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CREATIVE IDENTITY – HOW GENDER SHAPES LIFE ORIENTATIONS IN A CREATIVE ORGANISATION

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Purpose: The importance of creativity stems from its impact not only on organisations but also on social development, which translates into quality of life. This study aims to demonstrate the influence of gender on creative life orientations. The presented results are based on survey research. The analyses carried out in the study show that gender does not differ significantly in the development of creative life orientations.
Design/methodology/approach: This article reviews research on the impact of cognitive, theoretical, methodological and empirical issues using Cudowska's (2014) questionnaire to determine the impact of gender on respondents' life orientations. The study illustrates these processes using data from 1,395 respondents representing creative life orientations.
Findings: The results of this study demonstrate the insignificant role of gender and its impact on the development of creativity in organizations.
Research limitations/implications: Despite the author's efforts to ensure that the article is of the highest quality, several basic limitations should be mentioned. First, there is a geographical limitation. The article uses empirical data from a study conducted in the West Pomeranian Province and mainly concerns people with creative lifestyles. The second limitation concerns the research method. The data was obtained using a questionnaire survey. The third limitation is the one-off nature of the study. It would be appropriate to continue further meta-analytical efforts and conduct comparative studies to learn about the views of people with conservative life orientations.
Originality/value: As a result of literature and empirical research, the boundaries of existing knowledge concerning the influence of gender on creative life orientations have been expanded.
Keywords: creativity, creative organisation, creative life orientations.
Category of the paper: Research paper.

1. Introduction

Knowledge about creativity has recently reached critical mass. Unfortunately, it does not form a coherent and systematic system. According to Schmidt, an interdisciplinary approach to creativity should be developed and representatives of various fields should be invited to create a science with them – creatology. Unfortunately, creativity is still not one of the most important

issues in management, although it should be noted that interest in this topic has grown in recent years. This encourages and increases the amount of research conducted on the development of new forms of organisation, including entities that use creativity as a resource. It should be noted that the proper functioning of this category of organisations, and the proper development of creativity within them, depends on whether safe organisational conditions conducive to creativity are created, including the removal of emerging barriers. Therefore, in order to highlight a specific area of research and analyse it, two trends have been identified in this article. The first is cognitive in nature and focuses on the analysis of the literature on the subject. These studies covered foreign and Polish literature, which allowed for a critical analysis and shaped the research framework. They concerned concepts related to the development of ideas about creative organisations and creative life orientations. The second strand—the academic one—focuses on research conducted using a questionnaire developed by Cudowska (2014) based on an analysis of the relevant literature. The research sought to identify correlations between gender and creative life orientations in order to determine whether there are any correlations between them. The conclusion of the research presented in the article is to answer the following questions: How should creative life orientations be interpreted? And what are the correlations between CLO and gender?

2. Creative organisation – an attempt at definition

Creativity is a key factor in innovation, competitiveness and increasing the efficiency of organisations (Mathisen, Einarsen, Jorstad, Brennick, 2004; DiLiello, Houghton, 2006; Slåtten, Svensson, Sværi, 2011; Ibrahim, Haron, 2014; Liu, 2018; Luu, 2019). Creativity in an organisation has no value until it undergoes commercialisation processes and translates into a specific product, service or process offered to the customer. The results of studies presented in the literature on the subject have revealed a statistically significant and direct relationship between organisational creativity and organisational effectiveness, and have emphasised the role of creativity as a key capability of an organisation (Choi, Anderson, Veillette, 2009), drew attention to creativity as a strategically valuable resource and a critical source of competitive advantage (Shin et al, 2012, as cited in Bratnicka-Myśliwiec, 2019). Amabile, one of the most renowned researchers in this field, and her team (2005) also recognised creativity as the key to an organisation's sustainable competitive advantage (Sirková et al, 2014). It is also recognised that creativity has helped to create the most important innovations in human history and solve some of our most complex and significant problems (Johnson, 2014).

In their analysis of the literature on the foundations of contemporary organisational creativity, Zhou and Shalley (2008) and Anderson, Potočnik and Zhou (2014) refer to the interactionism model of Woodman, Sawyer and Griffin (1993), the component model of

Amabile (1988; 1996) and Ford's model (1996). The model by Woodman et al. (1993) was one of the first to truly highlight the multi-level nature of organisational creativity and the various influences that occur at different levels. The author divided these influences into three levels: individual (creative behaviour, cognitive style/abilities, personality, knowledge and intrinsic motivation), group (group composition, group characteristics and group processes, contextual influences) and organisational (organisational design and structure, communication channels and information flows). Another model, Amabile's component model of creativity (1988; 1997), also links individual creativity (i.e. motivation, creative skills and expertise) to the work environment (organisational motivation for innovation, management practices and resources) and thus to organisational creativity. Ford (1996), inspired by Csikszentmihalyi's systemic model (1988; 1997), according to which creativity occurs through the dynamic action of 'a system consisting of three elements: a culture containing symbolic rules, a person who brings novelty to the domain, and a field of experts', proposed a model of individual creative action (which results from a combination of meaning-making, goals, motivation, knowledge and ability, as well as emotions and beliefs about sensitivity and ability, relating to an individual's beliefs about their own creative capabilities and tasks and potential responses in this area), which is influenced by many social domains (Blomberg, 2016).

