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Chaos or Harmony? Well-Being in the Perspective of Managers of Polish Enterprises – Results of Qualitative Research

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Well-being is a topic that is increasingly examined in relation to the functioning of both individual employees and entire organisations. There is growing recognition that a person's psychophysical condition, including their mental state, emotional experiences, and overall energy, significantly affects their performance at work. This, in turn, affects the quality and effectiveness of their work, shaping not only how they behave in organisational settings but also the attitudes they display. It determines which of their resources serve as strengths or weaknesses, and to what extent they can draw on them in both professional and personal lives. The purpose of this research is to explore how managers in Polish companies understand the concept of well-being, and to identify which aspects of psychophysical functioning (positive and negative) they consider most important. The paper presents the results of a qualitative study based on focus group interviews (FGI) conducted in two separate panels. The first panel included eight managers representing younger generations (Generation Y and Z), while the second comprised eight managers from Generation X.

Keywords: well-being, PWB, SWB, work-life balance

JEL Classification Codes: I31, I15, J24

Introduction

To date, theoretical and empirical studies have largely focused on the dimension of well-being in strictly psychological terms, important from the perspective of the individual. The realities of the modern world, however, mean that well-being is no longer an individual matter for a person, as it can significantly affect their behaviour, attitudes, certain activities and challenges they pursue also in the professional dimension. The scope of changes that are taking place in the modern world, their intensity and unpredictability, means that human behaviour, expectations and needs are changing as is the environment in which they function (see Stepanova, 2024; Jarosik-Michalak et al., 2024; Ramasundara, 2023). Also changing is the perspective of the organisations themselves, which, being aware of the challenges faced by modern man, are increasingly meeting their expectations by posing the question of how to build well-being also in the workplace in order to truly benefit from the best part of their own employees' resources (see Garcia, 2025; WHO, 2025; Ahmad et al., 2025).

Well-being – what does it mean?

The question of the good life has always appeared in the area of people's interests. In the broadest sense, the good life is equated with well-being and life happiness. Aristotle wrote that it is the pursuit of happiness that is man's most important aspiration. Also, currently there is a growing interest in the *good life* in the social sciences (Dierendonck et al., 2008). In the literature, the term *well-being* is defined as the result of cognitive and emotional evaluation of one's life, which includes high levels of fulfilment and life satisfaction (Niškiewicz, 2016, as cited in Kasperek-Golimowska, 2012). At its core, it encompasses all the ways in which people experience and evaluate their own lives positively. What exactly it means to *experience life positively* can be understood in a difficult to count number of ways. Some equate well-being with happiness, but it can also evoke the image of a happy, cheerful person that many people do not identify with (see Tov, 2018). A sense of well-being in the perspective of researchers, is often defined as the effect of satisfaction and fulfilment that people feel in their own lives combined with low levels of stress (Niškiewicz, 2016). Shelly Kagan, posing the question of what the limits of well-being are, points out that rival theories differ on what facts directly constitute a person's well-being. Some views favour the conclusion that well-being is limited to the presence of pleasure and the absence of pain, but also, going further, well-being includes a variety of

mental states, not just pleasure (Kagan, 1992). The definition of well-being is the result of the application of diverse theoretical concepts. Among the important contributions is the “Onion” Theory of Happiness proposed by Czapieński, which posits that happiness consists of three layers. The first is related to the will to live, an innate element of psychological well-being; the second involves emotional satisfaction with life; and the third includes satisfaction with specific areas of life – such as work, home, family, friends, and income (Niśkiewicz, 2016).

