solutions which will develop conditions for the development of senior employees' skills will be critical. This will offer such employees prospects of being professionally active longer and will enable them to maintain the required level of efficiency and productivity. Employers will need to revise their views regarding investments in actions facilitating the development of both young employees (up to 40 years of age) and the senior ones as well. Undeniably, this will entail an increase of costs, periodic at best.

In organizational reality, age discrimination is widespread. A popular life cycle model makes a premise that with time, the growth of intellectual skills and vitality occurs, and subsequently a gradual decrease of the body's capacity ensues. The best, most productive period of life falls on the middle stage (Szukalski, 2008). Childhood, adolescence, and senility are considered as inferior from the social point of view. This leads to the emergence of bias and stereotypes towards individuals classified as belonging to a particular age group. The following fact ought to be highlighted: 'behaviors and terminology associated with age are socially construed. Therefore, the "social reality" structuring human life in the sphere associated with age is merely a product of collectively agreed upon definitions and struc-

tures' (Szukalski, 2008, p. 155). This leads to the emergence of social norms pertaining to behaviors which are required, proper and reprehensible at a particular age. *Ageism* constitutes a consequence of age-related stereotypes and bias. Butler, who is believed to have coined the term, defines *ageism* as 'a process of systematic development of stereotypes and discrimination of people due to the fact that they are old' (Palmore, 1990, p. 4). Subsequent definitions broaden the term. According to Palmore (1990, p. 4), *ageism* encompasses any bias or discrimination to the benefit or detriment of an age group.

According to Gonzales, Marchiondo, Ran, Brown, and Goettge (2015), age discrimination in organizational environment is ubiquitous and chronic. Results of studies prove that age discrimination at work afflicts both young (18–29-year-old) and senior (50+) employees. In general, it can be observed that results of studies on age discrimination at work indicate a U-shaped relationship. According to the self-evaluation of the youngest and oldest employees, they are discriminated against the most (Gonzales et al., 2015; Abrams & Swift, 2012). As far as young employees are concerned, age discrimination impacts their mental health, increases general stress level, boosts job dissatisfaction and interest in leaving the organization. With regard to senior employees, age discrimination has the same result. In addition, the interest in becoming retired grows. Discrimination is manifested in behaviors towards people considered as members of a particular group. The behavior reflects stereotypes (i.e. cognitive patterns describing members of a group) and bias, i.e. reluctance, negative attitude towards others, solely because they are members of a particular group. The stereotype and bias may be based upon age, social group, etc. (Weigl, 2000).

There exist numerous stereotypes pertaining to the functioning of people of various ages. The majority of studies focus upon the elderly. However, young employees are also exposed to consequences of being perceived stereotypically. Each stereotype pertaining to senior employees implies the existence of stereotypes concerning the young (Sargeant, 2013). For example, if an employer ascribes high work loyalty to senior employees, then they communicate the opinion that younger employees are less loyal. The limited number of studies pertaining to negative stereotypes of young workers allow to merely acknowledge the fact that they are perceived as less trustworthy (Loretto, Duncan, & White, 2000), less loyal to the organization

(Coy, Conlin, & Thorton, 2002) and less oriented towards undertaking citizenship behaviors (Truxillo, McCune, Bertolino, & Fraccaroli, 2012). Scholars also indicate that young employees constitute an exceptional and demanding group on the market, one which contests systems of values and norms (Eisner, 2005).

The following constitute theoretical concepts universally accepted as the framework explaining changes in employees' functioning which are motivated by age: the model of Selection, Optimization and Compensation (soc) (Baltes & Baltes, 1990; Freund & Baltes, 2002), and the socioemotional selectivity theory (Carstensen, 2006; Lang & Carstensen, 2002). The soc model makes a premise that effective functioning of ageing individuals is possible owing to three strategies of activity being synchronized. These support adaptation and enable effective application of available resources. Therefore, the implementation of the soc strategy enables personal resources to be applied optimally (Baltes & Baltes, 1990). The selection pertains to objectives and priorities being set on the basis of personal motives and preferences. As a consequence, the selection is selective in character. In addition, the selection derives from the perceived loss of personal or contextual resources. In such a case, the selection is based upon the assessment of losses experienced by an individual over the course of their life (Weigl et al., 2013). Optimization revolves around the acquisition and improved application of means for achieving objectives. Actions facilitating optimization may encompass, e.g. learning or improved effort in order to achieve results (Freund & Baltes, 2002). Compensation constitutes a mechanism revolving around gaining and applying alternative individual means or utilizing external assistance (also technologies) in order to retain the required level of effectiveness when hitherto means are insufficient in light of real or anticipated losses of resources (Weigl et al., 2013).

Future constitutes the fundamental construct of the socioemotional selectivity theory (Carstensen, 2006). The theory focuses upon motivational consequences of the change of the time horizon, and the hypothesis that individuals select objectives in accordance with their perception of future as limited or unlimited (Lang & Carstensen, 2002). People's fundamental objectives constitute the acquisition of knowledge and control of emotions. The acquisition constitutes an instrumental, and the control affective objective whose realization enables an individual to optimize psychological well-being. Accord-

ing to the theory, young people perceive time as unlimited (time since birth). Therefore, they are particularly motivated by the pursuit of development or objectives associated with knowledge (new information, social interactions) which may become useful in the future. On the other hand, generally speaking, older people perceive their time as limited (time to death perspective). As a consequence, they are motivated by short-term objectives associated with emotions, such as deepening existing relationships.

The application of adequate means of coping with reality is conditioned not only by own activity. Numerous contextual (organizational and extra-organizational) factors modify the situation of particular employees' age groups. In Poland, there are two groups of employees in a specific situation on labor market: the youngest and oldest employees. According to the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Policy (Ministerstwo Rodziny, Pracy i Polityki Społecznej, 2017), despite the fact that it improves systematically, the situation of the youth on labor market remains difficult. This is manifested in low professional activity and high unemployment (it is true not only for Poland, but also other EU states, e.g. Spain). According to Eurostat (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>), in December 2016, the harmonized unemployment rate for the youth amounted to 15.1% in Poland (18.1% in the EU). The rate was twice as high as the total harmonized unemployment rate in the country (8.2%).

Results of studies encompassing students indicate that they assess their competences increasingly higher (computer and Internet skills are classified especially high). Students evaluate their interpersonal skills as positive. They also declare being highly flexible. However, employers' opinions are to the contrary. They highlight employees' lack of competences, primarily social ones (Jelonek, Antosz, & Balcerzak-Raczyńska, 2014, p. 73). Apart from the most frequently indicated social, or soft, competences (maintaining contacts with clients, communicative skills, impeccable manner, self-presentation), and features ensuring work quality is maintained (responsibility, discipline, honesty, credibility, diligence, precision), employers draw attention to gaps in vocational training among numerous applicants, which may indicate either educational curricula being ill-designed, or low effectiveness of education presented by some schools and universities (Dardziński et al., 2014).

Difficulties in finding satisfactory employment are associated with

the fact that, e.g. employers draw much attention to experience in conducting duties at a particular position. They look for a 'ready-made' employee. As indicated in studies conducted between 2010 and 2013, job opportunities listing previous experience in a similar position as a requirement constituted 80% of all job advertisement (Kocór & Strzebońska, 2014). Fixed-period contracts constitute another drawback for young people on labor market. Such contracts lead to the lack of job security, and as a consequence, lack of stability in their lives. In 2016, in Poland, 27.7% of women and 28.0% of men worked under such contracts. Fixed-period contracts are very much age-dependent. Every third employee aged between 25-34 works under such a contract. The number of people working under such terms decreases with age (CSO, 2016). Employers view determination and diligence as potential strengths of young employees (<30). Such workers are usually inclined to be more engaged than their older colleagues whose position in the company is well-established. At the same time, employers indicate that young people are not always realistic with regard to employment conditions: their excessive ambitions result in high expectations of benefits when compared with what they are ready to offer to their employer (Pańków, 2012). According to Pańków (2012, p. 59), 'The search for their place on labor market, undecidedness regarding the direction of professional development, and interest in embracing new challenges, constitute features frequently manifested by the young. Such features make them less predictable employees [...].'

The situation of employees aged 50+ in organizations is influenced by the following: (1) position in organizational hierarchy – usually relatively high due to the fact that career development of this age group was frequently based upon vertical promotion resulting primarily from job seniority, (2) social status, frequently based upon experience and tacit knowledge, (3) stereotypes, i.e. beliefs regarding features and behavioral norms of members of a particular age group, (4) changes resulting from ageing (e.g. changes of perception, needs and motives). In the search of universal determinants characterizing the situation of senior employees, attitudes towards such employees are worth looking into. According to Bal, Reiss, Rudolph, and Baltes (2011, p. 698), 'attitudes towards the elderly are usually more negative than those towards the young.' Reasons behind such an approach can be found in stereotypes. The perception of the elderly as warm

but incompetent (Cuddy, Norton, & Fiske, 2005) is also present in workplaces. Senior employees are frequently stereotyped as: (1) less productive, (2) less motivated, (3) unwilling to participate in trainings and act to develop their careers, (4) more resistant and less inclined towards changes than their younger colleagues, (5) experiencing severe difficulties when dealing with novel technologies (Ng & Feldman 2012; Posthuma & Campion, 2009). However, results of studies do not confirm the majority of stereotypes pertaining to the elderly (Ng & Feldman, 2008). For example, Beck (2009, p. 10) suggests that ‘productivity of senior employees does not decline with age, but as a result of their skills becoming out of date.’ Results of studies by Kooij et al. (2011) indicate that the need for development diminishes with age, but the need for security increases. Baltes and Baltes (1990) selection, optimization and compensation theory (soc) may serve as an explanation of the issue. Successful functioning of an individual throughout their life depends upon the ability to maximize gains and minimize losses emerging from developmental changes. As a consequence, employees will search for such means of operation which will offer optimization of resources necessary for a satisfactory operation level to be maintained, and ones which will compensate for shortages posing difficulties. According to the soc theory, shortages of skills emerging in the elderly period result in a greater interest in finding means for compensating/maintaining skills at a desired level, rather than in the search for new development opportunities. Such an approach was also acknowledged in studies by Ebner, Freund, & Baltes (2006). They observed that a shift of gravity from a pursuit of development characteristic for the youth, towards prophylactics and retention at a later stage of life, occurs. A review of strategies employed in order to manage developmental changes occurring in the elderly period was published by Kooij, Tims, and Kanfer (2015).

HRM vs. Diverse Workforce: Theoretical Context

Changes in and around organizations must be accompanied by changes in thinking about objectives and operations of businesses. Human resources management constitutes one of the functional areas whose change is anticipated. The literature on SHRM highlights that employees’ attitudes and behaviors are critical for the relation between human resources management and organizational productivity (Nishii & Wright, 2008). Human resources departments play a

key role in strategic human resources management because they exert strong influence upon strategic decisions made on organizational level. Strategic HRM is associated with resource and ‘hard’ approach towards HRM. The hard approach is defined as ‘a process emphasizing tight integration of recruitment policy with human resources policy and business strategy, which treats employees as resources to be managed in the same rational way as other resources employed in order to maximize return rate’ (Legge, 1995, p. 43, as cited in De Prins, Van Beirendonck, De Vos, & Segers, 2014). The adoption of diverse workforce management implies that the hard, productivity-focused approach is balanced with the alternative ‘soft’ approach to HRM. This soft approach stems from the school of ‘human relations.’ It indicates that employees constitute a source of competitive advantage because they can adapt, are proactive in developing knowledge and skills valuable to the organization.

The issue of corporate responsibility has become significant for entities forming various relations with companies. Expectations of companies’ social surrounding are increasingly linked with the idea of corporate social responsibility. The following matters have gained importance: social function of companies’ operations, and the ability to reconcile expectations of diverse groups of interest. Organizations respond to these by undertaking actions in the framework of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). This concept is rooted in the idea of sustainable development understood as satisfying present needs in a way which does not threaten the satisfaction of needs of prospective generations. In light of the above, CSR constitutes a process of permanent improvement of companies via voluntary and systematic association of their operations with economic (*Profit*), social (*People*) and environmental (*Planet*) aspects (De Prins et al., 2014). All stakeholders, especially employees as a group significant from the point of view of companies’ operations, ought to participate in the process. Therefore, the concept of sustainable development ought to be reflected in human resources management. De Prins et al. (2014) offered a conceptual model linking the theory and practice of sustainable HRM. According to De Prins et al. (2014), definitions of sustainable development combine the following three elements: (1) development of human capital as an outcome of HRM processes, (2) acknowledgement of the fact that the achievement of business results constitutes the objective of HRM, (3) the problem associated with

HRM's role in ensuring the organization's existence in long-term perspective (Kramar, 2014). De Lange and Koppens (2007) transformed the 3P formula (*People, Planet, Profit*) into ROC formula (*Respect, Openness, and Continuity*). Inspired by the ROC model, De Prins et al. (2014) adopted *Respect, Openness, and Continuity* as the framework of sustainable HRM. When viewing HRM in light of the above, the following are highlighted: respect for internal stakeholders, i.e. employees (*Respect*), adoption of external and ecological perspective in HRM (*Openness*), and long-term approach in relation to employment (*Continuity*).

The first of the elements – *Respect* – constitutes a response to the neglect of H (*human*) in the resource approach to SHRM (Lengnick-Hall, Lengnick-Hall, Andrade, & Drake, 2009; Johnsen & Gudmand-Høyer, 2010; Khan, 2014). In practice, it entails revolutionary changes which ought to translate into a swift transition from competence management (organizational perspective is dominant, HRM's role is to facilitate employees' adjustment to requirements of the position) towards talent management (which focuses upon employees' strengths). The transition is to lead to sustainable HRM understood as a form of dialogue between the organization and employee in order to establish opportunities both for the individual and organization (Van Beirendonck, 2009). This entails HRM's stronger focus upon health issues, well-being, participation and empowerment.

Openness ought to be considered as HRM adopting the stakeholders' point of view. Based upon the *stakeholder theory*, the fact that every organization constitutes a miniature society ought to be taken into consideration. Such a miniature experiences the same tendencies and social problems as its surrounding environment. This justifies the expectation that issues associated with diversity, work-life balance, ageing, poverty, pollution, and other social problems will find reflection in HRM programs (De Prins et al., 2014). In practical terms, the adoption of stakeholders' perspective ought to result in the emergence of plans and programs regarding diversity management (including age diversity).

Continuity pertains to the continuation of long-term employment policies. Therefore, HRM ought to focus upon practices fostering long-term, mutually beneficial investments of employees in the organization and vice-versa. This requires employers to invest in trainings

or other forms of support for the development of employees' careers. At the same time, it denotes that employees ought to be loyal towards the organization and develop skills required at present and desirable in the future. It is noteworthy that the adoption of such an attitude precludes (limits as the minimum requirement) the provision of work without employment security. Continuity or long-term organization-employee relationship does not guarantee life-long employment. What is important is the co-responsibility of both the organization and employee for developing and maintaining employability (understood as the potential of an individual career determined by the level of vocational (professional) knowledge and skills, adaptability to new duties and professional challenges, and skills for managing the career (Saha, Van der Heijden, & Gregar, 2013) and capacity for work. The capacity (Ilmarinen, 2001) is determined by a person's personal resources which facilitate an employee's response to physical, psychological, and social requirements of work, work environment, organizational and management culture. The level of capacity for work is influenced by, e.g. age management in the course of an individual's professional career. In addition, managers ought to pay attention to solutions regarding the establishment and development of career paths and learning processes of individuals, teams, and organizations.

The concept of sustainable HRM justifies actions in diversity management being undertaken, especially as far as age-diversified workforce management is concerned.

HRM vs. Age-Diversified Workforce Management

Armstrong-Stassen and Lee (2009) observe that changes in age structure may result in a shortage of qualified workforce on labor market. This may complicate operations of many businesses emerging from changes in human resources management. As a consequence, scholars postulate that HR policies are redefined and new solutions developed and implemented. This will enable organizations to successfully attract, motivate and retain increasingly age-diversified and, globally, ageing workforce (Kooij, Jansen, Dijkers, & De Lange, 2010; Kulik et al., 2014; Bieling, Stock, & Dorozalla, 2015; Fornalczyk, Stompór-Świdorska, & Ślęzyk-Sobol, 2015). According to Cox (2001), challenges for organizations do not stem from the employment of age-diversified employees. The problem organizations face is the devel-

opment of conditions minimizing potential threats emerging from age-diversification (e.g. ageism, intergenerational conflicts, learning difficulties, emergence of homogenous groups which compete with one another), and maximizing the potential of age diversity (which manifests in, e.g. transfer and consolidation of organizational values by senior employees, improvement of innovation, reverse mentoring). Walker (2005) indicates 5 reasons behind age management systems becoming attractive. These include:

1. Workforce ageing on European labor market.
2. A paradox revolving around the diminishing vocational activity of the elderly despite their growing share in the society.
3. Requirements of social policy.
4. Initiatives undertaken by employers.
5. Prevention of discrimination pertaining to the elderly on labor market.

Essentially, age management programs are not universally implemented in organizations. According to Armstrong-Stassen (2007), a Manpower study (an interview with 28 thousand employers of 25 countries) indicated that only 21% of respondents developed a strategy with the intention of retaining senior workers. Research results published by CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) (2014) indicate that HR specialists are characterized by the reactive approach towards population ageing. Respondents representing HR specialists observed that they deal with problems associated with population ageing as they emerge instead of developing strategies targeting demographic changes (31%). 15% of respondents claim they are not convinced their organizations are in any way interested in population ageing. One third (33%) believe their organizations include the issue of population ageing in processes and procedures. However, a larger group (38%) believe it is not the case. At the same time, all respondents indicate benefits emerging from the employment of age-diversified workforce. HR specialists indicated the following as key benefits resulting from the employment of age-diversified workforce: knowledge sharing (55%), higher customer service quality (14%), growth of innovation (7%). Non-HR specialists indicated the following as positive outcomes of such an approach: adoption of various perspectives (72%), knowledge sharing (66%), new ideas

(41%), effective problem-solving (32%) (CIPD, 2014). The interest in age-management frequently arises in restructuring or other organizational changes, and when the threat of losing experienced and highly qualified workers emerges. Cases when age management is considered as a response to clients' expectations are also present (Fabisiak & Prokurat, 2012). This proves the necessity of searching for HRM solutions which would prolong professional activity so that employers are able to benefit from expert knowledge of senior workers. However, the majority of studies prove that both the application of practices and employers' attitudes are based upon negative stereotypes regarding senior employees, which proves the existence of a deeply rooted ageing deficit model (Duncan, White, & Loretto, 2000). According to Kanfer and Ackerman (2004), perceiving ageing as inextricably linked with the decline of cognitive and intellectual skills constitutes a far-fetched simplification and may be misleading. This can be acknowledged by studies pertaining to, e.g. the relationship between age and productivity (Ng & Feldman, 2008), changes in work motivation associated with age (Kooij et al., 2011), attitude of age-diversified employees towards work. As a consequence, academic discourse increasingly features such terms as 'age management,' 'age-diversity management,' 'intergenerational management,' 'age support,' or 'successful ageing in the workplace.' The multitude of terminology and shortage of unequivocal definitions are accompanied by the lack of a satisfactory answer to the question 'How to successfully implement HRM practices in organizations and address diversified and ageing human resources at the same time?'

'Age management' is the term featured in the literature the most frequently. It may refer to both demographic and social issues, and management of age-diversified teams. The literature analyses age management from the perspective of macro-economic and labor market problems (Fabisiak & Prokurat, 2012). According to Moczyłowska and Kowalewski (2014), age management ought to be considered in broad and narrow terms. The broad understanding of management implies analyses on the level of national policies and management of global ageing processes. The narrow understanding revolves around the perspective of organizations, i.e. actions undertaken within the company and other institutions which would take generational diversity into consideration. From organizational management's point of view, the term applies to personnel management

which includes age, ageing processes and life cycle of individuals, in order to facilitate the emergence of working conditions favorable for employees of all ages and enabling their potential to be employed and needs satisfied (Walker, 2005; Silverstein, 2008).

Theoretical framework of age management has not been shaped yet. The review of literature encompassing age management allows to observe that the adoption of a multidisciplinary approach is possible and necessary at the same time. The approach derives from demography, healthcare, ergonomics, occupational safety and health, psychology of learning and development, management sciences, behavioral economics, ethics, and several other disciplines. Studies conducted in the field require an integrated approach to be adopted. The approach combines various theories, models and research methods.

Several researchers have published good practices regarding age management. Organizational practices encompass any means and actions which overcome age barriers, promote age diversity, and facilitate the emergence of working conditions facilitating the achievement of positive results regardless of age. Therefore, it can be said that age management may be realized as:

1. A set of actions and solutions addressing senior employees in particular. These encompass, e.g. ergonomic solutions, flexible working hours, suitable scope of duties and responsibilities, trainings dedicated to this particular age group, and modified motivation systems.
2. Comprehensive, long-term approach towards career planning, thought-through development of teams. The objective of such an approach is to manage the career of an employee in a way which would take into consideration their abilities at a given life stage, prevent occupational burnout and competences becoming outdated, maintain their ambitions and interest in working, the ability to work, and productivity (Mendryk, 2015, p. 109).

Age management is defined as management pertaining to: ‘various areas addressing human resources management in organizations, especially with regard to ageing workforce, and general management of employees’ ageing processes via national policies and collective negotiations’ (Walker, 1997). According to Bugajska, Makowiec-Dąbrowska, & Wągrowaska-Koski (2010), ‘age management’ defines specific actions undertaken in various areas of human resources

management aiming to enable senior workers to continue employment in conditions ensuring security and health. Due to the fact that many scholars derive age management from the idea of diversity management, it seems that the application of the term ‘age-diversity management’ seems more appropriate. Age-diversity management suggests ‘planning and implementation of organizational systems and practices of age-diversified employees’ management which ensure potential benefits of diversity to be maximized and weaknesses minimized’ (Cox, 1994, p. 11). This ought to result in ‘employees of various ages being treated fairly in relation to work results and decision-making processes’ (Shen, D’Netto, & Tang, 2010, p. 2160). As a consequence, age stops being a criterion diversifying employees. The fact that age-diversity management does not assume equal or fair treatment of all employees is noteworthy. Diversity is based upon criteria associated with work, e.g. with results. Age is not a factor determining employees’ performance or any other aspects of their functioning in organizations’ (Bieling et al., 2015).

Organizations which remain under the influence of their surrounding environment design personal strategies translating into more detailed objectives associated with actions and methods which ought to lead to pre-set outcomes. Such actions may constitute alternative solutions based on one another or focusing upon various aspects and approaches. Age-diversity management ought to find its place in HRM policies determining the number and scope of actions encompassing age diversity and its potential outcomes (positive and negative from the point of view of organizations). The shape of HR policy influences decisions regarding instruments applied in age management (Cedefop, 2015). Generally speaking, age-diversity management policies applied in organizations may be classified as weak and strong. The weak reflect organizations’ mission revolving around them complying with anti-discriminatory regulations regarding age. Organizations do not value diversity *per se*, but respect it due to the fact that such an approach does not generate legal costs or does not entail loss of reputation resulting from non-compliance (Demuijnck, 2009; Stankiewicz, 2015). In light of results published by CIPD, it can be observed that the majority of organizations apply such practices. Strong practices in age-diversity management go beyond legal mandates and prohibitions. They reflect value organizations ascribe to diversity because its mission revolves around fostering climate in which employ-

ees of all ages are valued and encouraged to utilize their full potential (Avery & McKay, 2006; Demuijnck, 2009; Stankiewicz, 2015). Such organizations develop favorable conditions for age diversity understood as one where employees of all ages are welcome and valued (Rabl & Triana, 2014). Organizations valuing age diversity manifest the spirit favoring social inclusion (Van Dijk, Van Engen, & Paauwe, 2012) which can be measured via the analysis of diversity regarding the age of the workforce along with the presence and application of practices dedicated to age-diversity management.

A few fundamental areas may be distinguished in age management in organizations:

1. employment planning,
2. recruitment,
3. selection of employment forms and organization of work,
4. training and development,
5. change of the attitude towards ageing employees.

On the basis of studies encompassing Polish companies, Kołodziejczyk-Olczak (2014) distinguished ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ age management. ‘Hard’ management manifests in the employment of the elderly if the need arises. Trainings are offered provided they are externally funded (EU funds). Organizational and ergonomic improvements are applied. Such a type of age management is characteristic for traditional organizations. In knowledge-based organizations ‘soft’ age management is applied more frequently. It revolves around senior employees being treated subjectively. Their expert knowledge is appreciated, conditions for the emergence of work-life balance offered.

Many studies indicate that actions undertaken in the framework of age management primarily address senior employees (Tubielewicz, 2014; Kołodziejczyk-Olczak, 2014; Pinto, da Silva Ramos, & Nunes, 2015). However, devoting attention solely to such employees may entail negative consequences in the form of the feeling of injustice emerging among younger groups. On the other hand, seniors may feel stigmatized and pigeonholed. Therefore, age-diversity management ought to encompass actions aiming to improve/maintain skills of various age groups (Jensen & Moberg, 2012). As a consequence, a question emerges whether HRM practices ought to be diversified with regard to age, and if yes, to what extent/in what scope. The

literature of the subject features both advocates of diversified practices addressing employees of various age, and opponents of such an approach. The majority of studies regarding HRM practices make a premise that these practices exert the same kind of influence upon all employees (Lepak & Snell, 1999, as cited in Pinto et al., 2015). However, such an approach has been increasingly questioned. Scholars emphasize that employees perceive various HRM practices differently. As a consequence, various groups will respond to such practices in different ways.

The review of available literature allows to make the following observation. The majority of authors offer sets of age management HRM practices addressing primarily senior employees. The implementation of such practices is to prolong professional activity. According to Armstrong-Stassen (2008), 7 HRM areas which are critical from the point of view of retaining senior workers in organizations can be distinguished: flexible working hours and other work options, design of positions, trainings for senior employees, trainings for managers, performance reviews, salaries, and recognition and respect. The author observes that respect and recognition are indicated by senior workers as crucial for them remaining in the organization. This category encompasses the following: recognition of achievements, knowledge, skills, work conducted well, and being treated with respect (Armstrong-Stassen, 2008).

Fabisiak and Prokurat (2012) mention instruments of age management which may encompass: raising awareness of the management and other employees, implementation of best practices in the organization by adopting age management strategies in recruitment, training policies, implementation of life-long learning programs, occupational safety and health programs, and introduction of flexible employment.

Cimbálníková, Fukan, & Lazarová (2012) postulate the necessity of relating the idea of age management to a broad spectrum of actions associated with people's work in organizations. They draw particular attention to the care for employees' health, and support and promotion of physical fitness. In addition, the following seem significant: restructuring of the workplace (in accordance with needs of employers and employees), development of work environment targeting the improvement of working conditions, search for ergonomic conditions decreasing physical load employees bear, and adjustment of

work in the organization. Changes in HRM ought to include employees' suggestions and should facilitate intergenerational cooperation. Age-oriented HRM ought to support motivation and work satisfaction, maintenance of well-being at work, and appropriate organizational spirit.

The set of practices presented by Kooij, Jansen, Dikkers, & De Lange (2014) constitutes a proposition which fits into thinking about age management as presenting a comprehensive approach. In this approach, the management's attention is focused upon preventive and remedial actions in relation to all employee age groups. In addition, consequences of changes emerging in the lifecycle are accepted. The approach encompasses four groups of practices which may effectively influence various age groups of employees. The proposition is based upon SOC and *Lifespan theories*. The authors postulate that clusters of practices are applied. The cluster ought to include solutions which take changes in the lifecycle into consideration. The first 'cluster' of practices is labeled as *development HR practices*, i.e. those which enable employees to achieve a higher level of functioning (e.g. trainings). The second group constitutes *maintenance HR practices* and aims to maintain employees' functioning at a fixed level in relation to new challenges (e.g. changes of physical environment into more ergonomic or flexible working time). The third group encompasses *utilization HR practices*. These include actions aiming to restore employees' ability to function by utilizing their competences in cases when current work requirements prove to be too high (e.g. transfer to a parallel position in organizational hierarchy where the worker may employ their experience, assistance in retraining). The final group of HRM practices encompasses *accommodative HR practices*. Their application is associated with decreasing requirements, frequent degradation to a less demanding position. Such solutions are applied in cases when the gap between requirements of the position and employees' capacity is impossible to be bridged. High value of the proposition offered by Kooij et al. (2014) stems from the fact that these are not only practices dedicated to senior employees. The model can be successfully applied with regard to younger employees as well. However, the fact that the date of birth is not the only factor determining fitness for work ought to be taken into consideration. Therefore, people of various ages may benefit from the application of the same practices. The complexity of individual cases ought to

supply rationale to adopt a flexible approach and improve possible applications of means of influencing employees' involvement in organizations.

Conclusions

Broadly understood diversity of workforce in organizations and its application in management constitute one of the problems regarding organizational management and human resources management, which has been increasingly discussed in the literature of the subject. The necessity to undertake actions addressing effective and efficient application of diversified resources (also age-diversified) has been observed by both management theoreticians and practitioners. HRM solutions which would facilitate the engagement of various employee groups in the continuous achievement of high organizational results are increasingly pursued. Several studies postulate the incorporation of age-management/age-diversity management into HRM strategies. The attempts at offering definitions of age management in literature can be summarized by a general observation that age management encompasses all actions aiming at the utilization of age-diversified employees to the fullest extent by offering them the best conditions facilitating their productivity on global, organizational, and individual level. Such an approach towards the issue indicates its complexity but also enables multidisciplinary research to be conducted. The research combines the perspective of management, psychology, sociology, political sciences, and anthropology. The catalogue of issues and problems associated with these management fields is extensive, and solutions require consistent and long-term actions. The fact that age management requires a holistic approach realized throughout the vocational life cycle is noteworthy. Long-term objectives of age management primarily address prevention which is to counteract threats and negative phenomena emerging from physiological changes and hindrances in social functioning which occur as employees transit to older age groups. Such an understanding of age management enables the development of integrated programs facilitating the achievement of business objectives. The literature features numerous examples of good practices in age management. However, it seems there is no single way, no good or bad practices in the field. The effectiveness of age management is determined by situational factors – organizational and extra-organizational. Something which is productive in one or

ganization may serve as an example and a benchmark. However, the implementation of such a solution cannot guarantee that similar or comparably positive results will be achieved elsewhere. Undeniably, the appreciation of each employee's contribution, prevention of discrimination, and development of diversity-supporting environment constitute fundamental factors determining the achievement of objectives regarding age management. Organizational and personal values underlie formal organizational actions and individual behaviors. High position of diversity in the hierarchy of personal values fosters tolerance and openness to cooperation, which offers ground for the development of organizational culture based upon diversity as an organizational value. The issue of personal values will be discussed in the next chapter of the study.

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Chapter Three

The Role of Values in Human Resources Diversity Management in an Innovative Enterprise

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Introduction

In the era of knowledge-based economy, human resources have become the most valuable resource of companies. Their successful and effective management may contribute to the organization's success, achievement of competitive advantage, and generation of innovative technologies and solutions.

Both the literature of the subject and management practice recognize the necessity of individual treatment of and approach towards employees who differ with regard to age, sex, race, and several other features such as awareness, personality, predispositions, abilities, knowledge, experience, skills, competences, culture, identity, and system of values (Walczak, 2011). The bigger the team's diversity, the greater prospects for market and international success. This is due to the fact that, in such a case, more creative, non-standard, exceptional ideas and solutions can be expected on the part of employees. In order for such an objective to be achieved, proper human resources management is required. Such management ought to offer conditions for the development of knowledge and competences, for knowledge-sharing, mutual learning, and the emergence of organizational spirit facilitating the involvement in the organization and emergence of opportunities for the realization of employees' individual objectives. Undeniably, diversity management constitutes a challenge for managers, directors and team leaders of all levels. It re-

quires permanent personal development, establishment of new management models, greater flexibility, employee evaluation skills, and ability to undertake several actions enabling the personalization of management methods in relation to individual employees. According to Kaczmarek, Krajnik, Morawska-Wilkowska, Remisko, and Wolsa (2009, p. 8), ‘diversity management denotes the recognition of differences between people in the organization (and outside) and conscious development of strategies, policies and programs which form a climate for respect and application of these differences in order to achieve organizational objectives. The main aim of diversity management is the development of such a workplace where each employee feels respected and appreciated. As a consequence, they may fully apply their intellectual potential, which contributes to the success of the organization.’ Understanding and acceptance of differences between people helps organizations utilize all competences, potential and skills dormant in the teams of employees. As a consequence, it enables better outcomes to be achieved as far as work quality and results are concerned. The results derive from a greater involvement in the achievement of organizational objectives (Kirton & Greene, 2010, pp. 2–3).

As was already discussed in the previous chapters, there exist several visible criteria, such as sex and age, in the process of diversity management. As far as inconspicuous difference criteria, such as beliefs and systems of values, are concerned (Walczak, 2011), their isolation is more difficult because it requires a greater familiarity with an individual, motives of their actions, and driving forces pushing them to undertake particular actions. A premise can be made that age- and generation-wise similar groups pursue complementary systems of values. The representatives of Generation X appreciate work as a value itself, while the representatives of Generation Y consider it as a means for realizing own objectives, dreams and desires. In addition, they pursue work-life balance, do not identify with the company they work in at the particular moment and easily transfer to other jobs if opportunities for a swifter and easier realization of their own ambitions are offered.

At present, it is said we are experiencing employee-dominated market instead of one where employers dictate terms (pulsnr.pl, 2015). As a consequence, investments in the development of personal values of individual employees, their acceptance and application to

the benefit of the organization ought to reflect the exceptionality and professionalism of the manager. According to Walczak (2011), the development of a proper organizational culture, one based upon mutual respect, trust, common vision of the company's development, participation in management and leadership, is significant for the effectiveness and realization of processes in diversity management. Furthermore, 'the management of work groups requires a shift from the autocratic management style towards modern leadership. The activation of diversity synergy dormant in people is possible provided that employees recognize their observations, ideas, opinions and conclusions are indeed taken into consideration. They must be convinced that managers take employees' opinions into account and that they seek to apply their knowledge and experience. Such actions are critical, especially in the work of work groups or research groups where knowledge-sharing and generation of new ideas and solutions is significant' (Walczak, 2011).

The literature of the subject enumerates several benefits emerging from diversity management. For example, Kaczmarek et al. (2009, p. 6), indicate the following:

- Consolidation of intra-organizational culture values (equal opportunities, mutual trust, management ethics) which foster the creation of good work atmosphere – people are more open, feel appreciated and respected. This stimulates involvement, motivation, improves work productivity, and facilitates the acquisition and retention of talented workers;
- Inspiration of innovative ideas – diversity of employees' knowledge, skills and experience enables fixed thought patterns and routine actions and procedures to be broken, and fosters opportunities for the emergence of innovative (profitable, more effective) solutions to be developed, and key competences improved. This contributes to the growth of intellectual capital value;
- Knowledge development, acquisition of experiences, development of employee competences – work in a diversified environment offers mutual learning opportunities and exchange of experiences. In addition, the organization's openness to external recruitment enables new talents to be employed. They will be able to utilize their potential of knowledge, skills and ideas to achieve organizational objectives;

- Creation of positive organizational image and credibility, consolidation of good reputation – satisfied, non-discriminated and respected employees who work in a friendly atmosphere, constitute a crucial value. This is due to the fact that, owing to their attitude, patterns of behavior and expressed views, they exert influence upon a positive image of the company among prospective employees, clients, business partners, and other stakeholders;
- Improved adaptability to the changing market reality – a diversified employee team enables the requirements of various client groups to be determined. As a consequence, the company is able to satisfy these effectively;
- Fair treatment in employment and prevention of any form of discrimination (clear and fair remuneration principles, access to trainings, opportunities for developing professional qualifications and promotion within the organization). This contributes to the reduction of costs associated with employee turnover and absences.

As mentioned earlier, the inclusion of HR diversity management is beneficial for organizations. However, differences among employees must be recognized and forged into potential and organizational success. This poses a challenge for managers. According to Poczowski, people involved in HR management must radically redefine their main organizational role and strive to be leaders in generating values. This is directly associated with the emerging so-called new economy based upon globalization, informatization and knowledge (Poczowski, 2003, p. 11). Common organizational values which have been agreed upon with employees, are accepted by them, and, in best case scenario, emerge from individual values of particular employees, facilitate organizations' actions reflecting their missions and visions and the realization of objectives.

Values in Humanities and Social Sciences: Theoretical Aspects

Values in Sociology and Psychology

The term 'values' is discussed and defined in the literature by psychologists, sociologists, economists, and experts in management sciences. Rokeach, the representative of the psychological trend and the author of the so-called values theory, believes that values con-

stitute ‘a permanent belief that a particular behavior or the ultimate life objective is individually and socially more attractive than other behaviors and life objectives’ (Rokeach, 1973, p. 5). Lachowski (2012, p. 21) observes that value is ‘everything valuable and worthy of desire and constitutes the object of pursuit.’ Łobocki (1993, p. 125) defines values as ‘everything important and valuable for an individual and society, and worthy of desire. This is associated with positive experiences and, at the same time, constitutes the objective of human desire’ (p. 125).

According to Dyczewski, values may be identified with aspirations and understood as ‘important goods, resources, objectives worthy of being pursued and achieved more than others’ (Dyczewski, 1995, p. 104). According to Dobrowolska (1984), values are ‘everything which constitutes an object of needs, attitudes and aspirations of men. Therefore, it may be a material object, a person, institution, idea and a type of activity.’ Zbiegień-Maciąg (2005, p. 48) defines values as ‘a state of things and situations which people appreciate and pursue. They are relatively stable and determine what is right and required. They are to consolidate activities.’ On the other hand, Ostrowska (1994, p. 12) describes values as ‘beliefs regarding desired, organizing experiences and orienting behaviors in relation to broad classes of events.’

According to Tomaszewski, ‘values are realized in order for an individual to achieve “completeness of existence,” and “physical and psychological well-being.” For people, value consists of anything required for life, physical and psychological comfort, development of activity, and the feeling of “being needed and happy.” In addition, it is also anything that defines human identity and place in the surrounding world’ (Tomaszewski, 1984).

All the above definitions highlight the motivating and orienting character of this internalized ‘belief,’ ‘state,’ and ‘desire’ in the environment which does not offer ready-made scenarios. According to Górnjak (2015, p. 103), ‘initiatives based upon values result from the need for individual functioning, i.e. autonomous operation resulting from personal needs and desires. If a person believes they are treated individually, they feel they have a creating power in what they do. Such a feeling stimulates a kind of autonomous involvement based upon internal motivation. It constitutes a crucial element of a successful activity.’

Rokeach (1968) classifies values as instrumental and ultimate:

1. According to the author, instrumental values constitute a single belief assuming the following form: 'I believe that a particular behavior (e.g. honesty, courage) is personally and socially preferred in any situation and in relation to any object' (Rokeach, 1968, p. 160). Among instrumental values, the author isolates moral values, which are associated with particular behaviors and frequently concentrate upon interpersonal relationships and pertain to e.g. honesty, love and sensitivity, friendliness, chastity, protectiveness, remorse, etc., and competence values such as creative imagination, abilities, intellectual ambitions, etc. Competence values are more personal than social in character and usually pertain to self-actualization. They are also connected with the feeling of being embarrassed or discredited rather than with the feeling of guilt (Rokeach, 1973, pp. 7–8, as cited in Kościuch, 1983, pp. 83–96).

Other examples of instrumental values include: *ambition, tolerance, happiness, generosity, helpfulness, resourcefulness, independence, intellectuality, logical thinking, obedience, kindness, responsibility, self-restraint* (Rokeach, 1973, pp. 7–8, as cited in Kościuch, 1983, pp. 83–96).

Instrumental values constitute the fundamental ones. They are associated with general behaviors and express individual beliefs. According to the author of the values theory, they are subordinate and of lower significance when compared with the highest (ultimate) values, and are executive in character with regard to the achievement of the ultimate objectives.

2. Ultimate (autotelic) values assume the form of the following statement: 'I believe that a particular ultimate objective of existence (e.g. salvation, world peace) is personally or socially worth fighting for' (Rokeach, 1968, p. 160, as cited in Kościuch, 1983, pp. 83–96). In addition, the author enumerates the following among autotelic values: personal and social values. The former are self-centered and, in such a case, are of intra-personal character (e.g. salvation, exciting life, internal harmony), or society-centered and interpersonal (e.g. world peace, equality and brotherhood of people). In this context, it is evident that the dominance of particular social values leads to the preference for

other social values and depreciation of individual values, and the other way round (Rokeach, 1973, pp. 7–8, as cited in Kościuch, 1983, pp. 83–96).

Other examples of autotelic values include: *comfortable life, feeling of completeness, beautiful world, safety of the family, freedom, happiness, mature love, national security, pleasure, self-respect, social recognition, true friendship, wisdom* (Rokeach, 1973).

Autotelic values are the most significant and constitute the objective of human life. They are otherwise known as autonomous, supreme, and central values occupying the highest position in values hierarchy. The realization of these values is good itself.

In addition, Rokeach (1968, pp. 159–160) indicates several constitutive features of value:

- Value pertains to a desired behavior or ultimate objective of existence;
- Specific behaviors or objectives are personally or socially better than alternative behaviors or objectives;
- When internalized, value becomes, consciously or subconsciously, the leading criterion of activities and desires regarding objects or situations;
- Value constitutes a determinant explaining own attitude or attitudes of others, or the criterion evaluating own morality or morality of others;
- Value constitutes a model in self-education or education of others;
- Value goes beyond objects or situations, whereas attitudes concentrate upon specific attitudes and objects;
- The number of values in a person reflects the number of desired behaviors and ultimate objectives;
- Values occupy a more central position in the organization of personality and cognitive system;
- Values constitute a regulating behavior and orienting the cognitive system function;
- Value constitutes a single belief (contrary to the attitude) transcendently controlling beliefs and actions.

On the other hand, Dobrowolska (1984) classifies values as specific (depending upon the level of generality) and internalized. The author enumerates the following among specific values:

- Values of everyday life, such as career, family life, education, entertainment, possession;
- Specific elements of the above spheres of life, e.g. the type of professional activities, health of children, house, car, etc.; and
- Abstract values, such as prestige, fame, prosperity, morality, progress, etc.

Values considered by people as real, right, and worthy of desire, ones which impact human behavior, set the direction of activity, and form personal norms of behavior, are perceived by Dobrowolska as internalized. These values emerge when an individual not only approves of such values but embraces these as their own and applies them in practice. Individual values form systems. A person appreciating family life cherishes health and mentality of their children, pursues the possession of goods required not only by the person but also by other family members (Dobrowolska, 1984, as cited in Kolenda, 2011).

People are generally unable to function in harmony with all their values. Even though a value may be pursued, another value may be desired even more. Such a situation may be motivated by personal, occupational, and social conditions the individual functions in. In such a case, the so-called conflict of values emerges. In case of such a conflict, the hierarchization of values is required. It orders them in accordance with individual priorities and life objectives (cf. Kościuch, 1983). The lack of consensus as to values people follow in life may evoke a specific discomfort, hinder decision-making or realization of daily objectives. Therefore, the awareness and recognition of own values and their ordering are of considerable significance (Gentile, 2010). In a collective understanding, the hierarchy of values is determined by national traditions which form a culture, socio-economic conditions, and interpersonal relations (Kolenda, 2011). The significance of values hierarchy in life was discussed over a hundred years ago by Max Scheler, a renowned German philosopher. He indicated four groups of values: religious (what is divine and sacred), i.e. absolute values (concentrated around sanctity); spiritual values, divided into the following: cognitive (the desire to be com-

pletely familiar with the truth), legal (order-disorder, the feeling of hierarchy and justice), esthetic (beauty-ugliness); vitality-related values (associated with life and death, e.g. the right to live, health); hedonistic values (pleasant-unpleasant, e.g. prosperous life, joy of life, risk). According to Scheler's theory, hedonistic values are the lowest in hierarchy. They are pleasure-related and associated with easy and comfortable living. In addition, they provide satisfaction with life. Vitality-related values, also known as biological, are undeniably higher in hierarchy than hedonistic ones. The right to live, health and vital strength are indicated among these. Spiritual values, i.e. the truth, the good, love and beauty, occupy a higher level in the hierarchy. The following are associated with the truth: insight, counsel, wisdom. The good encompasses: fairness, nobleness, valor, heroism. Beauty denotes charm, sublimity, splendor, magnificence. These values give the taste of true happiness. Religious values occupy the top of the hierarchy. They include the sacred, God and anything associated with divinity: sanctity, grace, divine Providence, salvation, eternal bliss. These values are timeless and limitless. They offer complete happiness, i.e. one of profound and lasting character (Kolenda, 2011; Wędzińska, 2013; Galarowicz, 1997; Buczyńska-Garewicz, 1975; Orlik, 1995).

