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Summary

The article has the theoretical-empirical character. The problems related to the meaning of connotations with an university as an employer among potential employees were presented. In the theoretical part the method of the cognitive-critical analysis of the world literature on image management, marketing and human resources management was applied. On the base of the results of this analysis the key role of the potential employees' connotations with the employer in the process of image creation was underlined. There are not considerations in this scope connected with an university as an employer in the literature. So, one can state that two gaps (cognitive and research) exist. That's why in the article the following aims were to be gained: identifying young potential employees' connotations with an university as an employer, defining the changes of these connotations, grouping identified connotations etc. To prepare the empirical part the method of questionnaire research (to gather primary data) and the methods of quantitative analysis (including average rating analysis and comparative analysis) were applied. The results showed that respondents' connotations with an university as an employer were worst in 2018 in the comparison to 2016 year. It's reflected in the growth of values of five average ratings in the case of negative connotations as well as in the decrease of values of some average ratings in the case of positive ones.

Keywords: associations, university, employer, young potential employee, external image

Theoretical introduction

The way every entity functioning on the contemporary market is perceived is subject to dynamic changes. They are the effect of changes taking place in its internal environment and in its surroundings[1], which in turn evoke paricular associations with a given subject. Thus, these associations are not statistical in character, but they undergo transformations reflecting the dynamics, scope and specific character of changes taking place in a given entity and around it[2]. In practice, every participant of the market representing the offerors should want the associations with it to be as good as possible[3]. Partially, every entity can influence this by taking appropriate measures from the area of, among others, marketing communication[4], or by responsible, that is, ethical and subjective treatment of current employees[5], which results in a situation in which these employees share positive opinions about their employer with other people.

However, a major part of the factors which determine associations with a particular entity remain outside of its sphere of influence[6], which means they can't be controlled. Thus, it is not possible to fully freely shape what the recipients think and say about an entity. Obviously, this doesn't mean that issues associated with the functioning of particular opinions and stereotypes in the conscious and subconscious minds of the recipients can be left outside the main stream of marketing activities. What's more, for this reason it is necessary to pay even more attention to them and get more engaged in these issues in order to raise the likelihood that negative associations will improve over time, if such associations emerged in the past, or that positive associations, if they were linked to a particular offeror before, will be strengthened.

It is necessary to emphasize that in this area there are particularly hard challenges for the group of offerors formed by universities. This is associated with their characteristics as organizations offering above all non-material values, serving educational, scientific, research, social, cultural etc. functions. Moreover, as a rule, both in theoretical deliberations and in market practice issues associated with attracting student candidates to universities are taken into consideration[7], while what is often disregarded is that it is necessary to pay no less attention to the efforts aimed at attracting possibly best candidates for the employees of these

organizations[8], especially scientific-didactic and didactic employees. The subject scope of such activities should cover, among others, young participants of the labour market, who are only about to become active on the market. It is worth pointing out here that their efficiency to a large extent depends on the proper identification of earlier and current associations with the university as a future workplace and analysing the changes taking place in these associations. Actions aimed at forming positive associations have to be complex in character, relying on the results of such an analysis, as they play a strategic role[9], leading to the strengthening, or weakening of the potential of a particular organization.

The above-mentioned lack of full control over all factors determining the type, strength and durability of associations demands even more from the university as an employer, namely, perfect preparation and implementation of communication activities in the areas which remain under its influence. Among such areas is the identification of associations and monitoring the changes taking place within them. The occurrence of any disfunctions at this stage of the process of managing associations leads to the accummulation of image flaws, hampering, or even making it possible to obtain adequate candidates for work.

Thus, taking into consideration the key importance of activities associated with the identification and analysis of associations with the university as a workplace among potential employees, as well as the visible shortage of research on the subject, which leads to a cognitive and empirical gap, the article is an attempt to achieve the following research goals:

1) identifying the specific characteristics of the associations of young potential employes with the university as an employer,
2) identifying the scope of changes taking place within the identified associations,
3) hierarchical arrangement and classification of the identified associations,
4) comparing the subject scope of particular groups of associations, taking into consideration the factor of time.

