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EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT IN A MANUFACTURING COMPANY, OPERATING IN CENTRAL POLAND

The paper presents the results of the study, aimed at identification of employees' affective involvement to a large Polish company, operating on cosmetics market for over 20 years. It employs more than 300 persons, and distributes its products over 79 countries of the world. The analysis used *research desk* method and survey based on individual questionnaires. The level of engagement was measured and analyzed on the basis of a staff survey.

In the course of analyzing the results, a change in the structure of the answers about the factors that form commitment, was evaluated, in particular, depending on the length of seniority in the company and respondent's belonging to a certain professional group. Employees believe that they are committed to work and perform it enthusiastically (75%), trust both their managers (more than 70%) and colleagues (more than 80%), they feel appreciated and needed (about 70%). However, only 20% identify themselves with the company well enough to participate in the meetings organized outside its headquarters.

The study has revealed a relationship between affective involvement and the length of seniority, as well as between commitment and the respondent's membership in a particular professional group. Employees with the shortest seniority (≤ 1 year) are the most involved in their work and it is more inspiring for them. At the same time, this group shows the smallest sense of identification with the company. The group with more than 10 years seniority shows the least enthusiasm for work. The lowest affective involvement is demonstrated by production workers. The obtained results allow us to formulate hypotheses, which verification requires further research. The analysis should include the problem of effective tools to stimulate employment of the staff with high experience and of senior personnel.

Key words: affective commitment, questioning, professional group.

JEL Classification: A12, J29, M10.

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ЗАЛУЧЕНІСТЬ ПЕРСОНАЛУ У ВИРОБНИЧІЙ КОМПАНІЇ, ЩО ДІЄ НА ТЕРИТОРІЇ ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЇ ПОЛЬЩІ

В роботі представлені результати дослідження щодо виявлення рівня афективної залученості персоналу великої компанії, що діє на території Центральної Польщі. Компанія представлена на ринку косметики більше 20 років; в ній працює понад 300 співробітників, продукція реалізується в 79 країнах світу. В ході аналізу використовувався метод *research desk* (кабінетне дослідження) і опитування на основі індивідуальних анкет. Рівень залученості було виміряно і проаналізовано на основі опитування працівників.

В ході аналізу результатів оцінювалося зміна структури відповідей щодо факторів, що формують ангажованість, зокрема, в залежності від стажу роботи в компанії і приналежності респондента до певної професійної групи. Як вважають самі співробітники, більшість їх віддані роботі і виконують її з ентузіазмом (75%), довіряють як своїм керівникам (більше 70%), так і колегам (більше 80%), відчують себе потрібними і такими, яких цінують (близько 70%). Проте, всього 20% ототожують себе з компанією настільки, щоб брати участь у зустрічах, організованих за межами її штаб-квартири.

Дослідження виявило наявність взаємозв'язку між афективною залученням і стажем роботи, а також між ним і приналежністю респондента до певної професійної групи. Показано, що афективне залучення

знижується з ростом стажу роботи. Співробітники з найменшим стажем роботи (≤ 1 року) є найбільш відданими роботі. У той же час ця група демонструє найменший рівень отождоження з компанією. Група з більш ніж 10-річним стажем проявляє найменший ентузіазм по відношенню до роботи. Найнижчий рівень афективної залученості у представників виробничого персоналу. Отримані результати дозволяють формулювати гіпотези, перевірка яких потребує подальших досліджень. Аналіз повинен включати проблему ефективних інструментів стимулювання зайнятості співробітників з високим стажем і працівників, зайнятих на керівних посадах.

Ключові слова: афективне залученість персоналу, анкетування, професійна група.

