

**GENDER DIVERSITY AS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF DIVERSITY
MANAGEMENT IN MODERN ENTERPRISES: CASE OF POLAND**

Mariola Dźwigół-Barosz and Wojciech Leoński

Abstract. Diversified human resources have an enormous potential. Therefore, their proper use can be translated into the success of the organization on the market. One of the main areas of diversity management in Poland is gender. Gender diversity constitutes one of the most significant elements of diversity management, which is a challenge to contemporary enterprises. Many business entities still fail to recognize the potential that lies in gender diversity, as evidenced by the unequal treatment of women and men in some companies. Women on the labor market still have to face gender discrimination. That is why it is worth to draw attention to gender diversity and its potential. In the first part of the paper, diversity management is presented from the theoretical point of view on the basis of source literature and reports. The next chapter is focused on the issue of gender diversity based on studies conducted by various authors. The results of original studies concerning perception of women and men in management positions are presented in the subsequent part of the article. Furthermore, the authors have analyzed selected benefits and gender diversity support programs in contemporary enterprises. The main aim of the article is to draw attention to low participation of women in management positions in companies and to list arguments for eliminating this phenomenon by cautious use of diversity of competencies of both sexes. Empirical part of the article is, in turn, based on the results of the original survey conducted in Polish companies. The aim of the study was, inter alia, to compare the perception of women and men in management positions in the scope of 33 competences from 11 groups of competences from the domain of emotional intelligence. The study also refers to research on gender diversity carried out by other Polish and foreign authors. Discussion presented in this article can serve as methodological frame for developing actions in companies oriented at gender diversity as one of their organizational values.

Keywords: gender diversity, diversity management, workplace diversity, discrimination, strategy, Poland

JEL Classification: J16, L25, M12, M14

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1. Introduction

Diversity management has become a part of strategic plans of the world of business, being a response to a growing diversity of societies, clients, market structures and the entire business- and employee-related environment where knowledge and innovations are particularly gaining in importance, in order to protect a competitive edge in globalised economies (Stuber, 2012).

Although diversity and equal opportunities between men and women may be perceived as a social problem, it is, however, just one of many aspects. It is also becoming an issue connected with one's professional life, both at national and business levels. Nowadays companies have been facing many challenges related to parities. The problem of ageing societies and the battle for the most skilled workers are getting fiercer and fiercer. Employing suitable and talented personnel is already a complex task, whereas keeping the best workers poses an enormous challenge. Companies want to attract the most talented employees, whereas the Generation Y is eager to work in a diverse environment, as diversity is for them a completely natural phenomenon (Jański, 2014).

In the light of the current situation in the job market, a potential success for modern companies is inextricably connected with making use of the potential of women as managers, and investing money to develop their competencies.

Making use of the involvement of women is of particular importance not only to improve the effectiveness of companies, but also to develop entire national economies. Out of two outstanding and well-managed teams, the greater potential has the one that is more diverse. Female managers exert their influence in a slightly different way than their male counterparts – they more willingly share their ideas with the others and justify their own decisions in a rational way. The organisations that deliberately fail to benefit from the

diversity are depriving themselves of opportunities to achieve a more effective action culture.

Having said that, what do the best companies do to maintain the gender equality? They have been learning how to use gender-related languages; through realising that the current situation is not completely impartial and through adjusting the language and behaviour styles to talent resources and the 21st-century market reality (Wittenberg-Cox & Maitland, 2010, p. 135).

The aim of the paper is to focus the readers' attention on a low percentage of women holding managerial positions in companies, and to present arguments that speak in favour of eradication of the phenomenon by deliberately benefiting from various competencies of both genders. The presented reflections may constitute a methodological framework for elaborating in-company actions that perceive gender diversity as one of its business values.

The article also presents the differences in the perception of men and women on managing positions as demonstrated by the research carried out by Polish and foreign authors and presents the author's own research on the perception of men and women in the light of emotional intelligence – significant for management of a modern corporation. The choice of the competences in the area of emotional intelligence has been motivated by the fact that it is generally thought that the success and the career are determined by the IQ. However, in our way to success, IQ is surely an important factor, but without the ability to create correct relationships with others, it is insufficient.

A group of features in the area of emotional intelligence is, to a greater extent, responsible for success in human life, both in the private domain and in professional life. The emotional intelligence consists of several competences that allow a person to cope with the requirements imposed by the managers of modern corporations. Functioning in the realm of uncertainty and growing expectations from managers forces them to have excellent ability to cope with stress and perseverance in reaching a certain objective despite of failure, an ability to stay calm and not get worried.

2. Diversity management in theoretical perspective

Diversity consists in both similarities and differences between people, associated with their age, culture, physical abilities, physical appearance, disability, race, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, having children and other characteristics. Diversity is a complex of features, visible and invisible ones, that differentiate the society, including people employed in companies. Diversity means opportunities, but also risks for the organization. Diversity in a workplace is the subject of many studies carried out by various institutions and scientific centers. The question of diversity is a point of interest for the economists, sociologists, psychologists and ethics, which only confirms the complexity and multidimensionality of this concept.

The literature concerning management contains many definitions of diversity management (DM), which is why the authors of the article decided to mention those that best express the essence of this concept. The analysis of particular definitions will serve to identify the key features of diversity management. The concept of diversity management originated in the second half of the 20th c. in the USA and Western Europe. At the beginning DM was a tool for activating minority groups on the labor market. Diversity management was limited to counteracting prejudice, although the main reason for introducing diversity management principles were increased profits of the company, not legal arguments, moral obligations or corporate social responsibility (Kwiatek, 2014, p. 158).

