

Bernard Binczycki¹⁾
Wiesław Lukasiński²⁾

1) Faculty of Management
Cracow University of
Economics
Poland,
Bernard.Binczycki@uek.krakow
.pl
2) Faculty of Commodities
Cracow University of
Economics
Poland
Wieslaw.Lukasinski@uek.krako
w.pl

DETERMINANTS OF QUALITY OF WORK CONDITIONS

Abstract: *The effectiveness of the management of organization in relation to the area of human resources, on the one hand requires the use of economic calculation in terms of labor costs, but on the other hand, the task of the company managers is to determine the personnel policy taking into account the adjustment of tools and working conditions to the needs of man. This requires the right attitude of managers and determine appropriate expenditures for ergonomics and safety.*

The aim of the article is to present key factors influencing the quality of work conditions so the quality of professional life.

Keywords: *Ergonomics, Occupational Health and Safety, Human Resource Management, Work Conditions, Work Humanisation.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Dynamically changeable and complex surrounding obliges organisations to search for new sources of competitive predominance. It seems that the chances to achieve it should be sought in the potential of an organisation, among others in human capital possessed.

This is the level of worker's engagement in conducted duties on which the quality of their realisation and the possibility of achieving final result of organisation's management depend to a great extent. Therefore, it seems rational to strive for optimal quality of working conditions determining growth of workers' motivation.

In market economy, often defined as economy based on knowledge, key factor of organisation's development contributing to the growth of the value achieved and, in effect, the possibility of gaining competitive predominance are workers hired in that organisation. They influence on effectiveness and efficiency of used resources and, thus, the quality of financial and non-financial results. The level of employee engagement in the tasks performed by them largely depends on the quality of relationships and working conditions, so the quality of working life worker, which is about the level of their overall quality of life.

The quality of life may be defined as: "the level of meeting the needs of spiritual and financial nature, the level of fulfilling the

expectations of contractual normality in actions and situations of everyday life of units and societies" [1]. So the quality of life can be determined by evaluating the conditions of human life - the level of their life and degree of satisfaction with the existing conditions [2]. It should be assumed that to a great extent it is philosophical category determining the level in which life provides a man with satisfaction in the long run. For a person working for the organization unquestionable impacts on quality of life has the quality of relationships and working conditions.

Work relations are seen as the relations occurring among workers, or employees and employers. The quality of working conditions prejudice the general physical (material factors are: among others buildings, machinery, equipment, microclimate, noise, vibration, lighting, and others) and psychosocial (i.e. human relations, living conditions, the level of acceptance of participation in organization's life) factors stemming from work environment and influencing people conducting their work [3].

The aim of the article is to present key factors influencing the quality of work conditions so the quality of professional life of an employee of an organisation functioning in the area of Poland.

2. THE ESSENCE OF WORK HUMANISATION

As it was mentioned above, changes occurring in the environment of enterprises influence to a great extent work process, not only in the realm of shaping its course and intensity of the fulfillment of organisational tasks, but also positive and negative effects of work for a modern man. Positive consequences of technological progress in the process of work undoubtedly include the following:

- facilitating of long-distance communication (e-mail),
- easier access to knowledge (internet resources),
- work facilitating (instrumentation, automation of production and administrative office),
- practical realisation of the right to information,
- accelerated economic turnover (e-business),
- facilitating international trade,
- greater comfort of life.

There may be observed transformations in the ways of duties conducting with a greater role of modern technology, computerisation, globalisation, based on the guidelines knowledge-based organisation, and the expectations of employees about the benefits of the job.

Work as such plays in modern world a very important role as a field of man's activity and is characterised by the following features [4]:

- constitutes a special value, because by doing work, man obtains not only salary, but also suitable for it position and social prestige,
- salary for work is the result of a free agreement between the employer, or a person working for the buyer market, and a sales person selling their own work, commonly referred to as an employee,
- is related with a commodification of work and is reflected historically,
- a process of wide-ranging changes in the valuation of work begun in the past, still manifests itself in contemporary assessments of work,
- in these assessments there are visible differences in views on its economic

value, but also on its importance in human life, and is associated with including the problem of instrumentality in the approach to work as a source of income.

