Shaping Employee Experience in the Changing Social and Organisational Conditions

edited by Dorota Molek-Winiarska

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Cover design
Beata Dębska

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CONTENTS

PREFACE

The presented book considers reflections on shaping employees' experiences and acquiring unique competencies in the face of the changes we are all witnessing and participating in. This book presents a variety of studies on employee experiences in the organisational and social environment, which have appeared in recent years as a result of enormous world changes in cultural, social, economic and technological areas.

The main aim of the authors was to show selected perspectives of employee experience in changing environment, starting from the individual perspective that covers psychological aspects such as job stress, well-being, autonomy and meaningfulness and appreciation. The next part of the book presents an interpersonal and organisational view on job satisfaction, engagement and attitudes towards personnel control. The last perspective is about the international experiences of employees in different labour markets.

The first chapter presents well-being interventions during the COVID-19 pandemic based on the Cooper and Marshall Model of stress and the general model of well-being. The analysis of 275 well-being initiatives showed a great variety of possibilities to interact with employees' stress and negative experiences during the pandemic.

Chapter 2 focuses on managers and their stress resulting from constant changes in management practice, the global dimension of strategy and the need to manage in different cultures. The ability to flexibly use styles of coping with stress may be necessary for the efficiency and effectiveness of managing people. Relations between the style of coping with stress and the efficiency and effectiveness of managing people were investigated in this chapter.

Chapter 3 shows the psychological contract (PC) of gig workers with their employers. It draws on the concept of the PC to identify and explore the characteristics of gig employment that most influence the nature of the employment relationship undertaken. The in-depth analysis of gig workers' working conditions and expectations helps guide and stimulate further research by reflecting on the identified determinants of change in the shape and function of gig workers' PCs. This chapter closes the presentation of the individual (psychological) perspective on shaping employees' experiences and introduces the more organisational context that is continued in the following two chapters.

Some aspects of job satisfaction in the context of non-standard forms of employment offered to candidates are discussed in Chapter 4. The study revealed no significant differences between the level of job satisfaction in different forms of employment. The authors encourage the broader use of the *flexicurity* model as part of business practices in Polish companies as well.

The research results related to HR employees' experience with personnel controlling are presented and discussed in Chapter 5. It was established that personnel controlling triggers both positive and negative emotions. Controlling is usually identified with control and accounting, however the chance of strengthening the HRM position in the organisation comes from the employees' experiences in controlling as well.

Chapter 6 opens the last thread of this book related to a broader perspective of shaping employees' experiences in international labour markets. It presents various ways the COVID-19 pandemic affected the occupational lives of Polish migrants. The main factor mediating the pandemic effect on employees' experience was the sector and flexibility in changing work mode into a remote one. Generally, working remotely was seen positively, enabling workers to save time by avoiding commuting and focusing better on work. However, negative experiences were related to losing interpersonal relations and blurring the boundary between private and occupational life.

Chapter 7 presents factors that determine the organisational identification of female immigrants from Ukraine who work in Poland. The focus group interviews showed the employees' experiences in the area of cultural differences, national attitudes (and level of discrimination), level of identity and loyalty towards the employer. Some suggestions for shaping a positive organisational environment by HR services were included.

The main aim of Chapter 8 was to present a specific group of migrants, which are expatriates (usually highly qualified specialists). The characteristics of expatriates from different generations are included starting with Veterans and Baby Boomers, to Generations X, Y and Z. The main conclusion is to conduct research on a group of self-initiated expatriates as a diversified type of future expatriates.

The final chapter continues the topic of different generations in the job market. It explores the nature of the Millennials in China, a critical generation for the rapid growth of the second global economy. It focuses on some characteristics of the Millennials in China and the identification of their desires in the context of the ideal job and workplace. Their expectations are compared with the market labour offers, and some suggestions for HR in the context of employer branding are included.

This publication deals with issues related to shaping employee experiences in the changing organisational and social environment. The content of the book is rich and diverse. Although it does not exhaust all the issues falling within this area, it certainly shows the complexity of the factors influencing the experience of modern employees and their expectations, and concerns related to changing work environment. It is also an inspiration for empirical research as well as theoretical considerations.

Dorota Molek-Winiarska

Chapter 1

TYPES OF WELL-BEING INTERVENTIONS IN REDUCING WORK-RELATED STRESS DURING THE PANDEMIC

Dorota Molek-Winiarska[a], **Agata Pelc**[b]

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1.1. Introduction

Employees' and employers' experiences have significantly changed in the last two years due to the pandemic. Work-related stress undoubtedly increased, and many changes had to be implemented in order to maintain or restore well-being at work. This chapter opens the discussion about shaping individuals' experiences in coping with stress related to changes in work settings. It focuses on analysing the diversity of organisational interventions in reducing stress at work.

1.2. Work-related stress and well-being

Work-related stress is defined in the scientific literature and by international institutions as a psychological state which occurs when the demands of the job do not match (in quality) or exceed (in quantity) workers' resources or when the knowledge or skills of an individual are not adequate to meet the expectations of the organisation or its culture (Cox, 1993; Dewe and Cooper, 2020; Fink, 2016; WHO, 2020). In the past two years, the vast majority of reports and papers reported a huge increase in work-related stress due to enormous organisational, social, and national environmental changes (cf. Becker, Belkin, Tuskey, and Conroy, 2022; Craven, Staples, and Wilson, 2022; Escudero-Castillo, Mato-Díaz, and Rodriguez-Alvarez, 2021). Work-related stress causes enormous costs in terms of human health and impaired economic performance, including high rates of absence, staff turnover, work accidents and other psychosocial impacts on performance (EU-OSHA, 2020;

[a] Wroclaw University of Economics and Business, ORCID: 0000-0001-8554-6771.
[b] Chief Managing Director, Wellbeing Institute Ltd.

ILO, 2016; Irastorza, Milczarek, and Cockburn, 2014; Molek-Winiarska and Molek-Kozakowska, 2020).

Work-related stress is the main reason for the decrease or decline in well-being. The most general term that defines well-being refers to how individuals evaluate their lives, including mental state, social life, health, work environment, and material issues (Diener, 1984; Searle, 2008; Seligman, 2018). The concepts of hedonistic and eudaimonic well-being are also associated with work stress. Hedonistic well-being, which results from the feeling of pleasure and the absence of pain (Diener, Oishi, and Tay, 2018; Kahneman, Diener, and Schwartz, 1999), is disturbed in all situations when a person suffers from sadness and abandonment or general pain due to longitudinal work stress. Job insecurity, prolonged unfitness to work and the inability to meet job demands are the reasons for declining eudaimonic well-being as a feeling of meaningfulness and self-worth (Deci and Ryan, 2008; Ryff and Keyes, 1995).

In (Johnson, Robertson, and Cooper, 2018) the concept of well-being can be analysed in three areas – psychological (ability to cope with stressors and stay in a positive mood), physical (good health, fitness, beauty sleep) and social (positive relationships, support). Well-being is also considered from the organisational or private perspective, and the issue of well-being at work is widely described in the literature (Danna and Griffin, 2016; Schulte and Vainio, 2010). It is also worth noting that WHO defines mental health as "a state of well-being in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to the community" (WHO, 2018).

1.3. Well-being interventions at work

Well-being is considered not only in the area of motivation, satisfaction and commitment but also in work efficiency. It seems to have a significant impact on issues of work productivity, rate of absence and presenteeism, number of accidents at work or staff turnover (Cartwright and Cooper, 2014; Harter, Schmidt, and Keyes, 2004; Nielsen and Noblet, 2018; Robertson and Cooper, 2011). Hence, it is reasonable to undertake well-being practices in the organisational environment. Such initiatives may be targeted at three different aims (Cox, Karanika, Griffiths, and Houdmont, 2007; Dalgren and Gard, 2013; LaMontagne, Keegel, Louie, Ostry, and Landsbergis, 2007; Richardson and Rothstein, 2008):

– primary interventions that reduce or eliminate sources of psychosocial risk;
– secondary interventions that support employees' ability to cope with stress and increase well-being;
– tertiary initiatives that are psychological or medical interventions in coping with the negative results of psychosocial risk, burnout etc.

Well-being initiatives can be implemented on the organisational or individual level (Dalgren and Gard, 2013; Dewe and Cooper, 2020; Graveling, Crawford, Cowie, Amati, and Vohra, 2008; Richardson and Rothstein, 2008). Organisational level interventions (OLIs) are long-term actions, usually strategic ones, implemented in order to eliminate or reduce the sources of occupational stress (Cox et al., 2007; Nielsen and Noblet, 2018). Such interventions include actions aimed at improving workplace ergonomics, solutions concerning employee development, or changing the way the work processes are organised. Individual level interventions (ILIs) are designed to improve employees' well-being and increase the possibilities of coping with pressure at work (LaMontagne et al., 2007). The most popular ILIs involve various training for employees to cope with stress, relaxation sessions, dietary advice, psychological consultancy, and mindfulness training. Thus, ILIs are primarily sets of pro-health actions undertaken by enterprises, which are considered to bring immediate benefits resulting from their application (Gao et al., 2018; Hamberg-van Reenen, Proper, and Van Den Berg, 2012). Such interventions also tend to be flexible and adapted to the needs of different employees who may use the programmes either at the workplace or outside of it (Graveling et al., 2008; Molek-Winiarska, 2020).

1.4. Sources of work stress in the pandemic

There is no doubt that the pandemic brought enormous stress both in working and private areas of individual life (Coe, Cordina, Enomoto, and Seshan, 2021; Coe, Enomoto, Herbig, Kothari, and Stueland, 2021; Escudero-Castillo et al., 2021; Moss, 2021). Sources of stress (stressors) include interactions between the working environment, work content, and workers' abilities (needs, values, and preferences) that can affect health, work productivity, and job satisfaction (ILO, 2016). The model of job stressors by Cooper and Marshall, one of the most comprehensive models of relatively stable occupational stress sources (Cooper and Marshall, 1976), shows that the time of pandemic can increase stress in all groups of stressors, starting with the first source – Intrinsic to the job – which includes the deterioration of working conditions. A sudden change of office work into remote work has impaired the ergonomics of workstation (lack of equipment, furniture), as well as an access to other work devices helpful in everyday duties. Lack of space and conditions to work due to the presence of all family members were also enormous stressors for many employees. Changes in communication ways and channels brought changes in Role in Organisation, especially conflict, ambiguity and overload of job roles. Lack of job security as part of Career Development source was one of the most crucial sources of stress in some sectors (e.g. tourism and hospitality, restaurant business), mainly at the beginning of the pandemic. Many changes were conducted in Organisational Structure and Climate including working time, health and safety regulations related with wearing masks, disinfection, social distancing, office politics and restriction on behaviour. Relations within the organisation also changed significantly, starting with difficulties in delegating responsibility, tasks, as well as motivation processes due to critical changes in communication modes. Isolation and the feeling of loneliness are still the main stress source for many employees working remotely. Finally, the last and probably the most stressful factor is related to Organisational Interface with Outside. The enormous problem of work-life imbalance and deadly mixture of work and home environments have been experienced by all hybrid or remote workers for the past two years.

The brief analysis of the model of job stress sources revealed the vast and sudden need of implementing diverse well-being initiatives to decrease work-related stress and restore the employees' productivity and engagement.

Based on the theoretical background presented above, the conducted study addressed the following questions:

1. What types of well-being and stress management interventions were undertaken?
2. Were they related to stressors resulting from the pandemic time? Did they address the specific needs of employees during that time?
3. What differences in frequency and types of interventions can be found in two pandemic periods (at the beginning in 2020 and later in 2021)?
4. Were the interventions only short-term activities or rather longitudinal and ongoing well-being initiatives?

1.5. Method

The research method was a document analysis. The study involved 275 well-being initiatives from 46 organisations in Poland. These organisations voluntarily participated in an open competition for the best well-being practices organised annually by the Wellbeing Institute Ltd., one of the largest and most popular consulting organisations in Poland dealing with the education and promotion of well-being practices. It offers cooperation in training and workshops, and consulting and education fields. Since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, the Institute has been collecting data relevant to clients' health and safety and well-being initiatives. The data were collected and analysed in two time periods – at the beginning of 2021, where practices undertaken in 2020 were analysed (mainly initiatives implemented at the beginning of the pandemic period during the total lockdown and after that period). The second enrolment concerned practices implemented in 2021 and was decided on in March 2022. Each time, companies were obliged to describe their initiatives on the basis of a standardised questionnaire and send it with additional materials such as a short presentation of initiatives and a description of the effects. The questionnaire contained ten open questions concerning the type of the initiative, well-being measurement, implementation procedures, and level of cooperation with participants. Only initiatives dedicated to work-related stress and well-being were taken into account in this study.

1.6. Results

Due to the fact that the majority of the organisations that took part in the contests (especially during the second enrolment) were large companies, and the range of initiatives usually covered all employees, it was decided to analyse interventions regardless of the size of the organisation. The frequency and type of interventions, as well as their duration, were presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Characteristics of the study sample and initiatives

Distribution criteria	First period 2020	Second period 2021
No. of large organisations (employment > 250)	12 (48%)	17 (81%)
No. of medium-sized organisations (employment >50 <250)	11 (44%)	3 (14%)
No. of small organisations (employment <50)	2 (8%)	1(5%)
Total no. of initiatives	115	160
Range of initiatives	115 (100%) – for all employees	144 (90%) – for all employees 16 (10%) – for specific groups (e.g. managers, blue-collar workers, married employees)
No. of ILIs	96 (83%)	152 (95%)
No. of OLIs	19 (17%)	8 (5%)
No. of organisations implementing both types of initiatives simultaneously	11 (44%)	5 (24%)
No. of short-term initiatives (3 months or shorter)	76 (66%)	119 (74%)
No. of long-term initiatives (longer than 3 months or ongoing)	39 (34%)	41 (26%)

Source: own study.

On the basis of theoretical analysis and previously identified sources of stress (according to the Cooper & Marshall Model) characterising the pandemic period in particular, the investigation of well-being practices was carried out. Then, the frequency analysis of the initiatives divided into two pandemic periods (2020 and 2021) was conducted to find the differences in the number and type of interventions.

The first stress source resulting from poor working conditions due to changing the office into an ergonomically untested home-office, was eliminated by renting or purchasing a PC device to work at home. Additionally, some companies bought or rented furniture or other equipment (e.g. chairs, desks etc.) to improve the ergonomics of the workstation for remote workers.

Changes in the organisational role, ambiguity, overload, and conflicts due to misinformation, changes in communication channels, and new regulations were diminished by creating communication platforms and implementing ICT solutions very quickly. Regular meetings devoted to exchanging information, blogs for employees to solve current problems, using Intranet, chat, podcasts, and newsletters were prevalent initiatives.

Insecurity was reduced by open communication from company boards to employees about lack of dismissals from work, helplines (with lawyers, board members, HR managers) and sometimes financial benefits or financial aid. These types of interventions were almost twice as common in the first period in comparison to the second one.

A huge diversity of initiatives were introduced in reducing stress resulting from changes in the organisational climate and ways of working. Due to the pandemic and remote work, the employees' physical and psychosocial health were heavily impaired. Initiatives directed at constant informing about the current regulations and the epidemiological situation, as well as purchasing of the disinfection and personal protection equipment appeared on a daily basis in the majority of companies. Other types of interventions were strictly directed toward prevention and the improvement in physical and psychological health and well-being. The most popular interventions were promoting and funding physical activity events, stress management training, mindfulness and relaxation workshops and webinars as well as meetings with physicians, physiotherapists, psychologists, dieticians, and other health experts. Funding and expanding medical care for all employees were also quite common. Those interventions were definitely widespread in the second period of the pandemic (2021).

Poor relations with colleagues or sometimes the lack of them, isolation and a feeling of loneliness were mostly reduced by integration events, online and in-person meetings (breakfasts, coffee breaks, grill parties etc.), as well as meetings and webinars with psychologists, coaches, mentors and consultants to support and discuss mental problems.

Finally, work-life balance initiatives included guidelines on how to work remotely, provide online meetings and arrange everyday duties at the same time. Time management, readiness to change and self-motivation training were also provided. Webinars and guidelines for parents who had to organise work from home to simultaneously coincide with their children's online learning were also popular.

A quantitative analysis of the initiatives dedicated to deal with particular stressors is provided in Table 1.2, which shows the differences in the frequency of initiatives in two pandemic years. Great emphasis on reducing stress resulted from difficulties in arranging workstations, fitting job roles, and precarious employment, was applied at the beginning of the pandemic, while improving and restoring physical and mental health were dominant issues in the second period. More emphasis on restoring proper work-life balance was also indicated during that time.

Table 1.2. Type and number of stress management interventions in the study sample in two pandemic periods

Type of stressor	Number of initiatives per year	
	2020	2021
Intrinsic to job	9	3
Role in organisation	12	4
Job security	11	6
Organisational structure and climate	51	109
Relations within organisation	21	21
Organisational interface with outside	11	17

Source: own study.

The investigation of the fit of the interventions to employees' needs, as well as the consultations before implementation of the initiatives, were analysed on the basis of the questionnaire answers. There were almost no differences between the first and second samples; 88% of the companies investigated employees' needs before the implementation, and 81% consulted the final proposals with representatives of the employees.

1.7. Discussion and conclusions

The types of initiatives were investigated to answer the first research question. The most common forms of ILIs were webinars and online meetings on health-promoting topics such as a healthy diet, good sleeping habits, medical advice and healthcare. Online and in-person sport activities and competitions provided individually, in teams or with family members were also very popular, especially in the second period. The third most common type of interventions were online courses, webinars, meetings devoted to stress management, relaxation and mindfulness, resilience and psychological advice. OLIs were less popular, or even extremely rare in the second period; 17% of the interventions of the first sample and 5% of the second one were devoted to some organisational changes. All of them were related to changes in ergonomics of the workstations due to hybrid or remote work. These findings mainly match with the other studies. Various reports showed that the most requested policies were: flexible work schedules, family-support services (e.g. childcare, backup care), skill-building programmes (e.g. sleep improvement, stress-management programmes), and family or medical leave for mental-health conditions (Coe, Enomoto, Herbig, Kothari, and Stueland, 2021; Pal, Galinsky, and Kim, 2022).

Analyses of the interventions' aims showed the huge congruence between the needs of the employees and the content of the initiatives. They seemed to fulfil the employees' expectations during different times of the pandemic. However, it requires deeper investigation into implementation and evaluation processes. Nevertheless, this shows the companies' agility and flexibility to fit with the employees' needs and requests. The speed in tailoring HR and well-being strategies allowed companies to respond more effectively to the crisis, which also was confirmed in the literature (Craven et al., 2022). Agility and adaptability are increasingly assessed as critical success factors for individual and organisational well-being (Brassey et al., 2021).

The type and content of the intervention did not vary too much in both investigated periods, but the frequency was significantly higher in the second study. Not only was the number of initiatives in the second period higher, but also the frequency of ILIs was overwhelming – 95% of all initiatives were dedicated to individuals, and they were usually secondary or tertiary interventions. The percentage of multidimensional (OLI and ILI) initiatives decreased significantly in the second period (44% to 24%), however ILIs were seemingly implemented as "multi packages" of different programmes with the pick-and-mix offer for each participant. Differences in dealing with diverse sources of stress were also significant. In the first period, more interventions addressed the need to organise workstations at home – purchasing PCs or furniture was more prevalent than in the second period. Creating and establishing communication systems and using ICT were significantly more frequent in the first period. Interventions diminishing job insecurity were also more popular in the first period, whilst physical and psychological well-being initiatives were twice more frequent in the second period. Activities directed to health promotion, dealing with psychological problems or lack of fitness and sport activity were implemented in almost all companies in 2021. Interventions in maintaining and improving work-life balance were also introduced more often in the second pandemic period.

The duration of different initiatives was also analysed to answer the last research question. The prevalence of short-term initiatives was observed in both periods, however in the second one it was tremendous; 74% of all interventions in the second period were short-term, meaning they did not last more than three months. Many webinars, meetings, and online courses were one-time events or lasted for a few weeks and then ended. They considered particular problems of the employees' and fulfilled their needs for knowledge or advice on how to solve them, hence there was no need to continue with them. Yet, some of the initiatives devoted to physical activity or mental care were also single events and could not decrease stress problems or increase well-being at all.

Undoubtedly occupational health interventions may increase employees' well-being, but different types of initiatives may be needed and requested in the times of pandemic. Many recent studies show what types of interventions work. For example, Kubilienė et al. showed the great value of organisational climate and safety and stability initiatives (Kubilienė et al., 2021), McKee et al. focused on ergonomics of workstations (McKee and Hedge, 2022), while other researchers explained the factors related to effective remote work (Becker et al., 2022; Escudero-Castillo et al., 2021; Schade, Digutsch, Kleinsorge, and Fan, 2021) or even creating virtual offices (Robertson, Lin, Huang, and Schleifer, 2022). Despite some limitations (small sample, lack of randomisation), this study analysed data collected by organisations, which is rare in scientific publications. Due to that, it was possible to show the current perspective of what is happening in companies nowadays. Hence, this study can be very valuable, especially for management science researchers.

