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Editorial

The 9th Eastforum Chemnitz, a biennale conference organized by the Chair for Organisation Studies at Chemnitz University of Technology, took place in September 2009. Tired and bored by the dominance of the success-orientated management research regarding Central and Eastern Europe, we as the organizers decided to provoke a more critical look and to deal with topics almost wholly ignored in mainstream research, such as cultural and ideological cultures, clashes, frictions. Accordingly, the conference was dedicated to the main topic “Conflicts, frictions and paradoxes in CEE Management”. Several papers resulting from this conference, which directly addressed managerial conflicts and clashes in CEE economies, have already been published in the Special Issues of JEEMS (Lang/Rybnikova 2011).

The present issue includes four texts which explore several apparently marginal conflicts and paradoxes of management in CEE countries, since authors are dealing with everyday practices which are not explicitly conflict-laden, but by a closer look turn out as such. The papers included in this issue address paradoxes and conflicts in the context of Central and Eastern European countries on several levels: individuals, organizational practices and organizations as well as on the level of national culture.

In their paper “Conflict and cooperation inducer behaviors in Romanian organizations: followers’ perception” Doina and Gheorghe Alexandru Catana raise the question if conflict-inducing managerial behavior can be traced back to the individual motivation of managers. Thus, the scholars conceptualize conflicts in organizations as a consequence of managerial behavior. Drawing on the GLOBE methodology and rich empirical material, including interviews with CEOs as well as questionnaires with followers in Rumanian firms, the authors explore the correspondences between self-reported motives of CEOs on the one hand and their behaviors as perceived by followers. At least two results of this complex empirical undertaking are intriguing. First, subordinates score their CEOs rather as cooperation-oriented than conflict-oriented. Second, there are no direct correlations between the conflict inducing behavior of managers and their motives. It becomes obvious that inducing conflicts or cooperation in organizations cannot be explained solely by individual motivations of managers; the question deserves much more in-depth observations considering organizational and cultural facets as well.

The second paper written by Alicja Mis focuses on talent management in Polish organizations. Given still high percentages of current emigration of Polish employees, the topic of talent management in Polish organizations is highly relevant since talent management can be instrumental for employee retention as well as commitment of employees. In her study, Alicja offers a thorough analysis of the concept of talent as well as of talent management pointing to the main conceptualizations of talent management (i.e. egalitarian and elitarian tradition). While summarizing and discussing results gained from several empirical studies regarding talent management in Polish organizations, the author demonstrates how diffuse the strategies and practices of employers are. In numerous cases “talent management” is only a masquerading and re-labeling of traditional HRM practices. Critical recommendations made by Alicja Mis regarding talent management can sensitize companies and HRM managers not only in Poland.

The title of the paper by Natalia Spiridonova “Clashes between Western Management and Eastern Reality” hides critical consideration of the popular concept of “national culture”. In an intriguing way the author demonstrates the contradiction of results gained by measuring cultural dimension of “individualism vs. collectivism” in Russia, by drawing on the measures of Hofstede and Ralson et al. (2008). Referring to criticism made by Earley (2006), Natalia delineates several methodological problems of previous measurements of national culture, such as the concentration on the common-level measures instead of focusing on the individual organization or the dominance of the quantitative measures. Instead, the author pleads for the anthropological, local-sensitive perspective on “national culture” which in her view is more relevant as well as more adequate in the global economy nowadays. On the other hand she also defends national culture as “psychological, thus, individual construct”.

In their paper “Cultural profile of Polish students. Directions of change and perspectives for managers” Renata Krzykała-Schaefer and Anna Antczak outline a cultural profile of Polish students and, thus, of the Polish culture. Within the period of four years the authors undertook an empirical study of cultural orientations held by students of Poznan School of Banking. The questionnaire used in this study addresses five cultural dimensions: a) the relationship between human beings and their natural environment, b) fundamentals of relationship between individuals, c) the prime motivation for behaviour, d) the basic of human beings and e) the focus of the time. Empirical findings gained offer several insights: Polish students show very strong and increasing preference for harmony with environment, they highly prefer an individualistic orientation in human relationships, they show a high preference for “thinking” as mode of action in difference to “being” and “doing”; Polish students also increasingly

emphasize “present time” whereas the domination of the “future-orientation” seems to decrease. Not only scholars sketch the colorful profile on the current Polish culture in their paper, they also discuss relevant managerial consequences and ways how to deal with these partly paradoxical results in Polish organizations.

I enjoyed the kaleidoscope-like perspective resulting from the papers and it was a great pleasure for me to edit this issue. I hope the readers will also take pleasure in the final version of this work.

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Chemnitz

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Conflict and cooperation inducer behaviors in Romanian organizations: followers' perception*

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Abstract

The question our paper aims to answer concerns the correlation between the CEO's perceived conflict and cooperation inducer behavior and the CEO's *dominant* motivation. The sample consists of 166 followers and 79 CEOs from Romanian organizations. *GLOBE III C* questionnaire is the basis of creating the *two constructs: conflict inducer* and, respectively, *cooperation inducer* behavior. CEOs motivations (*power, achievement, affiliation and moral responsibility*) are identified based on the CEOs answer to *GLOBE III semi structured interview*. Contrary to our expectations, followers' perception on CEO's conflict inducer and, respectively, cooperation inducer behaviors significantly and positively correlate with *only a few items* of our constructs.

Key words: conflict inducer behavior, cooperation inducer behavior, CEO motivation

Introduction

According to some researchers and consultants in the conflict issue in Romania, it seems that Romanian CEOs are not too concerned with the potential sources of conflict and cooperation, conflict management or conflict *prophylaxis* (Petean, 2004). Romanian consultancy companies found out that in Romanian organizations the most important forms of conflicts are those of interest, structural, values and relationships (<http://business-edu.ro/component/k2/item/1164-rezolvarea-conflictelor-sau-cum-sa-punem-cartile-pe-fata.html>). Most of the conflicts produced in the last time in Romanian companies are *relational conflicts*, backed up by *communication* problems. An interesting finding of consultants is that *at lower levels* management there are fewer, more opened and easier to manage conflicts. Higher levels managers in turn, are confronted with more, complex and

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hidden conflicts (<http://business-edu.ro/component/k2/item/1164-rezolvarea-conflictelor-sau-cum-sa-punem-cartile-pe-fata.html>). Beyond these, Romanian managers do not think the company would get a considerable performance improvement if paying attention to conflict issues. They believe the technical, economic and social problems have a much more importance than behavioral ones for their leadership performance.

Still cannot be neglected that Romanian society was enough tensed in the last 20 years, in all of its areas (economic, social, institutional, moral, political): revolution and miners riots transmitted in direct on TV, ethnical, professional, work conflicts and more recently (2004-2009), open conflicts between the state fundamental institutions (Parliament, Government, Presidency). Only between 1992 and 2002 over 3200 significant work conflicts took place, with incubation stage during fall and winter, and starting stage during the spring. Conflicts have been solved through compromise (54%) and confrontation (46%).

An innovator CEO might induce new energies in his relations with followers not only in a free of conflict environment, but in the way he approaches the conflict, too. Based on the way of approaching the conflict, the involved parts might have a *cooperative* or *competitive* attitude, might emphasize *cognitive* or *affective* components of the conflict, *task* or *relation* components of the conflict.

Theory and hypotheses

Conflict and cooperation

In general, *conflict* is an *interactive process of incompatibility* between two or more individuals who interacts (Rahim, 1992). In opposition, *cooperation* is the *interactive process of compatibility* between two or more individuals who interact. Of course, incompatibility/compatibility might refer to opinions, values, goals (Boulding, 1963; Menguc, Auh, 2008), interests, activities (Deutsch, 1973, Chen, Tjosvold, 2007), plans and intentions, traits, behaviors, etc. Incompatibility might take different *forms*: disagreement, dissonance, obstruction (Deutsch, 1973), dissension, dispute, opposition, antagonism, controversy, altercation etc.

The potential *sources of conflict* or *cooperation* in an organization usually are found in *individual behaviors* (psycho-sociological sources) and/or in *organizational structures* (structural sources). As consequence, a *conflict inducer* is an individual who interacting with others might generate (induce) conflict, and *is perceived such*.

In our research the followers perceive a *conflict inducer* CEO through observing traits and behaviors that might be *potential sources of conflict* in organization. Such a CEO is perceived

as a strong person *structured* toward masculinity, elitism, risk taking, selfish, individualistic, exercising power and dominance, *diminishing both the effectiveness of leadership and followers work*.

Opposed, a *cooperation inducer* is an individual who interacting with the others might generate (induce) cooperation. In our study the followers perceive a *cooperation inducer* CEO through observing traits and behaviors that might be *potential sources of cooperation* in organization. Such a *CEO* is perceived as being *structured* toward femininity, groupism, assertiveness, performance and humanism, with positive impact on *the effectiveness of leadership and followers work*.

There are two opposite opinions about the conflict: conflict as a *plague* versus conflict as *benefit* (Eisenhardt, Kahwajy, Bourgeois III, 1997; Eisenhardt, Zbaracki, 1992; Pondy, 1969). According to the first opinion, the conflict main source comes from the individuals' behavior and managerial error. Thus, the organizational members should avoid conflict inducer behaviors and if the conflict manifests, should be eliminated.

When viewing conflict as *benefit*, it should be taken as desirable, because brings life and energy in human interactions, increasing the interdependency (Tjosvold, 1997). More than that, some argue that no role or relationships structure can be changed without inducing a conflict (Petelean, 2004). In this case, leadership objective is to provoke the conflict (as innovation generator) and to manage it.

There are theories and studies trying to nuance the two opposite opinions on conflict in organizational life. For instance, some authors consider that *conflict by itself cannot be taken as dysfunctional*; it is the way of *approaching and solving* it which brings dysfunctionality (Chen, Tjosvold, 2007; Edmonson, Roberto, Watkins, 2001; Lovelace, Shapiro, Weingart, 2001). A conflict usually becomes *dysfunctional* due to a bad communication between the parts. A direct, intelligent communication can give the conflict a creative, *functional* potential (Algad, Fuller, 1993; Amason, 1996; Chen, Tjosvold, Su, 2005). The theory on *cooperation and competition*, (Deutsch, 1973, 1980, 1990, Tjosvold, 1998) brings solid arguments in understanding the conflict's positive potential in problem solving. The *cooperative* manner in the conflict process demands focusing on *mutual interests* (common goals), on *win-win* finality of relationships. Conflict becomes a common problem needing a common (mutual) solution. People openly discuss their goals and act for finding a mutually beneficial solution. Empirical studies demonstrate that such an approach leads to high quality solution and a high productivity of actions (Deutsch, 1973; Tjosvold, 1998; Chen, Tjosvold, 2007). The *competitive* approach of the conflict demands the involved parts to focus on *divergent*

interests (goals). This happens when individuals believe they will be successful only if the others interests (goals) are obstructed. One part's success is the other part's failure (*win-lose*) and the conflict turns into fight. As a consequence, the individuals cannot use the conflict to solve the problem or to strengthen their relationships (Deutsch, 1973; Tjosvold, 1998; Chen, Tjosvold, 2007).

Another issue in the field literature concerns the analysis of *task conflict* and, respectively, *relation conflict* in organizational life (Jehn, 1995; Menguc, Auh, 2008). *Task conflict* is a disagreement between followers and CEO related to job description, including differences in opinions, ideas (Jehn, 1995). *Relation conflict* concerns tensions, animosities, arguments between CEO and followers (Jehn, 1995). From these definitions results that *task conflict* relates to the work the followers should perform in a department, while *relation conflict* relates to emotional incompatibilities between CEO and followers. It seems that successful organizations are those with moderate level of *task* related tension and *no relationship* tensions, suggesting that up to a certain level, *task* conflict is productive while *relation* conflict is absolutely destructive (Jehn, 1997). *Task* conflict managed in innovative, creative way is cognitive, so *functional* (Amason, 1996). Some associate *task* conflict with *cognitive* conflict, on one hand, and *relation* conflict with *affective* one, on the other hand (Priem, Price, 1991).

There are also nuanced studies exploring, for instance, the relation between *task (attributional) conflict* and the quality of relationship between the leader and followers (LMX). It has been argued that there is a negative correlation between attributional conflict and a lower quality of leader- follower relationship (LMX) (Wilhelm, Herd, Steiner, 2006).

Finally, should be noticed that some authors do not share the idea of beneficial role of conflict in the organization, underlying the doubtful use of conflict in solving organizational problems and dismantling the theory of *beneficent conflict* (Tompson, 1997).

Leader's motivations and followers' perception on CEOs conflict inducer and cooperative inducer behaviors. Hypothesis

In the present study we share McClelland motivational theory (McClelland, 1975, 1985) and Winter's motive coding system; (Winter, 1991a; 1991b; 1992). In his Thematic Apperception Test, McClelland states that in every culture, the general human motivation is a constellation of four unconscious motivations: *achievement*, *power (influence)*, *affiliation* and *responsibility*.

Achievement motivation

High achievement need is the concern for *success* on the expenses of all personal efforts. For such a leader, the key word is “excellence”. He might generate conflicts through very high standards set for himself (Tjosvoldt, Tjosvoldt 1995), persistency in achieving them, risk taking, collecting information permanently (to get feed back on his success), decision centralizing and interfering in followers’ activity. Based on the above ideas, we state the following hypothesis:

H1: CEO’s high achievement motivation is positively correlated with followers’ perception of CEO’s conflict inducer behavior.

Power motivation

High power need is ones unconscious concern to gain status and reputation, to influence the others and to have an emotional impact on them. A leader dominated by power motivation might generate conflict (Tjosvoldt, Tjosvoldt, 1995) through directive leadership (based on personal dominance), authoritative even aggressive behavior, exploiting his subordinates in order to achieve personal goals, rush to get richer, lack of cooperation (Terhune 1968), lack of gratitude to his subordinates. When there are no constraints, his power may become aggressive and damaging for the organization. Surprising, some studies show that the followers of a powerful CEO, show a more cooperative reaction (Bruins, Ellemers, De Gilder, 1999), especially if they perceive the power use legitimacy and CEO’s high competence.

There are some proves that the frequent use of power leads to a negative evaluation of CEO (Ellemers et al, 1998). Strong CEOs involved in conflict situations get significant lower scores than those with high power need but not involved in conflict or lacking the power motivation.

More competent leaders are more conflict inducers, employing coercive tactics more often than those less competent. In the same time, coercive tactics are more often used in companies in which the organizational performance rewards are shared by CEOs and followers. There are also some tests showing that the followers’ perception on the need and legitimacy of using coercion is the mediator of decision to employ or not coercion means (Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg, De Cremer, 2007).

Some argue that CEOs highly motivated by power fight rather for diminishing their dependence on others (personal power) than for increasing their power on others (social power) (Van Dijke, Poppe, 2006).

The idea that power is fundamental coercive and competitive and the power agents gain only through using the power against, not for others is considered wrong by some authors (Coleman, 2006). The reason is the wrong supposition that the power is a very scarce resource, held especially by top managers. Or, in real life people can exercise their power through support, autonomy, assertiveness and association, too (McClelland, 1975). It is believed that power oriented individuals follow all the mentioned stages, striving for association and evolving from power egocentrism to power socio centrism (from personalized power orientation toward socialized power orientation; Coleman, 2006) so, from autonomy to association, from conflict to cooperation. Individuals highly motivated by personalized and socialized power tend to be dominated by socialized power orientation, using the power in the benefit of their organization. Based on the above ideas, we state the following hypothesis:

H2: CEO's high power motivation is positively correlated with followers' perception of CEO's conflict inducer behavior.

Affiliation motivation

The CEO's need for affiliation is characterized by his desire of belonging, the joy of working in a team, the care for the interpersonal relations and the fear of high uncertainty. Theoretically, such a leader might generate *cooperation* because: is non-aggressive, depending on others for approval and acceptance, tending to favor someone, reserved in monitoring his followers' behavior, disciplining and communicating them a negative feedback. He is interested in the quality of personal relationships, not in gaining influence (wants harmonious and trusty relationships with people he knows).

Some studies show that high affiliation has an important role in developing organizational trust (Zhang et al, 2008). CEOs with high affiliation need seem to be reluctant in using the conflict in problem solving, because they do not want to produce "waves" (Tjosvold, Tjosvold 1995). Such CEOs emphasize the ethical consideration (Lang, Catana, Catana, Steyrer, 2008). Based on the above ideas, we state the following hypothesis:

H3: CEO's high affiliation motivation is positively correlated with followers' perception of CEO's cooperation inducer behavior.

Moral responsibility motivation

A leader motivated by moral responsibility has a high aversion towards exerting power in an authoritative, constraining and manipulative manner (McClelland 1975, Winter, 1991a; 1991b). He exercises a *moral usage of power*. Theoretically, such a CEO is *cooperation*

inducer because is group oriented, not impulsive, self-controlled, has an ethical behavior, based on good faith, fair, supportive and rewarding for the followers.

Some studies show that the *elected* leaders have a higher moral responsibility than *appointed* ones (De Cremer, Van Dijk 2008). There are studies finding that CEOs with high need of moral responsibility get higher scores at ethical leadership and lower scores at despotic leadership (De Hoogh, Den Hartog, 2008). Based on the above ideas, we state the following hypothesis:

H4: CEO's high moral responsibility motivation is positively correlated with followers' perception of CEO's cooperation inducer behavior.

Methodology

The *sample* consists of 84 companies (56% entrepreneurial and 44% established/non-entrepreneurial) from different fields of activity. The sample is large enough to allow statistically relevant findings. The data were collected based upon two GLOBE III Cross Cultural CEO Study instruments.