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ВОВЛЕЧЕННОСТЬ ПЕРСОНАЛА В ПРОИЗВОДСТВЕННОЙ КОМПАНИИ, ДЕЙСТВУЮЩЕЙ НА ТЕРРИТОРИИ ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ ПОЛЬШИ

В работе представлены результаты исследования по выявлению уровня аффективной вовлеченности персонала крупной компании, действующей на территории Центральной Польши. Компания представлена на рынке косметики более 20 лет; в ней работает более 300 сотрудников, продукция реализуется в 79 странах мира. В ходе анализа использовался метод *research desk* (кабинетное исследование) и опрос на основе индивидуальных анкет. Уровень вовлеченности был измерен и проанализирован на основе анкетирования сотрудников.

В ходе анализа результатов оценивалось изменение структуры ответов по поводу факторов, формирующих ангажированность, в частности, в зависимости от стажа работы в компании и принадлежности респондента к определенной профессиональной группе. Как полагают сотрудники, они 75% привержены работе и выполняют ее с энтузиазмом (75%), доверяют как своим руководителям (более 70%), так и коллегам (более 80%), чувствуют себя востребованными и ценными (около 70%). Тем не менее, всего 20% идентифицируют себя с компанией настолько, чтобы участвовать во встречах, организованных за пределами ее штаб-квартиры.

Исследование выявило наличие взаимосвязи между аффективным вовлечением и стажем работы, а также между ним и принадлежностью респондента к определенной профессиональной группе. Показано, что аффективное вовлечение снижается с ростом стажа работы. Сотрудники с наименьшим стажем работы (≤ 1 года) являются наиболее преданными работе. В то же время эта группа демонстрирует наименьший уровень отождествления с компанией. Группа с более чем 10-летним стажем проявляет наименьший энтузиазм по отношению работе. Самый низкий уровень аффективной вовлеченности у представителей производственного персонала. Полученные результаты позволяют формулировать гипотезы, проверка которых требует дальнейших исследований. Анализ должен включать проблему эффективных инструментов стимулирования занятости сотрудников с высоким стажем и работников, занятых на руководящих должностях.

Ключевые слова: аффективное вовлечение персонала, анкетирование, профессиональная группа.

JEL Classification: A12, J29, M10.

Introduction. High work efficiency is one of competitive advantages. Its achievement is possible due to construction and sustaining long-term employee commitment/involvement. The aim of this study is to present the results of research, the purpose of which is to evaluate affective employees' involvement in a Polish industrial enterprise, dealing on cosmetic market. The research was carried out using research desk method and survey technique with individual questionnaires given to respondents.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Attitude towards work may be different. However, one of the most interesting and initiating the largest number of studies is devoted to "organizational involvement"¹⁵. It could be generally defined as attachment, commitment or affection of a person to an organization.

Commitment doesn't indicate employee's happiness. It is possible to be happy at work, but this isn't an equivalent of hard and effective work for the good of organization. Some facilities, offered by

¹⁵ In internet search engine entry „organizational involvement” has 11 000 000 positions in Polish and 201 000 000 in English.

companies could make their workers joyful, but it does not affect the increase in their commitment to what they do.

The concept of involvement is not the same as job satisfaction, which is "a pleasant or positive emotional state resulting from the assessment of your own work or work experience." (Locke, 1976). It is possible to measure it regarding five aspects such as satisfaction from: salary, job, opportunity of promotion, chief as well as workmates.

So what is employees involvement? It's an emotional employee's commitment to a company and its goals. This employee's commitment is valuable for business. It means that worker doesn't work only for money or promotion opportunity, but in the name of achieving purposes by the enterprise. Worker's attention to a company causes that he/she voluntarily takes additional effort in favour of an enterprise (What Is Employee Engagement..., 2012).

Employee involvement is extremely crucial, because it leads to market-based results improvement through increase of quality and services effectivity. It also leads to the growth of customers' satisfaction, which brings increase in sales caused by the fact that a satisfied customer willingly uses the service again and recommends it to friends. As a result, the level of profit of an organization increases, which results in the return of shares, i.e. increase in share prices (What Is Employee Engagement..., 2012).