Recent decades have seen research on well-being develop across multiple traditions – including hedonistic well-being, subjective well-being (SWB), eudaimonic well-being, and psychological well-being (PWB) (Sirigatti et al., 2009). The concept of subjective well-being (SWB) was first introduced by Diener. It is understood as the branch of psychology that focuses on people’s assessment of their quality of life, including cognitive judgements and affective reactions (Diener et al., 1997). Over time, alongside subjective well-being, additional forms have emerged, proposed by theorists such as Deci and Ryan and Ryff, which are based on concepts of universal human needs and effective functioning. These approaches are referred to as psychological well-being (PWB), and they are rooted in humanistic theories of positive functioning. In this perspective, the authors that psychological well-being differs from subjective well-being, even if the two may overlap empirically. Subjective well-being is defined as people’s assessment of life, representing optimal human functioning (Diener et al., 2009). In general, subjective well-being (understood both hedonistically and eudaimonically) is shaped by feelings of happiness, life satisfaction, and the balance of affective experiences. It remains influenced by surrounding layers. In the objective dimension, well-being includes a sense of meaning and significance that results from cognitive evaluation of experiences, which in turn depend on goals, values and knowledge (Karaś, 2019). The hedonistic tradition defines well-being in global terms as life satisfaction and happiness, while the eudaimonic tradition emphasizes human development in response to life’s existential challenges. Concepts derived from the eudemoniac perspective are often moralistic and normative in nature (Ilska and Kołodziej-Zaleska, 2018). Eudemonistic and hedonistic approaches – while both concerned with assessing well-being – emphasize different characteristics. Subjective well-being refers to the overall sense of satisfaction with life, focusing on global life assessment, whereas psychological well-being (PWB) highlights personal growth and engagement with life’s existential challenges (Kołodziej-Zaleska and Przybyła-Basista, 2018).

One of the best-known concepts of well-being in the eudaimonic movement, focused on human development in the context of the existential challenges that life creates, is the model proposed by Carol Ryff. The model is based on six independent dimensions of human functioning: autonomy, self-acceptance, environmental

mastery, personal development, life purpose, and positive relationships with others (Ryff and Keyes, 1995; Ryff, 1995; Ruini et al., 2003; Blasco-Belled and Alsinet, 2022). Well-being is a subjective state that results from the evaluation of one's own mental condition and characteristics. Different resources and varying needs that individuals experience will influence their overall state of well-being (see Strykowska, 2009). Psychological well-being, therefore, refers to experiencing a sense of happiness and meaning in life, which constitutes the essence of motivation for action and engagement across various dimensions. Social well-being refers to the quality of relationships in a given workplace and the broader organisational climate (Tabor-Błażewicz, 2022). Ryff emphasised that the value of her theory lies in its focus not on the short-term experience of positive affect and emotions, but on a holistic view of well-being as a component of healthy human development (Karaś and Ciecuch, 2017, as cited in Ryff, 1989).

Psychological well-being consists of several interrelated factors. Dhanabhakym and Sarath (2023), when analysing these aspects, pointed to life satisfaction, positive emotions, low levels of negative emotions, autonomy, positive relationships, purpose in life, and personal growth. These factors interact with one another, consequently shaping an individual's overall well-being. Life satisfaction is understood as a general evaluation of one's life and, more broadly, is associated with a sense of meaning. Positive emotions and low levels of negative emotions also significantly influence well-being. Autonomy refers to the ability to make independent decisions. Positive relationships foster a sense of community, belonging, and social connection. Purpose in life is closely tied to the experience of meaning, while personal development is mostly broadly defined as a continuous process of self-improvement. Despite ongoing research, the area concerning the relative importance, intensity, and complexity of individual well-being factors – as well as the key life experiences that influence well-being is still not entirely clear (Henn et al., 2016). This leaves room for ongoing exploration of what well-being realistically entails in the context of modern psychosocial functioning, and which dimensions are most crucial for fostering life satisfaction – especially in the face of today's rapidly changing and uncertain environment in which individuals fulfil both personal and professional roles. This is particularly important, as a person's psychophysical condition directly influences their motivation and, consequently, their activity across multiple domains and roles. It is also worth noting that even within the eudemonistic framework of well-being, where personal development, self-awareness, and purposeful living are emphasized, there can be extremes. When the drive for self-realisation becomes excessive, it may impose high costs on the others or leads to compulsively meeting others' expectations, thereby undermining a core component of well-being: autonomy (Ryff, Singer, 2008). In this dimension, the study of the perspective of managers – people responsible for

entire companies, individual departments or, finally, teams of employees should be considered as very relevant, not only in the context of their professional roles, but also because of the specific psychophysical resources they have at their disposal that affect the way they undertake and cope with challenges and, finally, in the context of organisational behaviours that affect the way they manage both the organisation and the people employed in it.

