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IN THE UNIVERSITY AS AN EMPLOYER
AMONG YOUNG POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES
AND THEIR CHANGES IN 2016–2018**



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THE REASONS FOR THE LACK OF INTEREST IN THE UNIVERSITY AS AN EMPLOYER AMONG YOUNG POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES AND THEIR CHANGES IN 2016–2018

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DOI: 10.14611/minib.29.09.2018.11



Summary

The article is theoretical-empirical in character. In the theoretical part on the basis of the results of cognitive-critical analysis of literature on the subject the chosen aspects associated with the role of the university as an employer and with the way universities can efficiently attract young people as potential employees are discussed. Attention was paid also to the necessity to apply complex image-related activities and to visible negligence in this area. The results of this analysis point to the existence of a cognitive and research gap. It is because the previous theoretical deliberations and empirical analyses conducted with regard to such activities refer to companies and not to universities. That's why the article strives to achieve, among others, such goals as: identification of the reasons for the lack of interest in work at a university among the respondents; defining the changes in the reasons for the lack of interest in work at a university given by the respondents in the 2016–2018 period; hierarchical arrangement of the identified reasons. In the process of carrying out these goals an attempt was made to find answers to three research questions and to test the research hypothesis saying that sex is a feature differentiating the reasons for the lack of interest in work at a university mentioned by the respondents. In the empirical part of the article the results of an analysis of primary data collected by means of the method of questionnaire survey are presented. In course of the analysis the method of average assessment analysis and the Kruskal-Wallis test were used. The results of the analysis show that the significance of the reasons for the respondents' unwillingness to start work at a university has changed. Also, their hierarchy has changed. Moreover, sex turned out to be the distinguishing feature in case of only one reason, namely, the will to use knowledge and skills gained during studies in a workplace other than a university.

Keywords: university, employer, potential employees, employer's image

Introduction

One of the most important decisions that every young person willing to enter the labour market has to make is choosing the first employer. This is a very hard choice and it cannot be spontaneous. It should be preceded by an in-depth analysis of the available alternatives. It is because choosing a particular employer at this stage of professional career often determines the pace and character of its future development, by either stimulating it, or actually hampering it. Even though many young people don't wait till graduation, but find work already during studies, it usually isn't full time employment and allows them to reconcile education with professional duties.

In practice, people start first full-time job only after graduation. This is the beginning of a few dozen years of professional activity as another stage of life of a particular person. On the one hand the choice of the first employer has to be based on solid foundations, which enable its rationalization, on the other hand it leads to the formation of a certain body of knowledge, skills, feelings, relations etc. gained during work, which contribute to professional experience which may be later used in the future.

Taking into consideration the subject matter of this article, what is particularly important is an appropriate course of the stage preceding the decision on the choice of an employer¹, as consciously skipping some actions at this stage may lead to the emergence of effects unfavourable for the employee at the subsequent stages of the decision-making process. In comparison to the purchasing process, these effects may be particularly apparent at the post-sale stage, which with regard to the labour market can be identified with the start of work for a given employer. Obviously, in the process of making a decision on the choice of an employer, in practice it is impossible to take into consideration all aspects², just as it is impossible to anticipate all consequences of a particular decision. However, it is possible and necessary to strive to limit the risk associated with the decision³.

Again, applying the analogy of the purchasing process, it is possible to conclude that it cannot be an impulsive decision, but it has to be rational in character, which extends the time needed to take the decision and at the same time makes it possible to reduce the

aforementioned risk. Obviously, among the decision-making factors we can practically always distinguish objective and subjective factors. In the first group there are, among others, aspects associated with satisfying particular requirements of a potential employer, including the character of the candidate's education, his, or her age and held certificates etc. At the same time, the second group includes, for example, interpersonal abilities and skills, etc. The potential employee has to compare the requirements formulated by the employer with his, or her potential⁴, rejecting the alternatives for which the results of the comparison turn out to be unfavourable.