The biggest contribution to research on organizational involvement should be attributed to Mowday and his associates (Mowday, Porter, & Steer, 1982). In their opinion organizational involvement is individual's preoccupation with organization as well as identification with it. This is reflected in the questions included in the questionnaire OCQ (Organizational Commitment Questionnaire). Questions involve three areas: strong confidence in organization's goals and their acceptance, willingness to sustaining efforts in favour of organization as well as strong desire concerning organizational membership maintenance. Involvement transformation in a multidimensional scale was accompanied by studying other work aspects than those, on which Mowday and his associates concentrated their research. Crucial investment in development multivariate approach to organizational engagement is attributed to Meyer and his co-workers (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). Meyer detected, that Becker's understanding of engagement is similar to Mowday's conception. Becker perceives engagement in the context of extra benefits such as pensionable privilege or dependence of reward on job seniority. These benefits are acquired during work and their consequence is making it difficult to leave the organization. Meyer and his co-workers have combined two mentioned above components, giving two involvement dimensions and have added a third one. In this way they received three dimensions called: affective, continuance (duration) and normative ones.

"Affective engagement is connected with level, how individual identifies with the organization. The commitment of duration is more calculated and concerns individual need to continue working for organization. Normative engagement is conditioned by some social conventions determining the appropriate degree of devotion for the organization. Summarise, people remain in enterprise, because they want this (affect), they need this (continuing) or because they feel, that they should stay there (norm)." (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993).

"Affective engagement is – in Meyer's view – conditioned by the level of satisfaction individual needs and expectations of organizations. This kind of engagement remains in close association with psychology contract." (Makin, Cooper, & Cox, 2000). The latter is taken by Schein as unwritten expectations repertory, which function all the time between every member of the company and different managers and other people in this organization.

Factor, which builds affective engagement is doubtlessly an implementation in practise of empowerment conception, which states, that employee engagement in making decisions processes enables him/her as well taking responsibility for own activities. As a result the meaning of belonging is built and strengthened, relationship is improved, employees' commitment and productivity increase. Introduction and application of empowerment conception requires both organizational climate based on trust and undertaking such actions, as informing about company results, awarding prizes related to results, or submitting knowledge on an ongoing basis, which allows understanding the firm situation (Stankiewicz-Mróz, 2015).

"The most important affective engagement determinant is level of individual meeting expectations considering organization. Equally important determinants are opportunity of reference in company, having confidence in organization and clarity of the role. Research also shows, that

individual experience while first few months of employment is the most crucial element in affective engagement developing.” (Makin, Cooper, & Cox, 2000). Thus a conclusion that affective engagement of employees depends on positive experiences in organization, especially in early stage of professional job.

Engagement in work in effect is a lack of occupational burnout and emotional exhaustion, which the symptom is depersonalization, cynicism and negative feelings about work. Building and maintenance of long-run affective engagement is very important in case of sectors and organizations, whose workers in a specific way are at risk of occupational burnout syndrome (Stankiewicz-Mróz, 2018).

The goal and the main results of the study. The main goal of the study was identification the level of affective employee involvement in cosmetic industry production enterprise, functioning in central Poland, which is operating on the market for more than 20 years, employs over 300 workers and keeps the distribution of its offered products in 79 countries around the world.

This research checks a hypothesis H.1: in the examined enterprise workers are distinguished by high level of affective engagement. Research was conducted using survey technique with individually given questionnaires. Research sample involved 83 employees, which didn't meet a representativeness requirement. Selection of respondents depended on their accessibility.

Social-demographic analysis of respondents. 83 questionnaires were distributed among employees, and the same number was returned. However initial analysis showed that only 65 questionnaires contain complete information and therefore only those were subjected to further analysis.

A research analysis of a given sample was carried out in terms of stadnard socio-demographic features such as gender, age, work experience in the company, affiliation to the professional group, and education. The results are presented in fig. 1–4. From 65 survey participants there were 39 women and 26 men.

The second point in the metric was the range of respondents' age. We can see, that 12 examined persons were less than 30 years, 22 – were of 31– 40 years, 14 were between 41 and 50, and 17 were older than 50 (fig. 1).