Values in Management

Apart from sociology and psychology, the issue of values has recently gained significance in management sciences and has become a vital building block for management methods and leadership (Collins & Porras, 2008; Blanchard & O'Connor, 2003; Stachowicz-Stanusch, 2004; Gentile, 2010). Values in management are discussed in three contexts:

1. *Economic context* – value is measured by financial and book-keeping standards. Value in the company is indicated in financial aspects, added value, value offered to clients and shareholders. In such an understanding, value constitutes the basis for the pricing of goods, companies or brands (Niedbała, 2008; Duliniec, 2007; Czubała, 2012; Czekaj, 2012).
2. *Organizational context* – main values, significant from the point of view of the company, are declared here. This is done in accordance with the organization's mission and vision. These val-

ues are announced and accepted by the board, shared by all employees, and communicated externally to clients, contractors and shareholders. Organizational values aim to unite employees around common organizational objectives and constitute a specific indicator of all initiatives undertaken in the organization (Collins & Porras, 2003; Stachowicz-Stanusch, 2007; Bugdol, 2007).

3. *Psychological context* – values pertain to individual workers, constitute their beliefs, norms, ideals, ethics. They motivate particular actions and behaviors (Terelak & Hys-Martyńska, 2004; Siuta-Stolarska & Siuta Brodzińska, 2011; Drzeżdżon, 2013).

The development of companies' values and provision of value to shareholders, contractors and clients was, is and will be the ultimate objective of organizations.

Harari (2002, as cited in Poczowski, 2003), indicates the following five fundamental aspects of demonstrating value to stakeholders:

1. Uniqueness of values manifested in the offered product or services differing from others and being one of their kind;
2. Breakthrough character of values resulting not from the present *status quo* but from creating new markets, products and services. This denotes going beyond the traditional approach to assessing and satisfying clients' needs, and replacing it with a new approach revolving around leading clients;
3. Provision of values which intrigue, inspire and provide the feeling of exceptionality associated with features of offered products and services, or connected with the means of their acquisition and application. In other words, they evoke a shock among stakeholders;
4. Individualization of values emerging from the fact that in the conditions of new economy, the market has progressed from the market of mass recipient towards the one of individual clients. This entails the necessity of offering 'made-to-measure' products and services in response to the needs of particular clients;
5. Provision of values improving lives of recipients, i.e. values offering the feeling that a particular product or service contributes to their lives becoming better, easier, more complete, and even happier.

In knowledge-based economy, where the significance of human capital has been frequently emphasized, the provision of values to particular stakeholder groups derives from the proper human resources management. The process pivots upon employees' personal values. In order to realize HR management professionally and successfully, and consequently, effectively and efficiently manage the company, an in-depth insight into and familiarity with employees' expectations is critical. Clearly, people differ with regard to age, sex, and education, but also character, personality, and systems of values. Poczowski (2003, p. 15) believes that regardless of the membership in a particular age- or occupational-group, the following, common employee expectations can be indicated:

- honest and ethical treatment, and respect of their dignity,
- perceiving them as stakeholders instead of mere subordinates,
- appreciation and reward of their contribution to the organization,
- obtaining feedback,
- support of employee development offered by the organization. This is crucial for maintaining high employment levels,
- employers' recognizing the fact that, in employment relationships, employees are driven by the prospects of their own career.

The perfect situation emerges when employees' expectations are convergent with those of employers, and values of individual workers are reflected in values embraced, declared and pursued in the organization.

However, currently, diversity is dominant and the perfect situation is highly unlikely to occur. Therefore, the assessment of values of members of the organization, or employees of the company who are to cooperate to achieve an objective, is required.

The literature of the subject defines organizational values as 'a component of organizational culture, objects, states, things or situations appreciated by people and pursued via their membership in the organization' (Sikorski, 2006, p. 6). The term 'main values' refers to a particular group of publically expressed values or concepts shared by the majority of members of a particular organization, and the most central and chief for the continuity and development of the organization. The main values are the ones which express and

support organizational identity the most and those which administer the organization's development (Stachowicz-Stanusch, 2004). Armstrong defines organizational values as 'beliefs pertaining to what is the best or good for the organization, and to what ought to or should not occur' (Armstrong, 2011, p. 342).

On the other hand, Jones observes that 'a system of values of the organization constitutes a collection of accepted and implied values employees act upon. Organizational values are a collective conscience and intuition of members of a particular organization' (Jones, 2010, p. 168). Bugdol believes that organizational values reflect the specific character of the organization, its structure, social relations and purposefulness of activity (Bugdol, 2007, p. 9). However, the author highlights that value is to constitute a common good emerging from a social compromise.

Values are expressed in norms and artifacts. Norms constitute informal standards of behavior, ground rules and guidelines. On the other hand, artifacts are visible, material or non-material organizational aspects, heard, recognized and felt by people, and contributing to them understanding organizational culture (Armstrong, 2011, pp. 343-344). According to Krajewska-Nieckarz (2013, p. 217), 'employees' integration around common values denotes people declaring and being convinced to apply these values in organizational practice. Employees may be value-driven. However, values in use are the most valuable among these. Values in use exert the strongest impact upon relations the organization wishes to develop and maintain with their stakeholders. Indirectly, they shape the organization's image and contribute to the emergence of the organization's competitiveness.' According to Cyfert and Krzakiewicz (2009, pp. 119-120), organizational values ought to result from a compromise between various stakeholder groups – internal (shareholders, owners, managers) and external (employees, clients, potential employees). However, the author observes that values are frequently a reflection of values of leaders who create and shape organizational culture. As far as the successful application of values in the company's success is concerned, the most important factor is for leaders to act in accordance with the accepted and declared values. This is because it is the only way for values to be internalized, pursued and observed by employees of the organization (Penc, 2010, p. 240; Drzewiecki, Chelmiński, & Kubica, 2011, p. 115).

The following constitute values declared and observed by renowned enterprises (Stachowicz-Stanusch, 2004):

- Boeing – innovation, risk-taking, facing challenges, product safety, product reliability, product quality, inclusiveness, ethics;
- Ford – client-focus, profitability, honesty, integrity;
- General Electric – innovation, responsibility towards clients, employees, communities and shareholders, honesty, integrity, responsibility of individuals;
- IBM – appreciation of employees, client satisfaction, perfect quality and innovation;
- Johnson & Johnson – responsibility towards clients, employees, communities and shareholders, awarding individuals according to their contribution, creativity and productivity;
- Marriott – friendly service, client focus, people as number 1 priority, respect for an individual, happiness and hard work, constant personal development, overcoming difficulties in character development;
- Philip Morris – freedom of choice, being the best, creativity, hard work, constant personal development;
- Procter & Gamble – perfect product, constant personal development, honesty, respect for an individual, inclusiveness, co-ownership, trust;
- Sony – being a pioneer, innovation, respect for an individual, creativity, encouragement of personal development, respect for Japanese culture and national status as a primary value;
- Walt Disney – creativity, dreams, security, precision, attention to detail, lack of cynicism, constant personal development, American values;
- IKEA – innovation, modesty, simplicity, satisfying interests of the majority, will-power.

The above values are communicated and implemented by companies which achieved international success. They assume various forms, pertain to several stakeholder groups as well as individual processes of the organization. When attempting to categorize these values, a premise can be made that they are moral and extra-moral. The former are associated with behavior in accordance with own conscience (e.g. honesty, integrity, responsibility). The latter pertain to

behaviors and attitudes towards work and processes in the company and behaviors towards people – employees, clients (e.g. innovation, creativity, respect for an individual, hard work). Lachowski (2012) describes the following families of organizational values:

- *Professional Values* – values determining the main operation of the company, its chief features and those defining product quality. The family includes values such as trust, satisfaction, quality, professionalism, specialization, time savings;
- *Combative Values* – values indicating features the company wishes to apply in order to achieve success and competitive advantage. The following are included in this family: innovation, enthusiasm, ambition, battle spirit;
- *Behavioral Values* – values describing the way the company and its employees operate (e.g. passion, involvement, freedom, authenticity, openness, etc.);
- *Society Values* – values characterizing the relationship of the company with its surrounding environment. The following belong to this family: sustainable development, corporate social responsibility, environment protection;
- *Rational Values* – values determining means of communication with the surrounding environment. The following are included in the family: partnership, respect, availability, harmony, confidentiality, etc.;
- *Fulfilling Values* – enriching values which indicate features of the company's employees, e.g. talent, sensitivity, humanity;
- *Moral Values* – ethical and moral values of employees of the organization, and moral standard the organization observes, e.g. fidelity, transparency, loyalty to standards;
- *Social Values* – values the organization shares with the society, e.g. quality and style of life, patriotism, pluralism, etc.

According to Corporate Value Index report, the most significant business values in macro scale are the following respectively: quality, innovation, client satisfaction. Polish entrepreneurs appreciate the same values. However, the sequence of importance is reverse: client satisfaction, innovation, quality (Bielak, 2017).

The main values aim to integrate all employees of the company, including managers, into one cohesive whole forming the organiza-

tion. By the application of individual and diversified skills and competences, the integration will contribute to organizational success.

Values of the company ought to evolve along with the development of the organizational structure, changes in socio-cultural environment, and new employees joining the organization. The evolution ought to ensure that all people experience integration and find their personal values reflected in organizational values. Organizational values constitute a fundamental instrument in the concept of managing by values which will be outlined in further sections of the chapter.

Personal Values of Selected Employee Groups, Their Role and Significance in Diversity Management

According to Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2011, p. 24), people join organizations with already fully-shaped values and manifest ‘an inclination for making a particular choice.’ As mentioned earlier, people shape their systems of values from the earliest years in the process of upbringing, at home, in school, in peer groups, and develop these in subsequent years via professional experiences, residing in particular environments and cultures. Personal values, very much like organizational values, evolve along with the changing society, economy, and culture, via the interaction with people at work, in groups of common interests, in the process of personality development and acquired experiences.

Diversity is inherent in organizational reality. Every person is different. Even though, in particular situations, they may resemble colleagues or co-workers (both with regard to internal and external features), there will always exist an element separating and differing them and characteristic for the particular individual. Diversity constitutes an organizational value of its own, especially when the company operates internationally and manifests global aspirations (Roberge, Lewicki, Hietapelto, & Abdyldeaeva, 2011).

In relation to work behavior, in studies conducted with regard to human resources management, researchers isolated several employee groups which differ significantly, but internally, feature similar attitudes and values, both occupationally and in private life. The groups constitute generational cohorts defined in the literature of the subject as Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z or C. Authors cannot reach a consensus regarding specific timeframe spanning individual cohorts. However, studies in the field frequently

indicate that Baby Boomers encompass people born in the post-ww2 period between 1946 and 1964. Generation X includes those born between 1965 and 1978. Generation Y encompass the children of Baby Boomers, i.e. those born between 1978 and 1989. Finally, Generation Z or C, i.e. those born after 1990, and the Millennials, as a common reference term for people born between the beginning of the 1980s and the end of the 20th century (Levenson, 2010; Tulgan, 2011; Walków, 2017).

Differences between these generations in terms of systems of values were defined by Wiktorowicz et al. (2016). According to the authors, representatives of Baby Boomers indicate independence among the most significant values. They are driven by involvement, optimism and global view of problems at work. They appreciate stability, rarely change jobs and positions, desire to work in the post-retirement age, and readily share their experiences with younger generations. Baby Boomers are apprehensive in conflicts, are not used to receiving feedback. They may be reticent towards peers. They also prioritize the process instead of result.

According to Wiktorowicz et al. (2016), Generation X, whose representatives constitute present mature employees, are trustworthy and loyal towards the employer. The Generation appreciate values such as personal development, independence, diversity and diligence. Contrary to Baby Boomers, representatives of Generation X are result-focused. Even though Generation X are familiar with technologies, computers and smartphones, they trust face to face contacts and paper archives. They are frequently skeptical and pessimistic. They tend to be distrustful towards their superiors. They consider errors as personal failures. Multitaskers are difficult to find among the generation.

On labor market, representatives of Generation Y are usually multitaskers. They are open to new challenges. They become involved in the work they are interested in. However, they appreciate flexibility regarding the time and place of work. They expect satisfactory salary and investments in their professional development. Representatives of the Generation expect flat organizational structure, close contacts with superiors, and openness to discussion. In order to become a role model for the representatives of Generation Y, one must distinguish themselves with competences instead of a mere possession of a higher position in the hierarchy. Unrealistic expectations

and prioritizing own comfort over employers' expectations constitute weaknesses of the Ys. They also experience problems with interpersonal communication in intergenerational teams.

The youngest age group on labor market is popularly known as Generation Z. In addition, the group are labeled as generation C from English words 'connect,' 'communicate,' 'change' which refer to the Internet, communication and readiness for a change. These words characterize the Generation well. They generally do not remember the period before the Internet appeared and the time when Poland was not an EU member. They are known as open to new solutions and creative. At the same time, the border between virtual and real worlds fades. The Zs highly appreciate close friends, colleagues and acquaintances from social media. The Cs tend to experience problems with concentration. It is difficult to keep them in one place as well. They are also characterized by a superficial analysis and evaluation of situations. In addition, they are unsure of their future (Wiktorowicz et al., 2016).

This brief description of generations cooperating on labor market today offers conclusions that the management of modern teams requires the ability to balance the diversified human potential represented by various generations following different systems of values, beliefs and competences (more on the subject in the second chapter of this present book). The establishment of organizational values shared and accepted by various generations may unite people and enable them to successfully realize organizational tasks.

Managing by Values in the Context of Diversity Management

Managing by values is a relatively new leadership tool aiming to achieve three objectives: simplify the complexity of the organization's life created by the growing need for adopting changes on all levels of the company, lead, i.e. direct the strategic vision towards the prospective objective of the company, and consolidate the involvement of each employee in the improvement of the way they conduct their duties (Dolan, Garcia, & Richley, 2006). As the name suggests, Managing by Values is based upon values. True leadership constitutes a dialogue on values. The future of organizations is shaped by exhibiting values, metaphors, symbols and concepts in daily operations of employees of all levels and functions. Assigning human interpretations to the main visions of the company has fundamental signif-

icance for the development and survival of the enterprise (Dolan et al., 2006).

Blanchard and O'Connor (2003) suggest that managing by values ought to be understood as a systematic process of implementing organizational values in daily tasks and establishing organizational culture which will ensure the company's steady presence on the list of the so-called '500 Fortunate,' i.e. companies of the highest service quality and highest living standards of employees. Managing by values seems to be the tool for constant reshaping of organizational culture via common involvement in generating inspiration for new projects. The role of values in change management (management of organizational culture) may be compared to the skeletal structure managers allocate their resources around in order to bridge the gap between the vision of the future and reality of the present. Therefore, managing by values constitutes a process of organizational culture management, it being consolidated day by day, and its permanent renewal in face of the obscure future. In managing by values, the following phases can be enumerated: establishment of the main values, their development, and their institutionalization and redefinition (Stachowicz-Stanusch, 2004, pp. 13-14).

The establishment of the main values merely constitutes the beginning of the journey because that values alone do not make the organization great. What drives the organization forward is the conscious management of the main values. It is only then that they reveal their true power and beneficial properties. Kouzes and Posner (2017) observe that commonly shared values have the following impact:

- promote high level of corporate loyalty,
- facilitate the emergence of a consensus regarding the main organizational objectives,
- foster (stimulate, encourage) ethical behaviors,
- promote strong standards associated with hard work and protectiveness,
- reduce stress levels at work,
- facilitate understanding of expectations associated with conducted work,
- develop a strong conviction associated with personal effectiveness,

- stimulate good spirit (pride from being a part of the organization),
- develop teamwork.

Lachowski (2012) enumerates the following benefits emerging from managing by values:

- it enables the development of the organization's excellence and competitive advantage,
- it allows knowledge to be managed effectively,
- it stimulates employees' innovation,
- it enables employee competences to be applied effectively,
- it offers opportunities to build the long-lasting character of the company,
- it boosts the chance of the company remaining on the market.

Apart from the obvious benefits emerging from managing by values in companies characterized by diversity, it also ensures the company's survival in the state of change and unpredictability of the surrounding environment.

If a premise is made that the organization of the 21st century is a knowledge-based organization, the following question arises: When does the organization learn? It learns when it remains in motion, when it is characterized by intensity. The intensity of the organization is the atmosphere based upon dynamic, harmonious activity of its members supported by their enthusiasm, diversity, cooperation, involvement in the pursuit of clear main values.

The intensity stems from two sources:

1. It is motivated by external factors such as external pressure brought about by uncertain surroundings (crises, change in the organization) or organizational growth resulting from market opportunities, fusion, strategic alliances,
2. It originates from the organization itself.

External factors fostering the emergence of organizational intensity produce the crisis of identity. The lack of certainty and consistency within the organization results in organizational loss and may lead to the company's downfall. This is due to the fact that by changing its structure, management method or organizational culture to a

different one, the organization may lose the link with its past successes, which constitutes the source of its identity and main values.

In other words, the lack of elements stimulating the emergence of the forced intensity within the organization results in the intensity transforming into a destructive one. Therefore, only the organization with the strong feeling of identity, i.e. strong and conscious main values may survive and thrive in the conditions of uncertainty and diversified environment. The role of the main values in the organizational change, or intensity fostered by external factors, revolves around the provision of fixed reference points, knowledge of what is permanent and what may and ought to change in light of the principle stating that what is not 'core' in the organization should change.

Organizational intensity emerging in crises, organizational changes, or market opportunities may stem from the organizational surrounding. Modern organizations ought not to wait for a small crisis to emerge in order to change something in themselves. Changeability and internal chaos facilitate a change in the organization itself. The change, the intensity, ought to emerge on its own instead of being externally motivated. Organizational values may become internal sources implying the intensity.

Values, as opposed to other quantitative objectives, can never be fully achieved. As far as objectives are concerned, they are usually a destination, a place to be reached in a particular time. However, values such as security and client satisfaction remain on the level of excellence to be reached throughout a lifetime, all the time, in every moment, in every position. Values become permanent objectives. The organization's constant focus upon the main values results in it being constantly vigilant, in permanent motion, in pursuit of excellence which may never be reached.

Values offer organizational energy and become the source of internal motivation. In this way, the internal motivation, understood as the activation of purposeful behavior, becomes equivalent to the power of will. This implies that the source of organizational behavior ought to be sought in the organization itself rather than externally (Zimbardo & Ruch, 1997, p. 314).

The process of conscious managing by values releases an energy which fosters organizational intensity. The process can be realized by any organization and it is possible to learn to manage it (Stachowicz-Stanusch, 2004, 2007).

Even though the idea of managing by values has both advocates and opponents, it seems that as far as HR diversity management is concerned, it constitutes a perfect management method applied in innovative companies. The idea of managing by values itself stimulates boards, management staff and employees to become aware of their own values significant from the point of view of individuals. Subsequently, values significant from the point of view of the organization emerge and can be managed. Undeniably, people who are similar (e.g. with regard to age, profession, education, sex, or cultural models) may pursue different systems of values. This is due to the fact that values are motivated by family, surrounding environment and socio-cultural factors people grow up in and develop (Wędzińska, 2013). According to Rokeach (1973, pp. 23–24), ‘values emerge from cultural, social and personal experience; the moment they are internalized, they become personality structures determining behaviors.’

Establishing common organizational values bridges generations and groups representing different personal values, beliefs, ideas and objectives. Organizational values unite human resources characterized by a specific diversity in every organization.

Conclusions

Even though diversity of human resources is not a novel concept, it has recently gained popularity. According to Urbaniak (2014), there are at least three reasons behind the phenomenon. First of all, due to globalization, internationalization and international integration, a greater employee mobility has been observed. As a consequence, employee teams are becoming increasingly international and multicultural. Secondly, the professionalization of human resources management entails the necessity of including a broadening scope of features of both individual employees and whole workgroups and external stakeholders (suppliers, clients). Thirdly, the evolution of cooperation in production and services processes (more flexible employment forms, virtual character of work, network structures) leads to the redefinition of the model of human resources management. The redefinition allows diversity to become incorporated into the model to a greater extent.

Such an approach to diversity management results in an in-depth analysis of personal values of individual occupational- and age-groups, especially regarding attitudes individual group members

exhibit towards work or its position in the hierarchy of values of individual employee groups.

As mentioned earlier, three generations coexist on labor market at present: Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y. The fourth Generation, Z, is ready to embark on their careers.

According to studies by Accenture (Lyons, Lavelle, & Smith, 2017), representatives of Generation Z resemble their parents, i.e. Generation X, in their attitude towards work more than the previous generation, i.e. those born on the verge of the 1980s and 1990s (Generation Y). In case of the Zs, a shift towards traditional occupational values, such as a clear career path and job stability, can be observed. They are characterized by ambition and diligence, but also high level of requirements. What significantly differentiates them from the Xs is their ability to apply novel technologies. The youngest on labor market expect varied and interesting duties and personalized development programs. They are ready to offer devotion and hard work, and are able to become involved with the company for an extended period of time provided their education, knowledge and digital skills characteristic for the young generation are used in the particular work. Representatives of Generation Z swiftly become discouraged when they conduct repetitive actions. This leads to them becoming a motivational challenge for managers. The cited studies were conducted in the USA. However, according to Accenture branch in Poland, their results are reflected in Polish Generation Z as well (Ceglarczyk, 2017).

This fact was also acknowledged in studies by Żarczyńska-Dobiesz and Chomałowska (2014). These were conducted among representatives of Generation Z, students of a Polish university at that time. According to these studies, the Zs described themselves as: 'open to new experiences, creative and innovative, familiar with novel technologies, self-confident and aware of their own value, ambitious, flexible, interested in personal development and improvement of skills, able to establish interpersonal contacts with ease, versatile and multitasking, honest and able to make compromises, demanding, work enthusiastic, mutually motivating. Respondents indicated negative features of their generation as well. They enumerated the following most frequently: cunningness, posturing, demanding attitude, Internet addiction, lack of internal motivation or low motivation, lazy-

ness, unwillingness to become independent.' Results of studies conducted by these authors indicate that representatives of Generation Z appreciate the following work-related values (Żarczyńska-Dobiesz & Chomałowska, 2014): respect for themselves, being treated seriously, fair salary adequate to their competences. These ought to be accompanied by non-financial motivators, lack of age-discrimination, flexible working time, and their potential being utilized.

In addition, the authors compared Generation Z with the slightly younger Generation Y. Even though differences in several aspects cannot be observed, e.g. both generations are characterized by self-confidence, there exist fields where the Zs are far more superior than the Ys. For example:

- The Ys are familiar with novel technologies. However, the Zs are the most technology-oriented generation in history. They were born in the digital world and have not experienced the pre-Internet era;
- The Ys are optimistic towards life. On the other hand, the Zs are future-anxious, more realistic and cautious, and approach life materialistically;
- Diversity is something ordinary for the Ys. However, the Zs are even more open to and acceptant of diversity. As a generation themselves, they are internally diversified;
- The Ys constitute a 'for me' generation in search of fame and fortune. They recognize the problems of corporate social responsibility, etc. On the other hand, Generation Z is an 'us' generation. They are more socially oriented, more interested in the problems of corporate social responsibility. They are even more involved in the issues of global warming, famine, wars, etc. Honesty and lack of discrimination are far more important for them than money and status;
- For Generation Y, learning and development are deliberately planned. Permanent career building is characteristic for them. In case of Generation Z, learning and development follow the *just in time* principle. They desire to possess and know everything instantaneously, on demand, preferably online. They dislike the vision of permanent career building. Their attitude towards learning is also peculiar. They appreciate swift access to information.

- The Ys pursue work-life balance. For the Zs, work and life ought to constitute a whole they want to be themselves in and pursue the same values in.
- The Ys are educated and intelligent. However, the Zs are even more educated. Owing to the fact that they have grown up ‘on-line,’ among social media games, they developed diverse labor-market-appreciated values early. They are not afraid of risk and swiftly make decisions.

According to Smolbik-Jęczmień (2013), Generation Y are frequently described as manifesting a demanding attitude and overrating their skills. The author observes that the Generation highly appreciates work which constitutes an opportunity for realizing passions and interests, and enables further development and maintaining work-life balance. For Generation X, work is not everything, thus, they transfer from one to another relatively easily. They are characterized by considerable professional mobility, ease of adaptation, and openness to change. They expect a swift career and high salaries.

The Millennials significantly differ from the previous generations. According to studies by Smolbik-Jęczmień conducted on the verge of 2010 and 2011, representatives of Generation X identified career primarily with vertical promotion and pursuit of ever-higher positions. They also expect high financial position, job security and stability. This reflects the traditional approach to career development. According to Smolbik-Jęczmień (2013), in case of Generation X, work constitutes a value on its own. The Xs only consider a change of work as a necessity. The following motto is frequently applied in relation to the generation: ‘I live to work’ (Baran & Kłos, 2014). Smolbik-Jęczmień (2013) indicates the following values as representing Generation X: loyalty towards employers, work-alcoholism, significant work ethics, low self-confidence and low feeling of own value, recognition of superiors’ authority, need for team support and the feeling of usefulness, patience when waiting for a promotion or pay-rise, fear of losing achieved positions, trainings considered as an anchor of employment. However, as the author observes, representatives of the generation manifest symptoms of a new way of thinking. Studies conducted by the author indicate that 62% of respondents representing the Xs consider their careers as a process of permanent competence development, 58% observe that the achievement of job satisfaction

is significant, and 32% state that the acquisition of new experiences and pursuit of work-life balance are important.

At present, Baby Boomers, the generation of post-ww2 demographic and economic peak constitutes the oldest generation on labor market. According to Baran and Kłós (2014), employees of this generation are defined by the motto: 'I work to survive.' The following constitute the most vital values for the generation: independence, optimism, involvement. Their career usually encompasses work in similar positions for a single or a few employers at best. Baby Boomers expect a cooperative style from their employers. They are focused on cooperation, search for consensus, and active cooperation. They are used to working in highly hierarchic structures. At the same time, they readily teamwork (Woszczyk, 2013).

Knowledge regarding expectations and attitudes towards work and values pursued by employees enables employers to match the worker with organization better, and to undertake successful actions in human resources management – selection of suitable motivators, development of the most creative and productive teams, application of appropriate remuneration system, development of work-favorable conditions which will foster job satisfaction, and consequently achievement of good results by the enterprise. The recognition of diversity and its suitable management constitutes a significant element in the realization of the company's objectives and its development.

According to Smolbik-Jęczmień (2013), 'leadership skills, supervision or development of good work climate, merely constitute initial conditions for the successful activity of management staff. The growth of their awareness regarding knowledge and skills in diversity management ought to be considered. Otherwise, there is little chance for the organization to successfully manage the involvement of age-diversified employees.'

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Chapter Four

Satisfaction, Employee Engagement and Commitment in the Context of Employee Diversity Potential

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Introduction

The growing significance of employees' satisfaction and attachment is associated with their documented impact upon several areas of companies' operations. It is owing to the attachment and employees' competences that 'the organization consolidates and thrives' (Janowska, 2002, p. 13), its development is fostered, and competitive advantage acquired.

The authors indicate that changes emerging in business reality such as globalization, technological advancements, and development of knowledge-based economy, have recently increasingly influenced organizations. They must become more flexible in terms of satisfying needs of internal and external stakeholders. At the same time, organizations experience a deficit of competent workers and must compete for talents. Employees become less loyal towards organizations and manifest a greater inclination to change their place of employment. This results from their greater mobility, changes in career models, and characteristics of a psychological contract binding the employee with the organization.

As far as the above-mentioned trends are concerned, HR departments adjust their policies and means of operation to the changing reality and employees' expectations (Pocztowski, 2008, p. 50). Apart from creating conditions for the development of employees' potential, fostering satisfaction and attachment has become one of priorities undertaken by HR departments. Organizations strive to offer their

employees conditions boosting their attachment (Glińska-Neweś, 2010). They also attempt to acquire and retain the most valuable employees. According to studies conducted in 2014 by the Saratoga Institute, a change in the balance of power on labor market emerged. For the first time since 2010 more employees resigned than were made redundant. The growing ratio of employees' resigning to being made redundant results from, on the one hand, improving economy, and on the other, demographic changes (www.pwc.com/gx/en/hr-management-services). In addition, the report of 2016 acknowledges a growing number of resignations regardless of the size of the company. The issue is also finance-related. It is estimated that an average cost of employment in the USA amounts to 7 123 USD per employee. For a company which loses 48 staff members per annum, the cost aggregates to 340 000 USD. As far as employees originating from Generation Y are concerned, these figures may be 3–6 times higher when costs of required trainings are taken into account (Lipkin & Perrymore, 2009).

Job satisfaction seems to be a significant determinant fostering employees' involvement in their duties. It can be defined as a state of balance between employees' job-related requirements and expectations, and their satisfaction. The satisfaction results in a higher level of identification with the company, impacts work quality and reduces the likelihood of resignation (Steel, Griffeth, & Hom, 2002).

Definitions of the attachment featured in the literature of the subject are ambiguous. They encompass attitudes which manifest significant diversity and association with various factors. These include:

- *Organizational commitment* – it denotes the feeling of belonging, loyalty towards the organization, which encompasses identification with its objectives and values;
- *Job involvement* – the state of cognitive, psychological identification with work, the degree to which work constitutes the central value for an individual;
- *Work engagement* – constitutes a positive, affective and motivational state pertaining to work, the feeling of energy and emotional attachment to work and duties;
- *Professional commitment* – reflects the level of identification with the profession and its significance for an individual;
- *Team commitment* – indicates the degree to which the employee

shares objectives and values of the team, becomes involved in the achievement of team objectives, and values team membership.

The literature of the subject features the term employee engagement, which is applied primarily by consulting agencies. It focuses upon diagnosing employees' attitudes and precedes organizational interventions, e.g. the introduction of changes. This multitude of definitions results from the fact that studies regarding the attachment were conducted by practitioners and scholars in parallel. The present approach is inspired by studies of Kahn (1992). He indicated that employees are emotionally and cognitively attached to their work, focused on it, and express their 'selves' in it. They manifest a positive and emphatic attitude towards their colleagues. Disengaged employees are passive, do not put effort in their work, they conduct their duties mechanically, are not creative, and are distant towards their job. This construct is defined loosely and encompasses several elements of related constructs, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, elements of emotional and intellectual identification with the organization, and organizational citizenship behavior (o c b). In some studies, employee engagement is equivalent to work engagement, which makes determining the definition of the construct even more troublesome.

Employee attachment ought to be considered as an element of their competence potential. This originates from the fact that the attachment, in any of its forms, stems from peoples' motivational sphere. According to Armstrong (2017), it is a much broader concept than motivating, and a more lasting one. It also manifests a greater sensitivity to difficulties and interferences in work. In favorable conditions, it develops in time as well. It ought to be noted that a mere possession of particular competences is not sufficient. The interest and willingness to apply and present these in particular job situations ought to emerge as well. It is owing to employee attachment that they are able to excel at their duties, and at times, prioritize needs of the company over their own. As a consequence, the motivational sphere, including one associated with the attachment, constitutes a significant element of competences. This fact has been acknowledged in the literature of the subject (e.g. Armstrong, 2017). Competences constitute a basis of the attachment due to the fact that

skills and abilities enabling work to be completed competently result in the emergence of added value to the organization. In cases when employees' contribution is appreciated and rewarded, their organizational commitment is improved and the inclination to change the place of employment diminished. This results from the fact that employee attachment may derive from positive initiatives of the organization, and, in accordance with the theory of social exchange, emerges from the exchange between the employee and organization. From the point of view of the organization, tokens of appreciation and recognition, promotion, and financial incentives, may constitute the subject of the exchange. In light of the above, HR practices which offer the framework for a fair exchange are paramount. These benefits stimulate the obligation to reciprocate and foster loyalty, attachment, and citizenship behaviors. The feeling of unfairness may result in the emergence of negative consequences, e.g. diminished attachment, weakened identification with the organization, increased inclination for changing the place of employment, decreased work quality, frequent absences, and in extreme cases, unethical behaviors (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001; DeConinck & Stilwell, 2004). The fact that individual types of the attachment are motivated by organizational initiatives, but to various degrees, ought to be emphasized.

The issue of the attachment has been discussed in light of the psychological contract. It is defined as a non-written agreement between two parties: the employer and employee, who declare particular obligations and expectations towards each other. The obligations may be balanced or asymmetric, more or less clearly articulated. The existence of such a contract becomes visible in case a breach emerges. Previously, the employer offered remuneration, fair work conditions, and job security in exchange for daily work at a satisfactory level. At present, the relationship is frequently based upon a new type of psychological contract. Employees are much less attached to the company in terms of loyalty. In addition, their relationship with the company is based upon the exchange of benefits and services in accordance with the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). New expectations of employees include: fair treatment, recognition of their dignity, being perceived as stakeholders instead of mere subordinates, being understood with regard to development and career management, being offered an inspiring workplace, their employability being

improved, recognition and appropriate rewards for their contribution in the creation of values being offered. In such an approach, the employee determines their own level of attachment in relation to results of the evaluation, conditions offered by the employer and resources offered (Juchnowicz, 2010).

The objective of the present chapter is to discuss problems associated with employee attachment and multifacetedness of the issue in relation to its specific types, i.e. organizational commitment, job commitment, work commitment, and consequences and determinants which shape these. In addition, attention will be drawn to the fact that the attachment constitutes a critical element of employees' competence potential shaped in relation to demographic features (gender, age, generational membership, etc.).

Initially, the chapter will discuss issues pertaining to employee satisfaction. Then, individual types of the attachment and factors determining these will be described. Furthermore, issues associated with the diversity of satisfaction and attachment in relation to features of individuals, i.e. the context of human capital diversity, will be raised.

Job Satisfaction and its Determinants

Job satisfaction constitutes a measure of benefits acquired by the employee in relation to the employment relationship (Clark & Oswald, 1996). The satisfaction is also connected with the feeling of contentment associated with work, and the ability of the individual to realize their needs, objectives, values and beliefs. It is manifested by a positive attitude of workers towards their duties, colleagues, and work environment (Bartkowiak, 2009). The majority of authors indicate the emotional character of the feeling of satisfaction (Locke, 1976) associated with the satisfaction of their needs (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984).

The issue of satisfaction is discussed both at individual and organizational levels. It is defined and studied both as a solid construct and multi-dimensional one encompassing individual aspects of work. The satisfaction is associated with the relationship between employees' expectations towards the organization and the level of their fulfilment. From the organizational point of view, satisfied workers translate into the following: improved work productivity, improved team relations, decreased absence, reduced employee turnover (Locke, 1976; Manjunath, 2008).

Studies by Labedo (2008) indicate that job satisfaction influences

employees' inclination towards taking positive actions to the benefit of the organization, which, in turn, results in a greater probability of citizenship behaviors. However, it ought to be noted that despite the fact studies aiming to identify the relationship between performance and job satisfaction have been conducted since the 1970s, no conclusive results have been obtained so far. It is likely that this is a consequence of the multitude of approaches, definitions, methods and research scales. When reviewing scales applied by researchers it can be noted that some authors studying job satisfaction expand the construct and include turnover intention or organizational commitment in it.

Job satisfaction is influenced by three fundamental groups of determinants: personality-related, cultural, and job-related ones (Saari & Judge, 2004). The literature of the subject features the division into internal, external, and social factors determining the satisfaction (Sousa-Poza & Sousa-Poza, 2000).

Numerous researchers believe that job satisfaction is largely internal, subjective, and personality-dependent (Dormann & Zapf, 2001; Bruk-Lee, Khoury, Nixon, Goh, & Spector 2009). Factors determining it include the so-called personal dispositions, e.g. temperament, and differences in terms of shared values. Studies by Arani (2003) conducted among teachers in Iran and India indicated the existence of a relationship between the satisfaction and emotional intelligence. Bandura and Lyons (2014) point to the positive impact of extroversion and diligence upon job satisfaction. They also highlight that a positive self-assessment and experiencing self-efficacy improve job satisfaction.

Studies indicate significant differences with regard to job satisfaction between individual nationalities (Sousa-Poza & Sousa-Poza, 2000). Eskildsen, Kristensen, & Antvor (2010) conducted an analysis of European Employee Index and compared it with five cultural dimensions by (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005). The results of the evaluation prove that femininity and masculinity and avoidance of insecurity play a critical role in shaping job satisfaction in individual countries. The higher the femininity and lower avoidance of insecurity, the greater the general job satisfaction. Power distance and short- and long-term orientation dimensions influence individual aspects of satisfaction. Individualism vs. collectivism constitutes the only dimension which does not influence any of job satisfaction's aspects.

The fact that the highest job satisfaction was noted in Scandinavian countries is noteworthy.

Numerous researchers indicate the significance of external organizational factors in shaping job satisfaction (Kinicki, McKee-Ryan, Schriesheim, & Carson, 2002). They highlight that these are associated with work environment and may be perceived as satisfactory or frustrating by employees. The level of job satisfaction is influenced by, e.g. working conditions, job security, salaries and benefit packages, relationships in the workplace, promotion and development opportunities (Parvin & Kabir, 2011). Working conditions constitute a broad category of factors encompassing those associated with the workplace, tools and character of work, organizational policy, and applicable provisions, such as temperature, lighting, ventilation, noise, working hours, access to workforce, monotony and repetitiveness, responsibility, independence, etc.

In addition, organizational image and vision, ethics, managerial competences regarding making the right decisions and communication with employees, and superior-subordinate relationships, are also highlighted (Eskildsen et al., 2010). Bandura and Lyons (2014) emphasize the significance of trust, perceived fairness, and superiors' support, upon job satisfaction. The relationship between low job satisfaction and rule-breaking behavior is also highlighted (Martin & Hine, 2005; Nasir & Bashir, 2012). The feeling of unfair or unequal treatment diminishes job satisfaction and increases the possibility of such actions, e.g. theft in the workplace (Lipman & McGraw, 1988).

So far, few scholars focused their studies upon evaluating job satisfaction in light of organizational culture. The few include studies by Odom, Box, and Dunn (1990), which were conducted in transport industry. Results of the study indicate that bureaucratic cultures are not favorable for improved job satisfaction. When assessing health-care sector, Nystrom (1993) observed that strong cultures foster job satisfaction. Cross-sectoral studies of marketing experts in the USA indicated that clan and adhocracy-oriented cultures offer much better conditions for job satisfaction than market and hierarchical cultures (Lund, 2003).

Finally, the example of the multi-dimensional model of satisfaction encompassing the most critical determinants of the satisfaction ought to be discussed. The model was verified in international studies (based upon 21 states). According to their authors, the determinants

include satisfactory salary, promotion opportunities, job security, interesting work, independent work, good relationships with superiors, and good relationships with colleagues.

The lack of definite conclusions regarding job satisfaction which encompass considerations pertaining to both definitions and methods of assessment necessitates further studies in the area. However, it ought to be noted that researchers direct their attention towards attachment and its individual aspects, e.g. organizational commitment, or job involvement, which seem more straightforward as far as the explanation of employees' attitudes and behaviors is concerned.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment has attracted interest of researchers since the 1960s. It helps to understand and predict desirable behavior of employees. Becker (1960) was the first to describe the term in literature. He highlighted that it constitutes a mechanism underlying employees' investment in the organization such as time required to become familiar with and understand the organization, acquisition of skills specific to a particular work environment, and establishing relationships with colleagues. These investments are associated with the loss of interest in leaving the organization because it would entail the loss of benefits of such an investment.

The literature of the subject also defines the commitment as a psychological force binding employees with organizations, which makes leaving much less attractive (Johnson, Groff, & Taing 2009). Numerous authors indicate three characteristic features of organizational commitment: identification with organizational objectives, norms and values, involvement in the realization of organizational objectives, and loyalty manifested in the willingness to remain in the organization and to act to its benefit (Morrow, 1983, 1993).

Initially, the commitment was considered as a two-dimensional construct consisting of attitudinal commitment and continuance commitment (Etzioni, 1961; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Morris & Sherman, 1981; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). The former is treated as an affective component which assumes the recognition of the convergence between the objectives of an individual and the organization. The latter, also known as calculative commitment, reflects the outcome of the exchange between an individual and the organization, which motivates the individual to remain in the organization

or search for another employment opportunity (Mowday et al., 1982).

In the 1990s, another approach towards the commitment emerged. It emphasized its three-dimensionality and indicated three fundamental aspects (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Affective commitment constitutes the first of these. It describes the emotional relationship between an employee and organization which motivates them to remain because of its attractiveness. It reflects the degree to which the individual feels the need to undertake actions within a particular organization. It emerges from internal beliefs (e.g. passion, satisfaction). It is long-lasting and authentic. The majority of authors ascribe special weight to affective commitment as far as the generation of organizational results is concerned. Affectively committed employees remain in the organization of their own accord. It is accompanied by the sense of satisfaction and pride from belonging to the organization, and the willingness to continue employment in it. The identification with both organizational objectives and problems is characteristic for this type of commitment (Darolia, Kumari, & Darolia, 2010). Affective commitment constitutes a key component of organizational commitment and is closely associated with the intention of leaving, i.e. change of employer (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

The literature of the subject indicates that affective commitment is the most valuable from the point of view of the organization. This is due to the fact that it influences results achieved by employees, stimulates citizenship behaviors, limits turnover, and reduces stress level (Luchak & Gellatly, 2007; Colquitt, LePine, & Wesson, 2010).

Continuance commitment manifests in employees' unwillingness to bear costs associated with the change of their workplace. In addition, such costs may be heightened by the perceived lack of alternatives on labor market (Meyer & Allen, 1984).

However, due to the fact that, at present, employees are more aware of their value on the market, more mobile, and manage their careers more effectively, the decision on remaining in the company may result from a positive evaluation of the relationship between the employee's contribution and benefits associated with employment which may be attractive for the worker at the particular stage of their career, e.g. high job security, stability, development opportunities. Therefore, continuance commitment is not merely the outcome of a mutual exchange between employees and the organization. It may also pertain to a possible loss of benefits in case of resigning (e.g. bonus for job

seniority, pension plan, feeling of security, jubilee awards). This type of commitment may mean that an employee remains in the organization due to the opportunity to realize their own needs. It may be assumed that such an attitude is associated with a particular situation the employee is in, e.g. difficult familial situation, health condition, or a specific role work plays in the worker's life, e.g. prioritizing private life over professional matters. Therefore, a premise can be made that this type of attitude is not associated with deep identification with the organization and is sensitive to other competitive employment opportunities which would satisfy the employee's needs more effectively. It may also be assumed that it is not associated with full devotion to work, but rather conducting tasks rudimentarily.

Normative commitment is described as a strong commitment of the employee, even their obligation or moral duty, to remain in the organization. It is motivated primarily by social norms determining the level of loyalty, the sense of obligation and employees' faithfulness to the organization. It proves how deeply a person feels they ought to remain in the organization. It is associated with the sense of responsibility which motivates the employee to remain in the organization (David & Foray, 2001). Based on these principles, it can be said that a person acts in a particular way because they believe something is right and morally sound.

It seems that this type of commitment is relatively resistant to organizational factors. It is also shaped by the system of values. Scarce research indicates that if the organization invests in the development of a particular employee, they may feel obliged to remain, which seems convergent with the theory of social exchange (Meyer & Smith, 2000, pp. 319–322). Normative commitment is strongly grounded in experiences associated primarily with socialization in the family, society and organization. It is likely that the employee will be characterized by significant normative commitment if people in their immediate surrounding environment, e.g. parents, are long-term employees of a company, and/or emphasize the significance of loyalty towards the organization. In addition, the commitment is also linked with socialization in the organization. Strong normative commitment will normally emerge in organizations which highlight values and communicate that loyalty among employees is expected (Meyer & Smith, 2000).

Due to the fact that organizations derive many benefits from com-

mitted employees, researchers focus upon factors determining the level of organizational commitment. Determinants associated with work environment seem significant among these (Fornes, Rocco, & Wollard, 2008; Bruk-Lee et al., 2009; Zettler, Friedrich & Hilbig, 2011). Much like in case of job satisfaction, several categories of factors can be enumerated – those associated with the type of work: scope of duties, challenges, diversity of opinions, and those associated with employees' adjustment to organizations, with the level of independence and empowerment, and with the transparency of objectives and duties connected with the particular position. Factors fostering high work quality seem of importance as well. These encompass HR policies and practices which exert considerable impact upon the quality of work, and the degree to which employees identify with the organization (Chelpa, 1996; Green, Wu, Whitten, & Medlin, 2006).

The quality of relationships in the organization cannot be disregarded. The quality is reflected in the level of interpersonal and impersonal trust, communication with the leader, participation in decision-making, support of the organization, support of the superior, assessment of fairness in the organization, etc. (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002; Krot & Lewicka, 2015). The influence of leadership upon affective commitment seems significant. This is due to the opportunity it offers for developing employees' attitudes and behaviors by leadership (Morrow, 2011). Experiencing conflicts and ambiguity exerts strong and negative influence upon organizational commitment (Balassiano & Salles, 2012).

