

Dimensions of social capital: relationships and reliance in the furniture industry company. Part II

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Abstract: *Dimensions of social capital: relationships and reliance in the furniture industry company. Part II.* The article presents the results of the survey conducted on the employees of the enterprises belonging to the furniture industry. The aim of the survey was to get information about the respondents' opinions on given determiners of social capital. Therefore, the general state of social relationships and trust among the employees was measured, taking into account different answers for women and men. On the basis of the conducted analysis, many hypotheses were suggested, which may be the basis for further research.

Keywords: social relationships, trust

1. DIMENSIONS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL OF THE ORGANIZATION

The realization of the research goal was based on collecting information about the respondents' opinions on the following specific problems:

- trust between the co-workers in a process of the task realization in teams;
- willingness for sharing information, or knowledge with other employees;
- need for supervising work by co-workers, if their own duties are even partially dependent on the activities of other people;
- sense of trust, indicating the basic cultural assumptions in terms of general atmosphere in a workplace;
- ability to notice the opportunity to share information in a workplace, by means of some informal channels of communication;
- sense of support from the co-workers in situations exceeding the capacity of the individual;
- openness and help in adaptation to the new social environment for new employees.
- knowledge about the company operations, concerning building the network of mutual cooperation with other organizations.

Is there visible a dependency between the trust and well- done job? Rigid division of tasks is an alternative for cooperation based on the relations of friendship and trust. Nevertheless, the sense of trust causes that co-workers may focus on action and effects, not wasting time for mutual control [1]. Further analysis of this problem may show if the level of trust to the team is connected with the level of knowledge about the responsibilities of individual units for directly delegated tasks, or maybe it is first of all connected with the trust that the organizational system to which the employees have to adjust, is infallible. Highly rated the effects of tasks (project) realized by teams often are not the effects of the effectively working system. Established trust to the co-workers causes the effect of synergy, allowing to reach the best results.

Do the employees trust each other and share information? The source of knowledge of all the organizations are their individual employees. That is why the organizations should be interested in transforming the knowledge of an individual into knowledge of the organization. [2]. It is meaningful whether co-workers create the atmosphere of inspiration and organizational culture based on trust, which fosters searching for information and sharing knowledge. [3].

Research confirms that there is a connection between the trust to the co-workers and trust to the organization as a whole. [4]. Trust among the workers causes that they can offer greater

efficiency and innovation for their organization. [5]. What is the relation of the sense of trust and direct relationships in a workplace?

Organizational trust is the sense of believe in good intentions of other people and believe in their abilities. [6]. Can you trust the majority of the employees? Specificity of the internal atmosphere within the organization indicates that there exists an informal and unwritten rule, influencing the way people working within one organization should act and react. [7]. This internal atmosphere may develop, or limit the organizational trust.

Co-workers prefer sharing their ideas and discussing their problems with other co-workers rather than using formal channels of communication in relation with the supervisors [8]. Therefore, it is in the interest of the company to maintain the situation in which the employees can communicate. Interactions shape the relations able to build trust, which influence the access to the updated information. Are there many opportunities in the enterprises for informal meetings of the employees, fostering sparing information?

If an individual strongly believes in somebody's kindness, professionalism, honesty and credibility, probably this person will present high level of positive intentions [3]. Therefore, it seems to be significant that the individual is sure he/ she will be provided with friendship and professional help of other co-workers. The interactions shaping such values and norms crate a culture of trust. Do the employees feel that they can count on other workers' help?

Acceptance of the newly recruited people in the staff teams by the social environment at work may be a measure for the positive atmosphere and readiness for building relationships with others. The more closed group, the more difficult is the process of accepting the new people. Are the new employees quickly accepted into the company society?

Actions taken by the companies developing organizational cooperation are the indicators of the conscious building of external relationships. In this aspect, the elements of building the social capital emerge in the institutional aspect. Does the company organize common Project with other companies?