The concept of diversity management was introduced by Roosevelt Thomas (1990) stating diversity management embraces managing diversity effectively, by changing organizational culture and practices, valuing differences among employees and creating a work environment in which diversity can contribute to organizational goals (Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2015). Diversity management is a personnel management strategy based on the belief that the diversification of the employees constitutes a business asset that, under specific circumstances, may generate business benefits and profits. The aim of DM is to create a working environment in which all the employees feel valued and appreciated and have the opportunity to make the most of their individual capabilities in order to implement the missions of the company. DM means eradication of instances of discrimination, harassment, mobbing based on whatever reason, and creating an inclusive, empowering workplace (Rawłuszko, 2007, p. 28).

Diversity management is a collection of activities and practices aimed at the execution of enterprise's assumed goals using employees' heterogeneity. Diversity management requires, in particular, respect, understanding, acceptance and appreciation of people's diversity. DM enables the creation of workplaces in which all employees, regardless of demographic and social differences between them, feel appreciated and respected. Such activities allow the enterprise to fully utilise the employees' potential and favour their development, which may contribute to making human resources management more efficient (Leoński, 2016). Diversity management in the organization consists in balancing out the inequalities in terms of employment and promotion of women, as well as their remuneration. DM also covers creating a working environment for temporary workers and employing the disabled (Rudnicka, 2012, p. 148). DM can be also defined as part of the gendered construction and operation of management, indeed increasingly mainstream management (Konrad, et al., 2006, p. 312).

According to Ch. Keinert-Kisin (2016, p. 50) diversity management can be understood as an organizational practice derived from a mindset that embraces rather than fears difference. Organizational members differing from an established majority, the "norm", be it through visible or invisible difference, by birth or by choice, are accepted for who they are rather than negatively stereotyped. Their potential contribution to the organization is welcomed. Organizational diversity is perceived to enrich the organization through variety of different perspectives and skills. Diversity management uses methods and tools from HR

management. Selection of methods and instruments should be correlated with the structure of personnel and their use should be consistent with the assumptions of the personnel policy of the company (Gajdzik, 2015, p. 93). DM initiatives generally are recruitment and selection programs which typically focus on the achievement of percentage or numeric placement goals for minority and female employment (Besler & Sezerel, 2012, p. 627). When organizations actively assess their handling of workplace diversity issues, develop and implement diversity plans, multiple benefits are reported such as (Saxena, p. 83):

- diversity stimulates innovation and productivity and creates a world class culture that can outperform the competition,
- a diverse workforce that feels comfortable communicating varying points of view provides a larger pool of ideas and experiences,
- a diverse collection of skills and experiences allows a company to provide service to customers on a global basis,
- organizations employing a diverse workforce can supply a greater variety of solutions to problems in service, sourcing, and allocation of resources,
- employees from diverse backgrounds bring individual talents and experiences in suggesting ideas that are flexible in adapting to fluctuating markets and customer demands.

Definitions of diversity management presented in the chapter show various interpretations of this notion. Analysis of diversity management confirms that it is perceived as, inter alia: a management strategy, a company's policy, a business philosophy, a direction of changes in management. Despite the lack of a homogenous definition of DM, it is possible to distinguish several features recurring in many definitions. The authors often point at creating appropriate conditions in a workplace, taking into account the heterogeneity of the personnel. Diversity management consists in identification of particular dimensions of diversity significant in a given company and creating a working environment in which the employees are given the opportunity to make full use of their potential, competence, experience. These conditions must include openness to differences, tolerance and respect to other people as well as acceptance of various methods of operating. Another common feature are the areas of diversity management: employees and working environment. People employed in the company are more often than not the greatest asset and value of the company. They have significant impact on the implementation of the strategy of the company and achieving the intended objectives. Diversity management is manifested in the recruitment and selection process, motivating, promoting and remunerations, training, talent management and other elements of the HR management policy. Definitions of diversity management often draw attention to its strategic and comprehensive nature, as well as treating diversity as a fundamental asset of the company. Another element often mentioned in relation to diversity management is generating a positive impact on the organization. One of the results of diversity management is the improved performance of the organization and its increased competitiveness. Diversity management leaders, i.e. companies that signed the Diversity Charter in Poland, indicate a positive change in the working atmosphere (74%) and the company's image (71%), attracting and keeping talented employees (58%), the employees' loyalty (53%), competitive advantage (39%), and increased customer diversity (27%) (Responsible Business Forum, 2017).

Polish society is relatively uniform in terms of culture, race and religion. The most diversifying elements are usually age and gender. These two criteria constitute the most common reason for discrimination in Polish enterprises. Therefore, they are the main scope of diversity management in Poland. The authors of the study decided to focus their discussion on the issue of gender diversity in enterprises.

3. Gender diversity in enterprises – managing competences and gender

Gender diversity in enterprise may be interpreted as equal treatment and acceptance of both women and men. For many organizations gender diversity is a significant challenge. Business entities are still learning how to manage employees of different sexes. The employers often forget that teams diversified in terms of gender may prove to be a source of many benefits to the organization. It is a common belief that a man is a better manager because his innate, gender-specific qualities predestine him for the role.

2000 research on Polish female managers¹ showed that, firstly, women do not have worse predisposition to managing than men, and secondly, clearly showed that women have tendencies for democratic, i.e. participatory and partnership-based management. Such management develops attitude of active co-operation and responsibility for the enterprise, identification with the enterprise and motivates report's productivity (Lisowska, et al., 2000; Bliss, et al., 2003).