Methodology of own research

The purpose of this research is to investigate what the essence of well-being is in the opinion of managers of Polish companies and which aspects of psycho-physical functioning (positive and negative) are crucial to it. The research was carried out among managers of younger generations referred to in the literature as Y and Z, as well as managers from Generation X on the assumption that different generations represent different histories, coping skill sets or expectations (cf. for example, Reisenwitz and Iyer, 2009).

For the purposes of this study, Generation X was assumed to be those born between 1965 and 1980, Generation Y between 1980 and 2000 (Calvo-Porral and Pesqueira-Sanchez, 2020) and Generation Z between 1995 and 2012 (Barhate and Dirani, 2022). Due to age and thus specific career opportunities at this stage of life, only older representatives of Generation Z, i.e. those born between 1995 and 2000, who, in today's era of change and due to the nature of many organisations (e.g. IT), have the opportunity to pursue careers also in managerial roles, were invited to participate in the study.

The choice of method and technique of the research conducted depended on the exploratory nature of the study, as it focused on deep description rather than statistical analysis. The essence of the ongoing research was to find out what, in the opinion of the respondents, is well-being and with which aspects of life and work they identify it. What are their beliefs in this regard, what emotions, needs and expectations are associated with this state, and how they assess their own well-being. The purpose of qualitative research is to understand the perception of a particular phenomenon, and therefore, for this research, the choice of the indicated method was deemed appropriate. The following research questions were formulated in this paper:

1. With what do managers from Generations Y and Z, as well as Generation X, associate the concept of well-being, and which elements of psychosocial functioning do they consider most important for building and maintaining a high sense of well-being?

2. What professional and personal experiences are considered key to building a sense of well-being?
3. Which aspects, according to managers from Generations Y, Z, and X, have the greatest negative impact on their sense of well-being?
4. What key methods, forms and practices of building well-being do Generation X, Y, and Z managers observe in their organisations, and how do they assess their effectiveness?
5. In the opinion of Generation X, Y, and Z managers, to what extent are organisations responsible for shaping employee well-being? In what actions, attitudes, and decisions is this responsibility reflected?

The study used FGI – focus group interviews. The classic focus group format involves inviting 6 to 10 participants to a session moderated by a facilitator. Participants usually form a relatively homogeneous group, which helps eliminate communication barriers, increases the sense of safety, and thus creates an opportunity to express personal views among people who, in most cases, are unlikely to meet again. The principle of group homogeneity is supported by psychological mechanisms, whereby interaction with individuals perceived as similar promotes openness, encourages the sharing of experiences, and reduces feelings of shame, embarrassment, and fear of judgement (Lisek-Michalska, 2013).

The interview was conducted based on a prepared scenario consisting of seven open-ended questions, which served as a framework for the group discussion. Its purpose was to gain insight into how the respondents perceive well-being, which aspects significantly influence high or low levels of well-being, and which experiences, emotions and states they associate with its essence. This study also examined whether managers recognise specific forms of promoting well-being within organisations, how such initiatives are manifested, how they assess their effectiveness, and to what extent they believe organisations are responsible for fostering well-being.

The author of the study is aware that qualitative research cannot serve as a basis for generalised conclusions. Therefore, it is treated as cognitively valuable material that may support the formulation of more specific research problems and hypotheses in subsequent research processes and especially in the context of quantitative research.

Characteristics of the study sample

The aim of the research determined the purposeful selection of participants. The key inclusion were age (generations Y, Z and X and the level of position held (manager/owner (management level)). A total of 16 participated in the study, representing

small (up to 50 employees), medium (50 to 249 employees), and large enterprises (more than 250 employees). The study was conducted in the form of two separate FGI panels. The first group consisted of managers from the so-called young generations, Generation Y and Z (8 people), while the second group comprised managers from Generation X (8 people). The sample included ten women and six men. Participants represented the following industries: legal, services, electronics, medical, pharmaceutical, IT, trade, consulting, finance, energy and research institution. The study was conducted between December 2024 and January 2025.