In view of the above, it should be noted that, given the various research concepts and different ways of understanding them, modelling and defining a creative organisation is difficult and ambiguous. This state of affairs also stems from the fact that the diversity of entities operating in the creative sectors highlights how different creative organisations can be from one another. Some will be small entities with only a few employees (e.g. entities operating in the field of advertising), while others will be large entities that will require multi-tasking, complex organisational structures (e.g. research institutes, universities). Taking into account the aspects highlighted above, this article adopts the author's proposal for understanding this term, namely that organisational creativity is an entity whose systemic operation is based on the use of tangible and intangible resources in order to effectively utilise individual mental activities towards integrating them into collective processes, striving to achieve a higher-order creative process at various levels of organisation and management. The most important resource determining the creative process in an organisation is the appropriate intellectual capital potential, including creatively active human capital. The aim of such an enterprise is to dynamically achieve growth in value, including competitiveness, with a view to achieving economic, social, cultural and prestigious goals. The products of such entities are ideas, products or creative services covered by copyright.

The effectiveness of a creative organisation consists of many coexisting and interrelated factors. Researchers of this phenomenon refer to the role of creative resources (creative employees and teams), including their knowledge, creative leaders, the creative environment of the organisation, including appropriate and consistent management of creativity and knowledge, It should be emphasised that these two aspects are inseparable, as what is new is

usually based on what is old, and many useful innovations would not have been created without specialist knowledge (cf. Cook, Wall, 1980; Nonaka, Takeuchi, 1995; Gurteen, 1998; Andriopoulos, 2000; Martins, Terblanche, 2003; Amar, Juneja, 2011; Frankova, 2011; Ma et al., 2013). According to research findings, in a creative organisation, the team of employees should consist not only of people with expert knowledge (Choi, Thompson, 2005) and other competences, but above all of people with creative life orientations. Such people are highly desirable members of creative organisations and contribute significantly to the achievement of the set goal. However, research shows that creative organisations are primarily concerned with people with high creative absorption abilities, as it is this ability that allows them to generate new creative ideas (Cohen, Levinthal, 1990).

3. Material and methods

The subject matter discussed in this article required a review of the source literature. Articles were identified concerning the potential for creative organisation, the scope of its functioning, and the creative life orientations of employees working in these organisations. The concept of creative life orientations presented here was developed by A. Cudowska (2004). Therefore, in the rest of the article, all the assumptions she made will be adopted so that this concept can be used in practice. The author of the work assumed that the semantic scope of creative life orientations is very broad and, at the same time, diverse. The assumption regarding diversity does not treat it disjunctively, but conjunctively, constituting a kind of unity in diversity. Furthermore, it was assumed that "the creation of a life orientation takes place through experiencing reality and adopting an axiologically saturated ethical attitude towards it. Life orientation in its creative dimension is particularly diverse and dynamic, and can be shaped and developed throughout a person's life. This is all the more so because in contemporary societies we are dealing with many varieties of creation, corresponding to the diversity of areas and dimensions of an individual's functioning" (Cudowska, 2004). At the same time, it is difficult to clearly define how much one needs to ‘experience the old’ in order to ‘create the new’. This understanding of creativity creates a new space for understanding this issue and points to another assumption adopted in the article.

Bearing in mind the above conditions, the TOZ questionnaire was constructed on the basis of the following reference planes. The ontological approach to man refers to a searching man who actively and consciously makes decisions and takes responsibility for them. Of course, the area of search can be directed endogenously and exogenously, which leads to a continuous process of change. Humans therefore perceive themselves as thinking, cognising and transforming reality (Siemek, 1978, as cited in Cudowska, 2004). The next plane concerns the reference of creative life orientations from a processual perspective. Processual theories of

creativity have their place and reference to TOZ, because it is in the creative process and its inhibitors that the categories and perspectives presented above are visible. Next, psychodynamic theories of creativity were the point of reference for the adopted concept. Therefore, this part of the study was devoted to establishing a theoretical framework and gaining a broader understanding of the relationships between the components selected for the study. The verification procedure adopted in this article consisted of examining certain interdependencies between observable phenomena or facts, without any interference from the researcher. The research was diagnostic and exploratory in nature. The aim of the research was to gain knowledge about the phenomena in question and to analyse them in order to verify the theory, i.e. to confirm or refute it. In addition, the analysis allowed for the systematisation of knowledge and definitions related to the issue in question.

