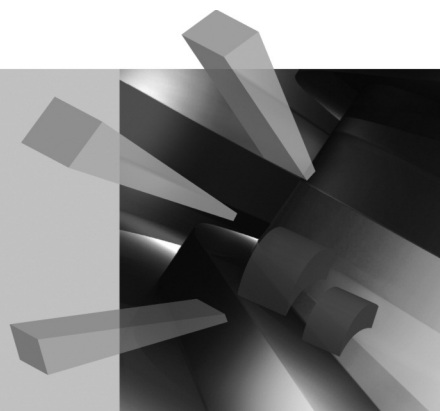# Human and work in a changing organisation. Management oriented on the employee interests

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Streszczenia

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THE INDICATIONS OF SUBJECTIVITY OF AN EMPLOYEE IN THE CHANGING ORGANISATION

Summary: The notion of subjectivity and the subjective role of an employee within the process of contemporary problems of competition among enterprises have been theoretically analysed. The pressure of constant changes is mostly implied by the changeability of the environment and functioning of an organisation under the conditions of risk and uncertainty. The main thesis of the article relies on the statement that in contemporary changing organisations there are premises for the subjectification of an employee.

Keywords: subjectivity, innovations, creativity, development of an organisation, change.

1. Introduction

In theory and practice of management, an employee is perceived as a rational person (*homo oeconomicus*), which consequently means the philosophy regarding a compliance of employee's attitudes and behaviours with formal organisational patterns that mainly encompass effectiveness, impersonality, and functioning efficiency. The identified philosophy regarding the compliance of attitudes and behaviours of an employee with formal organisational patterns relies consequently on the supremacy of subordination relations within the process of functioning of an organisation. This supremacy, which expresses a definite reality within an organisation and/or its environment, remains in close relations with an employee. An employee, who is aiming at a concrete model or ideal, expresses his or her own reality recognised within an organisation or/and its environment. Consequently, there is a main problem whether we should prefer an ideal employee shaped by knowledge and standards along with a complementary significance of a real employee or the other way round, a real employee along with a complementary significance of an ideal employee shaped by knowledge and standards. Assuming one of the opinions as opposite, without a complementary attitude towards the subjectivity of an employee in a changing organisation, it poses certain difficulties.

The aim of the study is to provide answers to the aforementioned problems by means of analysing the category of subjectivity as a reason-oriented aspects of de-

velopment of a contemporary organisation. The identification of determinants (conditions) of the employee's subjectivity should rely on the analysis of selected theoretical attitudes and empirical studies, performed on the basis of small and medium enterprises in the subregion of Tarnobrzeg, in Podkarpackie Voivodeship.

2. Employee's subjectivity – essence and significance

Subjectivity means a creative and causal role of a human by means of his or her personal causativeness, i.e., conscious activity, during which humans are initiators, the activity source results from their own values and aims. The tasks and the manners of their implementation result from individual preferences of an individual and are connected with his or her own desires. A human being is the creator of such actions and states [Tomaszewski 1985, p. 60].

The aforementioned problem of whether we deal with an employee who reasonably creates his or her behaviours or remain subordinate to standards and control maintains a direct factual connection with the evolution of the view that along with the development of an organisation, there is a process of substitution of material aims by the aims that are little quantified or even less quantified as well as reaching the ethical, aesthetic, and intellectual infrastructure of an employee, organisation, and its environment. This evolution-based view has its justification that an employee is naturally capable of autonomous formulating of the aims as he or she is a thinking individual, acting and able to make decisions. An employee has a capacity of conscious and aimed acting, expressing his or her subjectivity, which remains in a complementary and/or competitive system towards subjectivity as a whole [Jaremczuk 1999, pp. 17-18].

In theory and practice of management, the application character of subjectivity with reference to the subjectivity of an employee was recognised by B. Haus claiming that subjectivity[1] of an employee is mostly noticeable within an organic team [Haus 2004, pp. 431-432]. Here, we have equality of all team members. Operation of an assembly line makes a human similar to a gear of a machine, which means that it makes him or her more objectified. However, when his or her work relies on steering and control of the line, it is more independent – this is what develops the entire process. An enterprise with a greater number of a hierarchy structure creates the conditions for objectification of a human more than an enterprise with a flat structure. Each additional level is another authority that aims at subordinating people more than making colleagues with them. The smaller number of ranks, with the same rate of employment, is a greater range of management and it provides the conditions for greater independence of employees.

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[1] G.H. Mead claims that subjective I is what, to some extent, it is identified with. As a consequence, it is a reaction of an organism to other attitudes; these attitudes are organised subjective I, which reacts as subjective I. Subjective I and objective I – pursuant to the view of G.H. Mead – forms personality [Mead 1975, pp. 243-248].