In the process of carrying out the above-mentioned tasks an attempt was made to find answers to the following research questions:

1) What associations with the university as an employer did the respondents have in 2016 and 2018?
2) What changes in the respodents' associations with the university as an employer took place?
3) Did the respondents' associations with the university as an employer improve?
4) Did the respondents' associations with the university as an employer deteriorate?

General characteristics of empirical research

Striving to achieve the above-mentioned research goals and to find answers to the formulated research questions, 2 editions of questionnaire surveys[10] were carried out. Each time the survey covered 150 students completing 1st, or 2nd cycle full-time studies, as potential employees[11]. Including in the group of respondents also students from 1st cycle studies is associated with the specific character of the subject of research. Associations with particular subjects often lead to long-term consequences and potential evolution of such associations in practice is a process and isn't temporary in character. That's why associations with the university which people who haven't started second cycle studies have can substantially influence their choices associated with the future workplace.

The surveys were direct in character, as they required personal contact between the researcher and the respondents. The first edition of the survey was conducted in the first half of 2016[12] and the second edition was conducted in the first quarter of 2018. All obtained questionnaires qualified for quantitative analysis, which was possible thanks to face-to-face contact with the respondents. The collected primary data was analyzed based on the method of analysis of average assessments and the method of comparative analysis.

During both editions the respondents were presented with a set of the same 18 statements reflecting associations with the university as a workplace. Among these 18 statements 10 had positive undertones and the rest had negative undertones. The statements were formulated on the basis of the results of cognitive-critical analysis of literature on the subject and on the basis of the results of non-structured interviews preceding the first edition of the survey. Each of the

statements was supposed to be assessed by the surveyed on the five-degree Likert scale, in which 5 meant definitely yes, 4 — rather yes, 3 — neither yes, nor no, 2 — rather not, 1 — definitely not. The application of such a scale is the necessary condition for the use of the method of average assessment analysis.

The respondents' associations with the university as an employer — cognitive analysis

As table 1 shows, in 2016 in case of 8 out of 18 analyzed associations a total of over a half of the respondents gave affirmative answers, where with regard to three of them, a total of at least 3/4 of the respondents gave such answers. It is worth adding here that the 3 above-mentioned associations were the only ones that at least 30% of people definitely agreed with and the association which received the biggest total percentage of positive answers was at the same time the only association that received note „5" from over a half of the respondents. This was the association with the 'possibility of sharing your knowledge with others'. It is necessary to note that among 3 main associations there was also yet another association with sharing knowledge, which, hovever, had a different undertone. It was associated with the 'necessity to share knowledge' as a precious resource, which is a kind of imposed duty and not a voluntary and spontaneous sharing of possessed knowledge with other people. Thus, it is possible to assume that a basic feature of work at a university evoked dual emotions among the respondents. Both of the mentioned associations were accompanied by noticing 'an opportunity for a professional career' in work at a university, which placed second with an average assessment value of 4,06. It was one of 2 associations, for which the value of average assessment exceeded the threshold of 4,00. The second one was the already mentioned association with the 'possibility of sharing your knowledge with others', in which case the value of average assessment reached 4,60.

At the same time in 2016 universities were least often associated with a low-prestige workplace without prospects for professional development and evoking a feeling of shame. These 3 associations were the only ones which achieved average assessments with values below 2,00. It is worth adding here that in case of every association from this group none of the respondents gave

a note '5', which means nobody agreed definitely with these statements. Moreover, these were the only associations for which the total percentage of positive answers didn't exceed 6,0%.