CEOs motivation

Information about *CEOs motivations* are collected through a *semi-structured interview*, 40-60 minutes in length. CEOs developed answers around questions like: their education, managerial career, vision, strengths/weaknesses in playing their roles, organizational opportunities /threats, and important changes introduced under their leadership. The interviews were coded by two coders, using Winter's scoring system (Winter 1991a; 1991b; 1992). The scoring decisions were based on the specific content of what has been said, inferences or any kind of intuitions concerning the subjects being avoided. None of the analyzers were in any way familiar with the subjects of the interviews. The outcome of the analysis was the motivational portray of each CEO, with the ingredients of power, achievement, affiliation and moral responsibility. Due to the fact that 5 CEOs had no dominant motivation, the analysis was performed only for 79 organizations (79 CEOs and 166 followers).

Followers' perception: conflict and cooperation inducer constructs

Data about the *CEO's direct followers' perceptions* on *conflict and cooperation inducer behaviors* was collected through *GLOBE III C* questionnaire, filled in by 177 direct followers of analyzed CEOs. The analysis concerns the answers provided by the followers having CEOs

with a dominant motivation (166). Using *reliability analysis* (with *Cronbach alpha if item deleted*), two *constructs* were built from a total of 45 items (*I_conflict* and *I_cooperation*). To check the *solidity* of the constructs, correlation coefficients of construct indexes with their components were computed (all coefficients are significant with $p < .01$ or $p < .05$).

The *conflict inducer construct* was assessed using 19 items of *GLOBE III C* questionnaire measuring direct followers perception on their CEOs propensity toward power and status, domination, competition, aggressiveness, and similar behaviors. Examples of such behaviors are provided in *Table 1*. The construct has an *alpha coefficient* of 0.888, showing its high consistence.

Table 1: Conflict inducer construct: descriptive statistics for selected items

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Makes decisions in dictatorial way (i23)	3,07	1,882
Forces her/his values and opinions on others (i31)	4,76	2,028
Is not sincere, fraudulent (i33)	1,86	1,437
Inclined to dominate others (i35)	4,17	1,963
Believes that a small number of people with similar backgrounds (i40)	4,16	1,948
Is actively unfriendly, acts negatively toward others (i59)	2,20	1,763
Does not rely on others; self-governing (i61)	4,17	2,036
Tells subordinates what to do in a commanding way (i65)	4,68	1,907
Is an extremely close supervisor, one who insists on making all decisions (i80)	4,47	1,788

(Cronbach Alpha=.888; 166 followers perception)

The *cooperation inducer construct* was assessed with 26 items of *GLOBE III C* questionnaire measuring direct followers perception on their CEOs propensity toward groupism, assertiveness, negotiation, ethical and similar behaviors. Examples of such behaviors are given in *Table 2*. The construct has a very high *alpha coefficient*: 0.938.

Hypotheses were tested in *three steps*: a) on the whole sample (79 companies), b) on CEOs with a dominant motive and c) on all items of the constructs, using *regression (all variables entered)* and *correlation analysis*.

Table 2: Cooperation inducer construct: descriptive statistics for selected items

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Sets goals for my performance (i10)	5,34	1,492
Provides direction in regard to my job (i14)	5,17	1,465
Easily understood (i16)	5,60	1,468
Works jointly with others (i18)	5,95	1,367
Explains the rules and procedures group members are expected to obey (i39)	6,00	1,260
Demonstrates and imparts strong positive emotions for work (i43)	5,85	1,351
Uses a common standard to evaluate all who report to him/her (i46)	5,11	1,510
Administers rewards in a fair manner (i48)	5,23	1,677
Concerned with the welfare of the group (i56)	5,75	1,409
Speaks and acts truthfully (i58)	6,07	1,287
Acts according to what is right or fair (i75)	5,66	1,413
Does not boast, presents self in a humble manner (i81)	5,22	1,735

(Cronbach Alpha=.938; 166 followers perception)

Findings

Tables 3 and 4 display some of the most important research outcomes. Their relevancy should be evaluated taking into account the fact that our research is still ongoing, thus the final findings and of course, their interpretation could be altered.

1. The followers' statistically dominant perception is that their CEOs are by far, more cooperative inducers than conflict inducers

According to our theoretical model, most of the followers perceive their CEO as being group oriented, assertive, performance oriented and humane. Followers perceiving their CEO as being *conflict inducers* see their bosses as having masculine, elitist, risk oriented, selfish, individualistic, autocratic and dominating behaviors.

Table 3 displays the descriptive statistics for the *constructs* (dependent variables in our model): *conflict inducer* and, respectively, *cooperation inducer*. 94% of followers in the sample scored higher than 4 the items included in *cooperation inducer* construct (seven points scale: 1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree). Conversely, only 30% of them gave higher than 4 points to the items included in *conflict inducer* construct. Moreover, while 70% of followers scored *conflict inducer* items with less than 4, only 6% of them gave less than 4 points to

cooperation inducer items. Should be reminded that the two constructs have a high reliability (alpha=.938 for cooperation inducer construct and alpha=.888 for conflict inducer construct).

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for cooperation inducer and conflict inducer constructs*

Construct	Min.	Max	Mean value	St. deviat	Cronbach Alpha
Cooperation inducer behavior					
- Sample (79 CEOs behavior perceived by 166 direct followers)	3.00	6.96	5.69	.8786	.938
- Entrepreneurial (45 CEOs behavior perceived by 95 direct followers)	3.00	6.96	5.57	.9839	
- Established (34 CEOs behavior perceived by 71 direct followers)	3.62	6.92	5.85	.6886	
Conflict inducer behavior					
- Sample (79 CEOs behavior perceived by 166 direct followers)	1.26	6.26	3.36	1.083	.888
- Entrepreneurial (45 CEOs behavior perceived by 95 direct followers)	1.37	6.26	3.49	1.122	
- Established (34 CEOs behavior perceived by 71 direct followers)	1.26	5.58	3.21	1.015	

* The items of the constructs are answers given by 166 direct followers of 79 CEOs to certain items of *GLOBE III C* questionnaire (95 belong to entrepreneurial companies and 71 to established companies)

2. Over 70% of CEOs in the sample are dominated by achievement or moral responsibility and only 30% of them are dominated by power or affiliation need

In this atmosphere of cooperation, as Table 4 shows, most of the CEOs in the sample are first motivated by *achievement* (59.5%). On the second place are the CEOs with *moral responsibility* as prevalent motivation (15.2%). 12.65% of the CEOs are dominated by *power* and *affiliation* needs (each). The finding is similar with other studies performed on a sample of 44 CEOs (Lang, Catana, Catana, Steyrer, 2008), strengthening the research relevancy on Romanian CEOs motivations (the present sample being almost double).

Based upon their mean scores, the motivations in the sample *rank* as following: *power* (4.79), *moral responsibility* (4.06), *achievement* (3.91) and *affiliation* (2.74). The same ranking is valid for *entrepreneurial* companies. As shown in the table, the *established* companies CEOs have significant higher scores for three motivations, supporting the findings of previous studies (Lang, Catana, Catana, Steyrer, 2008; Catana, Catana, Finlay, Neal, 2006): *power* (5.26), *achievement* (4.57), *moral responsibility* (4.11) and *affiliation* (2.71). It could be noticed that the “differential area” between the two types of ranking comes from moral responsibility and achievement.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics for CEOs motivational needs*

	Motivational Needs			
	Power	Achievement	Affiliation	Moral Responsibility
Sample (79 companies)				
Nr.	10	47	10	12
%	12.65	59.5	12.65	15.2
Mean	4.79	3.91	2.74	4.06
St. deviation	2.569	1.671	1.1977	1.729
Entrepreneurial co. (45)				
Nr.	5	29	7	4
%	11.1	64.5	15.5	8.9
Mean	4.42	3.48	2.749	3.947
St. deviation	1.919	1.76	1.1055	1.357
Established co. (34)				
Nr.	5	18	3	8
%	14.7	52.9	8.8	23.5
Mean	5.26	4.57	2.713	4.118
St. deviation	3.236	1.354	1.3814	1.927

*Determined based on McClelland motivational theory and (1975, 1985) and Winter's motive coding system; (1991, 1992)

3. At the level of the whole sample and its sub samples (according to CEO's dominant motivation) the four hypotheses are either not supported or rejected.

The correlation coefficients between the *constructs indexes* and the CEO's dominant motivation have *no significant* values at the sample level, as well as at the level of sub

samples of companies (H1, H2, H3, H4 not supported or rejected at $p < .01$; $p < .05$), as Table 5 shows.

Table 5: Hypotheses related correlation coefficients

	Conflict index (I_conflict)	Co-operation index (I_cooperation)
Sample: - Achievement (H1) <i>not supported</i> - Power (H2) <i>not supported</i> - Affiliation (H3) <i>rejected</i> - Moral responsibility (H4) <i>not supported</i>	Pearson coefficient: .091 Sig (two-tailed): .242 Pearson coefficient: .005 Sig (two-tailed): .944	Pearson coefficient (-).008 Sig (two-tailed): .915 Pearson coefficient: .121 Sig (two-tailed): .121
Achievement dominated CEOs: <i>rejected</i>	Pearson coefficient (-).133 Sig (two-tailed): .188	
Power dominated CEOs : <i>not supported</i>	Pearson coefficient: .275 Sig (two-tailed): .228	
Affiliation dominated CEOs : <i>rejected</i>		Pearson coefficient: (-).050 Sig (two-tailed): .826
Moral responsibility dominated CEOs: <i>rejected</i>		Pearson coefficient: (-).212 Sig (two-tailed): .321

Note: rejected for contrary relation; not supported for insignificant relation

The hypotheses are partially accepted at the level of certain items of the constructs.

Table 6 displays correlation coefficients between CEOs dominant motivation and singular items of the two constructs for the whole sample and its sub samples (entrepreneurial and established companies ($p < .01$ or $p < .05$).

Table 6: Descriptive statistics for cooperation inducer items correlated with Affiliation and Moral responsibility

Items & motives	Mean value	St. dev.	Correlates with	Correlcoeff
Sample				
Consults with others before making plans or taking action (i24)	5.64	1.308	Moral responsibility	.153*
	5.75	1.409	Moral responsibility	.174*
Concerned with the welfare of the group (i56)	5.66	1.413	Moral responsibility	.158*
Acts according to what is right or fair (i75)				
Entrepreneurial companies				
Easily understood (i16)	5.55	1.569	Affiliation	.272**
Works jointly with others (i18)	5.78	1.482	Affiliation	.239*
	5.52	1.494	Moral responsibility	.220*
Acts according to what is right or fair (i75)				
Established companies				
Provides direction in regard to my job (i14)	5.44	1.251	Moral responsibility	.278*
Affiliation score (mean/1000 words)				
Sample	1.504	1.0932	No significant positive correlation	
Entrepreneurial companies	1.46	1.066	Easily understood (i16) Works jointly with others (i18)	.272** .239*
Established companies	1.564	1.1328	No significant positive	

			correlation	
Moral responsibility score (mean/1000 words)				
Sample	1.354	1.5643	Consults with others before making plans or taking action (i24)	.153*
			Concerned with the welfare of the group (i56)	
			Acts according to what is right or fair (i75)	.174*
				.158*
Entrepreneurial companies	1.240	1.3393	Acts according to what is right or fair (i75)	.220*
Established companies			Provides direction in regard to my job (i14)	
	1.505	1.8216		.278*

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two tailed)

As seen, at the *whole sample* level and in *established* companies there is no significant positive correlation between *affiliation* need and any item of *cooperation inducer construct*. The followers in *entrepreneurial* firms perceive the CEO having affiliation need as *being easily understood* (i16) and *working jointly with others* (i18).

At the *whole sample* level, the CEO's high need of *moral responsibility* is significantly correlated with the following perceived behaviors: 1) *consults with others before making plans or taking action* (i24); 2) *concerned with the welfare of the group* (i56); 3) *acts according to what is right or fair* (i75). When taking into account the firm type, in *entrepreneurial companies*, the highly moral responsible CEO is perceived as having a behavior in accordance with *what is right or fair* (i75), while in *established* ones, with the fact that the CEO *provides direction in regard to* the follower's *job* (i14).

Table 7 displays the items from *conflict inducer construct* having significant positive correlation ($p < .01$ or $p < .05$) with *power* and *achievement* as CEO's dominant needs. In the whole sample, as well as in *entrepreneurial* companies, high *power* need is significantly and

positively correlated ($p < .01$; $p < .05$) with the CEO's behavior in which CEO *tells subordinates what to do in a commanding way* (i65). This supports the finding of previous research, according to which the Romanian executives strongly reject the autocratic leadership (Catana, Catana, Bakacsi, 2007; Catana, Catana, Finlay, Neal, 2006). In *established* companies the perception of a *conflict inducer* CEO with high need of *power* is conditioned by an *elitist behavior* ($p < .01$).

Should be noticed that none of the items belonging to *conflict inducer construct* is significantly and positively correlated with *achievement motivation*.

Table 7: Descriptive statistics for conflict inducer items correlated with Power and Achievement

Items & motives	Mean value	St. dev	Correlated with :	Correl. coeff.
Sample Tells subordinates what to do in a commanding way (i65)	4.68	1.907	Power	.197*
Entrepreneurial Tells subordinates what to do in a commanding way (i65)	4.48	1.895	Power	.261*
Established Believes that a small number of people with similar backgrounds are superior and should enjoy privileges (i40)	3.90	1.914	Power	.336**
Achievement score Sample	3.098	1.84	No significant correlation with any item	
Entrepreneurial	2.86	1.690	No significant correlation with any item	
Established	3.42	2.000	No significant correlation with any item	
Power score Sample	1.68	1.71	Tells subordinates what to do in a commanding way (i65)	.197*

Entrepreneurial	1.488	1.485	Tells subordinates what to do in a commanding way (i65)	
Established	1.939	1.957	Believes that a small number of people with similar backgrounds are superior and should enjoy privileges (i40)	.261* .336**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two tailed)

Discussions, contributions and future research

1. Is there a cultural explanation of the fact that the Romanian followers *perceive* their CEOs as having more cooperation than conflict inducer behaviors? In building our constructs we used some of GLOBE research cultural dimensions, as following: a) for cooperation inducer behaviors: *performance orientation*, *in group collectivism*, *assertiveness* and *humanism* and b) for conflict inducer behaviors: *power distance* (elitism), *masculinity* (versus gender egalitarianism), *individualism* (versus institutional collectivism) and *uncertainty avoidance*. Previous studies on these dimensions have shown that Romanian executives perceive a high *in group collectivism* (9th place compared with the rank of 62 GLOBE societies), a high *performance orientation* (6th place compared with the rank of 62 GLOBE societies), a moderate *assertiveness* in their organizations (30th compared with the rank of 62 GLOBE societies), and a moderate *humane orientation* (31th in GLOBE sample) (Bakacsi, Catana, Catana et al, 2007, Catana, Catana, Chiriac, 2007).

In addition, the followers' perception of a more cooperative atmosphere in their organization is supported by the high consistency between CEOs and followers *decisional values* (Catana, Catana, 2008; Catana, Catana, 2009). We believe that any conflict begins when divergence in values appears, and cooperation when convergence in values is present. Anyway, one should wonder if the CEOs and followers in investigated companies are indeed cooperative or it is about lacking the capacity of generating cognitive, productive and creative conflicts.

2. *Achievement* is the dominant motivation for the most CEOs in the sample, supported by findings of previous studies on 44 Romanian CEOs (Catana, Catana, Finlay, Neal, 2006; Lang, Catana, Catana, Steyrer, 2008). As our findings show, there is no significant correlation of this motivation with any of our two constructs items at the level of the

whole sample (in entrepreneurial companies there is a positive significant correlation with the item “given to being moody; easily agitated – i74”:218*; in established ones, with “is able to negotiate effectively, able to make transactions with gains for company – i37”:268*).

3. Which might be the explanation that the four hypotheses are partially confirmed only for some items of the constructs? A probable answer is that the followers’ perception is influenced by the *situational field* in which CEO performs his duties (Mischel, 1973). As seen, in *entrepreneurial* companies the followers perceive their CEOs as having a conflict inducer behavior (i65) due to the recent history of command economy experience. The same explanation could be given to the perception of the CEOs from established companies as being more elitist (recalling the communist elite).

We believe that the most important *theoretical contribution* of our paper concerns the two *constructs*, which the authors propose to be tested on other cultures, in the GLOBE project framework.

The most important *empirical contribution* is supporting through its findings previous studies concerning the ranking of Romanian CEOs motivations.

The most important *practical contribution* is that the findings and their discussions might effectively serve CEOs training in management and leadership culture concerning conflict approach and CEO motivations.

The findings might be influenced by two phenomena: 1) the correlations are computed using two sets of data: CEOs dominant motivation scores determined based on CEOs answers to a semi structured interviews (answers coded then using Winter’s scoring system) while the followers perceptions were computed as mean values of GLOBE III C questionnaire items included in the two constructs (I_conflict and I_cooperation) We hope this do not harm too much the findings. 2) Most probably, the followers do not have an “updated” culture on the conflict role in the organization, which influenced their answers to the conflict related questions. Thus we argue that the perception of a more cooperative behavior of their CEO is rooted in the followers believe that the conflict should be taken as a plague.

Future research will approach the influence of demographic variables (CEOs and followers’ age, gender, profession) on the dependent variables in this study.