2. SOCIAL CAPITAL OF THE ORGANIZATION INDEX IN NUMBERS

Referring to the theory concerning the requirement of trust within the team for proper performance of the tasks (S1) 85,9% of the respondents claimed it is true. A small group (4,2%) agreed only partially with this statement, and 2,8% of the respondents do not agree with this point of view. The agreement with the statement was expressed by 88,9% of women, and 80,9% of men. Nevertheless, negation of this theory was observed only in the female group.

The respondents mainly confirm that the employees bestow various types of trust in a process of sharing information concerning their ideas, or plans (S2): 40,8%. With this statement 31% of the respondents agree only partially. The trust is higher rated by men, as 50% of them agree with this statement, and 30,8% rather agree. Men did not choose the answers negating this theory. For comparison, 35,6% of women agrees, and 37,8% partially agrees with this statement. At the same time, 6,7% of women rather did not agree, and 4,4% of them did not agree at all.

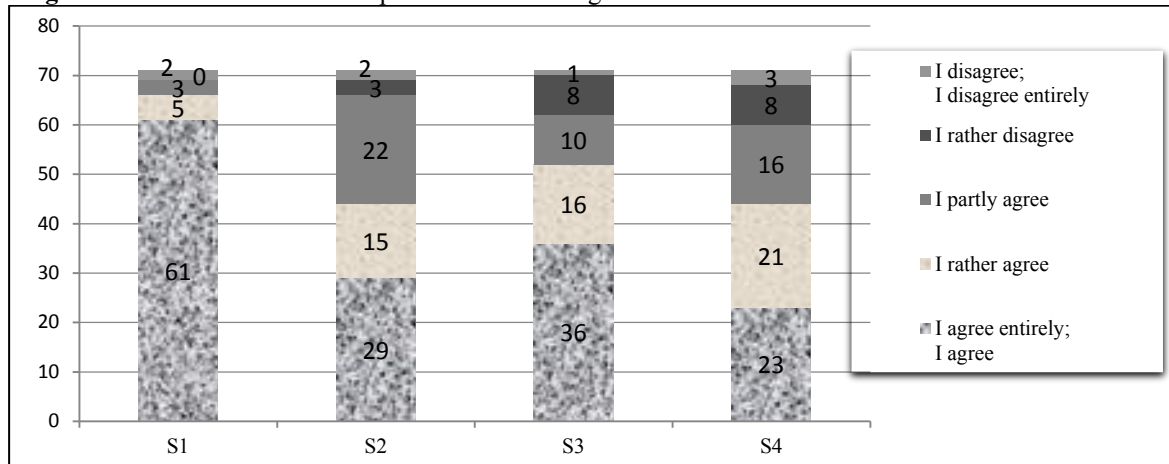
Half of the respondents (50,7%) feels the need for controllig the employees before joining the cooperation. The second largest group, claiming that they rather agree with this theory includes 22,5% of all the respondents. Lack of agreement may be observed in case of 12,7% of the employees. In case of agreement with the theory, it refers to 69,2% of the men and 40% of women. There are 15,7% of women, who rather do not agree, or not agree at all. There were no men who agree with this statement completely, and 7,7% denied it. The results show that the greater trust for other people in case of doing some works together is represented by women.

The general sense of trust in a given enterprise, the atmosphere o trust is felt by 32,4% of

the respondents, and 29,6% rather agrees that most of the employees are trustworthy. „I completely agree, I agree” answered 28,9% of women and 38,5% of men. Nevertheless, summing it up with the answer „I rather agree” we may observe a significant compliance of the opinions: 62,2% of women and 61,6% of men. Extreme negation of the opinions was typical rather for men: 19,2% (women: 13,3%).

The results discussed above are presented in the diagram 1.

Diagram 1. Declarations of the respondents concerning trust



Legend:

S1. When a task is being performed by the team, then everyone must have trust in themselves so that it is made properly.

S2. Employees generally trust themselves and are exchanging information between themselves to the subject, e.g. ideas, plans.

S3. At the work I am feeling the need to check effects of partners before joining in the continuation taken by them of work.