The main conclusions cover the following issues:

- During the pandemic, companies have focused on inventing new forms of previously existing programmes to be available online, or invented novel initiatives to answer employees' expectations.
- Companies could decisively and quickly adapt the process and workplace to the remote or hybrid form of work. These processes might allow a permanent change in the form of work used nowadays and can be applied in the future.
- There is an increasing desire to analyse existing well-being solutions and match them to employees' needs and organisational culture.
- There is a tendency to better monitor the effectiveness of well-being initiatives, not only by monitoring employee's satisfaction and engagement but also by using more reliable measurements pointing at the financial impact and return of these investments.

Finally, it is clear that companies are increasingly interested in developing comprehensive programmes, not just in individual initiatives. This may suggest that they include well-being into the main HR strategy, and advisedly create well-being organisational cultures.

Stress at work is undoubtedly still a burning issue worth discussing in the fields of different scientific disciplines and from various perspectives, thus this topic is continued in the next chapter to show another viewpoint related to managerial experience in coping with stress.

Chapter 2

THE FLEXIBILITY OF THE STYLE OF COPING WITH STRESS AS A DETERMINANT OF EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF EMPLOYEE MANAGEMENT

Katarzyna M. Rozbejko[a]

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2.1. Introduction

In recent years one can observe a significant increase in the number of global studies on stress in the workplace in sectors where the decision-making processes are carried out on a daily basis. These studies focus on the predispositions of managers and their subordinate employees to act in conditions of stress, environmental pressure, time and decision-making responsibility. In addition, the research aims at finding important factors in the individual perception of stress in the workplace and its sources in relation to work efficiency. Hence, this chapter continues the discussion about shaping individuals' experiences (primarily managerial) in coping with stress related to changes in work settings. It focuses on managers working in the banking sector. Due to their job's specificity, which consists in significant decision-making responsibility, time pressure and a particular system of work organisation, they act under constant stress, which may reduce their effectiveness in managing people and cause health problems in the long term. Most studies concentrate on healthcare professionals, e.g. nurses, doctors and paramedics, firefighters, pilots, policemen and teachers, but there is still a lack of research targeting managers working in the banking sector.

2.2. Managerial stress and coping styles

It should be emphasised that the issue of stress in the workplace should not be limited only to the description and classification of various forms of coping with it. It seems reasonable to define the style of coping with stress as a determinant of the efficiency

[a] Wroclaw University of Economics and Business, ORCID: 0000-0002-4861-7494.

and effectiveness of managing people. First, one has to highlight the importance of the issue adopted for consideration. According to Urbaniak (2019, pp. 199-213), currently stress resistance and the ability to cope with it is the most sought-after feature of an employee. What is more, Zajder and Kaźmierczyk suggest that coping with stress is considered one of the most valued managerial competences (Zajder and Kaźmierczyk, 2021, pp. 25-45), therefore it seems justified to focus on this aspect.

Heszen-Niejodek stresses that people are capable of adjusting their coping style to the required situation, at the same time emphasising that such adjustment is possible when the manager knows how to apply appropriate styles and is flexible in their use (Heszen-Niejodek, 2000, p. 29). This approach is compliant with the opinion expressed by Leipold and Greve, who claim that the elimination of ineffective coping styles and also a flexible resignation from unattainable goals or the ability to recognise immutability of circumstances and adapting goals to them play an important role in counteracting the negative effects of stress (Leipold and Greve after: Sołtys, 2015, pp. 216-218). In this respect, the concept of flexible coping with stress seems to be very useful, as it emphasises variability and effectiveness of dealing with stress.

Flexible coping with stress was defined by Kato as the ability to cease using ineffective styles and to create and apply alternative styles of coping with stress (Kato, 2015, pp. 19-37). In accordance with the flexible stress management hypothesis, a more flexible method of coping with stress results in more adaptive outcomes.

Many authors think that flexibility of coping with stress brings the best results, and thus is more efficient and effective and positively influences employee management, while the maladaptation in various areas is a consequence of excessive rigidity. It has to emphasised, however, that not only flexibility influences the effectiveness of coping with stress, but also the type of stressful situation, the characteristics of the individual, the nervous system and time frames.

According to Ogińska-Bulik, the author of many studies conducted with the use of the Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS) test created by Endler and Parker, the selection of a few styles is the only method that gives a positive result, because only when facing stressful situations is the manager able to choose whether it is better to concentrate on the task or the emotions. This flexible approach has a positive effect, as the manager experiences fewer negative emotions and adapts to difficult situations better (Ogińska-Bulik, 2012, p. 47). However, it should be remembered that in the CISS test, there is one more style that should be added to the above task or emotion-oriented styles, which consists in avoiding or alternatively taking on another task. The manager applying such a style faces unresolved problem and avoids it. According to Rozbejko, while the flexible use of styles focused on the task or emotions is a positive phenomenon, the use of the style concentrating on avoidance may have a negative impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of employee management.

Summing up the reflections addressed in this part of the chapter, it can be concluded that managers' flexibility in the use of the styles of coping with stress, i.e. the styles willingly used by them in task-related situations, determine their efficiency and effectiveness of employee management. The flexibility in choosing the appropriate style when coping with stress gives the best results, it is efficient and effective and positively influences employee management, while maladjustment in various areas is a consequence of excessive rigidity. The flexible use of task or emotion-centred styles is a positive phenomenon, while the use of the style focused on avoidance may have a negative impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of employee management.

On the basis of the literature review, it is assumed that a manager has to function in a highly stressful environment. An ability to deal with stress is currently recognised as one of the most valued managerial competences. Based on the above review, the following research problem was specified in the conducted study: What is the relation between the styles of coping with stress used by a manager, and the efficiency and effectiveness of employee management? The purpose of the research is to identify and analyse the relation between the style of dealing with stress and the efficiency and effectiveness of managing people.

2.3. Method

The participants of the study were the people holding managerial positions, who directly supervise the work of subordinates in the banking sector (institutional entity). Extensive research and numerous publications that can be found in the subject literature confirm that the banking industry ranks second in terms of both frequency of psychosocial risks and the level of the stress they induce.

To estimate a representative research group, it was assumed that the banking sector employed 165 431 people. An estimated 10:1 scale of management was adopted, which made it possible to estimate the size of the surveyed population in the community at the level of 16 543 people in managerial positions. With the 95% and 0.05% confidence level of the results of the data obtained from the survey questionnaires, it was calculated that 137 managers should be examined. Due to the difficulties related to the manoeuvrability of the completed questionnaires, and the general resistance of the respondents to the conducted research, it was decided to expand the group of surveyed managers to 200 respondents. The study covered 200 managers, however due to the completeness of the data contained in the questionnaires, the analysis was performed on 188 persons (Rozbejko, 2020).

2.4. Results

The study participants were managers employed in various banks in Poland (Alior, PKO SA, PKO BP, Millenium, Nest Bank, GBS Bank, BNP Paribas and others who wanted to remain anonymous), who expressed their willingness to take part in the research. All the respondents hold managerials position and directly manage subordinate employees, which was the required criterion enabling the participation in the study (Rozbejko, 2020, p. 188).

Table 2.1 shows the interpretation of the CISS test. Table 2.2. presents the structure of the respondents in terms of the results obtained in relation to three selected styles of coping with stress (Task-Oriented Coping TOC, Emotion-Oriented Coping EOC and Avoidance-Oriented Coping AOC divided into Distraction and Social Diversion).

Table 2.1. Interpretation of the CISS results

Style level	TOC	EOC	AOC	Distraction	Social Diversion
Very low	16-38	16-24	16-27	8	5-9
Low	39-48	25-35	28-34	9-13	10-12
Medium	49-61	36-51	35-47	14-21	13-18
Rather high	62-65	52-55	48-52	22-24	19-20
High	66-74	56-64	53-61	25-30	21-23
Very high	75-80	65-80	62-80	31-40	24-25

Source: based on (Strelau, Jaworowska, Wrześniewski, and Szczepaniak, 2013, p. 79).

Table 2.2. The number of managers according to the CISS scale

Style level	TOC	EOC	AOC
Very low	2	19	7
Low	14	41	25
Medium	81	106	77
Rather high	25	11	34
High	54	9	41
Very high	12	2	4
In total	188	188	188

Source: based on (Rozbejko, 2020, p. 192).

When analysing all three styles, it can be observed that the greatest number of managers opted for a medium level of style. However, in the case of the TOC and AOC styles, the number of managers with a high level was much greater than with the EOC style. One can also see that the largest number of people have a low and a very low level of the EOC style.

Tables 2.3 and 2.4 show the results in the CISS scales obtained by managers from individual age groups, using statistical parameters such as the arithmetic mean (M) and standard deviation (SD).

Table 2.3. CISS results of managers broken down by age groups

CISS Scale	Statistical parameters	Age 18-24 $N = 15$	Age 25-54 $N = 157$	Age 55-79 $N = 12$
TOC Min/Max 16/80	M	62.813	61.041	61.267
	SD	7.3776	9.5339	9.7868
EOC Min/Max 16/80	M	42.875	39.171	37.933
	SD	6.8981	10.640	7.4973
AOC Min/Max 16/80	M	51.188	44.699	42.133
	SD	10.271	10.204	9.4858
Distraction Min/Max 8/40	M	21.688	19.096	17.400
	SD	5.4738	6.4277	5.1381
Social Diversion Min/Max 5/25	M	20.000	17.123	16.400
	SD	4.7469	4.1438	3.2470

M – arithmetic mean; SD – standard deviation of the sample. No data for 4 people.

Source: based on (Rozbejko, 2020, p. 193).

The average results show that all three styles of dealing with stress are at an average level. Age slightly differentiates the results on the TOC and AOC scale, and consequently on its two components (Distraction and Social Diversion). Both the TOC and AOC styles of coping with stress in the 18-24 age group are quite high. The pairwise comparison test showed an average differentiation, which means that regardless of age, the respondents that use the style focused on avoidance engage in substitute activities and search for social contacts. However, due to the large numerical discrepancy, both in terms of age ranges and education, it was not possible to calculate e.g. the t-student. Therefore, the study population was treated as a whole according to the CISS guidelines without division into age groups and education, as shown in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4. CISS results in the overall summary

CISS Scale	Statistical parameters	Values
TOC Min/Max 16/80	M	60.9360
	SD	9.3700
EOC Min/Max 16/80	M	39.5350
	SD	10.2510
AOC Min/Max 16/80	M	44.9950
	SD	10.2490
Distraction Min/Max 8/40	M	19.2350
	SD	6.2698
Social Diversion Min/Max 5/25	M	17.2190
	SD	4.1192

M – arithmetic mean; SD – standard deviation of the sample. No data for 4 people.

Source: based on (Rozbejko, 2020, p. 194).

The comparison of the results obtained in every scale by each manager allows to determine the manager's dominant style of coping with stress. The dominance occurs when the score obtained in a given style is significantly higher than the score obtained in the other two styles. Intra-individual analysis of the results also allowed to distinguish those who manifested all three styles to the same extent (there are no significant differences between the results obtained in different styles), and those who cannot define the dominant style as the results in individual scales do not differ significantly from each other. The data associated with the styles are presented in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5. Distribution of the dominance of styles of coping with stress

Sample	One dominant style	Two styles on comparable level	Three styles on comparable level
Number of managers	75	73	40

Source: based on (Rozbejko 2020, p. 194).

Table 2.5 shows quite a high flexibility in the applied styles of coping with stress in the studied group of respondents: 60% of managers did not have one dominant style of coping with stress, 39% manifested two styles of coping with stress at a comparable level, 21% had all the three styles at the same level; 40% of the respondents have one dominant style. However, a detailed analysis of the data revealed that often managers who have a dominant style at a very high level, also have other styles at a quite high level: 25% of the respondents favoured a task-oriented coping with stress, 13% had a style of coping with stress focused on avoidance. However, it must be emphasised that this style is at a medium level, and that 2% of the respondents use an emotion-oriented coping.

Table 2.6 presents the interpretation of the results of the questionnaire on the efficiency and effectiveness of employee management. The adopted normalisation was developed on the basis of the calculated average, which designates the medium level.

Table 2.6. Interpretation of the results of the author's questionnaire

Efficiency level	Very high	High	Medium	Low	Very low
	20-18	17-15	14-13	12-6	5
Effectiveness level	Very high	High	Medium	Low	Very low
	15-14	13-12	11-10	9-5	4-0

Source: based on (Rozbejko, 2020, p. 199).

Table 2.7 presents the structure of the surveyed respondents according to the level of efficiency and effectiveness of managing people, broken down by gender.

Table 2.7. The structure of the sample according to the level of efficiency and effectiveness of employee management, broken down by gender

Efficiency level	Very high	High	Medium	Low	Very low
Number of women	38	66	21	7	0
Number of men	13	15	1	3	0
In total	51	81	22	10	0
Effectiveness level	**Very high**	**High**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Very low**
Number of women	23	20	60	29	0
Number of men	7	9	10	5	1
In total	30	29	70	34	1

No data for 24 people.

Source: based on (Rozbejko, 2020, p. 200).

Data analysis leads to the conclusion that 80% of managers achieved high or very high efficiency in employee management, whilst 40% of the respondents were characterised by their high or very high effectiveness in managing people, which may result from the specificity of the analysed sector. Table 2.8 shows the average results of the efficiency and effectiveness of employee management according to the scale of the author's survey expressed by the managers.

Table 2.8. Average level of efficiency and effectiveness in employee management

Efficiency	Effectiveness
16.84	11.43

Source: based on (Rozbejko, 2020. p. 201).

The average cumulative results for the surveyed respondents show that the level of efficiency was high, while the effectiveness was at an average level.

To sum up the analysis of the collected empirical data, one can see that in the analysed banking sector, the efficiency and effectiveness of employee management, as well as the flexibility of the style of coping with stress used by the supervisor towards subordinate employees, was at a high level among half of the respondents. Moreover, one can observe the flexibility in the selection of the style of dealing with stress among the respondents.

The research problem resulting from the study was to answer the question on the relation between the styles of coping with stress used by the manager, and the efficiency and effectiveness of managing people.

Table 2.9 shows the significance of the differences of individual styles of coping with stress with the efficiency and effectiveness of employee management. The analysis ignores the SSE management styles due to the insufficient number of respondents who manifested this style of coping with stress as dominant. The significance of differences was verified by means of the Kruskal-Wallis test.

Table 2.9. Significance of differences between the styles of coping with stress

Characteristics	Style of coping with stress								Significance of differences
	total (n = 161)		no style (n = 112)		TOC (n =40)		AOC (n =9)		
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	
Efficiency	16.1	2.3	16.0	2.2	16.2	2.6	15.7	2.5	H = 0.42 P = 0.81
Effectiveness	11.0	2.3	10.8	2.3	11.5	2.3	10.1	1.8	H = 4.0 P = 0.14

M − mean; SD − standard deviation.

Source: based on (Rozbejko, 2020, p. 205).

There were no statistically significant differences between managers who did not have the dominant style of coping with stress and managers characterised by TOC or AOC with regard to their efficiency and effectiveness in managing people. Slightly higher values in efficiency and effectiveness of managing people were obtained by managers characterised by the TOC style, however these differences are not statistically significant.

2.5. Conclusions and directions for further research

The aim of the study presented in this chapter was to determine how the style of coping with stress by the superiors determines the efficiency and effectiveness of managing people. The research conducted was aimed at solving the formulated problem.

In the analysed banking sector, 60% of managers do not have one dominant style of coping with stress; 25% of respondents favoured a task-oriented coping with stress, 13% used a style focused on avoidance. Yet it must be emphasised that the level of this style was average, and that 2% of the respondents opted for an emotion-oriented coping (Rozbejko, 2020).

The preferred style of coping with stress and the lack of a dominant style did not affect the efficiency and effectiveness of employee management in a statistically significant way. It should be highlighted, however, that the emotion-centred style was omitted while verifying the significance of differences by means of the Kruskal--Wallis test, due to the insufficient number of respondents who would select it.

During the literature review and empirical research, several problems arose which should become the subject of further empirical research from the point of view of science and its auxiliary role in relation to practice. It is possible to formulate the observed problems in the form of the proposals for further research:

1. In Poland there is little empirical research concentrating on the relation between the styles of dealing with stress and the effectiveness and efficiency of human

management. The research should be expanded to include other professional groups, which have not been investigated.

2. The flexibility of choosing the style of coping with stress as a determinant of the efficiency and effectiveness of managing people should be examined to a greater extent by extending empirical research.

3. It is advisable to conduct a study aimed at finding an answer to the following question: What could be the fundamental changes in the styles of coping with stress used if managers were aware of the effects of the flexibility of their use on the efficiency and effectiveness of employee management?

Conducting research addressing the above issues could contribute not only to a better use of flexibility in the selection of styles of coping with stress, but would also become an additional value of the competitiveness of enterprises.

Not only investing in the mental health and well-being of the employees, but also offering them attractive forms of employment and cooperation, may help organisations in attracting and retaining valuable workers. Psychological contracts and non-standard forms of employment as examples of organisational environment changes are discussed in the following two chapters.

Chapter 3

EMPLOYEES WITHOUT EMPLOYERS – THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE SPECIFICITY OF GIG WORKERS' PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACTS

Anna Rogozińska-Pawełczyk[a]

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3.1. Introduction

The development of information technology and social progress has generated various new business patterns and has become a benchmark for visible changes in ways of managing and organising work (Stone, Deadrick, Lukaszewski, and Johnson, 2015). Therefore this chapter focuses on shaping the experiences of workers that cooperate with organisations as freelancers, independent contractors or other contingent work arrangements covered by gig economy issues. It presents both individual and organisational perspectives included in gig workers' psychological contracts.

3.2. Gig economy and gig employment

The emergence of the so-called 'gig' economies due to these changes enables contemporary organisations to access cloud workers (Sundararajan, 2016). Work and workplace currently have an expanded meaning that goes far beyond the understanding of the traditional employment relationship (Perrons, 2003). The number of employees working in traditional work arrangements is declining, while the number of those working in alternative work arrangements is increasing (Ashford, Caza, and Reid, 2018). The model of working fixed hours in an office space with a direct supervisor and the same team is becoming less common (Ashford et al., 2018; Spreitzer, Cameron, and Garrett, 2017). Advances in technology have fundamentally changed the structure and nature of work, which has transcended the legal, economic, temporal and spatial constraints of traditional employment contexts

[a] University of Łodz, ORCID: 0000-0002-9376-6915.

(Gajendran and Harrison, 2007), as well as creating opportunities and challenges for both employers and employees.

The new forms of work go beyond telework, remote or virtual work, and include (but are not limited to) digitally based work. It is referred to as platform-mediated contracting or gig employment and involves a form of work in which a worker is self--employed and a short-term contract is entered into with an organisation to carry out a task or assignment, which may take a virtual form or be carried out at a particular organisational location (Spreitzer et al., 2017).

Gig employment uses digital online platforms as 'intermediaries' between the employee and the organisation that link supply and demand for services (Duggan, Sherman, Carbery, and McDonnell, 2020).

Compared to traditional full-time employment or permanent employment, gig employment is typically performed in an online environment and gig workers engage in a work style that differs from that assumed by theories of organisational behaviour. This can result in employees' isolation from each other and feelings of insecurity at work, thus threatening the developing employment relations (Gleim, Johnson, and Lawson, 2019). Ashford et al. (2018) diagnosed the challenges that gig workers and organisations operating in a gig economy environment may face, and identified them as remaining viable, staying organised, maintaining identity, and sustaining relations.

With gig workers performing their work outside of traditional centralised offices and conventional working hours, organisations cannot rely on traditional management as a means of planning, organising, motivating and controlling these employees (Jabagi, Croteau, Auderbrand, and Marsan, 2019). Therefore, it becomes an important issue to know the exact working characteristics of gig workers in achieving progress in their specific tasks and positively fulfilling the established relations with their employer.

3.3. The concept of the psychological contract in the perspective of new employment relations

The concept of the psychological contract (PC) in the context of the standard employment relationship has received much attention in empirical research to date. However, recent research suggests that PCs evolve in the wake of changes in the labour market (e.g. Baruch and Rousseau, 2019; Knapp, Diehl, and Dougan, 2020). These changes result in modifications to the type of employment relationship ("with whom" and "what"), schedule ("when"), and location ("where") (Ashford et al., 2018; Griep et al., 2019) that can be considered atypical compared to the traditional employment relationship.

PCs are changing; the conceptualisation proposed by Rousseau (1995) fits both traditional and new work organisations. The concept is not limited to the relationship between the employee and the organisation (i.e. the dyad). Rousseau (1995) argues that an exchange contract is made between a person and another party, such as an employer, "a customer, a supplier or any other independent party".

The concept of PC is useful not only for understanding exchanges that occur within an employment relationship where there is a clear employee-organisation link, but also for understanding new working arrangements made possible by digital technology. More recently, in support of this concept, Knapp et al. (2020) described PCs as an inherently universal [concept] and suitable for analysing exchange relationships that transcend specific employment circumstances and organisational boundaries.