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Theory and practice of talent management in Polish organizations

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Introduction

The development of interest in the issue of talents is supported by changes in understanding of human resources importance for an organization, perception of its capital and the only competitiveness factor as well as changes occurring in the organization itself and concerning its structure, method of operation, extending the role of an individual in the place of assignment to a position, importance of knowledge and organizational learning processes. The above and other tendencies also change the perspective of perception of an employee putting emphasis on their diverse competencies, the ability to revise them and the need to acquire knowledge. It requires adjustment of personnel tasks, becoming a one-of-the-kind challenge for the organization. Identification of a talented employee and his/her further development is, with regard to vagueness of the notion of talent, a precedential activity.

Practitioners more and more often formulate opinions that the issue of talents in an organization is of strategic importance and requires specific processes and instruments. It results from a problem perceived in companies as well as lack of complex and practical solutions.

Thus, undertaking research on talents in an organization has a cognitive and application cause. In the first case it enables arrangement of condition of the previous theoretical reflection, while in the second it discloses the existing practice in this respect and consequently - it supports the existing solutions.

The purpose of the article in this context is an attempt to indicate a designatum of the term "talented employee" and determination of the specific nature of recruitment and retention of talents processes. The presented considerations refer not only to the existing literature. Some of them also constitute empirical research results of surveying character.

Conceptual background – clarification of the key concept

Understanding and clarification of the phenomenon of talent requires an interdisciplinary approach, however – as it is acknowledged – the grounds of creative activities should be sought in psychological predispositions of an entity (Achter, Lubinski, 2005, p.601). A psychological perspective makes it possible to include creativity as an elite operation

rendering results in the form of works of significant importance for mankind. The egalitarian approach leads to another interpretation of creativity: understood as a commonly occurring activity and not limited to inventiveness or art (Nęcka 2004, p.784). The egalitarian and the elite approach determine the continuum which, with regard to the definition of talent, is also reflected in management. One of its poles is a potentially creative activity, defined as activity not leading to great work, however, leading to outstanding results. It seems that a more adequate descriptive term is a category of *highly effective employees*.¹ The second pole is creative talent, namely a set of individual features, thanks to which a man is able to create valuable works. There is located between them high potential (*employees with high potential*, *knowledge workers*, *knowledge intensive workers*) as well as creativity understood as a feature of an entity consisting in ability to generate new ideas (also defined as "creative abilities")².

The key word, both for this concept and for further discussion, is talent.³

In definition perspective of J.W. Dawid talent means intensified abilities (Dawid, 1996, p. 253), comprehensive or specialized (Szmidt, Piotrowski, 2005) (Chęłpa, 2005, p. 28). Sękowski, in accordance with Renzullim in turn indicates the following components of talent:

- exceptional abilities, which include general abilities (increased intellectual potential) and specialized capabilities (in a specific field);
- creativity, which is characterized by sensitivity and rich emotionality, as well as originality in thinking, unconventionality, courage in detecting and undertaking new problems as well as undertaking risk, uncertainty tolerance and acceptance of changes;
- commitment to work including internal discipline and diligence, persistence in pursuit of goals, faith in own possibilities and tendency to sacrifice as well as specific fascination with work (Sękowski, 2004, p. 35)

Disambiguation of understanding of talent is extremely difficult. A proof for this are numerous publications in which authors cope with this notion, obtaining consensus only to a

¹ More information on this topic: A.Miś (2009): Retencja i rozwój pracowników o wysokim potencjale, in: Człowiek i praca w zmieniającej się organizacji, ed.: M.Gablety i A.Pietroń Pyszczyk, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Wrocław, Wrocław, 275-276.

² Differences between these terms become also visible with regard to their durability and intensity: "... potentially creative activity is a temporary state or process, creativity – a relatively constant feature diverse inter-individually and creative talent – this feature, but highly developed" (Nęcka 2004, p.784)

³ It is derived from the Greek *talanton* and refers to weight possible to be taken by a human (Chęłpa, 2005, p.28) In Latin it takes the form of *talentum*, indicating both weight and money. The meaning and wording of the Polish word talent is a derivative of both of the above. W. Kopaliński defines talent as excellent special abilities to creative or reconstructive acts. A talent is also a person with such gift (Kopaliński, 1989). In psychological perspective a talent is a person who (1) has better insight and understanding of his/her own unique interests and predispositions than other people, (2) notices relations of these attributes with the possibilities of education and professional work, (3) thinks reflectively: as cherishing these individual characteristics may affect its future development (Achter, Lubinski, 2005, p.602)

limited extent (Borkowska, 2005; Goffe, Jones, 2007; Chełpa, 2005, Listwan, 2005, and others).

However, there is a certain level of compliance that talent is a rare good, not common, therefore its supply and availability is small (elite interpretation). An opposite pole of continuum is understanding of talent as a high level of competences crucial for the organization/position. In this perspective all employees of an organization may be regarded as talents, if the recruitment process assumed selection based on high qualification standards⁴ Defining talent becomes identical with the notion of an employee achieving high results (Woińska, Szmidt, 2005, p. 71). A talent is, therefore, each employee employed in the company – because they possess specific competencies (talents), essential from the point of view of an organization, that deserve support in development (Kwiecień, 2005, p. 163). This identification of talent may be identified as egalitarian.

Definition continuum has on its extreme poles determination of talent as a good or a gift introduced to an organization independently from organizational needs and possibilities of its use (talent as an intensified gift) and – understanding of talent as a pool of features and predispositions supporting the organization in implementation of its goal or strategy.

Adoption of a certain definition of talent implies the scope of organizations' role in shaping talent. On the one hand, leaving an employee alone, on the other hand, however, – development with the use of procedures and organizational instruments.

Among elements of talent structure there are intellectual potential, specific abilities and some characteristics or their configurations. Intellectual potential has a specific place in identification of talent, by some understood as intelligence (Brown, Lent 2005) by others perceived in a broader perspective (Tannenbaum 1986), (Renzulli 1978).⁵ The second, necessary condition is individual passion. Passion is determined as interest supported by individual motivation⁶. Without passion a person with general, extraordinary intelligence will not become a talent. They will remain a person with high intellectual potential. (Achter, Lubinski, 2005, p. 601)

Intellectual potential understood in a broader perspective also includes specific abilities which, if they go along with interests, can establish passion⁷ An element of talent structure are also non-intellectual factors which mainly include personality characteristics (e.g. persistence,

⁴ A talent is treated as to some extent dependent on goals and organizational procedures.

⁵ Researches show that talented people represent outstanding intellectual possibilities defined as general intelligence. It is a necessary, though insufficient condition.(Brown, Lent 2005, p. 203 and further)

⁶ T.Amabile introduces the notion of immanent motivation, which consists in being satisfied with the activity of creating itself (Amabile 1983).

⁷ In the opinion of psychologists it is nothing else but interests (passions) of employees that determine their professional success (rather than achievements and abilities) (Miś, 2000).

diligence, strength, internal discipline, originality, sensitivity, rich emotionality, belief in one's own possibilities etc.).

The role of environment is important in creating talents: first family and school and then organizational environment; it is necessary to understand and support individual interests (passions).⁸

It is worth noting that talent is a kind of characteristics of an entity, which is variable in time and is subject, within certain limits, to external and internal impacts.

The problem of talent management in an organization is strictly connected with the category of high - potential employees. Frequently, both practitioners and theoreticians use these terms interchangeably, which is understandable as the issue of talents in an organization comes from prior, recognizable and operational problem of high-potential employees management. A high-potential employee is a person whose qualification profile reflects the highest expectations of the organization, adequate to the position held. Expectations are diverse (they relate to several or many profile criteria) and constitute a derivative of personnel strategy of this organization. In distinction of a high-potential employee, organizational context is therefore necessary, and within it, specific forecasts of the demand for competencies as well as forecasting directions of changes of these needs. A measure of high potential of an entity are currently achieved results and – through the possessed potential – announcement of their further development. Talented employees, on the other hand, are characterized by internal placement of control. These are persons free from external reinforcements who find the energy and source of supplies in themselves. Therefore, the system of organizational bonuses does not constitute a value, for which it is worth taking the challenge. Financial awards which are frequently considered as crucial in keeping employees in the company have a secondary meaning against equipment of work posts and possibilities to fulfill one's ambitions, opened by the organization to a talented employee. The pursued purpose results from their own interests and passions and its value for the organization results from compliance with its needs. In the case of talented employees also secondary importance is attributed to feedback of evaluation. Satisfaction criterion is competing with oneself and one's standard of excellence in realization of goals (passions), and development criterion - gathering experience and knowledge related to personal interests. In the system of values of a talented person passion and its realization are highly placed, often higher than the work itself. However, in the

⁸ Research shows that persons of high general intelligence may be lost as talents when do not get support early enough. Early disclosure of outstanding intellectual equipment is the first step on the road of development of a truly exceptional talent (Achter, Lubinski, 2005, p. 601)

case of one's own interests and goals work becomes extremely important, it is means of pursuing the goal and implementation of passion.

A talented employee (talent) is a person who gives the organization something, which is an excess in this organization, often not observed in its plans and strategy, because to a certain moment, it is not in the awareness of the organization. Features of competence profile of a talented person are consistent with the organization's needs at acceptable level, but there is "something" that distinguishes it. This something is not measurable and the effects of talent use are rarely reflected in real achievements. Their normal operation is postponed and the effects are of cumulative and synergistic character. An employee is talented regardless of the organization, by giving their talent to the organization only temporarily. The ability to identify talent becomes a capital of the organization, because it is reflected in growth in competitiveness of this organization. Correct definition of the key term will enable it to be properly operationalized and then identified, and to use relevant techniques and instruments of acquisition, maintenance and development.

Methods

The surveys were conducted in 2007. by employees of the Chair of Human Capital Management of the Cracow University of Economics. The main research intention was diagnosis of practice condition in talent management in companies. For empirical tests, a specially prepared questionnaire was prepared collecting necessary information. Answers were obtained from 36 companies, among which private companies dominated (29), 14 of them with share of foreign capital. 7 of the examined companies are small, employing up to 50 people; 10 are medium companies employing from 50-250 and 19 are larger companies with the number of employees higher than 250 people.

The research covered analyses of seven problem areas on organizational theory and practice of talent management. The first area was concerned with the reasons of growing meanings of issues of talents in organizations. The second area covered explanation of the essence of talents and talent management. Further areas were related to such issues as: strategy of talented employees management, acquisition, their retention and development. The last area of interest and research works was concerned with the structure of existing talent management programmes; descriptions of cases were presented, relating to the issues of talent management.

Results: Talent management – acquisition and retention in Polish organizations

In an organization application of the issue of talents was done in 1990s and one of its practical expression is the idea of Talent Relationship Management. It is understood as active shaping of relations with persons having talent, namely an inborn predisposition to achieve success in a given field (Peter 2003), it was formulated in response to demand of the organization for excellent entities, supporting its competitiveness (Kozioł, 2006, p. 58). Achieving competitive advantage in a turbulent environment requires a consistent resource management system that only partially undergoes algorithmisation. Therefore, talented persons are a problem for personnel function, as talent as a rare good, is out of classification. Talent management is thus particularly responsible for anticipated organizational benefits. People, intellectual capital and talents are perceived as the most critical success factor of organizational strategy.

Research on talents in organizations conducted at Cracow University of Economics discloses the complexity of the concerned problems. Among practitioners there is also no consensus with regard to meaning of the term talent. It is disclosed in ways of understanding the notion of talent: rather ambiguous, with an unclear designate. Among the declared definitions of a talented employee dominates one with emphasis put on their effectiveness ("person obtaining exceptional results/highly effective") – more than 60% of indications obtained in the examined companies. Slightly less frequently a talent is perceived as a person having exceptional abilities in some direction – almost 45% of choices. Such a perspective on talent emphasizes the value of features "given" by employees to the organization. Other definition of talent, but of similar amount (ca. 15%), emphasizes the scope of knowledge of talented employees (a person having great knowledge, "knowledge worker") and their special features of personality. Single statements emphasized perception of talent as a highly qualified person or a person of particular practical experience related to work.

The results of given researches show that the issue of talent management, regardless of the method of their definition, is perceptible and taken into account by organizations participating in the research. In more than 50% of examined companies the issue of talents and their management is considered in the company's strategy being its element. More than ¼ of respondents, in turn, emphasize that in their companies the problem of talents is temporarily undertaken and solved, which means lack of systematic approach to them. In several researched companies no actions related to talents are undertaken (15%). In few researched companies we deal with perception of only some elements of talent management as components of a company's strategy; the remaining undergo temporary activities.

This information may be complemented with additional data on talent management as an element of a company's strategy, collected in the course of research. And so, only in several

examined companies (which is 14% of total), the strategy of talent management was formulated and implemented. Slightly more – 25% of companies is in the course of development of such a strategy and 30% plans its preparation in the near future. 22% companies taking part in research does not plan preparation of such a strategy.

If we assume that people with specific features, rare in the society, important for an organization, become a critical resource then effective organization's operations on the market of talents require right, professional decisions, based on the best knowledge. On the other hand, which is emphasized by J. Boudreau, organizational processes and tools referred to the market of talents are much less mature and clear than those used by management functions of other resources. Therefore, which is further postulated by J. Boudreau, it is necessary to develop the area of scientific grounds for decisions concerning talents in an organization (Boudreau, 2005 p.4). It will become the context of made decisions and at the same time will bestow them the appropriate direction. Further development personal function should be made not on the basis of these detailed improvements in professional practice of HR, nor even by means of improvement of its "accounting" dimension but by modification or change of its traditional paradigm, by consideration of knowledge grounds about talents.

The basic issue for the success of an organization becomes identification of the essence of talent management (TM).⁹ Literature provides diverse attempts to define this activity. In a broader perspective, talent management is "... a set of activities relating to highly talented people, undertaken with an intent of their development and efficiency and achievement of goals of the organization" (Listwan, 2005, p.21). A more detailed perspective mentions identification, development, maintenance, engagement and proper use of talents in a given organizational context (Sienkiewicz 2007, p.32). A practical perspective has a more descriptive wording: talent management includes search for them in one's own company or acquisition outside, taking particular care of them, as compared to other employees, consisting in providing opportunities for development, training and career planning, in addition, ensuring appropriate remuneration (not only in the form of salary) so that they are resistant to temptations coming from their employers and so they want to stay in the company (Maliszewska 2007, p.79). In this context, change of terminology mentioned by K. Kwiecień and consisting in replacement of the term: human resources management with the term: talent management may be of limited importance for companies with specifically developed personnel function (Kwiecień 2005, p.163). On the whole, however, it is assumed that talent

⁹ As it is noted by K.Thorne the words talent and talent management appeared in the vocabulary of global organization roughly 10 years ago in the context of the issues of retention and retention strategy. (Thorne 2007, p.65)

management covers the same or similar key processes which are undertaken with regard to human resource management but - apart from typical ones - often more sophisticated techniques and methods are used. S. Borkowska mentions here about assessment centre, a 360° technique, psychological techniques (diagnosis and measurement), climate test technique, intelligence and management style diagnosis and other. (Borkowska, 2007, p.4). Additionally, as the area classified in talent management she lists personal risk management and TM measurement effectiveness¹⁰

Talent management covers in different ways the mentioned tasks (activities). T. Listwan indicates that talent management can be described in the categories of process: entry – transformation – exit. Entry is understood as acquisition of talents to the organization, transformation means improvement, shifts and evaluation of employees, and exit includes monitoring of reasons of parting with not talented employees. (Listwan, 2005, p.21-26). T. Borkowska lists issues of acquisition of talents, their maintenance, development and motivation as key for their management (Borkowska 2007, p.5-8). Ł. Sienkiewicz by adopting a more practical point of view indicates employment planning, selection, maintenance (including motivation systems), potential development, assessment of work results and career planning as basic tasks necessary in effective talent management (Sienkiewicz 2007, p.41).

The first stage of talent management process – entry to an organization – includes the following actions: personnel planning, specification of sources of talented employees acquisition, methods of recruitment and selection techniques (selection) of employees and providing details of career paths possible to be executed in the company. The mentioned activities show framework of problems, necessary to be undertaken in talent management process. Personnel planning requires defining not only quantities and competences necessary for human resources organization but anticipating indication of excess competences. This difficult task will be closer to success if the organization makes proper decisions with regard to the scope of base of talents (broad or narrow), sources of talents acquisition and defines criteria of their identification. Making a decision about a broad or a narrow base of talents means increase or decrease of opportunities for identification of talent and at the same time

¹⁰ S.Borkowska rightly emphasizes that there is no one binding talent management model. It has "original" character due to the special character of the company, in which the issues of talents becomes an element of formal operations. The issue of size of the business is of importance as well as specific character of their business operations, organizational culture and preferred systems of values and other. (Borkowska 2007, p.4).

rules out the possibility of error while its selection. It also gives the opportunity to discover talents, in a way, in a postponed time.¹¹

The second element increasing the chance for talent management programme to be successful is a decision concerning internal or external acquisition of talented employees. Each decision, if made taking account of organizational conditions, will be righteous and will bring the expected results. There is an idea that internal sources of talent recruitment are more beneficial in the context of organization as a whole: employees identify more with the organization, are more loyal, have gone through the process of adaptation, a positive image of an organization as an employer is reinforced and other (Huselid and others, 2005). However, the proponents of external acquisition of talented employees emphasize that a significant advantage is an element of novelty brought by these employees to the organization. S. Borkowska quotes as an argument diversity of experiences as a factor contributing to the increase in innovation and organizational creativity (Borkowska, 2007, p.5). The related research shows that for the purpose of identification of a talented employee information is taken into account which enables assessment of both effectiveness and potential. As a source of effectiveness evaluation are indicated temporary evaluations, and especially level of goals implementation. Potential assessment is made mainly by a superior in the process of assessments analysis of selected competences represented in assessments sheets¹².