The main research problem, which is also the subject of this study, is to understand the relationship between gender and creative life orientations and their impact on the potential development of a creative organisation (conclusions). The author's goal was to conduct an in-depth analysis of the identified research problem. Due to the broad scope of the research, hypotheses were formulated concerning the following selected issues. The following were formulated:

Hypothesis (H). *There is a relationship between gender and creative life orientations of employees in creative organisations.*

In order to verify the hypothesis, self-descriptive research was conducted using a proprietary questionnaire, which was used in the article. Then, after defining the sampling frame, i.e. a set of items in the statistical population used to verify the formulated hypothesis, a research sample was randomly selected. The sample was selected using a stratified disproportionate random sampling method. As indicated above, the sample consisted of individuals working in creative organisations who perform creative activities.

The STATISTICA.PL ver. 12 statistical package and the EXCEL programme included in the MICROSOFT OFFICE package were used to perform statistical analysis of the results. The data analysis began with checking the normal distribution using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The results confirmed the normality of the distribution and allowed for the use of parametric tests: Student's t-test, ANOVA and Tukey's post hoc test.

In addition, a set of 48 questions by Cudowska (2004) was used to calculate the TOŻ (creative life orientations) or ZOŻ (conservative life orientations) index, with answers in the following versions: A – fits me, a – fits me a little, b – does not fit me a little, B – does not fit me. Points were assigned for each answer, 0, 1, 2, 3 (in versions A, a and B, respectively). The sum of points obtained in individual categories (+) gave the TOŻ value, and the sum of points for categories (-) gave the ZOŻ value. The TOŻ-ZOŻ value was used in the statistical analysis. A difference greater than or equal to zero (>=0) indicated a person with a TOŻ predominance, while a difference less than zero (<0) indicated a person with a ZOŻ predominance.

Preferences of respondents in terms of creative life orientations working in creative organisations – research results

For each respondent, the TOŻ (creative life orientations) and ZOŻ (conservative life orientations) indices were calculated. The results of the calculations in the categories 'New situations' Ns, 'New creations' Nw, 'Flexibility, adaptability and originality of thinking' E, 'Creativity as a value' Tw, and TOŻ and ZOŻ indices on the example of the group The interpretation refers to the value of the TOŻ-ZOŻ index calculated on the basis of a set of 48 questions in the A, a, b, B answer version. The analysis focused on gender and its relationship to creative life orientations, as it is known from published research in psychology and other fields that male and female brains differ significantly. According to Moir and Jessel (1993), the brains of women and men process information differently, resulting in different perceptions, preferences and behaviours. According to Maccoby and Jacklin (1974), different areas of behaviour can be distinguished: they concern the emotional sphere (level of aggression) and the intellectual sphere (cognitive abilities, including linguistic, mathematical and visual-spatial abilities). Many studies conducted over the last two decades on the cognitive functioning of women and men confirm these conclusions (Reite et al., 1995; Shywitz et al., 1995; Voyer, 1996), additionally revealing their cultural universality (Silverman, Philips, 1996, as cited in Herman-Jeglińska, 1999). Furthermore, the division of intellectual abilities typical for women and men into verbal vs. visual-spatial resembles the characteristics of the specific processing of material by the left and right hemispheres of the brain. Hence, differences in cognitive functioning between the two sexes suggest a different organisation of the brain, which is also revealed in the pattern of lateralisation in the brain of both these functions and motor functions (Harshman, Hampson, Berenbaum, 1983; Bishop, 1990; Peters, 1994, as cited in Herman-Jeglińska, 1999). There are also differences in creative abilities. Hence, some researchers, such as Kosień (1999), undertake analyses in this area. The results of the author's research on boys and girls of school age indicate that girls in the study group demonstrate a higher level of creative abilities. This may indicate that anatomical differences in brain function in the age group studied may influence the level of creative abilities, which is higher in girls during this period. Similar conclusions were reached by Mirski, who found that the greatest (though still relatively small) differences between girls and boys exist in the creative sensuality subscale. It is possible that during adolescence, creativity in girls is even more personal and intimate in nature, while boys are more likely to associate their creativity with more practical and professional plans. In turn, in the creative sensuality subscale, the average score for girls was higher than for boys. This difference was also to be expected – girls' creativity, especially at this age, is associated with greater emotionality and perceptual sensitivity. Research is also being conducted on adults The results obtained in the study conducted by Proudfoot, Kay, Koval, (2015) do not specify gender differences so precisely, referring to them strictly in terms of creativity. It turned out that, depending on the field, a higher level of creativity is sometimes attributed to women and sometimes to men. For example, women dominated in the field of

fashion, while men dominated in creative speeches. Given these ambiguities, a study was conducted on these issues.