A closer look at work organisations that operate through digital platforms reveals that they are not based on the traditional employee-organisation relationship (Duggan et al., 2020; Sherman and Morley, 2020) and "traditional assumptions about reciprocity and organisational support no longer apply or, at least, are significantly different" (Duggan et al., 2020). An important feature of this type of work organisation is that digital platform organisations do not consider their employees as workers (workers as employees) (Aloisi, 2015; Duggan et al., 2020). Furthermore, in theory, employees and employers do not have expectations of mutual trust and commitment and are more independent and autonomous (Ashford et al., 2018; Duggan et al., 2020). The main challenge here becomes technology and innovation, which can lead to a disruption of employment relationships, given the fears of job loss, social insecurity and the continued widening of inequality (Friedman, 2014). Despite these negative concerns that arise, other researchers such as Kirven (2018) are positive about the role of technology in assisting and streamlining work and giving greater control to employees. In such a setting, the existing role and design of the PC may become questionable.

Gig workers are paid for short-term jobs or tasks, which can lead to the mistaken assumption that the employment relationship is purely transactional (Duggan et al., 2020). However, emerging evidence suggests that the relationship between an employee and an organisation using digital platforms is much more complex (Aloisi, 2015; Ashford et al., 2018; Petriglieri, Ashford, and Wrzesniewski, 2019; Ravenelle, 2019). For example, Aloisi (2015) argues that trust between parties is integral to the functioning of the employee-platform relationship. Additionally, gig workers seek growth opportunities within the organisation as a digital platform (Graham et al., 2017), as well as social interactions (Ashford et al., 2018; Petriglieri et al., 2019). Moreover, gig workers also want to participate in the decision-making process in circumstances that directly affect them (Ravenelle, 2019). This evidence shows that despite the high level of flexibility and uncertainty of this type of work, the relationship is not just an economic exchange, but also includes a more relational component, at least for the employee. The gig work organisation communicates with the employee through an app that uses algorithmic management (Duggan et al., 2020). This raises the question: with whom do employees establish PCs? Organisations as such do not create PCs, nor do platforms, but rather managers who are agents of the organisation (Rogozińska-Pawełczyk, 2021). However, interactions with a digital platform can be considered as interactions with the organisation and as such can contribute to the formation and development of employee expectations. For example, an organisation using a digital platform may encourage certain in-role and extra-role employee behaviour (Duggan et al., 2020; Kuhn and Maleki, 2017) and expect employees to be accessible, responsive, follow policies and provide excellent service (De Stefano, 2016; Ravenelle, 2019).

Based on the author's review of the literature on the subject, the proposed theoretical explorations aim to understand the new form of PC of gig workers by exploring the specific features of gig work.

3.4. Towards a new form of gig workers psychological contract – characteristics of gig employment

The quantity, type and reality of the tasks posed to employees in an employment relationship can affect the quality of the relationships established within the PC. The job characteristics theory (JCT) suggests that optimal design of work and work tasks is one of the most effective ways to increase individual motivation, performance and job satisfaction (Hackman and Oldham, 1980). It can be hypothesised that the specific nature of the work tasks that gig workers are involved in and the way in which these tasks are designed should have a similar effect on the shape of the psychological contract that is established.

Autonomy and variety of job tasks performed

Gig workers are typically granted a high level of autonomy by providing them with considerable independence and freedom to choose their tasks and when to perform them. As researchers have noted, high levels of autonomy in gig work can lead to workers beginning to perceive that they lack the guidance and necessary instructions to perform tasks properly (Hannola, Richter, Richter, and Stocker, 2018), yet autonomy provides them also with a sense of control that enables flexibility and mobility of work, ultimately providing a context in which PC can develop (Wood, Graham, Lehdonvirta, and Hjorth, 2019). As gig workers perceive autonomy and flexibility in relation to their tasks, they should experience lower psychological barriers and be more committed to fulfilling each other's responsibilities and expectations of the PC (Corder and Ronnie, 2018).

Conclusion 1. The autonomy of gig workers has a positive impact on the fulfilment of the expectations and obligations of the established PC.

A second important feature of work that significantly shapes work relations is the variety of tasks performed by gig workers. Historically, the variety of tasks performed in standard employment relationship settings has mainly served to keep employees interested and engaged in their work (Hackman and Oldham, 1980). In current gig work conditions, it is increasingly observed that the variety of tasks performed negatively affects the level of employment relationships (Coetzee and Deas, 2020). The job tasks of gig workers are mainly characterised by high specificity and uniqueness, and their performance becomes possible with the support of information and communication networks that can be accessed through mobile devices (Jabagi et al., 2019). Therefore, as the variety within the tasks increases, gig workers may feel inadequately equipped with knowledge and information to adequately meet the requirements of the task, which ultimately frustrates employees and reduces the extent to which they invest their energy in fulfilling the employment relationship. In addition, employees may also experience a breach of PC (Coyle-Shapiro, Costa, Doden, and Chang, 2019) when the types of tasks required by the job are not exactly what they expect.

Conclusion 2. The greater the variety of tasks performed by gig workers, the less opportunity to fulfil the PC.

Anonymous nature of work

The existing studies of gig workers have found that, as a rule, their work is anonymous in nature (e.g. Kirven, 2018; Sundararajan, 2017). However, it is not entirely clear whether the anonymity brings benefits to the tasks performed and to employment relationship. From an organisational perspective, mutual anonymity can be beneficial as it protects the organisation from negative reactions from employees when their expectations are not met (Coetzee and Schreuder, 2021). In such a situation, however, the organisation loses a certain amount of authority and power, making it difficult for it to hold employees fully accountable for work tasks not completed (Deas, 2019). From an employee's perspective, maintaining anonymity can protect them from potential prejudice, and the negative consequences they might be experiencing if their identity were known (Coetzee and Schreuder, 2021). However, a lack of anonymity can lead to employees feeling that they are replaceable or expendable from the organisation's perspective (Łupicka and Grzybowska, 2018).

Consequently, the fulfilment of the promises and obligations of the ongoing employee PC is expected to increase as the level of anonymity of gig workers in the organisation decreases. As gig workers become less anonymous to the organisation they work for, they gain the additional potential to be uniquely recognised for both their successes and failures, resulting in higher levels of employee accountability. In contrast to traditional workplaces, gig work often does not connect employees to their employer. In such cases, employees are unable to create group accountability with the organisation and its members, which often manifests itself in reduced levels of PC fulfilment (Van Buren, 2000). Alternatively, reduced anonymity in the organisation may provide employees with the opportunity for their better organisational identification (Epitropaki, 2013). A sense of high organisational identification should therefore translate into increased more positive working relations.

Conclusion 3. As anonymity among gig workers decreases, the implementation of the PC increases.

Working environment

Although contemporary organisations operating in modern digital technologies are promoting platform-mediated contracting (Spreitzer et al., 2017), more traditional approaches to employment still account for a significant proportion of the established employment relations (Ashford et al., 2018). Gig workers, being representatives of a new type of employment, perform work virtually in a specific work environment (Jabagi et al., 2019). Indeed, gig workers have the possibility to work from home, in an external location (e.g. a library, a café or in public transport) or even in another place of employment. A varied work environment creates both opportunities and challenges for employees in fulfilling the obligations and expectations created by PC. On the one hand, a highly varied working environment offers greater flexibility and autonomy, which may increase the need to fulfil the enlisted employment relationship (Griep et al., 2019), while on the other, it may also fulfil them by reducing employee motivation, commitment and job satisfaction.

Regarding the virtual working environment, gig workers are mostly exposed to distractions caused by unforeseen external environment factors (Jett and George, 2003). Furthermore, although gig work provides employees an opportunity to earn during their free time, this may result in increased amount of work in another organisation where the employee also maintains an employment relationship (Friedman, 2014), resulting in divided attention, less commitment to the tasks at hand and a weaker employment relationship. Gig workers who work in different working environments are at risk of being distracted by multiple responsibilities resulting from the variety of tasks they perform and working for several employers at the same time (Jett and George, 2003), they will become more exhausted or experience burnout more quickly (Petriglieri et al., 2019). Therefore, the conditions and characteristics of the working environment in which gig workers perform their tasks should have an impact on the new form of PCs.

Conclusion 4. The higher the degree to which the working environment becomes demanding and distracting, the lower the possibility of fully implementing the PC.

Appreciation of employees' work

Another key area of difference in employment relationships between traditional contract workers and gig workers is the issues of identifying, appreciating and rewarding gig workers for their work. While more traditional workplaces have established HR practices and programmes that acknowledge or reward the best employees (Lill, 2020), the largely anonymous nature of gig workers' endeavour makes personal appreciation for their work almost impossible. Research on employee rewards and appreciation shows that open appreciation of employee performance can have a direct impact on employee behaviour and attitudes (Bussin and Van Rooy, 2014). Although typical HRM reward and appreciation systems (e.g. a predetermined level of remuneration for performing a task) are commonplace in contemporary organisations, it is likely that demonstrating to employees that they are valued can bring positive results in the form of strong gig worker-employer relations (Mosley and Irvine, 2015).

Employees often take on difficult tasks at work, not because they want to be rewarded more, but because they want to be appreciated by their employer or other co-workers. This type of appreciation can motivate gig workers to improve in subsequent tasks by providing them with a sense of fulfilment of their expectations from their employer (Epitropaki, 2013). Therefore, receiving appreciation will increase the gig worker's motivation to put in personal effort to positively maintain the employer-employee relationship. Obviously, it should be noted that this benefit will only accrue to the organisation if it employs the employee under further contracts.

Conclusion 5. Appreciation of gig workers' work will only positively influence the implementation of the PC in situations of regular cooperation organisation with the employee in subsequent assignments.

3.5. Conclusions

New and more complex forms of work organisation have affected existing understandings of the employment relationship, and in particular the new emerging nature of PCs. The nature and structure of PCs have been studied for over four decades, but the appearance of new forms of PCs brings new opportunities as well as challenges for researchers. The purpose of this chapter was to outline the features that characterise the nature of gig workers and the formation of employment relationships.

Based on recent analysis, discussion and empirical research on the changing nature of gig worker output, a digital-based work organisation and psychological contracts, two main areas for future research can be identified: the specific form of the PC and the distributed nature and functioning of PCs repeatedly initiated by gig workers.

In the case of the arising new forms of psychological contracts, further research is warranted as there is little research on gig workers. Moreover, the few existing studies on gig workers' expectations and obligations bring more complexity to this relationship as they show that the assumption of a purely transactional character of these arrangements is not entirely true (Duggan et al., 2020). As such, qualitative research can provide additional insights into what gig workers expect from an employment relationship of this nature. In turn, quantitative research can also be useful to measure the extent to which gig workers establish and implement different types of PC such as transactional, relational or balanced contracts.

Regarding the distributed nature of the PC of gig workers, some implications can be found in the conceptual work of Knapp et al. (2020) and Sherman and Morley (2020). The conclusions of the theoretical considerations carried out generate proposals predicting the probability of gig workers establishing and fulfilling PCs of a specific nature with individuals, groups or organisations. Moreover, they propose that the specificities of gig workers' work such as autonomy, variety of work tasks, anonymity, working environment and work appreciation are central to this process.

Discussion about other non-standard forms of employment as examples of shaping workers' experiences in changing environments is continued in the next chapter.

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Chapter 4

AVAILABILITY OF NON-STANDARD FORMS OF EMPLOYMENT IN ENTERPRISES AND ITS IMPACT ON JOB SATISFACTION OF EMPLOYEES

Czesław Zając[a], **Grzegorz Przystarz**[b]

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4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed psychological contracts as some specific forms of employment for freelancers and other gig workers. Here, the main emphasis is put on the relation between non-standard forms of employment and individuals' satisfaction. It helps to analyse different organisational conditions in shaping employees' experiences regarding factors that influence their engagement. Under the present conditions of the labour market, the problems of 'commitment management' take up special significance, both in the theoretical and practical aspects of human resource management processes.

4.2. Forms of employment

The professional literature is strongly governed by the assumption shared by many authors that a full-time employment contract for an indefinite period of time is the most valuable form of employment. According to Brzeziński, the ostensible imbalance of employer-employee relations formed under the present conditions of the employee's market only serves to elevate the advantage of the latter (Brzeziński, 2017, pp. 517-529). While indefinite-term agreements of employment surely provide a number of benefits to both employees and employers, one should not assume that the principal aim of the employer is to create stable teams of employees, as for many enterprises (e.g. those with seasonal sales fluctuations), the demand for labour also varies over time.

[a] Wroclaw University of Economics and Business, ORCID: 0000-0003-2407-7232.
[b] Wroclaw University of Economics and Business.

In his references to civil law agreements, Wojciechowski adopted the term of 'junk contracts' which the authors of this article find unjustified, as many such contracts do provide ample benefits for both parties and do warrant the proper satisfaction of their interests (Wojciechowski, 2015, pp. 96-111).

For the purpose of this study, non-standard forms of employment are defined as the provision of work in a form other than the standard in-the-office full-time employment contract for an indefinite period of time (Selby, Wilson, Korte, Millard, and Carter, 2001, p. 3). Thus, the term 'non-standard forms of employment' is used interchangeably with that of 'flexible forms of employment'. The term 'employee' is used, *sensu largo,* to relate to a person providing work for an enterprise, regardless of the legal formula that defines this relation between the parties (Bąk-Grabowska, 2014, pp. 24-32).

It appears that the use of non-standard forms of employment should be dictated by the need to offer best overall benefits to both parties. In practical applications, this assumption is rarely met due to the great diversity of opposing interests between the two groups. Wages are one of the more obvious areas of opposing interests in this context; while the employer perceives them in terms of personnel cost (the cost function of wages), employees view them as earned income (the income function of wages). Employees do not reduce their demands regarding wages – they also strive to negotiate access to other benefits and services, as this is also in their best interest.

Non-standard forms of employment are designed to combat unemployment, reduce the payroll expenditures, provide mechanisms for peripheral employment and regulate fluctuations in labour demand and supply. While business practice provides reasons to believe that their application may sometimes be tainted, it must be noted that this type of instrument requires proper adjustment to the needs and requirements of all stakeholders of the work provision process.

The current emphasis on the idea of *flexicurity* carries strong associations with the deregulation of the labour market, on the one hand, and the provision of valuable social benefits for employees, on the other. As the name implies, the widely discussed *flexicurity* model represents an attempt at balancing the flexibility and security of employment. In this context, it may be useful to examine the wealth of benefits offered by non-standard forms of employment.

The subject literature mainly focuses on employer's benefits offered by flexible forms of employment. However, in many cases, non-standard employment provides benefits solely to the employee. For instance, art. 186^7 and art. 186^8 of the Labour Code clearly state that employees entitled to a parental/childrearing leave of absence may submit to their employer a request for a reduction of their working time (by not more than half the value), to which the employing party is required to concede. As a result, the said employee is formally protected from dismissal for a period of 12 months (*Kodeks pracy*, 2020, art. 186^7 and art. 186^8).

Bąk-Grabowska et al., stressed that flexibility of employment is defined by many dimensions and categories, such as ethics, lawfulness, satisfaction of interests (of both

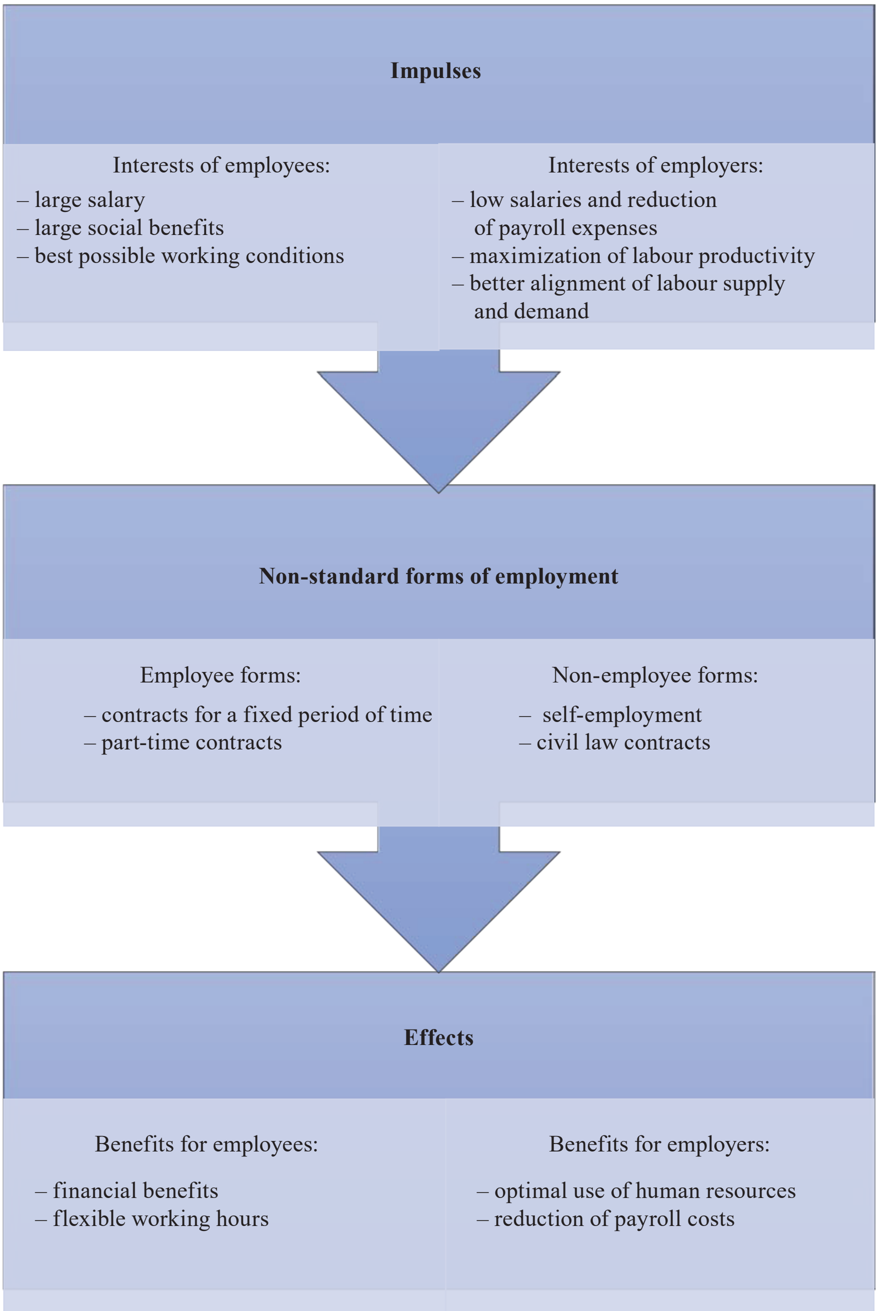

Figure 4.1. The role of non-standard forms of employment

Source: own study.

employees and employers) and the availability (and accessibility) of complementary forms of employment (Bąk-Grabowska, Cierniak-Emerych, Florczyk, and Zając, 2020, p. 19).

In order to support the management of human resources in the long-term perspective, employers need to take account of the social cost produced by the use of poorly construed forms of employment, as their maladjustment with the interests of employees may place a negative effect on their job satisfaction and productivity. In practice, it seems that flexibility of the labour market is much easier to achieve than the alleviation of the social effects produced by such attempts (Wiśniewski, 2018, pp. 269-278).

Thus, it may be assumed that the ideational rationale behind the use of non--standard forms of employment should be based on a proper balance between the benefits and interests of both parties. Impulses and motives, in the shape of expected future benefits, influence both employers and employees to pursue alternative forms of employment, since their optimal structure and utilisation may bring tangible advantages to all stakeholders of the process. Figure 4.1 presents a simplified diagram of this type of influence.

In the ideational approach, the use of non-standard forms of employment should form a 'blue ocean of the work provision process', tailored to the needs, and producing a number of benefits for both the employer (e.g. adjusting labour demand to sales fluctuations) and the employee (e.g. finding a better work-life balance). For the latter, employment is a source of many values, including an income required to support their families, and to pursue personal and vocational development goals, a sense of security and – importantly enough – job satisfaction. The main research question addressed in this chapter is expressed as follows: what is the impact of non-standard forms of employment upon job satisfaction of employees?

4.3. Job satisfaction and non-standard forms of employment

Job satisfaction is determined by a number of factors of economic and non-economic character. With regard to the latter, Bołtowicz and Jankowska emphasise the associations between satisfaction and passion. The findings of their study suggest that employees place great value on such work conditions that help them realise their duties with passion, enthusiasm and a sense of satisfaction. They also draw attention to the fact that employees performing their work with passion are decidedly less likely to change jobs or place of employment. At the same time, they are more productive, more loyal, and more responsible in their approach to work duties. In addition, this group was also found to be less prone to absenteeism (Bołtowicz and Jankowska, 2019, p. 105).