The last condition of effective acquisition process of talents is determination of criteria of talented employees selection. In view of lack of definition unambiguity it is necessary to define organizational needs in this respect and to confront them with job-related requirements. The priority are behavioral criteria. When an organization is looking for talented people for implementation of specific tasks or for specific positions, it is important to individualize the set of selection criteria. On the other hand, when seeking talents is intended to provide staff reserves, criteria should refer to general directions and possibilities to use their competences. The practice of Polish organizations reveals that majority of companies prepares sets of selection criteria including specific nature of the position (58%), 20% prepares "other" criteria with regard only to managerial positions, and 14% of the surveyed organizations does not differentiate talents identification criteria with regard to position. Among selection methods used towards talented employees the same tools are used as with regard to other groups of

¹¹ Providing the opportunity of disclosure of talents along with emergence of new possibilities, along with changing interpersonal configurations, acquired new knowledge, or in a better period of life. (Achter, Lubinski, 2005, p.600 and the following).

¹² Researches revealed that the method of obtaining information about talented employees most often used by the surveyed companies are interviews with managers (64% of selected answers), examination of achievement of goals by an employee in the last year (44%), as well as assessment obtained by the employee in the last year (42%).

candidates. The difference is complexity of the whole process. Most of the surveyed companies (53%) applies at least 3 assessment methods of candidates identified as potential talents. Among the mentioned methods selection interview prevails (used by 86% of the surveyed companies) and initial selection of application (performed in 81% of organizations). Relatively rarely psychological tests are applied (ca. 1/3 of the surveyed) and practical exercises not associated with specific character of the position (19%). 33% organizations makes use of assessment center. This is a particularly useful method in the situation of behaviour quality analysis in terms of future roles or changing roles (Hollyford and Whidett 2003, p.122).

Sub-process of identification and talents acquisition mentioned as the last – detailing career paths is approximate – makes it possible for employees with outstanding features to recognize possibilities created by the organization and consider their attractiveness when it comes to their own aspirations and pursuits. The effect will be a decision about longer or shorter connection with the company. From the point of view of organization planning and career management of a talented employee – though difficult - leads to benefits with regard to increased competitiveness. Particular importance here is substantial career component. Career is no longer only a sequence of position, experience becomes important that do not exhaust conditions of occupied position but cover wider scope. In the traditional meaning of career the scope of gained experience would constitute the possibility of taking up a specific new position, but, at the same time, would devaluate all remaining experience and knowledge gained on their basis. And these become essential in the environment of contemporary organizations. The above comments urged undertaking the attempt to determine the degree of development plans individualization formulated in the researched companies. Practice showed that development actions are not always differentiated with regard to employee groups (including talents). In more than half of the analyzed organizations development plans are formulated for each talented employee separately. Significantly less frequently such activities include the whole group of talented employees (ca.1/3 organizations). In other companies (ca.6%) development activities are not differentiated by preparing shared programmes for various employee groups.

The second stage of talent management process, defined as transformation (also as maintaining talents), includes these activities of organizations that focus on effective use of competences being its responsibility. In organization practice it takes the form of motivation interaction package, which covers tasks related to pay, shaping professional career, moves and widely understood individual development. Motivating means generation of high self-

motivation in employees to stay in the company and develop¹³. Effective motivation requires assistance in making employees aware of their own needs concerning the future, determination of possible methods of their satisfaction, indication of conditions and supporting circumstances present in the company. It crystallizes in designing career paths, including the target position and the role of the entity in an organization and defining particular steps enabling implementation of formulated purpose¹⁴. Development steps should take account of both working post changes and change with regard to remuneration and, above all, precisely describe necessary competence changes. Practice of companies – as the study shows is diverse. The content of talented employee development plans that are prepared in the analyzed organizations covers diverse aspects: from these related to the execution of specific tasks (1/3), through management competences development (nearly half of the researched organizations), and transferring general knowledge about organizations (ca. 1/3), to focus on further specialization. This means that perception of the role of talent (and thus preparation for it) in an organization mostly means future management process, undertaking managerial positions or conducting employee teams. What determines the essence of talent (passion, interest) is also subjected to development impacts, though as research shows, to a smaller extent.

One of fundamental motivation measures commonly used in organizations is remuneration. Traditional systems of remuneration are constructed based on position requirements or also take work results achieved by an employee as the basis. Remuneration of talented employees requires consideration of other type of "contribution" – possessed competences and in more detail – potential which the talented entity possesses. This type of remuneration focuses on "input", namely potential of the entity rather than "output" namely results achieved by them (Juchnowicz 2005, p. 99).¹⁵

Development of talented employees as an organizational operation is intended to create the possibility to maintain and increase these features of the entity potential, which constitute their values for an organization and/or are a response to individual need.

Development projects do not differ essentially from typical ones, offered in an organization but require accurate determination of needs: it does not always directly involve expectations

¹³ The category of self-motivation is particularly important in the issue of talents. Some authors treat it as essential for the notion of talent. The problem was signalled in the previous item of this study. See (Nęcka 2004)

¹⁴ Some authors postulate earlier employee diagnosis defining their professional personality (e.g. by means of Self Directed Search test of J.Holland,) or identification of its determinant (anchor) of career as is proposed by E.Schein. [Stegenka 2005, p.92] [Achter, Lubinski 2005 p.603]

¹⁵ M.Juchnowicz is of the opinion that this principle is met by two concepts of remuneration related to the person of an employee: remuneration based on knowledge and remuneration for competencies. More information on this topic: (Juchnowicz 2005, p.99).

of the company, it is often disclosed significantly in advance. Hence, suggestions concerning development of talented employees more frequently refer to some features rather than transfer of a specific quantum of knowledge. In the latter case it is rather development of possibilities of access than providing knowledge. Effective information is thus essential, enabling better connection of a talented employee needs and opportunities at his disposal. Development with regard to features of an employee may apply to such features/behaviour as team work, concentration, effective communication, decision-making and other. For this reason, more frequently training techniques are used, individual development programs are created, cooperation is stressed, along with relationship with the coach or a mentor (Mroczek 2007, p.28). Formal training techniques are used relatively less frequently, especially those that have a school form (Sienkiewicz 2007, p.43). The reported research shows what forms of development of employees regarded as talents are used in practice of the tested companies. More frequently are mentioned open trainings and internal trainings, closed trainings, workshops and self-education and rotation. Practical activity of Polish companies in fact includes forms of development perceived as the most appropriate for high-potential or talented employees. Clearly the emphasis is put on techniques that permit gathering and broadening knowledge, though quite considerable share also have not specific actions such as open or closed trainings.

Literature indicates training and development techniques more adequate to the needs of talented employees. Among those mentioned in literature, attention is paid to those that enable us to increase the knowledge and those that affect skills and behaviour. The former, appropriate for talents, affect faster and in shorter time¹⁶. The latter may be of supplementary nature. It includes a structured orientation towards organization and role, coaching, rotation, temporary delegation, targeted reading, learning in the process of education and e-learning¹⁷. Studies did not show a significant use of these techniques, though attempts are visible to vary development offer.

The unusual development of talented employees formulates a question about characteristics differentiating careers of different employee groups, including talents and knowledge workers. Considering interpretation of the notion of talent it may be concluded that perception of career of a talented employee in the organization should not take place through

¹⁶ The success of so designed development system has at its base adoption of the assumption that knowledge may be accumulated in shorter time. Impact on skills and behaviour requires a longer time, appropriate supervision and reflective support. (Berger, Berger 2004, p.295)

¹⁷ Only those which in professional literature are combined with the development of talents are mentioned. Other techniques, more traditional and focused on the processes of individual development in general are sufficiently described in literature.

implementation of requirements of hierarchical position but through learning processes. The content of career is based on acquired content in the processes of individual learning. The plateau of career is not perceived when an employee remains at the same work post in the same organization but when he/she stops learning. Therefore career of talented employees within the organization is not subjected to traditional ways of classification such as planning and pursuing hierarchical promotion towards higher, usually managerial, positions. The level of difficulty connected with career planning of talented employees by organizations is emphasized by the results of reported research: the majority of them do not have and do not build a system of planning individual careers (20). In further 10 companies individualized plans for talented employees are developed. A few others build only standard career plans. Therefore, it is necessary to find and create new ways of possible career development for talented employees, if the organization aims at longer cooperation.

The third stage of talent management process – leaving the organization, has a special meaning. It results in loss of something more than an adapted employee due to its special character. Leaving the company may be interpreted as a result of default in fulfilling the psychological contract and non-equivalence of exchange between organization and employee (Listwan 2005, p.25).

The consequences of a talented person quitting mean no return on expenditure invested in them, usually larger, but, above all, limited availability on the market of people with similar characteristics and/or competences. Consequences in this case are achieved not fully and in a longer time being a real and negative loss of the company's potential (Berger, Berger 2004, p.4).

Observation of a talented person makes it possible to see signals showing willingness to quit the organization in advance, which enables taking remedial steps. However, they do not always bring the desired effect, because reasons usually lie not in work itself but on the part of interpersonal relations where a special place is occupied by a superior of a talented person. However, regardless of results of remedial measures it is worth making everything, so that this situation, difficult in its nature, did not leave deep, negative emotions, shaping also the external image of the organization. Research did not show a special activity of the organization in relation to talented employees reporting the desire to quit.

Conclusion: problems with talent management

The specific character of talents results in the fact that their management creates many difficulties for an organization. Errors in management and observed barriers can be of

individual and organizational nature. In the event of errors and difficulties on the part of an entity there are not many possibilities of their elimination. They can relate to age of the entity, their family situation and some individual features. Dealing with such problems consists, above all, in their identification and making them an element of personnel decisions made in the organization. Also intervention of a career consultant is possible or psychological trainings of an employee, enabling to obtain employees' better inspection of themselves and appropriate behaviour modification.

However, what the organization may improve is its own errors and shortcomings, which become, after some time, a barrier to development and talents maintenance (organizational errors). They often include too narrow a horizon of planning employee development of talented employees. It is necessary here to have longer advance because the use of individual talent is not of economic character: it does not change at the rate comparable to changes of short - term goals of an organization. In addition, it is important to maintain for longer the conditions that were offered during recruitment process; a talented employee builds development of their interests on them. It is also necessary to remember about individualizing approach and continuous diagnosis of talented employee needs (Kaye, Jordan-Evans, 2002). No response to changing needs may result in reduction in enthusiasm and involvement and an attempt to find a different organization. Actions of the organization undertaken in respect of a talented person often to an insufficient degree are based on deepened knowledge about their aspirations and desires, and plans of their career take into account more the organizational needs than of the entity (Kowalska-Marrodan 2005, p.132). A difficulty for talented employees can also be the lack of support from the organization particularly in the first months of work, as well as conviction that, since they have high qualifications, they can accept any organizational role. The above and other traps limiting acquisition and development of talents in the organization may be overcome by (Kwiecień 2005, p.164):

- building talent management process and assigning a priority rank;
- continuous analysis of work environment with emphasis on its modernization
- intensifying activities for promotion of company brand as the employer;
- development of career proposals performed not only vertically within organizational structure;
- building consistent motivation programmes based on developing competencies and recognized employees aspirations;
- coordination of processes and programmes related to talent management to business strategy of the organization;

- implementation of diverse forms of employment and working time taking account of the problem of work – life balance;
- making the organization's management one of talent management bodies;
- appointment of a new functions within HR – talents' specialist (talents' manager).

The aforementioned suggestions do not constitute a closed list, nevertheless they may be the basis for effective activities carried out under organization for obtaining and maintaining talents. They can also counteract the phenomenon of stagnation in professional development of talented people. Its reasons are boredom, exhaustion and perception of one's capacities as limited (Juchnowicz 2005, p.104). Effective talent management in the organization reduces the chances of stagnation syndrome to appear and dismisses the vision of an employee quitting the organization.

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Clashes between Western Management and Eastern Reality

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Abstract

The article argues that due to different reasons, relevance of culture at the national level can be questioned. Recent papers suggest that culture is a psychological construct reflecting a multitude of influences on an individual. Moreover, in a global context it may be irrelevant to talk in terms of national cultures. Interviews with a number of executives of international companies prove these assumptions. To be effective global manager, it is necessary to refocus attention away from any of the values surveys toward developing theories and frameworks for understanding the linkages among culture, perceptions, actions, organizations, structures.

Key words: cross-cultural values; national culture; intercultural research; global manager

Introduction

For over 20 years researchers have urged international managers to take culture into account. But some of the confusion and criticism lodged in some papers is attributable to problematic definitions of 'culture'. One must remember that the construct has become so disagreeable that some within the field of anthropology (e.g., Geertz, 1973) recommended that the concept be set aside in favor of more concrete and manageable concepts.

The balance of global economic power started to shift in the late 1970s. The US economy was faced with problems of competitiveness, especially with regard to products from Japan and other developing Asian countries. As Ouchi, Pascale and Athos (1981) argue, this triggered a wave of research into the Japanese way of organizing and managing, based on the assumption that the uniqueness of Japanese culture (= values) contributed to the country's economic success. In addition, the success of Japanese 'transplants', the increasing number of multinationals, and the visible degree of difference between Americans and the Japanese created the need for and triggered interest in a better understanding of how to interact with the Japanese. Since it was assumed that the critical success factor was culture, anthropologically trained scholars entered the domain of intercultural management research, giving rise to the stream of research that Boyacigiller et al. labeled 'intercultural interaction' (2004). Several scholars conducting research from that perspective had some command of the Japanese

language and were also trained in anthropological research methods (e.g. Brannen, 1994; Kleinberg, 1989). With this intellectual background and professional training, different assumptions about culture were introduced into the field. Although national culture was considered as the fundamental source of identification, that identification was not seen as persistent in the face of cross-national interactions. Instead, culture within organizational settings was conceptualized not as a stable variable but as emergent and negotiated between interaction partners, hence ‘socially constructed’ (Sackmann and Phillips, 2004). While national culture and identity were considered important, other cultures were acknowledged at the organizational and the workplace level. These assumptions, the professional training of these scholars, and the real interface problems at work led to intercultural interactionists raising different kinds of research questions. Of interest were the nature of bicultural interaction and its perceived impact on organizational life, as well as the characteristics and processes of culture formation, and its evolution and emergence from binational interaction. More than a century of exploration within its basic domain of anthropology and decades of exploration within the fields of sociology, psychology and management have shown that culture may mean different things to different people. Hence, researchers, educators and practitioners in the fields of international and cross cultural management need to critically examine the way in which they treat and use the concept of culture (Sackmann and Phillips, 2004). Any activity in terms of identifying culture is implicitly or explicitly influenced and guided by a certain conceptualization of culture that, in turn, influences and shapes its identification. Some scholars argue that the concept of culture was and has been subject to contextual influences that have shaped both its nature and the basic understandings about it at a given point in time. The dominant logic (and paradigm) in researching culture has been guided by cross-national comparisons based on the assumption that ‘culture’ is a correlate of and basically equivalent to ‘nation’. Given developments in the spheres of technology, communications, society, politics and economics during the past decade (e.g. Castells, 2000, vols 1–3) that have impacted on the ways organizations are designed and function (Doz et al., 2001) and the ways in which people relate to and in them, the assumption of culture equals nation may no longer be adequate either for research that attempts to identify culture or for managerial practice. Instead, the perspective of multiple cultures may be more appropriate (Sackmann and Phillips, 2004).

Nationstate and its equation with culture

The challenge for future cross-nationally organized research teams is to raise awareness about the fact that culture can no longer be equated with nation. Recent studies on a multinational strategic alliance, binational joint venture, acquisition, and multinational teams show that nation or national identification is neither the only nor the strongest source for identification in a multicultural workplace. The use of nationstate and its unreflected equation with culture continues, however, to reinforce the outdated assumption that national culture is a given, single, immutable and homogeneous characteristic of both an individual and the population of a country (Sackmann and Phillips, 2004). In a multicultural and diverse society, culture can no longer be implicitly defined as a substitute for nation, and members of such societies can no longer be assumed to identify solely or most strongly with their country of national origin or citizenship.

As borders and boundaries get blurred with globalization, the relevance of culture at the national level can be questioned. Soderberg (2002) argues that national culture is outdated for dealing with the cultural complexity that transnational companies are facing. Appadurai (1996) challenges the territorial roots of culture and focuses on global culture flows stemming from the circulation of persons and of mass-mediated images and messages. Lenartowicz and Roth (2001), on the contrary, insist on the increasing cultural diversity of many nations and suggest examining regional cultures. Sackmann and Philipps (2004) advocate a multiple culture perspective including national, organizational, regional and professional cultures. Obviously, we can study culture at different levels, just as we can adjust the focus of a camera to account for a large landscape or a small detail. Cultural analysis may result in a more or less fine-grained picture, every succeeding focus bringing additional information. The challenge is to define at each level a consistent approach to culture, which may account for what is shared and what is not (Earley, 2006).

Most research in cross-cultural management uses country-level analyses to study cultures. When differences among nations were identified, explanations were typically sought in industrialization-related variables like education and GNP, or in traditional variables like religion and language. A few studies were concerned not with mean differences in attitudes, but with whether the relationship between attitudes and criteria varied by nation. For example, does the success of managers depend on the values they hold, and do such relationships differ by nation. On the other hand, another research acknowledges that individuals may identify with and hold simultaneous membership in several cultural groups. There is also the evidence of the idea of clusters of similar cultures which show meaningful similarity within sets of nations: Nordic European, Latin European, Anglo American, developing countries, and Japan.