Male managers are more ruthless in pursuing goals, make decisions quicker than women, their leadership skills are better developed and they are more eager to take risks. According to most respondents, female managers are more meticulous in action and more opened to co-operation with other people. They also perceive emotions more often than men – says A. Wilk (University of Wrocław sociologist and Talent Club program expert) (Wilk, 2011).

J.B. Rosener (2003) states that the management differences based on sex do exist. According to the author, women show interactive management in accordance with their life experience that is focused on co-operation and communication with others. According to her, men, on the other hand, prefer order and control system, which means they manage by passing down orders from top, performing authoritarian management.

H. Fisher (2003, pp. 21-23) has a similar view, she states that women have a tendency for contextual thinking. They often have a wider view on problems than male managers, they take more information into consideration in the decision making process and see more possible lines of action. According to the author, female thinking is network thinking,

¹ This was a ground-breaking research on Polish women in managerial positions funded by U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). It included 20 thousand women in managerial positions, from independent accountants to a chief execution officer in enterprises with 5 or more employees. 1892 women answered the questionnaire. Due to age of female managers, the sample was representative. The research represented private sector in a larger extent and feminized branches of industry in a lesser extent than GUS research on general population of women in managerial positions show.

opposed by sequential thinking that is focused, labelled, linear and associated with men. Whereas men see the enterprise as a diversified set of varied elements, women show tendency to perceive the enterprise as a whole, as a system of interconnected material and non-material assets that influence one another.

P. Cieślak, management practitioner, who observes business environment, notices that female presidents "are less inclined to waste time. They are more efficient. Men have a tendency to wandering off into other areas or discussions on other subjects. Women have better business discipline, better target focus and use facts to persuade. They are more 'masculine' than men."(Deloitte, 2012, p. 19).

As W.G. Nickels shows the higher the management level the more prominent is the role of co-operation skills and conceptual skills, and the role of technical skills declines (Nickels, 1999, p. 342). Partnership and teamwork skills are more important than individualism and authoritarian personality. Women have talent for co-operation, integrating people and creating good relationships between them, flexibility and dealing with failures (Ben-Yoseph & Gundry, 1998, p. 59). More women than men managers have the sense of internal control in work environment, meaning they perceive themselves as agents of changes, believe they can shape reality and do so (Porzuczek & Danaj, 1998, p. 38). It must be noted that: "women possess emotional intelligence that is required today: sensitivity, emotionality, empathy [...] their intuition, holistic perception of situation, and as such, more accurate decision making ability are more developed" (Majewska-Opiełka, 2012, p. 242). Thanks to those characteristics, women are better at motivating workers.

Informatization and globalization force managers to take into consideration a larger number of factors, and holistic thinking, according to H. Fisher (2003, pp. 21-23) associated generally with women, becomes very useful. Men have to master it, while women – reach to their resources and talents. According to T. Peters (2005) – American Business specialist – women make better leaders than men because they are more decisive and gain trust easier than men. He also claims that women are better salespersons (thanks to highly developed communication skills) and investors (thanks to reasonable decision making), they are educated and open to changes – they have traits much needed in modern business environment. New business environment prefers women as they pay less attention to hierarchy than men, are better at sustaining relations and they rather co-operate than compete.

I. Majewska-Opiełka (2012, p. 67) also stresses the importance of intuition in leading others and intuition is strictly related to women and until recently no male manager would admit to using it in fear of being ridiculed.

Research presented by the co-author (Dźwigoł-Barosz, 2015) create an image of a woman as they are perceived as more emotional than men, who, according to the respondents, are characterized by the so-called "clear thinking". According to the respondents, women are not too nice or emotional, they also tend not to feel edgy when a woman is performing

better and they can value men in the working environment. Respondents believe they are better at dealing with failures, pay more attention to challenges and work satisfaction rather than promotion.

Nowadays, a considerable problem is the lack of awareness among numerous top executives, both men and women, of what advantages may be achieved thanks to a greater representation of women in corporate boards. At present, in the largest Polish companies, classified as the leaders in the Central Europe, only 30 % of corporate boards feature a female member, whereas women hold chairman positions just in 4% of companies. A similar situation is observed in the companies quoted at the Warsaw Stock Exchange in which a female member works in every fourth board of directors, whereas women are at the helm of as few as 6 % of companies. The trend analyses over the last few years are far from optimistic – in Poland, just like in many EU countries, the number of women in corporate boards is decreasing, instead of increasing (Frańczak & Georgijew, 2012).

In Poland, the corporate boards consist of merely a dozen percent of women. The situation is not caused by their lower qualification or lesser professional skills; its roots lie in stereotypes that hinder women's professional development and promotion. Meanwhile, the studies show that companies run by gender-diverse managements are more successful and boast a better position on the market. According to the McKinsey & Company study, the corporate management that have a representation of at least three women, are 41% ahead of the sector's average in terms of return on equity and 56% ahead in terms of EBIT. A 30%-female representation in corporate boards is called a "critical mass", which allows both women and men to participate more effectively in the decision making process (Dąbrowska, 2014, p. 44).

According to the studies conducted by the European Commission, the representation of women in Poland in the corporate boards of the largest companies accounts for 11.8 %. As many as every fourth large company is ruled by a male-only management board, while there is just one female member in more than a half of the companies (Grzesiak, 2014).

Unfortunately approach to women in business still seems to be based on stereotypes despite women having better school results and diploma notes.