While some employees may place great value on job security and the various forms of protection and care received at their workplace, others may find satisfaction in such values as liberty to choose their own approach to tasks, greater independence and aversion to subservience. For the latter group, self-employment seems best suited to their needs, as this form of employment offers the best conditions for their independence, freedom, and job satisfaction. Professional publications emphasise an important trend related to job satisfaction in the self-employed group: in many cases, a high level of job satisfaction is only observed in the initial phase of employment, typically up to 12 months. The results of studies by Georgellis and Yusuf suggest a significant decrease in job satisfaction reported by those self-employed in the third and fourth year of their employment. This may suggest that the self-employment option is more suitable to those employees who seek short-term solutions (Georgellis and Yusuf, 2016, pp. 53-76).

Rogozińska-Pawełczyk provided evidence of a significant difference between job satisfaction levels reported by female and male workers. The findings show that women were more likely to report high (33.2%) and very high (12.6%) level of job satisfaction, compared to men (27.4% and 11.1%, respectively) (Rogozińska-Pawełczyk, 2018, p. 312).

Analyses of job satisfaction in the context of non-standard forms of employment are plentiful, but their conclusions are greatly varied. Many authors express their negative opinion on civil law contracts of employment in most radical terms, as evident in the term of 'junk contract' which has already managed to find its way into scientific discourse (Wojciechowski, 2015, pp. 98-111).

Other authors provide evidence in support of the view that job satisfaction reported by employees is of a comparable level, regardless of their form of employment (standard contract, contract of mandate, project delivery contract). Those studies also emphasise the more pronounced role of job satisfaction in any human-organisation adjustments (Dobrowolska, 2015, p. 220). De Cuyper, Notelaers and De Witte found that levels of involvement and satisfaction were inversely proportional to job insecurity, with the highest insecurity reported by workers on temporary contracts. Workers on fixed-term agreements reported similar levels of job insecurity as those on indefinite-term agreements (De Cuyper, Notelaers, and De Witte, 2009, pp. 193-205). Hünefeld and Köper demonstrated that workers on temporary contracts are less prone to absenteeism. The authors suggest that two factors may be at play here: the desire to show good health before the employer, and the fact that this form of employment is favoured by younger generations which are naturally more resilient (Hünefeld and Köper, 2016, pp. 94-113).

From the material and economic perspective, workers on non-standard (flexible) forms of employment receive similar wages to those employed on standard terms holding similar positions; their material workplace environment is also on comparable levels (Bąk-Grabowska, 2017, p. 19).

Active attempts at producing optimal forms of employment to best satisfy the interests of employers and employees are observed in all parts of the world. Governments of many nations have modified their laws to offer a consensual solution to unemployment, discrimination and other social costs of the work provision process.

The present trends of deregulation and decreased state intervention in employment have the effect of stimulating the use of flexible forms of employment which, from the neo-classical economic perspective, are expected to improve the labour market situation and the effectiveness of market mechanisms. Another challenge for state legislators is to ensure a compromise between labour market liberalisation, and at the same time the protection of social rights and labour laws. The introduction of the *flexicurity* model in such countries as Denmark and the Netherlands has brought the expected outcome. The Netherlands were quick to adjust their *flexicurity* model to the crisis conditions in 2007-2009 by normalising the non-standard forms of employment, but also offering employers a wider margin for layoffs under the economic duress (Bekker and Mailand, 2019, pp. 142-155).

Similar solutions were also adopted outside the EU, for instance in Japan and South Korea. However, state interventionism in both countries proved insufficient to oppose the effects of the social disproportion between those employed on standard terms and those on flexible employment. The alleviation of the social and economic disparities brought about by the introduction of non-standard forms of employment is a problem addressed by many non-governmental organisations in both Japan and South Korea (Cooke and Jiang, 2017, p. 175). Buddelmeyer, McVicar and Wooden studied the correlation between job satisfaction and the use of non-standard forms of employment. Their findings suggest a notably lower level of satisfaction in the flexible employment population, but the force of these effects was relatively low and strongly dependent on the form of such employment (Buddelmeyer, McVicar, and Wooden, 2015, pp. 256-275). The authors also suggest that the freedom to choose between various forms of employment may have a positive effect on job satisfaction and raise this as a subject for future consideration.

Personnel recruitment processes are mainly in the hands of managers and HR specialists. Decisions on the use of non-standard forms of employment are made at the planning stage to establish the required volume and structure of employment, also with regard to macroeconomic factors. Under such circumstances, a specific form of employment may be defined as applicable for a given position and for any given period. However, with the increased number of employment forms available, and in view of the apparent similarities between them (also in terms of benefits offered), two or more forms of employment may be found applicable for any given position. This offers the premise for presenting candidates with the freedom to make their informed choice in this respect. According to Kędziorski, freedom of choice, even in limited-selection scenarios, provides participants with a sense of freedom and active involvement in matters regarding their future, as well as greater responsibility for their choice of action. The problems of freedom and free will, defined as the authority to decide between at least two available options, have been a subject of debate for many centuries (Kędziorski, 2022, p. 121).

Despite the wealth of benefits offered by non-standard forms of employment, particularly the prospects of a better work-life balance, greater freedom, and better conditions to reconcile vocational and childcare duties of employees, many companies fail to provide candidates with an option to choose their preferred form of employment at the recruitment phase. As pointed out by Mazurkiewicz in his studies of Central Statistical Office reports, 80% of persons employed on civil law contracts reported having had no choice in this matter during the recruitment phase; for the self-employed, the reported percentage was lower and amounted to 50% (Mazurkiewicz, 2016, p. 37).

4.4. Method

In 2021, the authors conducted an empirical study of flexible forms of employment offered by selected companies located in various regions of Poland. Among other procedures, the study included detailed analyses of ten case studies of companies offering flexible forms of employment. The choice of companies for this part of the study was determined on the basis of their geographical location, company size, and segment of operation. Each of the ten companies under examination had been active on the market for more than 20 years. The research placed attention on small companies reporting seasonal variability of their sales volume (variable labour demand). The examined companies employed a combined total of 133 employees, of which 71 were employed on standard terms (indefinite-term contracts), 44 on trial period contracts or fixed-term contracts, 4 on a part-time basis, 1 on self-employment, 1 on an agency work contract, 8 on contracts of mandate, 3 on project delivery contracts, and 1 on the non-registered form of employment.

The data collection phase was accompanied by analyses of documents provided by entities under examination, complete with focused interviews with the owners (typically as acting managers) and with the employees. Before an interview, each participant was duly informed on the subject (namely: flexible forms of employment) and provided with a definition of the term (namely: provision of work in a form other than the standard in-the-office full-time employment contract for an indefinite period of time. The respondents were also presented with examples of such non-standard forms of employment adopted in Poland.

The respondents (both managers and employees) were also asked whether any alternative forms of employment had been offered over the course of the recruitment process. Accordingly, the responses from the two groups were used as a measure of their statements' veracity. Four (4) of the interviewed owners declared that their employees had been presented with a choice of the forms of employment at recruitment, but staff interviews revealed this to be true only for three (3) of those entities. For the remaining six companies, both the owners and the employees admitted that a specific form of employment was imposed on each staff member at recruitment.

The tool used in the empirical research conducted by the authors, was a categorised questionnaire, which provided the framework for focused interviews with the 146 respondents, who were owners, acting managers and employees of ten market garden centres in Poland.

A segment of questions included in the structured survey addressed the issue of job satisfaction in relation to their selected (or imposed) form of employment. The respondents were asked to assess their job satisfaction and their contentment with the choice of forms of employment offered by their employer, with their evaluations expressed on a 5-point Likert scale (1 – very good, 2 – good, 3 – average, 4 – poor, 5 – very poor).

4.5. Results of case study analyses

For those entities where a choice of a form of employment was presented to candidates at recruitment, job satisfaction and contentment in the choice of employment forms were both reported as very good or good, with only one respondent reporting 'average' in both categories. It must be remembered, however, that in each of the three entities where a choice of forms of employment was confirmed, the share of 'non-standard' employees was close to 50%. Admittedly, no generalised conclusions can be derived from the evaluation of job satisfaction in the three companies which happened to offer a narrow selection of forms of employment to their candidates.

For the seven entities where the candidates were offered no choice of employment form (the only real choice they had was to accept or reject the offer), job satisfaction was most often reported as 'average' (followed by good/bad, with an occasional 'very good' or 'very bad'). A similar structure of responses was observed in relation to their contentment with the choice of forms of employment offered at their workplace. None of the responses in this category contained the 'very poor' mark.

It may also be useful to observe that – in each of the entities under examination – the wages of the non-standard employees were at a level comparable to that of employees on standard contracts of employment. Each of the respondents performed their work duties at the office. Wage differences were found to be related to other determinants, such as knowledge and skills, seniority, competences, work duration, work commitment and suitability for the role.

Asked for an evaluation of their access to knowledge on non-standard forms of employment, the respondents typically described it as 'good' or 'very good'. At the same time, they were usually adamant that both the awareness and knowledge on non-standard forms of employment was poor among both employees and employers. The recognition of different forms of employment included: contracts of mandate, project delivery contracts, part-time employment, trial period contracts, fixed-term contracts, and self-employment. Similar results were obtained by Mazurkiewicz in her quantitative study of knowledge of non-standard forms of employment, with 44% of respondents declaring good knowledge, and 56% – very good knowledge of part-time forms of employment. Moreover, 51% declared at least a good knowledge of civil law contracts. Recognition of the more advanced forms, such as job-sharing and job-rotation, was poor, and 70% admitted to never having heard of such forms (Mazurkiewicz, 2016, p. 41).

Analyses of the findings suggest that both the availability of flexible forms of employment at recruitment and the prospect of active involvement in the formulation of future conditions of employment do have an observable positive effect on job satisfaction of employees. They also provide arguments confirming the statement that the provision of choice between various forms of employment at recruitment, and the proper adjustment of such forms to candidates' needs, will have a positive and measurable effect upon their job satisfaction.

4.6. Conclusions

The findings obtained from the qualitative empirical case studies should only be interpreted as a contribution to a detailed exploration of the nature of the correlations between the provision of freedom to candidates to choose their preferred form of employment at recruitment, and their later job satisfaction and contentment with the choice of forms of employment offered. To obtain a broader outlook on the subject at hand, the above findings should be complemented by the results of quantitative studies, to allow for a proper representation of other factors, such as the age and gender of the employees, and the size and sectoral variance of the employing entities.

It is the intent of the authors of this study to present these findings as a matter for consideration to anyone involved in the practical realisation of recruitment processes, to help them explore candidates' preferences and thus gain a better understanding of their 'prime movers' of job satisfaction. The findings may also stimulate managers to adjust the availability and choice of non-standard forms of employment to suit better the needs of their personnel and the interests of the employing entity. In addition, they provide further rationale for the broader use of the *flexicurity* model as part of business practices in Polish companies, as its utility has been proven based on successful implementations in Denmark, the Netherlands, and other countries. The effectiveness of activities promoting the use of non-standard forms of employment is largely dependent on the level of public knowledge of this subject. The forms of employment on offer by companies should be adjusted not only to the requirements of the sector, the employees and the employing entity, but also to a wealth of other factors, e.g. the regional unemployment statistics, as this approach offers tangible benefits to the state budget as such (Durczak, 2016, p. 11). The practical realisation of the above postulates may be difficult, as it requires a sufficient level of public knowledge and reliable information on the nature and application of non-standard forms of employment, sufficient knowledge of the labour code, and clear interest from employers in the effective application of such forms. It may also be useful to note that non-standard forms of employment are usually under more careful scrutiny from the control authorities. Thus, education with respect to flexible forms of employment should be targeted to all stakeholders of the work provision process:

employees, employers, and control authorities alike. As evidenced by the results of empirical studies and findings published by other authors on this subject, it may be noted that, while the respondents generally declare a very good knowledge of non-standard forms of employment, their awareness applies to a narrow selection of instruments from the expanding spectrum of solutions available to companies for the practical application under the present economic conditions (Mazurkiewicz, 2016, pp. 46-47).

Job engagement and satisfaction are not only created by forms of employment, but are also closely related to the organisational culture and climate, as well as HR management activities. This shifts considerations to assessing the effectiveness of human resources services. The next chapter considers the idea of personnel controlling, and the way it is perceived by HR professionals. It may help readers widen the perspective of shaping employees' experiences by analysing their attitudes, worries, and also sources of their dissatisfaction.

Chapter 5

EXPERIENCING PERSONNEL CONTROLLING BY HR EMPLOYEES – PRELIMINARY RESEARCH RESULTS

Małgorzata Striker[a], **Lena Grzesiak**[b]

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5.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present and discuss research results related to HR employees' experience with personnel controlling. The theoretical part of the chapter is based on the analysis of literature pertaining to personnel controlling and industry reports on HRM practice.

Industry reports on the HR function reveal a visible increase of the importance of personnel information and of the analytics conducted based on gathered data (e.g. Deloitte, 2021); they underline the importance of collecting and reporting it and point out the necessity of subjecting HRM actions to analysis. One can get the impression that when authors of these reports mention data analytics in HR, they are in fact referring to personnel controlling[1] (e.g. PwC, 2017); in more recent reports, controlling is assumed to be something "obvious in an organisation", especially if one considers that they often contain expressions typically used in the domain of controlling, such as: "return on investment", "costs of labour", "statistical data", "budget" and "analysis of HR risk". In view of all this, how does personnel controlling work in the contemporary practice of HRM? Is it used by HR employees and if so, to what extent?

As a result, this literature study contains only reviewed publications by Polish researchers, in whatever language they were published.

Personnel controlling and systems of managerial information within organisations are difficult to access for external researchers. Employers consider information related to these areas as sensitive and, as such, rules of business confidentiality apply. In view of this restricted access to information on the reality of personnel controlling,

[a] University of Lodz, ORCID: 0000-0002-3631-1826.

[b] University of Lodz, ORCID: 0000-0001-5078-1675.

[1] Although in the reports that were analysed, the notion "controlling" does not appear even once.

the research was directed more towards how it is experienced. Consequently, it was not specific solutions put in place in organisations that the research centred upon, but rather focused on how personnel controlling is experienced within the professional activity of HR specialists.

5.2. Personnel controlling

Personnel controlling is discussed both in publications pertaining to accounting and to HRM. In the literature, it is presented either as a functional variation of controlling, with features of general controlling being preserved, or as one of the personnel functions (e.g. Kowalczyk, 2015, p. 290; Nowak, 2015, p. 17; Zając, n.d., p. 139).

Since the early 1990s, the term ’controlling’ and its understanding have varied among different members of scientific circles in the domain of accounting. Polish scientists in the field of accounting were very often inconsistent in terms of how they perceived the nature of controlling and the extent of it, the same as with its relation with managerial accounting (MA). Initially, on the basis of German literature, controlling had a narrow definition and was limited to the account of costs, budgeting and reporting. With time, the scope of controlling became wider and started to include planning and managerial control, until it finally embraced the whole coordination of the managerial system, including planning, control, informing, organisational structure, human resources and motivation systems (Szychta and Dobroszek, 2017, pp. 365-367). In the accounting literature, there is a certain terminological chaos, as some researchers understand controlling as nothing else than managerial accounting, others as the process of coordination and control, as a management system without or with a small involvement of managerial accounting and the remaining group of respondents perceive it as the same as managerial accounting and managerial control (Szychta and Dobroszek, 2017, p. 376). Sobańska (2003, pp. 51-52) points out that personnel controlling, together with production controlling, marketing etc., is a part of operational controlling (composed of the account of costs and ratio analyses).

In HRM literature, the reviews published so far and related to different aspects of personnel controlling are mainly theoretical and general in nature. The article by Pocztowski (1994) was one of the first to make the connection between controlling and human resources – already in its title. Earlier scientific texts relating to this area focused more on the costs of labour (Górka and Chomątowski, 1974; Sudoł, 1967).

Personnel controlling lacks a clear, unambiguous definition (Kuźniarska, 2019, p. 37). The definitions that are cited most often are those formulated by Pocztowski and Purgał-Popiela (2004), as well as Bernais and Ingram (2005, p. 15). However, the authors usually do not explicitly refer to definitions of personnel controlling, instead they describe it by focusing on its features (cf. Pocztowski and Purgał-Popiela, 2004, pp. 178-189), on the benefits that it yields and the function that it fulfils (cf. Foremna-Pilarska, 2017, p. 146; Zając, 2008, p. 113). Selected definitions of personnel controlling are presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1. Selected definitions of personnel controlling

No.	Authors	Definitions
1	Bernais and Ingram (2005, p. 15)	Personnel controlling is an internal system of monitoring, analysing, assessing and decision-making helping to achieve objectives in the respective areas of human resources management within an organisation
2	Pocztowski and Purgał-Popiela, (2004, p. 180, as quoted in: Nesterak et al., p. 21)	Personnel controlling – (…) is an internal system of steering the processes that delivers value to stakeholders in the area of the personnel function; at the same time it is a tool that helps to measure the share/contribution of this function to the final economic result of the company
3	Nowak (2015, p. 22)	The role of personnel controlling would then be to provide required information with the aim of supporting human resources management, and to submit proposals that can be used by personnel managers
4	Foremna-Pilarska (2017, p. 146)	The area of action [of personnel controlling] extends over the entire organisation including human resources and the broadly understood effectiveness of using human potential constitutes its field of action. Functionality of personnel controlling in this area is expressed by fulfilling informational function of controlling within the management process
5	Zając (2008, p. 113)	Personnel controlling fulfills two main roles in the company: the informational function consisting in gathering, processing and preparing information necessary for making decisions related to personnel, as well as steering function which consists in coordinating plans and other personnel-related projects and exercising constant control over them
6	Kowalczyk (2006, p. 241)	Personnel controlling is an integral part of organisational control. Controlling is a system of management that helps to coordinate processes of planning, control and informational input (…); a supra-funtional management tool, which should support managers in making decisions; the aim of controlling is to supervise areas of activity of the company and undertake corrective actions

Source: own work based on literature references included in the table.

Having analysed Polish publications related to personnel controlling, it was concluded that there are relatively few articles devoted to the subject, and that most of them are theoretical and quantitative types of research.

5.3. Method

The aim of the undertaken empirical studies was to examine HR employees' experience with personnel controlling. In order to fulfil the objective of the study, the authors performed content analysis of statements provided by HR employees with relation to their experience with personnel controlling.

Due to the limited access to rational information on the functioning of personnel controlling, the authors had to look for another source of data that would allow to realise the adopted goal of the research from a different perspective. The research approach was based on the principles of Epstein's Cognitive Experimental Self Theory (CEST). According to this theory, every human being creates their own theory of reality. Humans process information in two systems: rational and experimental. The rational system consists in encoding reality based on verifiable information, it is reflective, thoughtful, analytical, conscious, based on identified causal relationships; the experimental system is impulsive, intuitive, rapid, associative and holistic. In comparison to the rational system, it is more 'immature', and judges and reacts to the environment faster and in a more superficial way. It is shaped by meaningful emotional experiences from the past, and associative connections are more important here than cause-effect relationships. It encodes the reality by way of images, metaphors and stories. Under its influence, a person gets "carried away" by emotions (Pracka, 2012, pp. 48-49).

In the context of the adopted principles, for the purposes of this research, experience is understood differently than in competence theories. As pointed out by Oleksyn (2010, p. 65), experience is understood as every event lived by a given person, as knowledge gained as a result of participating in such an event or the entire sum of knowledge thus gathered. From the perspective of competence management, only realistic experiences matter, therefore all subjective and unverifiable representations created by the employees and considered by them as their personal experiences are excluded. In this study, however, the authors focused on the latter aspect of experience.

Another principle that was adopted is that all aspects of human experience and human activity are socially constructed; what structures the experience is narration (Grzegorek, 2003; p. 211, Pracka, 2012, p. 49). By way of narrative action, a person is able to seize and classify their own experience (Bartosz and Żurko, 2014, pp. 21-22; Kulas, 2014, p. 115). Discourse or narrative analysis is therefore one of the research methods used in studying experience.

In this study, data related to subjects' experience were collected in the form of a spontaneous discourse provided by HR employees. Invitations to the on-line survey were sent out to 243 HR employees. They contained a link redirecting to an anonymous Google questionnaire and were distributed via LinkedIn, a professional social network. The position of the subjects who received the invitation was determined based on their LinkedIn profiles.

First of all, the survey contained three questions aimed at capturing certain features of the respondents (ownership sector of the organisation, gender, position within the HR department); there was also one question verifying whether their organisation had a controlling function or not. The research section of the questionnaire consisted of a single sentence starting with the following wording: "My experiences of HR controlling/controlling are…" and the respondents were asked to complete it. The opening phrase was deliberately short so that the respondents could recount their experiences with personnel controlling and how they felt about it without becoming influenced by any suggestions or expectations of the researcher, which otherwise might have biased their opinion. The respondents were also encouraged to write freely about as many topics and aspects of their cooperation with personnel controllers as they wished (the answers ranged in length from 1 to 25 sentences).

The respondent's characteristics (their gender, position within the HR department, ownership sector of the organisation and presence of controlling function) are summarised in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2. Respondents' characteristics

Sector	Private firm	61
	Public sector organisation	6
Gender	Female	35
	Male	32
Position	HR employee	41
	HR manager	26
Controlling function	Yes	60
	No	7

Source: own work.

