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Gender and managerial competencies as viewed by subordinates

Introduction

Power and management have been vested in men for thousands of years. Accordingly, success and leadership have been associated with typically masculine traits, such as decisiveness, self-confidence and competitive spirit.

The financial crisis of 2008, the fourth industrial revolution and digital transformation have exerted an influence on all the areas of everyday life, most notably on economy and business. Both market needs and employer behaviours have changed. Contemporary management studies demonstrate that organisations should display flexibility and prioritise human resources. Special attention is accorded to the need for structure flattening, teamwork and free information flow [Hejduk 2018:69-79]. Such transformations are facilitated by the employment of women. According to the reports of the largest corporations, women represent an untapped talent pool [Deloitte 2012:20-21] and their management style is better adjusted to the needs of contemporary business [Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt 2001:787].

Although women are well educated nowadays, the proportion of women at managerial positions in numerous companies is low and the higher the level of hierarchy, the lower the gender diversity. In 2018, women held 16.9% positions on the management boards of companies globally and represented only 5.6% of management board presidents [Deloitte 2019:9]. This situation may be attributed, *inter alia*, to the influence of stereotypes and traditional division of social roles, which generate numerous internal and external obstacles to women's career progress [Titkow 2003:39].

The objective of this paper is to give an overview of the most important managerial competencies from the point of view of employees, describe the impact of gender on management styles and indicate how these styles correspond to the needs of modern organisations. The analysis will use the results of a survey conducted among employees into the influence of gender on the style of managing employees. As part of the survey, the respondents evaluated their supervisors and identified those competencies of a good manager that they believe to be of primary importance. The information obtained has been compared with the modern concepts of leaderships defined in the literature describing both, the past and modern approach to management.

Leadership styles and changes in the business environment

A leadership style is a manner in which a leader is influencing group members in the process of pursuing the goals of his or her team and organisation. There are various different concepts of leadership. They describe the impact that the aptitudes and competencies of managers have on their team management style. In other words, these styles are defined by a behavioural theory that is concerned not with the traits of leaders but with their behaviours towards employees. It has been employed to formulate leadership styles [Gigol 2015:35-50]. The most popular classification is as follows [Gigol 2015:43; Diniz 2017:38-39]:

- Laissez-faire style – leaders do not monitor the work of their subordinates. They give them full freedom of action and decision without applying any incentives. The style yields good results in a situation when employees are experienced and qualified. When used among less experienced employees, it results in low efficiency and higher costs.
- Authoritarian style – leaders make all decisions without taking into consideration the opinions of other people. They define goals on their own and impose their own methods of work on employees. Such a style is recommended for employees who require constant control. It will not be appropriate for creative employees and those who enjoy teamwork.
- Democratic style (participatory) – leaders involve employees in decision-making. If any changes are being introduced, this management style helps to reduce the resistance of employees to the transformations because their opinion constitutes a part of the process of changes.

Another classification of leadership styles was developed by B. Bass ([Diniz 2017:38-39]). It is as follows:

- Transactional style whereby managers give rewards or penalties to employees, depending on the effects of their work and quality of task performance. Goals are pre-defined and employees accept the direction of activities specified by the manager, who later monitors results achieved and helps employees if they have any difficulties performing their responsibilities on time.
- Transformational style whose main assumption is good and open communication on the part of leaders. Their task is to motivate and engage employees so as to increase their productivity and effectiveness. Leaders focus on long-term goals while delegating minor and intermediate goals to subordinates.

Each of the aforementioned styles has its strengths and may be applied by leaders depending on the organisation's situation. Some of these methods used to be implemented as part of traditional management (authoritarian and transactional styles) while others are gaining importance in the light of ever more rapid and complex economic processes in the contemporary world (democratic and transformational styles).