However, before you get in touch with a particular employer, first you have to choose the branch in which you want to achieve self-accomplishment, which obviously also requires analysing your predispositions and expectations in the context of characteristics of a particular branch. In practice, for obvious reasons, resignation from a particular branch is tantamount to lack of interest in the employers representing the branch. That's why what is exceptionally important in the decision-making process are the opinions about not just a particular employer, but also a particular branch that young people get from various sources. It is worth pointing out that in case of universities the opinions are not too good and this is visible not just in Poland, but also in other countries⁵.

In literature on the subject there are attempts to analyse the reasons why potential, or current employees are interested in a particular branch and a particular organization mainly with regard to companies⁶. At the same time these issues are rather not investigated in case of universities⁷, which are regarded mainly as the providers of educational and scientific offer. Thus, universities are still not associated with the fact they also play the role of employers. Thus, we can say that there is a clear cognitive and research gap in this area. Perhaps to some extent this is associated with the fact that universities don't display greater activity on the labour market, which certainly doesn't make it easier for them to satisfy the growing expectations ahead of these organizations. Negligence in the area of such activities doesn't make it easier for them to at the same time build and strengthen their image as employers⁸. Thus, it seems it is extremely

important to analyse aspects associated with the level of interest of young people in work at a university and the reasons which potentially encourage them to tie their professional career to such organizations, or discourage them from making this decision.

Thus, this article aims to achieve the following research goals:

- 1) identifying the reasons why the respondents are not interested in work at a university;
- 2) identifying the changes in the reasons for the lack of interest in work at universities that took place in the 2016–2018 period;
- 3) hierarchical arrangement of the identified reasons;
- 4) comparing the hierarchy of reasons defined in 2016 and in 2018;
- 5) identifying the significance of sex as a factor differentiating the reasons for the lack of interest in work at a university mentioned by the respondents.

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

- 1) what reasons for the lack of interest in work at a university were mentioned by the respondents?
- 2) what was the scope and character of changes in the reasons for lack of interest in work at a university in the 2016–2018 period?
- 3) what was the hierarchical structure of the respondents' lack of interest in work at a university?

An attempt was made to test the research hypothesis saying that sex is a feature differentiating the reasons for the lack of interest in work at a university mentioned by the respondents.

General characteristic of empirical research

To achieve the above-mentioned goals, find answers to the research question and test the research hypothesis, in Q1 2018 the second edition of questionnaire survey⁹, was conducted. It covered 250 students completing full-time second cycle university courses as potential employees¹⁰. The surveys were direct in character, which required personal contact of the researcher with the surveyed individuals. All questionnaires were qualified for quantitative analysis, which was possible thanks to the application of face-to-face contact with the respondents. The collected primary data was processed by means of quantitative analysis using the method of percentage analysis, the method of average assessment analysis and the Kruskal-Wallis independence test.

The respondents were presented with 12 statements reflecting the reasons for unwillingness to start work at a university. They were distinguished on the basis of cognitive-critical analysis of literature on the subject and on the basis of the results of non-structured interviews. Each of the statements was supposed to be assessed by the respondents on a five-degree Likert scale, in which note 5 meant definitely yes, 4 — rather yes, 3 — neither yes, nor no, 2 — rather not and 1 — definitely not. The application of the scale is a necessary condition for the utilization of the method of average assessment analysis.

In order to find an answer to the question, whether diversification in terms of the distinction of particular groups (e.g. according to sex) is statistically significant enough to be able to say that the opinion of the respondents defined by the analysed answer is significantly different, the Kruskal-Wallis (KW) test was used. It is a non-parametric equivalent of ANOVA.

From the point of view of statistical criteria in case of KW the data don't have to satisfy many requirements. The only conditions for carrying out the test are¹¹:

- 1) dependent variable should be measured on at least an ordinal scale (it can also be measured on a quantitative scale),

2) observations in the analysed groups should be independent from each other, which means that a person who is in one group shouldn't belong to another, comparable group (this requirement is satisfied by dichotomous questions which make it possible to divide the respondents into disjunct groups (e.g. the division of the respondents into women and men) and single choice questions).