Out of the 243 respondents approached, 67 returned completed questionnaires. The answers were analysed in accordance with the recommendations outlined in the literature (e.g. Babbie, 2005; Bengtsson, 2016; Neuendorf, 2002; Silverman, 2007).

5.4. Results

The analysis of 46 complete statements enabled the authors to classify them into three groups: narratives that were predominantly negative (10), narratives that were described as: positive expectation towards controlling – bad experience (20), and narratives of a positive or neutral character (16). They reveal that personnel controlling can trigger both positive and negative emotions (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3. Excerpts of positive and negative statements about controlling

Statements about controlling	
positive	**negative**
Great tool	Don't like them
Inspiration	They mistreat others
Beauty of analytics	They make things difficult
Cool	That's awful
Interesting area	Stress
Useful	Nightmare
Love it	Black PR
Fascinating	Hate it

Source: own work.

The narratives contained several recurring motifs: a negative assessment of the term controlling, controlling perceived as equal to control, relations with accounting, and opportunity to increase the importance of HRM in organisations; 14 subjects reacted negatively to the term "controlling" in their feedback. The majority felt that the word "controlling" was inadequate to the meaning of this term, and in their opinion, "HR analytics" or "HR measurement" would be more suitable. Excerpts of the statements are presented in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4. Respondents' opinions about the term "controlling/personnel controlling"

Statement
"Personnel controlling… Not a lucky name for it, but the tool is OK?" (man, executive HR function, private sector organisation, yes)
"HR controlling is useful, in order to sell it, maybe not necessarily under this name, but as HR measurements or HR analytics would be all right" (man, managing HR function, private sector organisation, yes)
"In general the name as such was misleading" (woman, executive HR function, private sector organisation, yes)
"For me it is important to use "controlling" in a reasonable way. Intentionally – in brackets – because for me the name controlling obliterates the beauty of the analytics, of this system of information, this…" (woman, managing HR function, private sector organisation, yes)

Source: own work.

Ten respondents referred to the association between controlling and control in their answers. On the one hand, some subjects explicitly suggested that control and controlling are the same, on the other hand – relating to control in the name triggers negative emotions and unwillingness towards controlling. Excerpts of the statements are presented in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5. Excerpts of statements related to control

Statement
"Controlling – do we have to derive names for everything from control? (…) It is because I don't want that this analytical controlling be associated with control" (woman, managing HR function, private sector organisation, yes)
"I think that the controlling thing is unnecessary. What's the use of having two controllers in the company, if they do not help, but make things difficult instead. They excessively control people and not the processes. They create obstacles and do not support. As an associate HR managerial function in HR I do not see their usefulness for HR. As an MBA graduate, I know how it should look like and how it does not" (man, managing HR function, private sector organisation, yes)

Source: own work.

In their feedback, the respondents also referred to some specific features of the controllers' attitude and character. The problem was raised in 14 narratives. The subjects often provided facts and described how the cooperation between controllers and HR really looked like in practice – it was negatively assessed by the majority. Controllers were described as weird, tenacious, peculiar individuals, often convinced of their own infallibility and excessively focused on finance/accounting in their work. The respondents criticised them not only for excessive control of work time but also for their blind faith in KPIs and the culture of excessive devotion to ratios. According to the respondents, controllers looked for irregularities mostly and persistently in employees (as opposed to processes) – they used their job instrumentally (Table 5.6).

Table 5.6. Excerpts of respondents' statements on the specificity of controllers

Statement
"No, I don't like them. It is a bit of a controlling-trolling. I mean that they always want information, which doesn't lead anywhere really" (man, executive HR function, private sector organisation, yes)
"Personnel controlling should help in human management. In practice, it is more of a … maltreatment" (man, executive HR function, private sector organisation, yes)
"Controllers approach things too much, I would say, from accounting, finance perspective, they produce analyses that do not lead to anything really" (woman, managing HR function, private sector organisation, yes)
"I am not sure if I can say that, but I would say it this way: controllers maltreat HR" (woman, executive HR function, private sector organisation, yes)
"They treated everyone from above, accounting treated like a god. Uhhh… finance, accounting, that's most important in every organisation, and people supposedly not?" (man, executive HR function, private sector organisation, yes)

Source: own work.

The respondents felt the need to cooperate with a personnel controller. All the more painful was the fact that, in organisations, personnel controlling was not perceived as a tool to improve the personnel function and the benefits of using it in HR remained unnoticed. According to our respondents, controlling was used in all other areas of functioning, except for the personnel function, and even if there were some analyses carried out for HR, the effects of the controller's work were still useless/did not bring any added value to HR employees, or even remained out of their reach. The respondents regretted that the HR function was treated marginally and stereotypically by controlling; they judged actions undertaken by personnel controllers in the context of the personnel function as insufficient. At the same time, they pointed out that it was a tool that they needed, that it could strenghten the HRM position, and help them become a partner in business decisions-making processes within the organisation (Table 5.7).

Table 5.7. Excerpts of respondents' statements about personnel controlling as an opportunity for greater importance and development of the personnel function within organisations

Statement
"Controlling, analytics, indices – this is what is missing in contemporary HR" (man, managing HR function, private sector organisation, yes)
"Personnel controlling does not meet my expectations. I dream of those who, with the use of their magical tables, numbers, spreadsheets, could advise on how to make employees feel comfortable. (…) Our HR department does not receive the results of analyses carried out by controllers. Don't we deserve that? It seems that it is their strategy to omit us, the HR" (woman, executive HR employee, private sector organisation, yes)
"Personnel controlling should serve HRM and I wouldn't say that it is how it works in our company. They are a bit like gods, omnipotent, omniscient, accounting-centred, they control and punish us rather than support. Oh dear, it is not all right" (man, executive HR employee, private sector organisation, yes)
"Yeeeees, personnel controlling! I love it, I am fascinated by it, but… in our country it is a disaster, I have experience from the West where analyses in HR are as natural as salary payment. Here, accountants have made a black PR. They want it all for themselves, they are experts in everything. Seriously?" (man, managing HR function, private sector organisation, yes)
"Why in our country HR are not treated "seriously"? Because there is no correct, good, effective HR analytics/HR controlling, obviously without information you will not make a decision – why does nobody understand that. Controllers approach things too much, I would say, from accounting, finance perspective, they produce analyses that do not lead to anything really" (woman, managing HR function, private sector organisation, yes)
"I am fighting to obtain funding for controlling for HR. I am told, repeatedly, that HR does not need that" (man, executive HR employee, private sector organisation, yes)
"What I love most about controlling is that, seriously, if you want – this is a tool that can make HR more efficient" (woman, executive HR employee, private sector organisation, yes)

Source: own work.

5.5. Discussion and conclusions

The research results shed some light on the way personnel controlling is experienced by HR employees, in organisations belonging to the private and public sector. Statements related to the positive expectations of HR employees with regard to controlling were predominant but, at the same time, the negative experiences, in practice were consistently stressed. In the group of respondents, there were also subjects whose statements were exclusively positive or totally negative in their nature. Several recurring threads of thought were identified in the analysed narratives: the negative assessment of the term "controlling", controlling being identified with control, its interconnections with accounting, the chance of strengthening the HRM position within organisations. They prove that, in practice, personnel controlling falls into finance departments, and is perceived to be the same as managerial accounting. The name controlling unambiguously directs attention to the aspect of control which triggers a lot of controversy and negative emotions. For these reasons, some respondents suggested that the name should be changed. Interestingly enough, in multiple feedbacks, it was pointed out that the HR department was omitted in the functioning of personnel controlling, even though the respondents counted on it as a chance to elevate the prestige and importance of the personnel function and to get included in business and strategic discussions with other departments in the organisation. The problems revealed in this study may serve as a starting point for more in-depth research in these areas.

The limitations of this study are caused mainly by research methodology and the pooling of respondents. The research is not representative and the respondents' opinions cannot be extrapolated as typical for HR employees, especially as these were subjective views of the respondents. It is also worth noting that the studies carried out via the Internet made it impossible for the researchers to make sure that the questions were understood correctly (see Babbie, 2005, p. 367). Possible errors in their interpretation can distort the conclusions of the research. Additionally, there is the possibility of the respondents' memory being mistaken.

This chapter ends the first thread of the book related to studies focused on individual and organisational perspectives on shaping employees' experiences and moves considerations into an international perspective. The following four chapters present different aspects of shaping employees' experiences regarding different cultures, nations and societies.

Chapter 6

OCCUPATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF POLISH MIGRANTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC WITH PARTICULAR FOCUS ON REMOTE WORK

Olga Czeranowska[a]

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6.1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the labour market in most countries in an unprecedented way. Apart from the macroeconomic consequences of pandemic-related restrictions and lockdowns, the everyday working lives of workers were changed. Moreover, the pandemic has accelerated some technological changes and the popularisation of remote work. This chapter focuses on migrants as a group in a unique situation in the labour market in general, and again goes back to the pandemic topic, which is a massive source of change in the job market.

6.2. Pandemic and careers

As a 'naturally mobile subpopulation', migrants were also particularly affected by the pandemic-related forced immobility. However, they were also the groups that were especially likely to have some skills and experience with remote work and new communication technologies before the pandemic.

Apart from other, even more drastic consequences, the pandemic has changed the labour market landscape, accelerating the phenomena that started even before 2020 but also creating new ones. The practice of remote e-working has been known since the 1970s, frequently under other names (e.g. telecommuting – Nilles, 1975). Remote e-working is a broad term for "work being completed anywhere and at any time regardless of location and to the widening use of technology to aid flexible working practices" (Grant, Wallace, and Spurgeon, 2013, p. 3).

[a] SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities Warsaw, ORCID: 0000-0002-3516-1563.

Before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was a visible, albeit relatively marginal phenomenon (e.g. in Eurofund's and ILO's reports presented in 2015, around 3% of the employees were working most of the time remotely, and a further 10% working remotely occasionally). Google Consumer Surveys (GCS) in April and May 2020 showed that in the USA approximately a third of respondents had shifted to working remotely. Additionally, about one in every ten respondents have been furloughed or laid off (Brynjolfsson et al., 2020).

In their meta-analysis of 63 studies conducted before the pandemic, Charalampous et al. (Charalampous, Grant, Tramontano, and Michailidis, 2019, p. 19) argued that although the results on the remote e-work effects on employee's well-being are mixed, "there is still a greater consensus towards a beneficial impact of this working arrangement"). Moreover, in Dubey's and Tripathi's (2020) sentiment analysis of Twitter discourse regarding work from home, positive sentiment prevailed, with trust and anticipation being the most frequent emotions connected with the concept of working from home.

6.3. Migrants and pandemic

Social research regarding the effects of the pandemic on migrants' lives seems to be primarily focused on refugees and other groups of migrants in vulnerable positions, for whom the pandemic posed an additional, extreme threat (Alemi, Stempel, Siddiq, and Kim, 2020; Buheji, Mavrić, Beka, and Yein 2020; Falkenhain et al., 2020; Kassem, 2020). Yet, the pandemic was also a life-changing experience (albeit mostly in less life-threatening ways) for intra-Global North migrants, including their occupational lives.

Similarly, as in the case of the 'stayers' population, migrants' pandemic work experience was mediated by their occupational position (the sector they worked in, the position in the organisational hierarchy). In the case of migrants (and other vulnerable groups), the pandemic may have resulted in increased chances of discrimination (including labour market discrimination), as the crisis situation enhances hostile intergroup rivalry for various resources (Campbell, 1965; Sherif, 1954; Stephan, Ybarra, Martinez, Schwarzwald, and Tur-Kaspa, 1998; Tajfel and Turner, 1979). The authors of the International Labour Organization report noted that: "epidemics and economic crises can have a disproportionate impact on certain segments of the population, which can trigger worsening inequality" (ILO, 2020, p. 6). Moreover, some of the sectors of the economy most affected by the pandemic-related restrictions, such as hospitality and gastronomy, are also sectors that many migrants work in.

On the other hand, migrants as the "naturally mobile population" may have gained some skills needed for remote work even before the pandemic (because they used those skills to keep in contact with the home country – both in the private and occupational sphere).

6.4. Method

Using data from project (IT) entitled “Mobility: immobility of the mobile, mobility of the immobile – migrants in the times of pandemics and new information/communication technologies”[1], the author analysed the occupational lives of Polish migrants during the pandemic, and looked at various ways the pandemic and resulting restrictions had affected migrant’s careers. The study focused on the enforced (by the pandemic-related restrictions) immobility and virtual mobilities that were part in the “mobility energy”. In addition, the author also took into consideration the change in migrants’ occupational lives connected with the COVID-19 pandemic, with a particular focus on remote work.

The project’s qualitative component used the methodology of In-depth interviews (IDIs) based on the interview scenario consisting of blocks regarding the pandemic and the enforced immobility, the effects of the pandemic on the Interviewees’ occupational lives and their mobility plans and intentions. For three questions, show cards were used in order to help the interviewees structure their answers. As they were living in different countries, the interviews were conducted with an online conferencing tool (Google Meet). They were conducted in Polish, recorded and then transcribed.

This paper presents the findings regarding the various effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the migrants’ occupational lives. The study focused especially on the remote work – positive and negative experiences connected with it, as well as migrants’ strategies and preferences.

The sample consisted of 30 individuals born in Poland who were living abroad during the study. The interviewees were living in nine different countries, mainly in Europe. With the UK being the most represented, their geographical distribution was similar to general trends regarding Polish emigration.

The sample was balanced in terms of gender, consisting of 15 men and 15 women. The interviewee’s age ranged from 24 to 62, with a sample mean of 34 years old. As for educational attainment, over half of the sample had a higher education diploma (14 MA, 3 BA). In addition, six interviewees had completed general secondary education, five had a vocational education diploma, and one did not have a secondary education.

At the time of the interview, most respondents were employed, with two individuals running their own businesses and three being economically inactive and receiving social assistance. In addition, three of the Interviewees were furloughed, and one was still in education (PhD studies).

[1] The project was financed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in Poland under the 2019-2022 programme ”Regional Initiative of Excellence”, project number 012/RID /2018/19, amount of funding PLN 11 985 347.00.

6.5. Results

Pandemic and migrants' careers

The COVID-19 pandemic had very diversified effects on migrant's occupational lives, depending on their situation before the start of 2020 and other situational factors. For some, the pandemic and various restrictions connected with it were obstacles on the road to occupational change.

"I wanted to change my job, but because of the pandemic, this is taking time, this job changing process (...) Moreover, I thought that, because we were in the pandemic and things may happen with the job, many people are working remotely, so [in my new job] I wouldn't have the possibility to learn from co-workers, be around them, ask questions, which is normal when you are new… and I didn't want that, to start a job, but without people around me." (Michał, M, 28, the Netherlands)

"I thought that I would stay in this job…, that this would be just a temporary job, just for a couple of months, and it turned out to be over half a year more. I was planning to start looking for a job consistent with my qualifications, but it turned out to be impossible." (Oliwia, F, 26, the Netherlands)

For some of the interviewees, their plans and ambitions blocked by the pandemic were connected with starting their own businesses. Those kinds of projects are intrinsically connected with higher risk, which is undoubtedly heightened by the pandemic and the general feeling of uncertainty. As a result, especially entrepreneurial projects of a more 'physical' character frequently needed to be postponed for the unspecified, post-pandemic era.

"When it comes to production, my business project is connected with engineering, production, it's just production of material goods, and it's teamwork, and some things just can't be done online, especially those where you need physical production processes, machines, equipment." (Antoni, M, 30, the UK)

Similarly as with the physical mobility being transformed into virtual mobility, for some of the interviewees, while the COVID-19 pandemic blocked some of the occupational changes and new projects, it also enabled them to develop their careers in other directions. For others, it was also time when they came up with new entrepreneurial ideas.

"What it [changed] was that I started [to focus] on my blog. I upload more pictures, I bought a lamp, I bought a new phone, it is in the middle price range, but what is important for me, it has a very good camera." (Przemek, M, 52, Germany)

"During the pandemic, I came up with this great idea; we want to start a diet catering and supplement shop. So you can say that the pandemic was not only… it hindered my work, but really, I could have started other things, it all depends on the person." (Nikodem, M, 26, Germany)

"So I took this leave at work, and I tried working freelance, without the office. In the next five years, I see myself not being so strongly tied to the location where I need to be, to be at work, more travelling, where I can work half a year from one place, half a year from another… Just travel around the world and be free." (Edward, M, 34, Portugal)

Generally, the effects of the pandemic were most substantial for the specialisations and labour market sectors which cannot be 'moved online' such as gastronomy.

"So my workplace was closed and has stayed closed since. It is challenging to serve clients online, and I was a cook. So it is what it is." (Robert, M, 34, the UK)

Yet, for other interviewees, the pandemic did not mean an interruption of their working lives. On the contrary, despite the pandemic, some kinds of services needed to be still available (such as health-related services and some administrative ones). However, new regulations regarding safety and hygiene were enforced, depending on the occupational sector and country (and also the phase of the pandemic in the particular country).

"In my occupation, I was working normally, or even more than normal, because people had more time than usual, they were staying home, so they were using our services more. I'm a dental assistant, so we have those hygiene procedures, those were made even stricter, so at work I feel the safest because I know that everything is sterile, we are very careful." (Sabina, F, 23, Germany)

"I think for eight weeks we were training only outdoors, which is unusual for gymnasts, it was a very interesting experience, but we had it all weather-wise, from snow to sun and thirty degrees, so that was interesting… and the important change for us was that we couldn't go to any competitions, which was all in all a big problem, because competitions are where everything important happens, and where you can see the results [in artistic gymnastics]." (Klara, F, 27, Norway)

Face masks have become an essential part of those workplace protocols. Although necessary to minimise the risk of virus transmission, those can be seen as uncomfortable and bothersome. The exact standard of the mask was also differentiated between country and occupational context.

"Yes, we were obligated to wear those FP2 masks, it is difficult to breathe in those, and for nine hours a day… and for the major procedures also those, I don't know how you call those in Polish, those plastic shields that cover your face." (Sabina, F, 23, Germany)

"We were cheating a bit with masks, but it was hot and a bit difficult to breathe. Unfortunately, it is a bit uncomfortable when you need to wear a mask for eight hours." (Mariusz, M, 29, Norway)

For some, the pandemic meant being furloughed. Depending on the legal regulations, an employee on furlough is receiving some compensation for the time when they cannot work because of the pandemic.

“For the last half a year, I’ve been on my company’s keep, on furlough they call it.” (Wojtek, M, 26, the UK)

“When they closed us up, I stayed here, you were probably going to ask me about this later, I stayed at home, but they [the company] are still paying me, in the beginning, they were paying me 60% of my salary, now after all this time they will pay me 80%, thank God they didn’t just fire me, which they could do, but they just pay me some money.” (Nikodem, M, 26, Germany)

“Since the beginning of September, I returned to work, and in the beginning, I was on so-called half-furlough, so I was working half of my normal hours. Then, in November, December and part of January, I was working full hours, and now, since the half of January I’m back on half-furlough, I’m only working afternoons.” (Julia, F, 33, the UK)

Finally, some individuals in the sample had lost their jobs because of the pandemic.

“I stayed without a job because of this pandemic, I lost my job. In April, shortly before Easter, I took some leave after Easter, I came back from my leave, it was a week and a half later, and I received notice of termination. So I was devastated, because I knew… with the pandemic, everywhere people getting fired, it is bad, I don’t have a job, what will be next, how long will this last.” (Kornelia, F, 26, Germany)

Working remotely

For those whose workplaces stayed open during the pandemic, but the work they performed was not ‘place-specific’, mobility restrictions may mean being moved to remote work or ‘home-office’. However, it is essential to remember that although remote work became popularised during the pandemic, some were already used to it before 2020.

“So this is kind of funny, because all those reactions, that you could have expected from lockdown, I had three months before lockdown, because I accidentally made a lockdown for myself, because I thought that I would be able to work from home, without going to cowork, so I was sitting all days alone at home working, from June to December.” (Edyta, F, 41, Portugal)

“It is partially because in those PR agencies I worked in before, it was never a problem to work remotely, so when I needed to stay home for a couple of days or anything like that, I was working remotely, so then I learned this work-life balance.” (Julia, F, 33, the UK)

"We were working 100% remotely, what is important is that my company was, so I heard, a pioneer and one of the very few companies in the Czech Republic that had home office [before the pandemic] (...) We were doing it before it was fashionable, so to say. When I started working here in 2016, it was normal for employees to come to the office once per week or once per two weeks" (Sandra, F, 28, the Czech Republic)

Among the interviewees who were working remotely at some point of the pandemic, some saw the positive aspects of this new situation. Working from home, they could focus better on work problems, as there were fewer distractions than in the office. Skipping the commute also means more free time for one's hobbies, and certain domestic chores can be performed 'in the background' of the workday.