In the past, the main objective of management was to counteract uncertainty. According to the theory, management is a conservative activity aimed at achieving balance and stability in the environment

[Kostera, Śliwa 2012:13]. These were the characteristics of the business environment prior to the post-industrial age. T. Peters, a management expert, claims that traditional management is based on conquest, competition and rivalry [Peters 2005]. Traditional leaders are strict and establish rigorous requirements, rules and orders. They make decisions on their own and give instructions to employees on their basis. They control the work of their subordinates. They have extensive knowledge but do not share it with their team but rather use it in order to maintain their status [Lisowska 2009:105]. Such management methods correspond to the authoritarian and transactional leadership styles.

It is traditionally believed that one of the pillars of power is the use of influence and persuasion combined with the management of other people's emotions. Society is wrong to perceive such methods as effective. W. Daniecki, a management psychologist, [2016:38-47, 53] openly defines them as manipulation. He lists such examples of manipulative behaviours as shaming subordinates, being unable to acknowledge one's own mistakes, or disparaging and intimidating subordinates. Daniecki characterises supervisors who apply such techniques as Machiavellian leaders – egoistic, blind to other people's emotions and prone to impose their own will on others and abuse power. Such managers are effective, highly motivated and resistant to social pressure and the impact of external factors, but their subordinates are characterised by low work motivation and satisfaction as well as dislike of their managers [Daniecki 2016:58]. Traditional managerial habits are explained by Theory X, which holds that people are lazy by nature and motivated by career prospects and that they do not like changes and require constant control. Such an approach to employees corresponds to the method of work organisation developed by F.W. Taylor, according to which money is the main motivating factor. Taylorism involves strict production control, manufacturing standards and task repetitiveness [Mazur 2013:160-161].

In the second half of the 20th century, following the world's passage into the post-industrial age, the business environment and internal processes have changed to a considerable extent, becoming much more unpredictable [Listwan 1997:14]. The environment of organisations in the 21st century, in turn, is called a turbulent one. It is characterised by complexity, instability and uncertainty. Accordingly, an organisation has a negligible influence (or no influence at all) on its external environment. These dynami-

cally changing conditions pose a challenge to modern leaders and require flexible adjustment and response to changes. In consequence, the transformational style is gaining importance [Geryk 2016:98-99].

The factors that exert the most considerable impact on the environment and management of a company in the early 21st century include:

- progressing digitalisation,
- digital transformation,
- financialisation of the economy,
- environmental regulations.

Each of these phenomena may be indicated as a separate factor behind the changes in contemporary business. At the same time, they are all connected by causal links [Gigol 2015:79-82].

Globalisation is a phenomenon involving the unification of the global economy resulting from the elimination of barriers in freed trade and internationalization of business [Stiglitz 2005:7]. In the context of management, globalisation influences the process of decision-making, which is no longer based on the local point of view, but on the global one [Jantón-Drozdowska 2008:20-21]. The diversity of human resources in organisations is increasing. The approach to employees has to be changed – to a personal one. This, in turn, requires the flattening of structures and redefinition of the role of managers [Penc 2002:59].

One of the main drivers of globalisation is the global information system. The strict integration of all business processes, enabled by the development of information and telecommunication technologies, provides new methods of action [Gigol 2015:79]. In the face of the digital transformation, expectations towards managers are evolving. Knowledge, including specialist knowledge, is publicly available, so its importance is dwindling. It is soft competencies, understood as the ability to work with people, that are gaining prominence [Kostera, Śliwa 2012:298].

Another factor generating turbulences in the modern business environment is the growing role of markets, institutions and financial motivations. This phenomenon is characterised by the increasing importance of the shareholder value in companies, domination of financial systems based on the capital market instead of the banking system, development of complex financial instruments using a high level of financial leverage and smaller share of production and sales in business profits in favour of financial services [Epstein 2005:3; Księżyk 2013:5]. The excessive financialisation of the economy resulted in the global crisis of 2008 [Zioło 2011:10-12; Gigol

2015:80]. Scholars emphasise that the crisis of subprime loans was not a typical collapse of the economy, but the beginning of minor but more frequent crises. Consequently, organisations have to be agile and apply adaptative methods of leadership in order to survive [Heifetz, Grashow, Linsky 2009:114-124]. In the time of crisis, teamwork is of major importance, so leaders should be sensitive and intuitive. The key managerial competencies during recession include effective communication, multi-tasking, fast decision-making and organisational skills. Another competency that may appear less obvious but is not less significant concerns the ability to effectively sustain an organisational culture and development of human resources [Wooten, James 2008:355].