Moreover, emphasis is placed upon the impact of individual differences regarding values and demographic characteristics and personal factors upon organizational commitment (Spagnoli & Caetano, 2012), and those associated with personal situation (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016). Several authors indicate relationships between organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Foote & Tang, 2008). They point to both general job satisfaction and satisfaction with salaries, scope of duties, and relationships between colleagues and superiors (Leite, de Aguar Rodrigues, & de Albuquerque, 2014).

Despite the fact that individual dimensions of commitment are strongly interlinked, they are shaped by diverse determinants.

Scales assessing multi-dimensionality of constructs developed

upon a 24-item questionnaire based on Allen and Meyer's (1990) studies are used the most frequently in order to evaluate organizational commitment. In addition, a 15-item questionnaire of attitudinal Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) is also applied (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979).

To conclude, it may be observed that all the above approaches to organizational commitment highlight the relationship between the employee and organization, the interest in remaining in the organization and working to its benefit, and identification with its objectives.

Job Involvement

This construct was introduced into the discipline of organizational behavior and management psychology by Lodahl and Kejner (1965) and still attracts researchers' interest. Job involvement is defined as a cognitive state of psychological identification with work and is considered as an instrument of satisfying significant needs and expectations (Kanungo, 1981). The feeling is associated with the extent to which work constitutes the central part of an individual's identity and how strongly it is associated with the image of self. People who strongly identify with work believe that the most important things they experience are work-related (Chirkowska-Smolak, 2012). Kanungo (1981) highlights that the construct ought to be considered as a cognitive state connected with the outlook upon oneself, associated with the individual's identity, and not to be mistaken with the state of emotional satisfaction experienced in relation to work or internal motivation. People exhibiting high job involvement consider their work as highly important in their lives, and their disposition depends upon their self-evaluation regarding work they conduct. In other words, strongly involved individuals conduct their work well, and this shapes the sense of their own value (Lodahl & Kejner, 1965). Employees who believe they are complete because of their work, put more effort into it, are more focused on it, thus, they contribute to generating added value to the organization. Ishfaq and Talat (2011) indicate the following constituting elements of job involvement: active contribution to the organization's work, considering work as the central part of life, work as a significant element of self-assessment and the locus of the sense of own value. Govender and Parumasur (2010) confirmed that job involvement derives from the significance employees ascribe to their work. They indicated that the satisfaction

of employees' mental needs constitutes a critical requirement for developing job involvement. In light of the above, it seems that genuine interest in tasks associated with a particular position and considering these as significant and stimulating constitute a prerequisite for developing job involvement. Therefore, it is highlighted that job involvement is influenced by factors determining the perception of independence at work such as participation in decision-making, diversification of tasks, identification with tasks, perceived significance of tasks, and feedback (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). Job involvement is also associated with organizational spirit, especially factors such as supportive leadership, transparent roles, remuneration, opportunity for facing challenges. Lodahl and Kejner (1965) indicated the following as factors influencing the level of involvement: good relationships between managers and employees, transparent incentives, and support on the part of leaders and colleagues. In addition, a relationship between the perceived well-being and indicated job involvement was acknowledged (Huang, Ahlstrom, Lee, Chen, & Hsieh, 2016). It is believed that when employees are satisfied with their workplace, with conducted duties, and surrounding environment, they will manifest higher job involvement. Zelenski, Murphy, and Jenkins (2008) believe that employees satisfied with their work are more productive and willing to embrace more duties.

Researchers have recently focused upon the impact of HRM and TQM practices upon job involvement. Studies conducted by Boon, Arumugam, Safa, and Bakar (2007) among Malaysian companies representing manufacturing sector proved the existence of a relationship between the following practices and job involvement: empowerment, team work, communication, client focus, rewards and recognition. The significant role of empowerment has also been acknowledged in studies by Karia and Asaari (2006).

Some authors emphasize that job involvement is influenced by organizational determinants in a limited way. Instead, they believe that it is determined by individual features (Rabinowitz & Hall, 1977). In this approach, which is of situational character (Rabinowitz & Hall, 1977), job involvement is understood as a personal attitude towards a particular job. However, the fact that some organizational factors influence job involvement is highlighted. The factors include: leadership styles manifested by the superior, inclusion of employees into decision-making processes, social factors, and work characteristics.

Therefore, job involvement emerges from the interaction between characteristics of an individual along with shared values and features of work situations. This concept considers the approach to work as the consistency of individual characteristics with work environment, which results in high job involvement.

On the other hand, Hung (2008) highlights that job involvement constitutes a fixed variable associated with attitudes connected with work such as job satisfaction, turnover intention, and organizational commitment. Strongly involved people treat their work seriously because it constitutes a vital element of their lives and their approach to work builds their self-assessment. This serious attitude is manifested in, e.g. the fact that they are never late and avoid absences. The author observes that cultivating job involvement ought to be the most significant objective of organizations due to the fact that it stimulates organizational productivity and individuals' motivation.

In order to study this particular construct, a 5-item operationalization scale based upon studies by Lodahl & Kejner (1965) is applied. The scale measures the sense of work, willingness to make sacrifices, and the belief in the value of work itself. On the other hand, Kanungo (1982) offered a slightly modified, 10-item scale.

The above mentioned approaches indicate the existence of a positive relationship between job involvement and employees' effort and achieved results (Brown & Leigh, 1996). Numerous studies conclude that the involvement is reflected in the organization's productivity and contributes to its success. As a consequence, job involvement constitutes a construct which explains the development of the organization on the basis of human capital.

Work Engagement

The literature of the subject features three parallel terms describing engagement in the workplace: work engagement, employee engagement and job engagement (Banihani, Lewis, & Syed, 2013). The term 'employee engagement' was embraced by consulting companies and includes elements of various constructs. Academic discourse applies the term 'work engagement' the most frequently.

Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Romá, & Bakker, (2002) indicate that work engagement is a state of mind which is positively correlated with work. It is characterized by high energy when working, passion, devotion, and full focus on work. It sometimes manifests

in unwillingness to become detached from it. When defining work engagement, Saks (2006) indicates that it constitutes the extent to which the individual is devoted to and absorbed by their professional role. The state is associated with positive emotions towards work such as pride and belief in its significance, enthusiasm, inspiration and recognition of work-associated challenges. Work engagement reflects the optimal functioning at work (Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006). When studying middle-management, Schaufeli, Taris, and Rhenen (2008) observed that engaged employees are more willing to work overtime and manifest higher job satisfaction, are in good health and function well socially. Bakker (2009) indicates that engaged employees are more independent than their disengaged colleagues and are more active in influencing significant events in their lives. In addition, they are more energetic and active, manifest a positive attitude, are self-reliant in a sense that they rely upon their own judgement instead of searching for acceptance in others.

Kahn (1990) observes that work engagement is associated with full physical, mental and emotional employment in an organization. According to the author, work engagement pertains to the mental experience of work which decides on the degree to which individuals enter roles they play in the workplace. He emphasized that, due to their nature, an individual manifests an ambivalent attitude towards being a member of groups or systems, and they strive to find a proper proportion between isolation and total immersion. It is due to this entering and exiting the role that individuals cope with their ambivalence and changing conditions of the workplace (Kahn, 1990, p. 694). In the qualitative study utilizing a theory based upon two samples of summer camp counsellors and members of an architectural firm in the USA, he assessed the way working conditions impact people's engagement. He concluded that the engagement and withdrawal from the role are associated with people's experiences regarding work situations. According to Kahn, there exist three conditions for the emergence of the engagement:

- *Meaningfulness* – emerges when an employee recognizes the meaning of their work and feels useful and appreciated;
- *Safety* – pertains to the answer to the question whether the engagement is safe for the image, status or career;
- *Availability* – constitutes a feeling of possessing physical, emo-

tional or mental resources in order to become personally involved at a particular moment in time. This dimension is influenced by mental and emotional energy, lack of security, and personal life.

The above dimensions were evaluated by May, Gilson, and Harter (2004) who, according to Kahn's propositions, observed that all these are positively correlated with work engagement.

The term 'work engagement' frequently appears in the psychology of health and employment in the context of well-being. Work engagement is perceived as the opposite pole of occupational burnout (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74). Work engagement is composed of three components: vigor, understood and measured as the level of energy and mental resilience at work; dedication, emerging from pride of one's work and willingness to identify with it; and absorption, manifesting in focus upon work and difficulties in becoming detached from it. One of the more popular and recognized tools for measuring work engagement is Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), also defined as the Utrecht scale (Schaufeli et al., 2002). The three components, i.e. vigor, dedication, and absorption, are present in the scale.

Benefits emerging from work engagement are associated with both positive emotional states of employees (Schaufeli et al., 2008) and the improvement of organizational productivity (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002; Saks, 2006). It was observed that organizations bear high costs associated with the lack or loss of work engagement (Frank, Finnegan, & Taylor, 2004). In addition, it was acknowledged that actively disengaged employees (i.e. those manifesting their disengagement) exert negative impact upon the engagement of others (Loehr & Schwartz, 2003).

Scholars indicate several arguments which seem to confirm the belief that engaged employees work more effectively than their disengaged colleagues, and suggest that they manifest positive emotions such as enthusiasm, satisfaction, joy. They also remain in good health, are eager to involve their own resources to conduct duties, and radiate their engagement onto others (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004)

In addition, it was observed that there exist relationships between work engagement and business results, client satisfaction, profits gained, turnover, and the number of accidents (Harter et al., 2002),

the intention of leaving the organization, and the level of job satisfaction (Koyuncu & Burke, 2006).

Studies on a sample of 2194 employees in two British organizations prove that work engagement impacts employees' well-being and their work results (Alfes, Truss, Soane, Rees, & Gatenby, 2010). Work engagement also seems to influence organizational commitment, personal initiatives, and undertaking positive actions beyond the scope of duties. In their studies on a group of Spanish and Dutch employees, Salanova and Schaufeli (2008) indicated that work engagement moderates the relation between the workforce (such as independence) and pro-active behaviors.

Both organizational and individual factors are considered as antecedents of work engagement. It is observed that factors such as transformational leadership impact the level of work engagement (Vincent-Höper, Muser, & Janneck, 2012; Ghadi, Fernando, & Caputi, 2013; Gözüokara & Şimşek, 2015).

Sacks (2006) highlights the significance of perceived organizational support and organizational fairness in this context. Moreover, the ability to control one's work, variety of tasks, independence, feedback, i.e. factors impacting personal development, also exert influence upon work engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Studies suggest that people manifesting well-being tend to put more effort and are more involved in the realization of their objectives (Schaufeli et al., 2008).

Studies conducted by Langelaan et al. (2006) also offer interesting insights. These studies pertain to individual types of work attachment. It was observed that all evaluated symptoms, i.e. emotional fatigue, cynicism, depression, psychosomatic symptoms, and sleeping problems, are strongly and negatively correlated with work engagement. In the course of these studies, the authors concluded that all types of work attachment constitute individual but interconnected constructs. However, work engagement and organizational commitment remain in close relationship.

In conclusion, satisfaction and engagement constitute very desirable, even critical, employees' attitudes in the organization which seeks to develop and defeat competition. Research results indicate numerous pieces of evidence confirming that these attitudes offer tangible organizational benefits. As a consequence, their stimulation and monitoring on the basis of organizational actions are crucial.

Independent Variables

The present research project makes a premise that HRM systems, organizational fairness, organizational support, and superiors' support, exert impact upon attitudes towards work.

HRM system constitutes an ambiguous term which has many understandings and definitions. The authors indicate several aspects of HRM systems in various contexts: productivity of HR departments, values of human capital, systems of inter-related practices and their impact upon the generation of added value on the basis of human capital, influence of HRM practices upon the development of competences and knowledge in the organization, and stimulation of employees' positive attitudes and behaviors such as work attachment, loyalty towards the organization, results focus, etc. (Paauwe & Boselie, 2005). Boselie, Dietz, and Boon (2005) indicate that no commonly accepted list of HR practices has been developed. In addition, various studies include different sets of practices. However, four of these are ascribed considerable significance. These encompass practices associated with training and development, salaries, performance management (including performance reviews), and recruitment and selection.

The authors emphasize that the impact of HR practices upon employees' attitudes and behaviors, and consequently, organizational results, is possible only in cases when these are embraced by employees themselves. As a consequence, the significant role of the so-called HRM organizational spirit is emphasized. It results from the perception of HRM practices and processes, i.e. the way information pertaining to practices in operation reaches employees. The essence of the construct is seen in the belief that practices introduced in the organization (HR department and top management's perspective) ought to be differentiated from the way they are perceived by employees. This is due to the fact that it is this perception that impacts their behavior. The spirit emerges on the basis of perceptions and feelings of employees regarding initiatives undertaken in the framework of HR policies (Kinnie, Swart, & Purcell, 2005). It is considered as an intermediate mechanism between HR policy and applied practices, and organizational results (Sanders, van Riemsdijk, & Groen, 2008).

The perception of organizational fairness pertaining to several significant decisions affecting employees constitutes the next significant construct impacting employees' attitudes and behaviors. Them being perceived as negative or positive translates into a series of employee

behaviors significant from the organizational point of view, e.g. the sense of job satisfaction, involvement, productivity, citizenship behaviors, knowledge sharing (Colquitt, Noe, & Jackson, 2002). Due to the documented impact of the feeling of fairness, or lack of thereof in the organization, upon the quality of work, pro-social behaviors, or the sense of organizational commitment, the significant role of employees' feeling of organizational fairness ought to be highlighted. It pertains to three main aspects of the organization's operations: distributive, i.e. one associated with the distribution of resources in the organization; procedural, which is connected with fairness of procedures; and interactive, linked with fair treatment in communication and interpersonal relations (Lewicka, 2014).

It is believed that organizational factors play a significant role in the emergence of fairness-associated opinions. In a 'fair' organization, employees may focus on relations less, and devote more attention to conducting their duties.

Perceived organizational support may be considered as a further factor co-determining employees' attitudes and behaviors. It is defined as the belief regarding support on the part of the organization experienced by employees, and is understood as the appreciation and recognition of their contribution and care for their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 2001). Organizational support is associated with the belief that the organization is able to assist the employee in case they need support, and by doing so can reduce stress and boost the feeling of security. The following factors are indicated as influencing organizational support: fair and equal treatment, support of superiors, benefit packages, e.g. attractive working conditions, competitive salaries, development opportunities, independence, feeling of security, and rewards and recognition. In accordance with the theory of social exchange, a permanent exchange between the organization and employee takes place. The exchange is under constant revision. A positive assessment of the exchange may result in the growth of involvement, loyalty and productivity. In case of a negative assessment, involvement and productivity may be diminished, interest in leaving the organization may emerge, and, in extreme cases, actions which may harm or sabotage the organization may occur. As a consequence, the development of organizational support constitutes a significant area in organizations' operations.

Similarly to organizational support, the support of managers, di-

rect superiors, can be discussed. Such support is manifested in the care for employees' well-being, considering their views, opinions, and needs. Both types of support are interconnected and stem from treating employees as a particular capital of the company.

If the above factors are regarded by employees as positive, the probability of them becoming involved and committed increases.

Diversification of Satisfaction and Involvement Regarding Characteristics of Individuals

Numerous studies discuss the issue of diversity of satisfaction and involvement regarding age, gender, and position in the company.

Many researchers indicate such a diversity as far as age of respondents is concerned. However, results regarding the impact of gender upon the level of satisfaction are ambiguous. Studies by Clark (1997), who employed the multidimensional satisfaction scale, conducted among employees of British companies, indicate that women manifest a generally higher satisfaction than men. Contrary results were obtained in the studies of teachers' satisfaction in Iran and India. These studies did not prove the existence of gender-related differences in the matter (Arani, 2003).

On the other hand, studies of satisfaction conducted among employees in the USA indicate the existence of correlations with respondents' age but do not prove their existence with regard to gender (Janson & Martin, 1982; Lorence & Mortimer, 1985; Varca, Shaffer, & McCauley, 1983).

Studies conducted among Russian employees offer interesting insights. They prove the lack of relationships between general satisfaction and gender (Linz, 2003). However, some differences were observed with regard to individual aspects of attitude towards work and organization of individual groups. Men declare that a slight difference in salaries would incline them to change jobs. They would also be inclined to recommend their place of work to a close friend. On the other hand, for women, it is important that their contribution to the development of the organization is recognized. Considerable differences in satisfaction may be observed with regard to age-diversified employees. Senior employees consistently declare higher satisfaction than their younger colleagues. In addition, it was acknowledged that employees in more senior positions manifest higher job satisfaction, both general and dimension-specific (Linz, 2003).

The majority of studies indicate that job satisfaction is determined by the level of education. Less educated employees experience higher satisfaction in comparison with better educated colleagues (Clark & Oswald, 1995).

So far, few studies have been devoted to evaluating satisfaction of employees representing diversified generations. In addition, their results are ambiguous. Results of sequential analyses conducted by Kowske, Rasch, and Wiley (2010) indicate that representatives of Generation Y manifest higher job satisfaction, recognition, and development opportunities in comparison with representatives of Generation X. Cennamo and Gardner (2008) arrived at opposing conclusions. In their cross-sectional studies they proved that there exist no significant differences as far as job satisfaction of individual generations is concerned. However, they observed that representatives of Generation Y are more inclined to declare they considered changing jobs than representatives of Baby Boomers.

The situation is similar with regard to engagement. In this case, research results are ambiguous as well. Cennamo and Gardner (2008) did not identify significant gender-related differences with regard to organizational commitment.

Numerous authors emphasize the impact of age upon organizational commitment. They indicate that senior employees manifest a higher level of organizational commitment (Cho & Mor Barak, 2008). The fact may be linked with fewer employment opportunities for senior employees or higher costs associated with leaving the organization in their case (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). The relationship may also be explained by the fact that senior employees usually occupy higher positions in the hierarchy (Meyer & Allen, 1984). On the other hand, lower organizational commitment of younger employees may result from their shorter work experience and the fact that they invested relatively less into the relationship than their older colleagues.

In light of the above, studies of a team of Brazilian authors Da Silva, Dutra, Veloso, Fischer, and Trevisan (2015) are noteworthy. They analyzed relationships between working conditions and affective commitment. Results revealed that Baby Boomers attach more significance to work and corporate social responsibility than representatives of other generations. On the other hand, work and learning and development opportunities are the most significant for Generation X. Generation Y appreciate learning and development but

also find relations with colleagues and ability to reconcile professional and private lives important. On the other hand, D'Amato and Herzfeldt (2008) evaluated relationships between organizational learning, organizational commitment, and interest in changing jobs among managers. Generational differences in these relations were observed.

In case of job involvement, few studies have assessed its relationship with demographic variables. Relationships between the level of job involvement and age, education, work experience, position occupied, and salary level, were assessed. However, no conclusive results were obtained. When evaluating gender in relation to salespeople, Marshall, Lask, and Moncrief (2004) observed that women's job involvement usually scores low and men's scores between medium and high. As far as age is concerned, Rabinowitz and Hall (1977) did not observe significant differences between samples. The assessment of relationships between job involvement and age offered much better results. The relations were identified in groups of nurses, researchers, civil servants and military servicemen (Lodahl & Kejner, 1965). Marshall et al. (2004) arrived at similar conclusions. They observed that older salespeople indicate higher job involvement. No definite relationship between annual salary and job involvement was indicated. Some differences were observed when job involvement was related to weekly sales results. Similarly, studies by Brown (1996) indicated a positive but weak correlation between job involvement and salary levels. Positive relationships were noted between years of work experience and job involvement in samples encompassing civil servants, military servicemen, and fitters. However, other studies did not confirm these (Rabinowitz & Hall, 1977). To conclude, a reference to Brown's observations can be made. He claims that results of the meta-analysis 'clearly indicate the lack of relationships between job involvement and demographic features' (Brown, 1996, p. 243).

So far, few studies have been devoted to the relationship between work engagement and variables diversifying workforce. Studies conducted by consulting agencies may only serve as an inspiration for scholars due to the fact that, despite a common name, constructs evaluated by these are defined and understood differently. For example, studies conducted by the Institute for Employment Studies (www.employment-studies.co.uk/pubs/summary.php?id) pertaining to employee engagement conclude that the level of engagement

diminishes with time until the age of 60. At this point, it grows rapidly. This makes this particular age group the most engaged. It was also acknowledged that ethnic minorities are more work-engaged, and managers and professionals manifest higher engagement than employees of lower levels. However, there exist few academic studies in the issue and these do not offer definite conclusions. For example, studies by Saari, Melin, Balabanova, and Efendiev (2017) indicate that the position of managers exerts considerable impact upon work engagement in Russia, but not in Finland. This may suggest the influence of cultural factors upon the construct.

Studies of Banihani et al. (2013) offer interesting insights into the relationship between gender and work engagement. They indicate that despite the literature of the subject failing to identify differences in work engagement in relation to gender, and the fact that the construct is considered neutral gender-wise (Wilson, 1998), women face more obstacles and barriers in experiencing and presenting their work engagement. This may lead to occupational burnout. Calas and Smircich (1992) indicate that studies pertaining to work engagement are conducted from the male point of view, which contributes to the consolidation of social and work-related inequalities. Banihani et al. (2013) prove that men find it easier to experience meaningfulness at work because women tend to feel less recognized and useful in the workplace. The fact that women are underrepresented in executive positions is noteworthy as well. This may pose a barrier in experiencing meaningfulness at work. As far as the feeling of mental security is concerned, the situation is similar. Women feel less secure, thus, they frequently hide their true features and do not employ their competences fully. On the other hand, men are encouraged to be themselves. Finally, women are less available due to household and familial obligations. Studies pertaining to the relationship between work engagement and gender offer inconclusive results and indicate that there were no differences in Canadian, Australian and French samples. However, with regard to German, Belgian, Norwegian and Finnish samples, it was observed that men tend to be more engaged in work than women. On the other hand, South African and Spanish samples proved that women tend to manifest greater work engagement than men (Schaufeli, Taris, & Bakker, 2006).

To sum up the above results, several conclusions may be formulated:

1. Older employees manifest higher job satisfaction than younger workers.
2. Education is negatively correlated with employees' satisfaction, i.e. less educated employees manifest higher job satisfaction when compared with more educated workers.
3. Results pertaining to gender do not confirm the existence of definite differences regarding the feeling of satisfaction between men and women.
4. Organizational commitment seems to be the most closely linked with organizational resources than other types of commitment.
5. Results prove that job involvement does not seem to be determined by demographic features.
6. Results pertaining to work engagement are inconclusive. This may be associated with difficulties with defining the construct.

Issues discussed above suggest that even though it is difficult to determine definite relationships pertaining to job satisfaction and work attachment with regard to gender and other characteristic features, some conclusions which may serve as the basis for guidelines and recommendations for managing individual employee groups, can be drawn. It is also important to be aware of the fact that the discussed attitudes towards work are determined by organizational factors. As a consequence, the degree to which a particular employee will be able to become engaged in work for the particular organization ought to be established as early as the selection process.

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Chapter Five

Development of Employees' Potential in the Context of Diversity Management

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Employee Potential vs. Diversity Management

Modern organizations operate in the state of a permanent change. This is largely determined by globalization, development of technologies, employees' mobility, shortening life cycle of products and even enterprises themselves. When both the organization and its surrounding environment undergo a constant change, non-material assets gain significance (Salopek, 2006; Bassett-Jones, 2005). In globalization and innovation, people and their potential become the most valuable resource of organizations. It is employees' competences, their skills and creativity which frequently offer competitive advantage. The diversity of employees' competences is of particular significance in this context as some of these competences become outdated and others emerge (Kramer, 2011; Crook, Todd, Combs, Woehr, & Ketchen, 2011).

It ought to be noted that the literature of the subject does not offer one universal definition of employees' competences. Several ideas and research approaches can be found. These are associated both with the identification and evaluation of employees' competences. In addition, apart from competences, several synonymous terms are present, e.g. skills, abilities, and qualifications. This emerges as a result of the transfer of academic achievements across various disciplines and countries (Rakowska, 2007, p. 47). Moreover, typologies of competences vary. Due to the subject matter of the present study,

M. Armstrong's division of competences into behavioral and functional ought to be made a reference to (Armstrong, 2012). The former are associated with behaviors required at work, while the latter are connected with competences required for work at a specific position (Rakowska & Sitko-Lutek, 2015). Boyatzis may be considered a herald of the idea of employee competences associated with the behavioral trend. He identified competences with features of employees who did well in their jobs (Boyatzis, 1982). According to Boyatzis (1992), work results are determined by several characteristics of an individual, such as personal values, motives, experience, knowledge, skills, self-perception, and perception of one's social role. Argyle (1967), a representative of the behavioral trend, viewed competences in a similar way. Therefore, authors representing the behavioral trend analyze competences in light of employees' potential, their ability to manifest behaviors leading to the successful realization of tasks in a workplace. Contemporarily, competences in the behavioral trend encompass the following: knowledge, skills, and attitudes which enable employees to behave in a particular manner (i.e. competently, and effectively in a given situation). It is a broader approach than the one presented by typical behaviorists because employees' behaviors are analyzed as being determined by both internal and external (surrounding environment) factors (Rakowska, 2007; Rakowska & Sitko-Lutek, 2015).

Apart from competences, the literature frequently discusses employees' skills. Scholars indicate that these are a narrower term than competences themselves (Oleksyn, 2006; Rakowska, 2007). A premise can be made that for an employee to be competent, they ought to possess several characteristics enabling them to translate skills into effective activities (Antonacopoulou & Fitzgerald, 1996). Employees' competence potential seems significant from the point of view of HR management and HR diversity management. The potential can be understood as 'all features and characteristics of individuals constituting human resources which decide about their current and prospective ability and readiness to conduct activities to the benefit of the company, and which determine their leverage and advantage on labor market' (Jamka, 2011, pp. 225-226). In such a context, the following constitute the main elements of employee potential: theoretical knowledge, practical skills, abilities, health and motivation to work, which comprise its qualitative aspect. On the other hand,

its quantitative aspect is composed of the period the elements of the qualitative potential remain at disposal of the company. This definition offered a basis for premises regarding the development of a model of competence potential described in the research part of the present study. A premise was made that there exist fields of knowledge, skills and personal features which are of significance for the present and prospective ability and readiness to conduct activities to the benefit of the company and to operate on labor market (Rakowska & Sitko-Lutek, 2015; Valdes Conca & De Juana-Espinosa, 2012).

Recently, the literature of the subject features a trend associated with the analysis of relationships between a diversified employee potential and the achievement of organizational objectives, competitiveness on the market, and innovation (Henneke & Lüthje, 2007; Hoefer, Van Knippenberg, Van Ginkel, & Barkema 2012; Parrotta, Pozzoli, & Pytlikova, 2014; Grudzewski, Hejduk, Sankowska, & Wańtuchowicz, 2013). Numerous studies are devoted to work effectiveness of heterogeneous teams. Some researchers indicate that such a team, diversified with regard to sex, age education, etc., is more likely to generate conflicts (Klotz, Hmieleski, Bradley, & Busenitz, 2014). On the other hand, studies conducted among teams of programmers proved that diversity impacted effectiveness by generating task conflicts which, in turn, resulted in constructive criticism, thus, improving the team's innovation (Steffens, Terjesen, & Davidsson, 2012). Despite the fact that much attention was devoted to the issue of diversity and management of diversified teams of employees, no consensus regarding the impact of a team's diversity upon its effectiveness has been reached. It may result from the fact that not all organizations consider diversity management as a strategy, i.e. purposeful actions aiming to boost effectiveness, improve results, develop a creative process of solving problems by facilitating the emergence of conditions for the cooperation of teams composed of employees of various potential. Therefore, in order for diversity management to be successful and translate into the growth of organizational effectiveness, a suitable diversity policy and implementation of programs associated with it are required (Urbaniak, 2014; Mazur, 2009).

Several crucial factors determine whether the organization will be dominated by the benefits of diversity or its negative consequences. According to Gadomska-Lila, the identification of differ-

ences, them being understood, and subsequently utilized, play the key role (Gadomska-Lila, 2017). As a consequence, new concepts and diversity management models integrating diversity management processes with other organizational processes, emerge (Urbaniak, 2014; Rakowska, 2014).

In light of diversity management, the analysis of employees' potential encompassing features such as age, sex, experience, knowledge, skills, etc., is significant. The analysis enables diversity management strategies to be properly developed. In addition, the development of appropriate organizational structure, i.e. one favorable for employees' diversity potential, is important as well.

Numerous studies and reviews of EU member states' activity indicate that stereotypes, especially ones associated with sex, are still widespread and rooted in social consciousness (Joshi, Son, & Roh, 2015). Cultural norms, stereotypical perception of gender roles and models of functioning accepted in a particular society result in women in European countries being less interested in a career as an entrepreneur or manager, and less certain of their competences in this respect, than men (Piacentini, 2013; Estévez-Abe, 2005; Rakowska, 2007). Studied women assess their causative skills, especially those regarding management and establishment of a company, lower than men (Thébaud, 2010). On the other hand, results of studies indicate that women earn less because they seem to be punished for being a 'good citizen,' i.e. for selecting socially useful professions and presenting higher ethical standards (Grove, Hussey, & Jetter, 2011). Entrepreneurial attitudes of women and men are also influenced by their cultural background and country of origin. Social norms and the perception of gender roles accepted by a particular society largely determine entrepreneurial activity and manifested attitudes of women and men (Shneor, Camgöz, & Karapinar, 2013).

Studies prove that women are characterized by stronger communicative skills (including interpersonal skills), development of good relations, empathy, intuition, and ability to foster a positive climate. Moreover, women approach the application of power in a different manner than men do. For many women, power is not an objective itself, but a means enabling other, significant values, to be realized. On the other hand, men frequently apply power to gain prestige and material benefits, and attach less significance to the atmosphere in the company or employees' satisfaction (Rakowska, 2007, pp. 166–172).

Researchers interested in cultural determinants of sex's impact upon managerial and entrepreneurial competences and attitudes believe that such differences may be observed in young people – students. Studies of entrepreneurial attitudes conducted in four different countries¹ indicated that female students decided upon their prospective careers predominantly on the basis of fears and possible difficulties. On the other hand, male students' decisions were motivated by the drive towards success. Such an approach exerted a positive influence upon entrepreneurial attitudes, while fears and barriers' impact was negative (Şeşen & Pruett, 2014).

Research results indicate that stereotypes are not only limited to replicating general opinions and views on women and men, but also exert a significant impact upon decisions made regarding the activity of both sexes. Their influence upon women is the strongest and frequently hinders their application of rights and competition with men as equals (Młodożeniec & Knapieńska, 2013). The literature of the subject offers many examples of situations where women managers are discriminated against with regard to their sex and age (Jyrkinen & McKie, 2012).

Studies conducted among Polish SMEs indicate that women are aware of their situation on labor market being more difficult than it is in case of men. It was acknowledged that Polish society exhibits a stereotypical approach and evaluates men better than women in a particular position. In addition, more work and effort is demanded of women (Giedrojć, Zaręba, & Gajewski, 2012). This is one of the most significant reasons behind businesses being established by Polish women, who prove to be more entrepreneurial than those from other European countries (Balcerzak-Paradowska et al., 2011).

Apart from sex, age constitutes another frequently evaluated aspect of employees' potential diversity. At present, as a result of population ageing and new generations entering the labor market and them needing to cooperate with other age groups, proper age management skills pose a significant challenge for managers. There exist numerous companies whose age-diversified teams proved extremely productive owing to the effective application of their potentials. In face of the current socio-demographic situation, the employment of seniors in companies whose clients are also of similar age, or in com-

¹ The USA, China, Turkey and Belgium.

panies supplying age-specific products (health-oriented services, retail, etc.), needs to be considered and appreciated. In such cases, an older employee is more likely to satisfy the requirements of senior clients. In addition, the number of such clients will only grow (Liwiński & Sztanderska, 2010).

Professional and social skills of seniors constitute a unique resource the young do not possess. Numerous elderly employees are characterized by a special attention to detail, scrupulousness, and ability to communicate with clients and colleagues. In addition, they are frequently experienced in solving challenging problems. The loss of such competences due to an early retirement or redundancy may entail serious ramifications for the company (Giza-Poleszczuk, Góra, Liwiński, & Sztanderska, 2008).

Researchers dealing with the issue of age management highlight that both employers and employees themselves ascribe age-specific predispositions and skills to workers. There exist numerous stereotypes regarding seniors, which implies the existence of a stereotypical approach to the young as well (Sargeant, 2013). While young employees are commended for their gung-ho, go-ahead approach and creativity, seniors are believed to possess these qualities to a much lower degree. On the other hand, elderly employees are believed to be more experienced, patient, loyal and reliable, which implies the young do not possess these features (Liwiński & Sztanderska, 2010). Fazlagic (2008) considers the following characteristics as belonging to the group of young employees: the willingness and ability to work in teams, the need for work-life balance (w-LB), low loyalty towards employers, the lack of independence regarding decision-making, the lack of permanent father figures, multitasking, high ICT skills. Similar results regarding the young were obtained in studies conducted among employers employing graduates of economics. According to respondents, knowledge and theoretical background are among the assets of the young. On the other hand, the lack of a relationship between theoretical knowledge and practical skills, and little work experience acquired during studies, were indicated as weaknesses. Apart from vocational training, employers indicated shortages regarding soft skills of the young, such as communicative skills, the ability to start and maintain relationships, the ability to work in work-groups (Jakubiak & Sitko-Lutek, 2015).

At present, an increasing number of companies voice their need

for employees possessing well-developed soft skills, such as interpersonal skills, teamwork, communicative skills, flexibility, leadership, stimulation of development. Meanwhile, employees frequently perceive hard skills, such as technical knowledge, vocational skills, as more significant than the soft ones. Interestingly, such views are voiced by both young and senior employees (Van Dalen, Henkens, & Schippers, 2010). According to employers, interpersonal skills have become a strong attribute of workers determining their employment or promotion. Soft skills facilitate success in both careers and private lives (Heckman & Kautz, 2012).

Interesting results were also obtained in the course of other studies conducted among young people (<35). According to respondents, older workers (aged 55+) possess competences which may offer organizational competitive advantage. Such competences are missing in the <35 group. At the same time, despite such positive views, the study proved that the young are unwilling to cooperate with the senior. No conclusive answers were obtained when the root cause for such a state of affairs was sought (Richert-Kaźmierska & Stankiewicz, 2013).

Cognitive Styles as an Element of Employee Potential

Apart from employees' knowledge and skills, learning styles, referred to as cognitive styles in the literature, are vital for the development of the competence potential. To specify the term 'learning styles,' it can be said that they determine the way of thinking, identification of facts, and retention of information. The familiarity with learning styles is of particular importance as far as the management of diversified teams is concerned. This is due to the fact that it can contribute to the achievement of better outcomes, both by managers and employees of HR departments. Cognitive styles may also play a significant role in learning because matching the style with the form of knowledge acquisition improves the efficiency of the process and offers the highest results.

On the other hand, a controlled lack of the matching stimulates development. The situation is optimal when an individual is able to purposefully and consciously adopt the style which seems to be the most convergent with the requirements of a particular task. According to Honey and Mumford, anyone pursuing personal development ought to become an opportunist in terms of education so that all

emerging learning opportunities are utilized to the fullest (Honey & Mumford, 1995, p. 2).

When discussing learning styles, the term 'learning' ought to be explained as it has gained a variety of interpretations. Some studies describe learning as a situation or activity of acquiring knowledge or skills. Learning is also interpreted as a process whereby experiences acquired by an individual are retained, and subsequently, lead to a change of their behavior (Mietzel, 2003). A 'cognitive style' is also the term which has been frequently analyzed by numerous authors. According to Matczak (2004), it constitutes 'a preferred means of cognitive functioning matching the specific needs of an individual' (Matczak, 2004, p. 761). Riding and Rayner (1998) interpret the term in a different manner. They believe that the cognitive style denotes 'an innate and automatic way of responding to information and situations' (Riding & Rayner, 1998, p. 7), and 'a preferred approach towards organizing information and developing its representation' (p. 8).

As with cognitive styles, arriving at a specific definition of a learning style is troublesome. Claxton and Ralston (1978) define it as a permanent form of reacting and using stimuli in the context of learning (Sitko-Lutek, 2009, p. 82). Riding and Rayner highlight that the term ought to be understood not only with reference to different preferences regarding the choice of a form of learning, but also to individual differences in terms of intelligence and personality (Riding & Rayner, 1998, p. 51). Kolb defines learning styles with reference to learning cycles as a preferred method of information acquisition (p. 54).

Due to the fact that individual people learn better depending on a particular situation, applying diversified methods and becoming familiar with one's learning style is worthwhile in order to acquire knowledge more effectively. Unfamiliarity with one's strengths and methods enabling these to be developed may result in the application of inappropriate techniques, hence the emergence of problems in the acquisition and retention of information (Honey & Mumford, 1995, p. 2). A variety of typologies concerning learning styles were developed in order to facilitate learning processes. The following models may be included in the typologies: hemisphere model, sensory model, and the one developed by Honey and Mumford on the basis of the idea of experiential learning.

The Experiential Learning theory was developed by Kolb. In 1984, based on the theory, and with the application of achievements of, e.g. Jean Piaget, William James, John Dewey, and Carl Jung, he distinguished four styles. The essence of Kolb's model can be found in considering experience as a source of knowledge and development (Kolb & Kolb, 2005, p. 2).

Due to the fact that the model assumes the development of an individual, three stages of development were distinguished: acquisition (occurs from birth up to adolescence; the period when basic abilities and cognitive structures emerge), specialization (encompasses puberty and early adulthood; the period when a learning style specific to a particular individual emerges. The style is determined by education, society, and the character and requirements of the first job), and integration (beginning in mid-career period; the hitherto dominant style loses significance to the benefit of the remaining ones) (Kolb & Kolb, 2005, p. 4).

Kolb highlighted the importance of learning which constitutes a vital factor determining the path of personal development people lead their life along. In addition, Honey emphasized the power emerging from conscious learning by experience. He believed that it may constitute the most critical of all life skills. He claims the its shortage translates into the inability to acquire new knowledge, repeating the same mistakes, and considerable difficulties with adjusting to any change. However, the process of experiential learning is frequently disregarded and taken for granted. Considering one's own learning as intuitive is not the correct approach because it hinders the improvement of the process and communication of its results to others. Even though conducting any activity consciously and deliberately requires more time and effort, Honey enumerates several advantages emerging from such an approach: clarity of information or skills acquired, becoming familiar with means for a constant improvement of own learning methods and ability to help others do so as well, decrease of fear of change, learning on success instead of failure, improvement of knowledge transfer between situations (Honey, 1994, pp. 2-3).

Kolb offered an experiential learning cycle. He believes that learning is successful when an individual progresses through all stages of the process: beginning with a particular experience which subsequently serves as a basis for reflections for the development of

theories and generalizations (i.e. conducting an analysis and drawing conclusions). These may serve as hypotheses to be evaluated in consecutive situations. Then the cycle begins anew.

Even though the experiential learning model was introduced, this does not mean that everyone learns in the same manner. Some draw the most from testing themselves in action, others are satisfied with a mere observation. Other people seek to understand general principles, and others require guidelines telling them how they can act. The following exert impact upon learning styles: personality, pursued path of education and career, professional role and tasks conducted in a particular position, culture. Depending on the choice made by an individual, they may be classified as one of the four learning styles offered by Kolb, i.e. (1) accommodator ('I feel and act'), (2) diverger ('I feel and observe'), (3) converger ('I think and act'), and (4) assimilator ('I think and observe').

A person pursuing conscious learning should not only become familiar with his/her own style, and subsequently develop it via suitable forms of learning, but also attempt to develop the remaining styles in order to utilize all learning opportunities.

For the purpose of the study, the term 'cognitive style' will be defined as a fixed way of knowledge and skills' acquisition. The term 'learning style' can be applied interchangeably.

The typology of cognitive styles offered by Allinson and Hayes (2012) deserves particular attention among numerous typologies designed by researchers from many countries. The typology was developed with its practical application in management in mind. The authors highlight the significance of the familiarity with cognitive styles of individuals attached to business practice. They believe that this familiarity may be of particular importance when selecting candidates, planning career development paths, building workgroups, in conflict management, and mentoring, trainings and broadly understood development.

Allinson and Hayes offered a research methodology of cognitive styles on the basis of analytical and intuitive spheres. They believe that these spheres reflect differences in the way an individual approaches problem-solving and decision-making (Riding & Rayner, 1998). At the same time, they claim that only a small number of people may be classified as 'purely analytical' or 'purely intuitive.' The authors' approach constitutes a continuum which features indi-

viduals manifesting various degrees of intensity regarding a particular feature. On the basis of studies conducted by means of an original Cognitive Styles Index, Allinson and Hayes determined five cognitive styles: analytic, quasi-analytic, adaptive, quasi-adaptive, and intuitive. The analytic style is associated with significant logic in decision-making, the ability to focus on detail. On the other hand, the intuitive style assumes that syntheses are made and situations are evaluated comprehensively (Allinson & Hayes, 2012).

Cognitive preferences of an individual are shaped since childhood. They are partly determined by biological bases and upbringing. Even though slight modifications are possible, once shaped, cognitive styles undergo little change in the course of development. Cognitive preferences are considered by researchers as manifestations of personality.

The Application of Familiarity with Learning Styles for Competence Development

The practical application of knowledge associated with learning styles constitutes one of the methods of boosting the effectiveness of competence development. This is especially true for matching individual learning styles and content to methods and forms of training, and the convergence of teacher-learner styles.

According to Kolb (1976), the value of a learning style is determined by factors an individual perceives as facilitating or hindering learning. Everyone applies their own, mature learning style. Therefore, a suitable environment matched with the preferred style facilitates learning, while an unsuitable and unmatched environment may exert a negative impact. Despite the fact that the author recognizes the need for creating conditions favorable to everyone, i.e. all of the styles, he is an advocate of the individualization of learning and matching it with the style of an individual.² Such advocates believe that the approach improves not only results of the process but also satisfaction. They also indicate that styles influence not only the

² One of the fundamental examples may be the training conducted for Ford Motor Company by Mumford and Honey (1993). The diagnosis of learning styles of managers participating in the training revealed that the training group was dominated by theoreticians. Therefore, in order to successfully realize the training programme, heterogeneous groups with a balanced learning profile were formed. This facilitated the achievement of improved learning results.

way people learn but also the way they teach. Adversaries of such an approach observe that when matching learning strategies with a single dominant style, creativity is diminished and a peculiar routine instilled.

Such an uncertainty regarding the ability to shape learning styles entails a practical significance. Should styles be considered as fixed, then, the development of suitable forms of training constitutes the only way of adjusting a learning style, means, and learning strategy. In addition, the achievement of a harmony between the learning style and learning is possible by the selection of a coach of a suitable profile. Due to the fact that each of the styles reflects one of the stages of the learning cycle, a balance between all styles should be pursued (Pedler & Aspinwall, 1999).

If a premise is made that a certain flexibility does exist, then a change of the learning style may be achieved via the adaptation of the learner or lecturer. Both managers and trainers can be assisted in the development of learning strategies which are desired and different from the ones dominant in their cases.

Hayes and Allinson (1993, p. 76) reviewed studies devoted to the relationship between learning styles and teaching forms. When analyzing various studies pertaining to learning styles, they indicated that 12 among 19 key studies confirm the fact that matching the learning style and teaching form improves learning outcomes. The significance of learning styles in improving the effectiveness of managers is undisputed. Allinson and Hayes' (1996) observations acknowledge the fact. They observe that learning styles exert a stronger impact upon learning outcomes than sex, age and attitudes.

Researchers studying learning styles have not come to a unanimous conclusion whether and to what degree learning styles can be changed and what their origins are. Therefore, recommendations regarding the application of learning styles will pertain to both approaches: first, how to utilize the knowledge of the present state of affairs, second, what and in what way is to be developed.

An interesting field of application associated with learning styles is the ability to apply these in the development of social potential. The familiarity with individual learning profiles of managers may facilitate the effective use of human resources a company has at disposal. This is particularly relevant regarding the development of teams whose members include representatives of each of the styles.

Despite the fact that there are no good or bad styles, diversification seems to be the most viable option, thus, teams composed of members representing various styles seem to be optimal. Work results seem to increase with the balanced presence of each of the styles. This secures active experimenting, reflection and evaluation, the development of theoretical models, and practical applications.

The diagnosis of learning styles may also be helpful in the management of social potential. Employees manifesting the pursued learning styles may be acquired in the process of recruitment and selection.

A motivation system may also include incentives to acquire knowledge and skills in a particular way. The development of individual career paths ought to take the learning profile of an individual into consideration. Some types of tasks are handled much easier by a person of a particular learning profile, which may impact the choice of the prospective development path. The identification of the learning style may also constitute an element of periodic assessment and review of training needs.

Moreover, the familiarity with learning styles facilitates the development of the most effective training forms.