For the first time more women than men study at universities and women frequently have very good education and interesting experiences (Nitzsche, 2005, p. 8). In OECD countries the majority (54%) of university graduates are women (OECD, 2006a). Countries and enterprises that allow women to realize their full potential will benefit from their educational achievements. Among women in the age of 25-34 an average of one third has higher education compared to 28% of men (OECD, 2006b). Currently 59% of all university diplomas and 61% PhD titles in Europe are given to women (European Commission, 2006).

A small representation of women in top management could be a proof of low entrepreneurial skills of female managers.

However, the studies show (Kowalski, 2011) that women are owners of 37% of companies. Psychologists underline their resistance to stress, ability to work under pressure, their multi-tasking abilities, better self-organisation and teamwork skills. It seems that women's entrepreneurial qualities are not lesser than men's, and yet they are not reflected in promotion opportunities. In most cases women own small companies (they run 2/3 of such companies) (Glinka & Kostera, 2012), which proves that women feel the most comfortable in flat structures and that there are obstacles for promoting women in large companies. The phenomenon in question is called a glass ceiling effect – being a kind of invisible (i.e. there are no official rules that prevent women from achieving more important positions), but yet a considerable barrier for promotion of women. The career of women resembles a pyramid or a glass mountain that nobody is able to climb, whereas the perspectives, shown by the trends from the past years, seem to be far from optimistic. Although more women in Poland become managers as compared to women from other EU countries (there are by 6 percentage points more female managers in Poland than abroad), nonetheless the trend is slowly reaching the low average level in the EU – over last 5 years the number of female managers has decreased by 3% (Kowalski, 2011).

Facing the choice between being professionally active and starting a family, the 21st-century women opt for jobs (with the current high rate of divorce, a different choice would not be financially reasonable) (Wittenberg-Cox & Maitland, 2010, p. 44).

Moreover, the studies show (Hewlett & Luce, 2006, p. 13) that women find it uncomfortable to be financially dependent on their spouses. Despite of the fact whether the relationship is good or not, most women do not like asking for money. Nearly one half of the surveyed women (46%) admit that having their own source of income is an important advantage of professional careers.

Research presented by the co-author Mariola Dźwigoł-Barosz (2015, pp. 117-130) creates an image of a woman unburdened with motherhood, family affairs and pregnancy itself, on the one hand. On the other hand, it proves general preference for male leadership and management style. Although the respondents did not agree with the opinion that business is still a man-created world for men, in the end they still choose men² as their superiors.

4. Research methodics as to perceiving women and men in modern enterprises from the perspective of emotional intelligence

It is open secret that neither school grades nor intelligence quotient, SAT results allow to predict who is going to be successful in life. Best case scenario intelligence quotation determines 20% of the factors deciding on success, which means that 80% depends on other

² This opinion is backed up by 50% of the respondents. Only 7% of the respondents would choose a woman and 36% believe that gender is irrelevant at managerial position. 6% of the respondents find it hard to make a stand on the discussed matter.

variables (Goleman, 1997, p. 35). Factors independent of intelligence quotation, such as social class background, and sheer luck, play a major role in determining individual's position within society (Gardner, 1989; 1995).

Emotional intelligence is the individual's personal competences understood as the ability to recognize emotional states of oneself and others, as well as the ability to use own emotions and deal with emotional states of others (Mikołajewska & Mikołajewski, 2013).

Emotional intelligence includes the ability to control and regulate one's mood, which allows dealing with various situations. The ability to understand emotions and skilful use of those play a crucial role in human life as well as in professional life. Emotional intelligence competences complement rational intelligence.

Research and observation of business leaders seem to prove that 40-45% of professional success is a result of knowledge, expertise and general intelligence. In remaining cases constant self-improvement and diligence, as well as warm, calm personality, i.e. character, including traits called emotional intelligence, played the decisive role (Bieniok, 2007, p. 69). Therefore, one can say that emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in achieving professional success.

Emotional intelligence research show women have an advantage: they score higher than men in almost every aspect of emotional intelligence, i.e. (Pinker, 2005, p. 489):

- they show higher degree of empathy (recognition and reading other's emotions);
- it is easier for them to recognize and name own emotions;
- they deal better with frustration and stress;
- they have better concentration skills;
- they are more efficient at solving interpersonal problems and conflicts.

Women are definitely weaker in one regard: they lack self-confidence and faith in success.

This is proved by observations (Wiecka, 2014, p. 74) showing that main barriers on women's path to promotion are: lack of self-confidence and belief in own strengths as well as giving in to opinion and bias of the environment. Poll (Hewlett & Luce, 2006, p. 19) shows that almost half of men claim to be very or extremely ambitious, while only one third of women see themselves as such. Although the percentile is higher among businesswomen, where 43% claims to be very ambitious. On the way to the top they lose against men although they are well-educated, they have knowledge and required skills to hold key positions in enterprises.

Therefore, it must be noted that emotional intelligence combined with the usage of partnership-building language and easiness of starting and maintaining relations can decide on success. It's worth stressing that those skills to a great extent determine efficient managing.

Analysis of subject literature and research results of Polish and foreign authors shows ambiguity and lack of consistency in relation to women in managerial positions.

Taking into consideration the traits attributed to both men and women, a question rises: how are men and women in managerial positions perceived from the perspective of emotional intelligence competences so important for modern enterprise management?

Gathering information for comparison of perception of men and women from the perspective of emotional intelligence is possible thanks to researching respondents. One type of such a research is a questionnaire. For this research it is assumed that questionnaire is the best source of reliable data for resolving the main research issue. Usage of a questionnaire was also dictated by the ability to gather in a timely and systematised way matters relevant to the issue at hand and subject them to unified grading.