In this context it is crucial to carry out research on the condition of modern relations "man - work", "superior - subordinate", "worker - worker" to safeguard those working conditions that are conducive to human development. One of the trends in this area is humanisation of work of which different interpretations are shown in table 1 below.

Table 1. Chosen interpretations of work humanisation

Author	Interpretation
J. Penc 2008	<p>The process of humanization of work is such shaping its content, relations and conditions that make human labor more efficient and also better adapted to the psycho-physical capabilities and needs of a human being and the guiding principles of their life. Workers engage willingly in the matters of an enterprise if the following conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – an organisation constantly invests into the development of its workers, – an organisation appreciates the contribution of workers into the results of a company in a fair way, – an organisation provides the feeling of safety of those who achieve good results at work, – work will be for them a challenge as well as the source of personal satisfaction, – they will be aware of the fact that their contribution is significant for their organisation.
B. Mikula, A. Potocki 1998	<p>The process of humanisation of work organisation is to eliminate the influence of factors known as dehumanising. Humanisation of work organization should be a two-way process, consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – appropriate choice and adaptation of man, in this way eliminating those people who could objectively or subjectively feel negative work influence, – minimising and eliminating negative impact of factors of

	<i>work processes and social and physical work environment.</i>		<i>humiliated, devoid of power or permanently bored. Abilities of an employee must be used, there must be the increase in the ability to meet the needs and there must be maintained other roles in life (that of a husband, wife or a citizen) and secured acceptable means of existence.</i>
<i>B. Bombala 2011</i>	<i>One of the forms of modern humanisation of work is work structuring (work structuring). Recognizing the negative effects of specialisation there were introduced more perfect forms of work organization, of individual and team type, in which short, lasting only a few seconds work cycle is abandoned and the uniform realm of activities is left out. The proposed forms and methods allow to use the potential of the employee in the form of their skills, abilities, creativity, independence and responsibility. Structuring work can properly influence the content of work on individual work stations, extending them in terms of quantity or quality. If an employee performs repetitive actions, programmed, then the content of their work is very poor. The more unique activities, giving the opportunity to use skills and creativity and giving their work the stigma, the richer the content of work is.</i>	<i>Universal Dictionary of Polish Language 2003</i>	<i>Humanisation of work is to transform work process in such a way that it satisfies universal need of an extensive human.</i>
		<i>A. Sajkiewicz 1984</i>	<i>She narrows the humanisation of work to be used interchangeably with the terms "humanisation of work in an organisation," "humanisation of work organisation". In her opinion, "humanisation of work in the organisation is aimed at optimum adaptation of work to humans and vice versa, thereby satisfying the material needs of employees, realization of interests and ambitions and personality development.</i>
		<i>T. Pszczolowski 1987</i>	<i>Man is the organisation's most valuable thing. Attention is given to expanding human creativity and efficiency of the work done within the division of tasks. People are usually able to work better, to perform tasks at a higher level than required. The principle: "the right man in the right place" is opposed to the principle of a different kind, "man should not stand still, but to take more and more creative positions, demanding more and more skills." A manager has an obligation to create the conditions for the personal development of an employee.</i>
<i>Great Encyclopedia of PWN 2002</i>	<i>Humanisation is the programme of transformation of process and conditions of work, especially in big mechanised factories, in such a way that it satisfies human needs, the needs of manufacturers and serve the development of their personality. Implementation of programs of work humanisation consists of, among others: the removal of threats to the life and health of workers by protecting jobs, reduction of physical exertion and arduousness of work (ergonomics); enriching the content of the work and its intellectualisation; mitigating automation (eg. merging fragmented production activities). The essence of programs of humanisation of work consists of overcoming the effects of alienation of labor by changing its terms and content, it is also associated with the activities for the development of employee participation.</i>		
<i>R.L. Kahn 1974</i>	<i>The process of making work more suitable, more adapted to the nature of an adult man. It is a business of an employee not to be</i>		

Source: own work based on [5-10].