Kruskal-Wallis test, as a non-parametric equivalent of single-factor variance analysis is thus applied when data don't satisfy the requirements for carrying out similar parametric tests and they can be arranged according to particular criteria. It involves checking whether a number of independent results from a group come from the same population, or from a population with the same median. Particular samples don't have to be equally numerous. The input data are n element statistical samples divided by " k " of disjunct groups of a number of respondents ranging from n_1 to n_k .

The interpretation of the test can involve only comparing the ' p ' value with the assumed level of significance (usually 0.05) or an analysis of the value of statistics of the test in case when it is necessary to assess the "power/intensity" of the differences between groups. High values of test statistics show diversification in particular groups (against the hypothesis about equality in particular groups), where the higher the values, the greater the diversification.

Statistical analysis of the collected data was carried out by means of IBM SPSS Statistics Ver. 22.

Research results

Similarly as in 2016, after two years still over a half of the surveyed didn't take a university into consideration as its future workplace. As table 1 shows, in 2018 the reason for the lack of interest in starting work at a university highlighted by the biggest share of respondents was the will to use knowledge and skills gained during studies in a different place. It was the only reason that more than every fifth

respondent definitely agreed with and at the same time it was one of five reasons definitely confirmed by at least every tenth person. Taking into consideration the total percentage of affirmative answers, it is possible to note that over a half of the respondents mentioned this reason as the only one. It was also among three reasons that at least 1/3 of the respondents agreed with.

Both remaining reasons, as opposed to the will to test yourself in a different workplace had an exceptionally negative undertone. It is because they concerned negative impressions from studies and striving to stop all contacts with your university. Certainly, such feelings are not a foundation that could be used to build relations between the university as a future employer and the respondent as a potential employee. The undertone of these opinions unfavourable for the university as a potential employer is moderated to a certain extent by the fact that in total the same percentage of respondents, that is, 35,3%, denied that they rely on negative impressions from studies. At the same time, in case of the will to stop all contacts with the university in total a bigger percentage of the respondents denied that they take these impressions into consideration while looking for work outside universities, compared to the total percentage of people who took this reason into consideration.

It is also worth pointing out that in 2018 three out of twelve analysed reasons for the lack of will to start work at a university were named by a total of less than 10% of people, where two of them named by the comparably smallest share of respondents related to image, referring to the aspects concerning satisfying social needs. This concerns 'low social prestige' (7,8%) and 'shame of your workplace' (7,9%). Thus, it is possible to conclude that the respondents didn't take into consideration in their decision-making process concerning the choice of the future employer the image of the university, which in their opinion wasn't associated either with low prestige, or with the feeling of shame of your workplace¹². It is worth adding here that at the same time the mentioned three reasons, that is, 'low social prestige', 'shame of your workplace' and 'lack of prospects for professional development' were the only reasons negated by a total of more than 60% of people. This constitutes a confirmation of the conclusion that they didn't serve the role of leading decision-making factors.

Table 1. Reasons for the lack of will to start work at a university mentioned by the respondents (w %) (2018)

Named reasons	Definitely yes (note 5)	Rather yes (note 4)	Total of affirmative answers	Neither yes, nor no (note 3)	Rather not (note 2)	Definitely not (note 1)	Total of negative answers	Average assessment
Low social prestige	2,9	4,9	7,8	28,2	38,8	25,2	64,0	2,22
Low salaries	8,7	20,4	29,1	23,3	32,0	15,5	47,5	2,75
Lack of prospects for professional development	1,0	7,8	8,8	23,3	48,5	19,4	67,9	2,23
Job insecurity and lack of professional stabilization	1,0	11,7	12,7	31,1	42,7	13,6	56,3	2,44
The necessity to share your precious knowledge with others	4,9	24,3	29,2	21,4	31,1	18,4	49,5	2,67
Shame of your workplace	2,0	5,9	7,9	12,9	41,6	37,6	79,2	1,93
Burning out professional and life energy fast	10,7	13,6	24,3	28,2	31,1	16,5	47,6	2,71
Less free time than in other places	5,9	14,7	20,6	20,6	42,2	16,7	58,9	2,51
Negative general impression from studies	11,8	23,5	35,3	29,4	25,5	9,8	35,3	3,02
Negative experiences associated with contacts with lecturers from the time when you were a student	11,8	16,7	28,5	37,3	26,5	7,8	34,3	2,99
The will to stop all contacts with universities	12,6	21,4	34,0	27,2	28,2	10,7	38,9	2,97
The will to use knowledge and skills gained during studies in a workplace other than a university	43,7	26,2	69,9	18,4	8,7	2,9	11,6	3,99