Used questionnaire research method was developed in accordance with questionnaire construction guidelines (Babbie, 2009, pp. 275-293). Due to ambiguity of matter at hand the questionnaire in written form consists of multiple choice questions, as it limits the possible number of answers. Multiple choice questions are in a cafeteria-style (Bieniok, 1999, p. 158), i.e. where the respondents are given a set of predefined answers and can only pick from among the given answers.

It was proposed that given emotional intelligence competences would be graded in a five-point Likert scale (Likert, 1932).

Social research methodology uses the five-point scale in questionnaires. Using the Likert scale allows to observe the level of acceptance of phenomena or opinions etc. as well as it is used for measuring attitude towards certain issues or opinions.

This research aims at comparing the perception of men and women in managerial positions regarding 33 emotional intelligence competences divided into 11 groups. Table 1 shows competences as were given to the respondents.

Respondents were asked to evaluate in a five-point scale (1 – the lowest, 5 – the highest) the importance of each of the 33 emotional intelligence competences from the 11 groups in relation to both men and women.

Company research time frame: 2015-2016. 228 respondents from 14 different enterprises and 7 industries were qualified for the research. Sample had the highest percentage of female respondents (53%) at the age of 36-50 (39%) and 26-35 (36%). Respondents with higher and secondary education constitute 43% and 42% respectively, technical education (33%), economic and others (32%) and legal (3%). White collar workers constitute 60% of the respondents, blue collar workers – 24%, and managers: 17%. About 23%, i.e. 53 respondents stated that their work experience is over 26 years, 20% – up to 5 years. Respondents working for 6-10, 11-15 and 16-25 years constituted 19% for each group.

Table 1. Emotional intelligence competences. The higher the variable intensity, the higher the point rating

SELF-AWARENESS		WOMAN Points 1 -5	MAN Points 1 -5
1	ability to recognize own emotional states		
2	knowledge of own feelings, values, preferences		
3	self-esteem		
SELF-ASSESSMENT		WOMAN Points 1 -5	MAN Points 1 -5
1	belief in own strength		
2	awareness of one's capabilities, skills		
3	awareness of one's limitations		
SELF-CONTROL		WOMAN Points 1 -5	MAN Points 1 -5
1	ability to self-control one's emotional states		
2	ability to cope with stress		
3	ability to form one's emotions in accordance with oneself, own norms, principles and values		
EMPATHY		WOMAN Points 1 -5	MAN Points 1 -5
1	awareness of feelings, needs and values of others (understanding others)		
2	sensitivity to the feelings of others		
3	focus on helping and supporting others		
ASSERTIVENESS		WOMAN Points 1 -5	MAN Points 1 -5
1	ability to express opinion, critique, needs and wishes		
2	ability to say no in an unsubmitive way and without hurting others		
3	ability to be criticized, evaluated		
PERSUASION		WOMAN Points 1 -5	MAN Points 1 -5
1	ability to reason		
2	effective communication		
3	ability to alleviate conflicts		
LEADERSHIP		WOMAN Points 1 -5	MAN Points 1 -5
1	ability to create a vision and motivate others to achieve it		
2	ability to win over allies		
3	charisma		
CO-OPERATION		WOMAN Points 1 -5	MAN Points 1 -5
1	ability to form bonds and co-operate with others		
2	ability to work as a team in order to achieve goals		
3	ability to perform as a team and solve problems together		
MOTIVATION		WOMAN Points 1 -5	MAN Points 1 -5
1	own commitment		
2	drive for achievements		
3	optimism		
ADAPTIVE SKILLS		WOMAN Points 1 -5	MAN Points 1 -5
1	ability to change		
2	ability to act and make decisions		
3	ability to act and make decisions under stress		
CONSCIENTIOUSNESS		WOMAN Points 1 -5	MAN Points 1 -5
1	ability to take responsibility for tasks and perform those tasks		
2	ability to take pleasure in duties		
3	consistency in actions		

Source: Own elaboration based on D. Goleman (1996). Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ. New York: Bantam Books.

The highest number of respondents represented private sector enterprises (58%), state-owned enterprises constituted 42%. Mining industry enterprises are vastly dominant (33%). Enterprises from other branches constituted as follow: 15% – food industry, mechanical industries, construction and education – 11%, legal services and banking – 10%. Respondents represent enterprises of various size. 34% of respondents work in enterprises with up to 50 employees, similar number (31%) works in enterprises of 201-500 employees. Percentile of managers in enterprises with over 200 workers and 51-200 workers is 23% and 12% respectively.

5. Results

For precise result analysis of differences in perception of men and women in managerial positions it was checked if a statistically significant difference in evaluation of men and women in managerial positions exists.

All tests had a statistical significance $\alpha = 0.05$.

Responses were divided in accordance with the questionnaire into two groups:

- group 1 – responses evaluating women,
- group 2 – responses evaluating men,
- v1, v2, ..., v33 – questions from the questionnaire.

The following statistical hypotheses were assumed:

- H0: statistical distributions for both groups are equal (average for groups 1. and 2. are statistically equal).
- H0: statistical distributions for both groups are not equal (average for group 1. is not equal to average for group 2).

If α (statistical significance) < asymptotic significance; so if asymptotic significance > 0,05, there is no ground for discarding the H0 hypothesis, which means it can be assumed that the average for both groups are equal (i.e. there is no difference in evaluation of men and women in the answer). All the research were conducted with Mann-Whitney U test. Table 2 contains competence level ratings.

Conducted calculations show that there are no statistically significant differences for all competences from motivation category, i.e. own commitment, drive for achievements, optimism, as well as:

- self-awareness,
- ability to form one's emotions in accordance with oneself, own norms, principles and values
- consistency in actions.