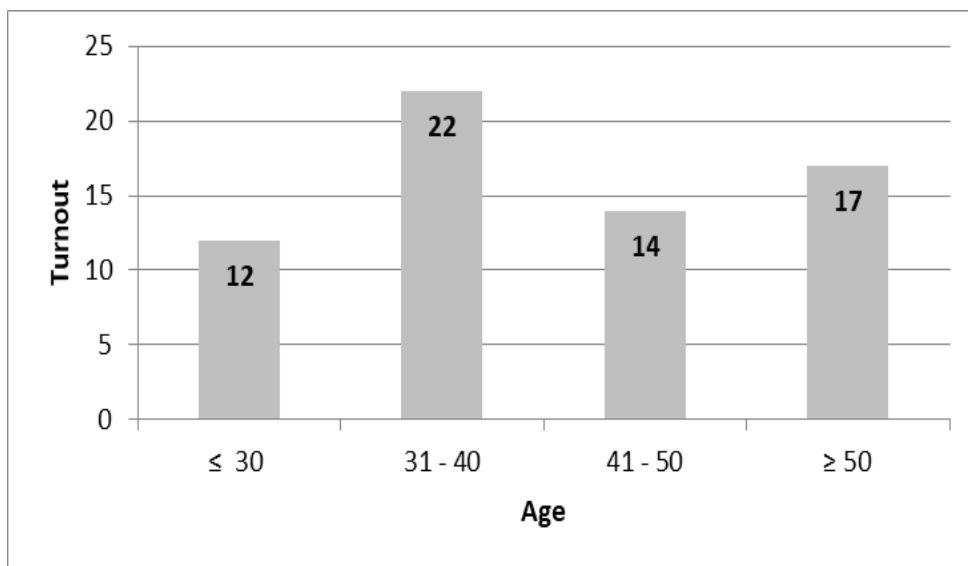


Fig. 1. Structure of studied population on account of age.

Source: Own study

The third point in the metric was to determine the length of seniority in the company. 7 respondents had seniority shorter than a year, 14 – worked one year or two, 23 – worked in the company from 3 to 5 years, 10 – from 6 to 10 years, and 11 people over 10 years (fig. 2).

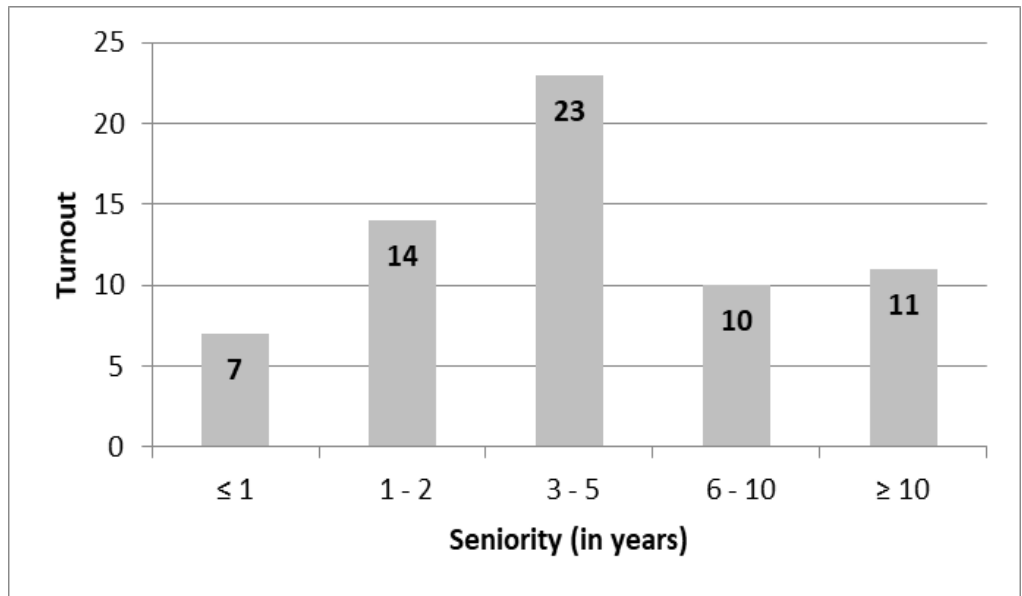


Fig. 2. Structure of studied population on account of seniority in company.