Practical guidelines pertain to the following suggestions regarding the adjustment of learning strategies, teacher's style, and other environment-associated aspects:

- Matching the learning style of the manager and the teacher in order to boost learning efficiency, i.e. the individualization of learning in line with specific preferences of the learning style;
- Assessment of the training program and trainers but also the review of reactions of individual participants to diverse teaching styles and methods;
- The application of various training methods by trainers;
- Design of trainings in a way enabling content to be taught in various ways allowing to match it with the manager's learning style, i.e. design the training with various types of recipients in mind;
- Becoming familiar with learning styles of managers and participants of the training. In addition, a review of gains and losses resulting from the application of the particular training method;
- Facilitation of learning, e.g. by organizational changes.

The familiarity with learning styles may also be of assistance when developing and implementing training programs:

- First of all, it helps to predict potential difficulties;
- Secondly, it may be useful when assigning roles and tasks to individual managers participating in the training;
- Thirdly, learning styles may help analyze learning and its effectiveness at individual stages;
- Fourthly, information on learning styles helps managers plan and develop own learning styles. It is possible via an in-depth analysis of questionnaires and the development of individual action plans;
- Lastly, it helps to develop appropriate teams.

Each of the learning styles has elements facilitating and hindering learning. The knowledge of the styles can facilitate the proper choice of teaching methods. It is also significant in daily work, mutual learning between superiors, subordinates, and peers. It helps to effectively utilize opportunities for the development of human and social capital of the organization.

The second aspect associated with the application of learning styles is an attempt to shape these. According to Honey and Mumford (1992, pp. 46–50), learning styles can be influenced and modified. The management plays a critical role in the process in the organization.

The superior influences the preferred learning styles by, e.g. the following:

- Diagnosis of learning styles of subordinates;
- Assessment of results in the context of these matching tasks conducted by them;
- Assessment of their own learning style and its matching to their subordinates;
- Identification of improvement opportunities which may be offered and financed.

The familiarity with learning styles may also be applied in building teams in the process of development and diversity with regard to age in order to slowly develop the acceptance of the more senior management for more active training forms. However, it ought to be

noted that the selection of training methods ought to include the needs of all learning styles.

Recommendations pertaining to the development of the management cadre seem to be the most significant. These recommendations are to help the management deal with market reality and ever-evolving global environment. However, the formulation of such recommendations seems difficult. According to Higgs (1996, p. 38), power distance impacts the way managers of different cultures operate. In countries of high power distance, e.g. Poland and China, the need for structured learning and an expert responsible for development is dominant. A consequence of such an approach is that until structures of traditional power distance are enforced, preferences for the reflexive learning style will prevail. However, the trend may change. Some studies (Sitko-Lutek, 2004) suggest that in post-Soviet states, such as Poland, Slovakia, the Baltic States, money has become the key power source replacing formal influence, authority, status. Therefore, such trends may limit power distance and result in the development of conditions facilitating the emergence of more active, individual forms of managerial training.

Undeniably, the ability of Polish organizations to survive and develop will only depend on the ability and willingness to learn. It is estimated (Sambrook & Stewart, 2000, p. 213) that in European organizations much depends on the motivation of employees to become involved in learning new tasks and processes and on developing a learning-culture. Great hopes regarding the introduction of changes and novel management methods are associated with the young generation of the active, entrepreneurial, well-educated, aware of the necessity and ready for constant development who have already acquired experience in successful operation in economy.

Modern organizations are based on knowledge and learning and increasingly introduce the idea of knowledge management. This is done not only via organizational, financial, and technological changes, but is primarily motivated by the degree and level of qualifications of its drivers, especially managers.

Development of Employee Potential in the Context of Diversity Management in Modern Organizations

With no proper investment strategy, human capital, very much like the traditional one, loses value. In addition, like never before, knowl-

edge and skills become outdated, devalue, and require development (Łaguna, Purc, Razmus, Błaszyk, & Gawrońska, 2015). Moreover, organizations which are able to recognize these in time achieve numerous benefits such as growth of involvement, job satisfaction, and improved well-being,³ etc. (Filipowicz, 2014).

The creation of potential development opportunities by organizations is of particular significance to the representatives of young generations. According to Fazlagic (2008), Generation Y (most frequently applied to people born between 1980 and 2000), requires constant stimulation, including stimulation in the workplace. Young people are capable of loyalty, however, not necessarily towards the company. If the employer cannot ensure development opportunities, they may transfer to competition without remorse.

In recent years, the attention has been drawn to work-life balance (w-LB) in the framework of Corporate Social Responsibility. It may be considered both on the level of individuals (employees) and the whole organization. Advocates of the concept highlight the need for creating such ways of work and working conditions which meet needs of employees and clients (McCarthy, Darcy, & Grady, 2010; Beauregard & Henry, 2009; Borkowska, 2010). Work-life balance is also associated with diversity management, especially in the context of age-diversified employees. Studies indicate that w-LB is appreciated primarily by the young, including the representatives of Generation Y. This is due to the fact that they value flexible working time and consider the ability to administer it a significant value (Fazlagic, 2008).

The idea of life-long learning, which stems from the Lisbon Strategy, constitutes an element of age management in modern organizations (Liwiński & Sztanderska, 2010). The idea revolves around the realization of initiatives determining effective, rational, and satisfactory for an individual application of potential, and care for the needs of employees of all ages. Life-long learning constitutes a tool allowing employees (of all ages) to remain professionally active, and to retain valuable, frequently expert competences, within the company. In addition, employees also benefit by maintaining their knowledge up-to-date, acquiring information, and due to intergenerational integration (e.g. by mentoring, intermentoring).

³ Well-being of employees encompasses the adjustment, good mental health, and low level of occupational burnout.

The role of a mentor is particularly important for people in the old age, who frequently feel their market value diminishes (Urbanak, 2014). As a consequence, for experienced employees, the role constitutes an acknowledgement of their professionalism, recognition of their competences and achievements (Lubrańska, 2014). At the same time, the involvement of the old, possessing competences crucial from the point of view of shaping the organization's competitiveness, in the process of intra-organizational and intergenerational knowledge transfer, may be of critical importance (Richert-Każmierska & Stankiewicz, 2013). This is specifically important at present, when age-, experience- and competence-diversified generations of employees cooperate within the majority of organizations. Unfortunately, the literature of the subject offers numerous examples of improper knowledge transfer. Barriers in this respect include competition focus, focus on the individual course of own work, ill-designed motivation system, national culture unfavorable to knowledge transfer which determines the type of organizational culture (Michailova & Hutchings, 2006, p. 385).

Meanwhile, transfer solutions may contribute to the achievement of competitive advantage by the organization. As a consequence, it is advocated to undertake actions aiming to develop organizational culture facilitating the successful knowledge transfer in the organization. Therefore, solutions matching the specifics of the organization ought to be selected, motivation system encouraging knowledge and experience sharing introduced, contacts facilitating knowledge transfer developed, and projects ought to be headed by people capable of motivating others and supporting them (Skiba, 2016).

In recent years, intermentoring has been introduced in business practice. It is a tool allowing to successfully transfer knowledge, skills and competences among employees of various ages. Studies indicate that skills of older employees constitute a unique resource which young and fresh employees do not offer. If senior employees occupy positions matching their competences, they are very productive. On the other hand, the development of age-diversified teams offers the opportunity for an intergenerational knowledge and skills transfer, i.e. a chance for maintaining continuity of knowledge resources and skills in teams (Giza-Poleszczuk et al., 2008).

Intermentoring is considered a modified version of traditional mentoring revolving around young people being introduced into

the organization by senior or long-time employees. Intermentoring is innovative in the application of the so-called technological mentor (a person below 35 years of age) who trains an older person in IT and ICT. When cooperating with each other, both groups exchange skills and improve competences - e.g. older people learn software skills, the application of technological solutions from the young, and the young make use of their colleagues' rich professional experience. Research results indicate that intermentoring clearly offers positive results - by co-developing their potential, employees influence the development of the whole organization (Baran, 2013; Gojny & Zbierowski, 2015).

The literature of the subject features studies indicating that young people, representatives of Generation Y, are particularly difficult to involve and retain in the company. As a consequence, the young require a specific approach to motivation and improvement. They frequently need being directed, assisted in achieving objectives and in personal development. It is highlighted that a motivation system of a modern organization must be flexible in order to influence attitudes and behaviors of employees differing with regard to their cultural background, potential, age, etc. According to several studies presented in the literature, the need for boosting employee involvement poses one of the most fundamental problems for modern organizations. Coaching is suggested in order to remedy the situation. It may help employees manage emotions and successfully identify and achieve objectives. A more productive work, better disposition, greater involvement, and finally, achieving maximum productivity by employees, constitute results of a successful coaching program (Crabb, 2011).

The literature of the subject features many studies confirming the positive impact of coaching upon employee involvement, work quality improvement, and higher involvement in the life of the organization (Ellinger, Ellinger, Bachrach, Wang, & Baş, 2010; Hagen, 2010). Successful coaching offers tangible results in the form of a productivity boost of the employee, department, and ultimately, the whole enterprise (Longenecker, 2010; Hagen, 2010; Heathfield, 2015; Joo, Sushko, & McLean, 2012). A considerable amount of time which ought to be devoted to such a training constitutes a significant drawback of the method. Remote coaching may be a solution to this shortcoming. It occupies much less time without losing any of its effectiveness (Averweg, 2010). Such initiatives may be particularly produc-

tive when applied among young workers possessing well-developed IT skills.

As far as remote training programs and growing popularity of remote education are concerned, it ought to be noted that many of these result in failure. Several factors may be considered as causes of such an outcome. The factors include: ill-conducted marketing recruitment processes, improper finance management, insufficient quality of online courses (Rovai & Downey, 2010).

Due to several notorious court cases, the turn of the 20th century constituted the period when the public began to recognize problems of the discriminated with regard to sex at work. Several years have passed since that time and public awareness changed. In addition, employers are much more sensitive to problems of minority groups (sex, age, religion, sexual orientation) in their companies. Many companies declare being open to such people. Many strategies feature regulations pertaining to diversity management. Managers of modern organizations frequently emphasize that, at present, modern organizations ought to be managed so that the diversity of their employees enables effective functioning instead of generating losses or conflicts (Ricco & Guerci, 2014). As a consequence, diversity has become a source of creativity and innovation of modern businesses which may serve as a basis for the achievement of lasting competitive advantage (Gonzalez & Denisi, 2009; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2011). However, on the other hand, diversity is frequently the root cause of misunderstandings and conflicts in the workplace, which may bear serious consequences for the company (low work quality, absences, loss of competitiveness). Therefore, companies face a paradox. When treating diversity as a value, they risk the emergence of conflicts. However, if they try to avoid it, they risk the loss of competitiveness (Héroux & Fortin, 2016). In face of such difficulties, managers' competences associated with diversity management gain significance. These skills largely determine development capacity, which is important both for organizations employing them, as well as for employees' functioning on the changing labor market.

Organizations which are aware of these challenges support employees in training regarding diversity management. Such trainings are vital for managers and HR departments who frequently make unpopular decisions pertaining to employment, reductions and shifts across positions. These types of decisions ought to be free from any

bias or stereotypes. There exist means for restricting such types of behaviors, e.g. cooperation of companies with universities in order to attract competent workers, mentoring (an opportunity to become familiar with the mentored, which allows for the stereotypical approach to be curbed), and special recruitment programs for women and minorities. Such solutions are particularly successful in large companies and corporations (they helped, e.g. Coca-Cola and IBM) (Dobbin & Kalev, 2016; Childs, 2005).

Despite initiatives being undertaken by companies in order to improve diversity management, development programs are not always successful (Hays-Thomas, Bowen, & Boudreaux, 2012). Results of analyses indicate that the percentage of women or the black occupying top management positions, e.g. in American financing companies between 1985 and 2014, changes only slightly. This is also true for the Silicon Valley where numerous managers declare the need for diversity both due to economic and social reasons (Dobbin & Kalev, 2016). It was observed that programs aiming to increase diversity and acceptance for otherness fail to bring the expected results. In addition, they sometimes aggravate the situation. This is the case with, e.g. mandatory equal opportunities trainings. Their participants frequently react to these with anger and resentment. Moreover, having completed the course, their hostility towards other groups becomes even stronger. When participants believe that the choice is theirs, prejudice does frequently decrease (Dobbin & Kalev, 2016).

The analysis of studies conducted among over 800 American companies indicated that businesses achieved better results with regard to increased diversity by the application of initiatives which were not designed with diversity in mind. Examples of such initiatives include, e.g. greater involvement of managers in programs realized jointly with women or minorities (e.g. recruitment programs at universities addressing women or people of other skin colors), promotion of corporate social responsibility (fairness and honesty towards the surrounding environment), targeted university recruitment, mentoring programs (Dobbin & Kalev, 2016).

The effectiveness of learning processes ought to be assessed on the level of an individual, group, and the whole organization. The assessment ought to evaluate whether trainings and development programs brought desired outcomes: expansion of knowledge resource, development of skills, change of behaviors, and whether outcomes exerted

the desired impact upon operations of the company. The lack of results may stem from various factors associated with the individual and organization. The following play a critical role in learning and knowledge sharing: an inclusive climate, spanning boundaries, and framing of diversity initiatives (Chrobot-Mason, Ruderman, & Nishii, 2013). Researchers particularly highlight relationships among inclusive climate, team knowledge sharing, and team creativity (Bodla, Tang, Jiang, & Tian, 2016). Diversity researchers have argued that a diversity climate contributes to perceptions that the organization values the contributions of all employees. Homan, Van Knippenberg, Van Kleef, and De Dreu (2007) showed that demographically diverse groups made better use of information when they had positive attitudes to diversity. Therefore, actions associated with shaping proper organizational climate and culture gain significance. These actions not only adapt diversity but also consider it as added value.

Improvement of competences is a complex phenomenon, especially in the context of human resources diversity management and the dynamic character of knowledge and skills becoming outdated. The key recommendations include the following:

- Development of learning and new knowledge instead of focus upon mastering certain content;
- Application of a variety of improvement forms and methods. These are not limited to short trainings forms but are based upon self-assessment, reflection, experiential learning, literature, and exchange of experiences;
- Establishment of acceptable assistance relations and the application of both formal and informal ways of support on the part of managers;
- Increase of actual participation in trainings by the improvement of attractivity and applicability of offered trainings resulting from the following: comprehensive analysis of training needs, post-training facilitation of the applicability of acquired knowledge and skills, shaping not only narrow groups of skills, improvement of broadly understood competences encompassing not only knowledge and skills, but also attitudes and self-awareness;
- Due to the rate of changes in the surrounding environment, apart from developing skills of managing routine problems,

- skills of managing changes and innovation ought to be fostered;
- Internationalization of economies, globalization and integration entail specific requirements with regard to employee development. This is especially true for the improvement of skills associated with cooperation with other cultures;
 - Development of organizational culture facilitating the respect for diversity as a value based upon the assimilation of the following: openness, responsibility, creativity, cooperation, need of achievements;
 - A change in the role of the management towards permanent personal development and co-generation of development opportunities of employees;
 - Holistic development of employees' integrating work, personal and social lives, broad interests.

Outcomes of employee potential development depend on several factors, both internal (within an individual) and external. The former encompass the following in particular: knowledge and skills, abilities, personality, cognitive skills, intellectual potential, norms and standards, beliefs, ethical and moral principles, patterns of behavior, attitudes, level of motivation. Undeniably, internal motivation plays a critical role in this case. It motivates an individual to undertake intellectual effort, encourages to realize particular actions, etc. HR practices are also significant, e.g. the way diversified employee groups perceive these, and support offered by managers and organizations.

Employee development and the development of involved and loyal teams pose a specific challenge for managers. It stems from a growing diversity of teams and the necessity of specific approach to the management of these. As a result of the professional activity becoming longer and consecutive generations of employees entering the labor market, managers must increasingly face multigenerational employee teams. Researchers highlight that modern labor market features four active employee groups. The fifth has just begun their professional careers. Effective management of such teams requires specific managerial skills. Managers must successfully apply the team's potential, and, at the same time, effectively handle emerging conflicts (Rudolph & Zacher, 2015). Misunderstandings and difficult situations frequently arise from a stereotypical perception of representatives of other age groups. They may pertain to, e.g. conflicting attitudes towards knowl-

edge, the ease of applying new technologies, means of communication, acquired skills and experiences. As a consequence, the management of multi-generational employee teams requires considerable awareness on the part of managers. They must be able to recognize and solve conflicts before they escalate and result in further cooperation within a workgroup becoming impossible. Interpersonal skills cannot be underrated in this case. In addition, decision-making and conflict-management skills are significant. Honesty and leadership are expected of modern managers. They ought to look after people instead of merely interests of a small group profiting from the operations of the company (Walczak, 2011).

When considering determinants of employee development in the context of age- or sex-diversified teams' management it ought to be noted that initiatives and actions taken depend on numerous factors. These include: system of needs, values followed, qualifications, and employees' functioning in a particular social environment. Any activity aiming to improve competences constitutes an effort for a person, one which requires determination, and motivation. The assessment of results of this effort is conducted directly by the person invested in the process (Lewicka & Warmuz, 2015).

In recent years, the literature of the subject popularized the idea of situational leadership 2 offered by Blanchard (1987, 1997, 2010; Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Nelson, 1993). The author and colleagues postulate competent and flexible matching the management style with employees' competence level. This is particularly valuable in case of management of heterogeneous employee teams diversified with regard to age, sex or nationality. The development of team members' competences, and the improvement of decision-making independence by the participation in management, are enumerated among the benefits offered by the application of situational leadership in business practice. Due to the application of the idea, employees and managers are joined in co-responsibility for initiatives undertaken in the organization. This, in turn, translates into the increase of involvement, loyalty towards the organization, and contributes to a greater care for work results. By the introduction of situational leadership managers become a sort of mentors of their subordinates who encourage them to develop competences via the growth of motivation.

The transition from the traditional employee management towards employee participation has become a significant challenge of present

times. Successful coordination of heterogeneous teams' work requires managers to apply new patterns of behavior and become sensitive to the needs and expectations of various employee groups. At present, the success of organizations on the global market is increasingly associated with effective actions of people. This, in turn, largely depends on skills regarding sharing knowledge, development and application of competences, involvement and exhibited attitudes.

Managers who want to be successful in managing diversified employee teams ought to be aware that it is workers and their skills which constitute a potential for development and innovation of companies. This requires their proper approach to the management of employees with diversified potential (age, competences, education, etc.). Cooperation focus and development of a communication model in such a team seem crucial. In such cases, much depends on competences and experience of the manager. In order to profit from skills of age-diversified workers, mentoring programs or intergenerational bridges ought to be developed in companies. Managers ought to care not only for the development of their employees but their own as well. Development of competences regarding successful diversified team management and the application of potential of various employees enable advantages of diversity to be fully utilized.

Undeniably, cognitive processes, employee development and shaping the organizational culture oriented to effectiveness and facilitating learning and inclusion, constitute challenges for modern organizations.

The stimulation of organizational learning on the basis of the familiarity with cognitive styles, competence development, and the development of a unique culture focused on the respect for diversity in the organization and mutual learning, are presented in Figure 5.1.

The development of employees' competences ought to be supported by the organizational culture facilitating diversity and (mutual) learning. In practice, this translates into the influence upon values such as decreasing power distance, increasing tolerance of diversity, assessment based upon achievements, and development of a cohesive system of social potential management in the organization. In order for trainings and HR principles associated with diversity management to be successful, the culture sensitive to otherness, one open to cooperation within heterogeneous teams, facilitating the decrease of distance, one where mentoring and intergenerational knowledge

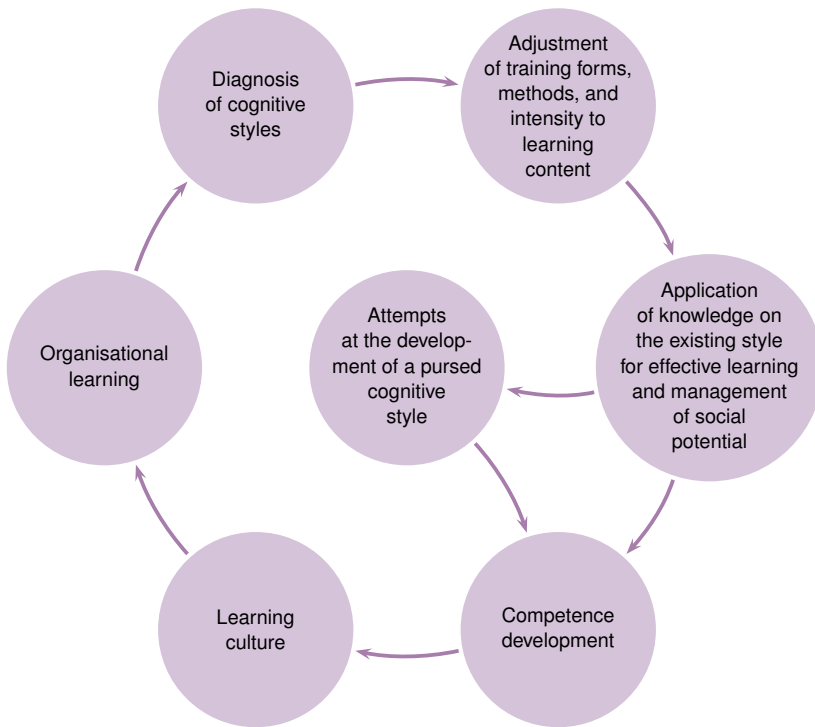


FIGURE 5.1 The Relationship between Cognitive Styles, Competence Development and Organizational Learning

transfer are present, is crucial (Dobbin & Kalev, 2016). However, studies published in the literature indicate that the majority of organizations feature merely declarative diversity culture. Usually, employees are perceived stereotypically according to their sex, age and ethnicity. Inequality and discrimination are present (Gilbert & Ivancevich, 2000; Dobbin & Kalev, 2016).

Numerous organizations declare openness towards diversified employees. However, in practice, they focus almost exclusively on ensuring equal employment opportunities and developing regulations regarding diversity management. Less attention is devoted to the valuation, development and application of diversity (Shen, Chanda, D'Netto, & Monga, 2009).

According to Pless and Maak (2004), modern companies devote much attention to the strategic sphere of policies, systems and processes associated with diversity. However, little attention is paid to

the normative sphere of organizational culture and values. According to these authors, in true diversity-cultured organizations, representatives of various environments, sexes or generations feel respected, their needs are recognized and efforts appreciated. Such cultures are known as ‘inclusive cultures.’ The development of these requires a solid moral basis, the introduction of mutual understanding principles, trust and honesty. It also takes time and constitutes a complex process. The first stage of its development focuses upon awareness raising and the creation of understanding of diversity. The second revolves around the development of the vision of inclusion, which constitutes a significant step towards determining the direction of changes. The third phase encompasses the definition of key terms and consideration of new management principles. The final phase focuses upon initiatives aiming to create an integrated system of human resources management (HRM). The system aims to introduce changes, translate principles into tangible and measurable behavior, and improve and perpetuate integrative behavior (Pless & Maak, 2004).

The adoption of the above-mentioned approach will result in the creation of organizational learning based upon competent employees who respect diversity, are willing and able to transfer knowledge across age-, sex-, and culture-diversified organizational groups and introduce knowledge management mechanisms which enable profits from diversity to be obtained.

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Chapter Six

Human Resources Diversity Management in Business Practice

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Globalization, rapid demographic and socio-cultural changes exert impact upon human resources management in organizations. As a consequence, diversity management has become a key issue in the field. Numerous researchers, e.g. Roosevelt, emphasize that diversity in the workplace offers opportunities for exchange of views, facilitates problem-solving by fostering development of various solutions, and develops respect and acceptance of work environment where everything makes sense. Roosevelt defined diversity management as ‘a universal process of management in order to create an environment which favors all employees’ (Thomas, 2001).

It is believed that diversification of organizational assets constitutes a success factor for employers. Therefore, diversity management may be defined as: (1) state of organizational awareness; (2) organizational spirit; (3) various perspectives people contribute to the organization which stem from the distinctness of race, styles of work, disability, and other differences (Reichenberg, 2001).

Diversity management emerged mainly in the USA. However, research and practice clearly indicate that it influences organizations’ operations globally in every corner of the world. The literature of the subject offers seven critical elements of successful global diversity programs (Table 6.1).

Several benefits emerging from properly applied global diversity management can be enumerated. The most important of these include:

- Access to new consumer markets;
- Improved innovation and versatility;
- Improved results of various work groups;

TABLE 6.1 Seven Elements of Global Diversity Management (GDM)

Elements	Brief description
Cultural intelligence (cQ)	<p>Denotes the development of programs which include cultural differences eliminating cultural barriers and exploiting diverse knowledge and views on problems in order to improve innovation and access to new markets. American organizations develop diversity management programs combating racial and sexual discrimination.</p> <p>cQ is composed of four main employee competences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cQ Drive – denotes interest in cooperation with people originating from various environments. It encompasses the ability to overcome hostile attitude and the ability to operate in difficult intercultural conditions; • cQ Knowledge – denotes understanding of various cultures and differences emerging from these. It requires more than a mere awareness of different languages, customs or appearance. It revolves around acceptance of the sphere of values, beliefs and religion which are tacit, and thus neglected; • cQ Strategy – denotes mental abilities which open a broad perspective to include other worldviews. People manifesting high strategy cQ are open to new or diverse ideas; • cQ Action – denotes the ability to conduct proper interpersonal communication in diverse environments. High level of the competence facilitates communication expressing respect, and fosters trust and relationship-building.
Glocalisation of diversity management	Denotes diversification of diversity-related problems depending on the country or region companies operate in. It requires adjustment to the particular location and ought to include cultural contexts, e.g. regarding message, understanding, language, and methods.
Flexible human resources management	Denotes the adjustment of human resources policies to employees' cultural profiles. Factors determining employees' motivation, job satisfaction and organizational engagement differ depending on the culture. Problem-solving and means for transferring and receiving information also differ.

Continued on the next page

- Improved employee engagement and well-being;
- Access to improved contacts with suppliers and stakeholders.

In addition, studies prove that diversity management in employee teams influences the growth of: sales revenues, profitability, market share, return from shares, and return on equity. Moreover, diversity

TABLE 6.1 *Continued from the previous page*

Elements	Brief description
Inclusive culture	Denotes organizational culture which recognizes, respects, and accepts different values. It encourages the expression of diversity and fosters climate enabling mutual cognition and learning. Integration aims to motivate and involve all employees, and to draw from their individual values. Integration is successful when each member of the organization has the opportunity to fully participate in its decision-making processes. Without inclusive culture, prejudices, discrimination, stereotypes, and isolation may begin to dominate. This will prevent employees' full participation.
Diversified and inclusive management	Permanent, active, and cohesive support may manifest in the following forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of cultural diversity with values, mission, vision, and strategy of the organization; • Appointment of the council for cultural diversity; • Shaping Cultural Intelligence; • Care for the development of Cultural Intelligence; • Regular updates regarding commitments towards cultural diversity; • Support for intercultural initiatives and mentoring; • Appointment of people responsible for cultural diversity from among the management and employees; • Support for cultural diversity community programs or initiatives improving intercultural relations in the organization.
Diversified partnership	Programs pertaining to diversity encompass internal and external stakeholders, e.g. suppliers and other social groups.
Cultural knowledge management	Knowledge on cultural differences may be applied in order to achieve competitive advantage. The knowledge is difficult to identify, tacit and cannot be stored and recorded by means of modern technologies. It ought to be transferred and shared. The process is facilitated by proper organizational culture supported by open communication, life-long learning, ideas being shared, and cooperation. It is directly associated with the human factor. Information technologies may only constitute a tool for knowledge being transferred.

NOTES Adapted from <https://cultureplusconsulting.com/2015/06/03/best-practice-global-diversity-management>.

management offers insight and flexibility required to achieve permanent global success. Culturally diversified organizations have 35% more chances to achieve improved results than others.

The discussion on diversity management is ongoing. Therefore, further studies in the field are necessary. Successful diversity management encompasses a broad spectrum of policies including flexible work, counselling for employees experiencing problems with inclusion, creation and development of talents, and age management. The majority of large companies apply such programs in the framework of HR. Remaining companies still consider diversity management as a challenge they need to face (Society for Human Resource Management, 2009).

Selected Observations and Concepts Pertaining to Diversity Management

When analyzing various viewpoints on human resources diversity management, two main perspectives can be indicated: universalist and situational (Alcazar, Romero, Gonzalo, & Gardey, 2013).

The former focuses upon the identification of the best and universal practices, i.e. those possible to be applied in any conditions of diversified resources management. The following actions may be enumerated in this case: support for equal opportunities, flexible working hours, work-life balance, active participation in performance review, intercultural trainings. These offer tangible benefits in the form of the growth of productivity in diversified teams. However, there are no detailed analyses and justifications behind these individual practices and human resources management based upon diversity.

The latter, situational perspective, indicates that relations between HR policies and productivity are not always identical and may change depending on the situation. Therefore, the view that there exist practices which can offer higher productivity in any conditions, may be rejected. As a consequence, a comprehensive approach towards human resources diversity management is required. Holck (2015) presents a similar opinion and applies the term ‘embedded diversity’ which denotes the necessity of evaluating diversity processes in particular organizational situations (Vikkelsø, 2015).

In addition, yet another classification can be discussed. It is based upon the management’s perception of diversity and objectives the organization sets for itself.

Four approaches can be enumerated:

1. *Care for the image of the organization* – the development of or-

ganizational image conveying the message that the organization values employees' diversity constitutes the primary objective. In such a case, the management care for promoting such policies which may attract public approval and promote the organization's positive image. The impression that the organization applies diversity management programs is paramount. Marketing campaigns play a significant role in this approach.

2. *Actions promoting equal opportunities* – they aim to offer a level playing field for all employees regardless of their background, ethnicity, age, sex, and other characteristics. It is a very specific approach which aims to translate actions into particular outcomes, e.g. the achievement of diversity among the management, contractors, and suppliers. This can also take the form of establishing diverse employee groups in key positions. The achievement of such outcomes is to be corroborated in reports pertaining to, e.g. diversification of salaries, promotion, or diversity in supply contracts.
3. *Acceptance culture* – denotes shaping the organizational culture in a way where diversified employees constitute a value themselves. Differences are recognized and accepted, mainly in order to reduce tensions, moderate conflicts, maximize productivity, and facilitate full application of potential in the workplace. The majority of efforts address the development of employees' awareness, including one pertaining to beliefs and biases (Backes-Gellner & Veen, 2013).
4. *Maximization of productivity of all employees* – the improvement of productivity of each employee constitutes the objective of the approach. This is achieved by removing barriers hindering the application of individuals' potential regardless of barriers emerging from diversity (such as race, culture, sex, etc.) or other obstacles crippling development (e.g. lack of foreign language skills, no education, social skills, etc.) (Rakowska & Cichorzewska, 2016).

Diversity management may also be assessed from the point of view of the system composed of five components (Figure 6.1).

Each of the elements may be applied separately by the organization. However, the comprehensive implementation of all elements offers much better results.

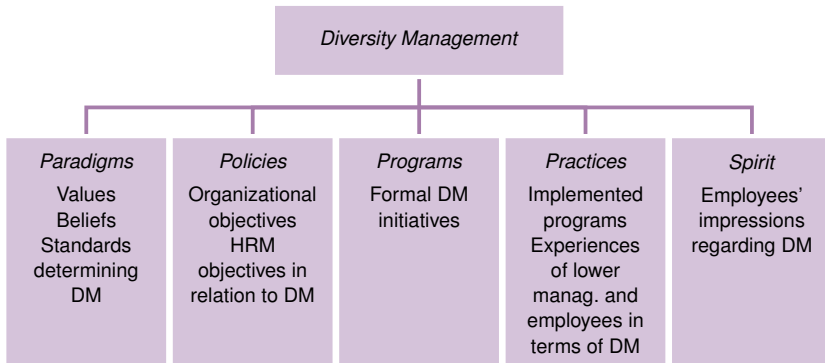


FIGURE 6.1 Five Elements of Diversity Management
(adapted from Kulik, 2014)

Good Practices in Diversity Management

The majority of studies pertaining to diversity management predominantly indicate numerous benefits it offers. Ones of economic character are primarily emphasized. These include, e.g. organizational efficiency, improved creativity, improved innovation, improved organizational flexibility, increased staff quality as a result of better recruitment, improved effectiveness of marketing strategies (Cox & Blake, 1991). Some authors indicate the improvement of non-material factors such as employees' morale, customer service quality, productivity, innovation (Kunze, Boehm, & Bruch, 2013; Nieves & Quintana, 2016; Ramasamy & Yeung, 2016).

On the other hand, views describing negative outcomes of human resources diversity management are also present. These encompass, e.g. reduced morale, diminishing engagement, intensified conflicts (Jehn & Bezrukowa, 2004).

Rakowska (2014a) draws attention to the fact that a particular discrepancy regarding outcomes of diversity management in organizations can be observed. On the one hand, diversity management may offer benefits to organizations provided it is thought-through and appropriately linked with human resources management. On the other hand, practice indicates several difficulties. Frequently, HR policy focuses upon the traditional approach, i.e. legal aspects associated with fair treatment of all employees. In rare cases a deliberate diversity management strategy emerges (Rakowska, 2014a). Research proves that diversity practices usually encompass the following areas: re-

cruitment and selection, training and mentoring (Kulik & Roberson, 2008; Bartels, Nadler, Kufahl, & Pyatt, 2013).

Various rankings, reports and classifications constitute an attempt at a comprehensive assessment of diversity management in businesses. The main global rankings pertaining to the issue include: *Global Gender Gap*, *Gender Diversity Index*, or junior, published only twice so far, *Diversity & Inclusion Index*.

The last of these attracted significant interest and gained good standing among business analysts worldwide. The diversity and inclusion index, established in 2016, evaluates 100 global public companies boasting the most diversified and inclusive work environments. The assessment is conducted on the basis of 24 factors in four areas:

1. Diversity;
2. Inclusion;
3. Employees' Development;
4. and Controversial News.

The index is calculated by assigning weight to each of the factors in accordance with their role on the market. Results (in %) are subsequently compared with results of other companies. The first 25 positions (out of 100) in the latest document were occupied by the following companies scoring the highest results in diversity and inclusion (Table 6.2).

On the other hand, *Global Gender Gap* is a report which has been published since 2006 by World Economic Forum. The latest report, of 2016, encompasses 144 both largest and emerging economies. The index aims to evaluate equality of sexes, and assess gaps in access to resources and opportunities in individual countries in particular. The index evaluates countries by calculating the difference between women and men in four key areas:

- health,
- education,
- economy,
- and politics.

Data included in the index originates from international organizations such as the International Labor Organization, United Nations Development Programme, and World Health Organization. Reports

TABLE 6.2 2016 Ranking of Companies According to Diversity & Inclusion Index

No.	Company	%	No.	Company	%
1.	Contact Energy Ltd	84.25	14.	Eli Lilly & Co	77.25
2.	Gap Inc.	81.00	15.	Hera SpA	77.25
3.	Johnson & Johnson	81.00	16.	Nedbank Group Ltd	76.75
4.	DiGi.Com Bhd	80.00	17.	Unilever NV	76.25
5.	Diageo PLC	79.25	18.	Allianz SE	76.00
6.	Colgate-Palmolive Co	79.00	19.	Bank of Montreal	76.00
7.	Novartis AG	79.00	20.	Bristol-Myers Squibb Co	75.75
8.	Roche Holding AG	79.00	21.	Norsk Hydro ASA	75.75
9.	Kathmandu Holdings Ltd	78.75	22.	Procter & Gamble Co	75.75
10.	Cisco Systems Inc.	78.50	23.	Unilever Indonesia Tbk PT	75.75
11.	Natura Cosméticos SA	78.25	24.	Kering SA	75.25
12.	Accenture PLC	78.00	25.	Verbund AG	75.25
13.	Medtronic PLC	77.50			

NOTES Adapted from <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/lista-100-najbardziej-zronicowanych-i-integracyjnych-przedsiębiorstw-na-swiecie-opublikowana-w-raporcie-thomson-reuters-650253423.html>.

published annually indicate that progress in bridging inequality is still too slow. Table 6.3 presents data from the ranking of 2016.

The third ranking is *Gender Diversity Index* (GDI) which has been published since 2011. The index is composed on the basis of a study encompassing the largest American companies. The report of 2016 indicates that these companies are on the verge of breaking 20% of women's employment in management bodies. Results indicate that 61% of companies do not employ women in executive positions. 41% of companies in the same group did not employ women as directors in the last 5 years. In addition, several of these companies ignore shareholders' proposals aiming to adopt formal diversity and inclusion policies. Only 25% of companies employed one woman in executive positions. The ranking reveals that in 2016, the majority of Fortune 1000 Companies, especially the smaller ones, did not implement diversity concepts.

In Europe, *Diversity Charter* (<http://www.diversity-charter.com/>) informs about the progress in the implementation of diversity management. It is an international initiative which was established in France in 2004 and is supported by the European Commission and

TABLE 6.3 Global Gender Gap Index of 2016

No.	Country	%	No.	Country	%
1.	Iceland	0.874	14.	Namibia	0.765
2.	Finland	0.845	15.	South Africa	0.764
3.	Norway	0.842	16.	Netherlands	0.756
4.	Sweden	0.815	17.	France	0.755
5.	Rwanda	0.800	18.	Latvia	0.755
6.	Ireland	0.797	19.	Denmark	0.754
7.	Philippines	0.786	20.	United Kingdom	0.752
8.	Slovenia	0.786	21.	Mozambique	0.750
9.	New Zealand	0.781	22.	Estonia	0.747
10.	Nicaragua	0.780	23.	Bolivia	0.746
11.	Switzerland	0.776	24.	Belgium	0.745
12.	Burundi	0.768	25.	Lithuania	0.744
13.	Germany	0.766			

NOTES Adapted from <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/rankings/>.

implemented in countries such as Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Ireland, Luxembourg, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Sweden, Hungary, Italy.

The charter constitutes a voluntary obligation signed by organizations which decide to introduce anti-discriminatory practices in the workplace and act in order to develop and promote diversity. The charter expresses the organization's willingness to involve all its employees and business and public partners in such initiatives. Organizations deciding to implement the tool act to the benefit of social cohesion and equality.

In Poland, *Diversity Charter* (<http://odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl/karta-roznorodnosci/>) was implemented in 2012. Since that time, 195 organizations have been associated under the charter. The companies include: Aviva, Grupa Żywiec, Kompania Piwowarska, L'Oreal Polska, Orange Polska, Proident Polska SA, Totalizator Sportowy sp. z o.o., Unilever, Bank BPH, Bank Zachodni WBK, CEMEX Polska sp. z o.o., KPMG, PGNiG, Polska Telefonia Cyfrowa, EDF Polska, PKN Orlen SA.

Apart from the above, Confederation Lewiatan monitors diversity management in Poland. The confederation implements the project

titled *Diversity Index* (<http://www.diversityindex.pl>). The objective of the study is to identify initiatives in diversity management in Polish organizations by measuring *Diversity Index* which includes 6 factors:

- Strategic diversity management;
- Organizational culture realizing diversity management;
- Employment structure from the perspective of diversity;
- Diversity-sensitive recruitment;
- Diversity-sensitive professional development;
- Diversity-sensitive salaries.

So far, two editions of the study titled Diversity Barometer were realized. Diversity Index was established in the course of the study. The following present the main conclusions emerging from the two editions:

- The average diversity index value among organizations included in the study amounted to 44.90%. None of the organizations scored the highest score. It denotes that none of the companies realizes diversity policies in 100%;
- Medium and large organizations are characterized by a higher diversity index than small companies/institutions. The highest score amounted to 77.13% and was achieved by a large company. The lowest score was 9.03% and was achieved by a small business;
- Diversity policy is implemented in professional development the most and in recruitment the least;
- Companies/institutions pay little attention to diversity in recruitment of candidates. The disabled are rarely encouraged to apply. Few organizations apply fair-treatment initiatives in their recruitment processes;
- Still, very few companies employ the disabled or people of various sexual orientations,
- Needs of employees of various religions and creeds are still not recognized enough as far as the opportunity for them to observe specific holidays is concerned. Companies/institutions which have already implemented programs addressing the soon-to-be-retired employees and support them in being satisfied with work in the organization constitute an exception to this rule;

- The interest in diversity management is usually declarative in character. Particular initiatives to meet standards in the field are limited. Less than 1/3 of companies/institutions possess diversity management strategies. Only 30% monitor salaries with regard to various socio-demographic factors. Few organizations implemented programs to the benefit of particular social groups (e.g. people aged 50+ or the disabled);
- Diversity management is frequently perceived as stereotypical. Programs associated with reconciling professional and private lives usually address women. Companies/institutions applying a novel approach, one which offers programs addressing fathers and encouraging them to benefit from paternity leave constitute 1/3 of respondents.

However, it ought to be noted that some organizations participating both in the first and second edition of the Diversity Barometer scored 72–78% on the diversity index. The fact is noteworthy and proves that there exist companies/institutions in Poland which are advanced in implementing diversity policies. Such organizations may serve as an example and benchmark for others. Unfortunately, the number of these companies is still not enough (Lisowska, & Sznajder, 2014).

GEO's experts believe that organizations' approach towards diversity management is largely determined by their location. The report by Society for Human Resource Management (2009) seems to acknowledge that. The report assesses diversity management applied by organizations in various geographic regions.

However, the experts believe that the following 9 common principles of diversity management can be enumerated (United States Government Accountability Office, 2005):

- *Leadership* – the vision of diversity is acknowledged and transferred in the organization by top management;
- *Diversity in the framework of the organization's strategic planning* – strategy and diversity plans are developed and adjusted to the organization's strategic plan;
- *Productivity-related diversity* – it denotes that a more diversified and facilitative work environment may offer greater productivity and improve individual and organizational productivity;

- *Assessment* – a set of quantitative and qualitative measures of impact of various aspects of a general diversity program;
- *Responsibility* – means of ensuring that leaders are responsible for diversity, which combine the assessment of their effectiveness and compensation with the development of diversity initiatives;
- *Succession planning* – permanent and strategic process of identification and development of diversified pool of talents for potential and prospective organizations;
- *Recruitment* – the process of acquiring qualified and diversified candidates;
- *Employee engagement* – employees’ contribution to diversity management in the organization;
- *Diversity training* – organizational initiatives aiming to inform and educate the management and staff on diversity management.

Selected Diversity Management Practices in HR

A few examples describing companies implementing diversity management practices are worth discussing. International companies include Lockheed Martin and Cisco Co. Polish companies encompass PKN Orlen SA and Bank Zachodni WBK. Such a selection was determined by the range and scope of activity and the fact that these companies are considered as the most innovative in their respective branches. In addition, the first two corporations were selected due to their high position in international rankings of diversity and inclusiveness, and because of their strong determination regarding the implementation of global diversity management programs. The following constitutes a brief description of these corporations.

Global Companies

Lockheed Martin is one of the largest in aviation sector in the world. It employs over 70 000 engineers and technicians. Women constitute 21% of managers in the company. Vice-president responsible for Global Diversity and Inclusion observes: ‘we create a better today for a better tomorrow.’ The core message of the company is the acceptance of diversity and integration as a key business imperative.

Diversity and integration constitute a fundament of the company’s

culture and reflect values regarding doing what is right, respecting others, and pursuing excellence. The company highlights that it values talents and employees' unique experiences because they facilitate the emergence of innovations and inexpensive solutions, which, in turn, offer significant value for clients.

The company bases their activities on several pillars:

1. EEO (Equal Employment Opportunities) – it is to facilitate the establishment of fair, productive, integrating and diversified work environment. In addition, it is to support the establishment of an environment which would be free from threats, violence, intimidation and abuse.
2. Affirmative Action (AA) program – it was developed in order to eliminate discrimination. AA programs are to identify and overcome barriers, both visible and hidden, and develop an environment offering equal opportunities for the application of the potential in the organization. Programs encompass positive steps undertaken by employers, e.g. development of affirmative action plans, monitoring representation, identification and elimination of potential barriers, enlargement of scope of actions, recruitment, mentoring, training, and other improvement programs designed to help employers hire, retain and support qualified employees. It constitutes a proactive strategy facilitating the emergence of versatile and diverse workforce.
3. Diversity – goes beyond legal requirements of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action (AA). Diversity is a tool which supports business strategies and enables individual differences and similarities to be evaluated in a safe, positive and relaxing environment. In addition, it also allows these attributes to be applied in the realization of commitments towards clients and implementation of innovations.
4. Corporate commitment – by the development of an integrated work environment, the company guarantees it will be able to attract, develop and retain diverse employees who will have an opportunity to present and improve their skills and competences. In addition, the company commits to care for safe and friendly workplace where everyone is treated fairly and with the highest professional standards, ethics and legal compliance.
5. Corporate Sustainability Council at Lockheed Martin focuses

upon efforts ensuring sustainability of processes and long-term environmental and social benefits for all stakeholders. It also ensures the development of strategic guidelines regarding present and prospective diversity and integration.