"Sometimes I was expected to be present [in the office], but frequently, when I'm solving some problems, doing some calculations, I prefer to stay at home, do my calculations peacefully, than to go there [to the office], and every moment someone is disturbing me, asking me some questions. I was able to concentrate better at home, and I think this [working remotely] positively affected my work's quality." (Antoni, M, 30, the UK)

"And you have this freedom, that at any time you can get the laundry going, as for those more private tasks." (Michał, M, 28, the Netherlands)

"So in that regards it was better [working remotely], because I had more time for those hobbies than I would normally have, especially when you work remotely and you don't lose this one hour on commuting to the office." (Julia, F, 33, the UK)

Even those who were initially sceptical towards the idea of working outside the office, discovered that they have their social needs met in other ways and became content working from home.

"[Before the pandemic] I thought that only in the office, with other people, I can get what I need, that is, criticism and support, intellectual stimulation to get better at what I'm doing. However, now, when this pandemic forced me to do this kind of work [remote work], I noticed that I don't need to work in the office. If I have my friends around me, I can work from home and still feel alright." (Edward, M, 34, Portugal)

"I think it all went well and that I'm doing great [working remotely]. It [working remotely] did not have such a big negative impact on me. If anything, it was a positive surprise, I like working from home." (Ania, F, 39, Sweden).

Working remotely offers particular positives for migrants, who are able to visit Poland without using their leave.

"And when we started alternating a week in the office and a week from home, this gave me freedom, I'm able to work from Poland, and being in Poland and having afternoons free, being there I can meet people." (Michał, M, 28, the Netherlands)

"Theoretically, me and her [the partner] are both working remotely, but this remote work does not necessarily have to be in the same country, right? We can visit the family [in Poland], and while staying there still work and study." (Antoni, M, 30, the UK)

In the case of Ania, an academic, the team was even able to move the social aspect of the work in the office online by creating new 'online traditions'.

"Fika [Swedish tea/coffee break custom] is a very important thing, and since the lockdown started, we have fika online. It is scheduled every day, for example at 11 am and 3 pm we have fika, there is always a zoom link where you can join and drink coffee with your colleagues. If you want to, it's not obligatory. Everything has moved online, next week we have an after-work meeting so it will be like beer after work but on Zoom." (Ania, F, 39, Sweden)

Yet, others prefer to use the opportunity of going to the office at least for some days a week as they prefer it to staying at home.

"I am going to the office now, we have permission, and I am working from the company's building. Theoretically, we are meant to be in the home office, but if you want very much and you keep the safety measures… not many people are there, I'm going three times a week because, honestly, I'm sick of the home office." (Sandra, 29, the Czech Republic)

One significant negative effect of working from home that some of the interviewees noticed was the lack of clear boundary between work and private life. Although time-consuming, the commute provided this kind of 'buffer time' between the two.

*"*Because you don't have this commute, you don't have this time to turn off the 'work mode', my partner has this problem, he works full hours and has a pretty stressful job.*"* (Julia, F, 33, the UK)

Another problem is connected with the negative effect of remote work on communication in the workplace, which is especially important in the occupational contexts that depend on teamwork. Communication tools and technologies have been introduced to provide more constant and 'natural' communication, but some still prefer meetings and conversations that are not technology-mediated.

"The difficult part is that we work a lot together [in the team], and really not having someone next to you is already a problem. You can't just ask someone to come to your computer and see what you are doing, give you feedback, and so on. But we found a solution. We are on a permanent call on Slack or Discord, those calls are 5-6 hours. We just sit and talk all the time." (Edward, M, 34, Portugal)

"It is always nice to meet someone, always those meetings are better when I'm there [in the office], and I can show something. I work in a different language than Polish, so if I get stuck, they [co-workers] see it live, and they can give me a hint, and on Teams, you can't see anything, it is more complicated." (Sandra, 29, the Czech Republic)

"For sure, it is not easy to work out the communication, and it is a huge challenge to force people to learn, to encourage them to get accustomed to answering on this communicator, to tell [co-workers] when they are getting up to get coffee, because we are no longer sitting in the same room." (Edyta, F, 41, Portugal)

Although for at least some of the employees, staying in the office is the preferred mode of work, they should not be pressured to risk their own and other's health, especially in case of non-essential services, that can easily work remotely, as in the case of Julia, who is working in a graphic design agency.

"Despite the fact that we are a graphic design agency, it is difficult to think of the work where you less need to sit in the same room, we were forced, really forced, guilt-tripped to come to the office till practically the last day before Boris Johnson announced the lockdown at the end of March (...) they closed schools suddenly and kids had to stay at homes, and my colleagues from work who have small children were forced to take unpaid leave, despite that fact that before the pandemic they were allowed to work from home sometimes." (Julia, F, 33, the UK)

Starting to work remotely was connected with some investments and home improvements being made in order to create a home office that would be comfortable. In some instances, employers participated in those by buying and lending equipment.

"Yes, we bought two computer monitors, to be able to work from home. And that is all, all the rest we got from the company." (Marek, M, 41, the UK)

Another challenge was creating a structure and habits that would enable the interviewees to at least symbolically separate their work and private lives in order to maintain a work-life balance.

"We were trying to have a separate room for work, to work in a different room, which you can leave at five p.m. and go elsewhere. So we were trying to minimise this effect of mix-up [of private and work lives], when you work in the room, then finish work and stay in the same room, and really, in your head after some time of something like this, you never stop working, you are always tired." (Ania, F, 39, Sweden)

6.6. Conclusions

The pandemic had a different effect on Polish migrants' occupational lives, depending primarily on the person's occupational history and situation before the pandemic. One more general tendency was the 'slowdown' effect that the pandemic had on migrants' occupational lives – planned changes (e.g. job change, starting a company) were postponed until more stable times. However, some of the interviewees were inspired by the pandemic to start some new entrepreneurship or a new way of work.

The effect of the pandemic on the interviewees' working lives also greatly depended on the sector they were working in. Some branches of the economy have more probability of being 'moved online', while for others, it is impossible. Therefore, some interviewees were still working outside of the home during the pandemic, dealing with new rules and sanitary regulations. Others were furloughed or even lost their jobs.

For those with jobs that could be moved online, the pandemic frequently meant working from the home office. Interestingly, some of the interviewees had such experiences even beforehand, which gave them experience and knowledge they could use during lockdowns. Generally, one can see that migrants found some positive sides of working remotely, such as avoiding the commute, having more time and fewer distractions than in the office. The interpersonal dimension of work (being in contact with colleagues, teamwork), meant that some new technologies-solutions were applied to mitigate the loss of face-to-face contact partially. Additionally, blurring the boundary between work and private life was listed as one of the problems connected with working remotely.

The study showed that Polish migrants in international job markets experienced both the positive and negative effects of the changes related to the pandemic. In the following chapter, the opportunity to consider the opposite situation is discussed in terms of how immigrants who look for work in Poland experience the domestic job market.

Chapter 7

THE FACTORS THAT DETERMINE THE ORGANISATIONAL IDENTIFICATION OF FEMALE UKRAINIAN IMMIGRANTS WHO WORK IN POLAND

Anna Ścibior-Butrym[a]

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7.1. Introduction

Currently, managing human resources in Polish organisations seems to involve the ability to manage human capital that is diversified in many different aspects in extremely turbulent times. This diversity increasingly often refers to nationality and place of origin. Organisational identification is an important element that explains the behaviour and attitudes of the organisation members. Knowing the factors that determine organisational identification means obtaining an answer to questions concerning such aspects as the expectations, needs, motivations, and values of employees, as well as the question as to how they perceive the identity of the organisation in which they are employed. Such information is essential for understanding the mutual relation that influences the sense of belonging and loyalty and, in consequence, the involvement in work and the performance of employee teams. Therefore this chapter focuses on analysing the organisational conditions of female immigrants from Ukraine who work in Poland. Three areas of organisational identification were analysed: the feeling of being accepted, the consistency between individual and organisational identity, and the sense of loyalty of the respondents towards the organisation.

[a] University of Szczecin, Institute of Management, ORCID: 0000-0001-7756-6908.

7.2. Female immigrants from Ukraine working in Poland and their organisational identity

The issue of organisational identification combines the psychological and sociological perspectives with management sciences. To paraphrase the words of Adam Smith, Man cannot be a social creature without socialising with other humans. Thus, understanding the factors that determine human behaviour, which are formed in the process of comparing oneself to others, is the key to building relationships and mutually desirable behaviour.

To understand what organisational identification means, it is worth having a closer look at the issues of organisation, its identity, the identity of its members, and the relationships between them. An organisation is usually understood as a set of designed and interlinked positions. These positions and the relationships between them are segmented by means of formal entries in the records of the services and/or descriptions of work positions and the descriptions of organisational structures. Thus, due to this formalisation, an organisation seems to be a certain structure with fixed positions and relationships, e.g. of subordination or superiority, among these positions (Konecki, 2007, p. 7). A structure, which is based on formal and informal rules of action and conduct, is a metaphorical framework, or rather a skeleton structure on which the work of all the members of the organisation is based. An organisation is more than merely a business entity that produces goods and/or provides services; it is a specific product of collective actions of a set of individuals, with their own unique identity. The theory of self, which has its roots in symbolic interaction, shows humans as individuals who constantly compare themselves to their own representations of themselves and to the way in which others perceive them. J. H. Mead believed that the human has a self that influences our perception of social reality and what we see and, therefore, determines our behaviour. An individual has an opinion about themselves; they assess themselves, compare, communicate, and interact with themselves. Such ability to conduct a certain type of monologue allows humans to shape their actions, modify them, set and pursue goals that are important for them. Individual identity allows us to define "who I am" and "who I am not".

Thus, when accepting various social roles, as well as those related to functioning in an organisation, we classify, in a way, the characteristics that distinguish us from others or make us like them. The individual consciously identifies the differences between "I" and "not I". When this process occurs on the level of social identification, one may refer both to personal identity and social identity. "The social identity of a subject is thus such self-recognition that remains closely related to the knowledge of the subject about others; it is an image of the self that is linked to the possessed images of others" (Machaj, 2005, p. 50). The individual conducts a series of social comparisons, attributing various traits and values to the group with which he or she identifies or not, in this way creating the awareness of "us" and "not us". Individuals who identify with a social group are eager to glorify its actions, identifying with the whole group. This also applies to organisations.

The phenomenon of favouring one's own group and the twin phenomenon of the depreciation of other groups are explained by the theory of social identity (Tajfel and Turner 1986). It assumes that: (1) people tend to divide those they encounter into categories; (2) as far as social categories are concerned, one of them always refers to the own category of the subject (we), and the others identify other groups; and (3) belonging to highly regarded social groups is an important source of high self-esteem (Wojciszke, 2006, p. 74). According to Machaj (2005, p. 45), issues of social identity are social science's response to problems with which contemporary individuals are confronted while functioning in various collective arrangements (including on the labour market), but also to the actions of the social structures, such as the state, the nation, and religious communities. "Social identity theory provides the basis for organisational identification" (Karahan and Bozkurt, 2021, p. 30); if individual identity answers the question what we are like, then one may assume that the organisational identity will answer the question: what is the organisation like? The identity of organisations is defined in various ways. Budzyński stated that it is the sum of the elements that identify and distinguish the company from other enterprises, and that it is manifested in the individual nature of the company, in visual form (Kocoń, 2009, pp. 146-147).

Organisational identity may be analysed in two dimensions: internal and external. This is expressed in the more detailed concept of organisational identity presented by Balmer and Soenen, who identified and characterised five types of such identity: (1) actual identity – based on commonly known attributes of the organisation, i.e. the form of ownership, management style, organisational structure, type of activity, target markets, quality of products, the system of values of all members of the organisation; (2) transferred identity, which is revealed in formal and informal communication; (3) perceived identity that is a part of the identity that refers to its noticeable manifestations, i.e. the image, reputation, and brand identity; (4) perfect identity that refers to the best position of the organisation on the market at a specific time, and finally, (5) desired identity that is connected to the vision of the organisation (Bembenek, 2012, p. 10).

Konecki referring to their distinction between two types of organisational identity: the identity perceived by members of the organisation, understood as a form of internal image of the organisation, and the interpreted external image that refers to the properties of the organisation that are perceived as its main, permanently distinctive traits by the environment of the organisation (Konecki and Tobera, 2002). The referenced ways of defining the issue of organisational identity are linked by the common trait which refers to the fact that it is perceived as a set of values, ideas and characteristics that build a certain image with which the organisation is identified. Considering that humans perform a certain kind of review of the image of themselves, trying to find themselves in various circumstances and social roles, one can assume that the identity of the organisation in which they function will also provide them with resources to categorise and make various references. As a result of such comparisons, the individual distinguishes the categories "I" and "we". Thus, Foote (1951) stated that the individual classifies herself/himself as a member of the organisation. This personal classification motivates her/him to act on behalf of the organisation (Karahan and Bazkurt, 2021, p. 30). Thus, organisational identification involves a strong sense of belonging and loyalty, which results from references to the organisation treated as a subject, to which the individual aspires, and with whose goals, values, and image he or she identifies. According to Zhu, Tatachari and Chattopadhyay (2017): "identification involves a process of depersonalisation, so that positive traits of social units may be integrated with the social self in order to construct and maintain a positive image of the self and thus to satisfy the need to self-improve".

By ensuring a sense of belonging and providing a positive basis for employees' social identity, managers may increase involvement and attachment to the organisation (Piccoli et al., 2017, p. 1508). In this context, it seems important to ask questions about the factors that determine the identity of organisations and their members. Ubiquitous social and economic transformations are inextricably linked to changes in the labour market and in employment structures. Managing human capital in organisations increasingly often means managing human potential that is differentiated in many aspects. Gross-Gołacka pointed to the growing influence of cultural evolution, common migration, and technological development on the shaping of an increasingly complex environment in which organisations function (Gross-Gołacka, 2019, p. 35). "The trends from the macro-environment are transferred to the micro scale, and those who manage organisations are confronted with new challenges that result from the heterogeneity of human resources" (Leoński, Pluta, and Wieczorek-Szymańska, 2020, p. 14). In Poland, women – immigrants from Ukraine, account for an increasing part of these resources.

Since 2014, a constantly growing number of foreigners have been arriving in Poland from Ukraine. According to the Office for Foreigners and its report "Citizens of Ukraine in Poland" of 14.12.2021, the number of Ukrainian citizens who have valid residence permits in Poland exceeded 300 thousand. As a result, they account for almost 57 per cent of the total number of foreigners who have settled in Poland (Urząd do spraw Cudzoziemców, 2021). Almost half of them are women who are looking for employment opportunities. Like men, they are an important element of the development of the Polish economy.

"The labour market verifies the supply of Polish human resources and supplements it with complementary resources obtained among foreigners. Employees from Ukraine have filled the competence gaps, which is proven by the gradual decrease in unemployment at the beginning of 2020" (Drabczuk, 2020). "The values of this group of workers and the expectations that they formulate with respect to work influence their evaluation of the practices of human resource management that are applied to them" (Gadomska-Lila and Moskalenko, 2019, p. 118).

Sensitivity to employees from Ukraine, who constitute the largest minority in diverse employee teams, requires the organisations to know the adaptation conditions that enable the organisational identification of its workers. According to G. Hofstede and G. J. Hofstede, at the moment when the visits of foreigners become constant and regular, the ethnocentric attitude of a society may change into polycentric, i.e. into acknowledging that in order to evaluate foreigners, we must know their culture (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2007, pp. 339-340). To apply this mindset in the context of managing human resources requires a will to learn about the factors that determine the behaviour of Ukrainian workers, of whom a large part are women. Considering that organisational identification fosters building organisational culture, maintaining and shaping organisational identity, and, finally, improves the performance of an organisation, it is worth analysing the factors that determine this identification among women from Ukraine who work in Poland.

7.3. Method

The main aim of the study was to determine the conditions for the organisational identification of female immigrants from Ukraine who work in Poland. To this end, the authors focused on three areas of identification: (1) the feeling of being accepted based on experience; (2) identification with the goals, values, and image of the organisation; (3) the sense of loyalty to the organisation. To verify how organisational identification is determined in the group of working female immigrants from Ukraine, the qualitative method was applied.

The focus interview method was chosen for several reasons. Firstly, a freely conducted interview that leaves some possibilities to deepen the analysed image enables the researcher to understand certain attitudes, motivations, and opinions that shape the behaviour of the respondent more easily, in the context of organisational behaviour. Secondly, the cultural perspective was taken into consideration, bearing in mind the possibility of the occurrence of differences in the perception and understanding of certain standards and customs that exist in culturally diversified teams of employees to which the women belonged. A focused group interview offers an opportunity to consider the cultural context at the stage of formulating and asking questions, which allows the researcher to avoid misunderstandings that may result, for example, from the way in which the respondents understand the terms and notions used. Finally, a focus interview is an excellent way to perform a certain localised recognition of the field of interest of the scientist. The general aim of focus studies is to deepen the knowledge and understanding of motivations, judgments, and attitudes that exist in the analysed group (Gawlik, 2012, p. 135). It is worth noting that it was assumed from the beginning that the conducted research would be a pilot study.

The sample was selected purposively. The persons invited to take part in the interview were female citizens of Ukraine from the so-called working-age group, i.e. 18-59. An exception was one respondent aged 65, who wanted to participate in the survey. The other women were from 32 to 48 years old. All the participants are immigrants from Ukraine who work in Poland, who have lived in the host country for at least one year and declare that they are willing to stay here for a longer period. The women work in different positions, at companies of various types of activity. In total, two focus group interviews were conducted, the first with the participation of only four respondents. Due to the fact that the date of the interview coincided with the Russian invasion of Ukraine, it was impossible to conduct the survey on all respondents who had planned to participate. As the sample was very small, a second focus interview was conducted with eight other respondents.

The focus group interview took place at the Centre for Support for Migrants and Refugees in Szczecin – a place with which the respondents were familiar. This allowed to eliminate the barriers that may result from lack of trust, or fears connected to participating in the research. Although the interview was conducted in Polish, the participants could speak in their mother tongue when necessary, and their answers were translated immediately. The moderator used a script that contained only guidelines to explore an interesting research area by asking questions that would allow the fullest possible image of the analysed phenomenon to be obtained. The questions concerned: (1) the feeling of being accepted stemming from the experience of discriminatory behaviour, the relationships employee-employee, and supervisor-subordinate, and the sense of being important for the organisation; (2) individual identity and organisational identity, i.e. how the respondents define their goals and values and how they perceive and describe the organisations for which they work (including their goals, values, image, organisational culture, and opinions), in the search for consistency between those two identities; (3) the sense of loyalty towards the organisation, and the factors that determine this in the context of the satisfied needs.

During the interview, the participants freely shared their experiences and interpreted the answers provided by other respondents. The casual atmosphere, but also the feeling that they were participating in an important event that might improve the situation of Ukrainian women in Poland, contributed to the involvement of the participants.

7.4. Results

The empirical material connected in the interview allowed for assigning the responses to the following groups: feelings of being accepted in the organisation, cohesion between individual and organisational identity, and the sense of loyalty towards the organisation.

Feelings of being accepted

All the respondents work in ethnically diverse teams. Most of them (except for one participant) do not feel like strangers either in the social or organisational environment. The women do not like to be treated differently, even if such treatment is an example of so-called positive discrimination:

"I feel that I am a foreigner. I do not feel like a stranger, but I feel that I am a foreigner, because I get too much attention from people: are you satisfied? How do you feel? Do you need any help? What would you like? Would you like this or that…? If you do not understand something, come and ask me, and so on. This is why…" (A worker at a company that manufactures dentistry scanners, 37 years old).

All the respondents agreed that, even if they had felt discriminated against at their workplaces, these were occasional incidents. However, they reacted to every such situation in a very emotional way. All of them appreciated working in their teams. They talked about positive relations that influence the perception of their current place of employment. An example is this response:

"I believe that the most important thing at work is the environment, the people. If the environment and the atmosphere are good, then the company prospers, and people work well." (A 48-year-old worker at a plant that manufactures hearing aids)

Frequent references to the importance of teamwork suggest that the respondents were more collectively than individually oriented. At the same time, the participants made some references to Polish people. They pointed to cultural differences, although this term was not used expressly. They believe that Poles are calmer and less stressed than their own compatriots, who have become used to a fast pace and living in a sense of insecurity, from which they escaped by emigrating, see the following quote:

"They keep on telling you: calm down, calm down, and then you think: God, how stupid I am! (A carer of elderly people, 65 years old). This is the difference between the Polish and the Ukrainians." (A 36 -year-old worker of an employment agency)

However, there were also other opinions:

"We, the Ukrainians, eat less and work more." (A worker at a company that manufactures dentistry scanners, 37 years old)

"If you work better and faster, then you become the enemy." (A 48-year-old worker at a plant that manufactures hearing aids)

Interestingly, the comparisons and references occurred on the level of social identification: Ukrainian-Polish, but these categories did not translate directly or indirectly to the environment of the organisations where the respondents worked and where, as they very often repeated, they felt very secure.

The women praised their supervisors, to whom they initially had felt a larger distance. This may result from a larger distance to the authorities that was common in their work in Ukraine. They are surprised by the straightforwardness, by praise, by showing support, and the tendency to be open to dialogue between the supervisor and the employee.