Source: Own study

In the fourth position of the questionnaire respondents specified their affiliation to an occupational group, which they belong to. In this research the dominant category were production workers – 44 employees. In comparison with the group of administration employees (13 members) and management team to which only 8 people belonged (fig. 3).

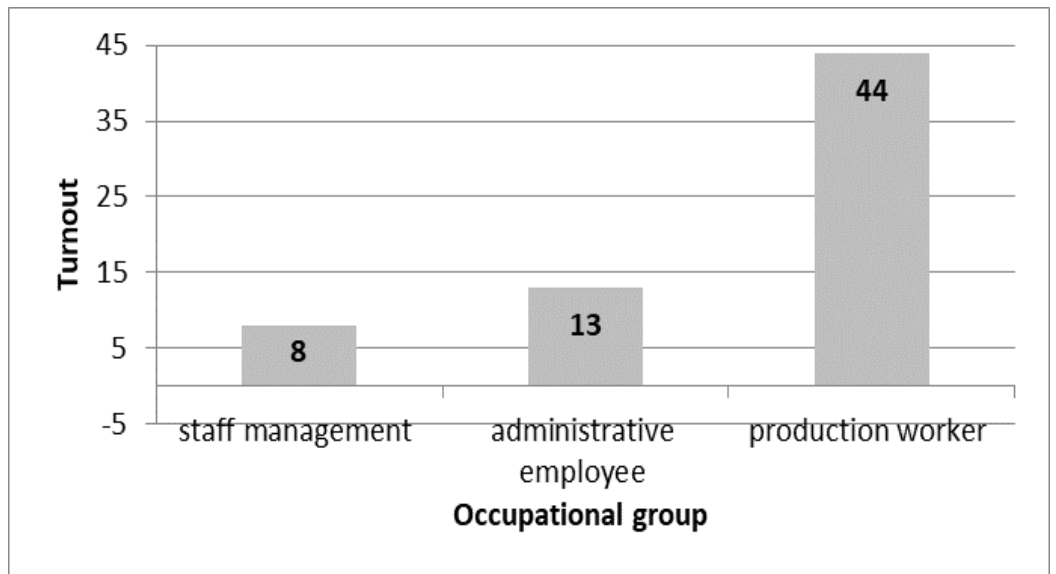


Fig. 3. Structure of studied population on account of occupational group.

Source: Own study

One of the crucial social-demographic features, related to the examined subject is education. The structure of education is presented on fig.4. Answers were as follows: 19 people had university degree, 10 – secondary education, 23 – secondary vocational, 12 – basic vocational and only one – elementary education.

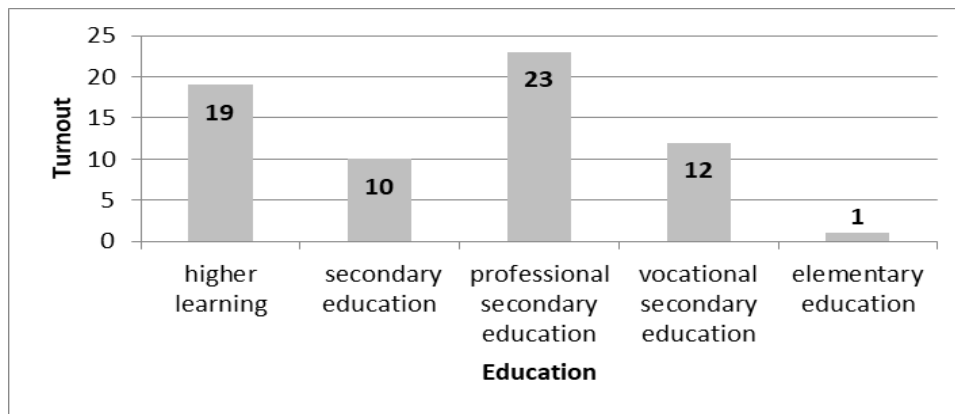


Fig. 4. Structure of studied population on account of education.