They showed sensitivity to regional variability by noting that their two Belgian samples varied in ways that located one somewhat closer to Nordic Europe than the other. These clusters of nations contributed to debates of the day by suggesting that language and technological development were not the overwhelming determinants of culture.

Over the past two decades, we have experienced radical changes in the areas of technology, communications, politics, economies, and society that have impacted on organizational life and turned traditions and commonly accepted patterns of life and work upside down and led to the questioning of some of the heretofore widely held assumptions in international cross cultural management. For example, technological developments in the computer and information sector have transformed workplaces, work itself, and the way work is done. Besides, they accelerated the process of globalization – for firms, for NGOs and not-for-profit organizations, as well as for academic institutions. Given the new technologies, work can now occur 24 hours a day around the globe (O'Hara- Devereaux and Johansen, 1994) in teams whose members are no longer co-located (DiStefano and Maznevski, 2000). New communications media, such as the World Wide Web, bring a wealth of instant and real-time information to those who have technical access even in the remotest places on earth. This has revolutionized all manner of human activity from political fund-raising to product-oriented problem solving (Herz and Banthien, 2002; Moon and Sproul, 2002), and has transformed the way in which research is conducted in terms of access to literature, interaction with colleagues, data collection, and dissemination of results. Resulting work realities can be characterized by dialogue in which hierarchy and positional power are less important than expertise and access power (Mechanic, 1962), which turns increasingly into a responsibility for each individual (e.g. Rifkin, 2000).

Sociologists' characterizations of today's societies and their future development range from multi-option societies (Gross, 1994) to risk society (Beck, 2003) and network societies (Castells, 2000, Vol.1). These new societies are typified by individualism, heterogeneity or diversity, uncertainty, ambiguity, and complexity. They need to be dealt with both by organizations that operate within these societies and by individuals who live and work in them. Resulting realities for individuals provide multiple options that are accompanied by multiple roles and inherent role conflicts. The sources for potential identifications have multiplied, and the question 'Who am I?' is no longer a trivial one. Now, it requires active 'identity work' on the part of the individual (e.g. Bissels et al., 2001; Hall, 1996). For work organizations, the implications of these changes in technology, communications, politics,

economies, and societies are manifold. To stay competitive and exploit the new opportunities, firms have moved beyond national boundaries using different strategies.

Underlying assumptions of culture may no longer fit the new cultural realities of today's and tomorrow's work life. A comparison of nations yields insights into national differences that are not necessarily – and are increasingly less likely to be – cultural differences. The differences resulting from a comparison of values that are collected with questionnaires distributed to employees of a US-based firm may reveal cultural differences – the question remains, however, how to interpret these differences. Are they indicative of culture at the functional level (e.g. research vs. sales), the organizational level (IBM culture vs. Siemens culture), the regional level (e.g. US East Coast vs. US West Coast), the national level (Hungary vs. Germany, where the question remains if new or old Bundesländer), or economic regions transcending national boundaries (e.g. Southern Europe vs. Northern Europe, or Europe vs. Asia)?

Some scholars such as Sonja A. Sackmann and Margaret E. Phillips (2004) prefer to assume that one of the evidences of culture change is cross-national convergence tendencies especially in some areas. They argue, we are witnessing an increasing trend towards convergence, and it is assumed that it has been triggered by mainly globalization forces. Others scholars argue that convergence pressures, though, may have arisen from international competition inducing similar global strategies. On the other hand, such arguments downplay differences in national systems and cultures as sources of competitive advantage. These may merit subtler policy responses rather than radical convergence. It means the changes in culture and the impact on attitudes to life and, also, to work realities. Convergence tendencies are highly selective signals for more nuanced understanding of cross-national aspects (Chris Carr and Markus Pudelko, 2006). On the other hand, convergence is substantially mediated by national culture, national industrialization strategies, and the role of the nation state in devising national institutions. Cross-continental acquisitions and alliances and subsidiary management require sensitive understanding of remaining international differences.

Controversial “powerful” indicators

In the field of international business studies it is still commonly assumed that Geert Hofstede continues to be recognized as the pre-eminent theorist of culture (Leung et al., 2005, p. 358; Kirkman et al., 2006). Hofstede used survey data collected by IBM from its employees in the late 1960s and early 1970s to measure national cultures along the dimensions of power distance, individualism–collectivism, and masculinity–femininity, with ‘masculine’ cultures

being those whose members believe gender roles should be especially rigidly defined, and uncertainty avoided. The fifth dimension, long- vs. shortterm orientation, was added in the 1980s, based on a survey of Chinese commerce students (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005). There are a number of competing typologies: Inkeles and Levinson ([1969] 1997; three dimensions, adopted by Hofstede in his original version); Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961; six dimensions); Hall (1976; two dimensions); Ronen and Shenkar (1985; five dimensions); Trompenaars (1993; seven dimensions); Schwartz (1994; three dimensions, plus 56 'basic' values); Triandis (1994; three dimensions); and most recently the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) with nine dimensions, each with a descriptive and a normative aspect, for a total of eighteen (House et al. 2004).

A. Bird and T. Fang (2009) numerate the following impact of Hofstede's paradigm: 1) he successfully narrowed the concept of culture down into simple and measurable components by adopting nation-state/national culture as the basic unit of analysis; 2) he established cultural values as a central force in shaping managerial behavior; 3) he helped sharpen our awareness of cultural differences; and 4) his notion of cultural value frameworks was adopted by others involved in large scale studies, e.g. the GLOBE project (Chokar et al., 2007).

However, Hofstede has been criticized for the datedness, small size, unrepresentativeness, and inconsistency of his national samples (McSweeney, 2002; Voronov and Singer, 2002), and for the lack of precision in his definitions, especially the individualism–collectivism and long- vs. short-term orientation scales (Briley and Wyer, 2001; Oyserman et al., 2002; Fang, 2003). But according to Frank B. Tipton (2009), even if samples are representative and dimensions carefully specified, there are further conceptual problems. Although easy to use (Sivakumar and Nakata, 2001), dimensional measures of culture tell us very little about the culture itself, and they do not explain the relations between the dimensions, however defined, and variables of interest (Boyacigiller and Adler, 1991; d'Iribarne, 1996–97; Harzing, 2004; Redding, 2005; Kirkman et al., 2006). Frank B. Tipton has analyzed Hofstede's rankings of variables for Britain, France, Germany, the United States, and Japan, along with the countries that rank closest to them in each case. Few of the countries with similar scores on any given variable have much, if anything, in common that might explain the result, and the groupings change from variable to variable. Surprisingly, but many readers will still prefer to stick with old data provided by Hofstede, which has the virtue of relative simplicity (Chris Carr and Markus Pudelko, 2006).

It is widely argued that the more common problem in cross cultural research is the reverse, where individual level measurement structures are used to draw conclusions about the

structure of ecological level measures. The most common criticism of Hofstede's research was that individual level measures corresponding to his national culture dimensions were not reliable. The dominant approach to national culture draws on Hofstede's work (1980) and defines it mainly as a set of values and norms, which guide behaviours. Osland and Bird (2000) showed the limits of this definition by shedding light on the 'cultural paradox', pointing out that culture, as a set of values and norms, does not account for the diversity of behaviours within a given cultural group and that generalizations are not reliable since many exceptions are observed. They conclude that a large part of people's behaviour cannot be explained by dominant values or shared perceptions and call for a different definition of culture.

A great deal of debate and disagreement from the Hofstede and GLOBE essays centers upon the meaning of survey data measured at an individual level but capturing (or intended to do so) collective level constructs. GLOBE does not provide a coherent and tight conceptual model linking individual assessments to more macro ones (Earley, 2006). According to Lyman Porter, 'Organizations don't behave, people do.' There is a great deal of confusion in the literature concerning the level measurement and construct in relation to cross-cultural and national research. This point is aptly made in Hofstede's (1980) original treatise in his description of the ecological fallacy. Since that time, many strong academics have attacked the level of analysis and grouping problem with entire volumes focusing on the topic, including F. Dansereau and F. Yammarino's *Advances in Cross-Level Organizational Research* annual series (JAI Press).

But in cross-cultural research the debate continues unabated (Earley 2006). He prefers to avoid the dilemma by assessing and analyzing constructs at a common level (individual) but with a caveat that such work is an individual-differences approach. From his point of view, both Hofstede and GLOBE team refer to an individual's perception of the surrounding world, and therefore their items are contaminated with the person's unique experiences, biases, etc. How might one escape this dilemma and truly assess constructs at a 'collective' or societal level? By abandoning values surveys asking individuals to assess their view of the world. If one wishes to measure an organization's 'behavior', then it is necessary to look at an outcome (action) that is uniquely defined by the entity. For example, one such outcome might be the reporting structure in an organization. Individual employees do not report to authority structures, and so this is a construct that applies at one level but not at another. However, taking individual assessments (perceptions) of reporting structures does not average, sum or interact to form a collective variable, and it has limitations for understanding culture (Klein et

al., 1994). Both Hofstede and GLOBE fell into the same trap in discussing the specific impact of aggregate cultural values on business practices (Earley 2006). And it is a trap that is inevitable if one uses values measured by individual perception as an indicant of collective culture. As one example take the three items Hofstede cites measuring power distance in his original work: (a) the preference for one style of decision-making by one's boss over other styles, (b) the perception of the boss's actual decision-making style, and (c, for non-managerial employees only) the feeling that employees were afraid to disagree with their manager. As Hofstede points out, these items are unrelated at an individual level (with no wonder: (a) reflects a valence; (b) reflects a practice; and (c) reflects a subjective reaction to an implied practice). These are measures assessing three very different features of psychological perception, but he argues that they are related at an 'eco-logic level', that is, at a countrylevel grouping. It is not clear why Hofstede would expect these three different psychological constructs to be related at an aggregate level. However, GLOBE posits why there well might be differences in correlation patterns of their two measures (what should be vs what is), and they find pattern differences.

According to Earley (2006), Hofstede's conceptualization of culture as a possession of a nation is unsatisfactory, because various 'value dimensions' suggest that such aggregations are contradictory with the constructs themselves. For example, how true does it ring for us to consider the power distance of a highly collective culture? By its axiomatic nature, a collective culture has a number of highly distinctive 'in-groups' (Erez and Earley, 1993; Triandis, 1994) that may have very different characteristics from one another. That is, one such in-group might be very low on power distance, whereas another might be quite high on it. Variability across subgroups may be overwhelmed by using an aggregate measure of culture at a societal level, but this fails to recognize that such within-society differences may flourish – a point raised by Martin in her analysis of culture (Martin, 1992). Such differences are presumed to be less extreme in more individualistic cultures. So the very interaction among key cultural values suggests that a national or societal level of analysis such as that posed by Hofstede is problematic as well.

It is really amazing how contradictory different research findings are! As Russia is a very tempting but unpredictable market in the eyes of some nationalities, I have compared some research results. On the Hofstede's website one will find the following information (see Table 1):

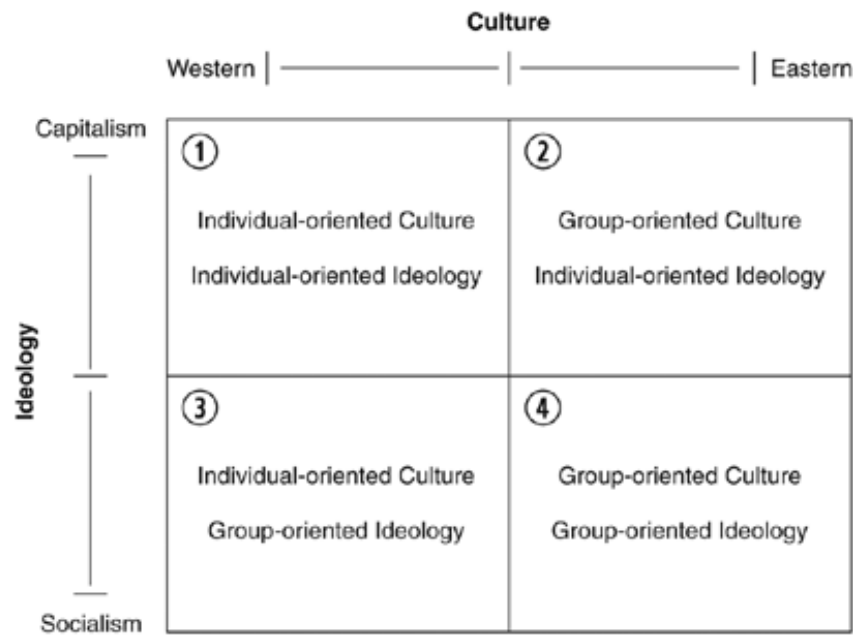
Table 1: Russia's score according to Hofstede

Country	PDI	IDV	MAS	UAI	LTO
Russia *	93	39	36	95	

The Individualism score is rather low, 39. That means that Russia has a collective culture.

Now look at other research results carried out by David A Ralston, David H Holt, Robert H Terpstra and Yu Kai-Cheng (2008). They represented the potential impact of national culture (East-West) and economic ideology (capitalist-socialist) on work values by the two-by-two model (figure 1).

Figure 1: The potential impact of national culture and economic ideology on work values



In this figure, national culture is on the horizontal axis with a continuum running from Western to Eastern, and economic ideology is on the vertical axis with a continuum running from capitalism to socialism. Thus, cell 1 (upper left) identifies a Western (individualistic-oriented) national culture with a capitalistic (individualistic-oriented) economic ideology. Cell 2 (upper right) identifies an Eastern (collectivistic-oriented) national culture with a capitalistic (individualistic-oriented) economic ideology. Cell 3 (lower left) identifies a Western (individualistic-oriented) national culture with a socialistic (collectivistic-oriented) economic

ideology. And cell 4 (lower right) identifies an Eastern (collectivistic-oriented) national culture with a socialistic (collectivistic-oriented) economic ideology.

The Individualism–Collectivism construct indicates the extent to which a society focuses on self-reliance as opposed to group support (Yang and Bond, 1990). There are constructs for cross-societal comparisons on individual work values other than the Individualism–Collectivism construct. However, according to Ronen and Shenkar (1985), Triandis et al. (1988), (Yang and Bond, 1990), the validity of many of these other constructs has been questioned, while the Individualism–Collectivism construct has consistently been acknowledged as a powerful indicator of differences among societies.

Now compare how controversial this powerful indicator is. To assess the impact of national culture and economic ideology on managerial work values, it was essential that the researchers identify representative countries from Eastern and Western cultures with socialistic and capitalistic economic ideologies so that each country selected would represent one cell in our two-by-two model of national culture (East-West) by economic ideology (capitalism-socialism). As shown in figure 2, the four countries selected for the study were: the United States, Japan, Russia, and the People's Republic of China.

Figure 2: Selected countries for the study

		Culture	
		Western	Eastern
Ideology	Capitalism	① UNITED STATES	② JAPAN
	Socialism	③ RUSSIA	④ CHINA

From this figure you can see that Russia has western or individualistic-oriented national culture but group-oriented ideology. So, according to Hofstede, Russia identifies collectivistic

national culture. According to David A Ralston, David H Holt, Robert H Terpstra and Yu Kai-Cheng, Russia identifies individualistic national culture.

I would like to make another comparison concerning Russia. Researchers David A Ralston, David H Holt, Robert H Terpstra and Yu Kai-Cheng consider Russia as Western culture. But the authors of metaconfiguration of GLOBE Societal Cultures, House et al. (2004), have put Russia into the Eastern Europe, that is the East part (figure 3). So, what is Russia?

Figure 3



It is perhaps for this reason that the work by Earley developed with Erez and others over the years sidesteps this cultural “quagmire”; they operationalized culture purely as a psychological construct reflecting a multitude of influences on an individual (e.g., Earley, 1989). This practice might seem to take the ‘culture’ out of culture (strip its collective nature), but if one looks at Rohner’s (1984) oft-cited definition of society, culture and social system, this approach is not inconsistent.

This idea has been supported by the results of different interviews I have conducted with the executives of French and German international companies. As they work in the head – quarter companies in Western Europe as well as in their affiliates in Russia, they were asked to describe the differences at work. They mentioned the different attitude to long term – short term orientation of employees, and I think the difference is due to economic ideology, not to national culture. But what is important is the fact that people working for foreign companies in Russia differ a lot from those working for domestic ones. Of course, foreign companies are

more internationally orientated who show the infusion of, for example, German management models. It means there are two different types of working environment depending on the company. That is why, according to one of the interviewees, a kind of selection exists when people chose the place of work. One executive, an expatriate, perceives the company where he works, as an “island” where certain people work. It illustrates the fact when individuals hold simultaneous membership in several cultural groups.

I think the most illustrative support of the idea that culture is a psychological construct reflecting a multitude of influences on an individual, was the expression of our American colleague who had been to Russia for the first time: “Surprisingly, we are more similar than dissimilar!” But the crucial fact is that during his stay he was communicating only with us, professors and students of the University. So, it was his personal experience that made him conclude that all Russians are like us, that is not true, of course. So, we can suppose that next time, if he has to deal with other people, he may be shocked or frustrated if he is cheated. As a consequence, it may damage a deal or a contract.

For the same reason, during our heat debate, one French executive, very emotionally and expressively, argued that French businessmen are afraid to work with Russians because of their bad behaviour. Moreover, nothing has changed in Russia since his first deal. But another French person who has been working in Russia for ten years argues that there are obviously changes which frighten less. So, these people conclude from their personal experience which depends on individuals with whom they interact. And the behaviour of individuals ranges from “very bad” to “similar”.

Moreover, most interviewees note great changes which have been happening in Russia. If foreign companies are initially internationally orientated, some small and medium-sized domestic companies show the evidence of cross-national transfer of management practices. These companies have oriented themselves toward Western European practices showing greater knowledge and understanding of foreign management practices, and for most of them the differences have narrowed. On the other hand, more traditional Russian companies show little sign of convergence.