Results

The focus group study reveals that the essence of well-being, although interpreted in diverse ways, is fundamentally understood as a broad sense of fulfilment in two key areas of life: personal and professional. The findings indicate that well-being is difficult to define in a one-dimensional manner, as it may mean different things to different individuals. The significance of its various components depends on the person's hierarchy of values, life goals, ambitions, specific needs at a given stage of life, as well as individual experiences. Representatives of the younger generations (Y and Z) associated well-being with peace of mind, a sense of security, mental and physical health, positive emotions, a stress-free life, and broadly defined self-realisation in both professional and personal domains. For members of Generation X, well-being was more often understood as a sense of fulfilment and engaging in activities that brings real satisfaction, not necessarily in the professional dimension, along with mental and physical peace and balance. Selected responses from the respondents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. What is well-being? – managers' perspective

"for me, well-being is peace of mind, a sense of security..."	Manager, financial services, Generation Y, female
"... I would add physical and mental health"	Manager, research institution, Generation Y, female
"... well-being, as far as emotions are concerned, is good, positive emotions that are well experienced, they do not cause tension, stress; it is stability in work, family and health..."	Law firm owner, Generation Y, female
"... a sense of joy, inner peace, a stress-free or low-stress life"	Manager, research institution, Generation Y, female
"... a sense of fulfilment, doing what you like, not forcing yourself to do anything..."	Owner, services, Generation X, female

cont. Table 1

“... developing for its own sake, not because we have to, but because we just want to. We have passions, hobbies, we invest most simply in ourselves, in our spiritual needs...”	Manager, financial services, Generation Y, female
“... well-being refers to the state of mental and physical health; it affects life motivation, how we feel on a daily basis, whether we are satisfied with our lives, whether we have the will to act. The need for rest, sleep, healthy eating, health, satisfied need for social relations, close relationships, work-life balance...”	HR manager, energy industry, Generation Y, female
“well-being refers to good physical, mental and emotional health. Balance. I identify it with positive emotions – mental and physical peace and self-realisation”	Manager, medical facility, Generation X, female
“well-being is a general sense of satisfaction with life. Functioning that meets basic psychophysical needs, but also gives something more, a higher level of fulfilment beyond basic needs...”	Vice president, pharmaceutical industry, Generation Y, male

Source: own study.

In seeking answers to the second research question, the study analysed how managers from Generation Y and Z, as well as Generation X, define the concept of well-being, and which aspects of psychosocial functioning they consider most important for building and sustaining a high level of well-being. The analysis revealed that for both groups, the following categories were of key significance: the health of oneself and loved ones, financial security and one’s current financial situation, the situation at home, and within the family, strong family relations, positive social interactions, job satisfaction, and opportunities for growth and self-fulfilment. Selected statements illustrating these perspectives are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Elements of psychosocial functioning considered most important for building and maintaining a high sense of well-being – managers’ perspective

“... first of all, you need to know what you want in life, what you are striving for. Knowing this, you can define to what extent and whether you are fulfilled at all. The starting point is to know what you expect from life. You can have a super job and be unfulfilled. There is no universal element, everything must be balanced”	Vice president, pharmaceutical industry, Generation Y, male
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“... the most important thing is relationships. They are the basis of everything. Without good relationships, there is no good action in the world, whether in life or at work”	Development manager, IT, Generation Z, male
“... relationships with family, with close people, that’s the basis of well-being. The other is health, and, for me at least, money. Today, it gives you a sense of security... when you have those three things – loved ones, health and financial stability – the other things kind of happen on their own... You can choose what you want to do and you don’t have to fight for those basic things...”	Owner, law firm, Generation Y, female
“my health and the health of my loved ones comes first.”	Manager, research institution, Generation Y, female
“... I would also add – your place on earth, your apartment, your home”	Owner, services, Generation X, female
“... you belong somewhere... as if something happens you always have somewhere to take refuge.”	Manager, finance, Generation Y, female

Source: own study.

The next step of the analysis focused on identifying which experiences in the professional and personal spheres are key to building a sense of well-being. The results of the study show that the most important experiences are often difficult or challenging events, which, when confronted with the situations of others, allow individuals to reevaluate their own life circumstances from a different perspective. Respondents also referred to childhood experiences as influential in shaping their sense of well-being. Experiences such as the birth of a child, the purchase of one’s own apartment, or achieving a desired professional position were also frequently mentioned. Selected statements are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. What professional and personal experiences are key to building a sense of well-being? – managers’ perspective