When asked whether they felt important for the organisation, most of the respondents talked about situations when they felt that their work was important and that they were important for the company.

Consistency between individual and organisational identity

The respondents described their organisations in positive terms. They know the goals of the organisations. They talked about prestige (about a well-known restaurant), the mission to do good (a veterinary clinic, the hearing aid manufacturing plant, charity organisation, working in a hospital), being useful (temporary employment agencies), and recognisability, in the case of the person who worked at a well-known electronic goods and household appliances store. Most of the participants, except for one person, like their workplaces, even if they do not work in their preferred positions. The women talked about the importance of honesty, being useful, and development perspectives. Ukrainian women see themselves as very hard-working, who like to perform the entrusted duties quickly and well. At work, they expect respect and equal treatment. They want to feel that they are a part of the organisation where they work and to which they aspire. They used the phrases "in our company", "at ours", etc., which, in the context of their responses, demonstrated a sense of identification on the level of social identity.

Sense of loyalty towards the organisation

The respondents were asked directly about their sense of loyalty to the organisations for which they work. All of them, except for one, declared that they felt secure at the organisation and that they would not like to change their place of work. They mentioned the sense of safety that the current employment gave them. They also pointed to their needs that have evolved with the length of their stay in Poland. In a migration situation, this is connected to the legality of residence and of employment. Initially, when they took their first jobs, the most important thing was money, i.e. the amount of remuneration, regardless of whether it was the same as the amount specified in the employment contract. With time, formal issues, including an employment contract or insurance that offer a sense of security and stability, became equally important as the salary. The factors that motivate them to work are the atmosphere at the organisation, the feeling of being useful, and the opportunities for further development. They see themselves as loyal; they value employment stability and the comfort that results from the feeling that they may develop their skills even in the circumstances of living with an uncertain tomorrow.

7.5. Discussion and conclusions

The main aim of the research was to determine the conditions for the organisational identification of female immigrants from Ukraine who work in Poland. The analysis of the collected empirical material allowed the authors to achieve the defined goal in three areas of identification: the feeling of being accepted, the consistency between individual and organisational identity, and the sense of loyalty towards the company where the respondents work. The participants emphasised the importance of the atmosphere at work, relationships between employees and between supervisors and subordinates, the sense of equal treatment and being part of the organisation. These are the variables that determine the feeling of being accepted in the surveyed women. The migrants carried out categorisation on the level of social identity, using the category "We, the members of the organisation". This may point to a feeling of belonging to the current workplace and the consistency between individual and organisational identity. The survey participants linked the sense of security to the stability of employment. Their expectations towards the employer include, among others, an employment contract, equal treatment, and development opportunities. They see themselves as loyal to their employers, with whom they connect their plans in a long-term perspective. The organisational identity of the respondents may be reinforced by taking these areas into account in human resource management.

Some of the responses revealed the existence of cultural differences, such as being collectively oriented, distance to authority, and long-term orientation, which, in the context of organisational identity, may constitute an important component of managing ethnically diverse employee teams.

The limitations of the conducted research result mainly from its pilot nature and the small size of the surveyed population sample. The results point to the potential directions of analysing organisational identity that require deeper exploration. In the future, it will be worth expanding the area of the analysed phenomenon by conducting individual in-depth interviews. The conducted focus group interview confirmed that the choice of the qualitative method was justified. The discussed issues and the differences in understanding certain terms require taking the cultural point of view into account. Moreover, it is worth considering extending the population of respondents by the refugees who have arrived from Ukraine after 24 February 2022. The survey was conducted at the beginning of increased traffic on the Polish-Ukrainian border. According to the Border Guard, as of March 13, 2022, because of the Russian military invasion on Ukraine, 1.575 million refugees have crossed the Polish-Ukrainian border since 24 February 2022, and the number continues to grow. Most of them are women and children.

As the Polish labour market is undergoing a dynamic transformation, the organisational identification of Ukrainian women is becoming increasingly important, even if only in the context of managing ethnically diverse teams of employees.

Ukrainian immigrants, as well as Polish emigrants, are content with the considerable changes in the international job market in which expatriates are well established, but are still not a very deeply analysed group of workers. The following chapter presents the characteristics of expatriates from different generations and widens the perspective of employees on an international stage.

Chapter 8

MOBILITY OF EXPATRIATES IN THE CONTEXT OF MULTIGENERATIONALITY

Gabriela Strzelec[a]

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8.1. Introduction

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the number of international migrants has constantly been growing, and the dynamics of this growth exceed the growth rate of the world population (OECD/EU, 2018). This phenomenon means primarily the refugee crisis, which affects the European Union and has a much broader geographic scope (Piekutowska, 2017). As presented in two previous chapters, migration processes are an essential premise for considering diversity management. Freedom of movement is conducive to active participation in the global labour market by both employers and employees. Organisations unite different nationalities and cultures, which creates procedures and an organisational culture that will enable satisfactory cooperation despite differences (Mendryk and Tor, 2011). Managing a diverse team is a challenge for managers. The different features, values,and motives related to belonging to a generation, create many opportunities and unique dimensions to the international labour market. The main aim of this chapter is to continue the issues of migration and add a new perspective – the characteristics of expatriates from different generations.

8.2. Expatriates as a form of international migration

International migrations are an interdisciplinary category and the subject of interest of various scientific disciplines, including demography, economics, geography, political science, sociology, and management, which result in different perspectives for analysing migration inherent in these disciplines. Given the above, there is no terminological order in this subject, no uniform research method, or standard method of explanation. The conceptual disorder intensifies the variety of defining individual

[a] Wroclaw University of Economics and Business, ORCID: 0000-0001-5672-6925.

migration categories, resulting from the traditions and needs of respective countries (Arango, 2000; MacLachlan and Carr, 2005; Okólski, 2012).

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), migration is any movement of a person or group of people within the borders of a given state or across a boundary between states (international border), regardless of the duration of this movement, its course, structure or cause (IOM [International Organization for Migration], 2011).

International migrations mean leaving the country of origin or habitual residence to settle permanently or temporarily in another country, combined with crossing an international border. Their multifaceted economic, social, cultural, and educational consequences are undoubtedly one of today's most critical global issues (Divinský and Podolinská, 2018). Migration is intertwined with geopolitics, trade, and cultural exchange and provides countries, businesses, and communities with tangible benefits (IOM, 2017). Every year, the increase in the migrant population (1.6%) is similar to the repopulation (1.1%); 3.5% of the world's population constitutes, in other words, 272 million people (IOM, 2020) who move between countries for various reasons in search of a better life, pursue a professional career, better education opportunities, out of curiosity, the desire to learn about the world, escape from persecution and prejudices, and climate change (the so-called climate refugee) (Okólski and Radziwinowiczówna, 2018). International migrants could therefore create the fifth most populous country (after China, India, the USA, and Indonesia). The percentage share of international migrants in the global population is presented in Figure 8.1.

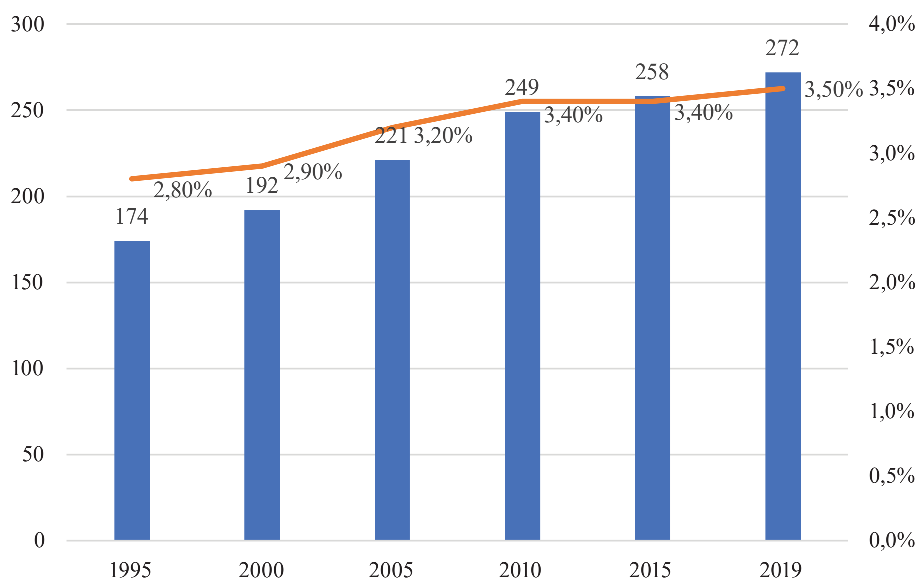

Figure 8.1. Number of international migrants in the world (in mln)

Source: (IOM, 2017).

The data show that 52% of international migrants are men, and 48% are women. The overwhelming majority (74%) are aged 20-64.

In management sciences, migrant refers to unskilled international workers from less developed countries (Al Ariss and Crowley-Henry, 2013; Castles et al., 2014). According to the United Nations, a migrant is a person who has lived in a foreign country for more than a year, regardless of the reason for the transfer, its voluntary or compulsory nature, and the manner and regularity (legality). In turn, an international migrant is a person who changes the country of usual residence (IOM, 2011).

Most migrants do not leave the country for the rest of their lives; they often deal with temporary and short-term migrations and change countries of residence during their journeys (Lesińska, 2014).

There is a group of international employees with a significant age range who find employment in the structures of multinational corporations. Therefore, it is worth taking a closer look at this topic.

Castles (2011) points to new trends in the movement of people, which are the result of economic, political, and cultural changes (Table 8.1).

Table 8.1. Mobility trends

Trend	Characteristic
Globalization of migration	Population flows will gradually span the world
Accelerating migration	The movement of people in all regions of the world is increasing and requires urgent regulatory action by governments
Differentiation of migration	Difficulties in controlling migration flow by local and international governments due to the coexistence of many types of migrants simultaneously (not only labour migrants or refugees)
Migration Feminization	Women play an increasing role in various displacement streams. There is a noticeable advantage for women (approx. 70%) among migrants worldwide
Politicization of migration	International migration has an increasingly strong impact on the politics of individual countries and national security. Therefore, there is a growing awareness of strengthening global cooperation between the receiving, transit, and sending countries
The prevalence of transit migration	This phenomenon occurs when traditional emigration countries (e.g. Spain and Poland) transform into transit migration and immigration countries

Source: a study based on (Castles, 2011).

In the literature on the subject, several forms of migration are distinguished depending on the adopted criterion of their division (range, time, the purpose of movements, etc.) (see Table 8.2).

Table 8.2. Forms of migration depending on the displacement criterion

Criteria	Characteristic
By range of displacements	– internal migrations: movement of people inside the country, within the boundaries of a given administrative unit (city, commune) – external migrations (emigration): trips to another country known as the host country, the receiving country, or the stay
By duration	– permanent migration: intention to stay permanently in the host country – periodic migration: long-term migration over one year, short-term migration up to 1 year
According to the primary purpose	– economic migration: for work – non-economic migration: tourist, educational, religious, etc.
According to the reasons for migration decisions	– forced migration: triggered by actions (pressures) of a political or administrative nature (escapes, trafficking in human beings) – voluntary migration: undertaken without external force due to the subjective feeling of discomfort and the search for more optimal living, work, study conditions, or escape from personal problems

Source: a study based on (Castles, 2011).

The economic side of the migration processes is the strengthening of labour supply in many local markets struggling with the labour shortage, the employment gap, and the competency gap. The research by the World Employment Confederation shows that to maintain the economic growth, by 2030 the USA will need approximately 25 million additional workers. In turn, to fill the employment gap in Europe by 2050 about 35 million workers will be required (World Employment Confederation, 2016).

In international periodicals that deal with various aspects of migration, e.g. International Migration Review, Journal of Global Mobility, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, and Ethnic and Racial Studies, the term ‘migrant’ refers to a person moving across state borders. Schiller, Basch, and Blanc (1995) define a transmigrant as a person who is a member of transnational communities, including corporations, due to migration.

The activities of international corporations, particularly the creation of their new branches or branches outside the boundaries of the parent enterprise, are related to the mobility of managers referred to as “a new variety of leadership nomads” (Okólski, 2003). Highly developed countries try to encourage the best people from abroad (high potential students, young talents) to study because it is a category of foreigners for whom entering the labour market is relatively easy (Przytuła, 2014).

Another type of international mobility is the “corporate internal labour market.” A feature of the operation of transnational corporations is the ‘transfer’ of competent employees between different countries to use their qualifications to the maximum. Flows within the corporation concern two types of professional positions: employees who perform technical functions in the start-up phase or crisis, and administrative employees who control the company, occupy the highest positions, and have a decisive influence on the strategies and production processes. In the long run, this type of mobility process has far-reaching cultural effects, contributing to the development and transfer of the "corporate culture and leading to a group of mobile people on a global scale (Kaczmarczyk, 2005).

It is worth emphasizing that although the characteristics of the so-called "flows within transnational corporations" are in line with the definition of expatriate used in management sciences, yet the word "expatriate" does not appear, but rather "highly skilled migrant," "highly skilled manpower movement", "migration of skilled transients," and "human capital-assisted migration" (cf. Przytuła, 2017).

Highly skilled migrants reflect the economic position of countries and the competitiveness of international companies operating in many markets (Solimano, 2008). Due to their high international mobility and the need to constantly improve their qualifications, they are highly desirable employees in the global labour market.

The reason for the demand for skilled migrants is the growing integration of world economies (Sassen, 2007) and demographic changes, including changes related to the ageing of the population, the outflow, and shortages of the labour force in particular sectors (e.g. healthcare, telecommunications technology) (Bauder, 2006; Cresswell, 2012). In Europe, the proportion of the migrant population is the highest compared to other continents, and young people constitute the largest group. The exodus of youth has reached an unprecedented scale (Rokitowska, 2017).

On the other hand, the 'brain drain' and 'brain waste' are also observed (Bauder, 2006; Brandi, 2001). A strategic challenge for countries whose goal is long-term economic development and building a knowledge-based economy should therefore be to reduce the brain drain, e.g. by creating conditions conducive to the returns of emigrants who are richer in knowledge and experience, and the use of 'brain gain' or by 'brain circulation' (Stadnik, 2012).

Researchers dealing with highly qualified international workers emphasize the lack of a unified approach to defining separate groups and the ambiguous links between migration and expatriation (Przytuła, 2016). In addition to traditional migrants, along with the allotment of international corporations, two groups of highly qualified mobile workers have emerged: traditional expatriates (AE) and self-initiated expatriates (SIE). However, based on the literature analysis, McNulty and Brewster (2017) found a very high diversity of the used definitions, which are often mutually exclusive, making it challenging to conduct research and compare the obtained results. Among self-initiated expatriates, there are at least ten different groups of mobile workers: from 'young bargain hunters', combining travelling, sightseeing and work, to highly qualified specialists who can easily find employment in the foreign labour market (Przytuła, 2016).

The most common definition of an expat is the one that indicates that they are employees of business organisations temporarily sent abroad to perform a specific time task or achieve a set goal. This definition emphasizes that the expatriates were already employees before their shipment abroad and employed by the organisation in another country, which distinguishes expatriates from people outside the company, e.g. tourists, immigrants, refugees, entrepreneurs, and students (McNulty and Brewster, 2017).

Yet, in Poland the most common definition of an expatriate is the one proposed by Przytuła (2014), namely "an employee of an international enterprise, usually a high-class specialist or manager, who is sent to foreign entities (a branch, division or another organisational and legal form), or from corporate headquarters, a third country, or between those units. Such transfer is voluntary. The expatriate may come from the country of origin of the corporate offices or be of a different nationality than the corporation's home country. Their working hours abroad can be long, medium, or short, taking various (alternative) forms into account."

8.3. Characteristics of the generations in the international labour market

In the literature on the subject, a generation is defined as a community of all individuals belonging to a given cultural circle, people of similar age who, based on a common historical and social situation, show similar attitudes, motivations, attitudes, and values systems (Yang and Guy, 2006). In sociology, a generation is defined as a group of people who have experienced some special event or events (Mabry, Schmeeckle, and Bengston, 2001).

Each generation is distinguished by different beliefs, features, interests, expectations, and attitudes common to all its members (Sirias and Karp, 2002).

In terms of definitions, it is necessary to explain the inconsistencies in the meaning of "multigenerational" and "intergenerational," sometimes used interchangeably as synonyms (Davis, 2007). Brownell and Resnick (2005), and Mabry et al. (2001) suggested that intergenerational relations refer to those s between and, in some cases, among members of different generations. According to Martinez (2002), multigenerational relations include two or more generations perceived as a static system, omitting the question of contact between their members.

Actions taken for the benefit of many generations are described as multigenerational and intergenerational when they intend to change their point of view through a mutual contact. The boundaries between individual ages may be dated differently in particular regions or countries due to the different experiences of societies, which determine a generation affiliation.

Therefore, the subject literature does not agree on terminology and the ranges of dates defining the years of birth of individual generations. Table 8.3 presents the vocabulary of various generational groups and the age ranges assigned to them.

Table 8.3. Generation groups appearing in the literature

Name	Alternative name	Date of birth
Veterans	Silent Generation Matures Traditionalists Greatest Conservatives	1925-1942 1925-1945 1922-1945
Baby Boomers (BB)	Boom(er) Generation Me Generation	1943-1960 1946-1964 1946-1962 1946-1961
X	Thirteenth Baby Busters Lost Generation Xers	1961-1981 1965-1976 1965-1980 1963-1981 1965-1983 1962-1979
Y	Millennials Next Echo Boomers Net Generation Digital Natives Generation Me Generation Next Millennium Generation	1982- 1981-1995 1981-1999 1984-2002 1981-2001 1980-2000 1980-1994
Z/C 1995-	Z C Connect Native users iGeneration Gen Tech Gen Wii Net Gen Digital Natives Gen Next Post Gen	1995- 1990- 1996-

Source: based on (Parry and Urwin, 2011).

As can be seen, the above table shows significant diversity in naming particular generations and the time frame of birth. Undoubtedly, the sociologists Strauss and Howe (1991) used the standard categories in numerous studies (e.g. Macky, Gardner, and Forsyth, 2008). Nevertheless, many studies deviate from this categorization, as seen in the discussed summary.

A generation determines the shared social, cultural, and economical context and political. Therefore, it can be concluded that the selection of the control variable, which is age, corresponds to the cultural and socio-economic conditions of both the researcher and the studied destination.

In the last two decades, demographic trends in the Polish labour market indicate an ever lower potential supply in the labour market of young workers (Drela, 2017). According to Eurostat (2020) forecasts, in 2025, the group of Y and Z Generation workers taken together will constitute more than half of the available supply in the country on the labour market (Wojnicki, 2017). Given the growing tendency to migrate and mobility, this may shape a dangerous trend of lack of supply and low quality of work in the labour market. The above data show that a substantial quantitative gap may arise in the coming years, but above all qualitative, in terms of motivation and competencies in the domestic labour market. Therefore, a natural demographic revolution occurs (Kawka, 2020).

Employees assigned to particular generations are characterized, among others, by various perceptions of the surrounding world. Generational affiliation also has a significant impact on the approach to work, the way of motivation, and the shaping of one's professional and life goals.

Currently, four different generations meet in organisations: Baby Boomers, Generations X, Y, and Z. By 2020, it was expected that 36% of the workforce would be members of Generation Z (Randstad, 2019). Each of these generations has been shaped by different socio-cultural, economic, and political events. Differences between employees are visible in many spheres of life, professional careers, and experience (Gadomska-Lila, 2015). Significant contrasts are visible primarily in such values as family, work, attitude to authorities, approach to change, level of commitment, and loyalty to the employer or colleagues.

The research results confirm that the features that characterize older generation employees are: accuracy, reliability, and the ability to communicate with clients and colleagues (Giza-Poleszczuk and Góra 2008).

Moreover, they have extensive professional experience (e.g. solving complex problems they encountered in the past). Thus, the loss of such competencies may expose the organisation to losses. These competencies cannot be replaced, or their replacement turns out to be very costly (Deheeger and Rolland-Cachera, 2004).

At the same time, age-mixed teams create the possibility of intergenerational transfer of knowledge and skills, thus maintaining the continuity of knowledge and skills resources in employee teams.

Research by Dickman, Cerdin, and Mayerhofer (2016) indicated the so-called 'European factor'. Younger Europeans are more likely to show the intention to go abroad. By experiencing internationalization, they gain valuable experience, skills, knowledge, and a network of connections.

In turn, Oh and Jang (2020), researching a group of young Korean expatriates (aged 25 to 38), observed that previous experiences of international mobility (e.g. student exchange programmes, vacation trips, short-term stays) correlate positively with the desire to undertake an expatriate mission.

In researching a group of students, Geyer, Putz, and Misra (2017) proved that student exchange programmes significantly impact on leadership skills and professional aspirations.

Selmer and Lam (2004) postulated that people who experienced international mobility during adolescence (e.g. children of expatriates, the so-called 'third culture kids') perceive themselves as international people. They show excellent preferences related to an international career.