Although several companies show convergence and have moved closer towards Western European style or adopted some formal techniques, some institutional and cultural differences remain. It is interesting the actual and current ‘distance’ of the Russian practices from the model and the degree to which Russian practices are expected in the near future to approximate the Western European model.

So, on the one hand, there is globalization and professionalization of management practices to adopt best practices. On the other hand, there are institutional and cultural differences. How will it change in different tomorrow's work contexts?

Culture as a psychological construct

Members of national communities hold multiple identities. The official national cultural identity is certainly one such, but it is capable of very different definitions, it is not the only one, and it may not be the most important one for any given individual. Anthropologist Adam Kuper takes it as given that, 'We all have multiple identities, and even if I accept that I have a primary cultural identity, I may not want to conform to it' (Kuper, 1999, p. 247). This means that the internalized, taken-for-granted cultural values of contemporary individuals include the ability and the right to reflect critically on one's own culture, and to adhere to, adapt, alter, or reject it as seems appropriate. Meaning for the contemporary individual arises precisely from this conscious process. As this occurs in relation to other individuals, it results in the creation of shared – that is, 'cultural' – meanings. Any grouping can form a culture, and any culture can be assumed to be 'a recursive network of self-observations and -distinctions from other cultures and non-cultures' (Fuchs, 2001, p. 156).

How do constructs such as 'society' or 'social system or social structure' differ from 'culture'? Rohner (1984) offers useful distinctions. He defines a society as 'the largest unit of a territorially bounded, multigenerational population recruited largely through sexual reproduction, and organized around a common culture and a common social system' (p. 131). He defines a social system as the behavioral interactions of multiple individuals who exist within a culturally organized population. He defines culture as 'the totality of equivalent and complementary learned meanings maintained by a human population, or by identifiable segments of a population, and transmitted from one generation to the next' (p. 119). Rohner acknowledges that the cross-generational transmission of cultural meanings within a society may be imperfect, such that over time individuals acquire variations on cultural meanings held by their predecessors. Cultural meanings are typically not shared uniformly by an entire society, and they are not shared precisely. Any two individuals from a given culture may hold slightly different meanings for the same event or construct, and these two individuals may have shared meanings with other parties in the society but not with one another. He states (p. 122): It is probable that no single individual ever knows the totality of equivalent and complementary learned meanings that define the 'culture' of a given population, and it is therefore unlikely that the person is able to activate, at any given moment, the full range of

meanings that define the ‘culture’ of his or her people. But complementary meanings free one from the necessity of having to know all of one’s ‘culture’.

Using Rohner’s definitions, it is possible to distinguish the effects of culture, social system and society on individuals’ actions and behaviors. In this sense, as Earley (2006) argues, both Hofstede and GLOBE have missed out on a more theoretically compelling view of culture. Instead, “we are left with an often employed approach focusing on the values espoused by members of a given sample and aggregated to reflect the society. But this means that we fall short of truly understanding culture, because values are only one contributor to the meaning that a group of individuals might attribute to a given stimulus”.

This last point is a very critical for viewing this large-scale assessment approach to study culture, and, as Earley (2006) argues, it presents two areas of potential contradiction with the Hofstede and GLOBE view of culture. First, culture is not a value (or set of values); culture is the meaning we attach to aspects of the world around us. As I shall argue in the final section, many of the shortcomings of current research on cross-cultural issues can be connected to an obsession we have with values as culture rather than meaning as culture. Even the traditional scholars dealing with values (e.g., Parsons and Shils, 1951; Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961; Mead, 1967; Rokeach, 1973) merely suggested that cultures may vary in their value orientations, just as they may vary in their institutional practices. Second, meaning systems are imperfectly shared across individuals and/or segments (sub-populations) within the same society. But even the meanings attached to an event may be imperfectly shared across individuals from the same society operating under the same social system, according to Rohner. Thus a culture of study assessing ‘should be’ vs. ‘actually is’ through individuals cannot be expected to provide convergence, particularly in highly diverse populations.

Conclusion

What are the attributes of a useful and fulfilling theory? No theory of organizational behavior today fully provides the conceptual framework for understanding how culture, managerial practices and work behavior are interrelated (Erez and Earley, 1993).

There have been more and more articles recently, offering new perspectives to cultural research. One of them, Earley, summarizes his ideas as following: (1) Stop doing this type of grand-values assessment. (2) Develop some mid- and/or grand-level theories that link culture to action. (3) Develop alternatives to values as a basis for exploring culture in relation to action. He says: ‘we have enough of these values-based, large-scale surveys, and it just is not terribly useful to have more of them’. Just as he argued nearly a decade ago, it was time to

move away from studies focusing on individualism–collectivism (Earley and Gibson, 1998). He suggests that scholars refocus their attention away from any more of these values surveys and toward developing theories and frameworks for understanding the linkages among culture, perceptions, actions, organizations, structures, etc.

Most recently, several researchers, some of them are Earley, Soon Ang, Kok-Ye Ng, David Thomas and Kerr Inkson, have undertaken a very different approach to studying cultural differences through a construct called ‘cultural intelligence’ (Earley and Ang, 2003; Thomas and Inkson, 2004; Ng and Earley, 2006). This construct focuses on understanding an individual’s capacity to adapt to varying cultural settings based on facets of cognitive and meta-cognitive processing, motivational mechanisms and behavioral adaptation. Rather than using exogenous and contextual factors shared in a society (values, meaning) as a driver of behavior, cultural intelligence focuses on an individual’s capabilities to adapt in a cultural setting as a driver of behavior. Although this work is nascent, it provides a very different avenue for studying cultural effects and influences on individual action.

Globalization is reshaping our modes of thinking and ways of behaving and fostering cultural change in societies. While some scholars (cf. Harrison, 2006; Harrison and Huntington, 2000) may argue over a ‘clash of cultures’, it seems just as relevant to focus on the ways in which cultures may learn from each other, even inspire each other where the beauty of cultural differences and cultural collisions is applauded (Fang, in press; Soderberg and Holden, 2002). At the same time, some scholars argue that a world culture (Lechner and Boli, 2005) or global culture (Arnett, 2002; Bird and Stevens, 2003) is emerging and that it threatens the existence of national cultures. I like the way Earley avoids a simplistic and sweeping ‘either-or’ debate over convergence vs. divergence. Instead, gives importance to understanding the paradoxical and evolving conceptualizations of cultures and their implications for cross cultural management theory and practice.

Bird and Stevens (2003) suggested that in a global context it may be irrelevant to talk in terms of national cultures. While well known critiques exist concerning the use of nation-states as the basic unit of analysis (e.g. McSweeney, 2002; Soderberg and Holden, 2002), we intend to adopt a less radical stance here, preferring instead to consider more expansive conceptualizations of culture and its impact. To better understand the workings of culture in today’s borderless and wireless cross cultural management environment, Fang (2003, 2005 2006) introduced the Oriental philosophy of Yin Yang to cross cultural theory building and crafted an ‘ocean’ metaphor of culture as an alternative metaphor to Hofstede’s ‘onion’ metaphor of culture. Culture is perceived as having a life of its own full of paradox and

change in a dialectical movement. Based on the Yin Yang philosophy, Fang (2005–2006: 77–78) proposed that opposite values can coexist within the same culture and society and argued that ‘human beings, organizations, and cultures intrinsically embrace paradoxes for their sheer existence and healthy development’. It seems that globalization has given rise to a paradoxical movement of cultures. On the one hand, emergent global cultures transcend national boundaries and cultures. On the other hand, the synchronizing power of the Internet and wireless digital technologies provide local companies and indigenous cultural values with unprecedented global exposure. Two broad constructs seem to have been driving the paradoxical movement of cultures: (1) *cultural ecology* with uniquely embedded local political institutions, climate, language, traditions and customs; and (2) *cultural learning* of values and practices as a consequence of cultural clashes in the marketplace and cyberspace of globalization, foreign direct investment (FDI), and the Internet. Cultural ecology contributes to containing cultures, making them a special, idiosyncratic and unique phenomenon; whereas cultural learning contributes to opening cultures, pushing them towards a common, non-idiosyncratic and globally interwoven phenomenon. Moreover, cultural ecology is not without dynamic implications. Global warming matters: the current debates on ecological challenges in terms of global warming and sustainable human development are reshaping the way we value our management and our life in general. Cultural learning can also give rise to the renewed meanings of indigenous components in local ecological settings. As such, cultural ecology and cultural learning integrate with each other and coexist within each other to shape a dynamic identity of cultures (A. Bird and T. Fang, 2009). It is high time we considered fresh ways of thinking about and studying the influence of culture on management in the age of globalization.

Recent papers make us ask new questions such as: Is the return to conceptualizing culture in terms of politics or practice and away from the overwhelming emphasis on values the only way out towards better understanding of cultural change in the increasingly pluralistic societies of the 21st century? Hong and colleagues (Hong et al., 2000) have argued that the rise of people who are ‘frame switching’ – shifting cultural filters and behaviors as they are crossing back and forth between two or more cultures – may also influence cultural change within cultures. It is reasonable to ask how they might relate to the sort of cultural development. Also, several authors have called for more attention to be devoted to cultural paradox (Fang, 2005–2006; Osland and Bird, 2000), that is, paradoxical values and behavioral orientations coexisting within one and the same culture. How might paradox and attempts to resolve it reflect and lead to cultural change?

If the global manager wants to be successful and effective, it is inappropriate to speak about clashes between “best practices” of western management and “awful” eastern reality. The international manager shouldn’t look at “average tendencies” in values and norms which may lead to wrong anticipation and behaviour, and, consequently, damage the deal. Instead, one should look at an individual, taking into account culture, perceptions, actions, organizations and others.

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Cultural profile of Polish students. Directions of change and perspectives for managers

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Abstract

With the increase in global activities, managers need a good understanding of culture.

The main aim of this paper is to explore cultural orientation of young Poles, students of Poznan School of Banking. Within the framework of International Management course, in the period of 4 years from 2004 till 2007, each group of over 50 students, males and females, aged 20-23, was asked to answer questions and express their preferences in a questionnaire, which has been particularly developed to indicate their dominant cultural values. Relying on the findings of western researchers but also on the answers from the questionnaire, the authors of this paper attempt to comment them in regard to the students' cultural priorities and preferences. The results of the study show not only directions of change in cultural values prevalent among young Poles but above all could be considered in the framework of their possible impact upon the adaptation of Western managerial concepts in Poland.

Key words: Studies, national culture, cultural values, Polish students, intercultural management

Introduction

Culture plays an important role in how international business is conducted, how governments act, how employees, suppliers, and customers behave and communicate, and how decisions are made. Although many factors have contributed to a convergence of managerial ideas and practices the world over, cultural differences persist and shape business relationships. Successful managers must know the cultural environment in which they operate. This knowledge will determine the most effective ways to communicate, motivate and lead. Understanding the underlying dimensions of culture help the international manager to avoid cultural mistakes and commercial losses. Culture's influence, although profound, often goes unseen. This results in deep and difficult conflicts, but also in untapped potential.

Culture can be defined as a system of values, beliefs, assumptions and norms, shared among a group of people. The group's cultural system is a general agreement among people about what

is important and how things will get done. The more fundamental the grouping, the deeper the culture, the greater its influence on members' values and beliefs, and the less the members are aware of this influence¹⁸.

According to Maznievski and DiStefano (2004) culture provides two functions that affect global management. First, culture provides a sort of *software for the group's interactions*. The shared cultural system allows members to interact with each other efficiently without questioning every motive or action, and with a relatively smooth flow of activity.

Culture provides guidance for decision-making: basic criteria need not be discussed at length. Culture also provides scripts for behaviour, so people know what to expect of each other and how to communicate – even how to express conflict and resolve it. Within a single culture managers can “get things done” more easily than they can when crossing to other cultures.

Second, culture provides a source of *identity* for people within the culture. This identity often surfaces when people describe who they are: “I am Polish” or “I am American”. The identity becomes even more important when it is threatened, and culture provides a boundary pulling insiders together around their shared values, shielding themselves from outsiders. Culture is like glue that binds groups together.

Several researches have studied the cultures of different nations and have, on the basis of similarities and dissimilarities with respect to their various dimensions, categorized them. These studies can be helpful to managers because they distil the complexity of a culture into simple, easy to relate frameworks that aid in understanding the extent to which a foreign culture may differ from that of their own.

Four models are particularly popular in cross-cultural studies and research:

1. Cultural Orientations Framework introduced by Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961), and further developed by Maznevski & DiStefano (2001, 2003)
2. Hofstede's model of four dimensions (1980, 2001)
3. Trompenaars's cultural parameters (1993, 2000)
4. Hall's time orientation- and communication models (1976, 1989)

¹⁸ It is nearly impossible to formulate a single definition of culture. None would be adequate anyway, because the concept is so complex. Indeed defining culture has become a science in itself. One definition, which has become particularly popular, has been presented by G. Hofstede (1991:5) He defines culture as “the collective mental programming of the people in the environment. Culture is not a characteristic of individuals; it encompasses a number of people who were conditioned by the same education and life experience”. In line with this, Ferraro's more recent definition is: “everything that people have, think, and do as members of society is culture” (2002:19).

Method

The main aim of this paper is to explore, in accordance with the Cultural Orientation Framework (COF) the culture dimensions of young Poles, students of Poznan School of Banking. During the International Management course, in the period of 4 years, from 2004 till 2007 each group between 50 to 55 students, males and females, aged 20-23, were asked to answer questions and present their preferences in a questionnaire, which has been particularly developed to indicate their dominant cultural orientation (see Appendix). The study was conducted using samples of 211 undergraduate business students.¹⁹

As first task of the questionnaire Polish students were asked to indicate from three possible answers the one which was the closest to their preferences in all five value-based categories within COF.

The second exercise dealt with differences in communication style. Students were asked to identify their dominant communication style by accepting or denying 5 statements created on E. Hall's communication model.

After assembling the filled out questionnaires all data of the study were transcribed into the excel type file and it became the basis for the comparison of results.

Based on the findings of western researchers, but also on the answers from the questionnaire, the present authors attempt to comment on them in regard to the students' cultural profile, their priorities, preferences and values.

The best way to understand and predict how one culture is different from another is within a framework that compares them with respect to important dimensions.

No culture is static or completely homogeneous. Cultures change, and individuals within a culture differ from each other. Knowledge of cultures should always be treated as tentative guidelines to interaction: the first important point of departure.

Cultural Orientations Framework provides a tool for identifying the system of shared values, beliefs, assumptions and norms that guide priorities and expectations in the culture.

Cultural Orientations Framework- theoretical considerations and research findings

Cross-cultural psychology has two broad aims: to understand the differences between human beings, who come from different cultural backgrounds, and to understand the similarities between all human beings (Hills, 2002).

People's attitudes to life are based on the relatively few stable values they hold. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's (1961) Values Orientation Theory, in the literature known also as Cultural

¹⁹ The number of students participating in the research 2004-2007 was as following: 2004-52 students, 2005-55 students, 2006-50 students, 2007-54 students.

Orientations Framework (i.e. Francesco and Gold, 2005, Deresky, 2006), proposes that all human societies must answer a limited number of universal problems, and that the value-based solutions are limited in number and universally known, but that different cultures have different preferences among them.

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck identified five basic issues that all groups must address and resolve in order to function effectively. These five basic types of problems could be formulated in a question form with possible three variations of answers to each one:

1. What is the relationship between humanity and its natural environment - mastery, subjugation or harmony?
2. How should individuals relate with others - hierarchically, as member of the group, or according to their individual merit?
3. What is the prime motivation for behaviour – to be, to grow, or to achieve?
4. What is the basic of human beings - good, bad ("Evil") or a mixture?
5. On what aspect of time should we primarily focus - past, present or future?

Maznevski and DiStefano (2001, 2003) developed further the concept of Cultural Orientations Framework emphasizing most of all the link between this concept and the practical influence of the orientation on management. Based on that, the present authors want to stress this link and also look closer at the cultural preferences prevailing among Polish students. In consideration of the results they received from the questionnaire, the authors attempt to comment on them in regard to the students' cultural profile, directions of change and a possible impact upon the adaptation of Western managerial concepts in Poland.

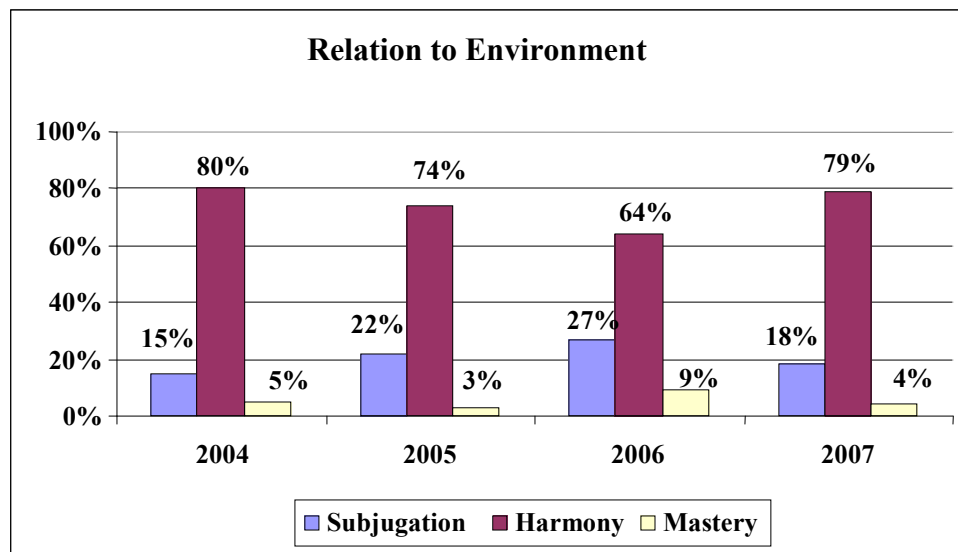
Relationship to the Environment

The issue of people's relationship to the environment reflects how people in a society ought to orient themselves in the world around them. Three main variations seem to exist in the human experience. One is *subjugation* to the environment: people see themselves as dominated by physical forces and/or subject to the will of a Supreme Being. Life in this context is viewed as predetermined or preordained. The second orientation is *harmony* with the environment. In harmony cultures, people do not see themselves as separate from the environment, but as part of an integrated, holistic system. Humans' role is to help maintain the balance of the system. The third variation is the *mastery* over the environment. In *mastery* cultures, people see themselves as dominating the environment. It is considered normal and good to shape the environment to suit humans' own needs or desires.

