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STEREOTYPES IN MANAGING DIVERSITY IN THE CONTEXT OF SEX

A b s t r a c t: W The article presents the definition of gender stereotype and discusses the mechanisms of its impact. The focus has been on gender, due to the need to promote equal opportunities for women and men and to empower women in the labor market. As part of the study, the author identifies selected stereotypes, both positive and negative, functioning in diversity management, focusing on gender, and then interprets them. The basis for the deliberations is a review of scientific literature, with particular emphasis on the results of several international empirical studies. Based on the interpretation of stereotypical views, guidelines for managers managing diversity were formulated.

K e y w o r d s: stereotypes, gender, diversity management.

J E L:

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been increased interest in the subject of stereotypes in management. It seems that the reason for the development of research on this issue is the fact that key concepts revolve around prejudices against diversity [Kunze, Boehm and Bruch, 2013; Reichel, Brandl and Mayrhofer, 2010], which may be the source of the formation or even strengthening of stereotypes. Diversity management offers opportunities to exploit the diversity potential and minimize the risk of stereotyping, as it is based on the assumption that the conscious activities of „celebrating diversity” and the integration of diverse values will create a work environment in which the talents of all employees will be engaged to achieve common goals [Kandola, Fullerton, 1994]. Weigl [2002] who among others, has devoted much attention to this matter, wrote that the most effective in overcoming mutual prejudices and stereotypes are situations that

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force joint action, thus increasing the chance of achieving an attractive goal. It is worth noting that contemporary research on diversity is increasingly pointing to the gender dimension as an area that needs attention. [Kupczyk 2013], especially the issue of unequal treatment of people based on gender in the workplace. It is worth adding here that discrimination is important not only from the perspective of individual employees, but also employee teams and organizations. The subject of this work will be the sources that are *inter alia* in psychological properties and mechanisms (stereotypes and gender prejudice) and situational conditions.

1. GENDER STEREOTYPES. STRUCTURE AND BASIC FUNCTIONS OF STEREOTYPES

Stereotype is a generalization referring to people who are assigned positive or negative traits using cognitive abbreviations. In this way, they simplify the perception of reality. [Aronson, Wilson and Akert, 1997]. Sex, on the other hand, is an easily identifiable feature, and because of the rigid beliefs about the attributes of groups of people in the society, such as women and men, it is particularly vulnerable to stereotypes. In literature on the subject, the concept of gender stereotype is variously defined. According to Miluska [1996], they may refer to the description of social beliefs characterizing a given sex with the fact that the characteristic behavior of one sex does not have to refer to the other. Brannon [2002], in turn, states that they include mental traits and separate actions for one or the other sex. Deaux and Lewis [1984], on the other hand, presented the complexity of gender stereotypes by characterizing the four parts that it specified:

- personality traits,
- social roles,
- external appearance,
- professions.

According to the authors, stereotypes based on personality traits refer to the behavioral aspect that is attributed to each gender in a given culture. A man is perceived as: an independent, active, competent, reliable, confident leader who can easily make decisions and does not yield under pressure. However, a woman is perceived as being focused on others, who likes to help, a sensitive, gentle, polite, selfless person with highly developed empathy and emotionality. Stereotypes of social roles refer to beliefs and perceptions of gender. They mainly include roles resulting from the division of occupational and family duties, which is exactly the example given by Młodawska [2009]: unmarried woman usually devote to career, married women work at home and at the same time take care of providing the right atmosphere, the husband provides for the family. Characteristic features regarding stereotypes of a man's external appearance are: tall, physically fit, strong, with broad shoulders and robust. In turn women are: gentle

voice, grace, softness of movements and neatness [Deaux, Lewis 1984]. The assumption that people are significantly different from each other is an attempt to understand differences and the result of human cognitive savings [Aronson, Wilson and Akert, 1997]. Gender stereotypes generalize the attributes of women and men. They can take a descriptive and prescriptive form. Regardless of what form stereotypes take, they can be an obstacle on the way of professionally aspiring women. In management, contemporary research on gender stereotypes, most often focused on the occurrence of disproportion in managerial positions [Ryan, Haslam, 2005], gender segregation of professions [Barbulescu, Bidwell 2013] and gender differences in earnings based on undervaluing women's work [Blau, Kahn 2017; Trębska 2018]. One of the ways to explain the disproportion of positions is the view on the reference to differences in human capital [Lips 2013]. At the same time, research indicates that they do not fully explain the gender pay gap [Blau, Kahn 2017]. The analyzes presented in the literature indicate that the source of these unexplained disproportions may be functioning gender stereotypes.