Asking about the idea of subjectivity, it is indispensible to ask a question about the subject, as subjectivity is the thing which constitutes the subject. The subject should be mostly understood as the things that may refer to us [Ostrowski 1999, p. 193]. The subject aspires – as J. Lipiec writes – to self-contentedness, which means that it has to exist itself, if itself, not with anything else or through anything else. It is a guarantee for its existence or broader: they owe themselves as they are. Then they become the subject of their existence [Lipiec 1997, p. 12]. Being the subject of acquiring may be feasible when there is the subject of acquiring. We know that, in advance, as claimed by J. Lipiec, it is good to be the subject and it is bad to be the object. Subjectivity of a human within an organisation – according to B. Haus – relies on the fact that a person cannot use their capacity of a free man within certain limits defined by an organisation and such a person becomes a tool within the organisation hierarchy – is a real human who may be freely defined [Haus 2004, p. 430]. Using authority of a free man indicates that every person – as maintained by K. Bolesta-Kukułka – is equipped with a unique personality, has various interests, the system of values, intelligence, stress endurance, temperament, etc. People does not base their behaviours merely on objective facts, but also on their interpretations (imaginations) which are shaped in both the process of cognition and emotional experiences [Bolesta-Kukułka 2003, p. 108]. The role of people within an organisation is also emphasised by T. Peters, who analyses contemporary innovativeness of an enterprise by means of subjectification of employees within an enterprise [Peters 1997]. It is advised to aim at changing the awareness of an employee, i.e., transferring a person having a given position into a person that is fully engaged in the activity of an enterprise. The changes in the sphere of subjectivity would be connected with new managerial roles in the scope of preparing employees to constant changes and increasing the flexibility of an organisation. In practice of management, it means that an innovativeness imperative exerts various organisational connotations. So as the team was encouraged to seek innovative solutions, the entrepreneurship culture should be also implemented [Kaliszczak 2011, p. 181]. At present, the issue of subjectivity is significant in the assessment of the value of human resources in order to explain the determinants of the development of an organisation.

3. Determinants for shaping the sense of employee's subjectivity – selected study results[2]

The process of employee's subjectification has a co-existent character with expressed owners' attitudes or the roles of managers in bigger enterprises. It is about creating an organisation that is friendly to people while shaping the sense of causativeness

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[2] The analysis included small and medium enterprises in the subregion of Tarnobrzeg; the studies had a questionnaire character, encompassed randomly selected enterprises and were performed in 2008 and 2009, among owners and employees.

and responsibility and, what is more important, in the aspect of the market competition of an enterprise – creativity and innovativeness. As claimed by A. Kaleta, in the face of complex and rapidly-changing reality, creating a long-term uniqueness and originality justifies the possibilities of development [Kaleta 2010, pp. 91-92].

The direction of changes in the sphere of subjectification of an employee may be identified by recognising the values which are observable within an organisation. With reference to the concept of P. E. Slater and W. G. Bennis, it indicates the need for defining internationalised values which govern the behaviours of employees under the conditions of constant changeability of a situation [Jaremczuk 2011, p. 22]. The values[3] were identified in small and medium enterprises,[4] and their results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Owners' behaviours towards employees and environment participants (%).

Description	Yes	No	No opinion
Communication with employees "top-bottom" and "bottom-top"	79	17	4
In contact with environment participants complete and free communication is the most important	81	16	3
In case of a conflict I seek a consensus with employees	71	18	11
In case of a conflict propose a compromise	56	36	2
In case of a conflict resign for the benefit of environment participants	25	64	11
In case of a conflict I am usually right in relation to employees and environment participants	31	55	14
I delegate more and more tasks on employees and they are fully responsible for their performance	53	42	5
I delegate more and more tasks on employees but I am co-responsible for their performance	66	30	4
Employees eagerly engage in the tasks for the enterprise as they believe that the success of the enterprise is connected with their personal success	73	25	2
I try to call the employees less formally, I am interested in their personal situation, not only their work	70	28	2
I totally trust my employees and their responsibility for the quality of performed work	70	27	3

Source: authors' own study based on the survey research.

The obtained results allow confirming the shape of the conditions for subjectification of employees in the process of gradual internalisation of values performed

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[3] The basis for differentiation relied on the following selected values: 1) full and free communication, regardless of a position and authority; 2) consensus as the conflict solution, instead of a compromise or concession under pressure; 3) creating employee relations by changing an individual effort regarding cooperation and succession of responsibility delegation into co-responsibility.