Every year, the corporation publishes a social report presenting initiatives, including ones in HRM diversity (Lockheed Martin, 2017). In 2016, the company implemented the strategy of global diversity and inclusion in the following pillars:

1. Employees' engagement revolving around promoting the culture of integration among employees via various programs and initiatives, e.g. Employee Resource Group (ERGS), Executive Inclusion Council (EIC), Allies for Inclusion;
2. Integration-based leadership – aims to develop an integrated team based on Cohesive Communication. CARE model was applied in order to achieve the objective. The model was based upon the following:
 - Commitment – introduction of positive cultural changes via diversity and inclusion;
 - Awareness – indication of subconscious prejudice, beliefs, preferences and behaviors;
 - Results – application of unique, diverse talents in order to achieve significant competitive advantage;
 - Engagement – stronger integration of surrounding environment.
3. External diversity – promotion and acquisition of talents in less represented societies via strategic programs such as:
 - Improvement of strategic awareness and promotion of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM);
 - Cooperation with minorities maintaining the institution of Higher Education/Minority Serving Institution Strategies;
 - Cooperation with national and local social partners.

The corporation participated in 21 various events in the area of diversity in 2016. These included the following: Black Engineer of the Year Awards, Asian American Engineer of the Year Gala, American Association of People with Disabilities, Catalyst Conference & Awards Dinner, PFLAG Straight for Equality Gala, MAES Latinos in

Science and Engineering Conference, National Society of Black Engineers Conference, Careers and Disabled Awards Dinner and Job Fair, National Black MBA Association Conference (Lockheed Martin, 2017).

On the other hand, Cisco Co is an American IT company, the largest in online sector in the world. At present, the company produces, sells and supports solutions in the field of networking hardware, telecommunications, video, group work, data processing centers, and network security.

The company operates in 165 countries worldwide. It employs 74 000, 28 000 (39%) of whom are engineers. It has a network of 70 000 partners, possesses 17 000 patents and uses 170 laboratories in the world (https://www.cisco.com/c/pl_pl/about/local.html).

The company has conducted approx. 170 takeovers since 1993. The company's vision is to facilitate the change in the way the world operates, lives, plays, and learns. The strategy focuses upon solving the most pressing problems of business clients by supplying intelligent networks and technological architectures developed on the basis of integrated products, services and software platforms.

The company's motto is the following: 'employees of culture [...] constitute our competitive advantage.'

The management believe that inclusion and diversity policies are critical in order to establish cooperation, connect, communicate and work. These also constitute the main driving force of innovation and cultural changes in the company. The company was established in 1984. It based its culture on clear communication, employee empowerment, honesty and economy. Therefore, the development of cohesive and diversified organization constitutes a permanent and significant business requirement for Cisco. The board of the company believes it is responsible for the following: integrated team;

- Elimination of prejudices;
- Development of environment everyone feels welcome in, appreciated, respected, and listened to.

The company established the Department of Integration and Cooperation, i.e. a global team which advises and supports Cisco management on the functional and regional level. The team assists in the realization of programs fostering integration, communication, and response to expectations regarding diversity.

Cisco managers believe that only those organizations which include diversity and inclusion in their strategies can thrive. As far as HRM is concerned, the company declares, e.g. diversification of existing teams; elimination of biased, disrespectful or intolerant behaviors; development of an environment based upon diverse views, support for flexible working hours.

According to Cisco, managers ought to set inclusion- and diversity-related objectives, especially via direct contact. In addition, they ought to hire employees who would supplement or add value in the field of diversity. Moreover, they ought to seek employees outside the company instead of restricting themselves to internal recruitment which limits diversity-related opportunities. Managers ought to effectively eliminate any improper behaviors, especially those regarding culture, race, sex, age, personality, and other features.

Prior to employment, the company requests the employee to complete a questionnaire, a self-assessment tool which constitutes an element of the Inclusion and Diversity program. The questionnaire is only for personal use. The aim of the tool is to assess the convergence of objectives of the employee with objectives of the organization.

The idea of cooperation with Cisco offered by the company itself is based upon promotion of inclusive culture, trust and mutual respect of all stakeholders and employees. As a consequence, they will experience inclusive culture, trust and mutual respect as well. In addition, when observing and appreciating differences and initiatives in the field of diversity, they will be able to experience benefits of the approach. The objective of changes in the field ought to reflect the following quote by Ghandi: 'Be the change that you wish to see in the world' (Mazur, 2014, p. 10).

As far as selected practices of Polish companies are concerned, the fact that these are usually applied by large companies which develop dynamically and have been considered as the most innovative in Poland ought to be emphasized. They are also signatories of *Diversity Charter* and place great significance in their actions upon the development of diversity policies. They publish social reports and ones in the field of diversity on regular basis.

Polish Companies

PKN Orlen SA is a Polish fuel and energy company, the leader in petrochemical industry in East-Central Europe. In the 2016 inte-

grated report, the company informs that ‘shaping organizational culture based upon values encompassing aspects of diversity is included in HR Strategy and CSR Strategy’ (see <http://raportzintegrowany2016.orlen.pl/pl-roznorodnosc-i-rownosc-szans>).

Issues associated with diversity management are regulated in the following documents in operation in the company:

- Work regulations of PKN Orlen SA;
- Core values and standards of PKN Orlen SA;
- Corporate Collective Labor Agreement for employees of PKN Orlen SA;
- 2013–2017 policy of employees’ potential management addressing employees of Orlen Corporate Group;
- CSR strategy for PKN Orlen (regulations concerning management of development and diversity);
- A separate internal organizational act regarding the implementation of the policy determining conditions and work regulations for the disabled in PKN Orlen SA;
- A separate internal organizational act of PKN Orlen SA regarding the introduction of support for employees in life crises;
- A separate internal organizational act regarding the project titled Family-Friendly Employer.

The above documents regulate the following matters:

- Fair treatment of employees in employment, and ban on discrimination;
- Respect for diversity;
- Management of cultural differences;
- Openness to the employment of the socially excluded or those in danger of being marginalized on labor market;
- Support of employee initiatives associated with equality practices in the company;
- Awards and promotion policies;
- Employment and reward standards of the delegated workers, the so-called expats and inpats;
- Adjustment of workplaces to the needs of employees (e.g. the disabled, the breastfeeding);

- Support for groups in difficult life situations;
- Initiatives supporting the reconciliation of professional life with private one (Work-Life Balance programs).

Moreover, PKN Orlen's diversity policy is implemented by means of the following:

- Organization of open trainings and workshops regarding diversity management for employees;
- Employees' voluntary work;
- Inclusion of diversity aspects in HR processes and tools (e.g. recruitment, training and development, salaries) and in shaping organizational culture;
- Workshops for expats regarding cultural differences management;
- A study of cultural differences management among employees;
- Appointment of the head and team coordinating anti-discriminatory and anti-mobbing initiatives and responsible for diversity management: Human Capital Committee, Spokesperson for Ethics.

At the end of 2016, the board of the company consisted of 6 men, and the Supervisory Board included 2 women and 5 men. Their age structure was the following:

- The Board: Approx. 34% were between 41 and 50 years of age, 50% between 51 and 60, and 16% between 61 and 70;
- The Supervisory Board: approx. 29% were between 31 and 40 years of age, almost 43% between 41 and 50, 14% between 51 and 60, and 14% between 61 and 70.

As far as sex structure is concerned, boards of companies in Orlen Corporate Group consisted of 89% of men. With regard to supervisory boards, the percentage amounted to 83.8%. This fact proves that the 30% gender parity is not met in this case. This is the greatest diversity management HRM challenge for the company at present. The fact that numerous corporate companies in Poland experience similar problems with maintaining the parity is noteworthy. The fact was acknowledged in results of analyses encompassing policies of *Diversity Charter* signatories. The most numerous employee group in PKN Orlen (1/3 of the total) consists of people aged 41–50. Those between

51 and 60 constitute approximately 27%. Employees between 31 and 40 comprise 1/4. 12% consist of workers below 31. Those above 60 constitute 5%.

As far as job seniority is concerned, employees with 30 years of work experience dominate (24%). Subsequently, people with 11 to 20 years of experience constitute 23%, those with 21–30 years of experience amount to 21%. People with less than 5 years of experience constitute 17% of all employees. The fewest employees boast 5 to 10 years of professional experience (15%).

All initiatives in diversity management are included in the annual integrated report available online (see <http://raportzintegrowany2016.orlen.pl/pl-roznorodnosc-i-rownosc-szans>).

Bank Zachodni wBK constitutes the next large company actively realizing diversity policy. For several years, the bank has ranked 1st in one of the most significant competitions in financial sector – the Euromoney Awards for Excellence. The ‘Best Bank in Poland 2016’ was granted for exceptional effectiveness of initiatives and excellent financial results of the bank. This was the second consecutive award for the bank, and the third in total in the period of last 5 years. Bank Zachodni wBK is the third largest in Poland as far as assets are concerned, and third largest with regard to the number of branches and offices. The bank’s diversity policy is the following: ‘We wish to develop work environment where everyone has equal opportunities, is respected and accepted. Respect for diversity is present in our internal standards and regulations. Primarily, it constitutes the integral element of our organizational culture based upon values: Friendly, Reliable, for You’ (<https://raport.bzwbk.pl>).

The organization places great importance upon gender diversity. Women constitute 73% of all employees of the bank (third highest score in Polish banking sector) and 58% of the management. The fact that women to men ratio regarding Material Risk Taker positions (exerting significant impact upon risk profile in organizations) grew by 5% is noteworthy.

On 24 May 2017, the company became the signatory of the *Diversity Charter* (see <http://odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl/karta-roznorodnosci/sygnatariusze-karty/>). The management believe that diversity management constitutes a crucial element of organizational culture which develops a workplace facilitating the emergence of cooperation, innovation, and appreciation of employees’ potential.

The signing of the charter was the cherry on top of the hitherto initiatives (e.g. Barrierless customer service project). It also constitutes an obligation for further challenges improving the value of organization and employees to be undertaken.

Standards encompassing respect for diversity and equal opportunities were included in, e.g. the General Code of Conduct, Bank Zachodni WBK policy pertaining to the compliance with human rights, and Bank Zachodni WBK policy regarding sustainable development (CSR). The latter aims to:

- Respect diversity, i.e. it imposes the ban on gender, race, ethnicity, age, or any other discrimination;
- Support equal opportunities for employees and pursuit of balanced representation of women and men in relation to functions, positions and the scope of duties.

Studies conducted in 2016 regarding involvement indicated that results concerning ethics and respect at the workplace and those pertaining to diversity grew. Results indicate the following:

- Approximately 3/4 of employees believe that people in the bank are treated individually and with respect (increase by 7% in comparison with 2015);
- 3/4 of employees believe that the company appreciates differences between employees regarding, e.g. sex, age, nationality, race, religion (increase by 7% in comparison with 2015 as well).

The bank places significance upon the so-called Joint Responsibility, i.e. responsibility for the development of an environment which is free from any abuse towards employees or lack of respect and dignity. Managers are chiefly responsible for maintaining such state of affairs, which has been included in their competence model. They are also the addressees of an e-learning training program encompassing, e.g. the issue of generational changes. In addition, all employees are required to participate in trainings on ethics and diversity.

The bank is also active with regard to undesirable behaviors. A dedicated program allowing employees to anonymously and safely report any violations of standards and other alarming events was developed. Employees can use the following tools to report such issues:

- relationship helpline,

- ethics helpline,
- dedicated email address.

2016, the bank undertook the following initiatives in diversity management and equal opportunities (see <https://raport.bzwbk.pl/en/roznorodnosc.html>):

- Development of cohesive Respect and Dignity policy defining the fundamentals of organizational culture;
- Regulation of violations reporting procedure;
- Implementation of the Policy of Sustainable Development (CSR) and Human Rights Policy;
- Works on the implementation of career and development paths;
- Change of regulations in order to implement various systems and schedule of working hours depending on specifics of organizational units;
- Implementation of Salary Policy which is based upon clear criteria. The policy states that salaries for equivalent positions are comparable and independent of age, sex and nationality.

The above mentioned models of corporate culture, which are based upon diversity and integration regarding human resources management, described on the example of Lockheed Martin, Cisco Co, PKN Orlen SA and Bank Zachodni WBK (the latter two are signatories of the *Diversity Charter*), exert considerable impact upon the development of the idea in business practice of other companies. Even though only four companies were discussed, each of the companies is a leader in the sector with regard to the development of diversity-based culture and inclusion and implementation of the strategy. Therefore, they may constitute a good practice for other companies which would like to follow suit.

Referring the initiatives of these companies to six areas isolated in the Diversity Index, it may be observed that international companies implement diversity management to a greater extent and realize strategic diversity management much more frequently. They also develop employment structure based upon diversity perspective and apply diversity-sensitive recruitment and professional development.

In Polish companies, even those with well-developed diversity policies, strategic approach, cohesive development of employment structure, and diversity-sensitive recruitment, are still missing. On

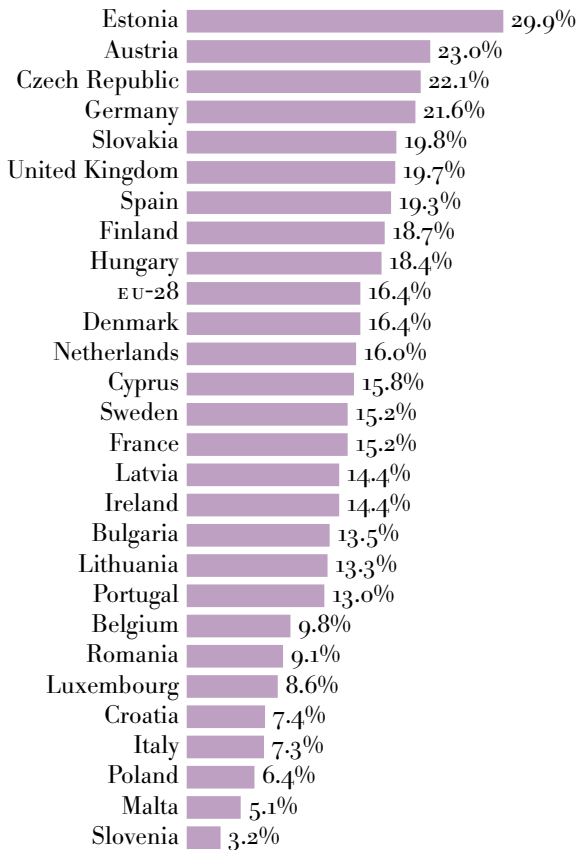


FIGURE 6.2 Discrepancy between Men's and Women's Earnings in EU Member States (adapted from *Puls Biznesu*, 2016)

the other hand, Polish companies manifest a satisfactory level regarding diversity-sensitive remuneration. According to Eurostat, Poland ranks 3rd among European countries as far as the discrepancy between women's and men's earnings is concerned. The discrepancy in the hourly wage amounts to a mere 6.4%. The greatest discrepancy in the gross hourly wage for men and women was observed in Estonia – it amounts to 29.9%. The situation is similar in Austria with the discrepancy of 22%, the Czech Republic (21.6%), and Slovakia (19.8%). Only Slovenia (3.2%) and Malta (5.1%) precede Poland. The fact that the EU average for the discrepancy amounts to 16.4% is also noteworthy.

Moreover, as far as the approach toward diversity of the man-

agement is concerned, Polish companies are dominated by *care for the organizational image* and *promotion of fair treatment*. These approaches are realized mainly by means of individual initiatives, programs and practices.

On the other hand, managers in international companies, especially those located in Europe and the USA, place emphasis upon the development of *acceptance culture* and *maximization of all employees' productivity*. These approaches are realized via particular strategies and policies based upon specific paradigms.

Conclusions

Research conducted over the last decade indicates that companies which properly manage diversity and whose teams are strongly integrated, experience more growth than others. Modern organizations must face numerous challenges, e.g. regarding response to the surrounding environment, adaptive skills, and responsible and engaged leadership. Therefore, no organization can afford to forsake potential benefits emerging from diversity and integration. Organizations interested in improving integration with cultural diversity ought to analyze their policies and organizational practices in order to ensure they are not discriminatory, and their systems and values contribute to the emergence of highly developed cultural intelligence (CQ) organizational culture. At present, it is not enough to add new tools and practices. The elimination of old systems which apply exclusion and do not meet modern standards is a necessity.

Numerous studies highlight that organizations in the 21st century ought to possess a well-developed system of diversity management, not only regarding human resources. It is crucial that diversity is included in relation to clients and international, ever-growing competition. In addition, managers must recognize that effective diversity management in the workplace requires long-term involvement in the introduction of organizational changes. This is difficult due to the fact that managers in many businesses do not possess clearly defined means for implementing diversity and inclusion practices. The present analysis of good practices may constitute a helpful guideline for them. The analysis also allows to observe that differences may be inspiring and their proper management may stimulate innovation, change of behaviors and organizational development. However, the way they are implemented in is largely dependent on the context

they function in, i.e. the specifics of the organization itself, their understanding of and approach to diversity and the context these are applied in.

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Chapter Seven

Diverse Competence Potential of Employees in Innovative Enterprises: Research Results

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Objectives, Methodology, Approach

The main objective of the study was to identify the diverse competence potential of employees in innovative companies, as well as to describe the undertaken activities and practices which enable the diverse competence potential to be applied for the needs of human resources management (in the context of employee diversity).¹

Scientific objectives: elaboration and verification of the model of competence potential management in the context of human resources diversity management in innovative organizations.

Detailed objectives:

1. Identification of competence potential level, especially in the following fields: knowledge, skills, values, well-being, and cog-

¹ Gender, age, organizational position: managers, specialists, operational staff.

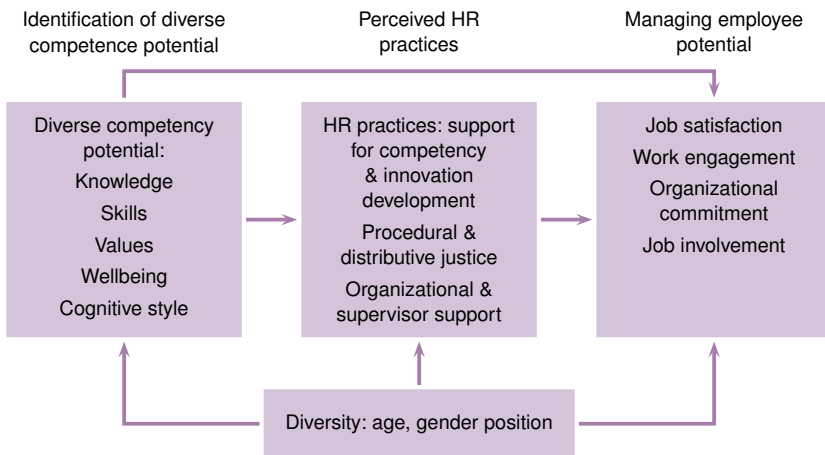


FIGURE 7.1 Model of Employee Diversity Potential Management

- nitive styles, in the context of employee diversity (gender, age, position).
2. Perception of HR practices applied in organizations, especially those associated with the following: development opportunities, organizational support for innovation, practices encompassing procedural and distributive justice, and organizational and supervisory support.
 3. Assessment of employee potential management via the identification of the following: the level of job satisfaction, work engagement, organizational commitment, and job involvement, in the context of employee diversity. A premise was made that job satisfaction, work engagement, organizational commitment, and job involvement may be considered as the indicators of employee potential management.
 4. Search for relationships between the perception of HR practices and the above-mentioned indicators linked with employee potential management, with their diversity (gender, age, generation, position) being taken into account.
 5. Identification of HR initiatives and practices enabling the application of employee diversity potential to be optimized.

A model of employee diversity potential management was developed to reflect these objectives (Figure 7.1).

The following hypotheses were postulated:

1. There exist typical elements of potential which distinguish the representatives of Generation X from those of Generation Y.
2. In separate employee groups, diversified with regard to age, gender, and professional group (positions), there exist typical characteristics related to the development of the possessed potential.
3. In the groups of diverse workers there exist elements of competence potential associated with job satisfaction, work engagement, and organizational commitment.
4. There exists a relationship between human resources diversity management and innovation.
5. Familiarity with characteristics concerning the diversification of the potential in separate employee groups is insufficient, which leads to the incomplete application and development of this potential in enterprises.

In order to arrive at the above-mentioned objectives, a study among 50 innovative enterprises operating in the south-east and south of Poland was conducted in the period of 2014–2016.

Characteristics of the Sample

The companies were selected on the basis of innovative companies' lists developed in Poland by professional committees, e.g. Polish Academy of Science '500 Most Innovative Companies in Poland' (Baczko & Puchała-Krzywina, 2012) or *Wprost* (2013). The study utilized the Oslo Manual definition of innovation, which states: 'an innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (goods or services), or process, a new marketing method, or a new organizational method in business practice, workplace organization or external relations' (OECD, 2005, pp. 47). A company which has already introduced at least one of the following four types of innovations was considered innovative (innovations implemented between 2012 and 2014 were assessed):

- *Product innovation* – the introduction of goods or services which are new or significantly improved with respect to their characteristics or intended uses.
- *Process innovation* – the implementation of a new or significantly improved production or delivery method.

- *Organizational innovation* – the implementation of a new organizational method in the organization's business practice, workplace organization or external relations.
- *Marketing innovation* – the implementation of a new marketing method involving significant changes in product design or packaging, product placement, product promotion or pricing.

The study encompassed 50 companies. Their structure was the following: 32 large enterprises, and 18 medium-sized companies. Out of the total number of companies in the study, 21 deal with manufacturing, 22 provide services (including 4 dealing with financial services, 5 with public utility services, and the remaining with design services and novel ICT), 7 are active in trade/sales. Out of the 50, 12 are the signatories of the *Diversity Charter* (declaration of compliance with EEO/AA and readiness for and involvement of employees and business partners in diversity; see <http://odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl/karta-roznorodnosci/sygnatariusze-karty/>). As far as the scope of innovation is concerned, between 2012 and 2014, all companies implemented national-level innovations, and 17 of them introduced international or global innovations (valid mainly for international corporations).

The study was based primarily upon a survey questionnaire. 3,057 completed questionnaires from 50 companies were returned. Data from 2,076 questionnaires was incorporated in the study. The sample ($N = 2,076$) is detailed in Table 7.1.

Approach, Research Techniques and Tools

Two main sources of data were used to arrive at the research objectives and verify the hypotheses:

- The questionnaire for employees (completed by 2,076 employees in 50 innovative companies);
- The semi-structured interview with HR specialists/managers (one interview in each company – 50 respondents).

The survey questionnaire had already been verified in a previous pilot study (Rakowska & Sitko-Lutek, 2015). The final version comprised of the following:

1. Self-assessment of employee competence potential (knowledge, skills, values, well-being, cognitive style);

TABLE 7.1 Characteristics of the sample

Gender (%)	Women	49.1
	Men	50.9
Mean age in years		39.6
Education (%)	Higher (BA, MA)	77.0
	Post-secondary	7.0
	Secondary	14.0
	Vocational	3.0
Position (%)	Operational staff	28.4
	Specialist	52.2
	Manager	19.5
Dominant specialization of the position (%)	Technical support	29.3
	General admin duties	25.0
	Finance-related duties	16.3
	Projects, research, innovations	7.1
	IT-related duties	3.3
	Marketing, sales, logistics	17.8
Mean work experience		16.6
Age (1) (%)	18-30	26.8
	31-40	30.3
	41-50	19.9
	51+	21.0
Age (2) (%)	Below 30	22.1
	30-50	52.2
	50+	25.7

2. Perception of HR practices applied in the organization (organizational and superiors' support, procedural and distributive justice, improvement methods, potential development opportunities, support for innovation development);
3. Indications of employee potential management: job satisfaction, work engagement, job involvement, organizational commitment;
4. Data pertaining to respondents and organizations.

The following constitute the main sections of the interview questionnaire for HR department employees:

1. Assessment of innovation (innovation type, sources, outcomes).

2. General characteristics of HR initiatives.
3. Innovation-stimulating programs and practices.
4. Approaches and practices associated with diversity management in organizations.

General Results

Competence Potential: Results of the Self-Assessment

Knowledge

The self-assessment pertained to 9 of its aspects: (1) organization's functioning, (2) market trends, (3) specialist work-related knowledge, (4) specialist non-work-related knowledge, (5) methods of management, (6) knowledge regarding environment protection, (7) IT applications, (8) project management, and (9) cultural differences. Knowledge assessment was conducted in light of the following 3 aspects:

- *Significance* (importance of knowledge) – ‘As far as you are concerned, how important is to have knowledge in this area.’ The assessment was made on the basis of a 1–5 scale (1 – ‘insignificant,’ 5 – ‘very significant’).
- *Improvement/development*. Respondents answered the following question: ‘How often do you improve/develop knowledge in the particular area?’ (1–5 scale).
- *Strengths*. Maximum of three out of nine knowledge areas could be selected.

Respondents indicated that specialist knowledge associated with their position (mean = 4.66 on 1–5 scale) and familiarity with the organization's operations (mean = 4.14) were the most significant. On the other hand, they considered knowledge of cultural differences (mean = 2.85) and that of environment protection (3.31) as the least significant. This may be interpreted as respondents' disregard for the issue of diversity and environment protection. However, this may also acknowledge the fact that those organizations have not recognized the significance of diversity yet, and that diversity management constitutes a relatively new concept in Poland.

As far as the frequency of improvement/development is concerned, it can be observed that areas developed the most frequently encompass those indicated as vital, i.e. specialist knowledge (mean = 3.93) and familiarity with the organization's operations (mean = 3.11 on 1–

5 scale). Knowledge associated with diversity (mean = 1.99) and environment protection (mean = 2.50) is developed the least frequently. In general, results pertaining to the improvement/development prove that respondents improve their knowledge relatively seldom.

Presented results regarding the importance of knowledge are consistent with results regarding strengths of respondents. Respondents' strongest areas of knowledge encompass: specialist knowledge (indicated by 35.6% of respondents), and familiarity with the organization's operations (13.5% respondents). The weakest areas include: diversity (1.5%), environment protection (5%) and project management (4.8%).

Strengths Regarding Knowledge in the Context of Diversity. From the point of view of diversity management, becoming familiar with both general results pertaining to respondents' strengths regarding knowledge and results classified in relation to gender, age and positions, is interesting.

According to data presented in Table 7.2, strengths declared by women and men differ in several areas (statistically significant differences, chi-squared test with the significance of ≤ 0.02). Men indicate the following as their strengths more frequently: management methods, environment protection, IT applications, project management. On the other hand, women selected cultural differences more frequently.

As far as the specialization is concerned, i.e. operational staff, specialists and managers, a tendency can be observed for managers to declare they possess specialist, work-related knowledge (82%), knowledge of the organization's operation (38.8%) and management knowledge (33.4%). Knowledge pertaining to employee diversity is considered as managers' weakness (1.3%). Surprisingly, in this particular area, operational staff scored higher (5.5%). In addition, in comparison with the remaining employee groups, operational staff distinguish themselves with regard to IT applications (24%). It can be associated with the fact that this group features the largest share of the youngest employees (46% below 30 years of age).

Further sections analyze employees' age. It can be discussed in the context of various age spans. The literature features a considerable volume of studies on 50+ employees, thus this group was distinguished in the study (Van Dalen, Henkens, & Schippers, 2010). In

TABLE 7.2 Strengths Regarding Knowledge in the Context of Gender and Positions

Area of knowledge*	General	Gender		Position		
		w	M	O	S	M
Operations of the organization	29.9	29.8	28.2	26.3	26.5	38.8
Market trends	32.5	26.8	28.1	30.3	24.2	31.3
Specialist/work-related	76.6	78.1	76.8	69.8	79.2	82.0
Specialist/non-work-related	18.2	17.5	18.6	17.5	20.4	12.9
Management methods	18.2	16.9	20.9	15.9	15.0	33.4
Environment protection	10.4	9.3	12.9	12.3	10.5	10.3
IT applications	22.1	16.5	27.5	24.0	21.3	21.0
Project management	3.9	9.8	11.5	9.7	10.2	13.4
Diversity management	5.2	2.8	1.9	5.5	2.5	1.3

NOTES *Maximum three out of nine areas of knowledge could be indicated as respondents' strength. w – women, M – men, o – operational specialists, M – managers. Values expressed as percentages.

TABLE 7.3 Strengths Regarding Knowledge and Their Distribution in Relation to Respondents' Age

Area of knowledge*	Answers in age groups		
	Below 30	30-50	50+
Operations of the organization	27.0	29.6	30.1
Market trends	32.4	26.0	24.1
Specialist work-related	72.1	79.8	76.9
Specialist non-work related	17.3	18.6	17.8
Management methods	18.9	18.3	20.1
Environment protection	7.4	10.2	18.1
IT applications	23.3	21.8	20.0
Project management	11.5	11.4	7.4
Diversity (age, gender, culture)	4.1	2.8	1.6

NOTES *Maximum three out of nine areas of knowledge could be indicated as respondents' strength. Values expressed as percentages.

addition, corporations frequently distinguish the following employee age groups: below 30, 30-50, 50+. Apart from this classification, a different division, including one based upon generations can be distinguished (results pertaining to generations will be outlined in further sections of the chapter). Table 7.3 details results pertaining to respondents' strengths regarding knowledge in three age groups.

The below 30 age group are characterized by their knowledge in terms of market trends and IT applications. Results of those 50+ may be surprising with regard to the strength concerning IT applications because, when compared with the youngest group, they are not much different. The literature of the subject characterizes the youngest employees as possessing extensive IT knowledge and skills. This seems to be acknowledged by the view that research results concerning competences of 50+ employees are ambiguous (Moczyłowska & Kowalewski, 2015). When compared with the remaining groups, project management knowledge is perceived as a weakness of the 50+ group. Interestingly, the youngest employees seem to possess the most extensive knowledge regarding diversity among all groups, which may result from their more frequent contacts with foreigners. In turn, the oldest employees are distinguished by the knowledge regarding the operations of the organization, methods of management and environment protection. This may result from their work and life experience.

Skills

The self-assessment of skills pertained to the following 15 areas: (1) organization of time of own work, (2) coping with stress, (3) learning, (4) career management, (5) interpersonal communication, (6) conflict management, (7) cooperation with representatives of other cultures, (8) leadership and authority, (9) cooperation with people of different ages, (10) collaboration with representatives of different genders, (11) swift adaptation to a new environment, (12) ability to mobilize for prolonged work periods, (13) ability to perform additional tasks, (14) creative thinking, (15) foreign language skills. Similarly, like in the case of knowledge, skills were analyzed in the following three aspects:

- The significance of skills (scale from 1 - 'not important' to 5 - 'very important');
- The frequency of skills' improvement/development (scale from never 1-5 very often);
- Identification of strengths (maximum 5 out of 15 skills selected).

Respondents recognized the following as the most important skills:

- Organization of time of own work (mean = 4.45);
- Coping with stress (mean = 4.48);

- Creative thinking (mean = 4.43);
- Learning (mean = 4.39);
- Interpersonal communication (mean = 4.33);
- Swift adaptation to a new environment (mean = 4.27).

The least important skills encompassed the following:

- Ability to cooperate with representatives of other cultures (mean = 3.16);
- Leadership and authority (3.48);
- Language skills (3.88);
- Ability to perform additional tasks (3.87);
- Collaboration with representatives of different genders (3.99).

Results indicate that the pro-development attitudes of respondents are particularly associated with the importance of continuous improvement and adaptation to new conditions. Poor assessment of the importance of the ability to cooperate with representatives of different cultures and in language skills may result from a small cultural diversity in the surveyed organizations. Additionally, poor results regarding the cooperation with representatives of other genders can either be the sign of existing stereotypes, or conversely, the lack of recognition of gender differences as potential problems.

The next section analyses the frequency of skills' improvement/development. As in the case of knowledge, respondents do not undertake the improvement of skills frequently (none of the skills scored a higher mean than 4.0; the highest score was 3.49 and referred to learning). Nine of the 15 skills scored the mean of development frequency lower than 3.00. This constitutes a poor result. Respondents were also requested to indicate their strongest skills (maximum 5 out of 15 skills selected, Table 7.4). Their strongest areas are the following:

- Organization of time of own work (64.8% of respondents);
- Learning (45.9% respondents);
- Cooperation with people of different ages (40.5%).

From the point of view of diversity and population ageing, the fact that 40.5% of respondents declare skills in cooperation with people of different ages is noteworthy. However, this is only valid for age

TABLE 7.4 Strengths of Respondents by Gender and Specializations

Skills	General	Gender		Position		
		w	M	O	S	M
Organization of time of own work	64.8	69.9	61.8	67.4	66.5	60.2
Coping with stress	38.4	35.3	42.6	41.3	37.3	39.1
Learning	45.9	44.8	48.1	48.3	47.9	40.1
Career management	17.0	14.4	20.4	17.5	17.2	16.3
Interpersonal communication	37.6	43.2	33.4	36.9	39.9	39.8
Conflict management	21.6	19.7	22.4	22.8	19.7	27.2
Collaboration/rep. of different cultures	4.7	4.3	5.3	5.5	5.2	2.8
Leadership, authority	9.8	8.2	11.3	7.4	10.2	12.3
Collaboration/rep. different ages	40.5	42.7	39.2	41.1	59.1	39.6
Collaboration/rep. different genders	14.3	12.7	15.8	14.6	14.8	12.3
Swift adaptation to a new environment	33.4	33.4	34.0	31.2	34.3	33.9
Ability to mobilize for prolonged work periods	22.4	23.5	21.7	19.4	23.1	24.9
Ability to perform additional tasks	15.7	17.1	14.8	9.1	12.7	24.9
Creative thinking	28.5	24.6	32.9	26.0	23.6	34.1
Foreign language skills	12.2	13.2	11.6	5.2	14.1	8.0

NOTES w - women, M - men, o - operational specialists, M - managers. Values expressed as percentages.

management. Respondents' weakest skills include the cooperation with representatives of other cultures (4.72% of respondents).

Respondents appreciate time management and personal development, which proves they recognize the need for development. Poor results in collaboration with representatives of different cultures does not necessarily denote that they do not attach any importance to it. It may stem from the fact that diversity management in their enterprises is limited, and because employees may have rare contacts with representatives of other cultures. In addition, the fact that 12 out of 50 companies signed the *Diversity Charter* is noteworthy. The above may suggest that diversity management initiatives are only declaratory in character and are not communicated to all employees.

Strengths Regarding Skills in the Context of Diversity. Based upon the analysis, it was observed that women indicated the following skills as strengths more frequently than men (Table 7.4):

- Organization of time of own work (chi-squared test, significance 0.000);
- Interpersonal communication (significance 0.000);
- Collaboration with representatives of different ages (significance 0.000);
- Ability to mobilize for prolonged work periods (significance 0.000);
- Ability to perform additional tasks (significance 0.000);
- Foreign language skills (significance 0.000).

Ruderman, Ohlott, Panzer, and King (2002) emphasize that roles women play in their personal lives provide benefits for their skills' development. This means that the commitment to multiple roles is related to interpersonal and task-related skills. Women are more ready than men to take on extra work and mobilize themselves for prolonged work periods, which may arise from the necessity of them combining various roles. They also declare better communication and language skills.

Men, in turn, more often than women, indicate the following skills as their strengths:

- Coping with stress (level of significance 0.001);
- Career management (level of significance 0.001);
- Learning (level of significance 0.000);
- Conflict management (level of significance 0.011);
- Collaboration with representatives of different genders (level of significance 0.000);
- Leadership and authority (level of significance 0.021).

As a consequence, the fact that differences between the strengths declared by women and men exist, is acknowledged. It can be said that men in this group attach a greater role to managing their professional career than women. Results pertaining to conflict resolution and stress management are interesting. Men's higher scores in the group regarding these two skills may stem from the fact that they are less emotionally concerned with decisions and conflict resolutions

TABLE 7.5 Strengths of Respondents by Age Groups

Skills*	Answers in age groups		
	Below 30	30-50	50+
Organization of time of own work	64.0	63.1	71.4
Coping with stress	28.6	40.2	46.8
Learning	47.5	47.1	43.4
Career management	20.9	14.1	19.4
Interpersonal communication	35.4	38.4	40.1
Conflict management	13.8	20.7	32.6
Collaboration/rep. different cultures	3.2	2.7	10.2
Leadership, authority	8.8	7.9	14.2
Collaboration/rep. different ages	30.9	39.4	53.2
Collaboration/rep. different genders	11.0	12.9	20.2
Swift adaptation to a new environment	35.3	34.8	28.4
Ability to mobilize for prolonged work periods	20.9	20.0	28.0
Ability to perform additional tasks	11.3	18.8	14.8
Creative thinking	28.4	30.9	24.4
Foreign language skills	17.3	12.4	7.7

NOTES * Respondents could choose maximum 5 out of 15 skills. Values expressed as percentages.

than women. Studies on brain prove that men and women process emotions differently (Spalek et al., 2014).

As far as positions are concerned, it may be observed that differences between specific positions pertain to the following strengths: organization of time of own work (significance 0.002 for operational staff and specialists), coping with stress (significance 0.003 for operational staff), learning (significance 0.003 for operational staff), interpersonal communication (significance 0.021 for managers), leadership (significance 0.023 for specialists and managers), mobilization for prolonged work periods (significance 0.021 for specialists and managers). On the other hand, Table 7.5 outlines respondents' skills in relation to age.

When comparing choices regarding strengths in each of the three age categories, it can be observed that the youngest employees (up to 30 years of age) are distinguished by four skills:

- learning,
- career management,

- swift adaptation to a new environment,
- foreign languages skills.

In the 30–50 age group, two skills can be highlighted:

- the ability to perform additional tasks,
- creative thinking.

Employees aged 50+ seem to diverge from the other age groups. They indicated the following skills more frequently than the other groups:

- organization of time of own work,
- coping with stress,
- interpersonal communication,
- conflict management,
- cooperation with representatives of other cultures,
- leadership and authority, cooperation with people of different ages,
- collaboration with representatives of different genders,
- ability to mobilize for prolonged work periods.

In the 50+ group, a high proportion of respondents indicating the ability to cooperate with people of different ages (53.2%) and stress management (46.8%) ought to be highlighted. This can result from their extensive professional experience. Such results can make these employees play a significant role as mentors in their organizations. Moreover, the score regarding the ability to mobilize for prolonged work periods (28%) contradicts the existing stereotypes regarding this group of employees.

Values

Values constitute the next element of employee potential. Eighteen values were distinguished: 9 occupational and 9 general values. Respondents were requested to select the most and least important values (they could choose maximum 5 of the most important and maximum 5 of the least important from the list of 19 values) (Table 7.6 outlines the list of values).

The fact that general values obtained higher results than occupational ones is noteworthy. Respondents indicated the following as

TABLE 7.6 List of Values

General values	Occupational values
Honest life	Good relations with colleagues
Family happiness	Work-life balance
Health	Security
Peace	Achievements
Wealth	Autonomy
Respect	Professional honesty
Life full of adventures	Authority
Tolerance	Intellectual stimulation
Natural environment	Responsibility

the most important general values: health (82.3%); family happiness (78.4%); honest life (60.5%) and respect (36.3%). Among occupational values, the highest results pertained to work-life balance (38.8%), security (30.9%), good relations with colleagues (23.6%) and responsibility (23.4%).

Low results regarding achievements (12.5%) and intellectual stimulation (12.3%) ought to be emphasized. These may suggest that respondents are not particularly focused upon professional development in the organization, and that a workplace may be linked more with economic security than a place with professional development opportunities.

Values in the Context of Diversity. In the case of the following five occupational values: achievements, autonomy, professional honesty, authority, and intellectual stimulation, no statistically significant differences were observed between men and women. Therefore, no men's and women's preferences can be indicated in relation to these (Table 7.7). The obtained results do not confirm conclusions featured in the literature regarding the traditional perception of women's and men's careers in organizations. However, there are differences in the case of four values (chi-squared test, significance 0.000). This applies to:

- Work-life balance (45% women, 34% men);
- Good relations with colleagues (27% women, 22% men);
- Security (35% of women, 29% of men);
- Responsibility (22% women, 27% men).

TABLE 7.7 The Most Important Values for Women and Men

Group	Value	Women	Man
General values	Honest life	48.5	51.5
	Family happiness	49.0	51.0
	Health	49.5	50.5
	Peace	46.2	53.4
	Wealth	45.8	54.2
	Respect of others	52.3	47.7
	Life full of adventures	54.0	45.9
	Tolerance	50.0	50.5
	Natural environment	49.6	50.4
Occupational values	Good relations with colleagues	54.3	45.3
	Work-life balance	55.7	43.4
	Security	53.4	45.4
	Achievements	53.1	46.9
	Autonomy	48.8	54.1
	Professional honesty	45.9	54.1
	Authority	45.5	54.5
	Intellectual stimulation	53.0	47.0
Responsibility	44.0	56.0	

NOTES Values expressed as percentages.

Work life-balance is vital for women, which may stem from the social role they perform. However, it should be remembered that these values are declaratory in character. Nevertheless, it seems to confirm the traditional roles of women in Poland. Van der Lippe, Jager, and Kops (2006) argue that differences between countries may arise. For instance, in Sweden, pressure on both men and women is high. For Dutch and Swedish women, the agreement with their spouses decreases the impact of working long hours weekly. Having young children appears to be important in relation to paid working hours for Swedish men and Slovenian women. In Poland, organizations should introduce more flexible working hours and offer more organizational support so that women can reconcile their various roles.

When analyzing the results in the context of positions, several differences can be observed in relation to:

1. Work-life balance (the lowest number of indications among managers (chi-squared test, significance 0.000));

2. Authority (the largest number of indications among managers; chi-squared test, significance 0.04);
3. Responsibility (the largest number of indications among managers; chi-squared test, significance 0.03).

In order to analyze values in the context of age, four age categories were proposed (20–29 years of age; 30–39, 40–49; 50+). This was due to the fact that there exist differences between women and men in terms of their life structure (Sugarman, 2001). It should be also noted that people in different societies may go through similar patterns of building and changing the structure, but the frequency and duration of life adjustments may depend upon the particular society. Work-life balance is regarded as the most important value in each age category, while autonomy and authority as the least important. Interestingly, employees aged 20–49 place security second, whereas for the eldest respondents responsibility is secondary. It would seem that, contrary to the above, the eldest employees would pursue security the most.

As far as occupational values in the context of age are concerned, it can be concluded that there exist differences among groups of respondents (statistically significant) in relation to:

1. Good relations with colleagues – the number of indications increases with age (chi-squared test, significance level 0.021);
2. Achievements – the number of indications decreases with age (significance level 0.000);
3. Professional honesty – the number of indications increases with age (excluding the 50+ group, the significance level is 0.000);
4. Responsibility – the number of indications increases with age (excluding the 50+ group, the significance level is 0.000).

The above results allow to conclude that there exist differences in the characteristics of respondents in the context of their preferred values. Further analyses of values were undertaken in the context of age and gender. The most interesting facts are compiled in Table 7.8.

All respondents, regardless of age and gender, indicated the following three values the most frequently: work-life balance, security and responsibility. For women aged 30–39, the scores for security (41%) and work-life balance (51%) are very high. On the other hand, for women aged 50+, the results are much lower (security – 25%, work-

TABLE 7.8 The Most Important Occupational Values in the Context of Age and Gender

Values	Age groups							
	20-29		30-39		40-49		50+	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Work-life balance	46	31	51	37	49	34	34	35
Security	35	34	41	30	36	20	25	25
Responsibility	10	21	21	22	27	30	30	31

NOTES Values expressed as percentages.

life balance – 35%) (Table 7.8). This may be accounted for when the change of women’s social roles in individual career stages is considered. Younger women, especially those caring for small children, have additional duties to fulfill. As they get older, they are able devote more time to the organization than to their families. When the scores for men in similar age groups are considered (Table 7.8), the values of work-life balance are much lower and do not change as much (age 30-39 – 37%; age 50+ – 35%). It should also be noted that in the 50+ group, the declared impedance of three values – by women and men – is very similar. This means that mature women who have fulfilled their familial responsibilities are willing to devote more time and energy to their organizations. However, the existing stereotypes regarding 50+ employees, especially women, prevent 50+ women workers from fulfilling their career-related objectives. In addition, the statutory retirement age in Poland being lowered in 2017 (60 years of age for women and 65 for men) decreases employment opportunities for mature and competent workers. In general, based upon the above, it can be concluded that the tools and practices of human resources management should be adjusted to the age and gender of respondents. In particular, this should concern groups of women aged 30-49, and women and men aged 50+.