This justifies the claim that men and women are perceived as being on the same level with regard to those competences.

Table 2. Competence level research results

Competence group	group	question/competence	Minimum	Maximum	Average	group	Minimum	Maximum	Average	difference between average	asymptotic significance (2-sided)	Description
self-awareness	v1	1	5	3.91	1	5	3.89	0.01	0.586	statistically insignificant difference		
	v2	1	5	3.94	2	5	4.13	-0.19	0.027	men rated higher than women		
	v3	1	5	3.80	1	5	3.52	0.28	0.001	women rated higher than men		
self-esteem	v4	1	5	3.99	2	5	3.82	0.17	0.010	women rated higher than men		
	v5	1	5	3.77	1	5	3.48	0.29	0.000	women rated higher than men		
	v6	1	5	3.46	1	5	3.83	-0.36	0.000	men rated higher than women		
self-control	v7	1	5	3.93	1	5	3.66	0.26	0.005	women rated higher than men		
	v8	2	5	4.04	1	5	3.67	0.36	0.000	women rated higher than men		
	v9	1	5	3.82	2	5	3.92	-0.10	0.345	statistically insignificant difference		
empathy	v10	1	5	3.60	1	5	4.01	-0.42	0.000	men rated higher than women		
	v11	1	5	3.37	1	5	3.89	-0.52	0.000	men rated higher than women		
	v12	1	5	3.52	1	5	3.64	-0.11	0.089	men rated higher than women		
assertiveness	v13	1	5	4.03	2	5	3.65	0.37	0.000	women rated higher than men		
	v14	1	5	3.82	1	5	3.40	0.42	0.000	women rated higher than men		
	v15	1	5	3.06	1	5	3.44	-0.38	0.000	men rated higher than women		
persuasion	v16	1	5	3.61	2	5	3.90	-0.29	0.002	men rated higher than women		
	v17	1	5	3.33	2	5	4.09	-0.76	0.000	men rated higher than women		
	v18	1	5	3.58	1	5	3.92	-0.34	0.000	men rated higher than women		
leadership	v19	2	5	4.11	2	5	3.78	0.33	0.000	women rated higher than men		
	v20	1	5	4.14	2	5	4.00	0.14	0.041	women rated higher than men		
	v21	1	5	4.13	1	5	3.57	0.56	0.000	women rated higher than men		
co-operation	v22	2	5	3.89	2	5	4.13	-0.24	0.002	men rated higher than women		
	v23	1	5	3.49	3	5	4.17	-0.68	0.000	men rated higher than women		
	v24	1	5	3.17	2	5	3.99	-0.82	0.000	men rated higher than women		
motivation	v25	1	5	4.36	3	5	4.48	-0.12	0.193	statistically insignificant difference		
	v26	2	5	4.48	3	5	4.44	0.04	0.625	statistically insignificant difference		
	v27	2	5	4.04	2	5	4.15	-0.11	0.224	statistically insignificant difference		
adaptive skills	v28	2	5	3.92	1	5	3.60	0.32	0.000	women rated higher than men		
	v29	2	5	4.24	1	5	3.86	0.38	0.000	women rated higher than men		
	v30	1	5	3.87	1	5	3.38	0.49	0.000	women rated higher than men		
conscientiousness	v31	1	5	3.89	2	5	4.02	-0.13	0.019	men rated higher than women		
	v32	2	5	4.00	2	5	4.27	-0.26	0.000	men rated higher than women		
	v33	2	5	4.14	2	5	4.14	0.00	0.743	statistically insignificant difference		

Source: Own elaboration.

Researched responders result compilation shows that in case of 14 emotional intelligence competences men are rated higher than women.

Men are perceived higher in all competences related to empathy, persuasion and cooperation. The remaining competences where men were rated higher than women:

- knowledge of own feelings, values, preferences,
- awareness of one's limitations,
- ability to be criticized, evaluated,
- ability to take responsibility for tasks and perform those tasks,
- ability to take pleasure in duties.

Research results show that there are 13 emotional intelligence competences where women were rated higher than men.

Those include all competences related to leadership and adaptive skills as well as:

- self-esteem,
- belief in own strength,
- awareness of one's capabilities, skills,
- ability to self-control one's emotional states,
- ability to cope with stress,
- ability to express opinion, critique, needs and wishes,
- ability to say no without hurting others.

6. Actions that support gender equality in the workplace

Many researches prove that discrete prejudice against women is still present in enterprises and society which distorts learning cycle that is crucial for becoming a leader. Those research also point out the actions enterprises can undertake to alleviate the situation. It is not enough to determine required skills and competences and pass those on to people as if they were existing in social void. It is necessary to create climate for women motivation to power will be stimulated and encourage others to notice and support women efforts (Ibarra, et al., 2014, p. 42).

One of the pro-diversity policy elements is a financial, organisational or staff-related support for bottom-up initiatives undertaken by the staff willing to improve their involvement in the company (Ministerstwo Pracy i Polityki Społecznej, 2014a).

One of the simplest activities supporting diversity in an enterprise consists in promoting among the employees knowledge regarding diversity and implementing a system of incentives aimed at actively promoting diversity.

Activities promoting diversity in a workplace are also undertaken by international organizations. At this point it is worth mentioning the Diversity Charter, which is a written commitment of an enterprise concerning implementation of prohibition of discrimination and mobbing in the workplace, developing and implementing policy of equal treatment and diversity management, promotion of diversity, introduction of institutional, internal solutions regarding development of the policy of equal treatment, engagement of all the

employees in the DM dialogue etc. This initiative operates in the European Union as of 2011, and it reached Poland in 2012 (Responsible Business Forum, 2016). The main objective of this international initiative is to promote diversity and equal employment opportunities. Being a signatory of the Diversity Charter can be perceived as prestigious. The companies that signed the Charter constitute an elite group. They can act as a model for other entities willing to implement programs associated with diversity. The impact on the company's image and reputation should also not be underestimated – such companies are perceived as socially responsible.