Source: Own study

The above-described group has passed the survey, based on the questionnaire containing 9 questions and based on Likert scale of answers to express the extent to which they agree with the statements given in the questionnaire. Employees were asked about selected factors influencing the level of affective involvement in the company.

Basic assumption was that the factors, building involvement are:

- inspiring work;
- enthusiasm for work;
- trust in superiors;
- trust in associates;
- undertaking non-obligatory actions for the good of the company;
- identification with the firm by participation in the meetings, organized outside its walls;
- sense of supervisor's care about employees and of respect of their rights;
- sense of being appreciated and needed;
- personal contacts between workers.

The structure of respondents' answers is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Structure of replies concerning engagement building factors

Selected factors building affective engagement	Structure of replies [%]				
	completely agree	partly agree	no judgement	partly disagree	completely disagree
Inspiring work	26%	48%	15%	11%	0%
Enthusiasm for work	45%	32%	14%	9%	0%
Trust in superiors	34%	40%	15%	6%	5%
Trust in associates	31%	51%	11%	8%	0%
Undertaking non-obligatory actions for the good of the company	65%	29%	3%	2%	2%
Identification with the firm by participation in the meetings, organized outside its walls	9%	18%	26%	23%	23%
Sense of supervisor's care about employees and of respect of their rights	32%	34%	17%	6%	11%
Sense of being appreciated and needed	14%	52%	12%	12%	9%
Personal contacts between workers	26%	32%	38%	3%	0%

Source: Own study

The above results show that the majority of employees agree (partly or completely) with the statement that in their workplaces there are factors building affective engagement. The most workers partly agreed with occurrence factors i.e.: inspiring work, trust in superiors and associates along with

a sense of supervisor's care about employees and of respect of their rights. The percentage of employees, who were of this opinion fluctuate between 34% and 52%. As for enthusiasm for work and undertaking non-obligatory actions for the good of the company, the majority of workers completely agree with the statement about the presence of these factors. The percentage of such answers was high and amounted to 45% and 65% respectively. Employees' opinions on identification with the firm by participation in the meetings, organized outside its walls and personal contacts between workers, are divided. The percentage of respondents' choices wasn't as varied as in the previous cases and no clear trends are visible. The majority of workers had no opinion about these aspects.

Comparative analysis. Two comparisons were made to check how the structure of the answers on the questions about the factors, which build affective engagement, will change depending on the length of seniority in the company (Table 2) and on affiliation to occupational group (Table 3). For that purpose the sum of the answers "completely agree" and "partly agree" in relation to the amount of respondents from the relevant group (occupational group or on particular length of seniority in company) was calculated. The result was presented in the percentage form.

Table 2
Structure of replies concerning engagement building factors depending on the length of seniority in the company

Selected factors building affective engagement	Structure of replies depending on the length of seniority in the company [in years]				
	≤ 1 [n = 7]	1 – 2 [n = 14]	3 – 5 [n = 23]	6 – 10 [n = 10]	≥ 10 [n = 11]
Inspiring work	86% (9%)	71% (15%)	70% (25%)	80% (12%)	73% (12%)
Enthusiasm for work	86% (9%)	93% (20%)	83% (30%)	80% (12%)	45% (8%)
Trust in superiors	86% (9%)	78% (17%)	78% (28%)	40% (6%)	73% (12%)
Trust in associates	86% (9%)	86% (18%)	87% (31%)	70% (11%)	73% (12%)
Undertaking non-obligatory actions for the good of the company	100% (11%)	86% (18%)	96% (34%)	90% (14%)	100% (17%)
Identification with the firm by participation in the meetings, organized outside its walls	14% (2%)	29% (6%)	30% (11%)	30% (5%)	27% (5%)
Sense of supervisor's care about employees and of respect of their rights	71% (8%)	64% (14%)	60% (22%)	70% (11%)	64% (11%)
Sense of being appreciated and needed	86% (9%)	78% (17%)	43% (15%)	80% (12%)	73% (12%)
Personal contacts between workers.	100% (11%)	71% (15%)	52% (23%)	60% (9%)	55% (9%)