The dwindling potential of our planet gives rise to an increasing number of ecological and social threats. In order to avoid them, it is necessary to focus on the transformation of societies based on consumerism into societies sustainable in terms of both, consumption and production. It is only the employment of sustainable leaders that may have a real impact on the change of this situation. Sustainable leaders are leaders who combine their managerial qualifications with the knowledge of the social and ecological situation. Their skills include long-term thinking that is based on empathy and takes account of the future of generations to come. The innovativeness of managers and their openness to changes are crucial for the establishment of sustainable strategies for companies. What is also significant is the ability to influence employees so as to communicate the idea of sustainable values to the entire staff. Organisations focused on the ecological aspects of business are becoming more desirable players in the economy [Pabian 2017:124-126]. The changeability of the organisational environment and need for innovation force leaders to change their view of the business world and develop new management styles [Kotler, Caslione 2013:18].

Management styles and gender

In the analysis of the impact of gender on management style, one may find two positions. In accordance with the first one, there are differences between female managers and male managers, while the other one holds that there are no differences whatsoever. The former has more followers [Eagly, Johnson 1990]. Table 1 shows the gender differenc-

es in management style referred to in literature. It may be noted that leadership competencies are associated with gender mainly based on stereotypical ideas about the social roles of women and men.

At the moment, the interactive feminine style of management is ever more appreciated. Focus on human resources and their development is a particularly desirable trait at any managerial position. Modern business shapes leaders in such a way that men have to face the challenge of changing their leadership methods and adopting feminine characteristics [Gerzema, D'Antonio 2014:297-306]. The process of adjustment to one's role is referred to as androgenic leadership, whereby each gender assumes the traits of the other gender in order to increase their

effectiveness as leaders [Titkow 2003:76]. Both styles – the feminine and the masculine one – may contribute a significant added value to the functioning of companies. The loss of one of them or excessive androgyny limits the range of managerial competencies within a company [Deloitte 2012:15].

A review of literature demonstrates that women may have a better aptitude for being “managers of tomorrow”. The survey whose results are discussed below answers the question whether competencies assigned to women and men are reflected in Polish reality and whether they correspond to the concept of the feminine and masculine styles of management. The survey was conducted online in early 2019. The questionnaire was published in social media (Face-

Table 1. The comparison of management styles: masculine and feminine ones

Description	Men	Women
Type of management style	Authoritarian style, prescriptive and controlling, based on tasks. Power consists of prestige and position within the hierarchy	Democratic style, based on relationships, characterised by interaction, focus on teamwork and equality between members
Success measures	Quantitative parameters: profit, increase in sales, increase in the market share	Qualitative parameters: customer and employee loyalty and satisfaction
Strategies of action	Act aggressively, approach competitors as enemies	Take non-aggressive actions and apply low-risk strategies. The effects of their actions are long-term ones
Creating a vision	Set clear strategic lines of action	Develop long-term plans, taking into account numerous options and solutions
Decision-making	Make decisions faster than women but on their own	While making decisions, they take into account a broader scope of information and a greater number of methods of operation. They involve their team in the decision-making process, hold group discussions and strive to reach a consensus. They take into consideration non-market and non-financial factors
Communication within a company and relations with employees	They are not eager to express sympathy or ask personal questions. While providing information, they undermine the position of their interlocutor, asserting their own authority. They criticise people who have different opinions. They treat praises and gratitude as a lack of competence. They have difficulties talking about their feelings, so they give remarks regarding facts. They are unwilling to ask for help because this would evidence their lower position towards other people. Since they approach the world in hierarchical terms, they prefer to give orders instead of establishing contacts	They create a wider space for communication within and outside an organisation. They strive to ensure transparency. They take care of others; they are interested in personal matters and provide support. They provide information in such a manner so as not to make any employee feel “worse”; they raise their interlocutor's sense of self-worth. They use terms of endearment more frequently than men. They praise others and express gratitude more frequently. By talking about feelings and emotions, they build close-knit communities. They have no problem asking others for help and advice. They effectively resolve conflicts. They are focused on compromise and mediation. They are willing to share their knowledge and motivate others
Influence	They exert pressure, making use of their position for this purpose	They inspire, engage and make friends with people. They attach importance to matters of morality and ethics
Other	They have better time availability. They have more belief in themselves and their success	They are resistant to stress. They are multitaskers and better at organising work. They are ready for development and learning. They have greater emotional intelligence