H. Ibarra, R. Ely and D. Kolb propose actions aimed at making managerial positions more accessible for women (Ibarra et al., 2014, pp. 43-44):

- educating men and women on second generation gender bias,
- creating safe "identity development areas" where women will find support in the process of climbing the professional ladder,
- encouraging women to make the goals they want to achieve as leaders the cornerstone of their work and not follow rooted stereotypes.

Similar methods for supporting female manager chances in business were developed by "MetLife". That is why Klub Kobiet w Biznesie (Club of Women in Business) was founded. It organizes meetings of both sexes in order to exchange experiences, build relations and get mutual support and advice (Dąbrowska, 2014, p. 44).

Another type of support involves work-life balance projects. In Poland, the idea of WLB is a relatively new notion, although the companies and employees tend to increasingly gravitate towards it, noticing its benefits. The significance of the WLB idea for employees in Poland and around the world is disclosed by data contained in the Workers Preferences and Workplace Ability report of 2014 (Kelly Global Workforce Index, 2014, p. 7). At this point it should be noted that for 42% of employees in Poland and 56% of employees around the world, the idea of WLB is more important than salaries or promotion. Interest in WLB results mainly from the implementation of needs of the employees associated with performing different non-professional roles. For many companies, enabling the employees to use various WLB programs constitutes a challenge. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that WLB programs are quite expensive and preferred by large companies. By analyzing benefits of implementing the idea of WLB, it can be argued that it can be significant for gaining competitive advantage on the market. WLB practices can greatly improve the efficiency of the HR management.

An example of WLB is Capgemini's project. The aim of the company's project is to activate women and men on parental leave and to help them stay in touch with the company while on leave. A special website was designed for parents willing to return to work after the parental leave. On the website one can find a list of all vacancies available in the company, as well as e-learning training courses that may help the parents to expand their skills. The "Business Mama" website contains information on job opportunities during child care leave and available benefits, under relevant bookmarks: "I am on maternity leave", "I want to get

back to work". Furthermore, the company elaborated a "Guide for Parents" and a "Guide for Superiors" being a database that contain information on parental entitlements, steps to be taken before starting the parental leave and before returning to work. The company also subsidises a child's stay in a pre-school, children's club or kindergarten. They also created a parent room in each of their office facilities (Ministerstwo Pracy i Polityki Społecznej, 2014a).

7. Benefits of gender diversity in enterprises

Increased number of women at higher positions is beneficial for enterprise results. American Catalyst analytic centre made a ground breaking discovery while researching correlation between women at high power posts and enterprises from the Fortune 500 list. It turned out that a group of enterprises with highest percentage of female representatives at the highest managerial positions had way better results than those with lower percentage of female representatives. Proprietary capital return rate was 35.1% higher and total shareholder return was 34% higher (Catalyst, 2004).

According to the data collected by the McKinsey & Company (2010), companies with the highest representation of women in corporate boards have better return on equity (ROE) ratios by 41% and EBIT by 56% (McKinsey & Company, 2010).

Another report conducted by Credit Suisse, entitled Gender diversity and corporate performance (Credit Suisse, 2012), confirms that net income growth for companies with women in the board has averaged 14%, compared to 10% for those with no female board, 2.4 times higher price-to-book ratio (compared to 1.8 times), the return on investment higher by 4 percentage points (16% compared to 12%) and the debit-to-equity ratio of 48% (compared to 50%), i.e. lower by 2 percentage points. According to the data contained in the report, one may draw a conclusion that the companies with more women in corporate boards have better market valuation at the stock exchange.

The reasons why companies with women in corporate boards achieve better results are the following (Ministerstwo Pracy i Polityki Społecznej, 2014b):

- various competencies,
- a better use of potential, talents and skills,
- a greater emphasis on needs of a client-consumer,
- a higher level of corporation governance, a reduced willingness to take a risk.

The equality of men and women as to taking economic decisions brings about sheer advantages, whereas its lack results in losses (Ministerstwo Pracy i Polityki Społecznej, 2014b). If the employment rate of women in the US, Japan and Egypt were at the same level as the employment rate for men, then the gross domestic product of these countries would be higher by, accordingly 5.9 and 34% (Empowering The Third Billion, 2012).

Countries and enterprises that allow women to realize their full potential will benefit from their educational achievements. Secretary-General of Organisation for Economic Co-

operation and Development (OECD, 2006a), A. Gurría, says that women are the least utilized economic commodity in world's economy.

In 2010 "Science" (Woolley, et al., 2010) published research implying that efficiency of groups working on solving tasks or issues increases with diversity of competences of their members. More diversified groups have higher potential for finding adequate and profitable solutions. Diversity is mostly gender-related – teams with female members are in general more effective. Therefore, diversity increases efficiency.

The inclusion of women into boards of directors and top management structures is not a fashionable must-do, but a logical business decision. The greater percentage of women at the helm of the companies, combined with diversity of top executive structures, may be a source of a company's competitive edge (Wróbel, 2010).