The analysis of ways of humanisation of work, shown in table 1, shows a rich set of methods and techniques of management, enabling the enrichment of man in the work process. Assuming that one of the functions of work is human development, attention should be paid to the risk of skipping the managers of this dimension of work in the practice of business, resulting in adverse. These should include contemporary examples of dehumanization of work, such as alienation, workaholism, obesity, internet addiction and chronic lack of time.

3. WORKER AND WORK PLACE

Work place is defined as the smallest, yet indivisible and organisational unit in which work is organised in a specific part of the human realizing diverse work process. It is understood as a system of work, which is characterized by elements such as target, input, output, process transformation, environment, equipment and people [11]. As part of work processes, a man by using tools converts the object of work, changes its properties and states, thus implementing appropriate processes converts the input elements (resources) into outputs (products).

It is an employee from whom effectiveness and efficiency or competence are required as they bring the expected benefits for the organisation. The result of a man's work can be considered as the resultant of their motivation, knowledge and skills. If any of these elements is insufficient then obtained results may be insufficient too. Therefore it is of the utmost importance to treat striving to the quality of working conditions as well as workers' relations and the choice of competent employees optimised.

Conditions of carrying out work depend to a great extent on duties which must be realised by workers on particular work posts. There is also a great influence of the quality of work stations, characteristics of technological process, the level of modernity of existing equipment, necessity of using complicated and dangerous in exploitation tools, carrying out duties in dangerous environment with the use of flammable materials (miners, energy), or immediately life-threatening situations in areas with such elements as fires, floods.

In practice, it becomes necessary to diagnose working environment, which is designed to optimise the effectiveness, efficiency and safety conditions of work. Apart from the difficulties arising from the loads generated by the material environment (process technology, environmental conditions for its implementation) there can occur problems resulting from improper work organisation, or the wrong choice of employees.

Such a situation may lead to an increase in the probability of manifestation of human behavior restricting the ability to work safely, which often leads to intensification of various risks that are difficult to predict and resolve, the

consequence of which is the increase in the number of accidents. Thus, one should strive for the creation of quality culture of which the most fundamental element is perceived as safety.

It is strictly connected with the necessity of choice of managing instruments determining the optimising of the quality of work relations and work conditions. A major role is played here by the style of implemented leadership, the ability to form proper communication channels conditioning the effectiveness of getting a message across as well as appropriate interpretation of information.

A leader is obliged to design a suitable organisational structure or to create motivating system determining complete engagement of workers in duties conducted by them. Psycho-physical well-being depends to a great extent on the quality of work conditions.

Great importance is assigned to the appropriate employee selection, assigning roles, tasks that are compatible with their skills and that are able to implement effectively and efficiently. In practice of the functioning of the organisation a man plays a crucial role, must be involved in the process of reducing occupational risks, the elimination of accidents at work, factors causing occupational diseases.

In the relationship of man - technical object that is the employee who the most sensitive element, and their improper attitudes and behavior norms can be a major cause of accidents. It therefore becomes essential to make a proper selection of workers. In this process, it seems useful to make a diagnosis.

The main fields of a discussed diagnosis are the following:

- intellectual abilities conditioning memorising of information and make appropriate interpretation of occurring phenomena possible,
- cognitive abilities thanks to which workers may properly assess the situation in which they must make decision,
- psychomotor skills conditioning the efficient execution of the steps necessary to implement the decision and the task,
- employee's personality features decisive about the possibility to assign the task to a specific person (we can include here: a sense of responsibility for the execution of the

task, the ability of emotional self-control, the ability of predicting the future - the consequences of their decisions).