Table 1. **The respondents' associations with the university as a workplace in 2016 (in %)**

Assessed associations	Symbol	5	4	Total of affirmative answers	3	2	1	Total of negative answers	Average assessment
Very easy and enjoyable work	a	3,8	30,2	34,0	28,3	33,9	3,8	37,7	2,96
High social prestige	b	26,4	47,2	73,6	17,0	3,8	5,6	9,4	3,85
High salaries	c	7,5	43,4	50,9	30,2	15,1	3,8	18,9	3,36
An opportunity for a professional career	d	33,9	45,3	79,2	15,1	3,8	1,9	5,7	4,06
Certainty of employment and professional stabilization	e	13,2	47,2	60,4	32,1	5,6	1,9	7,5	3,64
The possibility of sharing your knowledge with others	f	77,4	11,3	88,7	7,5	1,9	1,9	3,8	4,60
The possibility of impressing others	g	11,3	41,6	52,9	35,8	11,3	0,0	11,3	3,53
The possibility of "being forever young" thanks to continuous contacts with young people	h	11,3	34,0	45,3	26,4	26,4	1,9	28,3	3,26
More free time than in other places	i	13,2	28,3	41,5	22,6	32,1	38,0	70,1	3,15
Very responsible and hard work, which at the same time brings a lot of satisfaction	j	13,2	47,2	60,4	30,2	9,4	0,0	9,4	3,64
Low social prestige	k	0,0	3,8	3,8	24,5	37,7	34,0	71,7	1,98
Low salaries	l	0,0	11,3	11,3	26,4	49,1	13,2	62,3	2,36
Lack of prospects for professional development	ł	0,0	5,6	5,6	11,3	34,0	49,1	83,1	1,74
Job insecurity and lack of professional stabilization	m	3,8	3,8	7,6	30,2	50,9	11,3	62,2	2,38
The necessity to share your precious knowledge with others	n	30,2	45,3	75,5	7,5	15,1	1,9	17,0	3,87
Shame of your workplace	o	0,0	1,9	1,9	5,7	22,6	69,8	92,4	1,39
Burning out life and professional energy fast	p	0,0	7,5	7,5	28,3	51,0	13,2	64,2	2,30
Less free time than in other places	r	7,5	13,2	20,7	20,8	45,3	13,2	58,5	2,57

where: 5 — definitely yes; 4 — rather yes; 3 — neither yes, nor no; 2 — rather not; 1 — definitely not
Source: Own materials prepared on the basis of the results of conducted research.

Analysing data contained in table 2 it is possible to conclude that in 2018 the number of associations which a total of over a half of the respondents identified as occurring phenomena dropped from 8 to 6. Even though the same association was named again by the biggest share of respondents (the percentage exceeded 90%), it was the only association that more than 3/4 of people agreed with. It is also worth pointing out that work at a university was associated with the 'necessity to share your knowledge' by a much smaller share of respondents than in 2016. Back then, taking into consideration the percentage of positive answers, this association placed second and in 2018 it placed only sixth. At the same time, in 2018 a definitely bigger share of the respondents, than two years earlier, perceived in work at a university 'certainty of employment and professional stabilization'.

It is worth pointing out that in 2018 only one association received an average assessment with a value exceeding 4,00, while in case of 2 associations the value of this assessment didn't exceed 2,00. These two associations are 'shame of your workplace' (assessment — 1,79) and 'lack of prospects for development (1,99). These two associations were the only two for which in 2018 the total percentage of negative answers exceeded 80%, even though two years earlier associations with 'shame of your workplace' received negative responses from a total of almost 10% more people. Both of the mentioned associations also received comparably lowest average assessments in 2016, even though their values were slightly lower back then. In other words, it is possible to conclude that the university as a workplace evoked comparably worse associations in 2018 than in the previous period. What also supports this conclusion is the fact that in case of the third association which in 2016 obtained an average assessment below the value of 2,00 ('low social prestige'), the value of this assessment increased to 2,15 over two years. Moreover, in 2016 nobody mentioned 5 negative associations as unequivocal feelings associated with work at a university, but in 2018 every negative association was mentioned by at least every hundredth respondent.