Promoting diversity results in attracting and acquiring talents, especially female talents. Women (a half of each society) constitute a not-yet appreciated resource of talents, managerial skills included. The diversity-related culture is characterised by adherence to binding laws on equality in the workplace, relationships with the interested parties, and widespread promotion of values, standards and customs, aimed at developing an atmosphere for accepting and valuing differences instead of just tolerating them (Wojciechowicz, 2015, p. 711).

Among the most significant actions undertaken by companies to promote diversity, the following are worth emphasizing: including the subject of diversity in strategic documents of the company, ethical systems, introduction of recruitment principles accounting for diversity and eliminating the impact of unaware stereotypes on decision processes. Diversity in workplace creates the image of a socially responsible company, which is an entity that feels responsible for its actions, accounts for the needs of stakeholders and respects ethical principles in case of both its employees and clients. In the opinion of stakeholders, such company is perceived as a socially sensitive entity that uses transparent business practices and respecting diversity. Wise diversity management is one of the most important criteria defining a good and reliable employer. Implementing DM programs in an organization should make its employees satisfied by working for such company.

It cannot be said with certainty that an increase of number of women in company boards will cure national economies, but it must be noted that diversity undoubtedly introduced by women in managerial positions can determine organization's success.

8. Conclusions

Diversity and integration form one of the most significant trends on the global labor market. This was confirmed in a study conducted among 10 000 of Heads of HR departments and CEOs from 140 countries. 69% of the participants considered diversity a significant issue (Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends, 2017). Gender issues are perceived in different ways,

depending on the country, region and specific situation, including the degree of economic development of the given country of area (Glinka & Kostera, 2012, p. 318).

Business imposes specific code of conduct on managers – regardless of their sex. Business environment is often ruthless environment where tasks must be completed quickly and efficiently.

Which approach to managing a modern enterprise will be better: male tactics focusing on efficiency, or tactics based on rational reasoning, that according to research (Deloitte, 2012, p. 20) are more associated with women?

I. Majewska-Opiełka (2012, p. 67) also stresses the importance of intuition in leading others, and intuition is strictly related to women and until recently no male manager would admit to using it in fear of being ridiculed.

2000 research on Polish female managers³ showed that, firstly, women do not have worse predisposition to managing than men, and secondly, clearly showed that women have tendencies for democratic, i.e. participatory and partnership-based management. Such management develops attitude of active co-operation and responsibility for the enterprise, identification with the enterprise and motivates report's productivity (Lisowska, et al., 2000; Bliss, et al., 2003).

Author's own research confirm other author's research results proving ambiguity in perception of men and women in managerial positions.

Research results regarding perception of men and women in managerial positions from the position of emotional intelligence presented in the paper creates the image of motivated, optimistic and committed individuals with achievement drive and persistence, regardless of sex. Both men and women in managerial positions were seen as self-aware and able to form own emotions in accordance with themselves.

Research results where specific groups scored higher are surprising. They show that women are rated higher in leadership and adaptive skills, while men score higher in empathy, persuasion and co-operation. Women are more aware of their skills and capabilities, while men are more aware of their limitations. Male managers show a higher capacity for taking fulfilment from duties and ability to take responsibility for tasks and their execution, while women are better at dealing with stress. Respondents also pointed that female managers are able to express opinions, critique, needs and wishes and can say no in an unsubmissive

³ This was a ground-breaking research on Polish women in managerial positions funded by U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). It included 20 thousand women in managerial positions, from independent accountants to a chief execution officer in enterprises with 5 or more employees. 1892 women answered the questionnaire. Due to age of female managers, the sample was representative. The research represented private sector in a larger extent and feminized branches of industry in a lesser extent than GUS research on general population of women in managerial positions show.

way and without hurting others. Men are better at accepting critique and being graded than women. Women are seen being able to consciously control their own emotional states, but men, on the other hand, scored higher in regard to knowledge of their emotions, values and preferences. Women scored higher in regard to belief in own strength and self-esteem.

In the light of those results further research on subject matter is justified. It would be expedient to include other, not present in this research, aspects regarding perception of men and women in managerial positions such as: how respondents of both sexes rate one another, how age, education, type and length of work or enterprise size or legal status influence the differences in perception.

Future research could utilize tools such as Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) or Emotional Intelligence Test (EIT) to measure emotional intelligence competence levels instead of researching the perception of men and women from the perspective of emotional intelligence (Caruso & Salovey, 2009).

Nowadays a surprising number of managers despite high general intelligence (academic), knowledge and competences are not successful at managing. This is true not only for managers (Bieniok, 2011, p. 18).

Emotional intelligence plays an important role in economy and enterprise operation, as this kind of intelligence is responsible for all interactions between workers. Claim that emotional intelligence dictates relations between employees and is an important variable in enterprise management is fully justified (Opolska, et al., 2009).

Research results obtained by the author do not show that any sex has an advantage in the field of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence competences analysis associated with men and women in managerial positions creates area for similar activity of men and women.

Enterprises should utilize competences of both sexes and consciously use their diversity and create more efficient work culture. This notion is in line with claim that lines between management styles of men and women are getting blurred. This is already visible in Western Europe, but not yet in Poland, where a typical personification of an efficient manager is a confident authoritarian man.

The managerial competences of male and female sex discussed in the paper do not justify the conclusion that women are less suitable for managing than men, or that men are more suitable for managing than women.

G.N. Powell claims: "There are few reasons to believe that only men or only women can be perfect managers. "Member of each sex can be an outstanding, mediocre or poor manager" (Powell, 2002, p. 362). Business environment is still far from stable. In those turbulent times even enterprises and industries that were stable can't be certain what tomorrow will bring. That is why managers should be prepared to face different scenarios and make their enterprises agile and flexible by utilizing management styles of both genders.

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