S4. Most employees in the enterprise are trustworthy.

Source: Own elaboration based on the questionnaire study.

An opinion about effective meetings of the employees, with an informal style (S1) is represented by the following percentage records: 28,2% of the respondents agree that in an enterprise there are many occasions for informal meetings of the employees. 23,9 % of the respondents rather agree. In case of women it refers to respectively: 26,6% and 28,9% ; in case of men: 30,8% and 15,4%. Thus, the opportunity to meet informally is more perceived by women (55,5%) than men (46,2%). Also among men greater number of the respondents strongly denies this theory: 23,1% (women: 8,9%).

The majority of the employees (64,8%) agrees with the theory concerning support for other people (S2): 31% agrees, 33,8% rather agrees. In case of men, 34,6% are sure of the validity of this statement. It is the greater number than in case of women: 28,9%. Absolute lack of agreement with this statement that the employees may rely on other workers was expressed by 11,1% of women and 3,8% of men. The results show that the assurance of help is more visible in case of men, than women.

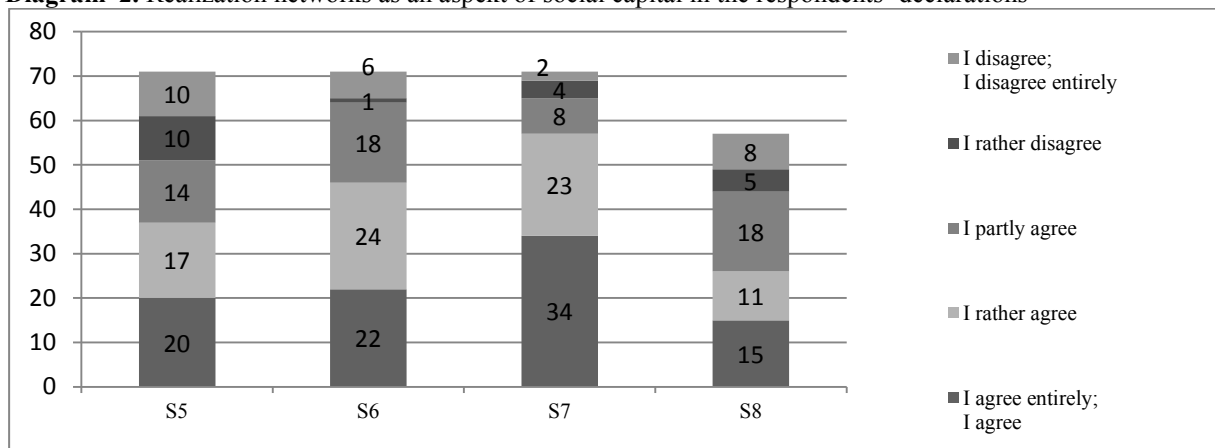
Time of adaptation of a new employees is one of the indicators of the openness for the new members (S3). Almost half of the respondents (47,9%) claim that new employees should expect quick assimilation into the group and the warranty of being accepted. With this statement 32,4% of the respondents rather agree. It means that majority of the respondents (80,3%) refers positively to the situation in the enterprise regarding this phenomenon. Total lack of agreement with this statement may be observed in case of only 2,8% of people. Answer “I rather disagree” was given by 5,6% of the respondents. It is worth mentioning that negation of the quick adaptation of a new employee was expressed only by women: 4,4% of them did not agree completely, and 8,9% rather disagreed. Thus, similarly to the assessment of the willingness to help the co-workers, men perceive the situation in a more optimistic way.

The statement concerning organizing by the company common projects with other enterprises (S4) required from the respondents some knowledge in this area. The analyzed joint-stock company may prove such activities. One of the partner organizations is Warsaw University of Life Sciences- SGGW.