Worker must see the sense of work, significance of their post, necessity of its correlation with others and know their place in a subsystem. This increases the likelihood that they will identify with the objectives of the organisation and fully involve in their implementation [12].

**4. INTERNAL FACTORS
AFFECTING THE QUALITY OF
RELATIONS AND WORKING
CONDITIONS**

It becomes very important to pay attention to provide with conditions favouring limiting factors causing negative impact on the quality of occupational life. The most common irregularities threatening the occurrence of various types of loads include:

- assignment to perform simple and repetitive tasks that cause monotony, fatigue and discouragement,
- physical and mental overloading e.g. by assigning a worker to carry out the tasks above their abilities, skills or aware of its degradation by underestimating powers and assigning them to carry out tasks far below their abilities,
- lack of action aimed at creating an organizational culture that emphasizes values respected by staff, skills, orientation to quality, excellence, ethics and safety,
- lack of adequate to the tasks performed jobs of designing work stations, ensuring its adequate equipment (tools), lighting, microclimate conditions, noise,
- the lack of provision of information on the risks associated with the work, to take action to limit (total elimination) risks associated with work, excessive burden organ systems of the human body, which can result in the formation of injury, occupational diseases, the occurrence of discomfort, or excessive fatigue,
- lack of inclination to the selection of technologies, materials, equipment

does not endanger the health and lives of the employee,

- lack of ability to shape organizational solutions are considered socially responsible, which has a negative impact on the quality of life of the employee.

Different types of irregularities may lead to the production of relations and working conditions in a manner directly endangering the safety of work, spreading all sorts of pathologies, e.g. a conscious desire to avoid work, increase in the number of sick leave, reduced productivity.

The aim should be to ensure ergonomic workplace, defined as the ability to adapt the technical parameters of the position and the work process to the individual psycho-physical capabilities of the employee. Poor quality of working environment can lead to: fatigue, stress, deprivation, overload, the occurrence of threats and difficulties in its implementation (table 2).

Table 2. The effects of low-quality working environment - improper preparation of work station

Cause	Characteristics
<i>Fatigue</i>	<i>Human is characterised by reduced ability to respond to stimuli, reduced attention span, visual-motor condition, drowsiness and loss of motivation to perform tasks. Its effect is a reduction or complete loss of ability to carry out the assigned tasks.</i>
<i>Stress</i>	<i>It is seen as a set of physiological changes in the body that may be the result of improper working conditions, noxious stimuli, greatly hindering them. They include: noise, temperature, lighting. Stress may be the result of difficult situations, various types of overloading of the organism, causing psychological changes in regulatory mechanisms, leading to the preparation of the emotional state of tension. The group of stressors include: discomfort of work, social isolation, inadequately prepared workplace.</i>
<i>Deprivation</i>	<i>This is due to mental fatigue which is the result of long-term threat, not</i>

	<i>ensuring the key elements for the normal functioning of the body. It can lead to disorders in terms of perceptions of different phenomena, and even sleep in performing work (constitutes a special hazard for drivers) [13-14].</i>		<i>may be sought for in the obstacles of physical or social type.</i>
<i>Overload</i>	<i>The effect of the allocation tasks to an employee, those tasks that are on the verge of a worker's physical or mental abilities. Their implementation requires from employees maximum effort. Long-term overload leads to discouragement and even exhaustion, resulting in loss of ability to work.</i>		
<i>Threats</i>	<i>Threat is seen as the presence of a situation threatening the loss of valuable employee values, among other things, their health or even life. Depending on the situation with which we are dealing with a man starts various defensive reactions. This can be: aggression, or make attempts to escape from the problem. This is dependent on the voltage level of emotional and psychological resistance to emerging threats.</i>		
<i>Difficulties</i>	<i>Difficult situations resulting from disrupting the balance of work changes. The reason for difficulties may be inappropriate equipment of work station disturbing its performance. Sources of difficulties</i>		

Source: own work based on [15].