Comparing the values of average assessments of the analyzed associations from both years, we can notice that the differences weren't that big (picture 1), regardless of whether there was growth, or reduction of the value of assessment of a particular association (table 3). The biggest diference came up in case of the association with the 'necessity to share your knowledge' and amounted to 0,61. It was one of 10 associations, which

Table 2. **The respondents' associations with the university as a workplace in 2018 (in %)**

Assessed associations	1	2	Total of negative answers	3	4	5	Total of affirmative answers	Average assessment
Very easy and enjoyable work	2,4	21,1	23,5	35,8	35,0	5,7	40,7	3,20
High social prestige	1,6	16,4	18,0	18,9	45,1	18,0	63,1	3,61
High salaries	6,6	24,8	31,4	22,3	38,0	8,3	46,3	3,17
An opportunity for a professional career	0,0	5,7	5,7	19,5	50,4	24,4	74,8	3,93
Certainty of employment and professional stabilization	0,8	4,1	4,9	22,8	50,4	22,0	72,4	3,89
The possibility of sharing your knowledge with others	0,8	0,0	0,8	6,6	32,8	59,8	92,6	4,51
The possibility of impressing others	4,1	12,3	16,4	28,7	35,2	19,7	54,9	3,54
The possibility of being "forever young" thanks to continuous contacts with young people	9,8	23,0	32,8	34,4	22,1	10,7	32,8	3,01
More free time than in other places	6,5	27,6	34,1	28,5	31,7	5,7	37,4	3,02
Very responsible and hard work which at the same time brings a lot of satisfaction	3,3	15,6	18,9	33,6	42,6	4,9	47,5	3,30
Low social prestige	24,4	45,5	69,9	22,0	6,5	1,6	8,1	2,15
Low salaries	18,7	36,6	55,3	21,1	20,3	3,3	23,6	2,53
Lack of prospects for professional development	29,3	51,2	80,5	11,4	7,3	0,8	8,1	1,99
Job insecurity and lack of professional stabilization	15,4	51,2	66,6	27,6	4,1	1,6	5,7	2,25
The necessity to share your precious knowledge with others	7,4	24,0	31,4	18,2	35,5	14,9	50,4	3,26
Shame of your workplace	45,5	37,4	82,9	11,4	4,1	1,6	5,7	1,79
Burning out professional and life energy fast	11,4	35,0	46,4	34,1	17,1	2,4	19,5	2,64
Less free time than in other places	14,6	39,0	53,6	26,8	15,4	4,1	19,5	2,55

Where: 5 means definitely yes; 4 — rather yes; 3 — neither yes, nor no; 2 — rather not; 1 — definitely not
Source: Own materials prepared on the basis of the results of conducted surveys.

achieved lower values of average assessments in 2018 than two years earlier. The remaining 8 analyzed associations achieved average assessments with higher values than in 2016, where this growth concerned 5 out of 8 negative associations. A result of the differences in the values of average assessments, even though they were comparably small, were differences in places occupied by particular associations. Only the position of 4 of them improved, while 8 didn't move. In case of the remaining 6 associations their positions in the hierarchy deteriorated by 1, or 2 positions.

Table 3. Comparison of the hierarchy of associations with the university as a workplace