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

At the same time 'the will to use knowledge and skills gained during studies in a workplace other than a university' was negated by in total the smallest share of the respondents. It was named as the only reason in this context by less than every fifth respondent (only 11,6%). This confirms the conclusion that the respondents, choosing an employer, would follow above all this intention. Moreover, on this basis we can draw yet another conclusion. It concerns the fact that on the one hand the respondents had unfavourable feelings from studies and would like to stop contacts with the university in the future, yet they thought that studying allowed them to acquire the knowledge and skills making it possible to start work in organizations representing other branches.

However, it is worth paying attention to the changes that took place in case of the opinions of the representatives of potential employees in 2018, compared to 2016. For example, the reason such as 'low social prestige' in 2016 wasn't mentioned by any respondent (table 2), while after two years the percentage of affirmative answers may have been comparably small, but amounted to 7,8%. Also, the share of people claiming they follow 'shame of your workplace' almost doubled, while the share of people relying on 'negative impressions from studies' more than doubled. The percentage of respondents taking into consideration 'the will to stop contacts with the university' more than tripled. Also, the opinions concerning a major part of the remaining analysed reasons deteriorated. Among them we can see greater emphasis on the issues of 'low salaries', or 'job insecurity'. Moreover, the share of people relying in their professional choices on the 'will to use knowledge and skills gained during studies' dropped.

Table 2. The reasons for the lack of will to start work at a university (in %) (2016 and 2018)

Named reasons	2016		2018		Difference	
	Total of affirmative answers	Total of negative answers	Total of affirmative answers	Total of negative answers	Between affirmative answers	Between negative answers
Low social prestige	0,0	73,9	7,8	64,0	7,8	-9,9
Low salaries	17,4	73,9	29,1	47,5	11,7	-26,4
Lack of prospects for professional development	17,4	73,9	8,8	67,9	-8,6	-6,0
Job insecurity and lack of professional stabilization	8,7	71,7	12,7	56,3	4,0	-15,4
The necessity to share your precious knowledge with others	26,1	54,3	29,2	49,5	3,1	-4,8
Shame of your workplace	4,3	89,2	7,9	79,2	3,6	-10,0
Burning out professional and life energy fast	23,9	65,2	24,3	47,6	0,4	-17,6
Less free time than in other workplaces	21,7	63,1	20,6	58,9	-1,1	-4,2
Negative general impressions from studies	15,2	56,5	35,3	35,3	20,1	-21,2
Negative experiences associated with contacts with lecturers from the time when you were a student	19,7	54,4	28,5	34,3	8,8	-20,1
The will to stop all contacts with the university	10,9	67,4	34,0	38,9	23,1	-28,5
The will to use knowledge and skills gained during studies in a workplace other than a university	78,2	15,3	69,9	11,6	-8,3	-3,7

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

One of few positive symptoms is the fact that the percentage of respondents taking into consideration the reason associated with the 'lack of prospects for professional development' was halved. This means that after all they started to notice in work at a university the possibilities of building skills enabling their professional development. It is necessary to emphasize that with regard to any of the twelve analysed reasons for the lack of will to start work at a university there was a more, or less apparent reduction of the percentage of answers denying the occurrence of a given reason. This can be interpreted as an element alleviating the negative undertone of the changes discussed thus far, even though it can also be an outcome of the transformation of the expectations of respondents as potential employees with regard to the future employers¹³.