It is important to keep in mind that in each culture there are all three ways of relating to the environment mentioned above. It is crucial to remember that *all* variations are present in *all* cultures at *all* times; however, each culture has a clear *pattern of preferences*. This is true of all the cultural orientations.

Based on Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's (1961) Cultural Orientations Framework, Polish students were asked to indicate one from the three possible answers in this category, the one which was the closest to their preferences (see Appendix Task 1).

The following preferences have been indicated:



Source: Research

Very strong preference among Polish students for *harmony* is at the first sight a bit surprising, for in the literature most of the Asian cultures are identified as being particularly representative of this option (Brake [et al.], 1995).

The results show, however, that young people in Poland want to go along well with their environment and want to serve its welfare.

This could be a result of a strong influence of modern, western, ecologically-balanced way of living with a particularly cooperative orientation to environment protection.

The environment orientation influences managerial activity in many ways. Three of them can be illustrated as: goal setting, priorities for projects, and what causes are attributed to problems or unexpected negative results (see Figure 1) (DiStefano, Maznevski, 2001, 2003).

Figure 1: Variations in relation to the environment orientation and examples of managerial impact

	Subjugation	Harmony	Mastery
Goal setting	Vague, hesitant	Contingent, moderated	Specific, confident, unambiguous,
Priorities for projects	Understand higher goals, focus on implementing God's will.	Balance whole system, focus on connection between parts.	Control specific parts, focus on fixing problems.
Perceived causes of problems	No problem – it was not God's will for this to happen.	Whole system not taken into account or is out of balance.	Elements in environment not adequately controlled.

Source: Adopted from Lane, H.W., DiStefano, J.J., Maznevski, M.L. (2001): International Management Behavior, Cambridge, Blackwell, DiStefano, J.J., Maznevski, M.L. (2003): Culture in International Management: Mapping the Impact (2003) in IMD Perspective for Managers, No.105, November, Lausanne.

Based on the results of Polish students and their preferences for *harmony*, the managerial impact would be that the goal setting in Polish organizations is more likely to be moderated by the culture's need to fit with the environment. Young Poles are more likely to look for connections between different parts in project management and strive for balance of the whole system.

Relations among People

The concept of relationships among people is concerned with the responsibility one has to and for others. There are three common patterns of relations: collective, individualistic, and hierarchical. In *collective* cultures, members of a group look after each other, maintaining and promoting the welfare of the group as a whole.

In *individualistic* cultures, people are responsible mainly for themselves and their immediate families. There is a strong belief that one should take care of oneself. Independence and standing on your own two feet are valued and emphasized.

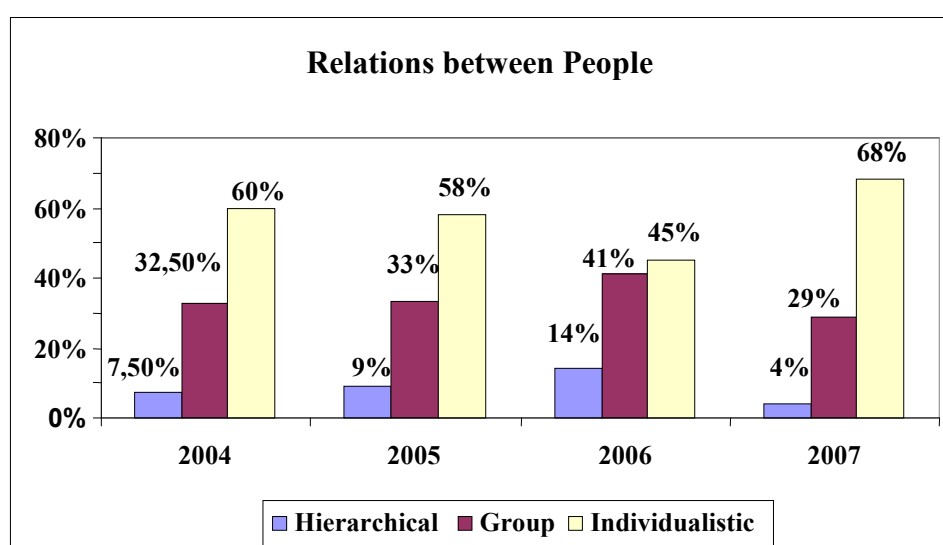
Finally, in *hierarchical* cultures, those at the top of the hierarchy have both responsibility for and authority over those below. In this variation, relationships of power and responsibility are arranged so that those lower in the hierarchy are obliged to submit to the will of those higher

in the hierarchy. In return, they have the right to expect that those higher in the hierarchy will look after, protect, and provide for them.

Cultures typically reflect all three of these ways of dealing with how people relate to each other; however, usually one value is stronger than the others.

Also in this case, Polish students were asked to indicate one from the three possible answers which was closest to their preferences (see Appendix).

The following preferences have been indicated:



Source: Research

Based on the results, a clear preference for variation C – *individualism* – can be easily seen. A relatively small difference from variation B, particularly in 2006, suggests that group orientation should not be underestimated in Poland either.

Cultural orientation “Relation among people” seems to be related to two dimensions of cultural values, which have been introduced and developed by Geert Hofstede (1980, 2001): individualism/ collectivism (IDV) and power distance (PDI).

According to Hofstede, Poles occupied a rather high position in both dimensions – PDI=68, IDV=60 (Hofstede, 2001: 502).

Some other authors, however, came up with slightly different results. In the article “Cross-cultural differences in Central Europe”, the positions of four Central European countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) have been set against Hofstede’s dimensions of national cultures, estimated on the basis of matched samples of students (Kolman [et al.], 2003). Among the four countries, Slovakia shows the largest power distance and Poland the smallest – PDI=47.

Historically, Polish society was a curious mixture of democratic and authoritarian elements and there has always been ambivalence towards authority, which appears to be rooted in the recent as well as the more distant past. On the one hand, Poles attach much value to having a good working relationship with their direct superior and to being consulted by him or her (argument for low PDI). On the other, Polish managers have a tendency to adopt an autocratic management style and to resist everything that could dilute managerial authority (argument for high PDI). Generally speaking, authority is something to be reckoned with, and it is wise to obey it at least ostensibly, but at the same time, the legitimacy of authority is easily questioned. This could be one of the reasons why young Poles show so small a preference for option A – *hierarchy*.

Poland has a rather high position on the scale of *individualism* within the group of Central European countries. It is well anchored in the stereotype of the individualistic Pole. Research shows, that Poles favour individual decisions and opt for individual responsibility and growth (e.g. Mikułowski-Pomorski, 2003). They do not count any more on the protective role of the State in solving their vital problems and strongly believe that everybody has the right to a personal opinion.

Managing a business requires managing relationships among people – therefore, the relationship variable has a strong influence on managerial practice and policy. Organizational structures, communication and leadership, reward systems, teamwork and other managerial processes are all influenced by the relationship orientation (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Variations in relations among people orientation and examples of managerial impact

	Hierarchical	Group	Individualistic
Managerial Impact			
Organizational structure	Attention on vertical differentiation	Attention on horizontal differentiation	Informal, flexible behaviour
Communication patterns	Authority-based	Within-group emphasis	Multiple, as needed, open
Reward system	Status- based	Group-based	Individually-based
Leadership	Leader commands subordinates, looks after them.	Leader shows personal care and concern for subordinates.	Leader empowers subordinates to make own decisions.

Teams	Leader decides roles, determines structure of team.	Joint goals, roles fluid, prefer group reward.	Identify individual roles and contributions; individual rewards.
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Source: Adopted from Lane, H.W., DiStefano, J.J., Maznevski, M.L. (2001): International Management Behavior, Cambridge, Blackwell, DiStefano, J.J., Maznevski, M.L. (2003): Culture in International Management: Mapping the Impact (2003) in IMD Perspective for Managers, No.105, November, Lausanne.

The preferences of Polish students for individualistic values show their priorities in terms of organizational behaviour and managerial styles. According to DiStefano and Maznevski (2001, 2003) in cultures where individualistic values are dominant, individuals are given much attention in the organizational structure. There is strong preference for leaders that delegate and empower subordinates to make own decisions. As far as teamwork and cooperation are concerned, it is important to identify individual roles and design the reward system based on individual contribution.

Young people in Poland wish to be involved in decisions that affect their work. They are ambitious, professionally oriented, open-minded and willing to take a risk. They are motivated by pay for performance and individual assessments.

Mode of Activity

The activity orientation does not refer to a state of activity or passivity, but rather to the desirable focus of activity. The *being* culture, is characterized by spontaneity and fully experiencing each moment. In these cultures, “One works to live, one does not live to work!” Work gets done, but is not necessarily prioritized over other things. Whereas the *doing* approach is a striving, achieving, accomplishing orientation. In a *doing* culture people are more likely to view tasks and work-related activities as central to their existence and even self-identity.

In *growing (thinking)* cultures, rational thought and planning before action are emphasized. People should neither act impulsively by feelings, nor compulsively by some hidden force of necessity.

The activity dimension affects how people approach work and leisure, how preoccupied they are with work in general and what their objectives and priorities are. It also influences how decisions tend to be made and which reward system is preferred (see Figure 3).

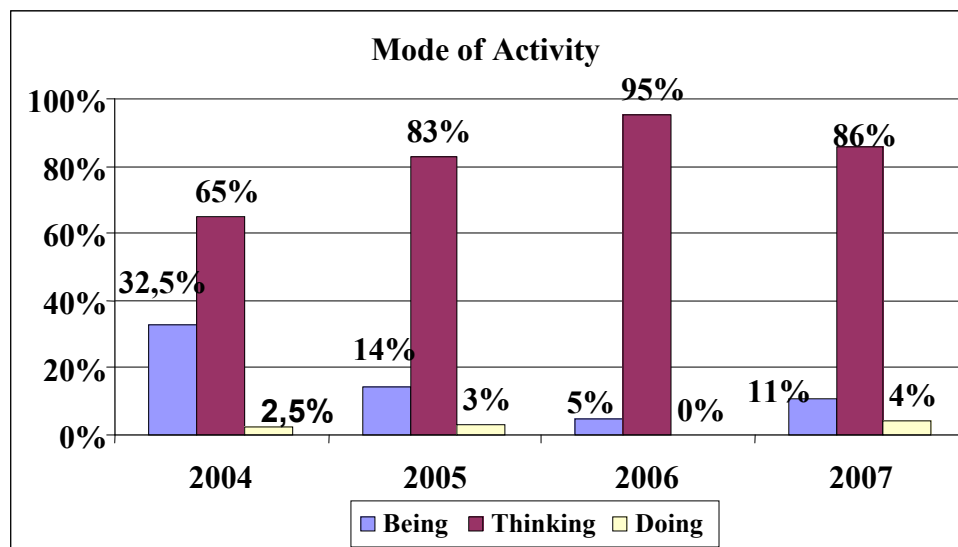
Figure 3: Variations in Mode of Activity orientation and examples of managerial impact

	Being	Growing (Thinking)	Doing
Decision criteria	Emotional	Rational	Pragmatic
Rewards system	Feeling-based	Logic-based	Results-based
Concern for output	Spontaneous	Balanced objectives	Compulsive

Source: Adopted from Lane, H.W., DiStefano, J.J., Maznevski, M.L. (2001): International Management Behavior, Cambridge, Blackwell, DiStefano, J.J., Maznevski, M.L. (2003): Culture in International Management: Mapping the Impact (2003) in IMD Perspective for Managers, No.105, November, Lausanne.

Also in this case Polish students were asked to indicate from three possible answers the one which was the closest to their preferences (see Appendix).

The following preferences have been indicated:



Source: Research

The preferences of Polish students in the orientation Mode of Activity need some commentary. What is striking is their preference for *growing (thinking)* variation, which

comes at first sight as a bit surprising. The authors of this paper represent the opinion that young people in Poland are confronted with an increasing intensity of changes taking place all over the world and in Poland itself and that these changes offer both opportunities and many challenges. Consequently, young people in Poland have developed more cautious, rational and logic-based way of dealing with everyday situations in life. There is no doubt that young Poles perceive today's world as unpredictable and very money-driven, so they are ready to work hard and gain additional education to achieve tangible results in their work (argument for *doing* variation). Research done in 2004 on the group of young Polish professionals indicated that money was an important motivator (position number one for males and number five for females) (Frankel [et al.], 2006). These preferences for a high salary and material success seem to go well with values typical of masculine society, and Poland ranks rather high in this dimension (MAS= 64 , Hofstede 2001:502). The same research, however, indicated that although money was an important motivator, there are certainly other methods of motivation beyond financial ones, which are as well desired and expected.

Very important seem to be the characteristics related to long-term career objectives: sense of accomplishment, achievements, continued development (argument for *growing* variations).

Additionally, it needs to be mentioned that in Poland as in other Slavic countries, the human dimension is important in all aspects of interpersonal relations, including business. Poles are famous for their warm and generous hospitality, spontaneity and sometimes too emotional reactions (typical of *being* variation). Poles will strike a deal when they feel right about it. Those who hope to do business in Poland should be prepared to spend time developing a good personal relationship and only then should business be discussed (Richmond, 1995:68).

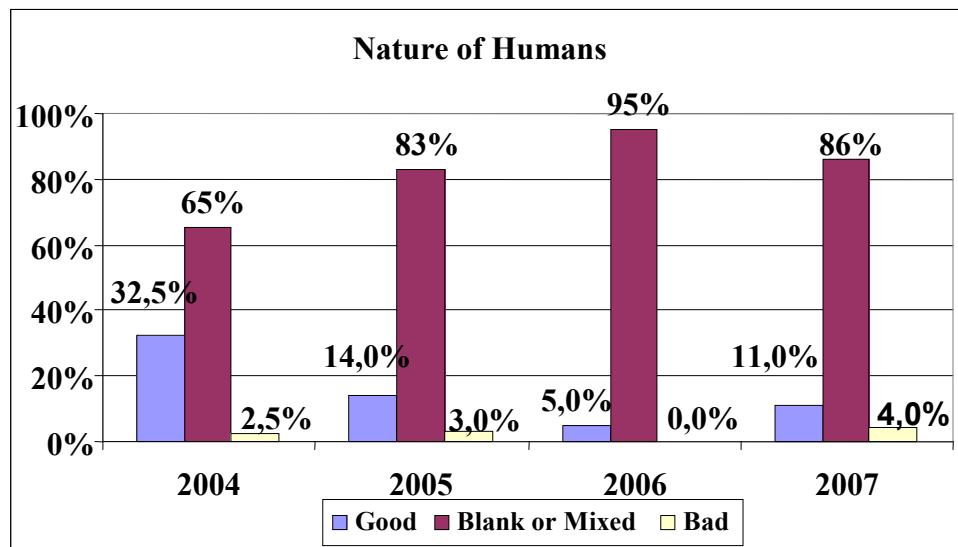
Basic nature of Human Beings

The belief about basic human nature does not reflect what one thinks about individuals but rather one's belief about the inherent character of the human species. It is not a belief in how an individual person behaves, but what the underlying nature of all of us as humans is. In some cultures, people believe that the basic nature of humans is not predetermined, but in fact it is a *blank slate*. Human nature, they believe, is completely determined by the environment and events of each person's life. In some cultures it is assumed that we begin life basically *good*, and that if people do bad things in their lives it is an anomaly or a result of something making them bad in their experiences and environment. In these cultures, people tend to trust others until evidence is provided that they cannot be trusted. In other cultures it is assumed that we begin life basically *bad* (e.g. the notion of original sin in Christianity), and that we

must always guard against this tendency to give in to our evil nature. People in these cultures tend to protect themselves and monitor others, and to celebrate and honour people who, against their basic nature, do extremely good things.

Like in previous cases also in this category Polish students were asked to indicate from three possible answers the one which was the closest to their preferences (see Appendix).

The following preferences have been indicated:



Source: Research

The most obvious impact on business of the human nature value may be on control systems in organizations.

Figure 4 illustrates how differences in Nature of Humans can be seen in organizations.

Figure 4: Variations in Nature of Humans orientation and examples of managerial impact

	Good	Blank or Mixed	Bad
Trust	High trust assumed until proven otherwise.	Trust dependent on characteristics of person and situation.	Low trust assumed until proven otherwise.
Control system	Loose, information-based.	Moderate, experienced-based.	Tight, suspicion-based.

	Low levels of monitoring and control preferred and expected.	Monitoring and control tasks are situation dependent.	High levels of monitoring and control preferred and expected.
Management styles	Participative	Moderate supervision, consultative	Close supervision, top-down

Source: Adopted from Lane, H.W., DiStefano, J.J., Maznevski, M.L. (2001): International Management Behavior, Cambridge, Blackwell, DiStefano, J.J., Maznevski, M.L. (2003): Culture in International Management: Mapping the Impact (2003) in IMD Perspective for Managers, No.105, November, Lausanne.