Well-Being

Well-being constitutes another element of employees’ potential. Mental well-being relates to a person’s psychological functioning, life satisfaction, and ability to develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships. Psychological well-being includes the ability to maintain a sense of autonomy, self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life and self-esteem. Therefore, remaining mentally healthy involves

more than the treatment and prevention of mental illness. The study follows well-being items featured in the concept of Tennant et al. (2007) (Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale). Respondents were requested to assess their state of well-being in the past 2 months on the scale 1–5 (from 1 – ‘never’ to 5 – ‘always’).

- I perceive future in black colors (reverse).
- I feel that I lack energy (reverse).
- I feel joyful.
- I feel healthy.
- I am interested in new ideas.

The majority of respondents perceive future positively (scores of 4 and 5 were offered by 67% of respondents). The level of respondents’ energy may be assessed as average – 39% of them rarely experience lack of energy, 34% experience it sometimes, and merely 2% experience it frequently. More than 50% of respondents frequently feel joyful (50%), which constitutes a good result. Similar scores were achieved with regard to health (54% frequently feel healthy, 21% very frequently). Interest in novelties was indicated by 80% of respondents.

Well-Being in the Context of Diversity. Women’s and men’s well-being does not diverge much (significance of the *t*-test amounts to 0.063). In addition, statistically significant differences among respondents occupying the same positions do not exist. There are no statistically significant differences in relation to well-being as well (the significance of the *t*-test is 0.173).

The analysis of well-being in the context of age groups (4 age groups were isolated) indicates that there exist statistically significant differences with regard to well-being of the 50+ and the remaining employees. However, these differences are only slight (post-hoc tests, significance of 0.000).

Cognitive Styles

The styles determine the way of thinking, identification of facts and assimilation of information. As a consequence, a premise was made that the familiarity with cognitive styles is significant in the context of the management of diversified employee groups. The project follows the Cognitive Style Index (CSI) concept developed by Allinson and

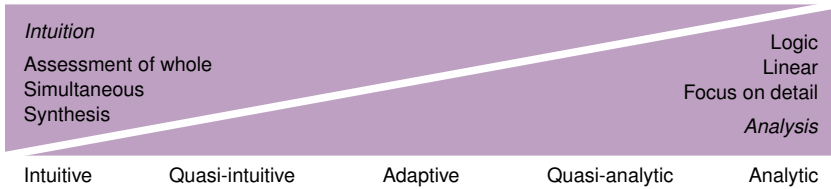


FIGURE 7.2 A Continuum of Cognitive Styles (adapted from Allinson and Hayes, 2012, p. 4)

Hayes (2012). The CSI describes the way a person thinks, perceives and remembers information. The CSI is also known as an important concept in the area of education and management. The familiarity with an individual's cognitive style can be useful in HRM processes, e.g. selection, placement, motivation and development.

Allinson and Hayes identified five notional learning styles (Figure 7.2). Intuition and analysis (intuitive and analytic styles) can be found at the extremes of the spectrum. However, a cognitive style often includes elements of both intuition and analysis. The adaptive style can be found in the middle of the continuum. This style implies a balanced blend of the two cognitive modes (Allinson & Hayes, 2012). The quasi-intuitive style and quasi-analytic styles neighbor the adaptive style.

The CSI questionnaire contains 38 questions describing 5 cognitive styles. The CSI scores can range from 0 to 76. A score of 0 indicates a very strong preference for intuitive ways of processing information and a score of 76 indicates a very strong preference for analytical ways of thinking:

- Intuitive style (0–28);
- Quasi-intuitive (29–38);
- Adaptive (39–45);
- Quasi-analytic (46–52);
- Analytic (53–76).

Figure 7.3 presents respondents' cognitive styles. Respondents manifested the analytic style the most frequently (every third respondent). Next, the quasi-analytic style was indicated by 28.8%, adaptive – by 21.4% and quasi-intuitive – by 13.3%. The intuitive style was indicated the most seldom (4.1%).

The compiled empirical data was presented in contingency tables

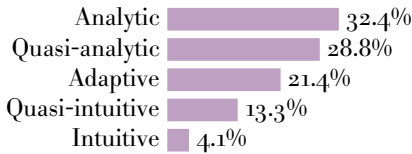


FIGURE 7.3 Respondents' Cognitive Styles

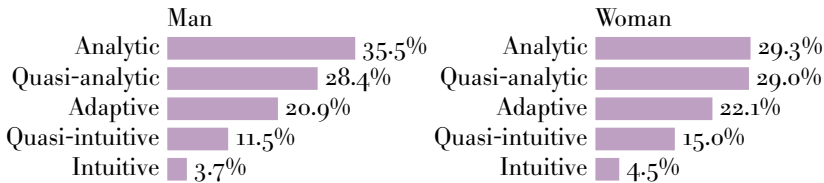


FIGURE 7.4 Cognitive Style vs. Respondents' Gender (statistically significant differences; $\chi^2 > 3.841$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$)

which underwent statistical analysis. The chi-squared test of independence was applied due to the character of the analyzed data. Relationships scoring $p < 0.05$ were considered as significant. In order to establish answers to the research questions, an analysis of the impact of independent variables characterizing respondents upon cognitive styles manifested by them was conducted.

Gender proved to diversify cognitive styles of respondents (Figure 7.4). Men exhibited the analytic style more frequently than women (35.5% vs. 29.3%). On the other hand, women's preference was for the quasi-intuitive (15% vs. 11.5%) and intuitive styles (4.5% vs. 3.7%). This seems to prove a greater importance of intuition for women than men.

No statistically significant differences were observed with regard to positions occupied by respondents (managers, operational staff, specialists). On the other hand, differences in the specifics of the position, i.e. the dominant profile of the position emerged (Table 7.9) Respondents whose dominant profile encompassed IT applications, predominantly manifested the analytic style (approx. 48%) and seldom the intuitive style (1.6%). On the other hand, respondents dealing with marketing, sales and logistics manifested the adaptive or quasi-analytic (28.5%) and intuitive styles (6.1%).

The analysis of results indicated that cognitive styles were determined by respondents' age as well. The analytic style, which was predominant among all respondents, was also the most frequent indi-

TABLE 7.9 Profile of the Position vs. Displayed Cognitive Style (%)

Cognitive style	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Intuitive	2.9	4.8	3.6	5.5	1.6	6.1
Quasi-intuitive	9.1	14.4	16.4	17.9	9.5	15.2
Adaptive	22.3	20.4	15.5	20.7	15.9	28.5
Quasi-analytic	31.8	27.5	23.9	29.0	25.4	28.5
Analytic	34.0	32.9	40.6	26.9	47.6	21.7

NOTES (1) technical support, (2) general admin. duties, organizational, legal, HR tasks, (3) finance-, accounting-, and reporting-related duties, (4) projects, research, innovations, (5) IT-related duties, (6) marketing, sales, logistics. Statistically significant differences; $\chi^2 > 11.07$, $df = 5$, $p < 0.05$.

TABLE 7.10 The Profile of the Position vs. Respondents' Age (%)

Cognitive style	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69
Intuitive	7.0	2.9	2.4	4.7	3.2
Quasi-intuitive	14.8	14.7	10.0	14.3	7.4
Adaptive	23.9	20.6	25.7	14.5	27.4
Quasi-analytic	26.4	29.9	30.6	29.1	24.2
Analytic	28.0	31.9	31.3	37.4	37.9

NOTES Statistically significant differences; $\chi^2 > 9.49$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.05$.

cation of the eldest respondent group. On the other hand, the intuitive style, which was the least popular among all respondents, was manifested by the youngest age group (20-29) significantly more frequently than by the elder generations (7%).

In conclusion, it can be said that gender determines cognitive styles. It was men who represented the analytic style more frequently than women. On the other hand, women manifested the quasi-intuitive and intuitive styles more frequently than men. It denotes that, when making decisions, it is women who recognize relations among various elements, approach situations comprehensively, rely upon their intuition and experiences more frequently. In turn, men think logically, analytically, and focus upon a specific task more frequently than women. In addition, the dominant profile of the position and respondents' age determined cognitive styles as well.

Results in these areas may prove the necessity of adjusting human resources management tools to individual features characterizing employees. Becoming familiar with cognitive styles of employees seems vital. This knowledge may be employed by the management

staff in a more aware manner (Allinson & Hayes, 2012). Moreover, the process of adaptation and mentors' selection may be more effective if the individual cognitive style of a new employee is taken into consideration. The division of duties among employees constitutes another field cognitive styles may be applied in. They may enable the efficiency of individual team-members to be boosted and communication among them improved.

Summary of Competence Potential in the Context of Diversity

Gender. Except well-being, statistically significant differences were found in each of the elements of potential. Some declared strengths of men's and women's knowledge and skills differ statistically. Statistically significant differences pertaining to women's strengths in knowledge and skills are presented in Table 7.11. In addition, there exist statistically significant differences between men and women regarding the most important general and professional values and cognitive styles. For women in particular, work-life balance, good relations at work, security and achievements are of considerable significance. On the other hand, men value the following more than women: peace, wealth, professional honesty, authority and responsibility. As far as cognitive styles are concerned, women represent the quasi-intuitive and intuitive styles more frequently than men, who predominantly manifested the analytic style.

Position. Competence potential in the context of the occupied position (operational staff, specialists, managers) is diverse. Operational staff, in comparison with the other groups, are distinguished by IT and environment protection knowledge. The highest results were noted in the group of managers. In five areas, results were higher than in the other two groups. Particularly high scores in the group of managers relate to: specialist work-related knowledge, operations of the organization, and management methods. This is consistent with the model of the Polish manager provided in the literature – a manager specialist with good technical skills (OECD, 2013).

In the context of skills, the operational staff group are distinguished by good skills regarding stress management, management of the time of own work, and learning. In turn, the group of specialists are characterized by the ability to adapt to new conditions swiftly, foreign languages proficiency, and the ability to cooperate with rep-

TABLE 7.11 Differences in Women's and Men's Competence Potential

	Women's characteristics	Men's characteristics
Knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge regarding cultural differences • Organization of time of own work • Interpersonal communication • Cooperation with representatives of other cultures • Collaboration with representatives of different ages • Ability to mobilize for prolonged work periods • Ability to perform additional tasks • Foreign language skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of management methods • Environment protection • IT applications • Project management • Coping with stress • Career management • Learning • Conflict management • Collaboration with representatives of different genders
Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work-life balance • Good relations with colleagues • Security • Achievements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace • Wealth • Professional honesty • Authority • Responsibility
Well-being	Women and men do not differ significantly	
Cognitive styles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More representatives of the quasi-intuitive and intuitive styles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More representatives of the analytic style

representatives of various age groups. The following are manifested by managers more frequently than by operational staff and specialists: creative thinking, the ability to perform additional tasks, ability to mobilize for prolonged work periods, conflict management and leadership.

Differences in the preferred values in the context of the occupied positions were observed. These differences apply to 3 occupational values in particular:

1. Work-life balance (the lowest number of indications among managers);
2. Authority (the largest number of indications among managers);
3. responsibility (the largest number of indications among managers).

No statistically significant differences were observed among oper-

ational staff, specialists and managers in relation to cognitive styles. On the other hand, differences among employees of various specializations exist (e.g. IT specialists represent the analytic style the most and the intuitive style the least, respondents dealing with marketing, sales and logistics manifested the adaptive, quasi-analytic, and intuitive styles the most).

Age Groups. There exist statistically significant differences in the self-assessment of knowledge and skills in relation to respondents' age. Strengths in the context of three age groups (below 30, 30–50, 50+) are worth highlighting. The youngest employees are characterized by the knowledge of market trends and IT applications. Their knowledge of diversity management is also more extensive when compared with the remaining groups. On the other hand, the oldest employees are distinguished by the greatest knowledge regarding the operations of the organization, methods of management and that of environment protection. At the same time, knowledge of IT applications does not diverge much from that of the remaining groups.

In the group of the youngest employees, learning, career management, and foreign languages were indicated as strengths more frequently than in the other two groups. Employees aged 30 and above distinguish themselves with their creative thinking skills and ability to take on additional tasks. While the 50+ group are characterized by: interpersonal communication, conflict management, cooperation with representatives of different cultures, cooperation with people of different ages, cooperation with people of different genders, and the ability to mobilize for prolonged work periods.

Age groups differ with regard to several declared values. Particularly interesting results pertain to the following occupational values: good relations with colleagues (the number of indications increases with age); achievements (the number of indications decreases with age); professional honesty (the number of indications increases with age); and responsibility (the number of indications increases with age). The differences regarding work-life balance in individual age groups of men and women are worth mentioning as well. The significance of work-life balance changes among various women's age groups. This is evidently associated with women's changing social roles. In men's groups, such changes do not occur.

In case of well-being, statistically significant differences were ob-

served between the 50+ group and the remaining groups. However, these differences are not very high, thus, they may be considered as exerting no impact upon the diversity of individual age groups.

Cognitive styles constitute the final element of the potential diversified with regard to age. The analytic style emerges more frequently among the eldest respondent group, whereas the intuitive style the least. On the other hand, the latter style was manifested by the youngest employees the most frequently.

Conclusions. The above results acknowledge that the potential of employees is diversified with regard to gender, occupied positions and age.

Perceived HR Practices

Best HR practices and employee engagement are the most popular mantras for high satisfaction, job engagement, and results of organizational performance. This is particularly true in the context of:

1. Perception of HR practices related to employee development and creation of innovative climate (Shuck, Twyford, Reio, & Shuck, 2014);
2. Organizational and superiors' support (Saks, 2006);
3. Procedural and distributive justice (Salanova, Agut, & Peiró, 2005; Saks, 2006).

Therefore, the perception of these HR practices has become an area of interest in the present study. The surveyed practices were divided into four categories: practices pertaining to opportunities of employee development, organizational support for innovation, support from the organization and superiors, and perceived justice. In order to collect information regarding these aspects, respondents were requested to answer 10 questions (the extent they agree with each of the statements, scale 1 – ‘completely disagree’ to 5 – ‘completely agree’). General results are presented in Table 7.12. Results were broken down by gender, position and age group, and were presented in Table 7.13.

Results regarding the Perceived Opportunities of Employee Development (POED) and Perceived Organizational Support for Innovation (POIS) ought to be assessed lower than average due to the fact that the sample includes innovative companies. According to employees’

TABLE 7.12 Items Describing the Perception of HR Practices

Items	Variables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My organization supports the improvement of my competences • I am satisfied with the opportunities for developing my competences in the organization • The organization takes full advantage of my potential • My direct superior supports the improvement of my competences 	POED (Perceived Opportunities of Employee Development)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The atmosphere prevailing in my organization facilitates the creation of innovative ideas • Formal practices introduced in the organization stimulate employees to search for innovative ideas 	POIS (Perceived Organizational Support for Innovation)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My organization takes into account my objectives and values, creates the conditions for me to be able to offer as much as possible • My superior cares for me, takes into account my objectives and values, creates conditions for me to be able to offer as much as possible 	SupO (Support from the Organization) SupS (Support from the Supervisor)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The procedures on the basis of which decisions are made in the organization are fair • The remuneration I receive reflects my work effort 	PrJu (Procedural Justice) DiJu (Distributive Justice)

TABLE 7.13 Results Regarding the Perception of HR Practices

Item	POED	POIS	SupO	SupS	PrJu	DiJu
Mean	3.17	3.11	3.19	3.46	3.24	3.10
Median	3.25	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00
SD	0.89	0.95	1.01	1.11	0.96	1.12

views, HR departments do not undertake many activities which stimulate employees' creativity and innovation. It may mean that innovations are bought from the outside, or are created by specialized employee groups working in projects or R&D departments. This may denote that businesses are not interested in applying the potential of all employees in order to create innovations. On the other hand, employees seems to be unmotivated to use their competences for generating innovations. When analyzing views regarding the perceptions of HR practices in the context of diversity (Mann-Whitney U test,

TABLE 7.14 Perceived HR Practices in the Context of Diversity

Category	Item	POED	POIS	SupO	SupS	PrJu	DiJu
Gender	MW	476196.5	478963.0	472379.0	493541.0	480903.0	495650.5
	<i>p</i>	0.327	0.323	0.035	0.611	0.173	0.856
Position	KW	41.619	20.416	25.573	7.615	13.179	62.402
	<i>df</i>	2	2	2	2	2	2
	<i>p</i>	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.022	0.001	0.000
AG	KW	7.851	0.65	18.81	3.89	18.55	36.98
	<i>df</i>	2	2	2	2	2	2
	<i>p</i>	0.020	0.723	0.000	0.143	0.000	0.000

NOTES MW – Mann-Whitney, KW – Kruskal-Wallis, AG - age groups.

Kruskal-Wallis test), several statistically significant differences can be observed (Table 7.14).

POED and POIS and Diversity

There exist statistically significant differences regarding the Perceived Opportunities of Employee Development and Perceived Organizational Support for Innovation in the context of employee positions. The lowest results emerged in the group of operational staff and the highest among managers. Managers perceived more opportunities for developing their potential (POED) and innovation than respondents in the other groups. There are also statistically significant differences in the context of age. Similarly, the oldest workers seem to have more opportunities than the youngest employees. There are no relations between age and the development of innovation (POIS).

Women and men do not differ in the context of the Perceived Opportunities of Employee Development and Perceived Organizational Support for Innovation.

Support from the Organization (SupO) and Support from the Supervisor (SupS) constitute another group of practices. The SupO and SupS have a positive relationships with employees' sense of perceived self-obligation to care for the organization's well-being and making sure it achieves its objectives. Therefore, many authors emphasize that these two types of support exert influence upon employees' behaviors in the organization. Both concepts – the organizational and supervisors' support – were described more broadly in Chapter 4. As indicated in Table 7.15, the results of the perception of Support from the Supervisor (SupS), are higher than the perceived

TABLE 7.15 Results of Perceived Organizational and Superiors' Support

Results	SupO	SupS
Mean	3.19	3.46
Median	3.00	4.00
SD	1.01	1.11

TABLE 7.16 Perceived Support in the Context of the Occupied Position

Results/position		o	s	M
Support from the Organization	Mean	3.10	3.15	3.40
	SD	1.04	0.99	0.97
Support from the Supervisor	Mean	3.34	3.48	3.57
	SD	1.16	1.11	1.01

NOTES o - operational staff, s specialists, M - managers.

Support from the Organization (SupO). In general, respondents do not experience the support of the organization, but their opinions are diversified ($SD = 1.11$).

SupO & SupS and Diversity

There exist significant statistical differences in the perception of organizational support (SupO) between women and men. The results for men are higher than for women (significance 0.035) (Table 7.13). No statistically significant differences in superiors' support (SupS) were noted with regard to gender.

There exist SupO and SupS differences regarding positions (significance level ≥ 0.02). Specialists and managers experience more support from their superiors and organization than operational staff do (Table 7.16). However, opinions are diversified ($SD \geq 0.97$).

The perception of organizational support (SupO) also depends upon respondents' age ($\alpha = 0.000$). The highest results emerged in the group of the oldest employees and the lowest among the youngest workers. This may contradict the existing stereotypes regarding the 50+ employees.

In addition, in relation to the group of managers, differences between women and men in the context of SupS were observed. Male managers feel higher support from their superiors than female managers (Mann-Whitney U test, significance 0.018).

The third group of practices pertains to the distribution of rewards and resources in the organization, i.e. the Perception of Procedural

and Distributive Justice (PrJu; DiJu). In both cases, results are rather low. In particular, it is valid for distributive justice. As a consequence, in general, respondents believe that organizational rules regarding their rewards are unfair (means DiJu = 3.10; PrJu = 3.24).

PrJu and DiJu and Diversity

Men and women do not differ in their opinions regarding procedural and distributive justice in organizations (Mann-Whitney U test, $\alpha = 0.856$; $\alpha = 0.173$). However, differences in the context of the occupied positions (Kruskal-Wallis; 0.001; 0.000) and age groups (Kruskal-Wallis; 0.000; 0.000) are present. The highest results – for both types of justice – are observed in the group of managers and the group of 50+ employees, and the lowest in the group of operational employees and among the youngest workers.

Particular attention ought to be paid to the very low results regarding distributive justice in the group of operational (mean = 2.89) and the youngest employees (mean = 2.87). The fact that the group of operational staff consists of the youngest employees in 46% ought to be highlighted. In the group of managers (mean = 3.46) and the oldest workers (mean = 3.31) scores are relatively higher. The youngest workers and operational staff perceive decisions regarding received tangible and intangible rewards as unfair. The implications of these views can exert an impact upon job attitudes and behaviors at work, especially engagement and commitment, which will be examined in the next chapter.

Moreover, in the group of managers, men and women differ in the Perception of Procedural Justice (Mann-Whitney U test, $\alpha = 0.02$). Fairness and transparency are perceived by women managers as less favorable than by men managers.

Results pertaining to the development and application of potential and innovation are particularly unfavorable, especially when the fact that we are dealing with innovative companies is concerned. General results regarding the perception of support and procedural and distributive justice are average. The support of superiors is relatively higher than that of the organization.

The above mentioned results regarding the perception of practices applied in the organization allow to conclude that the view of these practices varies depending on the group of respondents. Although overall results are average, and sometimes low, the best results are

observed in the group of managers and the group of 50+ employees. The results in the group of the youngest employees are disturbing and require further examination.

In addition, there exist differences in the group of managers regarding gender. Men report higher support from their superiors than female managers. Men also perceive procedures as more favorable for them than women do (procedural justice).

Methods of Competence Development

One of the objectives of the present study was to identify the applied and preferred methods of competence development used by respondents. Twelve improvement forms and methods were assessed. Respondents were requested to select out of twelve forms of development offered in the cafeteria. Table 7.17 outlines the most frequently applied improvement methods in relation to employees' gender. The variable proved to determine the development methods in 5 out of 12 analyzed cases. Men selected the following significantly more frequently than women: information originating from external experts (45.5% vs. 39.7%) and independent study of literature (58.8% vs. 54%). On the other hand, women applied improvement in the form of trainings and workshops (69.9% vs. 64.1%), studies (46.9% vs. 39%) and experience gained in the course of rotating positions and change of jobs (38.6% vs. 34.1%) more frequently.

The *preferred methods of development* constituted the second surveyed aspect. Results pertaining to the preferred improvement method in relation to respondents' gender indicate the existence of statistically significant differences in two cases. Men declared the inspection of the surrounding environment (22.5% vs. 18.9%) as the preferred method more frequently than women. On the other hand, women pointed to coaching and mentoring more frequently (42.8% vs. 37.9%). Women selecting these forms may result from their need for the development of assertiveness, greater difficulties associated with their careers and the presence of stereotypes in the organization. This is valid especially for women pursuing significant positions, including those of managers.

The analysis of whether the occupied position determines the *applied method of development* revealed statistically significant differences in 5 cases ($\chi^2 > 5.99$, $df = 2$, $p < 0.05$). The distribution of answers regarding the exchange of information with superiors seems

TABLE 7.17 Methods of Development vs. Respondents' Gender (%)

Methods of development	Woman	Man
Studies, post-graduate studies*	46.9	39.0
Trainings, workshops*	69.6	64.1
Coaching, mentoring	15.8	18.7
Feedback from periodic performance review	26.9	29.6
Exchange of information with superiors	67.1	67.8
Exchange of information with colleagues	82.1	80.1
Learning in the course of work	84.2	82.7
Rotation of positions/ workplaces*	38.6	34.1
Inspection of the surrounding environment	67.4	65.5
Study of literature*	54.0	58.8
Learning from online sources	71.8	73.9
Information from external experts*	39.7	45.5

NOTES * Statistically significant differences ($\chi^2 > 3.841$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$).

TABLE 7.18 Preferred Improvement Methods vs. Occupied Positions (%)

Preferred improvement methods	Operational staff	Specialist	Manager
Trainings, workshops	59.1	67.8	73.8
Coaching, mentoring	14.5	15.9	23.9
Feedback from periodic performance review	30.3	25.0	32.1
Exchange of information with superiors	69.3	63.8	71.2
Information from external experts	38.1	42.1	50.4

NOTES Statistically significant differences ($\chi^2 > 5.99$, $df = 2$, $p < 0.05$).

interesting. It is applied predominantly by managers (71.2%) and operational staff (69.3%). Specialists apply it more seldom (63.8%). Similarly, feedback originating from the periodic performance review is applied as the improvement method more frequently by managers (32.1%) and operational staff (30.3%) than specialists (25%). On the other hand, the frequency trainings, information originating from external experts, coaching and mentoring, are applied in, grows in direct proportion with the position in the organizational hierarchy.

The occupied position determined the *preferred improvement methods* in 8 cases (statistically significant differences; $\chi^2 > 5.99$, $df = 2$, $p < 0.05$). The interest in trainings and workshops, information originating from external experts, exchange of information with superiors, learning in the course of work and from online sources, were

declared by managers more frequently than by other respondents. On the other hand, operational staff voiced interest in coaching and mentoring, rotation of positions or workplaces more frequently.

Results were also examined with regard to the impact of the dominant specialization of the position upon the *preferred method of development*. The dominant profile of the position determined the improvement method in 9 out of 12 areas. The greatest differences were observed in case of independent study of literature, which was practiced by 71.4% of staff involved in design and innovation-related activities, but only by 47.8% of those involved in finances and accounting. Results associated with learning in the course of work are also interesting. These were appreciated by IT staff (91.3%) and marketing, sales and logistics staff (90%) the most. The remaining groups scored it lower.

The analysis of the *preferred improvement methods* in relation to the *dominant profile of the position* revealed statistically significant differences in merely two cases. Feedback from the periodic performance review was preferred by design-handling employees (25%) and admin support staff (23.3%). It was indicated by IT staff the least frequently (5.8%). On the other hand, competence development via experiences obtained in the course of rotation of positions or a change of workplace was voiced the most frequently by marketing, logistics and sales staff (28.6%). For R&D department staff and technical support the percentage was slightly lower (20.9% and 20.6%, respectively). IT staff voiced their preference for this particular method the least frequently (13%).

Results were also analyzed in relation to the *age of respondents*, who were divided into four groups. Statistically significant differences ($\chi^2 > 7.81$, $df = 3$, $p < 0.05$) emerged in all cases except coaching and mentoring. A declining tendency may be observed in some types of the improvement in relation to age. This is valid for studies (61.1% in 20–29 age group, and only 27.8% in the 50+ group), improvement in the course of feedback from periodic performance review, exchange of information among colleagues, learning in the course of work, rotation of positions/workplaces, inspection of the surrounding environment, and learning from online sources. On the other hand, trainings and workshops were applied more frequently by the 40–49 age group.

Respondents' age proved to determine the *preferred method of de-*

velopment in virtually all cases (except trainings and workshops and independent study of literature) ($\chi^2 > 7.81$, $df = 3$, $p < 0.05$) as well. More than 50% of respondents in the youngest age group voiced their interest in coaching and mentoring. However, the method became increasingly less popular with age. A similar trend was observed in case of feedback from periodic performance review, rotation, and information originating from external experts. On the other hand, older employees declared interest in the exchange of information with superiors (39.7%) and colleagues (39.9%), and independent learning from online sources (35.7%) more frequently than their younger colleagues. This may come as a surprise when the latter of these is considered.

To sum up the discussion of the improvement methods, the fact that there exist differences pertaining to the applied and preferred improvement approaches and that they are determined by gender, age and positions, ought to be highlighted. These results may be utilized by managers or HR specialists in order to design employee development which would take their methods of preference into consideration. The analysis of research results indicated that women are more likely than men to participate in mentoring or coaching. On the other hand, men are more likely than women to apply the improvement in the course of observing others.

Research results revealed the existence of impact of the occupied position upon the preferred improvement methods. Those in managerial positions, more frequently than the other employees, indicated their interest in participating in active forms of development enabling the exchange of information, such as trainings and workshops, consultations with external experts, exchange of information with superiors, learning in the course of work and from online sources. On the other hand, those in operational positions voiced their interest in coaching, mentoring and rotation of positions and workplaces more frequently than the other employees. The above results may constitute the basis for the development of improvement programs for people in various positions in the organizational hierarchy.

Respondents' age proved to determine the preferred improvement methods in virtually all cases except trainings and workshops and independent study of literature. More than half of the youngest age group indicated interest in coaching and mentoring. However, the

method became increasingly less popular with age. A similar trend was observed in case of feedback from periodic performance review, rotation and information from external experts. On the other hand, the oldest group declared the interest in exchanging information with their superiors and colleagues, and learning from online sources more frequently than their younger colleagues. Such results may indicate the need for adjusting methods of development to employees' age. A premise can be made that the application of improvement methods convergent with the interest of a particular group will translate into a greater effectiveness and efficiency of competence improvement.

Indicators of Employee Potential Management

Employees' self-assessment constituted the initial step of the process. The evaluation of the perception of the applied HR practices, including the assessment of employee potential, was the second step. The evaluation of employee potential management was the third. A premise was made that the assessment of employee potential management (the application of employee potential in the organization) may be identified via the assessment of its indicators which encompass: job satisfaction, work engagement, organizational commitment, job involvement.

Job satisfaction constitutes a variable which exerts an impact upon several organizational employee behaviors, including the ultimate results of the organization (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002). It is also correlated with work engagement (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014).

On the other hand, when employee engagement and organizational commitment are concerned, the sources compiled so far are impressive. Nevertheless, the issue poses methodological problems, which has already been raised in Chapter 4. The problems pertain primarily to the definition of the engagement itself and its individual types, i.e. work engagement, organizational commitment and job involvement (Rakowska & Maćik, 2015).

Engagement was originally perceived as the reverse of occupational burnout. However, Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) argued that both burnout and work engagement constitute two distinct concepts which should be assessed). This means that, at least theoretically, an employee who is not burnt out may score high or low on engagement, whereas an engaged employee may score high or

TABLE 7.19 Items Pertaining to Work Engagement

1.	When I am at work, I feel full of energy (vigor)
2.	I am able to work for a prolonged period of time without taking longer breaks (vigor)
3.	I am eager to go to work and problems do not reduce my eagerness (vigor)
4.	I am enthusiastic about my work (dedication)
5.	My work inspires me (dedication)
6.	I believe my work has a sense (dedication)
7.	When I work I forget about everything around me (absorption)
8.	I am happy when I work intensively (absorption)
9.	Time passes by quickly when I am at work (absorption)

NOTES Based upon Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova (2006, pp. 701–716).

low on burnout. It should be also noted that, in this approach, unlike workaholics, engaged employees do not work hard because of a strong and irresistible inner drive, but because working is fun for them (Gorgievski, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2010). Such an approach was implemented in the present research premises.

The 9-item UWES scale (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006) was employed in order to identify the level of work engagement. In such an approach, work engagement is composed of three elements: vigor, understood and measured as the level of energy and mental resilience in work; dedication, emerging from the pride in one's own work and readiness to identify with it; and absorption, manifesting in the focus upon work and difficulties in becoming detached from it (Rakowska & Maćik, 2015).

Organizational commitment constitutes the second construct. It pertains to emotional attachment, i.e. the relationship between the employee and the organization based upon joint values and interests. The present study applies Allen and Meyer's concept (1990) which distinguishes three types of commitment: affective, calculative and normative commitment. The first type denotes employees' emotional attachment to the organization. Calculative commitment is of instrumental character. It results from the belief that the cost of leaving the organization would be too high, and/or alternative employment opportunities do not exist. Normative commitment is associated with the feeling of moral obligation to continue employment. It is manifested in the loyalty towards the organization. Five items were applied in order to assess organizational commitment (Table 7.20).

TABLE 7.20 Items Pertaining to Organizational Commitment

-
1. I feel as if my company's problems were my own (affective)
 2. I feel emotionally attached to my organization (affective)
 3. The company offers me so many benefits that I do not need to search for an alternative (calculative)
 4. I am convinced that one ought to be loyal towards the organization at all times (normative)
 5. I know that my colleagues rely upon me, thus I would never abandon my company and colleagues in a critical moment overnight (normative)
-

NOTES Based upon Allen and Meyer (1990, pp. 1-18).

TABLE 7.21 Items Pertaining to Job Involvement

-
1. The most significant things in my life at present are associated with my work
 2. Most of my personal objectives and hobbies are connected with my work
 3. My work achievements foster my self-esteem
 4. I consider my contribution to the realization of organizational objectives as significant
 5. I seek to improve work methods and achieved results
-

NOTES Based upon Kanungo (1982, pp. 341-349).

Job involvement is the next aspect. It is of particular significance for professionals, including the management cadre. It emphasizes the cognitive and psychological aspects of identification with work which may satisfy peoples' deepest needs and expectations. Kanungo's (1982) approach was employed in order to develop the scale.

The questionnaire's constructs were verified in pilot studies (Rakowska & Sitko-Lutek, 2015). In all cases, Cronbach's alpha amounted to ≥ 0.70 . In order to assess work engagement, organizational commitment and job involvement, a 5-point scale was applied (1 - 'completely disagree with the statement,' 5 - 'completely agree with the statement'). General results of the study regarding work engagement, organizational commitment, and job involvement are outlined in Table 7.22.

Work Engagement. General results are slightly below what is considered a good score. The highest results pertain to work dedication (mean = 3.87). It is a relatively good result. Employees scoring high results in work dedication, experience the feeling of sense and significance from their work, they are enthusiastic and proud of their jobs,

TABLE 7.22 Results Regarding Work Engagement, Organizational Commitment, and Job Involvement

Item	Work engagement			Organiz. commitment			Job involvement
	Vigor	Dedic.	Absorp.	Affect.	Calcul.	Normat.	
Mean	3.73	3.87	3.69	3.42	3.26	4.12	3.52
Median	3.66	4.00	3.66	3.50	3.00	4.00	3.60
SD	0.72	0.81	0.70	0.99	1.27	0.81	0.65

feel inspired and challenged by them. Those who score low, do not identify with their work because they do not perceive it as meaningful, inspiring, or challenging. Moreover, they feel neither enthusiastic nor proud of their work.

Organizational Commitment. General results are average. The lowest results pertain to calculative commitment (mean = 3.26). It constitutes a low score. This component is sometimes labeled ‘continuance commitment,’ which means that the committed person will continue to be employed in the organization due to costs of leaving (both economic and social). Low results may be interpreted as a guideline for organizations. Namely, if respondents find an organization which offers more benefits, they may leave their present workplace. Additionally, opinions regarding calculative commitment are very diverse. This may be due to the fact that the sample features various enterprises with different motivational systems and operating on different labor markets. Their results regarding normative commitment are relatively good (mean = 4.12). This may denote that many employees experience a sense of obligation towards their organizations. Even if they are unhappy in their roles, they feel they ought to stay because it is the right thing to do. In the situation of good results regarding normative commitment, low results in calculative commitment may look somewhat more optimistic. The fact that views and opinions regarding calculative commitment are very diversified ought to be highlighted (SD = 1.27). This may result from a considerable diversity of employment opportunities.

Work Engagement, Organizational Commitment, Job Involvement in the Context of Diversity. As far as gender is concerned, there exist differences in work absorption (Mann-Whitney U test, significance 0.000, Mann-Whitney U test). However, these discrepancies are small (mean for women = 3.72, mean for men = 3.62). With regard to af-

TABLE 7.23 Engagement, Organizational Commitment, Job Involvement and Positions

Item	Work engagement			Organiz. commitment			Job involvement
	Vigor	Dedic.	Absorp.	Affect.	Calcul.	Normat.	
χ^2	55.92	42.22	25.87	87.87	47.04	43.36	35.09
<i>df</i>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<i>p</i>	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

fective commitment, the situation is reverse (Mann-Whitney U test, significance 0.012), i.e. scores of men are slightly higher than those of women (mean for men = 3.47, mean for women = 3.36). However, these discrepancies are small as well. Gender does not diversify results in relation to job involvement.

Results pertaining to work engagement, organizational commitment, and job involvement, differ with regard to positions (Kruskal-Wallis, significance 0.000). The higher the position, the higher the mean values (Table 7.23). The largest differences can be observed for calculative commitment (means: 2.99, 3.30, 3.58). The score for operational staff is alarming (mean 2.99).

In the group of managers, there also exist statistically significant differences (Mann-Whitney U test, $p \geq 0.04$) between women and men managers regarding:

- Work absorption (results higher for women managers than men);
- Affective commitment (results higher for women lower than for men);
- Calculative commitment (results lower for women than for men).

The issue is worth further assessment because contemporary organizations need employees who are psychologically attached to their work and are willing and able to invest themselves fully in their roles in the long-term perspective.

Job involvement constitutes the final component. The construct of job involvement is somewhat similar to organizational commitment – both constructs pertain to employees' identification with the work experience. However, the constructs differ. Job involvement is more closely associated with the identification with one's immediate work-related activities, whereas organizational commitment refers to one's attachment to the organization. Job involvement is related to job characteristics, especially task autonomy, task significance, task

TABLE 7.24 Results Pertaining to Job Satisfaction

Item	Total	Phys.	Econ.	Int.	Task
Mean	3.75	3.96	3.45	3.87	3.71
Median	3.75	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
sD	0.66	0.92	1.01	0.87	0.82

identity, skills' variety and feedback and supervisory behaviors such as leader consideration, participative decision-making and amount of communication (Brown, 1996). Results pertaining to job commitment are diversified with regard to positions ($p = 0.000$). The highest scores pertain to managers. Even though these are only average, they ought to be regarded a low because managers ought to be expected to manifest a stronger job involvement (mean = 3.58).

Satisfaction

Job satisfaction constitutes the final indicator pertaining to employee potential management. The literature features two main approaches towards examining job satisfaction: either examining job satisfaction as a whole (global approach) or focusing upon specific areas of job satisfaction (facet approach) (Coomber & Barriball, 2007). The study embraced the latter. Respondents were requested to answer to what extent they were satisfied with the following, four aspects of their work:

1. Physical conditions of work (safety, noise, temperature, workplace equipment) (Phys).
2. Economic aspects of work (pay, financial rewards, insurance) (Econ).
3. Interpersonal relationships (quality of relations with superiors, with other employees, atmosphere) (Int).
4. Activities and tasks (monotony and repeatability, responsibility, independence) (Task).

Respondents were to assess their satisfaction with various job aspects by means of a 5-point scale (1 – 'I am completely dissatisfied,' to 5 – 'I am completely satisfied').

The lowest level of satisfaction concerns economic-related aspects, while the highest pertains to the physical environment (Table 7.24). Moreover, views and opinions present the greatest diversity in the latter case (sD = 1.01). Satisfaction with interpersonal relations scored

TABLE 7.25 Satisfaction vs. Occupied Positions

Position	Phys.	Econ.	Inter.	Tasks
Operational	3.74	3.20	3.80	3.55
Specialist	4.00	3.47	3.89	3.72
Manager	4.19	3.75	3.19	3.93

NOTES Mean values.

the highest. This may be related to the already-mentioned, relatively high level of normative commitment. Satisfaction with tasks and activities is average. Physical working conditions were assessed the highest.

Satisfaction in the Context of Diversity. No statistically significant differences were observed between men and women in the context of the four areas of satisfaction. However, there exist discrepancies in the context of positions. This refers to the satisfaction from: physical conditions, economic conditions, and performed tasks (Kruskal-Wallis, significance 0.000). The higher the position, the higher the satisfaction in each aspect. Very low results of economic satisfaction in the group of operational staff (mean = 3.20) may be alarming (Table 7.25). The results are consistent with the previously-mentioned scores pertaining to low calculative commitment in this group.

In the case of economic satisfaction, there exists a relationship between the age group and economic satisfaction (significance level 0.00). The higher the age, the higher the level of economic satisfaction (means: 3.22; 3.46; 3.58). Results are similar with regard to satisfaction with tasks and activities (significance 0.022; means: 3.60; 3.71; 3.78). The relationship is reverse for satisfaction with interpersonal relations (significance = 0.011; means in age groups 3.93; 3.89; 3.58). The youngest employees express the highest satisfaction with interpersonal relations.

The analysis conducted in the group of managers shows that there exist no significant differences between men and women regarding the four areas of satisfaction (Mann-Whitney U test, level of significance ≥ 0.30).

Conclusions. Results pertaining to the application of competence potential ought to be perceived as average. The lowest scores pertain to operational employees in particular. In their case, work engagement may partly result from the character of tasks and activities, as well

as low economic satisfaction. The highest scores apply to managers. When compared with the remaining workers, they are the most work-engaged and committed to the organization. Low scores for calculative commitment may pose a threat for organizations due to the fact that if employees find better employment, they will leave the company. On the other hand, these results are counterbalanced by good results in normative commitment. Therefore, the search for factors determining the level of the potential's application is vital. The issue will be discussed in the next section of the chapter associated with the verification of hypotheses.

Verification of Hypotheses and Summary of Results

The following five hypotheses were postulated:

1. There exist typical elements of potential which distinguish the representatives of Generation X from those of Generation Y.
2. In separate employee groups, diversified with regard to age, gender, and professional group (positions), there exist typical characteristics related to the development of the possessed potential.
3. In the groups of diverse workers there exist elements of competence potential associated with job satisfaction, work engagement, and organizational commitment.
4. There exists a relationship between human resources diversity management and innovation.
5. Familiarity with characteristics concerning the diversification of the potential in separate employee groups is insufficient, which leads to the incomplete application and development of the potential in enterprises.

In order to verify the first three hypotheses, data from the survey questionnaire (encompassing 2,076 respondents) was employed. In order to verify hypothesis 4 and 5, data compiled in the course of the semi-structured interviews with HR specialists (50 interviews) was used.

Verification of H1

In order to verify the hypothesis "There exist typical elements of potential which distinguish the representatives of Generation X from those of Generation Y," data obtained from 1,637 respondents was

TABLE 7.26 Characteristic Features of the Sample in the Context of Generations Y and X (%)

Category	Item	Y	X
Gender	Women (%)	52.9	48.1
	Men (%)	47.1	51.9
Age (mean)		29.6	44
Education (%)	Higher (undergraduate, graduate)	84.8	79.1
	Post-secondary	4.4	5.1
	Secondary	8.5	13.4
	Vocational	2.3	2.4
Position (%)	Operational staff	34.8	20.1
	Specialist	54.7	50.9
	Manager	10.5	29
Dominant specialization of the position (%)	Technical support	27.4	32
	General admin duties	25.2	27.8
	Finance-related duties	15.6	18.7
	Projects, research, innovations	10.0	5.7
	IT-related duties	4.0	2.7
	Marketing, sales, logistics	17.8	13.0
Work experience (mean)		6.8	20.4

used. Due to the ambiguity associated with time spans defining the individual cohorts, the following were applied in the present study: Generation Y – people born between 1981 and 1996 (people aged 18–33 in 2014, at the time of the study), and Generation X – those born between 1965 and 1980 (aged 34–49 in 2014).

The sample, consisting of 2,076 respondents, included 912 representatives of Generation Y, and 725 representatives of Generation X. Generation Y sample was dominated by women (52.9%). Men prevailed in the X sample (51.9%). The age average for the Ys amounted to 29.6 years of age, and for the Xs to 44. The majority of both groups had higher education at the time of the study (84.3% for the Ys, and 78.8% for the Xs). 50% of the Ys were older than 30 years of age, and 50% of the Xs were above 44. A more detailed description of the sample is included in Table 7.26.

Results of chi-squared tests for one variable indicated the existence of significant differences regarding sample size isolated with regard to education, occupied positions, dominant specialization of

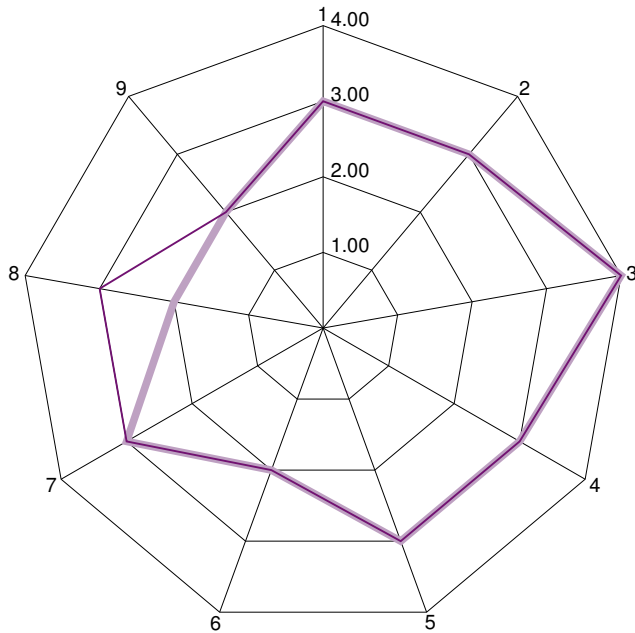


FIGURE 7.5 Frequency of Knowledge Improvement as Perceived by Representatives of Generations Y and X

NOTES 1 – operations of the organization, 2 – market trends, 3 – specialist work-related knowledge, 4 – specialist non-work-related knowledge, 5 – management methods, 6 – environment protection, 7 – IT applications, 8 – project management, 9 – diversity management, light – generation X, dark – generation Y.

the position, and work experience. It was only in case of gender that null hypothesis regarding the lack of differences in the sample size applied ($p = 0.085$ for the Ys and $p = 0.313$ for the Xs).