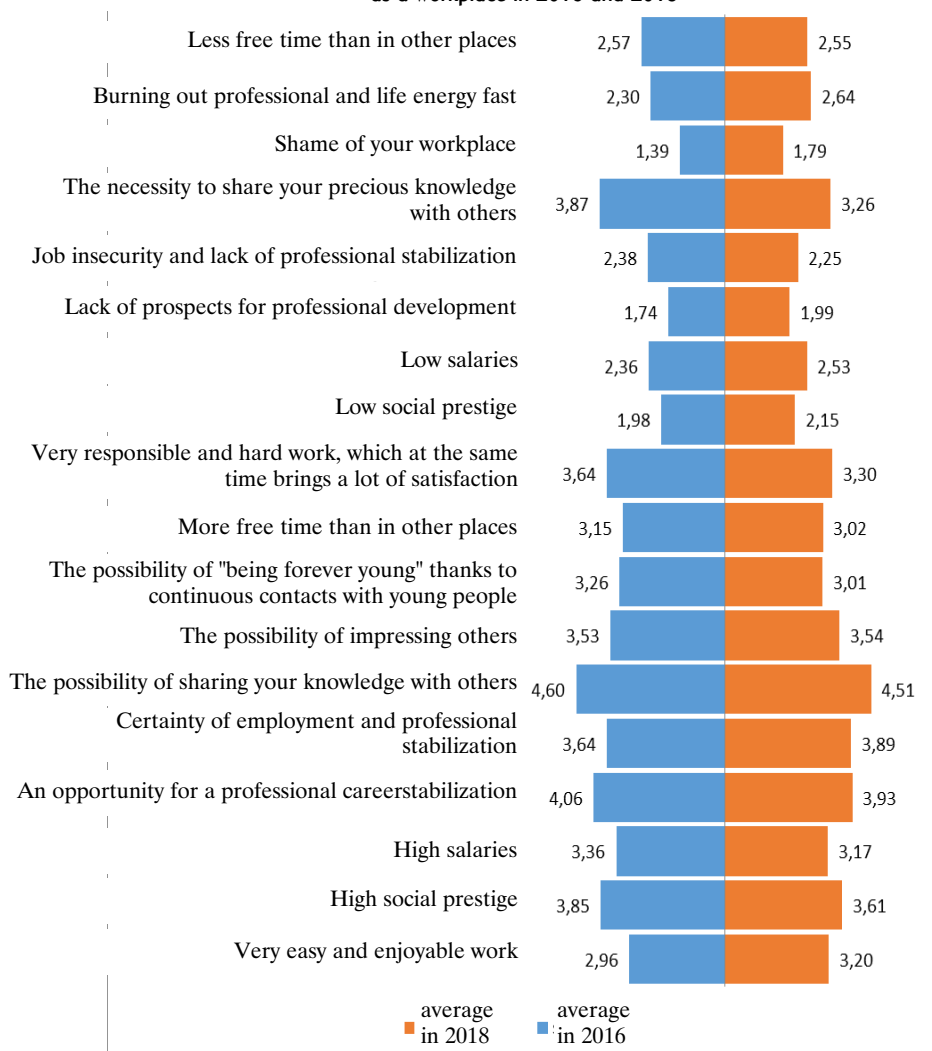| Assessed associations	Symbol	2016 year		2018 year		Difference	
		Average assessmet	Place	Average assessmet	Place	Average assessmet	Place
Very easy and enjoyable work	a	2,96	11	3,20	8	+0,24	+3
High social prestige	b	3,85	4	3,61	4	–0,24	0
High salaries	c	3,36	8	3,17	9	–0,19	–1
An opportunity for a professional career	d	4,06	2	3,93	2	–0,13	0
Certainty of employment and professional stabilization	e	3,64	5	3,89	3	+0,25	+2
The possibility of sharing your knowledge with others	f	4,60	1	4,51	1	–0,09	0
The possibility of impressing others	g	3,53	7	3,54	5	+0,01	+2
The possibility of "being forever young" thanks to contacts with young people	h	3,26	9	3,01	11	–0,25	–2
More free time than in other places	i	3,15	10	3,02	10	–0,13	0
Very hard and responsible work which at the same time brings a lot of satisfaction	j	3,64	5	3,30	6	–0,34	–1
Low social prestige	k	1,98	16	2,15	16	+0,17	0
Low salaries	l	2,36	14	2,53	14	+0,17	0
Lack of prospects for professional development	ł	1,74	17	1,99	17	+0,25	0
Job insecurity and lack of professional stabilization	m	2,38	13	2,25	15	–0,13	–2
The necessity to share your precious knowledge with others	n	3,87	3	3,26	7	–0,61	–4
Shame of your workplace	o	1,39	18	1,79	18	+0,40	0
Burning out professional and life energy fast	p	2,30	15	2,64	12	+0,34	+3
Less free time than in other places	r	2,57	12	2,55	13	–0,02	–1

where: "+" means growth; "-" means drop
Source: Own materials prepared on the basis of the results of conducted surveys.

Taking into consideration the values of average assessments, we can conventionally divide all analyzed associations into the following 5 groups:

1) crucial associations — group 'A' — values of average assesments amounting to at least 4.00;
2) very important associations — group 'B' — values of average assessments ranging from 3.50 to 3.99;

3) important associations — group 'C' — values of average assessments ranging from 3.00 to 3.49;

4) associations of medium importance — group 'D' — values of average assessments ranging from 2.00 to 2.99;

5) associations of little importance — group 'E' — values of average assessments no higher than 1.99.