“... I think that in order to solidly feel what well-being means to me, when I hear that word, it is, paradoxically, difficult experiences, those that show me what I don’t want and what undermines my well-being...”	Manager, research institution, Generation Y, female
“... these difficult experiences also show what is important in life...”	Owner, law firm, Generation Y, female

cont. Table 3

“... maybe situations like those where we can compare ourselves to others, that kind of experience of going somewhere and seeing how other people live; make us appreciate what we have or encourage us to improve something, to strive for growth...”	Owner, services, Generation X, female
“... we also often realise how lucky we are and how much well-being we actually have when we come into contact with a sick person, or end up in hospital; there, there are a number of people who are very seriously ill and you whine that you have it bad, that things didn't work out for you at work, that's when you notice these disparities, that in the whole mess we are very lucky...”	Manager, finance, Generation Y, female
“all childhood experiences”	Manager, medical facility, Generation X, female

Source: own study.

The research also examined which factors, according to managers from Generation Y, Z and X, have the greatest negative impact on well-being. The findings suggest that key aspects of psychosocial functioning contributing to a decline in well-being include various types of loss – such as the loss of health, relationships, vitality, and energy, as well as illness, both personal and within the immediate family. Such experiences often lead individuals to re-evaluate their lives and life purpose. According to the respondents, aspects related to health and physical condition are particularly detrimental to well-being, as health is the base for self-realisation in other areas of life.

Table 4. What lowers well-being? – managers' perspective

“aging can have the effect of lowering the sense of well-being, loss of health, vitality and decrease in activity. A lowering of mood in oneself and loved ones... some kind of loss, death, in general loss of various kinds, loss of relationships.”	Owner, services, Generation X, female
“... depression takes its toll...”	Manager, finance, Generation Y, female
“... for me, for a long time, the lowering of the sense of well-being stemmed from the birth of a sick child; it seemed to me for a long time that now I will no longer have this well-being, that now is the moment that what was my well-being is over. The loss of a job, loss of income, failure to provide for the family can also be a problem...”	Manager, research institution, Generation Y, female
“illness of oneself and loved ones, it is severely depressing”	Manager, finance, Generation Y, female

Source: own study.

The next stage of the study addressed aspects of well-being within the work environment. The panellists were asked whether the organisation they work for actively support and promote employee well-being. However, the results show a rather negative view of employers in this regard. Respondents pointed to numerous initiatives they perceived as superficial or performative, which, in their opinion, can hardly be considered meaningful efforts to enhance well-being. The majority of respondents' statements reflected the belief that the organisations in which they are employed do not genuinely prioritise employee well-being.

Selected responses are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Workplace well-being and the evaluation of employers' actions – managers' perspective

"... I would say rather not. Not in the systemic sense, which would be done with conviction. It is more for show that we do something, some things are also forced by the market, for example, medical care, which is standard. Companies are doing this not to take care of the employee; it just has to be done"	Vice president, pharmaceutical industry, Generation Y, male
"I don't see it at all. Companies don't care about building well-being. You do your job and that's it. You won't get anything else."	Development manager, IT, Generation Z, male
"... theoretically yes, there are seminars, a psychologist, but it is very superficial. As a rule, the organisation shows initiative, but ostensibly because the goal is more image than sincere concern for employee well-being. The demands of the market determine what is – if other organisations are doing it, so are we."	Manager, electronics, Generation Y, female
"... this is derived from various activities, but it seems to me that probably not always, but in most cases the sense of well-being in the people who make up the organisation is not an end in itself. It's kind of just derivative of different things, situations. There is a salary, because there is a job well done, there is perhaps a nice atmosphere, because there are interesting, good people working there, but the goal I think of any organisation, certainly the overriding goal is not to look after the well-being of the people who work there"	Manager, research institution, Generation Y, female
"the employer is focused on its well-being..."	Manager, finance, Generation Y, female
"the employer is focused on its profit... while I think what matters is, firstly, how the employer builds relationships with employees and, secondly, how relationships are built between employees. If there is no acquiescence on the part of the employer to certain behaviours, then this indirectly builds up well-being in the organisation... it's not about making everyone love each other, but about making relations good, appropriate"	Owner, law firm, Generation Y, female

Source: own study.