The preference of Polish students for *blank or mixed* variation of basic human nature expresses their belief that people are basically good but in some situations they behave in an evil manner and so it is important to be cautious in order to protect oneself.

As mentioned before, Poles build their relationships based on trust and sometimes it takes longer time to create a relationship particularly with people from other cultures. Because of the history of domination from outside, there is some uneasiness about foreigners in Poland. This is why one builds first a good, trustworthy relationship, only then business can proceed smoothly.

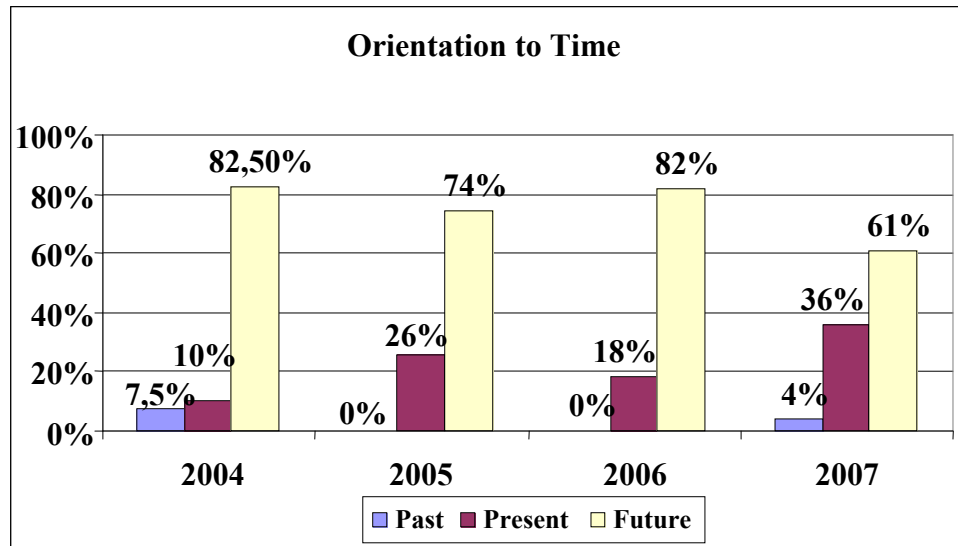
In both business and professional life young Poles would expect and prefer a moderate control system and consultative managerial style and as trust is gaining on strength, they would prefer more participative way of interacting with lower level of mentoring and control.

Orientation to Time

There are two ways of thinking about time. The first involves one's general orientation toward time rather than how one uses specific units of time. This can be illustrated by how people respond to new events. If people respond to a new challenge by looking to tradition then their dominant value may be past-oriented. Cultures with a *past* orientation look to the past for answers and advice to resolve current dilemmas, and strongly value traditions and ancestors. Cultures with a *present* orientation think about today's immediate needs or those of the short-term future, and focus on keeping up with modern times. Cultures with a *future* orientation prioritize the long-term future, often sacrificing things today for security or success far into the future.

Also in this category Polish students were asked to indicate from three possible answers the one which was the closest to their preferences (see Appendix).

The following preferences have been indicated:



Source: Research

The planning horizon is this cultural variable's most obvious point of impact on managers (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Variations in Time orientation and examples of managerial impact

Past	Present	Future
<p>Past and tradition important; Make things consistent with past practice.</p>	<p>Immediate concerns important. Promote urgency, immediate threats and opportunities.</p>	<p>Long-term approach. Sacrifice today for future benefits. Incorporate long-term goals into current plan and action.</p>

Source: Adopted from Lane, H.W., DiStefano, J.J., Maznevski, M.L. (2001): International Management Behavior, Cambridge, Blackwell, and DiStefano, J.J., Maznevski, M.L. (2003): Culture in International Management: Mapping the Impact (2003) in IMD Perspective for Managers, No.105, November, Lausanne.

The strong preference of Polish students for the *future* variation does not surprise, if we consider that young people in general, wherever they live, are more prone to look ahead, hoping for new potential for growth and development. Also, Polish students are willing to trade short-term gains for long-term results and they like to set future goals and directions. This priority of young Poles seems to contradict observations conducted by some authors who wrote the following remarks about Poland: “There is a strong respect for tradition. Post communist countries have developed distaste for long-term planning. This is undoubtedly a reaction to the communist past as well as a response to the current conditions of uncertainty” (Brake [et al.] 1995:107). “History is very important to Poles and visitors will be surprised how often dates and events from the past of Poland will be cited in conversation” (Richmond, 1995:47). “Poles are definitely past-oriented. The length and significance of their history and heritage provide an indispensable background and launching pad for current action” (Lewis, 2000:257).

There is another aspect of time orientation that strongly influences behaviour and appears to be related to the dimension of activity discussed earlier.

E. Hall (1976, 1989) observed that in some countries deadlines and programs are all important. They are the essence of business. Business people try to achieve project deadlines on time and within the budget. These countries are referred to as monochronic. In others, greater flexibility is appreciated. There is less worry about deadlines. Time is renewable. In business, the key thing is to make sure that the quality of relationship is good, and then everyone can work out things together. These countries are referred to as polychronic.

According to Dudkowski (2005) the following general observation can be made about Poles in relation to time: Poles are more relaxed about time than some monochronic cultures but not necessarily unpunctual. One should not steal other people’s time but Polish society is not time dominated in a typical monochronic sense. Poles tend to turn up a little late and dedicate more time for relationship building. They show also some tendencies to divided attention. They can perceive not just a single issue but they can also see and monitor several activities simultaneously, so that they can promptly react as well as notice and grab the opportunity (rather typical of polychronic orientation).

Differences in communication among cultures

Communication is central to culture and essential to management. Without effective communication, systems and organizations experience difficulty and even failure. However, it is challenging to achieve effective communication even within a single culture or

organization. It becomes even more complex when people from multiple cultures and organizations need to interact. The challenge is to interpret correctly what a person from a different culture means by his or her words and actions.

Edward T. Hall, an American anthropologist, used the concept of context to explain differences in communication styles among cultures. “Context is the information that surrounds an event. It is inextricably bound up with the meaning of that event” (Hall and Hall 1989:64). Cultures can be categorized on a scale from high- to low-context. The main characteristics of both communication styles are presented in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6: Main characteristics of high- and low-context communication styles

Low context (LC)	High context (HC)
Primary focus: exchange of information, facts and opinions	Primary focus: developing relationships
Language: explicit, direct	Language: implicit, indirect
Direct communication means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Putting the main message up front - Preferring words that are straightforward and dynamic - Valuing the truth over politeness 	Indirect communication means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delaying main message until after details and explanations - Tolerating and enjoying ambiguity in word choice - Valuing the pleasant exchange more than objective truth

Source: Based on the concepts of Edward T. Hall (1976, 1989)

The preferences of Polish students in communication styles

The preference of Polish students for low-context communication style is easily seen in responses to the questionnaire’s next item – *what is your communication style?* (see Appendix, Exercise 2).

According to their preferences students were asked to identify their dominant communication style by accepting or denying the following 5 statements:

1. When I communicate with others I say straightforwardly what I want.
2. There is no room for “private talks” at workplace.
3. I often try to convince others of my point of view.
4. I usually do not “beat about the bush” but stress directly what is important.

5. I pay careful attention to *what* has been said rather than *how* it has been said (i.e. body language).

The following results has been reached:

Statement	1		2		3		4		5	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
2004	84,5 %	15,5 %	25,5 %	74,5 %	56,5 %	43,5 %	56,5 %	43,5 %	60%	40%
2005	91%	9%	13%	87%	75%	25%	73%	27%	42%	58%
2006	83%	17%	24%	76%	60%	40%	76%	24%	76%	24%
2007	95%	5%	9%	91%	64%	36%	64%	36%	45%	55%

Source: Research

The preferences of Polish students as regards communication need some comments.

The present authors believe that preferences in communication style illustrate in general the changes in priorities and values among young people in Poland. Looking at the results, it is rather obvious that students prefer to communicate in a rather straightforward and direct way. They are not afraid to say frankly what they think and like to convince others to their point of view. This shows a rise in the self-confidence of young Poles and also a preference for direct communication with a primary focus on exchanging information, facts and opinions. So they can be fairly direct and speak their mind. This also confirms high individualism which has been discussed earlier in this paper. On the other hand, however, there are some preferences that indicate the importance of building and sustaining good relationships (compare preferences of Polish students in statement 2 mentioned above), which sometimes involves being indirect in speech and able to read between the lines (compare results in statement 5).

In the literature, there are some meaningful examples that illustrate indirectness of communication among Poles and in this sense are indications of a rather high-context communication style.

Dudkowski claims that Poles have a tendency to describe things rather than call “a spade a spade”. They have a tendency to “beat around the bush” and proceed in a roundabout fashion. Additionally, there is a certain degree of complexity in interpreting the message. The information is not furnished using words only – very important are such channels as body language, facial expression, intonation, eye contact, style, silence, social status, mutual

friends, duration of the relationship, and all other signals sent by a person. (Dudkowski, 2005:47).

In this spirit other authors wrote:

“Polish is a subtle language that can seem purposely ambiguous at times. Thoughts are often expressed in an indirect and roundabout way in the expectation that the real meaning will be somehow understood. Visitors should listen carefully for hidden meanings. As with other Slavic languages , it takes more words to say something in Polish than in English, and many English words and expressions simply do not exist in Polish” (Richmond, 1995:63).

“The Polish communication style is enigmatic. It can ring all the changes between a matter-of-fact, pragmatic style and a wordy, sentimental, romantic approach to a given subject. When in the latter mode, Poles are fond of metaphor and their speech is rich in implied meaning, allusions, images and ambiguity. Irony and even satire are used to great effect.” (Lewis, 2000: 257).

The authors of this paper represent the opinion that priorities in the communication of Polish students in an adequate way represent changes in the cultural profile of young Poles. In addition to the influence of the Western communication style, which is strongly low-context and task-oriented, the process of globalization and the omnipresent need for language simplification are reflected in changes in the contemporary language of young people in Poland. They feel a necessity to express their thoughts, feelings, moods and intentions through the use of the smallest number of words (Garcarz, 2004:10).

J. Mazur (2000:182) claims that contemporary Polish cultural tendencies are shaped by cultural fashions copied from Western societies. The language which is preferred by young Poles is direct, economical and precise.

Joanna Szczek (2002:231) observed that: “Language and culture influence one another. The constantly changing language reflects the opinions, mentality, way of thinking and attitude toward life of speech community which exists in a particular language”. Jan Miodek added to that: “Despite the fact that language changes slowly, it is clear to me that this process of change has indeed accelerated recently. It is the effect of the totally different political and economic situation in Poland after 1989 (Miodek, 2001:183).

Discussion

In the academic literature, there are several stereotypical opinions about the inhabitants of post-communist Europe, which are often based on the superficial knowledge of these countries' past that usually goes far back into the history of Europe.

What has happened since 1989 was the simultaneous transformations of the economic system, political structures and dominating management method. Without the understanding of these changes, which all occurred in a short period of time, it is difficult to appreciate the present state of the Polish mind. Young people in Poland are confronted with ever greater intensity of changes that take place all over the world and in Poland itself. They offer them both opportunity and many challenges as well.

That is why these groups of students have been particularly interesting. The study comprised students of Poznan School of Banking, one of the leading business schools in Wielkopolska, who decided to study there, convinced that the Polish economic and social transformation is promising. This positive motivation to study and the sense of importance of the profession make them face the question of their role in society and potential possibilities for their development in the future. They are ambitious, professionally-oriented and open-minded.

Based on the observation of current Polish life and the analysis of student responses, there is indication for a tendency toward lower power distance, higher individualism, and a strong future orientation together with a monochronic approach to time and a low-context style in communication. Young people in Poland want to go along well with their environment and want to serve its welfare. They are ready to work hard, gain additional education to achieve tangible results in their work. Money is an important motivator but there are certainly other methods of motivation beyond financial ones, which are equally desired and expected. Very important are characteristics related to long-term career objectives: sense of accomplishment, achievements, continued development.

This can be particularly significant for foreign corporations investing in Poland. Discovering the true expectations of employees should provide direction for managers in order to create a clearly defined and supportive motivation system.

Caveats of the study

Results of the study allow comparison of data and preferences in regard to cultural orientation framework and communication of Polish students within the period of four years. A total of 211 undergraduate business students of Poznan School of Banking submitted usable responses from 2004-2007.

Several caveats however should be mentioned regarding this study.

First, the research was conducted with students in only one business school in Western part of Poland. These students were relatively homogenous in age, major area of interest (business)

and educational level. Results may differ if a broader cross-section of Polish students would be surveyed both in term of geographical location of universities and the fields of study.

Second, no gender differentiation was made in final results of each sample. It remains open for further investigation, if gender influence students preferences in term of Cultural Orientation Framework's categories and communication's styles and how strong is this influence.

Similar, in case of data processing: after assembling the filled out questionnaires all data of the study were transcribed into the excel type file and the comparison of results has been done based on that. The next step could be to perform a number of various statistical analysis methods in order to gain additional information and formulate further research questions.

Last but not least. This study suffers from the problems inherent in research using students. These problems principally concern generalization from student samples. Students and those engaged in business have different characteristics, such as age, experience, and familiarity with a particular task or the importance of an issue. Therefore, findings of a study of students may not shed much light on the population of more interest, those engaged in running businesses. An attempt to generalize the results of a study of students to the work population is inherently flawed, particularly regarding external validity or generalizability (Gordon, Slade and Schmitt, 1986). However, it is also true that no homogenous sample is generalizable, and that differences in student and nonstudent responses may reflect important boundary variables (Greenberg, 1987).

Conclusions

Europe is becoming more culturally diverse. The enlargement of the European Union, deregulation of employment and globalization have increased the multicultural character of many countries, adding to the number of languages, religions, ethnic and cultural backgrounds found on the continent.

Many observers believe that Poland is a highly attractive country. One of the reasons is its central geographic location that should be very profitable in regard to commerce and production in the centre of integrating Europe. Second, there is anticipation of high speed economic growth, brought about by the influx of EU assistance funds and foreign direct investment as well as the growth of the consumer purchasing power of Polish society.

The escalating level of international involvement and competition in today's business arena mandates that managers develop the skills necessary for effective cross-cultural interactions and daily operations in foreign subsidiaries.

Managers have often seriously underestimated the significance of cultural factors; according to numerous accounts, many blunders made in international operations can be attributed to a lack of cultural sensitivity. It calls for the ability to understand the perspective of those living in other (and very different) societies and the willingness to put oneself in another's shoes. Company reports and management studies make it clear that a lack of cultural sensitivity costs business money and opportunities.

The Cultural Orientation Framework, together with some of Hofstede's, Trampenaars' and Hall's indices, provides an important tool for comparing cultures with each other. It highlights similarities and differences among cultures, and points out implications for management. This information is critical to implementing strategies across cultures in international organizations. Managers who are aware of their own cultural systems can predict areas of conflict and potential learning when working with people from other cultures. Those, who are designing strategies and systems for international organizations can take these differences into account. With practice, this tool can lead to a more synergistic approach to managing cultural diversity.

The authors of this paper hope that presented results can be seen as a helpful tool for understanding management characteristics in Poland. The results of the study show not only directions of change in cultural values among young Poles but above all could be considered in the framework of their possible impact upon the adaptation of Western managerial concepts in Poland.

Appendix

Questionnaire

This questionnaire has been developed to indicate your cultural profile, priorities, preferences and values. Below, there are two tasks / exercises. Please, read them carefully and indicate your views on various issues. Thank you.

- 1. Please, indicate which one from three possible answers is closest to your preferences in each category:**

	Possible answers:		
	A	B	C

Relation to Environment (1)	Life is largely determinate by external forces such as God or Fate. A person can't surpass the conditions life has set.	Human should , in every way, live in complete harmony with nature	The human challenge is to conquer and control nature
Relation among People (2)	Some people are born to lead others. There are " leaders" and there are " followers" in this world	Whenever I have a serious problem, I like to get the advice of my family or close friends on how best to solve it.	All people should have equal rights as well as complete control over their own destinies
Mode of Activity (3)	It's not necessary to accomplish great things in life to feel your life Has been worthwhile. It's enough just to „be‘.	Human beings' main purpose for being placed on this earth is for their own inner development.	If people work hard and apply themselves fully, their efforts will be rewarded
Nature of Humans (4)	Most people are basically pretty good at heart	There are both evil people and good people in the world and you have to check to find out which are which	Most people can't be trusted.
Time (5)	Humans should learn from history and attempt to emulate the glorious ages of the past	The present moment is everything. Let's make the most of it. Don't worry about tomorrow, enjoy today	Planning and goal setting make it possible for humans to accomplish miracles. A little sacrifice today will bring a better tomorrow.

Source: Kluckhohn, F., Strodtbeck, F.L., (1961): Variations in Value Orientations, Evanston, Peterson.

2. What is your communication style?

According to your priorities please, accept or deny the following statements:

	Yes	No
1. When I communicate with others I say straightforwardly what I want		
2. There is no room for “private talks” at workplace		
3. I often try to convince others of my point of view		
4. I usually do not “beat about the bush” but stress directly what is important		
5. I pay careful attention to <i>what</i> has been said rather than <i>how</i> it has been said (i.e. body language)		

Source: Fichtinger, H., Sterzenbach, G. (2003): Knigge fürs Ausland, München, Haufe Verlag, 119.

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