Picture 1. **Comparison of the values of average assessments of associations with the university as a workplace in 2016 and 2018**

Association	average in 2016	average in 2018
Less free time than in other places	2,57	2,55
Burning out professional and life energy fast	2,30	2,64
Shame of your workplace	1,39	1,79
The necessity to share your precious knowledge with others	3,87	3,26
Job insecurity and lack of professional stabilization	2,38	2,25
Lack of prospects for professional development	1,74	1,99
Low salaries	2,36	2,53
Low social prestige	1,98	2,15
Very responsible and hard work, which at the same time brings a lot of satisfaction	3,64	3,30
More free time than in other places	3,15	3,02
The possibility of "being forever young" thanks to continuous contacts with young people	3,26	3,01
The possibility of impressing others	3,53	3,54
The possibility of sharing your knowledge with others	4,60	4,51
Certainty of employment and professional stabilization	3,64	3,89
An opportunity for a professional careerstabilization	4,06	3,93
High salaries	3,36	3,17
High social prestige	3,85	3,61
Very easy and enjoyable work	2,96	3,20

Source: Own materials prepared on the basis of the results of conducted surveys.

In 2016 there were 2 associations in the first of the mentioned groups. Two years later the group included only one association, which previously also belonged to the group (table 4). The group of very important associations marked as group 'B' also lost one association. In 2018 a total of 5 associations were identified as at least very important, while in 2016 there were 7 such associations. 2 out of associations which belonged to the group 'B' in 2016 later were found in the group of important associations, which in 2018 included also all associations which belonged to the group 'C' two years earlier and 1 association from group 'D' in 2016. Thus, the group of important associations back then included only 3 associations, while in 2018 it contained 6 associations. The group of associations of little importance forming the last group shrank from 3 to 2 associations. It is worth adding here that in 2018 both of the bottom groups, that is, 'D' and 'E' consisted of only negative associations, but in 2016 they contained also 1 positive association — that work at a university is easy and enjoyable.

It is also necessary to point out that the biggest change of position (a drop in this case) concerns one of negative associations and in particular the 'necessity to share your knowledge'. In 2016 it placed third, opening the group of very important associations, but two years later it placed seventh and belonged to the group 'C'. Thus, it is possible to conclude that despite small growth of the value of average assessments of most negative associations, a major reevaluation of the perception of the university as a workplace took place. It is because the respondents associated work at a university not just with 'the possibility of sharing knowledge' and an 'opportunity for a professional career' like before, but also with 'certainty of employment'.

On the other hand, it is worth pointing out that in case of 2 associations their places improved by 3 positions. These two associations are 'easy and enjoyable work' and 'burning out energy fast'. While the change of position of the former association — which resulted in a transition from group 'D' to 'C', can be identified as a certain improvement of the preception of work at a university, the change associated with the latter of the mentioned associations suggests a deterioration of the image of the university as a workplace. At the same time, taking into consideration the fact that the association of 'being forever young thanks to continuous contacts with young people' placed in 2018 two positions lower than before, getting close to the threshold of group 'D', may lead to the conclusion that the perception of the psychological dimension of work at the university deteriorated.

Table 4. **Comparison of the classifications of associations with the university as a workplace**