The values of average assessments calculated for each analysed reason became a basis for their hierarchical arrangement. Taking the obtained values of average assessments into consideration, all analysed reasons for not considering the university as a workplace were divided into 4 groups. Conventionally the following ranges of the values of these assessments were adopted:

- 1) values of average assessments amounting to at least 4,00 — group 'A' — key reasons;
- 2) values of average assessments ranging from 2,40 to 3,99 — group 'B' — important reasons;
- 3) values of average assessments ranging from 2,00 to 2,39 — group 'C' — reasons of medium importance;
- 4) values of average assessments below 2,00 — group 'D' — reasons of low importance.

As table 3 shows, among twelve analysed reasons for aversion to starting work at a university only four didn't change their position. However, this doesn't mean that the values of average assessments achieved by the aforementioned reasons didn't change. What's more, the changes of these values were big enough to move three reasons to different groups, in comparison to 2016 (table 4), while only one reason, namely, 'shame of your workplace' remained in the same group. This aspect in both analysed periods placed last, fitting into the group of

reasons marked as 'D', that is, reasons of little importance.

The positions of all the remaining reasons changed, where in case of four their positions deteriorated, compared to 2016, while in case of another four reasons, their positions improved. The biggest change was observed in case of the 'will to stop all contacts with the university', as in 2018 this reason placed 4th and two years earlier it placed 10th. It is worth pointing out here that this change had a rather negative undertone from the point of view of not just the image of the university as a potential employer, but also from the perspective of its general image. Moreover, an effect of the change of the value of average assessment in case of this reason was the change of group, to which it was allocated in 2018. It is because it moved from group 'C' to group 'B', which clearly shows major growth of its significance among other decision-making factors taken into consideration by the respondents as potential employees analysing the university as a potential employer.

Table 3. Values of average assessments of the reasons for the lack of will to start work at a university (2016 and 2018)

Named reasons	2016		2018		Difference between position
	average assessment	position	average assessment	position	
Low social prestige	1,96	11	2,22	11	0
Low salaries	2,26	7	2,75	5	+2
Lack of prospects for professional development	2,18	8	2,23	10	-2
Job insecurity and lack of professional stabilization	2,17	9	2,44	9	0
The necessity to share your precious knowledge with others	2,47	3	2,67	7	-4
Shame of your workplace	1,56	12	1,93	12	0
Burning out professional and life energy fast	2,48	2	2,71	6	-4
Less free time than in other workplaces	2,46	4	2,51	8	-4
Negative general impressions from studies	2,37	6	3,02	2	+4
Negative experiences associated with contacts with lecturers from the time when you were a student	2,43	5	2,99	3	+2
The will to stop all contacts with the university	2,16	10	2,97	4	+6
The will to use the knowledge and skills gained during studies in a workplace other than a university	4,15	1	3,99	1	0

where: '-' means deterioration of position and '+' means improvement of position

Source: Own materials prepared on the basis of research results.

Also 'negative general impressions from studies' were among the reasons in case of which a comparably strong improvement of position was observed. In this case the change of place by four positions was associated also with the change of group from 'C' to 'B', which shows the growth of significance of also this reason. It is also necessary to emphasize that the reason is related to image in character, reflecting the way the respondents perceive universities resulting from the experiences of the respondents as students. Among the image-related reasons there is also another reason which occupied a higher position in 2018 than in 2016, that is, 'negative experiences associated with contacts with lecturers', even though this time, despite a much higher value of average assessment no change of group took place and the discussed reason in 2018 still belonged to group 'B'. At the same time, the group changed in case of the fourth reason, whose position improved in 2018, namely, 'low salaries'. This change points to the growth of significance of financial aspects¹⁴ and clearer association of universities with worse salaries than in case of other employers¹⁵.