Research Results in the Context of Generations X and Y

The assessment of differences in the scores for Generations Y and X commenced with the answer to the question on the frequency of improvement regarding specific types of knowledge and skills. The median was employed in order to conduct the analysis of the frequency. Figure 7.5 presents results of the analysis.

The median indicates that the frequency of development remains on a relatively low level in both samples. It is only in case of specialist work-related knowledge that 50% of both the Ys and Xs indicated frequent and very frequent attempts at the improvement. Discrepan-

TABLE 7.27 Assessment of a Particular Knowledge Area as a Strength for Generations X and Y

Knowledge Area	Y	X
Operations of the organization	26.9	29.7
Market trends	29.7	25.2
Specialist/work-related	75.4	79.2
Specialist/non-work-related	18.4	18.2
Management methods	17.1	20.6
Environment protection	8.2	10.9
IT applications	23.4	19.7
Project management	11.6	11.2
Diversity management	4.7	1.8

cies between respondent groups were revealed with regard to project management methods' improvement. As far as Generation Y is concerned, 50% of them developed project management knowledge frequently and very frequently (median = 3). However, for 50% of the Xs, this type of knowledge was not improved at all, or was improved sporadically (median = 2). In addition, the chi-squared test was applied. The analysis of residuals indicted that, in case of both groups, answers 'not at all' and 'sporadically' surfaced more frequently than the calculus of probability would suggest. On the other hand, answers 'frequently' and 'very frequently' emerged less frequently than the calculus would suggest.

An in-depth analysis of results' distribution in the surveyed cohorts (Mann-Whitney U test for independent samples, $p < 0.05$) revealed that answers in both generations do not differ statistically only in two cases: (1) improvement of knowledge regarding the operations of the organization, and (2) improvement of knowledge pertaining to management methods and techniques. Therefore, it can be said that the growth of significance regarding the possession of a particular type of knowledge was accompanied by the growth in the respondents' awareness regarding the significance of the development. The relationship is stronger for the representatives of Generation Y. The way respondents assess the possession of a particular type of knowledge as a strength in such a context seems interesting. Results of such an assessment are compiled in Table 7.27.

Both representatives of Generations Y and X indicated specialist work-related knowledge as their strength (75.4% of the Ys and 7.2

of the Xs). The following were also indicated as strengths: market trends knowledge (29.7% of respondents), and knowledge of the organization's operations (26.9%). In case of Generation X, knowledge of the organization's operations was indicated by 29.7% of respondents, and knowledge of market trends by 25.2%. Both age groups selected knowledge of cultural differences in business as their strength the least frequently (4.7% of the Ys, and 1.8% of the Xs).

Cross analyses were conducted to formulate an answer to the question whether high improvement frequency is associated with the assessment of a particular area as a strength. The following were acknowledged:

- In case of Generation Y, 80% of respondents who frequently or very frequently improved their specialist work-related knowledge, considered the area as their strength. In addition, 70% of respondents who frequently or very frequently improved their knowledge of market trends, considered the area as a strength. The lowest score (47.9%) pertained to the application of IT considered as a strength;
- In case of Generation X, 84.7% of respondents who frequently or very frequently developed their knowledge of cultural differences in business, considered the area as a strength. In addition, 75% of respondents who frequently or very frequently developed their specialist work-related knowledge, considered the area as a strength. The lowest score (39.3%) pertained to specialist non-work-related knowledge considered as a strength.

A similar analysis was conducted in order to determine differences between the groups in terms of the frequency of skills' improvement. The assessment was based upon the median. The results of the analysis are presented in Figure 7.6.

Based solely upon the median, it ought to be noted that as far as skills' improvement is concerned, a considerably larger discrepancy between the two age groups emerges than in case of the frequency of knowledge development. Representatives of Generation Y improved the following skills more frequently than the Xs: organization of time of own work, learning, creative thinking (in each case, median = 4), leadership, authority (median = 3). In case of Generation X, the median value of each answer was not higher than the median scored by the Ys. Therefore, it can be said that the growth of the awareness as-

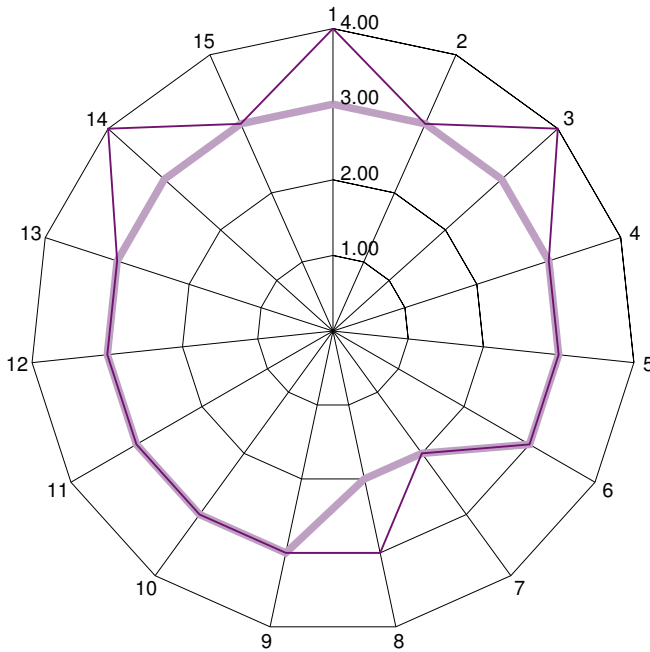


FIGURE 7.6 Frequency of Skills' Improvement as Perceived by Representatives of Generations Y and X (Median Values)

NOTES 1 - organization of time of own work, 2 - coping with stress, 3 - learning, 4 - career management, 5 - interpersonal communication, 6 - conflict management, 7 - collaboration with rep. of different cultures, 8 - leadership, authority, 9 - collaboration with rep. of different ages, 10 - collaboration with rep. of different genders, 11 - swift adaptation to a new environment, 12 - ability to mobilize for prolonged work periods, 13 - ability to perform additional tasks, 14 - creative thinking, 15 - foreign language skills, light - generation X, dark - generation Y.

sociated with the possession of a particular skill was accompanied by the tendency for the skill's development. The relationship is stronger for Generation Y.

The improvement of skills results in the increase of their level and boosts the probability of the skill being considered as a strength. As evident in Table 7.28, it is only in case of three skills that representatives of Generation Y considered these as strengths. It is valid for learning (50.6% for the Ys and 42.9% for the Xs), career management (18.1% for the Ys and 15.4% of the Xs), and foreign language proficiency (16.9% of the Ys and 10.1% of the Xs). In the remaining cases, representatives of the Xs scored skills higher than the Ys.

TABLE 7.28 Skills Indicated as Strengths by Representatives of Generations Y and X

Skills	Y	X
Organization of time of own work	63.3	42.2
Coping with stress	32.6	42.2
Learning	50.6	42.2
Career management	18.1	15.4
Interpersonal communication	36.7	40.0
Conflict management	15.3	25.5
Cooperation with representatives of other cultures	3.1	5.0
Leadership and authority	7.5	11.2
Cooperation with people of different ages	34.9	41.0
Collaboration with representatives of different genders	11.6	14.9
Swift adaptation to a new environment	33.9	34.8
Ability to mobilize for prolonged work periods	19.7	20.3
Ability to perform additional tasks	15.0	17.1
Creative thinking	28.6	14.1
Foreign language skills	16.9	10.1

NOTES Values expressed as percentages.

The largest differences in the assessment of a skill as a strength emerged in case of conflict solving (10.2 pp) and coping with stress (9.6 pp). In both cases, representatives of Generation X selected these as their strengths more frequently. Considerable differences surfaced in case of learning and foreign language skills (7.5 pp and 6.8 pp, respectively). In these two cases, it was representatives of Generation Y that selected these more frequently. The following skills are worth mentioning: cooperation with representatives of different cultures, leadership, authority, cooperation with representatives of different genders, and foreign language skills. For each of these, the frequency of their selection is low regardless of the age cohort. Only 3.1% of the Ys and 5% of the Xs indicated the cooperation with representatives of different cultures as their strength. Leadership and authority are considered as a strength by 7.5% of the Ys and 11.2% of the Xs. As far as the cooperation with representatives of different genders is concerned, it was selected as a strength by 11.6% of Generation Y and 14.9% of Generation X. Only 10.1% of the Xs and 16.9% of the Ys indicated foreign language skills as their strength.

Values constitute the next surveyed element of employee potential

TABLE 7.29 Values Indicated as Significant

Values	Y	X	
General	Honest life	55.7	64.3
	Family happiness	82.1	80.1
	Health	82.7	84.4
	Peace	24.7	21.5
	Wealth	14.5	6.1
	Respect of others	36.5	36.7
	Life full of adventures	13.8	5.9
	Tolerance	6.7	8
	Natural environment	5.5	5.8
Occupational	Good relations with colleagues	23.3	21.9
	Work-life balance	42.3	40.1
	Security	34.9	28.6
	Achievements	17	10.2
	Autonomy	6.7	4.7
	Professional honesty	13.8	21.9
	Authority	4.2	2.8
	Intellectual stimulation	15.8	10.5
Responsibility	18.4	27.6	

NOTES Values expressed as percentages.

of generations X and Y. Respondents evaluated which of the general (9 values) and occupational values (9 values) are important. Figure 7.29 presents the distribution of respondents' answers.

Based on the answers, the catalogue of values significant for representatives of Generations Y and X can be compiled. According to respondents, the following are significant among general values: health (82.7% of the Ys and 84.4% of the Xs), family happiness (82.1% of the Ys and 80.1% of the Xs). Honest life constitutes the next significant value regardless of the age cohort (55.7% of the Ys and 64.3% of the Xs). This value noted the largest discrepancy regarding the number of answers among generations (8.6 pp) of all general values. Natural environment constitutes the least important value regardless of the age cohort (5.5% of the Ys and 5.8% of the Xs). The lowest discrepancy regarding the number of answers was noted for this particular area (0.3 pp). Tolerance constitutes another low-scoring general value. It was selected as important by 6.7% of the Ys and 8% of the Xs.

Occupational values scored much lower scores. Work-life balance scored the highest number of answers in both generations. It was indicated as important by 42.3% of the Ys and 40.1% of the Xs. Security ranked second most important with the score of 34.9% for the Ys and 28.6% for the Xs. It is noteworthy that the discrepancy between the number of answers given by each of the generations is relatively large and amounts to 6.3 pp. Authority scored the lowest in both groups. It is important for 6.7% of the Ys and 2.8% of the Xs. It is noteworthy that the difference in the number of answers given by representatives of both generations for responsibility amounted to 9.2 pp (18.4% of the Ys and 27.6% of the Xs), and the difference for professional honesty amounted to 8.1 pp (13.8% of the Ys and 21.9% of the Xs). Autonomy was considered significant by 6.7% of Generation Y and 4.7% of Generation X.

Well-being constitutes the next element of the potential. The level of well-being is relatively similar in both generations. The mean amounted to 3.82 for the Ys and 3.81 for the Xs. As far as health-related well-being is concerned, Generation Y scored it higher than Generation X (4.01 vs. 3.95). With regard to the interest in novelties, it was similar for both generations (4.19 for the Ys and 4.21 for the Xs). The analysis of the equality of variances revealed a difference between the groups only in relation to the interest in novelties (Levene test 0.009).

Conclusions. On the basis of research results, it can be acknowledged that the hypothesis: ‘There exist typical elements of potential which distinguish the representatives of Generation X from those of Generation Y,’ was verified positively. Table 7.30 outlines the areas identified as displaying differences between the two generations.

Verification of H2

The second hypothesis states ‘In separate employee groups, diversified with regard to age, gender, and professional group (positions), there exist typical characteristics related to the development of the possessed potential.’

The analysis of results obtained from the sample of 2,076 allowed to verify the hypothesis positively. Results pertaining to the development of potential regarding cognitive styles and improvement methods in the context of human resources diversity were applied to that

TABLE 7.30 Differences between the Representatives of Generations X and Y

Surveyed area	Identified differences
Frequency of knowledge improvement (9 knowledge areas)	<p>Distribution of responses displays statistically significant differences in the following (1) market trends, (2) specialist work-related knowledge, (3) specialist non-work-related, (4) environment protection, (5) IT applications, (6) project management, (7) diversity management. Project management: Y > X.</p> <p><i>Summary.</i> In general, frequency of development is relatively low in both respondent groups. The growth of significance regarding the possession of a particular knowledge area was accompanied by a stronger tendency for the area's improvement. The relationship is stronger for Generation Y.</p>
Knowledge as a strength	<p>X (larger percentage of indications than Y): (1) operations of the organization, (2) specialist work-related, (3) management methods, (4) environment protection.</p> <p>Y (larger percentage of indications than X): (1) market trends, (2) IT applications, (3) diversity management.</p> <p>X=Y: (1) specialist non-work-related knowledge, (2) project management.</p>
Frequency of skills' improvement (15 skills)	<p>Y developed the following skills more frequently than X: (1) organization of time of own work, (2) learning, (3) leadership, authority, (4) creative thinking. Remaining skills: X > Y.</p> <p><i>Summary.</i> The growth of significance regarding the possession of a particular skill was accompanied by a greater tendency for the skill's improvement. The relationship is stronger for Generation Y.</p>
Skills as a strength	<p>X (larger percentage of indications than Y): (1) coping with stress, (2) interpersonal communication, (3) conflict management, (4) collaboration with representatives of different cultures, (5) leadership, authority, (6) collaboration with representatives of different ages, (7) collaboration with representative of different genders, (8) swift adaptation to a new environment, (9) ability to perform additional tasks, (10) creative thinking.</p> <p>Y (larger percentage of indications than X): (1) career management, (2) foreign language skills.</p> <p>X=Y: (1) organization of time of own work, (2) ability to mobilize for prolonged work periods.</p>

Continued on the next page

effect. Tables 7.31–7.33 present the summary of results pertaining to the observed statistically significant differences in the surveyed ar-

TABLE 7.30 *Continued from the previous page*

Surveyed area	Identified differences
Values	<p><i>General values</i></p> <p>X (larger percentage of indications than Y): (1) honest life, (2) health, (3) tolerance.</p> <p>Y (larger percentage of indications than X): (1) family happiness, (2) peace, (3) wealth, (4) life full of adventures.</p> <p>X=Y: (1) natural environment.</p> <p><i>Occupational values</i></p> <p>X (larger percentage of indications than Y): (1) professional honesty, (2) responsibility.</p> <p>Y (larger percentage of indications than X): (1) work-life balance, (2) security, (3) achievements, (4) autonomy, (5) authority, (6) intellectual stimulation.</p> <p>X=Y: (1) good relations with colleagues.</p>
Well-being	<p>Value similar to the average.</p> <p>Self-assessment of health: $Y > X$ ($p < 0.05$).</p> <p>Interest in novelties $X > Y$ ($p < 0.05$).</p>

eas ($p \leq 0.05$). These tables describe differences identified among respondents in relation to age, gender, occupied positions, and dominant specialization of the position.

Verification of H3

The next, third hypothesis states: ‘In the groups of diverse workers there exist elements of competence potential associated with job satisfaction, work engagement, and organizational commitment.’

In order to verify this hypothesis, the results of employee competence potential ought to be revisited. The assessment encompassed 9 knowledge items and 15 skills. Respondents indicated knowledge/skills areas important for their work, the frequency they improve the areas, and items they consider their strengths. Results revealed that the potential is diversified and the level of the potential’s improvement is low. Respondents rarely improve their potential. When they do, it is in the areas which are significant for their work.

In case of knowledge improvement, it was only in relation to specialist work-related knowledge that the mean amounted to 3.93 (median = 4.00). In the remaining areas, the mean for the frequency of

TABLE 7.31 Differences with Regard to the Displayed Cognitive Styles

Item	Identified differences
Gender	<p>Men displayed the analytic style significantly more frequently than women. Women represented the quasi-intuitive, intuitive and adaptive styles more frequently.</p> <p><i>Summary.</i> Women recognize relations between elements, approach situations comprehensively, rely upon their intuition and experiences when making decisions more frequently than men. On the other hand, men think logically, analytically and focus on details more frequently than women.</p>
Age	<p>The analytic style was displayed primarily among the oldest respondents. The intuitive style was manifested among the youngest respondents (20–29 age group) who displayed it significantly more frequently than the other cohorts.</p> <p><i>Summary.</i> The analytic style was prevalent among all respondents, and the intuitive style was the least frequent. However, the analysis of results indicated statistically significant differences depending on the age group. In conclusion, it can be argued that the analytic style becomes more prevalent with age.</p>
Dominant profile of the position	<p>Respondents with the dominant position profile in IT applications displayed the analytic style much more frequently (48%) than the other respondents, and the intuitive style the least frequently (1.6%). Respondents dealing with marketing, sales and logistics, displayed the adaptive, quasi-analytic, and intuitive styles more frequently than the other respondents. Those with project-, research- and innovation-dominance, manifested the quasi-intuitive, adaptive and intuitive styles more frequently than the other respondents.</p> <p><i>Summary.</i> In general, the intuitive style was the least popular, and the analytic and quasi-analytic styles prevailed. However, statistically significant differences among individual styles emerged depending on the dominant position.</p>

improvement scored 3 and below (median = 3 and 2). Results for skills improvement are similarly low. The highest score pertains to learning (mean = 3.49, median = 4). In the remaining cases, the mean amounts to 3 and below (median = 3 or 2).

Therefore, the following question arises: ‘Why do respondents neglect to improve competences in the organization?’ The following constitute explanations and associated questions:

- Are organizations interested in pursuing employee competence development?

TABLE 7.32 Differences Regarding the Applied Improvement Methods

Item	Identified differences
Gender	<p>Men applied the following development methods more frequently than women: (a) utilization of information from external experts, (b) independent study of literature. On the other hand, women applied the following more frequently: (a) trainings and workshops, (b) studies and post-graduate studies, (c) experience obtained when rotating positions and workplaces.</p> <p><i>Summary.</i> Gender proved to determine the applied improvement methods in 5 out of 12 cases.</p>
Age	<p>A declining trend associated with age regarding the participation in certain improvement types can be observed. It is valid for studies, development via feedback from periodic performance reviews, exchange of information with colleagues, learning in the course of work, rotation of positions/workplaces, inspection of the surrounding environment, learning from online sources. On the other hand, trainings and workshops were utilized more frequently by the 40–49 age group.</p> <p><i>Summary.</i> Statistically significant differences emerged in all cases except coaching and mentoring.</p>
Position	<p>Exchange of information with superiors and feedback from periodic performance review are applied by managers and operational staff. Specialists apply these more seldom. On the other hand, the frequency of improvement for trainings, information from external experts, coaching and mentoring increases in proportion with the position in the organizational hierarchy.</p> <p><i>Summary.</i> An attempt was made to establish whether positions occupied by respondents determine the application of improvement methods. The analysis revealed statistically significant differences in 5 cases.</p>
Dominant profile of the position	<p>Statistically significant differences emerged in the following: (a) studies, post-graduate studies, (b) information from periodic performance review, (c) exchange of information with superiors, (d) exchange of information with colleagues, (e) learning in the course of work, (f) inspection of the surrounding environment, (g) independent study of literature, (h) independent learning from online sources, (i) information from external experts.</p> <p><i>Summary.</i> Significant differences emerge in, e.g. independent study of literature, which is practiced by project, research, and innovation staff the most, and the least by those in finances and accounting. On the other hand, learning in the course of work was appreciated the most by IT departments, and marketing, sales and logistics staff, whereas others assessed it lower.</p>

TABLE 7.33 Differences Regarding the Preferred Improvement Methods

Item	Identified differences
Gender	<p>Men declared the inspection of the surrounding environment as the preferred development method more frequently. Women, on the other hand, preferred coaching and mentoring.</p> <p><i>Summary.</i> Statistical analysis revealed significant differences in only two cases.</p>
Position	<p>Managers declared interest in the following more frequently than the remaining respondents: (a) trainings and workshops, (b) information from external experts, (c) exchange of information with superiors, (d) learning in the course of work, (e) learning from online sources. Operational staff voiced interest in coaching and mentoring, and rotation of positions/workplaces more frequently than the remaining respondents.</p> <p><i>Summary.</i> The position occupied by respondents determined the preferred improvement methods in 8 cases.</p>
Age	<p>The following constitute development methods preferred by the youngest respondents: (a) coaching and mentoring, (b) information from periodic performance review, (c) rotation of positions/workplaces, (d) information from external experts. The oldest respondents preferred the following: (a) exchange of information with superiors and colleagues, (b) independent learning from online sources.</p> <p><i>Summary.</i> Respondents' age proved to determine the preferred improvement methods in virtually all cases (except trainings and workshops, and independent study of literature).</p>
Dominant profile of the position	<p>Feedback from periodic performance review was preferred by project and admin staff. IT staff preferred it the least. Development in the course of rotation of positions/workplaces was indicated by marketing, sales, and logistics staff the most. Research staff and technical support staff preferred it relatively more seldom. IT staff declared preference for this method the least frequently.</p> <p><i>Summary.</i> The analysis of the preferred improvement method depending upon the position's profile revealed statistically significant differences in only 2 cases.</p>

- Do organizations foster opportunities for the improvement of potential in the organization?
- Do respondents possess motivation and/or are they motivated to develop their potential? Are there any benefits/rewards associated with it?

TABLE 7.34 Results for POED Items

Items for POED	Mean
My organization supports the improvement of my competences.	2.95
I am satisfied with the opportunities for developing my competences in the organization.	3.12
The organization takes full advantage of my potential.	3.23
My direct supervisor supports the improvement of my competences.	3.38

- If the opportunities for developing the potential exist, does the organization offer opportunities to apply these competences in practice?

The analysis of HR practices, especially the Perceived Opportunities of Employee Development (POED), offers, at least, partial answers to be obtained. Results for POED items presented in Table 7.34 prove that organizations do not support and do not utilize the potential of the surveyed employees (in the opinion of respondents at least).

If organizations fail to recognize and apply the improved potential, as POED results suggest (my organization takes full advantage of my potential mean = 3.23), then the question whether it has impact upon the engagement, commitment, and job satisfaction, arises.

It was observed that the relationship between the engagement, organizational commitment, satisfaction and job involvement with the frequency of knowledge (9 areas) and skills (15 items) improvement is weak. Even though, in the majority of cases, statistically significant relationships were revealed (Pearson's r), the development frequency was low (Pearson's $r \leq 0.20$, $p \leq 0.05$). Therefore, they were not analyzed further. Only in one case, knowledge of market trends, the correlation coefficient between the frequency of improvement and engagement, organizational commitment, and satisfaction was higher, i.e. $r \geq 0.33$ ($p = 0.01$). This proves that information policies and knowledge of market trends form a relationship with engagement, commitment and satisfaction of employees. The organization's good situation may stimulate the drive towards work, the interest in remaining in the organization, and satisfaction from working in a 'good' company (correlation with job satisfaction $r = 0.57$ for $p = 0.01$; with calculative commitment $r = 0.45$, $p = 0.01$; work dedication $r = 0.45$, $p = 0.01$). Due to the fact that interesting results pertain to the improvement of a sole area, revisiting views regard-

TABLE 7.35 Relationships between POED and Indicators of Competence Potential Management

POED	Work engagement			Organiz. commitment			Job involv.	Job satis.
	Vigor	Dedic.	Absorp.	Affect.	Calcul.	Normat.		
Rho	0.37	0.47	0.30	0.33	0.45	0.36	0.38	0.53

NOTES Correlation significant at 0.01 (two-sided).

ing respondents' opportunities for competence improvement seems valid.

POED results prove that, according to respondents, organizations do not offer substantial support of competence development and are not deeply interested in applying the potential. This may result from the fact that employee potential does not sufficiently match organizational needs. Therefore, a more in-depth analysis of employee potential and a search for its better application seem worthwhile. As a consequence, the establishment of the answer to the following question seems crucial: 'Can the provision of the Perceived Opportunities of Employee Development (POED) be associated with a higher engagement, commitment and satisfaction?' If the relationship exists, it means that ways of engaging employee potential better can be found, including the context of its diversity as well.

Results of the analysis confirmed the existence of statistically significant relationships between POED and indicators of competence potential management (Table 7.35). As a consequence, the provision of conditions for the development of the potential may stimulate work engagement, organizational commitment and job satisfaction. The relationship is particularly strong with regard to job satisfaction, calculative commitment and dedication. Results revealed that the development is significant for respondents. However, the needs of respondents and organizations are not convergent. In general, according to employees, the majority of organizations express little interest in employees' potential.

From the point of view of diversity management, establishing the strength of the relationship with regard to age, gender and position is vital. The analysis of results pertaining to gender indicates that results of both groups are similar. On the other hand, as far as age is concerned, the strongest relationships between the POED and work engagement (primarily work dedication), calculative commitment, and job satisfaction emerge in the youngest employees. It means that

TABLE 7.36 Distribution of Spearman's Correlation with Regard to Age Groups

Poed	POED	Work engagement			Organiz. commitment			Job involv.
		Vigor	Dedic.	Absorp.	Affect.	Calcul.	Normat.	
<30	1.00	0.39	0.51	0.30	0.34	0.58	0.43	0.64
30-50	1.00	0.36	0.45	0.28	0.32	0.45	0.32	0.57
50+	1.00	0.35	0.47	0.34	0.33	0.34	0.35	0.51

NOTES Correlation significant at 0.01 (two-sided).

POED constitutes a vital factor which may be employed in order to improve engagement, commitment and satisfaction, especially among the youngest employees (who have little calculative commitment). The strongest relationships with the POED are observed among operational employees, especially with regard to calculative and normative commitment, and work dedication). However, each group manifests strong relations with job satisfaction (r for operational employees = 0.59, for specialists $r = 0.56$, for managers $r = 0.55$, for $p = 0.01$).

Differences pertain to calculative commitment in relation to the occupied positions (r for operational employees = 0.53; for specialists $r = 0.45$; for managers $r = 0.35$, $p = 0.01$) and work dedication, where the highest results emerged among operational staff (0.56; 0.43; 0.46, $p = 0.01$). In this case, the relationship between the POED and calculative commitment ($r = 0.53$) and work dedication ($r = 0.56$) ought to be highlighted.

To summarize the discussion of the initial two elements of potential, i.e. knowledge and skills, it ought to be noted that matching development practices with employees' age and position may considerably increase their work engagement, organizational commitment, job involvement and satisfaction.

Another aspect of employee potential is well-being. Results of the analysis prove that it is strongly correlated with vigor² ($r = 0.39$), work dedication (0.42), and job satisfaction (0.37). Based upon the above, it can be assumed that organizational care for the well-being of employees can contribute to the growth of job satisfaction and work engagement. On the other hand, when assessing the correlation in the context of diversified employees, it can be observed that gender does not diversify the relationship for men and women. As far as the

² Only the cases in which Pearson's r value is higher than 0.30 were considered.

occupied positions are concerned, it can be said that the strongest relationship with well-being can be observed among operational staff in relation to the following:

- Correlation with vigor $r = 0.43, p = 0.001$;
- Correlation with work dedication $r = 0.46, p = 0.001$;
- Correlation with job satisfaction $r = 0.40, p = 0.001$.

This means that well-being is strongly associated with work engagement and job satisfaction, especially for the youngest employees. The analysis of correlations with regard to respondents' age indicated differences in the relationship between well-being and several indicators of the potential's management. Even though, in individual age groups, the correlation is similar to the one with vigor and calculative commitment, it differs in the following cases:

- Dedication – the older the respondent, the stronger the relationship (0.37; 0.43; 0.45 for $p = 0.001$);
- Affective commitment – the older the respondent, the stronger the relationship (0.15; 0.18; 0.32 for $p = 0.001$);
- Normative commitment – the older the respondent, the stronger the relationship (0.26; 0.23; 0.35 for $p = 0.001$).

With regard to satisfaction, the strongest correlations pertain to the oldest (0.44 for $p = 0.001$) and youngest employees (0.40). For the 30–50 age group, $r = 0.33$.

The above results prove that, in case of the 50+ group, care for well-being is significant due to the fact that it is strongly correlated with engagement, commitment and job satisfaction.

In order to establish the relationship between satisfaction and well-being of individual age groups, an analysis encompassing the strength of the relationship was conducted. The analysis categorized satisfaction into four aspects (Table 7.37)

The fact that the strongest correlations are not associated with economic aspects but interpersonal relations and tasks and activities is interesting (Table 7.37). This is particularly visible in the group of the oldest and youngest employees. This allows to suggest that by improving interpersonal relations in the organization, sharing a suitable atmosphere and organizational culture, and assigning tasks properly, satisfaction, engagement and organizational commitment can be increased. A premise can be made that, for the youngest workers, who

TABLE 7.37 Correlation of Well-Being with Aspects of Job Satisfaction in Three Age Groups

Age groups	Aspects of job satisfaction			
	Physical conditions	Economic aspects	Interpersonal relations	Tasks and activities
<30	0.21	0.28	0.33	0.36
30-50	0.23	0.23	0.29	0.26
50+	0.24	0.29	0.39	0.37

NOTES Correlation significant at 0.01 (two-sided).

constitute a considerable share among operational staff, tasks are not always interesting, but the situation can be improved by job enrichment, a temporary change of roles, or a modification of employee control and supervision. In case of older workers, who frequently possess extensive knowledge and competences, their experience can be applied by them becoming mentors or advisers for their younger colleagues.

The above discussion allows to argue that the hypothesis 'In the groups of diverse workers there exist elements of competence potential associated with job satisfaction, work engagement, and organizational commitment' was verified positively. Employees possess a diversified potential. However, it is not a subject organizations are completely interested in. Therefore, in case of knowledge and skills, the search for direct relationships between indicators and potential management is difficult. It is only in the case of knowledge development regarding market trends that significant relationships with satisfaction, work engagement and organizational commitment emerge.

Relationships with the POED indicate the direction the improved application of the potential via employees' increased engagement ought to be searched in. If organizations seek to improve engagement, commitment, and satisfaction, they may do it by providing better development opportunities and competence application. However, the needs of the organization regarding employee competences ought to be examined first. In general, employees seek to improve and desire their competences to be applied, which is ultimately correlated with their engagement and satisfaction. The relationship between the POED and job satisfaction is particularly strong.

As far as diversity management is concerned, improvement initiatives matching the requirements of the three age groups ought to be

considered. Considerable space for improvement exists with regard to the youngest participants in particular. Similar conclusions can be drawn from the correlation between the POED and well-being.

In case of the youngest workers, who are the least satisfied with economic aspects and are uncommitted to the organization (low calculative commitment exists), a risk of them leaving the organization emerges. Results suggest their engagement and commitment can be increased by good relations at work being fostered and development opportunities offered.

In case of the 50+ group, well-being constitutes a significant factor improving satisfaction and engagement, which ought to be reflected in specific HR practices being introduced.

In conclusion, among the initial three hypotheses, two were verified completely and one partially. The next two hypotheses will be verified in the next sub-chapter.

Results Pertaining to Diversity Management Practices

Diversity management can be identified from two perspectives, from an employee's perspective, and as well as from the perspective of the management and HR specialists. This part will present the results regarding the perspective of human resources management specialists. Information on the management of diversity was collected during semi-structured interviews with 50 HR specialists (one in each enterprise). The aim of this part of the project was to identify dominant approaches and practices related to diversity.

As a reminder, it is worth citing information about the companies in the sample. There are 50 companies which conduct their business on a local or national scale (32 large businesses, 18 medium-sized companies). The majority of these companies had international capital and only 12 were based upon Polish capital exclusively. The companies are located throughout Poland, and their employees are predominantly Polish. The fact that 12 out of the 50 are the signatories of the *Diversity Charter* (declared compliance with EEO/AA and readiness for and involvement of employees and business partners in diversity) is noteworthy. This is due to the fact that, at least formally, this obliges the company to enforce particular diversity-related commitments and initiatives.

Due to the lack of the companies' consent to reveal their names, Table 7.38 outlines sectors these companies operate in.

TABLE 7.38 Type of Activity and Number of Entities

Sector	Number of entities	Sector	Number of entities
Municipal services	5	Manufacturing	20
Trade/Sales	7	Finances, insurance	4
Services, projects, IT	14	Total	50

All the surveyed companies implemented at least one national innovation between 2012 and 2014, and 17 companies implemented an international or global one (mainly international corporations). This means that national innovations are dominant. Usually, innovation of a larger scale emerges in international corporations. In addition, based upon the analysis of the survey (2,076 questionnaires returned by employees), it may be inferred that in the majority of cases, innovation does not emerge as an outcome of human resources management, is not organization based, i.e. it is not a consequence of the application of human resources. This seems to be supported by the previously discussed low scores pertaining to practices associated with the development and application of the POED potential, development of innovation in the course of the POIS. Innovation is based upon other sources. In case of international corporations, innovation originates from the corporations' HQ or its international branches. Other organizations generate innovations in R&D departments and acquire these owing to special funds. Even though an attempt was made to acquire additional information on the sources of innovation and their financing, respondents were reticent to provide such data. When it was provided, it usually pertained to the size and type of innovation. The following constitute types of implemented innovations:

1. Types: process innovation was implemented by 88% of companies, organizational innovation by 85%, marketing innovation by 67% and product innovation by 86%.
2. Number of innovations implemented in the organization in the past 4 years: two innovations – 22%, three innovations – 29%, 49% – four innovations.

The interview with HR specialists assessed HRM practices in a broad sense and diversity management practices. The interview focused upon whether an awareness of the significance of diversity management exists, and whether relationships between diversity and innovation emerge.

The research tool, i.e. the interview questionnaire, consisted of 28 questions, 18 of whom pertained directly to diversity, and the remaining to HRM. The following areas were examined in the section associated with diversity:

- Formal aspects and displays of diversity management;
- Existence of internal documents regulating diversity-associated behaviors;
- Development of diversity-friendly culture;
- Applied programs and practices;
- Diversity management as an element of the management cadre review;
- Employee satisfaction assessment, including such diversity aspects as age, gender, disabilities;
- Awareness of the role of diversity management;
- Diversity vs. innovation.

Results pertaining to human resources management are the following:

- *HR vs. support of innovations.* Two questions were posed: ‘Does the organization apply innovation support procedures and practices (if so, what are they?),’ and ‘Does an incentive system, a system for collecting and rewarding new ideas exist?’ 41 out of 50 companies declare they apply innovation support practices and 9 admit they do not. Only 17 companies indicated specific practices in the area, e.g. rewards for submitting new ideas, bonuses, awards, competitions, trainings. The latter were indicated the most frequently. Specialists’ answers are not convergent with those obtained in the course of employee survey (POIS, i.e. Perceived Organizational Support for Innovation).
- *Competence improvement opportunities.* 19 companies declare providing considerable opportunities for employee competence development (trainings, post-graduate studies, coaching, mentoring); 21 declare average opportunities, i.e. available to a selected group, 10 declare low level of opportunities (only selected competences and selected employees). In this case, HR specialists’ opinions differ from employees’ perception (POED, i.e. Perceived Opportunities of Employee Development).

- *Talent management.* Virtually every second company (24 out of 50) declare talent management (5 of them voice informal initiatives); 26 companies do not undertake initiatives in the area. This confirms the previous conclusions indicating that the surveyed companies rarely apply human capital and potential to develop innovations.
- *Flexible working hours.* It is applied in 25 companies, 13 of whom grant it to selected employee groups.

Results pertaining to diversity management:

- *Formal aspects and displays of diversity management.* Two companies declared the existence of a diversity management strategy. However, it ought to be noted that 12 out of 50 companies are the signatories of the *Diversity Charter*, which obliges them to possess formal documentation associated with diversity/diversity management.
- *How is diversity perceived in your organization?* In case of 8 organizations diversity is perceived in a broad sense and encompasses anything which may diversify employee potential, including e.g. health, marital status, culture, age, gender. When the question pertaining to diversity aspects significant in management is concerned, the following were mentioned:
 1. Employees' age – 19 companies;
 2. Competences – 11 companies;
 3. Gender – 11 companies;
 4. Experience – 9 companies;
 5. Disabilities – 2 companies.
- *Presence of internal documents regulating diversity issues.* When confronted with the question 'Has the company introduced an internal document pertaining to fair treatment?' 27 specialists answered 'Yes,' 22 'No,' and 1 did not offer an answer. Such information is usually posted on a bulletin board, web pages, documents in HR department. In addition, there exist ethical codes, diversity charters, good practice codes, which are posted on the companies' web pages, CSR documents, compliance policy regulations. However, in more than 50% of the companies (23) employees receive no information regarding fair treatment at a workplace.

- *Development of diversity-friendly culture.* Almost every second HR specialist believed their company fostered the development of the culture (24 companies, including 8 conducting informal initiatives). 16 companies indicated practices associated with the process: traditional and online trainings; team-building initiatives, workshops, and projects. In one case, an e-learning training is concluded with an exam. In addition, informal guidelines from the management were indicated (8 organizations).

Diversity-related programs and practices:

- *Age management* is declared by 17 companies, 11 of whom apply practices associated with retaining older employees, mentoring, 3 offer programs where the older teach the younger, 2 where the older teach the younger and vice versa, 4 companies introduced development programs dedicated to particular age groups (30, 30-50, 50+); 5 companies conduct recruitment with age management in mind.
- *Gender* – 40 companies have no formal HR practices associated with employees' gender; 8 implement programs and trainings associated with women's promotion, 6 apply mentoring programs; 6 consider gender structure of the company when conducting recruitment.
- *Other formal practices* associated with diversity: a program connected with the employment of the disabled (7); project management (4); employment structure in recruitment (6); all HR processes include diversity (2); superiors place emphasis on diversity (5) (informal); no formal practices (23).
- *Diversity management as an element of the management cadre's assessment.* Only 4 companies incorporate diversity management issues into the management cadre's performance review.
- *Assessment of employee satisfaction which includes diversity aspects.* 26 companies declare they assess employee satisfaction. Only 4 analyze results in light of employee diversity.
- *Awareness of the role of diversity management.* When confronted with the question 'Does your organization recognize the significance of employee potential diversity?', 18 specialists stated that diversity management had no relevance in their companies. On the other hand, 28 specialists declare that the significance is

recognized but initiatives are always formal. Most frequently, they are associated with employees' age, experience and competences. Initiatives linked to gender are more seldom, and those connected with disability the least frequent. In 4 cases, specialists stated it was difficult to assess. In total, 22 out of 50 companies do not recognize benefits emerging from diversity in the organization and from the management of employees' diversified potential.

- *Diversity vs. innovation.* Representatives of HR departments were asked their opinion regarding the significance of diversity in their organization in relation to innovation. The following question was posed: 'Do you recognize a relationship between diversity and innovation?' 31 respondents answered 'Yes,' and 26 of them indicated the following benefits: a greater number of ideas, innovation. In addition, four pointed to a new social order, improved atmosphere, one to improved financial results. For eight respondents it was difficult to assess.

To summarize, when the responses obtained in the course of interviews with HR departments are compared with those from employee questionnaires regarding the perception of HR practices, it can be observed that the two present two distinct outlooks upon the issue. Kulik (2014) presents a similar problem in her provocative paper where she argues: 'in human resources management, a line can be drawn that distinguishes research on formal organizational programs (above-the-line research) from the research on organizational practices as experienced by employees (below-the-line research)'. She indicates that below-the-line research measures employee perceptions of diversity management activities, but 'offers guidelines to HR professionals regarding which diversity management activities should be adopted.'

Information compiled in the course of interviews with HR representatives presents the organizations in a better light than when opinions collected in employee questionnaires are concerned. However, when analyzing data concerning both human resources management and diversity, it can be observed that HRM is on an average level, and diversity management is still low. Despite the above, it is evident that these issues are beginning to be recognized.

As far as the area of diversity is concerned, i.e. the awareness of the

role diversity management plays in organizations, it is declared to be on an average level (28 out of 50 companies declare initiatives in the field). However, 19 surveyed companies declare they pursue formal aspects of the issue, such as plans, programs, on specific initiatives. In addition, approx. every second company (24 organizations) declare they develop diversity-friendly organizational culture. However, the implementation of particular activities in the area was declared by merely 19. Despite the above, increasing difficulties in recruiting qualified employees, along with population ageing, result in issues associated with age management becoming a primary objective, which finds reflection in HR practices.

27 out of all surveyed companies acknowledged the existence of formal documents describing and regulating diversity policy in their HRM operations. This means, that at least from a formal standpoint, the awareness of diversity-associated issues ought to be evaluated as average. Interestingly, when asked to explain what significance do official documents, e.g. ethical codes, behavior and cooperation standards, diversity charter, bear in their organizations, specialists admitted that they are primarily to improve the organization's image. As mentioned earlier, 12 out of 50 businesses signed the *Diversity Charter*. It is evident that it is only declarative in character and, judging by the majority of answers, merely constitutes an element of PR. If diversity-related initiatives are indeed taken into consideration, they are primarily to develop a positive image of the organization in its surrounding environment. Conscious and targeted initiatives aiming to apply employees' diverse potential are rare.

Based upon responses pertaining to the perception of innovation vs. diversity, it can be observed that only in some cases (formal) relations are recognized but this does not translate into HR practice. This is surprising because all the surveyed companies were considered innovative (one of them belongs to the 100 most innovative companies in the world).

Four out of 7 remaining companies recognize the significance of the relationship. However, their solutions and initiatives are typical or relatively limited in scope. Only 3 out of 15 businesses conduct intensive diversity-related initiatives. However, it is difficult to acknowledge that these are connected with innovation. They are more to develop an image of the company caring for diversity. The most frequent initiatives encompass: the establishment and support for the

50+ clubs, Say Yes to Health, E-learning trainings, Global Networks project groups, flexible working time for parents of children younger than 5. The remaining companies, even if they run several initiatives in the area, they do not perceive it as a comprehensive strategy of the organization.

Research results prove that, even though the majority of businesses recognize the significance of diversity potential, they rarely adopt formal solutions to develop it. The companies lack diversity-related strategies. Instead, they primarily implement image-related programs. Therefore, it constitutes a formal approach associated with developing the image of employees' fair treatment.

This approach does not constitute a conscious application of employees' diverse potential in order to develop innovative solutions.

As far as the following two hypotheses are concerned,

4. there exists a relationship between the human resources diversity management and innovation, and
5. familiarity with characteristics concerning the diversification of the potential in separate employee groups is insufficient, which leads to the incomplete application and development of this potential in enterprises,

the present study fails to positively verify hypothesis 4, but succeeds in positively verifying hypothesis 5.

In conclusion, it can be argued that the present study clearly indicates the existence of two dominant approaches adopted by the surveyed companies: care for the image of the organization, and initiatives promoting fair treatment. Acceptance culture and maximization of all employees' productivity are observed more seldom. Global studies indicate a similar trend. This denotes that the majority of businesses still consider Diversity Management as an element of an image-related policy.

However, due to current demographic changes, it seems that the emergence of a more comprehensive approach, which includes at least employees' age and gender in human resources management, is just a matter of time.

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Chapter Eight

Summary and Recommendations

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The main objective of the project was to identify the diverse competence potential of employees in innovative companies, as well as to establish activities and practices which may result in the potential being used more effectively by organizations.

Summary of Competence Potential Assessment

Based upon the self-assessment of competence potential conducted among 2076 employees of innovative organizations, it can be inferred that respondents are primarily ready to carry out their basic duties. They declare knowledge and specialist skills, and knowledge associated with the organization's operations as their strength. In addition, these constitute areas they develop the most frequently. Other areas seem to be somewhat neglected. On the basis of the above, it can be argued that the remaining areas of knowledge and skills are low and average and diversified with regard to gender, age, and the occupied position. Cultural differences and the knowledge of environment protection scored the lowest in relation to knowledge, the frequency of its improvement, and their significance at work. The fact that the sample included international corporations, and 12 of them signed the *Diversity Charter*, is noteworthy. This allows for another conclusion to be drawn- diversity management is still a new concept in Poland.

On the basis of statistical analyses conducted in the framework of the present study, it can be observed that men indicated the following knowledge areas as their strengths more frequently than women did: management methods, environment protection, IT applications, and project management. On the other hand, women declared the knowledge of cultural differences as their strength more frequently.