Assessed associations	Symbol	2016 year			2018 year		
		Average assessment	Miejsce	Group of associations	Miejsce	Average assessment	Group of associations
The possibility of sharing your knowledge with others	f	4,60	1	A (crucial)	1	4,51	A
An opportunity for a professional career	d	4,06	2		2	3,93	B
The necessity to share your precious knowledge with others	n	3,87	3	B (very important)	7	3,26	C
High social prestige	b	3,85	4		4	3,61	B
Certainty of employment and professional stabilization	e	3,64	5		3	3,89	B
Very responsible and hard work, which at the same time brings a lot of satisfaction	j	3,64	5		6	3,30	C
The possibility of impressing others	g	3,53	7		5	3,54	B
High salaries	c	3,36	8	C (important)	9	3,17	C
The possibility of "being forever young" thanks to continuous contacts with young people	h	3,26	9		11	3,01	C
More free time than in other places	i	3,15	10		10	3,02	C
Very easy and enjoyable work	a	2,96	11	D	8	3,20	C
Less free time than in other places	r	2,57	12	(of medium importance)	13	2,55	D
Job insecurity and lack of professional stabilization	m	2,38	13		15	2,25	D
Low salaries	l	2,36	14		14	2,53	D
Burning out profesional and life energy fast	p	2,30	15		12	2,64	D
Low social prestige	k	1,98	16	E	16	2,15	D
Lack of prospects for professional development	ł	1,74	17	(of little importance)	17	1,99	E
Shame of your workplace	o	1,39	18		18	1,79	E

Source: Own materials prepared on the basis of the results of conducted surveys.

Summary

As the above deliberations show, associations of the respondents representing young potential employees with the university as a workplace, may have not changed radically, but it is possible to notice certain unfavourable symptoms. Among them is, for example, the growth of the values of average assessments in case of 5 negative associations, which was comparably highest in case of perceiving work at a university as a reson for 'shame' (growth of 0,4). At the same time, we can notice a drop of the values of average assessments for some positive associations. It was observed, among others, with regard to the association with 'opportunity for a professional career', with 'high social prestige', or with 'work which brings satisfaction'. As has already been mentioned, these are not very big changes, but the very fact that they happened may be worrying, especially that still in practice, activities from the area of building the image of the university as an employer are underestimated and in many cases universities don't take such measures at all. This certainly constitutes a barrier hampering the acquisition of valuable employees, who would regard universities as an 'excellent workplace' allowing them to satisfy their professional ambitions and dreams.

Obviously, the conducted surveys are subject to certain limitations. Among them is the fact that by now only two editions of the survey have been conducted. Another one is the fact that they covered only Polish students as potential employees. In order to eliminate these limitations, in the future further editions of the research will be conducted regularly, which will make it possible to identify potential trends related to the associations with the university as a workplace. Also the geographical scope of the research will be expanded. Thanks to this it will be possible to carry out a comparative analysis between associations with the university as a workplace observed among Polish and foreign students.

References

[1] This dychotomy also concerns the category of attractiveness of a given entity in the role of an employer, which in literature on the subject is rightfully presented as a two-dimensional construct based on how the current and potential employees perceive it (see. T. Jiang, P. Iles, Employer-brand Equity, Organizational Attractiveness and Talent Management in the Zhejiang Private Sector, China, "Journal of Technology Management in China" 2011, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 97–110).

[2] Changes taking place in the environment of a particular entity to a large extent constitute the effect of globalization of the market, which leads to on the one hand homogeneization and on the other hand to the heterogenization of the recipients' behaviours. With regard to purchasing habits the issue is discussed by, among others, A. Goliszek (Homogenizacja i heterogenizacja zachowań konsumenckich w społeczeństwie globalnym, "Handel Wewnętrzny" 2015, nr 1, p. 101–109). It is necessary to emphasize that these effects concern also the recipients of personal values, including potential employees.

[3] This ambition boils down to achieving a state, when a particular organization is regarded as "an excellent workplace" not just by the employees of the organization, but also by the participants of the external labour market (see: I. Bakanauskiene, R. Bendaraviciene, I. Bucinskaite, Employer's attractiveness: generation Y employment expectations in Lithuania, "Human Resources Management & Ergonomics" 2016, vol. 1, pp. 6–22).

[4] Among such measures there is influence by means of a particular set of symbols, which constitute one of the basic attributes of a particular organization (see: The SAGE Encyclopedia of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, S.G. Rogelberg (ed.), Sage Publications Thousand Oaks 2016).