As mentioned above, the positions of four other reasons deteriorated, where in case of three reasons it was a change by four positions and with regard to one reason it was a change by two positions. Despite the changes of positions, in none of these cases the group changed, which shows that the relative significance of each of these reasons didn't change.

Taking into consideration the ranges of average assessment values proposed above, it is possible to conclude that in 2018 no reason made it into group 'A', as none achieved an average assessment with a value of at least 4,00 (table 4). Even though similarly as in 2016, the first position was occupied by the 'will to use knowledge and skills gained during studies in a workplace other than a university', it belonged to group 'B'. A total of nine reasons were found in this group, while two years earlier it was formed by four reasons. An effect of raising the size of group 'B' was at the same time reduction of the number of reasons which in 2018 made it into groups 'C' and 'D'. In the first one of them there were two reasons and one of them ('lack of prospects for professional development') belonged to the same group also in 2018, while the second one ('low social prestige') previously ended up in group

'D'. This points to the growth of significance of image-related aspects and that the respondents notice the social perception of work at a university. At the same time Group 'D' was formed by one reason which belonged to this group also last time. However, it is possible to notice a major growth of the value of its average assessment, which clearly got closer to the border separating this group from group 'C'. This has a negative undertone, as it concerns the issue of 'shame of your workplace' which is definitely unfavourable from the point of view of satisfying social and psychological needs.

Table 4. Classification of the reasons for the lack of will to start work at a university (2016 and 2018)

Named reasons	2016			2018		
	Average assessment	position	Group of reasons	Average assessment	position	Group of reasons
The will to use knowledge and skills gained during studies in a workplace other than a university	4,15	1	A (crucial)	3,99	1	B
Burning out life and professional energy fast	2,48	2	B (important)	2,71	6	B
The necessity to share your precious knowledge with others	2,47	3		2,67	7	B
Less free time than in other workplaces	2,46	4		2,51	8	B
Negative experiences associated with contacts with lecturers from the time when you were a student	2,43	5		2,99	3	B
Negative general impression from studies	2,37	6	C (of medium importance)	3,02	2	B
Low salaries	2,26	7		2,75	5	B
Lack of prospects for professional development	2,18	8		2,23	10	C
Job insecurity and lack of professional stabilization	2,17	9		2,44	9	B
The will to stop all contacts with the university	2,16	10		2,97	4	B
Low social prestige	1,96	11	D (of little importance)	2,22	11	C
Shame of your workplace	1,56	12		1,93	12	D

Source: Own materials prepared on the basis of research results.

The analysed reasons for the lack of will to start work at a university turned out to be mostly not diversified with regard to the sex of respondents. The only reason for which statistically significant diversification, according to the aforementioned demographic feature was identified was the respondents' 'will to use knowledge and skills gained during studies in a workplace other than a university'. It is

because it was the only reason for which the 'p' level of significance was lower than 0,05 (amounting to 0,012) and the results of Kruskal-Wallis test for women and men (amounting to 47,83 and 63,74, respectively) differed clearly. Thus, it is possible to say that the statement contained in the research hypothesis is true only in case of the reason which both in 2016 and 2018 was named as the main reason why the respondents look for an employer other than a university.

Summary

On the basis of the presented deliberations it is possible to conclude that most of the respondents wouldn't like to work at a university, not treating it as an attractive employer. It was the only issue that didn't change in the 2016–2018 period. At the same time the significance attributed by the respondents to particular reasons for the lack of interest in work in an organization of this kind changed. Obviously, this led to clear changes in the hierarchy of reasons taken into consideration by the respondents, as only four of them retained their former positions. However, an effect of the changes of values of their average assessments were changes of groups that they belonged to in 2018, compared to 2016.

Even though still the main reason was the 'will to use the knowledge and skills gained during studies in a workplace other than a university', its significance measured with the value of average assessment was found to be comparably smaller. It is necessary to emphasize that it was the only analysed reason in case of which the sex of respondents was a feature differentiating answers. Thus, it is possible to say that the statement contained in the research hypothesis with regard to the respondents is true only in case of this reason.