Source: own elaboration based on [Deloitte 2012:12, 15, 21; Lisowska 2009:109-119; Smyła 2015:23-26; Titkow 2003:73-90].

book and LinkedIn), including groups of students at various universities, groups intended for collecting data for surveys and groups of residents of several Warsaw districts. 120 responses were obtained, including 77 from women (64%) and 43 from men (36%). People between 25 and 33 years of age represented the largest group of respondents (48%). The second largest group was composed of respondents between 16 and 24 years of age (39%). People between 34 and 42 years of age represented 9% of the surveyed while people between 43 and 51 years of age – 3%. The smallest group was composed of persons above the age of 52, who represented less than 1% of the surveyed. The largest number of the surveyed (41%) were employed in micro-enterprises with 1-9 employees and in large companies employing more than 250 persons (32%). 16% of the surveyed worked in medium companies (50-249 persons) while 11% in small enterprises (10-49 employees). The respondents were asked also to specify the nature of their company. As many as 43% answered that they work in a corporation. 11% declared to be employed respectively in start-ups and in family companies. Persons with a job in a state company represented 9% while those working in agencies – 6%. In addition, 20% of the respondents selected the option “other”. The surveyed had worked in a given team most frequently for 1 year up to 2 years (27%) or for 7 up to 12 months (26%). 20% of the respondents declared that they had had an experience of 4 up to 6 months. 12% of the surveyed had worked with their boss for 1 up to 3 months while 10% for 3 up to 5 years. The smallest group was composed of persons with an experience of 6 and more years (5%). Although the survey was not representative, its results may be helpful in identifying the manner in which women and men as leaders are perceived by their subordinates.

The importance of managerial competencies as viewed by employees

As part of the first stage of the survey, the task of the surveyed was to identify those of 30 behaviours that were, in their opinion, the most important ones as characteristics of an “ideal” manager. The list of desired competencies provided as part of the survey had been developed based on literature describing modern leadership [Espinoza, Schwarzbart 2018:107-109; Gerzema, D’Antonio 2014:297-306;

Harvard Business School 2017:40-336]. The survey participants were asked to select 15 traits describing a competent manager best.

According to the employees surveyed in Poland, the most important trait by far is to have practical knowledge of the activity pursued by the company, department or team. Next come reasonable delegation of tasks and motivating employees. One of the “soft” competencies – the ability to communicate effectively and listen actively – is ranked fourth. It is followed immediately by a “hard” activity, typical of the authoritarian masculine style of management – the establishment of rules and strict compliance with them. Other significant attributes include the following: supporting the team, kindness and respect, and constructive feedback. Fairness and basing opinions on facts are ranked ninth. The last one out of ten is involving the team in the process of decision-making. The next ten positions correspond to the feminine style of management. These traits include care for employees, high emotional intelligence, building relations, cooperation and flexibility. They are followed by vision and future planning and further by openness, transparency and honesty. Next, the surveyed indicated the ability to effectively conduct meetings. Less desirable competencies include empathy and development of employees. The employees attach the least importance to creative sessions organised by a manager, spending time with the team and charismatic speaking.