The research also examined which methods, tools and forms of support for employee well-being managers have encountered in their organisations. The findings reveal that although managers recognise a wide variety of initiatives, they generally rate their effectiveness as low. Nonetheless, managers did highlight several initiatives aimed at psycho-physical fitness, such as webinars with health or finance experts and psychological or physiotherapy consultations, as well as measures focused on direct team relations, namely cultivating a positive, friendly work atmosphere that supports well-being. Selected statements are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Methods, tools and forms of support for building well-being in organisations – managers' perspective

"... in our company there is a Health Factory, a group of employees who deal with topics related to well-being, for example, webinar with a nutritionist – how to live healthy, the importance of sleep, food, organisation of exercise at work, organisation of immunisations, we have <i>ad hoc</i> support of a psychologist seven days a week – phone line and consultations"	HR manager, energy, Generation Y, female
"webinars with a psychologist, webinars with a financial advisor, medical care, care from a physiotherapist during work, these are very important. Because you don't have to organise them outside of work"	Manager, electronics, Generation Y, female
"interpersonal conversations, relationships, but that's the only thing that I think is a form of support in the organisation; if you have nice people at work, you can handle it"	Manager, medical facility, Generation X, female
"in theory, preventive examinations, exercises in the office; but these are artificial things that are ticked off as existing. You can give someone tests and have them tested, but on the other hand you can wear them down mentally. People are exploited on a daily basis because there is pressure, a sense of lack of agency and decision-making"	Vice president, pharma, Generation Y, male
"... it seems to me that in addition to these material aspects, the basis of well-being is the psychological aspects of building the well-being of employees through small gestures, i.e. noticing, appreciating, asking about private matters, attentiveness to people, not only material aspects"	Owner, services, Generation X, female
"my well-being is most influenced by the work atmosphere and the employer's provision of, as far as it can be ensured, because it is also influenced by the employees, a nice and friendly cooperation between people, and for me it is important to build a team and work in such a way that there is no incentive for rivalry between people, and this is the case with me. In my section, there are 10 people, and everyone has their own area of work and each person who works with us works in such a way that they do what they are supposed to do plus everyone always helps each other, there is not even a shadow of an element of competition."	Manager, research institution, Generation Y, female

Source: own study.

The final part of the study examined whether managers believe that organisations are responsible for building employee well-being. In this respect, respondents’ views are divided. On the one hand, employer’s responsibility is recognised, but to a limited extent. Respondents emphasise that the organisation’s overriding goal is not to foster well-being but to secure profits and business results in financial terms.

Table 7. Organisational responsibility and building well-being – managers’ perspective

“They should be, according to the principle that there is no employee from a slave, and if you build this well-being of the employee then they are more willing to work for a given organisation, while it seems to me that there is still such a belief that you are focused on the result and you want to pay the employee as little as possible... there is still a belief that everything is about money and the atmosphere is relegated to the background...” “... if the work is just a tool to achieve the means, then you also do not have expectations of the employer. You just treat the work as a slice of life and it is not so much necessary for the employer to build this well-being, but it is also important for the employer to make sure that there are not some abuses in the organisation.”	Owner, law firm, Generation Y, female
“... the employer is not entirely responsible for building well-being...”	Manager, research institution, Generation Y, female
“... the employer is very responsible for building well-being, at least through respect, which is crucial for these employees, this is one of the basic needs for a person to feel respected. The employer can influence it in many ways; firstly, by paying fairly; secondly, by respecting that person; thirdly, by offering opportunities for development, training, taking care of the atmosphere, integration, there are many opportunities. It is another matter whether employers do it, but the field of action is huge, people spend part of their lives at work, for many it is important, one of the important roles, I think the employer has a big influence.”	Owner, services, Generation X, female

Source: own study.

Discussion

The results presented in this paper reveal several important aspects. First, respondents perceive well-being as a multidimensional construct encompassing many of human functioning. Because individual needs and capabilities vary

widely, support must be tailored to each person to be truly effective. In this context, it is difficult to consider that organisations can largely take responsibility for building well-being among both employees and managers. Respondents recognise several forms of organisational support, yet they rate their effectiveness and relevance rather negatively, mainly because these measures do not match employee's current needs and individual preferences. From this perspective, an organisation's capacity to shape well-being is limited; nonetheless, it should not abandon initiatives that strengthen a culture of cooperation and mutual support. Such efforts include open dialogue with staff, competent and empathetic leadership, appropriate leadership styles, and programmes that foster integration and healthy relationships (cf. Białas et al., 2023). On the other hand, the individual perspective must be taken into account: well-intentioned organisational initiatives do not always match the needs and expectations of employees' managers, whose situations are seldom fully understood. Respondents noted that the relationships, work atmosphere, the organisational environment are what enhance belonging and integration, thereby improving well-being at work. Thus, material benefits are not the primary drivers of well-being; rather, cooperation and relationships that generate positive emotions and foster a sense of security and integrity. It should also be noted that, regardless of age, perceived organisational support can affect job satisfaction ratings and well-being (cf. Mendryk and Rakowska, 2016).