It is also worth pointing out that the significance of negative experiences from studies increased substantially, which has a definitely negative image-related undertone, at the same time pointing to the fact that universities have to not just build their image as an employer, but also have to improve their general image, as its image of an institution playing the educational role was also unfavourable.

Obviously, the conducted research is subject to certain limitations, which include the object scope (only Polish students), or subject scope (lack of in-depth analysis of particular reasons). The results presented in this article constitute only a fragment of much broader research. There are plans to regularly repeat the research for the purpose of identification of potential trends, which by now could only be signalled, as only two editions of the survey have been carried out.

References

- ¹ The process of choosing an employer should cover three basic stages, which occur in course of a purchasing decision-making process (see: S.D. Vivek, S.E. Beatty, R.M. Morgan, Customer engagement: Exploring Customer Relationships Beyond Purchase, "Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice" 2012, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 122–146; R. Mugge, H.N.J. Schifferstein, J.P.L. Schoormans, Product attachment and satisfaction: understanding consumers' post-purchase behavior, "Journal of Consumer Marketing" 2010, vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 271–282): pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase. It is because when an employee chooses a particular employer, it means he or she chooses the conditions of employment offered by the employer, that is, "buys" these conditions.
- ² As research conducted by other authors suggests, potential employees looking for an employer more and more often pay attention to aspects related to long-term benefits (associated for example with the opportunities for professional development) treating short-term aspects (associated with material benefits in form of remuneration and financial, or material benefits) as a secondary issue. This trend has been observed for at least a decade. What's more, it is possible to notice it clearly in various countries and branches. For example, in 2010 it was identified in case of graduates of business studies in India (A. Dutta, E.M. Punnoose, Factors Affecting Choice of First Employer. A Study of Indian Management Graduates, "Global Business Review" 2010, vol. 11, iss. 3, pp. 435–448); or in 2016 in case of potential employees in Lithuania (I. Bakanauskienė, R. Bendaravičienė, I. Buiėnskaite, Employer's Attractiveness: Generation Y Employment Expectations In Lithuania, "Human Resources Management & Ergonomics" 2016, vol. X, no. 1, pp. 6–22).
- ³ It is only then that there is greater likelihood that after starting work for a particular organization a person will regard it as an attractive employer. The perceived attractiveness of the employer reflects the benefits that a potential employee expects to achieve after changing his role to the current employee of a given organization. These benefits can be aggregated within 5 following groups (see: G.G. Reis, B.M. Braga, Employer attractiveness from a generational perspective: Implications for employer branding, "Revista de Administração", vol. 51, no. 1, pp. 103–116): innovative, social, economic, developmental, and application-related. As we can see, only one of these groups is material in character and the remaining ones refer to non-material values.
- ⁴ This is not just about the professional potential covering particular abilities, skills, knowledge etc., but also about the cultural-psychological potential. As secondary research shows, among 10 key factors that determine whether a person who has started work for a particular employer feels happy and satisfied, there are values applied in a given organization (see: J. Morgan, The Top 10 Factors For On-The-Job Employee Happiness, "Forbes" 2014, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jacobmorgan/2014/12/15/the-top-10-factors-for-on-the-job-employee-happiness/#328c67395afa> (viewed: 23.06.2018)). Obviously, the more these values comply with the values shared by an employee, the higher his sense of happiness and satisfaction.
- ⁵ For example, among 50 most attractive employees in the USA named by employees there wasn't a single university (see: R. Gillett, The 50 best places to work in 2018, according to employees, <http://www.businessinsider.com/best-places-to-work-2018-2017-12?IR=T> (viewed: 23.06.2018)). In case of Polish universities unfavourable opinions on their subject are confirmed by, among others, the formal assessment of the personnel, infrastructural aspects etc. presented in the report from the evaluation research titled "Wypracowanie potencjalnych kierunków interwencji w okresie programowania 2014–2020 w oparciu o doświadczenia z wdrażania XIII osi priorytetowej PO IiŚ Infrastruktura szkolnictwa wyższego" (<http://www.ewaluacja.gov.pl/media/29016/rk1.pdf> (viewed: 23.06.2018)).