This is also confirmed by the studies of Doherty, Dickmann and Mills (2010), conducted on a group of people aged 15-30, In which 87% of respondents claim that short-term and long-term trips (e.g. as part of research internships, etc.) enable the development of an international career and provide a chance to obtain valuable interpersonal relations.

Each of these generations has been shaped by different socio-cultural, economic, and political events. The differences between employees are visible in many spheres of life stage, professional careers, and experience (Gadomska-Lila, 2015). Significant contrasts are visible primarily in such values as family, work, attitude to authorities, approach to change, level of commitment, and loyalty to the employer or colleagues.

At the same time, age-mixed teams create the possibility of the intergenerational transfer of knowledge and skills, thus maintaining the continuity of knowledge and skills in employee teams.

Therefore, managers and HR (Human Resources) departments are faced with the challenge of the skilful use of the potential of various generations and the selection of appropriate tools and practices for human resource management.

8.4. Conclusions

The considerations made allow for the drawing of important conclusions. Generations X, Y, and Z are filling the labour market and significantly changing it. Each of them differs in terms of expectations towards employers and their mutual perception. According to Business Insider (Businessinsider, 2021), Generation X grew up without computers and watched the digital changes taking place. This is a generation of ambitious, hard-working people, but also described by the younger Generations Y and Z, as tired, serious, and stressed.

Millennials are one of the most visible generations – hard-working, ambitious, determined, lazy, and naive. This generation is represented by many well-known technology creators (such as the founders of Facebook or Snapchat).

Born and brought up in the world of the ubiquitous Internet and digital economy, Generation Z undoubtedly poses a challenge to the international labour market. Although they are just entering their professional life, members of this generation have already marked their presence in a significant way. They are considered ambitious, lazy, disloyal, and disengaged. They are curious about the world but quickly get bored.

The indicated differences also illustrate the generation gap, which is one of the most significant challenges faced by HR managers.

Undoubtedly, managing a diverse team is a challenge for the organisation's managers. However, the different features, values, and motives related to generation affiliation create many opportunities and unique dimensions to the international labour market. The indicated differences also illustrate the generation gap, which is one of the most significant challenges faced by HR managers.

The considerations in this chapter allow for the conclusion that the differences between workers of different generations result from social and historical events in which they live, and not of their age as such. Each generation experiences events and context in its formative years as a potential basis for the emergence of Mannheim's shared "innate way of experiencing life and the world" (Mannheim, 1952). New generations establish 'fresh contact' with and respond to cultural norms, attitudes, and behaviour with acceptance or opposition (Joshi, Dencker, and Franz, 2011).

An exciting proposal for future research in this area may be the reference to the differences in defining generations as multidimensional social groups shaped by a shared historical experience (the social forces perspective).

The chapter is a theoretical discourse and does not pretend to be a comprehensive diagnosis of the problem. However, it presents its multifaceted dimension and encourages to explore more directly the differences and similarities in each generation of employees on the global market. Therefore, the last chapter undertakes the comprehensive description of one generation – the Millennials.

Chapter 9

RETAINING MILLENNIALS IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Magdalena Krzyzanowska-Celmer[a]

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9.1. Introduction

This chapter explores the nature of the Millennials in China, a critical generation for the rapid growth of the second biggest economy worldwide. It focuses on some characteristics of the Millennials in China and the identification of their desires in the context of the ideal job and workplace. This generation should be adequately described because a contemporary workplace in China is characterised by the employment of multiple generations, with the largest generational cohort of Millennials currently equal to approximately 400 million, compared to 80 million in the US (Teh and Loh, 2021). Generation Y (Strauss and House, 1991), Baby Boom Echo (Foot and Stoffman, 1998), NetGen (Burke and Ng, 2006), Nexters (Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak, 1999) – these are the most common labels for the generations born between 1977 and 2000.

9.2. Characteristics of the Chinese Millennials

Millennials in China, while indicated by the years in which they were born, are more importantly characterised by the events and significant changes that took place during their lifetime, both in China and globally, such as: deepening of economic reform, fast two-digit economic growth; "One-Child Policy", globalisation, rapid technology advancement, changes in social values, liberalisation movements for minority groups such as LGBT and encouragement to openly express needs and desires. These resulted in some commonly labelled generational characteristics of Millennials in China known as the "Little Emperors and Empresses" who are well-looked after and spoiled by their families, never experienced hardship, and most individualistic and self-centred (Yang, Yu, and Wu, 2018).

[a] SGH Warsaw School of Economics, ORCID: 0000-0001-5418-9070.

Millennials are considered as the best educated generational cohort in China looking to international institutions to further their education. China is however experiencing serious talent shortages and an escalated competition for a highly skilled talent pool (Beechler and Woodward, 2009; Chu, 2013), which make organisations struggle to attract and retain talent (Sanner-Stiehr and Vandermause, 2017; Wang and Peng, 2015). Thus, it is of the highest importance to understand what the Chinese Millennials value at work and what prevents them from leaving the organisations abruptly, often without any notice. The gig economy – characterised by the prevalence of short-term contracts and freelance work as opposed to permanent jobs and dominated by its growing number of Millennials – does not help and, on the contrary, seems to be one of the greatest dilemmas for employers in China.

Millennials in China address various questions with regard to their work every day such as: "why am I here, and why should I stay? What is the meaning of the work I do? Do they value adequately my skills and contributions? Do I have an opportunity to utilise my 'tech savvy'?" (Krzyzanowska-Celmer, 2019, p. 8). Chinese Millennials are one of the most unique generations in history with so much change occurring in just one generation. Their experiences and expectations have been influenced by four major factors, such as: Economic reform, One Child Policy, Technology Boom and Traditional systems (Gilbert and Wilson, 2015, p. 5).

Millennials are savvy and digital natives. "For the Chinese Millennial, technology is not just a part of life, it is a way of life" (Gilbert and Wilson, 2015). The Chinese Millennials grew up, as the first generation in China, with computers and access to the Internet and witnessed how technology has changed their life and the economy. In June 2019, the popularisation rate of the Internet in China was 99.1%, compared to 5.3% in 2003. An increase of 6.06 million monthly of active mobile internet users aged below 24 was noted. The age group of 25-40 spent over 160 hours per person monthly on mobile Internet (*Questmobile report…*, 2019). Currently, more than 90% of Millennials own a smartphone used for various activities: from entertainment sharing life moments on WeChat and Douyin (known as TikTok and similar to Snapchat), to paying bills on Alipay or WeChat Pay (The New York Post, 2018). Chinese Millennials are more experienced in BATs (Baidu, Alibaba, Tencent) than FAANGs (Facebook, Amazon, Netflix and Google), which is due to the fact that many social media applications known in the West are restricted in China.

Millennials are cashless. As a result of this technological advancement, Millennials in China have been spearheading the transition to cashless mobile payments, fuelling the rapid growth of the domestic fintech industry (The Financial Times, 2022). The use of ATMs has declined in favour of cashless transactions conducted via mobile phones. In 2015, 73% of Chinese Millennials shopped on-line, compared to 35% of Millennials in the US (Dauxe). Alibaba reported 1.48 billion payments processed through Alipay, with 90% of transactions completed via mobile phones on Alibaba Singles Day already in 2017 (Alibaba, 2018).

Millennials in China are significant global luxury goods consumers. Chinese customers are forecasted to account for 40% of global luxury goods sales by 2024, with the Millennials accounting for 58% of global luxury goods buyers according to the report issued by the Boston Consulting Group and Tencent in 2018 (BCG and Tencent report, 2018). In 2021, luxury goods newcomers (17%) were mostly the post-90s with a strong purchasing power, half of them spent more than RMB 50k on luxury goods per year (BCG and Tencent report, 2021)

Millennials in China are highly entrepreneurial; well educated, equipped with high tech devices, cosmopolitan and forward thinking, Chinese Millennials are lay the foundations for creativity in China and strongly mark the transition from "Made in China" to "Created in China" (*Taobao Maker Festival*..., 2018). As many as 74% of Chinese Millennials would launch their own business if they had trouble finding a job and 93% agreed with the statement that "technology has put so many professional and entrepreneurial opportunities in front of me" (Jing Daily). Taobao and T-mall are popular e-commerce platforms utilized by Millennials for their entrepreneurial efforts. Alibaba announced in the "2018 Chinese Youth Creativity Report" released by Taobao and CBN Data during the Taobao Maker Festival that 2 million Millennials had launched their businesses on Taobao (Jing Daily).

Chinese Millennials are well educated abroad. In 2019, around 703,500 Chinese students left their home country to pursue overseas studies which is a 6.25% increase over the previous year (Textor, 2021). The top five foreign destinations for Chinese students in 2021 were: the US (372,532), Australia (165,809), the United Kingdom (129,045), Canada (98,565), and Japan (94,047), based on data from Project Atlas 2019, a report published by the Institute of International Education (IIE) (*Project Atlas*…, 2020).

9.3. Stay Millennial-ready

These specific circumstances make Chinese Millennials a very demanding population for employers to engage, motivate and retain. They generally express little loyalty to their current employers and they change jobs three to four times in their first two years of work experience after college (Ye, 2006, pp. 19-21).

Employers in China need to understand and adjust accordingly to three significant shifts reshaping the Chinese work environment (Table 9.1).

One of the strongest expectations of the Millennials in China is a rapid career progression (*Robert Walters report*…, 2015). Career advancement (75%) and better pay (60%), are the top criteria when considering a career change, but innovation and flexibility are key to attracting modern talent in China (*Talent report Greater China*..., 2019). Being tech-savvy, Millennials look for work environments recognised for innovation and digital technology – ideally famous brands. Moreover Deloitte discovered that the needs and wishes of younger people can be summarised in three M's: meritocracy, mentorship and meaning (*The 2016 Millennial survey*...,

Table 9.1. Shifts reshaping Millennial work environment in China

No	Shift	Overview
1	From standardised to personalised	Millennials look for personalisation at the workplace to cultivate confidence and build individuality, as opposed to the highly uniformed school educational system. **Personal space** and **flexible workplace** are considered as forms of expressing their true selves
2	From hierarchy to communal	Millennials look for mainly horizontal management structures placing high value on **friendship** and **equality** at work; 71% want their co-workers to be a second family
3	From escape to embrace	Millennials look for a comfortable workplace environment that allows them to connect, relax and stay productive. They value a **life quality** and seek for functional workplaces to **inspire** and encourage creativity

Source: adopted from (Gilbert and Wilson, 2015, pp. 6-9).

2016). Chinese Millennials particularly value transparent leadership succession plans and a lot of support and training for those who want to take on the leadership roles. The Deloitte Millennial Survey showed that 71% of those likely to leave in the next two years are unhappy with how their leadership skills are being developed.

Millennials in China considerably value personal independence. A career advancement and compensation are considered as direct means to their personal independence, a cornerstone of their happiness. Personal independence is reflected in the sense of fulfilment via economic prowess, personal space and time, as well as self-defined happiness (*The 2016 Millennial survey...*, 2016). It is important to provide Millennials in China with transparent succession plans and conduct salary reviews on a regular basis.

Personalised workplaces are important reflections of individual expressions and personality. Millennials in China desire to customise their workplaces according to their individual needs. They highly value flexibility and adaptability in terms of creating and designing the quality space that will inspire. As indicated in the Haworth Report, common practices may include the following:

- involvement in the workplace design process and giving some freedom to choose personal items to be installed in the workstation,
- opportunity to control workspace lighting, shading, temperature,
- adjustable ergonomic furniture,
- computer displays aligned with users horizontal line of sigh,
- technology-integrated devices e.g. soft seats with build-in power sockets, various storage options, locker, day box, mobile storage units or pedestals,
- round tables to create a sense of equality and closeness, transparent or semi--transparent meeting room walls, collaborative furniture arranged at a 90 degree angle, open plan space layout,
- social spaces for better connection and communication,
- relax space e.g. quiet zones, meditation room, soft seat areas,

– spaces of special focus to increase convenience e.g.: Taobao delivery room, mother's room, childcare facilities (Gilbert and Wilson, 2015, pp. 8, 10, 13).

It is crucial to launch a retention programme for Millennials on the very first day of their employment. Millennials want to be given a warm welcome when they come on board. They feel appreciated if they are offered a senior staff member as their mentor, who also introduces them into the company's culture, values and business development plan. On the other hand, they might provide mentoring and coaching support with digital technology. Reverse coaching and/or mentoring are win-win solutions to effectively recognise and motivate Millennials (Krzyzanowska-Celmer, 2019, p. 10).

Millennials in China have clear leadership preferences. The studies on leadership preferences of Chinese Millennials (e.g. Jiang and Hui, 2016; Lin and Sun, 2018; Ren, Xie, Zhu, and Warner, 2018; Yi, Ribbens, and Morgan, 2010; Xie and Chen, 2014) found that Chinese Millennials expect supportive leadership that helps to mitigate negative emotions (Jian and Hui, 2016), as well as participative and coaching leadership (Ren et al., 2018; Xie and Chen, 2014). Millennials look for a manager who is more of a coach and a collaborator to support their career path (Bye, 2018, p. 7).

Values are important job motivational drivers for Millennials. A study of work values across generations in China (Yang et al., 2018) proved that Chinese Millennials showed the highest preference for both extrinsic and intrinsic work values, followed by the Social Reform generation (1967-1981) and the Cultural Revolution generation (before 1966) that scored the lowest. The Millennial cohort exhibits the highest preference, among all generations, for extrinsic work values for both system-related work values (working conditions, pay, fringe benefits, promotion and advancement, job security) and interpersonal-related work values (status, belonging, recognition, appreciation, job friendships). The results with regard to intrinsic work values also show the Millennials rate the highest for performance-related (accomplishment, achievement, competence, personal worth, confidence) and job-related values (ability utilisation, challenging work, decision-making, responsibility, meaningful work). Millennials want to feel they do an important job which matters and is adequately paid. "There is a need to review their pay status against the market after around 1.5 years of service in the company. (…) They should be paid in line with the market if their competency level is sufficient" (Ye, 2006, p. 20). They want to be recognised and praised for their successes and achievements.

Flexible timing is one of the factors that Millennials value highly. They believe that due to technological advances, they can work anytime from anywhere and hate being bound by the standard work time frame. They are the first generation to ask to work from home or remotely. Companies must better utilise smart devices and wireless Internet for the needs of Millennials, who prefer to work even beyond normal working hours when they are not physically present in the office. There are certainly types of jobs that will allow for remote working, which companies should start identifying (Krzyzanowska-Celmer, 2019, p. 10).

9.4. Conclusions

"Millennials will be Millennials no matter what continent they are on" (Gilbert and Wilson, 2015, p. 6). Chinese Millennials, like their peers across the globe, are shaped by the same factors such as technological advancement, the rise and opening of the global economy and virtually unhindered access to the information. The Great Place to Work ® 2020 survey report demonstrated that Millennials seek equity, transparency, flexibility and purpose. They particularly look for the workplace they will be proud to work in (reputation), a job that has a special meaning (purpose), and work activities that will bring them joy (connection) (*Great place to work*…, 2020).

Chinese Millennials are however influenced heavily by national culture, economic reforms and a distinctly different workplace (*Great place to work*…, 2020, p. 6). Three significant shifts ("From Standardised to Personalised, from Hierarchy to Communal, from Escape to Embrace") reshaping the Chinese work environment should be considered by those employers who want to attract, develop and retain Chinese Millennials. There are six key factors that make Chinese Millennials satisfied with the workplace, underpinning the enlisted shifts: personal space, flexibility, equality, teamwork, quality and inspiration (*Great place to work*..., 2020, p. 6). Hence, employers who hire Millennials in China should adjust their people programmes and instruments (EB&recruitment, development, incentive) around these factors.

SUMMARY

The main aim of this book was to show different ways of shaping employees' experiences in organisational and social environments. The national and international perspectives were included to present divergent ways of influencing workers' experiences.

Dorota Molek-Winiarska and Agata Pelc showed the organisational perspective of shaping employees' experience in terms of their well-being at work. During the pandemic, companies focused on increasing their workforce's mental, physical and social well-being to decrease absence and turnover and overcome isolation, health problems related to prolonged sitting, poor diet and lack of physical activity, and work-life imbalance.

Next, Katarzyna Rozbejko undertook the issue of styles of coping with stress within a group of managers in the banking sector. She showed the links between the flexibility of stress management and the effectiveness of managerial work. The findings encourage developing stress management skills by training and HR practices, as well as by shaping the organisational environment in order to use resilience as a resource influencing managerial performance.

The third approach in the process of moulding employees' experiences was described by Anna Rogozińska-Pawełczyk in her theoretical discoures, which considered changes in psychological contracts for gig employees. The author showed that the relationship between gig employees and the company is not purely transactional (payment for task/project). Gig workers seek growth opportunities within the organisation they work for, as well as social interactions. They also want to participate in some organisational decision-making processes. Some main conclusions were drawn from the analyses related to gig workers' autonomy and anonymity, expectations, variety of tasks undertaken, the level of appreciation of their work, and demands from the environment. These conclusions visibly showed huge changes in gig workers' experiences and changes in shaping their organisational environment.

Next, Czesław Zając and Grzegorz Przystarz considered non-standard forms of employment and their impact on job satisfaction. They discussed on the basis of the literature review a huge complexity in relations between job satisfaction and form of employment. Based on the conducted case studies, they found that job satisfaction of the employees did not vary concerning different forms of employment. However, the authors underlined that there were also no differences in wages. This study paints another picture of the influence of some aspects of the organisational environment on forming employee experiences.

Małgorzata Striker and Lena Grzesiak focused on employees' experience with personnel controlling, by investigating some attitudes towards this idea from the accounting and HR perspectives. They found that positive expectations of HR employees concerning controlling were predominant but, at the same time, negative experiences in practice were consistently stressed. A better understanding and usage of personnel controlling may strengthen the position of HRM, and influence the process of shaping the organisational environment to better fit employees' predispositions.

The transition from organisational to international perspective was introduced by Olga Czeranowska. She described the process of shaping employees' experiences on an international level in the context of the pandemic. The author presented a very interesting study based on interviews with Polish migrants working abroad. It was found that they experienced positive aspects of remote work (less distraction, lack of commute problems), but at the same time, their social needs were not fulfilled. Isolation, loneliness, weakening relations with friends and families, as well as blurring the boundary between work and private life, were the most significant negative experiences of Polish migrants working remotely.

In turn, Anna Ścibior-Butrym presented the perspective of Ukrainian migrants (females) who have been experiencing identification with Polish organisations they worked for. On the basis of the interviews, the author indicated three main aspects of identification – the feeling of being accepted, the consistency between individual and organisational identity, and the sense of loyalty towards the company.

Even wider perspectives of migrants' experiences are disclosed in the chapter devoted to expatriates. Gabriela Strzelec showed not only the trends, forms and reasons for expatriates' migration, but also described their characteristics in relation to generations. The author found that expatriates from Generations X, Y, and Z have significantly changed the labour market. Each of them differs in terms of their expectations towards the employers, and their mutual perception. The differences in their experiences partly explain the generation gap, and challenge companies to create and change environmental conditions to fulfil these expectations.

One of these generations – Millennials – was described by Magdalena Krzyzanowska-Celmer, who pointed to challenges for an employer (especially in a gig economy) to minimise retention and encourage this group of workers to stay and be engaged at work. According to the author, Millennials in China are the best-educated generation and global luxury consumers. They are highly entrepreneurial, tech savvy, very creative and ready to migrate. They look for personalisation, horizontal management and comfortable workplaces. They expect rapid career progression, independence and a creative, challenging environment. Hence, employers, especially HR services, have to use diverse instruments to retain them, and maintain their engagement.

The diversity of the presented theoretical and empirical studies devoted to shaping employees' experiences in different conditions reflects the speed and intensity of the social and work changes in domestic and international markets. It may be an inspiration for both scientists and practitioners to provide better solutions in different areas of organisational and social environments.

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From a review:

"When reading the monograph (…), the reader is presented with a collection of interesting and innovative contents, diverse and yet at the same time addressing the very same sphere of considerations which regard changes, the conditions and the results of these changes in terms of the impact of contemporaneity and of the surrounding turbulence in the 2020s, which concern the field of the management of human resources. In my (the reviewer's) opinion, this monograph should be recognised as both necessary and relevant because – due to its presentation of many highly topical and important determinants regarding the impact of the current threats and factors shaping the employee attitudes in a contemporary organisation and its environment – it undoubtedly provides encouragement for a discussion on the present condition of an organisation, the role of its human capital, and in particular, the threats existing in its environment. In the majority of the chapters, the grounds for a scientific debate are based on the considerations dedicated to numerous aspects which can optimise the quality of decisions related to the management of human resources. The variety of the fields of research presented in the reviewed monograph creates a stimulating and unique combination of studies, which despite the apparent diffusion of topics present a common feature, namely the aspect of analysis and reflection on the attitudes and behaviour of modern employees in the unpredictable and difficult times of everyday organisational and social practice (…). This constitutes an undisputable contribution to this discipline."

dr hab. Tomasz Kawka, prof. UG
University of Gdańsk

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