Table 2 presents all the leadership traits in the sequence indicated by the surveyed women and men.

The first six items are similar in the opinion of both genders. The only exception is the establishment of rules, a trait that represents one of the most important practices of a good manager in the opinion of men. Women ranked it seventh. The last items on the list are also similar for both genders.

There are several competencies that men appreciate much more than women, including the ability to draw conclusions from the feedback of employees, cooperation, creating a vision and planning the future; openness, transparency and honesty.

Women, by contrast, highly value the following traits in their bosses more frequently than men: flexibility of action, striving to ensure positive team culture and dynamics, controlling conflicts and stress within the team, care for employees and their successes, as well as controlling one’s own emotions and patience.

The aforementioned results confirm most of the theoretical reflections from the earlier parts of the paper with respect to gender differences. Particu-

Table 2. The list of leadership competencies according to their importance in effective management depending on gender of employees

No	Employees	
	women	men
1	Has a practical knowledge of the area managed	Has a practical knowledge of the area managed
2	Reasonably and responsibly delegates tasks	Establishes rules and complies with them
3	Motivates and engages employees	Reasonably and responsibly delegates tasks
4	Communicates effectively: listens and shares information	Motivates and engages employees
5	Supports the team in difficult situations	Communicates effectively: listens and shares information
6	Is kind, respects team members and their emotions	Support the team in difficult situations
7	Establishes rules and complies with them	Encourages others to provide feedback and draw conclusions from it
8	Provides constructive feedback on an ongoing basis	Is kind, respects team members and their emotions
9	Takes the opinions of team members into account while making decisions	Is fair, bases his/her opinion on facts
10	Is fair, bases his/her opinion on facts	Cooperates and treats success as a team achievement
11	Is flexible, acts and resolves problems	Provides constructive feedback on an ongoing basis
12	Strives to ensure positive team culture and dynamics	Strengthens the position of employees and gives them a chance to shine
13	Controls team conflicts, relieves stress and tensions	Takes the opinions of team members into account while making decisions
14	Cares for employees and helps them to achieve success	Takes personal responsibility for difficult issues
15	Controls emotions, is patient and effectively deals with vulnerabilities	Has a clear vision and plans the future strategically
16	Encourages others to provide feedback and draw conclusions from it	Places emphasis on openness, transparency and honesty
17	Strengthens the position of employees and gives them a chance to shine	Is flexible, acts and resolves problems
18	Is not ashamed of failures, displays modesty and humility, knows how to apologise	Creates a vision that team members want to follow
19	Cooperates and treats success as a team achievement	Cares for employees and helps them to achieve success
20	Takes personal responsibility for difficult issues	Provides constructive feedback on an ongoing basis
21	Has a clear vision and plans the future strategically	Controls emotions, is patient and effectively deals with vulnerabilities
22	Creates a vision that team members want to follow	Is not ashamed of failures, displays modesty and humility, knows how to apologise
23	Effectively conducts meetings	Effectively conducts meetings
24	Places emphasis on openness, transparency and honesty	Gives priority to the team's interest over his/her own benefits
25	Gives priority to the team's interest over his/her own benefits	Controls team conflicts, relieves stress and tensions
26	Is emphatic, caring and knows how to express sympathy	Is emphatic, caring and knows how to express sympathy
27	Develops employees / conducts coaching	Develops employees / conducts coaching
28	Conducts creative sessions (brain storms, idea maps, etc.)	Spends time with the team not only while performing tasks
29	Spends time with the team not only while performing tasks	Conducts creative sessions (brain storms, idea maps, etc.)
30	Speaks charismatically	Speaks charismatically

Source: own elaboration.

lar attention should be paid to the establishment of rules and compliance with them – men appreciate this trait more than women. It is also surprising to note the position of cooperation. According to literature, women should regard it as one of the foundations of functioning in society. The survey results indicate, however, that a larger percentage of men as compared to women expect cooperation from their manager.