Source: Own study

Due to irregular amount of people in the relevant groups symbol "n" is used to indicate the number of respondents in a given group. In order to facilitate the comparison of received results the percentage amount was added in brackets under each value, showing the proportion of answers in relation to the number of all respondents.

The analysis allows estimating the relationship between the preference of the factors, building employees engagement and seniority. Workers who had seniority lower than one year made up the least numerous group consisting of only 7 persons. They agreed with the statements about occurrence of all the factors listed above. The percentage of their answers ranged from 71% to even 100%. Probably such a result is triggered by the emotions connected with a new job. However we

could observe in this group a clear deviation in case of answering on questions about identification with firm by participation in the meetings, organized outside its walls. In this case the proportion of answers is extremely small and amounts only 14%. It seems to be a normal situation caused by beginning job in a new place, environment and with newly-met people.

In this research there were 14 employees, whose seniority ranged from 1 to 2 years. Here we could see slight changes compared to the first workers group. In case of almost all the factors we may mark a decline in the answers percentage. It could be caused by the fact, that a worker loses his enthusiasm associated with getting a new job and slowly gets used to perform duties. An employee may also think that supervisors pay less attention to him/her than when he/she was a newly employed worker. On the other hand we observed increase of the answer's percentage for such factors, as enthusiasm for work and identification with the firm by participation in the meetings, organized outside its walls. Growth of enthusiasm could be a result of worker's proficiency in fulfilling professional duties, whereas greater identification may be explained by the desire to establish relationships with associates in the company.

The largest group consists of employees with seniority between 3 and 5 years. In this group is recorded a decrease in the number of the answers on questions about such factors as inspiring work, enthusiasm for work, trust in superiors, sense of supervisor's care about employees and of respect of their rights, sense of being appreciated and needed, personal contacts between workers. We can conjecture that it has to do with routine at work and as for relationships with other associates – there could appear some misunderstandings or disputes. Whereas we can observe increase in case of such factors, as trust associates, undertaking non-obligatory actions for the good of the company and identification with the firm by participation in the meetings organized outside its walls. It could be caused by establishing good relations with associates as well as by feeling oneself a part of a team.

The next group contains 10 persons with the seniority between 6 to 10 years. We can observe here further downside trend in percentage for such factors as enthusiasm for work, trust in supervisor and associates, undertaking non-obligatory actions for the good of the company – in comparison with the previous group (3–5 years of seniority). On the other hand we see an increase in the percentage of responses for the factors: inspiring work, sense of supervisor's care about employees and of respect of their rights, sense of being appreciated and needed, personal contacts between workers. The reason of that could be sophisticated positive contact with other employees and management due to acquired knowledge, which an employee can share with others.

In the last group there are 10 persons with seniority longer than 10 years. Comparing the answers of these respondents with the previous ones we see a drop in the percentage of responses in the case of such factor as inspiring work, enthusiasm for work, identification with the firm by participation in the meetings organized outside its walls, sense of supervisor's care about employees and of respect of their rights, sense of being appreciated and needed, personal contacts between workers. It is caused probably by monotony and routine work. On the other hand we observe an increase in the percentage of responses about such factors, as trust in supervisor and associates and undertaking non-obligatory actions for the good of the company. This can also be caused by a habit, because these employees will not look for a new workplace. More comfortable for them is to stay in current company, where they know their duties, workmates and supervisors.

From the viewpoint of research goals it was crucial to establish the relationship between the assessment of factors that build commitment and affiliation to a given professional group in the company. It should be noted, that there are much larger disproportions in the number of people included in each group compared to the previous list (Table 3).