[4] For a broader description of these problems see Kaliszczak [2009, pp. 603-610].

by owners. Proper decision-making under the conditions of changeability of the environment, the entrepreneurs connect with disposing interpersonal skills used in the process of subjectification of employees and creating effective communication with environment participants.

The sense of subjectivity is the expression of engagement of an employee in an organisation. In the opinion of the employees, engagement is the function of their satisfaction with work, which shapes many factors, but what is the most important is to properly satisfy various needs of employees (social, material, self-development, needs in the scope of safe and comfortable working conditions – 56% of the indications). More than one third of the surveyed (34%) noticed that the condition for engagement is mostly the recognition of employees' needs by the management board. It seems that the starting condition for the process of subjectification is knowledge how to provide an opportunity for an employee to use his or her position in total. Almost half of the surveyed (47%) recognises the value of trust among organisation participants as the source for a proper atmosphere at work and for one quarter of the respondents' independence of performing tasks has a main significance. Appreciation for creative attitudes is an important element for almost one quarter of the respondents and positive relations among colleagues for 28% of the surveyed.

The research in the scope of shaping the condition within an organisation favours creativity and innovativeness of employees and indicates the most significant factors, which would decisively contribute to improvement of shaping the atmosphere of creativity and innovativeness [Kaliszczak 2010, pp. 167-185].[5] Employees' ideas should be subject to focusing attention as well as creation of an openness atmosphere – as maintained by 61.2% of the respondents Moreover, the persons generating new ideas must be treated in a friendly manner – 52.5% of the indications. This demand seems to be justified against the opinion of 50.7% of the surveyed as an employee is afraid of presenting his or her ideas as he or she does not want to be underestimated by his or her boss. More than half of the surveyed (51.2%) notice a need for creating a motivation system for unconventional solutions. It was also emphasised that there is a need for directing attention of the management to listening to suggestions and ideas of employees in the course of discussions (35.0%). The significant issue is an increase in self-efficiency and responsibility of employees, which was indicated by one third of the respondents (32.5%). As a result, the idea of freedom and subjectivity of employees (actions and influence) as a factor increasing the motivation of actions includes creation. More than one third of the respondents (35.6%) indicated a need for creating simple opportunities for providing ideas. However, the lowest percentage of the respondents claimed that creating an innovative organisational culture should rely on assuming innovations as an enterprise value (27.6%). Generally, the employees greatly indentify their proclaimed values as the coincident with the

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[5] Pilot studies were performed in the form of a questionnaire interviews in 100 randomly selected organisations in the subregion of Tarnobrzeg, in Podkarpackie Voivodeship.

aims and values of the team (40%) than for an entire organisation (28.7%). Among many various values, to the greatest extent, the respondents value hard working in both life and at work (60%) and creativity and inventiveness. Next positions were occupied by knowledge (45%), responsibility (40%), working with a team and in a team (31.5%), optimism in action, positive thinking (35.6%). Innovativeness was indicated only by 3.75% of the surveyed.

Subjectification of an employee means assuming their individuality, uniqueness, and rank, which is connected with their action in the changing reality. This indepen-dent existence and being themselves of an employee in the act of freedom is one of the most important determinants of human subjectivity. This treatment of an employee, as a free and autonomous in their decisions, relies on affirmation of entrepreneurship by means of which an employee brings various changes into an organisation [Jaremczuk 2007, pp. 14-16].

4. Conclusion

Under the conditions of changes brought in contemporary organisations, the issue of subjectivity of an employee constitutes a significant factor in the process of management of employees. Consequently, the main reflection in the aforementioned considerations and empirical studies relies on the fact that we should prefer a real employee along with a complementary significance of an ideal employee shaped by knowledge and standards. The category of subjectivity in this meaning constitutes a casual aspect of the development of a contemporary organisation, the organisation that changes.

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PRZESŁANKI PODMIOTOWOŚCI PRACOBIORCY W ZMIENIAJĄCEJ SIĘ ORGANIZACJI

Streszczenie: W artykule poddano analizie teoretycznej pojęcie podmiotowości oraz podmiotowej roli pracobiorcy w procesie wyjaśniania współczesnych problemów konkurowania przedsiębiorstw. Presja ciągłych zmian implikowana jest przede wszystkim zmiennością otoczenia oraz funkcjonowaniem organizacji w warunkach ryzyka i niepewności. Główną tezą artykułu jest twierdzenie, że w zmieniającej się współcześnie organizacji identyfikowane są przesłanki upodmiotowienia pracobiorcy.

Słowa kluczowe: podmiotowość, innowacje, kreatywność, rozwój organizacji, zmiana.