⁶ Such research was conducted by, among others, B. Arachchige, A. Robertson, Business student perceptions of a preferred employer: a study identifying determinants of employer branding, "The IUP Journal of Brand Management" 2011, vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 25–46; E. Alniaçik, Ü. Alniaçik, Identifying dimensions of attractiveness in employer branding: effects of age, gender, and current employment status, "Procedia — Social and Behavioral Sciences" 2012, vol. 58, pp. 1336–1343; A. Dabirian, J. Kietzmann, H. Diba, A great place to work!? Understanding crowdsourced employer branding, "Business Horizons" 2017, vol. 60, iss. 2, pp. 197–205; J.M. Moczyłowska, K. Leszczewska, Determinants of organization attractiveness as an employer in the opinion of managers, "Forum Scientiae Oeconomia" 2015, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 47–56 etc.

⁷ There have been only individual papers concerning universities as employers (m.in. Ch. Priyadarshini, S. Mamidenna, O.B. Sayeed, Identifying dimensions of employer attractiveness in Indian universities: an approach towards scale development, "Journal of Asia Business Studies" 2016, vol. 10, iss. 2, pp. 183–193), but they analyze only the perspective of the current employees, without taking into consideration the opinions of potential employees. However, it is necessary to emphasize that it is a positive symptom, as until recently no such research was conducted.

⁸ The lack of coherent and complex activity aimed at building the brand and image of the university as an employer definitely makes it harder to attract the attention of potential employees, as the perception of the university as an employer is to a large extent determined by both mentioned marketing attributes, as also other authors draw attention to this fact (see, among others: A. Sivertzen, E. Nilsen, A. Olafsen, Employer branding: Employer attractiveness and the use of social media, "Journal of Product & Brand Management" 2013, vol. 22, no. 7, pp. 473–483; M. Biswas, D. Suar, Antecedents and consequences of employer branding, "Journal of Business Ethics" 2016, vol. 136, iss. 1, pp. 57–72; E. Alniaçik, U. Alniaçik, S. Erat, K. Akçin, Attracting talented employees to the company: Do we need different employer branding strategies in different cultures? "Procedia — Social and Behavioral Sciences" 2014, no. 150, pp. 336–344).

⁹ First edition of the survey was carried out in the first half of 2016. It was preceded by non-structured interviews with 50 people.

¹⁰ Non-random choice of the sample was applied.

¹¹ <http://www.statystyka.az.pl/test-anova-kruskala-wallisa.php> (viewed: 10.04.2018); http://www.statystyka.pl/t4997_1_test_rangowy_kruskala-wallisa.php (viewed: 10.04.2018).

¹² The issues of perception of the university as an employer and the changes that took place in terms of associations with the university in 2016 and 2018 have been analysed in detail in the article by A. Baruk, A. Goliszek, Zmiany skojarzeń z uczelnią jako pracodawcą — opinie młodych polskich potencjalnych pracowników, "Marketing Instytucji Naukowych i Badawczych" 2018, vol. 28, iss. 2.

¹³ Changes in associations with the university as a workplace point to this (see: A. Baruk, A. Goliszek, Zmiany skojarzeń z uczelnią jako pracodawcą — opinie młodych polskich potencjalnych pracowników, "Marketing Instytucji Naukowych i Badawczych" 2018, vol. 28, iss. 2).

¹⁴ Nevertheless, still the issues associated with salaries don't belong to the key criteria of choice, which complies with the trends presented in the theoretical introduction.

¹⁵ This conclusion is confirmed by the results of research concerning associations with the university as an employer, which were analysed in detail in the article by A. Baruk, Polska uczelnia jako (nie)atrakcyjny potencjalny pracodawca, "Marketing Instytucji Naukowych i Badawczych" 2017, vol. 26, iss. 4, pp. 101–116.

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