Limitations of the study

The main limitations of the chosen method are typical of qualitative research, which makes it difficult to treat the study as representative or to generalise the findings statistically. Nevertheless, the results point to several areas that warrant further empirical investigation, especially through quantitative approaches.

The most obvious limitation is the sample size. Statistically, it is too small to support broad generalisations, however, this follows from the use of focus-group interviews (FGIs), where a single session typically involves 7 to 9 participants (Maison, 2010). This form of research allows researchers to overcome the difficulties of exploring interview in the case of a much larger group. It should also be noted that contemporary research trends also encourage abandoning the traditional requirement that study participants do not know one another beforehand (Maison, 2010).

In this type of project, the unit of analysis is not the individual respondent but the entire focus group. Under this methodology, drawing general conclusions from single observations is not justified. Consequently, a focus-group should comprise more than one group (see Ciesielska and Jemielniak, 2018), which is the case in our research.

The group format itself can also be a limitation. Participants may be reluctant to share sensitive information in a group setting compared with an individual interview or survey (Yayeh, 2021), which can significantly hinder data collection.

Conclusions and practical implications

Further research on employee well-being should pay particular attention to the creation of a cooperative climate at multiple organisational levels. Previous findings indicate that soft management factors, such as leadership style and day-to-day work practices, can make a decisive difference to employees' perceptions of well-being and which factors they regard as crucial to its improvement or decline. The empirical material collected here shows how managers define well-being and which factors they regard as crucial to its improvement or decline. While the core elements of well-being are broadly similar for most people, the details differ, the individual dimension is therefore critical.

In practice, an individualised approach is advisable for both employees and managers, especially given today's volatile business environment. A single model is unlikely to suit every group and personality. Therefore, organisations need a clear understanding of the real needs, challenges, and difficulties their key personnel face. Insight in this area may be essential for designing well-being programmes that at least partly address staff needs. It is also important to understand how managers and employees themselves define well-being, what state they associate with it, how it manifests itself, and how it shapes their behaviour. Individual differences in this area make it necessary to at least partially personalise programmes.

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Chaos czy harmonia? Dobrostan w perspektywie menedżerów polskich przedsiębiorstw – wyniki badań jakościowych

Abstrakt

Dobrostan to temat coraz mocniej eksplorowany w kontekście funkcjonowania zarówno pracowników, jak i całych organizacji. Nie ma bowiem wątpliwości co do tego, że kondycja psychofizyczna, stan umysłu, energia życiowa, którą dysponuje człowiek – jego emocje, przeżycia, doświadczenia, są tym, co w istotnym stopniu wpływa na sposób funkcjonowania w pracy, a tym samym na jej jakość i efektywność, co finalnie przekłada się na to, kim jest pracownik dzisiejszych organizacji i jakie zachowania, postawy w pracy przejawia. Które jego zasoby są jego największą siłą, a które największą słabością, i w jakim wymiarze może z nich czerpać, realizując się zarówno na polu zawodowym, jak i prywatnym? Celem niniejszych badań było zbadanie, na czym polega istota dobrostanu w ocenie menedżerów polskich firm i które aspekty psychofizycznego funkcjonowania (pozytywne i negatywne) są dla niego kluczowe. W pracy przedstawiono wyniki badania jakościowego. Zastosowano zogniskowany wywiad grupowy (FGI) zrealizowany w dwóch odrębnych panelach. W panelu pierwszym udział wzięło ośmiu menedżerów – przedstawicieli tzw. młodych generacji (pokolenie Y i Z), drugi panel stanowili menedżerowie pokolenia X (osiem osób)

Słowa kluczowe: dobrostan, well-being, PWB, SWB, work-life balance

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