Respondents belonging to management staff (8 persons) agreed with the statement about the occurrence of such factors as inspiring work, enthusiasm for work, trust in supervisor and associates, undertaking non-obligatory actions for the good of the company, sense of supervisor's care about employees and of respect of their rights. The percentage of employees, who were of this opinion ranged from 75% even to 100%. A little lower result (63%) was for the last two factors. The fewest respondents agreed with the identification with the company by participating in the meetings, organized outside its walls. It was only 37%. But as we can see, analysing further results it was a general trend for all respondents regardless of their affiliation to a certain professional group.

Table 3

Structure of replies concerning engagement building factors depending on respondents' affiliation to a given professional group

Selected factors building the affective engagement	Structure of responses depending on respondents professional group [%]		
	management staff [n = 8]	administrative employees [n = 13]	production workers [n = 44]
Inspiring work	100% (12%)	77% (15%)	68% (46%)
Enthusiasm for work	75% (9%)	92% (18%)	75% (51%)
Trust supervisor	100% (12%)	69% (14%)	68% (46%)
Trust in associates	87% (11%)	92% (18%)	77% (52%)
Undertaking non-obligatory actions for the good of the company	100% (12%)	100% (20%)	91% (62%)
Identification with the firm by participation in the meetings, organized outside its walls	37% (5%)	38% (8%)	23% (15%)
Sense of supervisor's care about employees and of respect of their rights	87% (11%)	77% (15%)	57% (38%)
Sense of being appreciated and needed	63% (8%)	62% (12%)	68% (46%)
Personal contacts between workers	63% (8%)	92% (18%)	55% (37%)

Source: Own study

Administration staff (13 people) considered their work to be less inspiring compared to the responses of the management group, but they think that they put more enthusiasm into their work performance. Similarly to production workers people who work in administration, have less trust in supervisor than the management staff does – about 69%. The biggest percentage of trust in associates (92%) among the groups, may be a result of that their work is connected with accuracy and big responsibility for the company's fortune. Sense of supervisor's care about employees and of respect of their rights is 77%. Sense of being appreciated and needed is similar for each group and varies within 62–68%. However, this is the group of administration employees that shows the highest percentage of responses regarding personal contacts between employees (92%).

The most numerous group is that of production workers. It includes 44 persons. Moreover it is a group with the lowest percentage of answers with regard to other groups, if we consider all the studied factors except for the sense of being appreciated and needed. It is probably due to the awareness, that they are the foundation of the company, because they are responsible for enterprise production.

Conclusions. The majority of employees are involved in work and do it with enthusiasm. They trust their supervisors as well as their associates. They feel appreciated and needed. They undertake non-obligatory actions for the good of the company. Supervisors respect their rights and care about them. Rarely, however, the respondents agreed with their identification with the firm by participation in the meetings organized outside its walls. It was also difficult for them to specify their personal contacts with other employees (Table 1).

The study has shown that there is a relationship between the length of seniority and commitment (Table 2). Employees with the shortest seniority (≤ 1 year) are the most involved in their work and it is more inspiring for them. At the same time, this group shows the smallest sense of identification with the company. Probably the reason is the fact that they are a part of company for a short time, they know few associates and they had no time for emotional attachment to a workplace. The group with more than 10 years seniority shows the least enthusiasm for work. We can presume that it is caused by a habit and routine.

In its turn, management staff considers their work to be inspiring (Table 3), which may be due to the fact that in this position people face new challenges, thanks to which their work is not

monotonous. They almost absolutely trust their supervisors. This trust between executives is important for the functioning of the whole organization. Administration employees put into their work a lot of energy, but they feel underappreciated in the company. As for production workers, most of them do not feel themselves a part of the company and they do not think that supervisors take care about employees and respect their rights.

To sum up, affective involvement decreases with seniority increasing, and the lowest affective involvement is demonstrated by production workers. This we may hypothesize, on the basis of the present research, however it requires deeper research of the subject.

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