Table 1.
Creative life orientations (TOŻ) and conservative life orientations (ZOŻ) in the context of the gender of the respondents

Wersion A a b B					
Men- 547 osób			**Woman - 848 osób**		
Alfa-Cronbacha		0,665	Alfa Cronbacha	0,680	
	Ns+ - Ns-			**Ns+ - Ns-**	
relationship	persons	%	relationship	persons	%
>= 0	263	48,08%	>= 0	447	52,71%
< 0	284	51,92%	< 0	401	47,29%
	Nw+ - Nw-			**Nw+ - Nw-**	
relationship	persons	%	relationship	persons	%
>= 0	180	32,91%	>= 0	321	37,85%
< 0	367	67,09%	< 0	527	62,15%
	E+ - E-			**E+ - E-**	
relationship	persons	%	relationship	persons	%
>= 0	265	48,45%	>= 0	469	55,31%
< 0	282	51,55%	< 0	379	44,69%
	Tw+ - Tw-			**Tw+ - Tw-**	
relationship	persons	%	relationship	persons	%
>= 0	135	24,68%	>= 0	142	16,75%
< 0	412	75,32%	< 0	706	83,25%
	TOŻ -ZOŻ			**TOŻ -ZOŻ**	
relationship	persons	%	relationship	persons	%
>= 0	183	33,46%	>= 0	296	34,91%
< 0	364	66,54%	< 0	552	65,09%

*Wartość różnicy większa lub równa zero (>=0) oznaczała osobę z przewagą wartości TOŻ, natomiast wartość mniejsza od zera (<0) oznaczała osobę z przewagą wartości ZOŻ.

The distribution of responses is presented in Table 1, showing the 'Women' and 'Men' groups separately. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the Women group in the test (A, a, b, B) = 0.680 indicates high reliability of the tool used, while the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the Men group in the test A, a, b, B = 0.665 also indicates high reliability of the tool used. 447 people (31.01% of respondents) in the 'Women' group show a predominance of TOŻ (TOŻ-ZOŻ>=0. while 401 people show a predominance of ZOŻ (TOŻ-ZOŻ<0. 263 people in the 'Men' group show a predominance of TOŻ (TOŻ-ZOŻ>=0), while 284 people show a predominance of ZOŻ (TOŻ-ZOŻ<0. It should be noted that no differences were observed when analysing the 'Women' and "Men" groups, and the predominance of TOŻ preferences was particularly evident in the areas of 'New situations' and 'Flexibility, agility and originality of thinking'. In the categories 'New creations' and 'Creativity as a value'. Only in category 'E' in the Men group are differences visible. It can therefore be concluded that the respondents answered all the questions asked of them honestly.

4. Summary

The subject of exploration discussed in this article concerned the preferences of respondents in terms of life orientation in the creative versus conservative dimension, taking into account the division into 'Women' and 'Men'. The research was selective in nature, although a significant group of respondents was surveyed. Nevertheless, in the author's opinion, this does not entitle her to make unambiguous conclusions or excessive generalisations. In the author's opinion, the attempts made so far to empirically examine the issue of creative life orientations have served not only to understand the phenomenon, but also to gain a deeper understanding of creativity as a specifically human form of social and economic organisation. This seems to be of paramount importance in view of the volatility and dynamics of the modern world, its complexity and intricacy. The empirical illustration of the concept of creative life orientations among the studied group presented in the article allowed for the verification of the assumptions made in the article. The author hopes that this inspiration in the search for an adequate theoretical expression of the model of life orientations in the creative versus conservative dimension has made it possible to indicate how the surveyed group of respondents, representing only a specific part of society, presents itself in this regard. It is worth remembering that the distinction between specific types of identity always takes place within the space of specific social phenomena.

In the light of the analyses carried out, the issue of examining the interdependence between gender and TOŻ was particularly important. It turned out that people employed in creative organisations did not show significantly greater differences based on gender. It was expected that the study would prove the thesis about the relationship between gender in a creative organisation and creative life orientations. It can therefore be concluded that creative life orientations are not determined by gender, but by environmental determinants and whether the individual strives to develop and train their own creativity. Pointing to an egolitarian approach to creativity, it can be said that every individual has creative abilities and traits, but there is a difference in their intensity. However, it is not only this that determines whether someone is creative or not. It seems, therefore, that other determinants definitely influence TOŻ preferences. The author hopes that this inspiration in the search for an adequate theoretical expression of the model of life orientations in the creative versus conservative dimension has made it possible to indicate how this area is presented. The analyses carried out allow us to conclude that the research results obtained explain many controversial issues and shed new light on the research conducted in this area. However, it should be emphasised that they require further study and analysis to explain the phenomenon. They thus become a field for discussion and the development of scientific discourse in the presented empirical works.

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