As far as the occupied positions are concerned, managers are distinguished by a higher declared level of specialist knowledge, knowl-

edge of the organization's operations, and knowledge of management methods, when compared with the other two groups. Results pertaining to executives are convergent with those observed by other authors (Skuza & Scillon, 2014, p. 61; Rakowska, 2007, p. 175). Operational staff indicate the knowledge of IT applications as their strength slightly more frequently than the other groups. This may stem from the character of their work, but also from the fact that virtually half of the group (46%) consists of people below 30 years of age. Similarly, the youngest employees declare the knowledge of IT applications as their strength slightly more frequently than the other age groups. Horn Nord, De Juana Espinosa, Paliszkiwicz, and Mądra-Sawicka (2018) indicate that respondents' age makes a difference regarding social media preferences. Conclusions drawn by Van Deursen and Van Dijk (2011) are similar. Authors conducted a study examining the level of IT skills among the Dutch population. The study distinguished four IT skills: basic operational internet skills, formal internet skills (navigation and orientation), information internet skills, strategic skills (the capacity to use the Internet as a means of reaching particular objectives). The conclusion was drawn that it was not age but education which exerted the strongest impact upon the level of IT competences. These authors observed that the elderly perform more poorly than younger generations only with regard to operational and formal internet skills. They argue that the lack of these skills might be considered as only a temporary problem until a more accessible technology appears. On the other hand, the lack of information and strategic skills seems to be more related to intellectual abilities. Van Deursen and Van Dijk (2011) believe that the current 'digital divide' could be easily addressed by providing physical access. However, the change regarding the content-related internet skills is much harder. Due to new requirements of labor market, this has become a modern challenge. On the basis of Polish research results, Urbaniak (2013, p. 134) believes that older employees are more active in gaining new qualifications in order to retain their workplaces. As a consequence, the level of their competences does not diverge from that of their younger colleagues.

Employees' skills constitute the next significant element in the assessment of respondents' potential. The assessment encompassed 15 skills. Respondents indicated the following 3 as their particular strengths: organization of time of own work, learning, cooperation

with representatives of different ages. In light of changes emerging on labor market, the latter two ought to be seen as positive. However, the collaboration with representatives of different cultures ranked among the weak skills, which ought to be perceived negatively in relation to diversity management. The phenomenon may result from the fact that Polish labor market, when compared with the one present in the so-called Old Europe, remained relatively homogenous. However, the latest data indicate that the Polish market is experiencing a rapid transformation, which was particularly visible in the past two years (Lis, 2017). Therefore, a greater attention ought to be drawn to the collaboration with foreigners. In general, the competence potential in the area of skills may be evaluated as satisfactory in case of the organization of time of own work, learning, and cooperation with representatives of different ages. As far as the remaining 12 skills are concerned, the level is average or low, but predominantly diversified.

Women indicated the following as their strengths more frequently than men: organization of time of own work, interpersonal communication, collaboration with representatives of different ages, ability to mobilize for prolonged work periods, ability to perform additional tasks, and foreign language skills. Similar conclusions pertaining to skills are presented by Giri (2004) and Ruderman, Ohlott, Panzer, and King (2002). The fact that women declare they are ready to take on extra work and mobilize themselves for prolonged work periods, may result from experiences associated with them performing several roles. On the other hand, men declare the following as their strengths more frequently than women: coping with stress, career management, learning, conflict management, collaboration with representatives of different genders, leadership and authority. Other authors also indicate the former four of these skills as more characteristic for men (Ridgeway, 2001). On the other hand, results pertaining to conflict resolution and stress management may be explained by men being less emotionally involved in decisions and conflict resolution than women (Spalek et al., 2014).

Differences pertaining to women's and men's skills may be partly explained by the fact that skills are shaped throughout a lifetime in the course of new experiences being gained and different life roles performed. Studies of developmental job experiences indicated personal experiences as sources of competence development. In case of female managers, it was observed that, in addition to learning

TABLE 8.1 Synergies Across Roles: Personal Roles Enhancing Professional Roles

Skills	Roles
Opportunities to enrich interpersonal skills	Motherhood as well as other personal relationships teach managers interpersonal skills. Raising children or participating in other relationships teaches respect for individual differences and how to understand, motivate, develop, and direct employees.
Psychological benefits	Overcoming obstacles, taking risks and succeeding in personal fields bolster self-esteem, confidence, stamina, and courage to do the same professionally. Personal experiences help develop perspective upon work life.
Emotional support and advice	Friends and family members act as soundboards and motivators, provide different pieces of advice and insights from their experiences, and allow to vent emotions, which help temper reactions to stressful work situations.
Handling multiple tasks	Juggling personal tasks, setting family goals, planning for the family help to develop administrative skills and learn to prioritize and plan.
Personal interests	Interests, cross-cultural experiences, characteristics or background (previous experience, nationality, gender, tasks in other roles) provide skills and perspectives valuable in work.
Leadership	Leadership opportunities in volunteer, community organizations, or family settings provide leadership lessons (strategy, budgets, organizing, implementing systems, achieving goals through others) and increase comfort in authority roles.

NOTES Adapted from Ruderman et al. (2002, p. 373).

from job experiences, female executives reported that motherhood increased their self-awareness, which positively impacted their managerial effectiveness (Morrison, White, & Van Velsor, 1992). Similar studies conducted among male executives showed that personal experiences, such as coaching children's sports, taught lessons in leadership (McCall, Lombardo, & Morrison, 1988, as cited in Ruderman et al., 2002, p. 371). The roles women play in their personal lives provide benefits for their skills' development which means that the commitment to multiple roles is related to interpersonal and task-related skills (Ruderman et al., 2002). Therefore, professional resources can be gained from other, personal roles, and experiences in one role can enrich another (Table 8.1).

The literature of the subject frequently emphasizes the fact that

women display good social skills, which may be associated not only with roles they perform but also with emotional intelligence. A debate about whether women are more emotionally intelligent than men has been ongoing. However, research results in this area are contradictory (Brackett & Salovey, 2006). Women typically score higher than men in general emotional intelligence (Extremera, Fernández-Berrocal, & Salovey, 2006; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey 1999). On the other hand, there exist gender differences in specific aspects, which need more explanation and further investigation (Lopez-Zafra, Garcia-Retamero, & Martos, 2012). Discrepancies regarding the self-assessment of competences in relation to gender ought to be viewed with caution. According to Paustian-Underdahl, Walker, and Woehr (2014), the perception of female and male managers' competences differs. Based upon a meta-analysis, the authors observed that in the majority of studies, there were gender differences in the perception of effectiveness, e.g. men rated themselves as significantly more effective than women did.

As far as results in the context of positions are concerned, when compared with the other groups, managers distinguish themselves by communicative skills, which ought to be viewed positively, because, as Mintzberg (1990) argues, they devote most of their time to communicating. In addition, they also declare leadership skills and motivation for prolonged work periods, which ought to be viewed positively as well.

When analyzing skills in the context of age groups, it ought to be noted that the youngest employees (below 30 years of age) mentioned the following as their strengths more frequently than the other age groups: learning, career management, swift adaptation to a new environment, and foreign language skills. These are significant from the point of view of further development. Employees aged 30–50 are distinguished by the ability to perform additional tasks and by creative thinking. Those aged 50+ seem to differ from the other age groups primarily because they indicated the greatest number of strengths in skills acquired in the course of experience and cooperation with others. In addition, they also indicated the motivation for prolonged work periods as a strength more frequently than the other groups. Therefore, it can be argued that, in this particular group, certain experiences shaped professional confidence, which is characteristic for the group when compared with the other ones. In every organiza-

tion there exist positions best suited for those possessing a mix of confidence and expertise that only age can bring. Younger employees frequently lack the finesse needed to get the job done, which comes with experience. Moreover, as highlighted by various scholars, older workers provide reliable service and are more loyal. These results are convergent with observations of other authors as well (Gratton & Scott, 2016).

Professional confidence develops with experience. It is clearly explained by the lifespan theory of selection, optimization and compensation (s.o.c) of Baltes (1987). According to the theory, successful aging encompasses the selection of functional domains on which to focus one's resources, optimize developmental potential and compensate for losses. Throughout their lives, individuals are increasingly faced with age-related deficits which place limits upon their cognitive and behavioral resources. As a consequence, new competences emerge which enable the deficits to be minimized.

The theory of fluid and crystallized intelligence is associated with the development of new competences (Cattell, 1971). In general, the fluid intelligence constitutes an ability to solve novel abstract problems on the spot. It is juxtaposed by the crystallized intelligence, or knowledge of the world and how it works. The fluid intelligence reflects abilities associated with information being processed, it being used, and with reasoning and memory. On the other hand, the crystallized intelligence reflects the way information is gathered, and skills applied in the process and strategies shaped throughout the lifespan of an individual. The fluid intelligence diminishes with age, whereas crystallized intelligence increases as we grow older and gain more life experience (Zaval, Li, Johnson, & Weber 2015; Baltes, Rudolph, & Bal, 2012). The majority of scholars agree that the level of fluid intelligence decreases with age, while the one of the crystallized intelligence remains constant, and in some cases, may grow- this is valid for e.g. vocabulary. As far as competences of senior employees are concerned, Ng and Feldam (2012) conducted a meta-analysis in order to verify stereotypes pertaining to this group of workers. They evaluated 6 stereotypes. Only one was confirmed in the study, i.e. elderly workers are less willing to participate in training and career development. The remaining 5, i.e. elderly workers are: less motivated, resistant and less willing to change, less trusting, less healthy, more vulnerable to work-family imbalance, were not confirmed. This

denotes that employees aged 50+ possess significant competence potential which ought to be properly utilized by organizations.

Research results pertaining to the self-assessment of the potential offered the opportunity to verify the hypothesis on employee generations. The following hypothesis was posed: there exist typical elements of potential which distinguish the representatives of Generation X from those of Generation Y. Similarly to the analysis of results pertaining to age groups, it was observed that the number of knowledge and skills areas indicated as strengths typical for the Xs was higher than in case of the Ys. The considerations discussed above, associated with the development of competences over age, provide a good explanation of the phenomenon. When compared with the Xs, the representatives of Generation Y are distinguished by the knowledge of IT applications. However, differences are slight. In addition, statistically significant differences connected with the preferred occupational and general values were observed. For example, the Xs indicated professional honesty and responsibility more frequently, whereas the Ys pointed to work-life balance, achievements, autonomy, authority and intellectual stimulation. Good relations with colleagues were important for both generations. Based upon the analysis of all elements of competence potential, it can be observed that differences in the potential in the context of generations (X and Y) exist. The familiarity with these ought to be taken advantage of by the management.

As far as general results pertaining to the most significant values are concerned, it ought to be noted that these values were indicated more frequently than the occupational ones. The most frequently indicated general values included: health, family happiness, honest life, and respect. These results are convergent with Polish ones obtained by the National Statistical Office (<https://stat.gov.pl>). On the other hand, the most frequently selected occupational values encompassed work-life balance, security, personal relations, and responsibility.

The significance of five occupational values changes over time. In case of the following three: professional honesty, responsibility, and good relations, the higher the age category, the more indications linked with these values. This acknowledges the fact that work constitutes the central value for mature employees more frequently than for their younger colleagues (work centrality- individual beliefs regarding the degree of significance that work plays in their lives) (Ng

& Feldman, 2012). Urbaniak (2013, p. 134) highlights the considerable significance of interpersonal relations among senior employees. The author claims that professional activity in the group is undertaken because development, the feeling of own value, and contacts with other people matter to them. With regard to achievements, it can be observed that the frequency of indications decreases with age. Ng and Feldman (2012) and Gratton and Scott (2016) arrived at similar conclusions.

The comparison of values which matter for women and men revealed differences in case of four values: work-life balance (more important for women), good relations with colleagues (more important for women), security (more important for women), responsibility (more important for men). Other authors present similar observations (Peterson, 2004). Peterson (2004) highlights that, in general, men and women value the same aspects of work but rank them differently. Values are usually more rooted in culture. As a consequence, the difference in values important for men and women is associated with the internalization of different roles and expectations linked with these. Despite changes emerging in several countries, men are more likely to engage in breadwinning activities, and women to emphasize the role of family life. In Poland, these changes are acknowledged by e.g. a growing share of women in labor market, or the introduction of the paternity leave.

However, many women experience problems with combining their social and occupational roles. This is a consequence of the fact that e.g. the other sex cannot be attributed with e.g. giving birth and looking after the baby- at least in the initial stages of its life. According to Van der Lippe et al. (2006), there exist differences between countries with regard to negotiating the share and mutual support of women and men in their professional and family lives. Therefore, studies discussed in the present project highlight younger women's high results pertaining to the significance of work-life balance. In order to analyze values appreciated by women and men in relation to their age, values were examined in four age groups (20-29 years of age; 30-39; 40-49; and 50+). Sugarman's (2001) life-span development theory and the double helix model of the life span development of successful women (White, 2003) motivated such an approach. All respondents, regardless of gender, indicated the following three values as the most significant: work-life balance, security, responsibility. However, the

frequency of men's and women's indications differed depending on the particular age group.

When compared with the other age groups, women aged 30–39 indicated the following the most frequently: security (41%), and work-life balance (51%). On the other hand, among women aged 50+, results pertaining to the same values are much lower (25% for security and 35% for work-life balance). A similar age-dependent phenomenon was not observed among men. As far as the 50+ age group is concerned, results for men and women are similar. This means that mature women can devote more time and energy to their organizations.

However, the surrounding environment does not facilitate them doing so. This is especially valid when the fact that Poland lowered the retirement age in 2017 (60 years of age for women and 65 for men) is considered along with the presence of stereotypes. Currently, finding a job for women aged 50+ has become a challenge. To conclude results pertaining to values in the context of age and gender, it ought to be noted that practices of human resources management should be adjusted to the age and gender of the respondent. In particular, this should concern groups of women aged 30–49, and women and men aged 50+. In addition, positive results concerning wellbeing, also among those 50+, ought to encourage such initiatives. This is especially valid because, even though statistically significant, differences regarding wellbeing in the context of age groups are slight indeed. Ng and Feldman (2012) arrived at similar conclusions. Moreover, it ought to be noted that, when compared with the other respondents, those aged 50+ indicated the ability to mobilize for prolonged work periods more frequently.

The final element in the assessment of the potential included the cognitive style. The analysis revealed that the style was diversified with regard to age. The analytic style was displayed by respondents the most frequently, and was observed among the eldest respondents the most. On the other hand, the intuitive style was displayed the least frequently. However, it can be argued that it emerged among the youngest workers the least frequently. It ought to be noted that the cognitive style is largely associated with personality. This does not necessarily mean it should not be diagnosed and applied in human resources management, especially in the processes of employee competence management (Alinson & Hayes, 1996).

Summary of Results Pertaining to the Perception of HR Practices

In order to arrive at the objectives of the project, including the identification of HR practices which may be associated with the development and application of employee competence potential, the assessment of whether the perception of these practices by individual employees is diversified became valid. The evaluation encompassed the following four groups of practices: opportunities for development, organizational support for innovation, procedural and distributive justice and organizational and supervisors' support.

In case of the former two practices, i.e. perceived opportunities for development (POED) and perceived organizational support for innovation (POIS), results ought to be viewed as low due to the fact that they pertain to innovative companies. According to Donate and Guadamillas (2015), HR practices play a significant role in the generation of innovation, thus a higher level of these practices ought to be expected from the surveyed organizations. On the basis of results emerging from respondents' answers a conclusion can be drawn that the majority of organizations do not perceive human potential as the main source of innovations. They must be generated in specialized groups of employees (projects, R&D departments) or originate externally.

The perception of POED and POIS practices is diversified as well. Managers, more frequently than the other groups, perceive opportunities for the development of their potential and innovation. Also, employees aged 50+ seem to have more chances for development (POED) than their youngest colleagues. However, age does not influence differences in the perception of development of innovation (POIS).

Further practices are associated with the support of the organization (SupO) and supervisors (SupS). These two types of assistance exert critical influence upon organizational behaviors (Eisenberger, Malone, & Presson, 2016). As seen by employees, results pertaining to the support are low, and the supervisory support is slightly lower. These results may be interpreted twofold. First of all, most probably, organizations offer low support for their employees and their development. Secondly, organizations offer support opportunities but employees do not recognize these intentions. The literature highlights the significance of employees being communicated intentions associated with the application of these practices in the organization. Alfes,

Shantz, Truss, and Soane (2013) highlight that it is not these practices alone, but rather employees' perceptions of those practices which are linked with employee outcomes. On the other hand, Ostroff and Bowen (2016) indicate the role of the organizational climate, which can be understood as a shared perception of what the organization is like in terms of practices, policies, procedures, routines, and rewards (which behaviors are expected and rewarded). They also claim that the content of the climate can vary across groups within the organization. As far as these studies are concerned, it can be argued that men feel they receive stronger organizational support than women. It can also be observed that managers and specialists feel they have more support from their supervisors and organization than operational employees. Additionally, in the group of managers, differences between women and men in the context of support from supervisors were observed. Male managers seem to have more support from their supervisors than female managers.

The assessment of HR practices encompassed those associated with the perception of justice pertaining to the distribution of rewards and organizational resources. Justice constitutes a belief that everyone in the same setting is treated in the same way by the employer. Adams (1965), the author of the equity theory, distinguished two types of justice- distributive and procedural. The former pertains to the subjective assessment pertaining to the distribution of rewards. The latter is associated with the process of rewarding and its perception. The assessment of these practices is critical in order to ensure the suitable level of employee engagement. Studies prove that the feeling of injustice may entail harsh consequences both for employees and employers (Greenberg & Colquitt, 2013).

Results pertaining to the perception of justice are diversified in the context of the occupied positions and age groups. The highest results, for both types of justice, are observed in the group of managers and in the group of employees 50+. Results in the groups of the operational staff and the youngest workers are alarming, especially as far as the distributive justice is concerned. The youngest employees and operational staff perceive decisions regarding rewards and salaries as unfair, which surely exerts a negative impact upon their job attitudes and work behaviors. In addition, in the group of managers, female executives perceive fairness of procedures less favorably than male managers. This may prove the existence of the so-called glass ceil-

ing and glass cliff (Sabharwal, 2013). It is also evident that reactions to injustice can be influenced by the expectations of how men and women should behave (Caleo, 2016).

To summarize the results on how the HR practices are perceived, low values, especially in case of distributive justice, organizational support and opportunities for the development of innovation ought to be noted.

Summary of Results Pertaining to Determinants of Competence Potential Management

Four determinants of competence potential management were established: job satisfaction, work engagement, organizational commitment and job involvement. These may be considered as indicators of employee potential management.

The first of these factors, job satisfaction, constitutes a determinant of people's behavior in the organization (Yücel, 2012). The analysis of four facets of job satisfaction was conducted (physical environment, economic aspects, interpersonal relations, undertaken tasks). In general, the mean score for all four facets may be assessed as below average. Results for individual aspects of satisfaction are diversified. The lowest result pertains to the satisfaction with economic work aspects, and the highest with interpersonal relations.

It can also be noted that the higher the position, the higher the satisfaction with physical conditions, economic conditions, and performed tasks. The youngest employees are usually assigned with less ambitious tasks. Over time and as they gain experience, they are assigned with more satisfying duties. The fact that the youngest workers are the most satisfied with their interpersonal relations is noteworthy. This may somewhat alleviate the impact of low satisfaction with economic conditions. High satisfaction with interpersonal relations in every group may be utilized to shape employee behavior because, as mentioned earlier, regardless of age, respondents indicated such relations among the most highly appreciated values.

Work engagement constitutes the second determinant. It may be interpreted as a positive state of mind towards work. It is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. In this case, general results are slightly above a good score. The highest results pertain to work dedication (good score). This ought to be viewed as positive because employees having good results in work dedication seem to experi-

ence the feeling of sense and significance from one's work, are enthusiastic, feel inspired and challenged by it. It should also be noted that shaping the engagement in the organization is by no means easy because work engagement is correlated with personality. It is believed that individuals who are active, conscientious, emotionally stable, and extrovert, are more likely to experience work engagement than others (Zecca et al., 2015). This means that HR specialists and managers face additional tasks associated with e.g. selection, matching the employee with particular duties, and the application of suitable HR practices which will include diversity and inclusion (Downey, Werff, Thomas, & Plaut, 2015; Yang & Matz-Costa, 2017).

Organizational commitment is the third determinant of employee potential. It is composed of three elements. Somers (1995) observed that affective commitment constitutes the most consistent predictor of withdrawal intentions, turnover or absenteeism, while normative commitment is related only to withdrawal intentions. Calculative commitment interacts with affective commitment in predicting job withdrawal intentions and absenteeism.

Research results pertaining to affective commitment are on an average level, and those for calculative commitment are below average. The highest scores pertain to normative commitment and are on an average level. Usually, normative commitment is higher in organizations which value loyalty and systematically communicate the fact to employees. Normative commitment may also rise when employees recognize signals that the employer is committed to their wellbeing. Moreover, opinions are very diverse. This may result from the fact that the surveyed organizations operate on more or less attractive labor markets (they do business in various regions in Poland).

Job involvement constitutes the final determinant. It may be interpreted as a subjective condition that makes people devoted to their work. Results for job involvement are average. Due to the fact that, similarly to work engagement, it is affected by the employee's personality traits and values, and less by organizational factors (Rabinowitz & Hall, 1977), attempts at shaping its level require an individual approach to the employee.

When assessing determinants in the context of diversity, it was observed that they differ depending upon the occupied position. In every case, i.e. satisfaction, work engagement, organizational commitment, and job involvement, results are the highest among managers,

TABLE 8.2 Relationships between the Perceived HR Practices and Determinants of Competence Potential

(1)	Work engagement			Organiz. commitment			(2)	(3)
	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)		
POED	0.37	0.48	0.31	0.34	0.47	0.37	0.40	0.58
POIS	0.29	0.41	0.25	0.29	0.36	0.29	0.35	0.45
SupO	0.37	0.46	0.28	0.45	0.51	0.40	0.51	0.58
SupS	0.34	0.38	0.24	0.30	0.42	0.36	0.37	0.56
PrJu	0.32	0.37	0.25	0.35	0.43	0.35	0.43	0.50
DiJu	0.22	0.31	0.19	0.28	0.60	0.32	0.35	0.60

NOTES Column headings are as follows: (1) HR practices, (2) vigor, (3) dedication, (4) absorption, (5) affective, (6) calculative, (7) normative, (8) job involvement, (9) job satisfaction. Correlations significant at 0.01 (two-sided).

and the lowest among operational staff. Gender itself does not determine outcomes, which confirms results of other authors (Khalili & Asmawi, 2012). On the other hand, gender-motivated differences exist among managers. Results pertaining to calculative commitment are higher among female managers. The situation is reverse in case of calculative commitment. It may be associated with them receiving lower salaries or rewards and benefits than male managers in the same positions (Hajec, 2016). In addition, the previously-mentioned results acknowledging that female managers perceive fairness of procedures as less favorable for them than for male managers, ought to be highlighted. This entails the need for further studies of managers in this context.

Relationship between the Perceived HR Practices and Determinants of Competence Potential Management

The next detailed objective associated with the main target of the project was to identify practices leading to the employee diverse potential being used more effectively. Based upon the analysis of results it can be observed that, in every case, there exist statistically significant correlations of practices with management determinants. The strongest relationship emerged in case of job satisfaction (Table 8.2). It supplies the opportunity for improving work engagement, organizational commitment, job involvement and job satisfaction via a suitable application of HR practices.

Detailed results pertaining to the correlation of HR practices with

TABLE 8.3 Correlations between HR Practices and Job Satisfaction in the Context of Gender, Age and Position

Category		POED	POIS	SupO	SupS	PrJu	ResJu
Women	Sat_mean	0.59	0.47	0.61	0.57	0.50	0.61
Men	Sat_mean	0.56	0.43	0.55	0.57	0.49	0.56
Age <30	Sat_mean	0.65	0.52	0.53	0.58	0.49	0.57
Age 30-50	Sat_mean	0.57	0.39	0.59	0.58	0.50	0.61
Age 50+	Sat_mean	0.52	0.52	0.60	0.52	0.49	0.58
Operational	Sat_mean	0.59	0.46	0.55	0.58	0.51	0.53
Specialists	Sat_mean	0.56	0.41	0.57	0.54	0.48	0.61
Managers	Sat_mean	0.56	0.51	0.62	0.60	0.50	0.59

NOTES $p = 0.01$.

TABLE 8.4 Correlations between HR Practices and Organizational Commitment - Age

Age		POED	POIS	SupO	SupS	PrJu	ResJu
<30	Com_af	0.34	0.27	0.41	0.28	0.30	0.27
	Com_cal	0.57	0.46	0.50	0.46	0.41	0.62
	Com_nor	0.44	0.37	0.45	0.45	0.39	0.28
30-50	Com_af	0.34	0.32	0.41	0.29	0.34	0.28
	Com_cal	0.47	0.38	0.51	0.44	0.45	0.60
	Com_nor	0.36	0.29	0.38	0.35	0.36	0.33
50+	Com_af	0.32	0.30	0.43	0.34	0.43	0.27
	Com_cal	0.35	0.31	0.52	0.31	0.43	0.56
	Com_nor	0.35	0.29	0.32	0.27	0.28	0.31

NOTES $p = 0.01$.

individual determinants in the context of diversity are outlined in Tables 8.3-8.8.

Based upon the analysis of results, it ought to be noted that the youngest employees strongly appreciate opportunities for the development of competences, which is acknowledged by the strong correlation of the Perceived Opportunities for Employee Development (POED) with job satisfaction ($r = 0.65$, $p = 0.01$). In comparison with the other groups, this one also features stronger correlations of the POED with calculative commitment (POED and calculative commitment $r = 0.57$, $p = 0.01$; POED and work engagement $r = 0.50$; $p = 0.01$) and with work engagement. Therefore, it can be argued that by offering young employees development opportunities, their work

TABLE 8.5 Correlations between HR Practices and Organizational Commitment – Gender

Gender		POED	POIS	SupO	SupS	PrJu	ResJu
Woman	Com_af	0.31	0.29	0.407	0.38	0.33	0.24
	Com_cal	0.47	0.36	0.50	0.51	0.39	0.60
	Com_nor	0.38	0.32	0.42	0.44	0.36	0.34
Man	Com_af	0.37	0.30	0.45	0.41	0.37	0.32
	Com_cal	0.46	0.37	0.53	0.52	0.48	0.60
	Com_nor	0.36	0.28	0.36	0.38	0.34	0.31

NOTES $p = 0.01$.

TABLE 8.6 Correlations between HR Practices and Organizational Commitment – Positions

Position		POED	POIS	SupO	SupS	PrJu	ResJu
Operational	Com_af	0.33	0.27	0.40	0.37	0.37	0.30
	Com_cal	0.53	0.42	0.50	0.51	0.39	0.59
	Com_nor	0.44	0.34	0.41	0.44	0.36	0.32
Specialist	Com_af	0.30	0.28	0.44	0.41	0.33	0.24
	Com_cal	0.45	0.34	0.51	0.51	0.45	0.59
	Com_nor	0.35	0.28	0.39	0.41	0.32	0.31
Manager	Com_af	0.34	0.32	0.37	0.39	0.35	0.26
	Com_cal	0.35	0.32	0.52	0.54	0.44	0.61
	Com_nor	0.25	0.25	0.31	0.33	0.41	0.27

NOTES $p = 0.01$.

engagement and organizational commitment may be considerably boosted. In addition, these results prove that a stronger organizational and superiors' support may increase employee satisfaction and organizational commitment.

For the 50+ age group, when compared with the other groups, the strongest relationship emerged between the organizational support (SupO and job involvement $r = 0.60$; $p = 0.01$) and procedural justice (SupO and job involvement $r = 0.53$; $p = 0.01$) and job involvement. As mentioned earlier, work becoming the central value emerges more frequently among this group than in case of younger workers, and is associated with job involvement.

When analyzing correlations regarding gender, it can be observed that stronger relationships for women than men emerge in relation to the normative commitment's relationship with the support of the su-

TABLE 8.7 Correlations between HR Practices and Work Engagement and Job Involvement – Age, Gender, and Position

Category		POED	POIS	SupO	SupS	PrJu	ResJu
Age <30	Eng	0.50	0.40	0.47	0.46	0.34	0.31
	Job_inv	0.38	0.34	0.46	0.39	0.32	0.22
Age 30-50	Eng	0.45	0.38	0.50	0.42	0.45	0.32
	Job_inv	0.43	0.37	0.48	0.34	0.43	0.34
Age 50+	Eng	0.47	0.39	0.32	0.25	0.29	0.18
	Job_inv	0.36	0.34	0.60	0.43	0.54	0.45
Woman	Eng	0.48	0.38	0.49	0.44	0.40	0.31
	Job_inv	0.44	0.38	0.54	0.42	0.44	0.33
Man	Eng	0.46	0.38	0.41	0.34	0.36	0.27
	Job_inv	0.37	0.33	0.48	0.34	0.44	0.36
Operational	Eng	0.53	0.41	0.42	0.42	0.40	0.32
	Job_inv	0.45	0.35	0.50	0.40	0.44	0.36
Specialist	Eng	0.42	0.36	0.43	0.35	0.33	0.22
	Job_inv	0.34	0.33	0.51	0.36	0.42	0.31
Managers	Eng	0.42	0.36	0.48	0.42	0.45	0.27
	Job_inv	0.42	0.38	0.50	0.40	0.44	0.35

NOTES $p = 0.01$.

TABLE 8.8 Correlations Wellbeing with Potential Management Indicators in Group 50+

Work eng.	Satist.	Com_af	Com_cal	Com_nor	Job_inv
0.42	0.43	0.33	0.23	0.35	0.38

NOTES $p = 0.01$.

pervisor, and regarding normative commitment with resource justice. Results for correlations of all practices with work engagement and job involvement indicate that, in virtually all cases (except the relationship of job involvement with resource justice), stronger correlations emerge for women than men. The greatest discrepancies emerge for the relationship regarding the support of the organization and support of the superior. This offers meaningful information regarding opportunities for improving job involvement and work engagement among women.

Results pertaining to the correlation of work engagement with POED and POIS for operational staff ought to be noted. It means that the engagement may be boosted by the application of practices asso-

ciated with the development of the potential and innovations in the organization. When compared with the other groups, the one also features a stronger relationship of work engagement with resource justice. On the other hand, specialists manifest stronger relations of calculative commitment with resource justice. As far as managers are concerned, correlations between job satisfaction and organizational support and supervisors' support, as well as those between the satisfaction and POIS, ought to be noted. All these ought to be taken into consideration when developing innovation-friendly climate in the organization.

It was also established that wellbeing is correlated with work engagement (vigor and dedication) and job satisfaction. This indicates another venue employee potential may be applied in, especially in relation to employees aged 50+.

The present conclusions and discussion allow to claim that the hypothesis 'In the groups of diverse workers there exist elements of competence potential associated with job satisfaction, work engagement, and organizational commitment' was partly verified. For women, the organizational and supervisors' support is very significant. For the youngest workers, development opportunities are important. For the 50+ age group, wellbeing and organizational support, along with development opportunities and their potential being actually applied by the organization are appreciated. However, according to the opinion of employees, organizations rarely apply their knowledge in practice.

Summary of Human Resources Management and Diversity Management

A slightly different picture of the organization emerges on the basis of information obtained from HR specialists employed in the surveyed organizations (interviews with 50 HR specialists, one from each company). The majority of specialists stated their organizations applied innovation supporting procedures and practices (POIS). Every third specialist was able to indicate specific practices in the area. Results regarding the assessment of opportunities for employee development (POED) are similar. This means that views and opinions of HR departments and employees differ.

Interviews with HR specialists aimed to assess the approaches applied in and associated with the area of diversity. It ought to be noted

that 12 out of 50 surveyed companies signed the *Diversity Charter*, which entails particular obligations for them.

Based upon information collected among HR specialists, it can be observed that half of them declare their companies introduced formal documents associated with diversity. On the other hand, the other half had no such documentation. In addition, employees of these companies were not familiarized with documents pertaining to fair treatment at a workplace. Therefore, from the formal point of view at least, it is hard to state that diversity management is present in the surveyed organizations. Even though every third company declared they shaped diversity-friendly culture, team-building events more frequently than workshops, projects and trainings were mentioned as examples of practices applied in the area.

However, it can be argued that HR specialists have begun to recognize the significance of diversity in human resources management, especially in the context of employees' age and employee competences. This is a consequence of demographic changes and problems with finding employees with suitable competences. Diversity management in the context of employees' gender is much less optimistic. Only 1 in 6 HR specialists stated their organizations undertook diversity-associated initiatives. Among practices encompassing gender-diversity, respondents indicated development programs addressing women, and care for employment structure. A few organizations have undertaken initiatives associated with the employment of the disabled.

As a consequence, even though the surveyed organizations display certain formal image-related initiatives concerning diversity, it cannot be said that they implement diversity management actions. Diversity management does not constitute an element of the organizations' strategy and is not included in their business plans. The diversity-related initiatives are not perceived in terms of direct business advantages. For example, only 4 companies apply diversity management as an element of the management cadre's performance review. However, these and other actions mentioned by HR specialists are to achieve image-related objectives and communicate to the surrounding environment that, from a formal standpoint, all employees are treated equally. This fact was acknowledged by HR specialists when they answered the question concerning the role of diversity in their organizations. Every third respondent believed that the diver-

sity of employee potential had no significance for their organizations. HR specialists were also queried on whether they recognized the relationship between diversity and innovation. Only every second offered a positive answer.

Due to the above, based upon declarations collected among the specialists as well as upon results pertaining to employees' perception of HR practices, it may be concluded that there exist relations between the diversity of human resources management and innovation in the surveyed companies. This also denotes that HR specialists' knowledge of characteristics concerning the diversity of employee potential is insufficient, which finally leads to incomplete utilization and development of this potential in enterprises. As a consequence, initiatives ought to be undertaken in order to apply diversified employee potential more effectively. What is more, the management paradigm ought to be changed (Grudzewski, Hejduk, Sankowska, & Wańtuchowicz 2013; Claver-Cortés, de Juana-Espinosa, & Valdés-Conca, 2014).

Conclusions and Recommendations

On the basis of research results and the review of literature, the following conclusions and recommendations for diversified human resources management can be made in the context of the optimal application of employee competence potential:

1. Competence potential of the surveyed employees is diversified, and human resources diversity management is very low.
2. The perception of employees and specialists concerning HR practices differs. Similar conclusions were drawn by Kulik (2014), who argues that in HRM research, a line can be drawn that distinguishes research regarding formal organizational programs from the ones regarding organizational practices as experienced by employees.
3. In order to implement diversity management, HR specialists and managers require rational reasoning and knowledge. However, the hitherto research results are ambiguous. Kulik indicates that 'on the one hand, managers are under considerable pressure to manage diversity. On the other hand, there is a shortage of academic research on diversity management' (Kulik, 2014, p. 129).
4. In order for organizations to be able to benefit from employee

diversity, they must first determine, from the point of view of their organizational strategy, what type of diversity they pursue. Therefore, diversity must become a part of their strategy. Subsequently, HR programs and practices ought to be adjusted and matched. A reverse logic is pointless from the point of view of business gains. Undeniably, the focus upon the strategy of fairness and equity, and combating discrimination, are valid. However, it is difficult to indicate a direct correlation with business profits. These encompass primarily image-related benefits.

5. Research results allow to conclude that demographic changes and the shortage of employees with appropriate competences gradually compel organizations to recognize the significance of employee diversity with regard to age and competences. The practices offered in the model, which match workers' age, constitute a reasonable direction of activity. In particular, the matching and adjustment of practices ought to include the development of special packages for the following: the youngest age group (below 30), those 50+ (wellbeing, the application of their competences, mentoring), women aged 30-49 (work-life balance), and female managers (organizational and superiors' support, mentoring).
6. In addition, in order to develop innovation in the organization, the following HR practices play a critical role (Donate & Guadamillas, 2015):
 - Training programs which enable the skills to share knowledge, abilities to understand and use IT tools as essential instruments for the achievement of knowledge management objectives, to be developed;
 - Incentive systems (monetary and non-monetary) to reward teamwork instead of individualism;
 - Company programs of internal rotation that make employees go through different departments or develop different functions in the firm;
 - Introduction of mechanisms of participation centered upon solving various problems;
 - Application of theoretical methods into practice which can be used for the assessment and control of knowledge management processes (creation, storage, transfer, application, etc.);

- introduction of teamwork as a regular practice.
7. The present research results prove that it is possible to improve job satisfaction of all employees and increase organizational and supervisors' support. The fact ought to be clearly communicated to the management. In addition, many employees appreciate development opportunities and the ability to apply the possessed competences in practice. Matching the development practices with employees' age and position may significantly increase not only job satisfaction, but also work engagement, job involvement and organizational commitment (Lewicka & Rakowska, 2017), which is significant if employees, especially those with key competences, are to remain in the organization.
 8. Due to the fact that work engagement and job involvement are associated with employees' mentality, HR departments and managers face additional tasks associated with e.g. selection, matching employees with duties, and the application of HR practices in the context of diversity and inclusion. This is particularly valid where extremely demanding jobs (such as those in high-tech companies) require employees to work extra hours, making work central to their lives, but not necessarily by choice.
 9. Attention ought to be paid to communicating intentions behind the application of the practices because it is not practices themselves but rather their perception by employees which play a key role in human resources management (Ostroff & Bowen, 2016).

In addition, results of the present study enable practical recommendations for managers and HR departments associated with employee development to be offered. The management of diversified employee groups requires considerable awareness on the part of managers to motivate to achieve results and improve qualifications.

1. Due to the fact that the potential of senior employees, when compared with the one of the remaining groups, is extensive, it ought to be utilized as a source of a successful transfer of the organization's knowledge, skills and experience to future leaders, as well as to those areas that require specialized expertise. However, due to the existing stereotypes, intergenerational training is required. The training is not only to enable mutual learning regarding skills but also to combat stereotypes.

2. On the basis of results pertaining to cognitive styles, matching the styles with methods, designing exercises so that the content is taught in various best-suited ways, are advised.
3. Improvement of competences is a complex issue, especially in the context of human resources diversity management and the rapid knowledge and skills' ageing. The following constitute the key recommendations for managers and HR specialists:
 - Development of skills and new knowledge instead of focus upon mastering particular content;
 - Conscious application of employee diversity for mutual learning and development of a culture facilitating knowledge exchange;
 - Establishment of acceptable assistance relations and application of both informal and formal ways of supporting these by managers and organizations;
 - Due to the rapidity of changes in the surrounding environment, apart from the development of ways of coping with routine problems, it is necessary to improve skills for managing changes and innovations;
 - Internationalization of economy, associated with globalization and integration, result in the emergence of specific requirements for employee development. This is especially valid for the development of skills for collaboration between various cultures.
4. It is important to develop an organizational culture fostering respect for diversity as a value, one based upon displaying such values as openness, responsibility, creativity, cooperation, need for achievements.
5. A change of the management's role towards self-development and co-creation of employee development opportunities is required.
6. Holistic employee development, which integrates work, private life, community, and broad interests, gains significance.

Managers and HR specialists ought to remember that perceiving a person merely in light of them representing a particular generation, gender, or culture, may be misleading. Individual approach towards employees is due, one which takes their characteristic features, pre-

dispositions, experience, displayed values and skills into consideration. Individual talent, independent from age, nationality, position or gender, ought to be searched for in each workgroup. In order to care for the organization's image, successful motivation systems ought to be developed. The systems should include development programs matching the needs of individual employees. Managers ought not to forget that they should constantly improve their qualifications in order to successfully manage diversified teams.

Directions of Prospective Studies

Further studies ought to focus upon bridging the gap between the perception of HR practices of employees and HR specialists. Practitioners require more knowledge on how to successfully manage diversified human resources. It is primarily about identifying the best diversity management practices which may be implemented among managers and employees instead of a mere evaluation of formal aspects of organizational diversity. The investigation of diversity programs and practices ought to constitute the objective.

Due to the fact that diversity may be understood broadly, a greater focus upon the macro-level outcomes is required, e.g. focus upon work and family when preparing development programs.

In addition, diversity climate ought to be examined. The climate is understood as shared employee perceptions and interpretations of the meaning of diversity paradigms, policies and programs in the organization. Its impact upon the effectiveness of applied HR practices ought to be assessed. A greater attention ought to be devoted to communicating the intention behind the introduction of HR practices. As a result of the need for creating innovation in organizations and low volume of available studies regarding relations between HR practices and HRM systems and innovations, the search for answers to the question whether HR practices may influence employee proactive behavior and subsequent innovation outcomes ought to be continued.

Differences emerging between female and male managers regarding the perception of organizational support and practices associated with procedural justice require further studies in order to explain whether these discrepancies result from the congruity theory or from other causes. In addition, the effectiveness practices associated with diversity management in the context of gender ought to be examined.

Even though the issue has been under discussion for years, it has not been fully examined yet.

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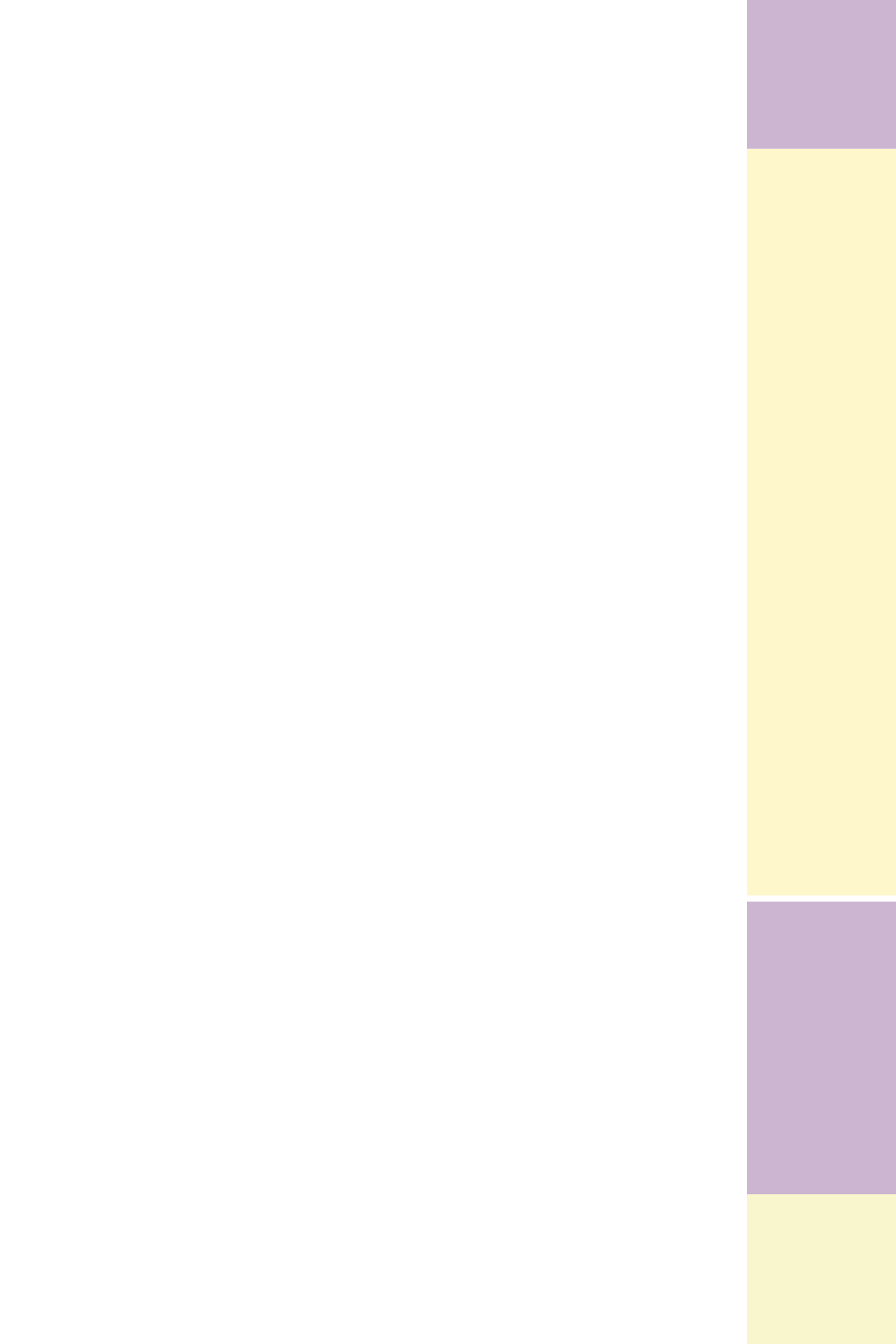
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Conclusions emerging from the empirical section of the book may offer recommendations to improve the efficiency of diversity management among companies and managers ... The review of research results may constitute a reference point for those interested in pursuing the implementation of diversity management in organizations. Differences among respondent groups outlined in the book may offer information on the way teams which utilize the synergy and improve productivity ought to be formed. I wholeheartedly recommend the book due to its compelling subject matter, rich cognitive content and reliable empirical studies which formed the basis of various constructive conclusions. The present work fills the gap in publications pertaining to the issue of diversity management.

Irena Hejduk

Authors, in empirical part present a very complex, multidimensional model that comprehends all the factors described in the previous chapters, even including some of the concerns pointed out, such as differences between industries. This book is very enlightening for academics and practitioners both, because it offers a multidisciplinary view of an unavoidable issue (that of diversity in the workforce), and gives tools to help companies use this diversity for their profit.

Susana de Juana-Espinosa

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