Manager's gender and his or her competencies

In the second part of the survey, the surveyed were asked to specify to what degree their bosses corresponded to the characteristics of a “manager of tomorrow”. Their managers were awarded points (-2, -1, 0, 1, 2) for how they succeeded in adjusting

Table 3. The average rating of the competencies of managers depending on their gender

No	Competencies	Men	Women
1	Has a practical knowledge of the area managed	1.07	1.06
2	Delegates an appropriate number of tasks to appropriate people and provides support in their implementation	0.01	0.59
3	Motivates and engages employees	0.17	0.24
4	Communicates effectively: listens actively, shares information, explains his/her decisions and asks questions	0.35	0.57
5	Establishes rules and complies with them	0.25	0.57
6	Supports the team in difficult situations	0.41	0.65
7	Is kind, respects team members and their emotions	0.52	0.90
8	Provides constructive feedback on an ongoing basis	0.01	0.51
9	Is fair, bases opinions on facts	0.43	0.65
10	Takes the opinions of team members into account/ involves the team in the process of decision-making	0.16	0.55
11	Is flexible, acts and resolves problems	0.49	0.63
12	Strives to ensure positive team culture and dynamics	0.23	0.55
13	Encourages others to provide feedback and draws conclusions from criticism	-0.07	0.14
14	Cooperates with the group and treats success as a team achievement	0.23	0.65
15	Strengthens the position of employees and gives them a chance to shine	0.01	0.47
16	Cares for employees and helps them to achieve success	-0.09	0.45
17	Controls emotions, is patient and effectively deals with vulnerabilities	0.28	0.39
18	Controls team conflicts, relieves stress and tensions	-0.03	0.04
19	Is not ashamed of failures, displays modesty and humility, knows how to apologise, controls his/her ego	-0.20	0.20
20	Takes personal responsibility for difficult issues	0.55	0.86
21	Has a clear vision and plans the future strategically	0.26	0.29
22	Creates a vision that team members want to follow	-0.14	0.20
23	Places emphasis on openness, transparency and honesty	0.43	0.55
24	Effectively conducts meetings	0.41	0.73
25	Gives priority to the team's interest over his/her own benefits, puts the team first	-0.33	-0.08
26	Notices employees' emotions and feelings, is able to empathise with them, is caring and knows how to express sympathy	-0.10	0.55
27	Supports the professional development of employees / conducts effective coaching	-0.51	-0.10
28	Conducts creative sessions (brain storms, idea maps, etc.)	-0.54	-0.49
29	Spends time with the team not only while performing tasks	-0.07	0.31
30	Speaks charismatically	0.04	0.02
	Average score	0.14	0.42

Source: own elaboration.

themselves to the contemporary concepts of management. They were evaluated based on the same thirty traits and behaviours as in the first part, formulated in more descriptive terms, so as to make it easier for the respondents to visualise the situation. The average score was calculated for each gender based on the points awarded. The results are shown in Table 3.

Women are rated slightly higher in each competency, except for speaking charismatically and practical knowledge. The differences are not yet substantial. A small gap between men and women may be noted also with respect to creating a vision and planning the future strategically, controlling conflicts and stress and organising creative sessions that have an influence on the involvement of employees.

The most marked differences in evaluation concern the following: appropriate delegation of tasks, providing constructive feedback, care for employees and empathy. The survey results demonstrate that these skills are the domain of women.

The representatives of both genders have an average negative score equivalent to a lack of a given trait or skill in three cases: they do not put their employees and their interests first; they do not support the development of employees through coaching and do not conduct creative sessions with their employees. These behaviours are characteristics of the feminine style of management. Most of the female managers who were evaluated in the survey do not apply these methods.

Table 4 shows eight competencies in which both genders have the highest scores. Seven of them are the same for men and women alike. This comparison may suggest that men and women perform managerial activities in a very similar way. It should be noted, however, that women usually receive higher ratings from their subordinates – the average score

of women is 0.42 as compared to 0.14 for men (cf. Table 3). The score changes after the weighted average are taken into account. The weights are percentages of people who identify a given competency as an important one from their own point of view. The average scores for both genders were re-calculated and they increased in both cases – women scored 0.49 while men 0.21.