Taking into account the positions occupied (vast majority of the respondents are administrative workers), it may be assumed that they have sufficient knowledge and information. Nevertheless, a group of respondents (19,7%) did not expressed their opinions in this case. 21,1% of all the respondents were sure of the common projects realized by a company with other organizations; 15,5% rather agreed. Thus, less than a half (36,5%) of the respondents claim that their company undertake such actions. 11,3% of employees do not agree with this statement and 7% rather disagree. The men showed greater knowledge about the company operations (23,1%) than women (20%). Regardless the fact that in both groups there were noticed some disagreements, the women with their negative attitudes were in majority: 13,3%. Respectively, the negative answer was given by 7,7% of men.

The results discussed above are presented in a form of a diagram 2.

Diagram 2. Realization networks as an aspekt of social capital in the respondents' declarations



Legend:

S5. There are many chances in the enterprise to informal meetings of supporting employees for information exchange.

S6. Employees can always count on the other's help in solving problems.

S7. Recruits are quickly involved in the community of the enterprise and accepted by the rest part of the group.

S8. The company is organizing common undertakings with other companies.

Source: Own elaboration based on the questionnaire study.

3. FORMULATION OF THE HYPOTHESES

The above mentioned hypotheses maybe treated as initial hypotheses, being the basis for further research. The theories to which the respondents were asked to refer, create only a draft of the solution for the given research problem. In order to answer the research questions in the area of trust and relationships between co-workers, the scope of the questions in the questionnaire would have to be greater, and the optimum solution would be to use the interview method. That is why the essence of the conducted research is formulated in a form of the research hypotheses, which could be helpful in a process of exploration of the subject of social capital of the organization:

1. In the enterprises there is a strong need for trust, which determine the efficiency of the tasks performed by the employees.
2. Women pay more attention to the trust in a process of cooperation.
3. Employees of this enterprises do not have the strong sense of trust for sharing information, plans, ideas.
4. Men are more trusting in terms of sharing information and knowledge.

5. Employees do not have the strong need for checking the actions of the co-workers before joining the continuation of work started by them.
6. Men feel a much stronger need for controlling co-workers.
7. In the enterprises the atmosphere of general trust to the majority of people, both men and women, is not established.
8. In the enterprises informal meetings of the employees, fostering the process of sharing information, are not common phenomena.
9. Men notice the opportunities for sharing information through the informal contacts more rarely than women.
10. In the enterprise there is not a believe developed that in case of difficulties while dealing with the employee's duties, he can count on somebody's help.
11. Men, to the greater extent than women believe that in case of some problems with their duties, they may expect some help from other co-workers.
12. Employees of the enterprise have quite a high sense of openness to the new employees.
13. Men, quicker than women accept the new employees in the enterprise.
14. The employees have little knowledge concerning common project realized with other companies.
15. Men have greater knowledge in the subject of cooperation of the enterprises with other companies.

CONCLUSIONS

The elements presented above were described in order to characterize the attitudes of the employees, defining the level of social capital in an intentionally selected enterprise. Do results described in this article allow to evaluate the selected elements of social capital in a positive way? The answer is not clear. None of the statements directly indicates the bases for trust and positive relationships. They were confirmed, even by a half of the employees.

Trust is important at all levels of organization, especially at the level of co-workers, who create informal networks of knowledge/ information exchange [4]. According to R. Putnam, the relation between the social trust and the scope of social capital exists and it is very strong. [9]. Strengthening of the social trust and relationships among the employees is profitable for all the organizations, because social capital is an asset, which may bring significant material effects with a small amount of time and action.

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Abstract: *Wymiary kapitału społecznego: sieci relacji i zaufanie w przedsiębiorstwie branży meblarskiej. Część II.* Artykuł prezentuje wyniki badań opinii pracowników zakładu meblarskiego na temat wybranych wyznaczników kapitału społecznego. Określono zatem ogólny stan relacji społecznych oraz zaufania wśród zatrudnionych uwzględniając różnice w odpowiedziach kobiet i mężczyzn. Na podstawie przeprowadzonej analizy zaproponowano szereg hipotez roboczych, które mogą być podstawą dalszych poszukiwań badawczych.