2. GENDER STEREOTYPES

Employers are convinced that there are great gender differences and it results in unequal treatment of employees in the workplace. This situation is not only not conducive to relationships prevailing in teams, but also may be associated with their less involvement and motivation in the workplace. Despite the fact that women make up more than half of the population and high percentage of the workforce, they are still not proportionally represented in the most important positions. The reasons for this phenomenon may even extend to traditional roles that are attributed to women, such as childcare, which explains the occurrence of the stereotype that women seek jobs in occupations that do not require too much availability [Janicka, 1995]. In countries where there is a longer working time per one employee per year, a higher level of occupational segregation by gender was observed. The economic aspect is also crucial. The prolonged retirement age means that older people are professionally active, which means that they can not take part in caring for grandchildren. In a convenient situation, the family can afford to hire a nanny, but it is no so obvious when the mother's potential earnings are lower or comparable to the carer's pay. Then women are often forced to give up their jobs. In connection with the above, organizations that take actions in elimination gender inequalities should include the area of reconciliation of work and family life. Here

you can indicate another gender stereotype. According to Trębska [2018, p. 343], women are trained in unprofitable occupations, which later do not bring them a large profit, and often even satisfaction with the work they do. In the same context, Dudaka [2016] speaks, who thinks that women are more likely to take up jobs that requires lower-qualification and which gives no promotion opportunities and less paid. Interestingly, it is stereotypically believed that occupations that lose their attractiveness in terms of income and prestige are not taken by men [Reszke 1991]. This view in an interesting way is explained, among others by Krysińska-Kościańska [2018], who draws attention to the fact that a woman lacks female role models. Another myth prevailing in the workplace is the conviction that women do not have to work because they have spouses earning for them [Drela, 2016, p. 194]. This assumption neglects the professional aspirations of women, in addition, adversely affects men because it creates another stereotype: a man totally responsible for the financial maintenance of the family. Such liability may cause health problems related to work overload and stress. Turning to the issue of the differentiation of remuneration for the same work or work of the same value. It seems important to emphasize that in Poland about 20% higher wages are paid to men [Drela, 2016, p. 196]. As it turns out, the reasons for this phenomenon can also be seen in stereotypes. First, it is believed that men more effectively than women negotiate pay conditions [Pfeifer C., Stephan G., 2018], and secondly, women perceive their pay as fair more often than men [Pfeifer C., Stephan G., 2018]. In addition, in the opinion of employers, the work of women is often perceived as less valuable because:

- Women often have lower professional experience than men (women stop work due to maternity reasons)
- Women generate so-called complications resulting from household duties (caring for a disabled family member, sick child, etc.).

In conclusion, the main barriers that affect the promotion or transition to other organizations by women are, among others functioning gender stereotypes that include lack of role models, lack of support in senior management, lack of value, especially appreciated by women, such as a deep sense of the sense of work and close cooperation with others [Krysińska-Kościańska [2018].

3. GENDER MANAGEMENT AS AN ELEMENT OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

Gender is one of the key dimensions of diversity. The observed disproportions in the workplace that take place between women and men focus mainly on occupational and economic segregation. In Poland, since the end of the nineties of the twentieth century, solutions related to gender-related issues have been slowly implemented, which in a special way affects gender diversity. Such actions in the face of emerging conflicts in organizations due to diversity and social expectations towards women and men have contributed to the development of gender management. Strategy of including equal opportunities for women and men in the mainstream of the company's policy [Wiktorska-Święcka 2009]. Based on a more thorough look at the gender similarities and differences in the context of striving to achieve the organization's goals. Kupczyk [2013] devotes a lot of attention to this issue, the author draws attention to attempts to solve the problem of gender diversity in the workplace, giving as the example gender management. Many studies have so far analyzed the styles of targeting represented by both sides of the sexes, which can illustrate how to exercise power and manage the organization. Meanwhile, the above considerations may accompany discrimination and activate gender stereotypes that have always limited the choice and development of people. Therefore, it is considered as a good practice to introduce pro-effective management solutions, as the issue related to gender is now the aspect that is the most important challenge in management [Ibid, p. 96]. This event has initiated a series of studies on the relationships between women and men in managing, among others:

- the relationship between gender and productivity was examined [Luanglath, Ali and Mohannak, 2019],
- differences between the sexes were shown in relation to sources of knowledge in the organization [Al-A'ali, Alazali, 2019, pp. 19-19],
- the key leadership opportunities in diversity management in the context of gender have been named [Carr-Ruffino, 2019],
- phenomena related to the behavior of women and men in the organization were diagnosed [Małysa-Kaleta, 2015],
- a number of solutions have been developed to eliminate undesirable phenomena that are a consequence of differences between the sexes [Dadel, 2010],
- observation of a number of different types of organizations to indicate possible practical solutions that can be implemented to increase equal opportunities for women and men in management were made [Kupczyk 2013].

SUMMARY

The main results of this paper are recommendations for managers involved in the organization of the implementation of policies aimed at equalizing opportunities and the situation of women and men. Because it seems that activities aimed at raising awareness about gender inequalities may be important. Therefore, organizations should take action to eliminate gender inequalities. In such a way that they consistently cover the following areas: elimination of training segregation, reconciliation of work and family life, participation of women in managerial positions and their participation in political decision-making bodies. What should be emphasized, an important condition for preventing professional segregation by gender is not only ensuring formal equality, but also supporting good practices that minimize the occurrence of prejudices, stereotypes and discrimination in the workplace.

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