The gender of the respondents was adopted as the first factor differentiating the scores of managers. Women were much stricter while evaluating their supervisors: they awarded 0.30 to their female managers and 0.002 point to their male managers. The ratings from male employees were much higher: male managers were awarded 0.31 point while female managers – 0.84 point. It may be seen that both genders evaluated managers of the same gender in the same manner. The opposite is the case with inter-gender relations. According to the survey results, women find it difficult to cooperate with male bosses while men enjoy having female supervisors. The fact that women receive lower ratings from women may be attributed to the phenomenon of discrimination of women by women [Smyła 2015:29-30].

Yet another factor that has an influence on differences in opinions about managers is the age of the respondents. In order to illustrate these differences, the surveyed were divided into two age groups: Generation Y, including persons born between 1982 and 1996, and Generation Z, including persons born in 1997 and later.

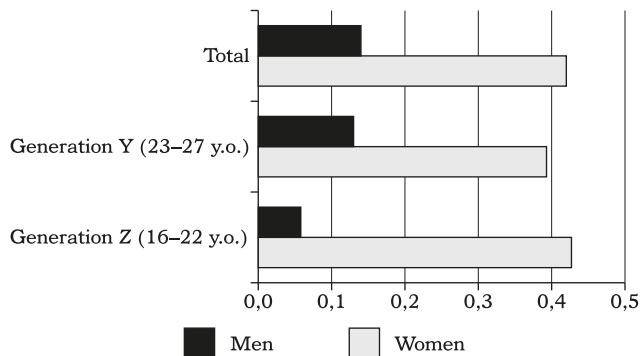
While examining the data shown on drawing 1, one may note that women are rated higher than men in both age groups. Generation Y is slightly less appreciative of both genders than all the surveyed – men scored 0.13 and women scored 0.39 points. The youngest employees (Generation Z) are much more critical about their male bosses than all the

Table 4. Key competencies of managers according to gender as viewed by employees

Women	Men
Practical knowledge	Practical knowledge
Kindness and respect towards employees	Taking responsibility for difficult issues
Taking responsibility for difficult issues	Kindness and respect towards employees
Effectively conducting meetings	Flexibility
Supporting the team in difficult situations	Fairness, basing opinions on facts
Fairness, basing opinions on facts	Openness, transparency and honesty
Cooperation	Effectively conducting meetings
Flexibility	Supporting the team in difficult situations

Source: own elaboration.

Figure 1. Evaluation of managers according to their gender in the opinion of the surveyed belonging to Generation Y and Z.



Source: own elaboration.

respondents (0.06 points). The average score given to men by this age group is lower by 0.01 points than the overall score. It may be concluded that the youngest generation that is entering the labour market values the feminine style of management much more than the previous generations while displaying a low level of acceptance for the masculine methods.

Conclusion

The survey has helped to determine which of the characteristics of modern leaders referred to in relevant literature are important from the point of view of employees in Poland. A significant proportion of the respondents are people between 16 and 33 years of age, so their opinion has had a large influence on the survey results. At the same time, this age category will represent the majority of employees in the near term.

The survey results indicate that the most desirable characteristics and competencies of leaders from the point of view of employees include the following: knowledge and experience in the managed area, establishing rules and complying with them, proper delegation of tasks, motivating, engaging and supporting the team, giving constructive feedback, effective communication, kindness and respect.

Women are rated much higher than men with respect to managerial competencies. It may be thus claimed that women meet the modern requirements of business better than men. The comparison of the survey results with the characteristics of the female

and male management styles confirm gender differences in competencies. Based on the responses of the surveyed, it is possible to conclude that the inclusion of women in management is of great importance because their traits and skills correspond to the image of modern leaders better than male competencies.

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