Lack of ergonomic traits in work stations understood as maladjustment of technical parameters for the job to the individual mental and physical capacity is a consequence of an erroneous design of work environment.

Wrong choice of technologies, tools, work organisation, lack of ability to limit habits, expand their consciousness and creativity can lead to inappropriate behavior, taking the wrong position, which results in excessive use of their strengths and incurring too great a burden on the human body. This can lead to a variety of disturbances in the body, e.g. damages to the movement of compression of nerves or blood vessels [16].

5. CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of the management organization in relation to the area of human resources, on the one hand requires the use of economic calculation in terms of labor costs, but on the other hand, the task of the company management is to determine the personnel policy taking into account the adjustment of tools and working conditions to the needs of man. This requires the right attitude of managers and determines appropriate expenditures for ergonomics and safety.

Acknowledgment: The publication was financed from the resources allocated to the Management Faculty of Cracow University of Economics, under the grant for the maintenance of the research potential.

REFERENCES:

- [1] Kolman, R. (2000). Zespoły badawcze jakości życia, *Problemy Jakości*, 2.
- [2] Ostasiewicz, W. (2004). Ocena i analiza jakości życia, AE we Wrocławiu, Wrocław, 58-59.
- [3] L. Kozioł, (2015). *Organizacja stosunków i warunków pracy w przedsiębiorstwie [w:] Wybrane problemy zarządzania relacjami w przedsiębiorstwie*, red. A. Kozina, MFiles-Encyklopedia Zarządzania, Kraków, 18.
- [4] M. Skiba, (2015). Ogólna charakterystyka pracy ludzkiej i aksjologiczne nurty jej społecznego wartościowania, *Humanizacja pracy*, 1, 75.
- [5] Penc J., (2011). *Encyklopedia Zarządzania. Podstawowe kategorie i terminy*, Wyższa Szkoła Studiów Międzynarodowych w Łodzi, Łódź 2008, 2011.

- [6] Miłucha, B. & Potocki, A. (1998). *Humanizacja organizacji pracy*, Akademia Ekonomiczna w Krakowie, Kraków.
- [7] Bombała, B. (2011). Od humanizacji i strukturalizacji pracy do upelnomocniania pracowników - aspekt etyczny, *Annales. Etyka w życiu gospodarczym*, 1, 77.
- [8] Pszczołowski, T. (1987). *Organizacja od dołu i od góry*, PWE, Warszawa, 335.
- [9] *Wielka Encyklopedia PWN*, red. J. Wojnowski, (2002). WN PWN, Warszawa, 506.
- [10] *Uniwersalny Słownik Języka Polskiego*, red (2003). S. Dubisz, WN PWN, Warszawa, 1168.
- [11] Jasiński, Z. (2005). *Podstawy zarządzania operacyjnego*, Oficyna Ekonomiczna, Kraków 2005, 53-54.
- [12] Katz, D., & Kahn, R.L. (1979). *Spoleczna psychologia organizacji*, PWN, Warszawa.
- [13] Mather, G. (2006). *Foundations of Perception Psychology*, Psychology Press.
- [14] Styles, E.A. (2006). *The Psychology of Psychology*, Press 2006.
- [15] Wiczorek, S. (2012). *Specyfika zagrożeń na stanowisku pracy kierowcy w transporcie drogowym* Współczesne standardy w zakresie zarządzania bezpieczeństwem i higieną pracy – możliwości i zagrożenia, red. J. Lewandowski, M. Znajmiecka-Sikora, Wydawnictwo Politechniki Łódzkiej, Łódź, 40-42.
- [16] Horst, W. (2004). *Ryzyko zawodowe na stanowisku pracy*. Ergonomiczne czynniki ryzyka, Wydawnictwo Politechniki Poznańskiej, Poznań.