[5] The relations between the employees and the employer are becoming more and more similar to the relations between the buyer and the offeror, as they are based on the expectation that the employer will satisfy the expectations of employees (see: A.B. Thompson, The Intangible Things Employees Want from Employers, "Harvard Business Review" 2015, no. December, https://hbr.org/2015/12/the-intangible-things-employees-want-from-employers (06.03.2018)).

[6] The perception of a particular organization and as a result its image are multidimensional categories, which with regard to the image of a university is emphasized also by N. Azoury, L. Daou and C.E. Koury (University image and its relationship to student satisfaction: case of the Middle Eastern private business schools, "International Strategic Management Review" 2014, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 1–8), or G. Berens and C.B.M. Van Riel (Corporate associations in the academic literature: three main streams of thought in the reputation measurement literature, "Corporate Reputation Review" 2004, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 161–178), where the latter name factors associated with the recipient himself (including his experiences and individual perceptive abilities) among the main determinants of image, as well as factors associated with his environment (including the influence of other people) and factors associated with the perceived entity (including communication activities taken up by him).

[7] The necessity of using the instruments of marketing influence to attract student candidates to a university and to build the image of a university among this group of recipients is discussed by, among others, H. S. Akareem and S.S. Hossain (Determinants of education quality: what makes students' perception different?, "Open Review of Educational Research" 2016, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 52–67). At the same time issues associated with the utilization of modern information technologies for the purpose of building the image are analyzed by F. R da Costa and A.S. Pelissari (Corporate Image: Influencing Factors from the Viewpoint of Students of Distance Learning Courses, "Brazilian Business Review" 2017, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 108–130). However, they don't analyze the issues concerning the necessity of managing image, including associations with the university as an employer.

[8] The issues associated with attracting employees are discussed above all in relation to companies playing the role of employers (see. J.M. Moczydłowska, Determinants of organization attractiveness as an employer in the opinion of managers, "Forum Scientiae Oeconomia" 2015, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 47–56; I. Greer, M. Hauptmeier, Management whipsawing: The staging of labor competition under globalization, "Industrial & Labor Relations Review" 2016, vol. 69, no. 1, pp. 29–52). What's more, the most common practice is analyzing mainly their activities from the area directed to the inside of a particular entity, skipping the fact that at the same time the employer has to take actions directed to the environment, that is, the participants of the external labour market.

[9] It is worth pointing out that in literature on the subject we can see clear discrepancies concerning the temporal perspective of image-building. For example, S. Polat (The relationship between university student's academic achievement and perceived organizational image, "Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice" 2011, vol. 1, no. 11, pp. 257–262),or R. Abratt and N. Kleyn (Corporate identity, corporate branding and corporate reputations:

reconciliation and integration, "European Journal of Marketing" 2012, vol. 46, no. 7/8, pp. 1048–1063) think rightfully that it is a long-term process. However, some authors express the opinion that the image of an organization is temporary in character and doesn't have a process dimension, constituting only a reponse to the question :"how is it perceived right now?" (see: J.M.T. Balmer, S.A. Gayser, Corporate marketing integrating corporate identity, corporate branding, corporate communications, corporate image and corporate reputation, "European Journal of Marketing" 2006, vol. 40, no. 7/8, pp. 730–741). It is hard to agree with the second approach, Obviously, image is dynamic in character, changing along with time, but if it constituted a category associated with only a given point in time, it wouldn't make sense to build it in a complex way and thus, a given organization wouldn't have the capacity to influence it.

[10] They were preceded by non-structured interviews with 50 people.

[11] Non-random choice of the sample was applied.

[12] The results of surveys conducted in the first edition concerning associations with the university as an employer were subject to detailed analysis in the following articles: A. Baruk, Postrzeganie uczelni jako pracodawcy przez młodych potencjalnych pracowników, "Marketing Instytucji Naukowych i Badawczych" 2016, vol. 21, iss. 3, pp. 1–18; A. Baruk, A. Goliszek, Zewnętrzny wizerunek uczelni w roli pracodawcy jako podstawa segmentacji młodych potencjalnych pracowników, "Marketing Instytucji Naukowych i Badawczych" 2017, vol. 23, iss. 1, p. 79–96.

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