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Why Employees Decide to Be Good Citizens in Organisations? Pilot Study Result

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Abstract:

Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) is an extra-role behaviour with the positive result for an organisation. That is why both academics and managers want to understand what motives trigger behaviour that might contribute to competitive advantage. The paper presents results of pilot study which aimed at finding connections between OCB and motives enumerated in McClelland Human Motivation Theory.

Keywords: *Organisational Citizenship Behaviour, McClelland Human Motivation Theory*

1. Introduction

One of the most important problems in contemporary management is hiring people who will be able to develop their potential and use it for achieve organisational aims. It is more likely to happen when employees' individual goals are coherent with organisational ones and people can realise their needs through their job. Because not all needs can be satisfied by regular duties, people often take extra-role actions, amongst which is Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB). It is a subject of research all over the world mainly because of its beneficial influence on organisational performance. Podsakoff at al. wrote that OCB might contribute to competitive advantage created mainly by employees[1]. Motivated and engaged people want to create successful companies as they can see the connection between achieving both personal and organisational success. That is why they decide to go beyond their formal contracts when it may have positive results for their company and willingly help others, take additional functions, attend non-mandatory but important meetings, obey the rules even if no one is looking at them or work extra hours without complaining.

The motivational literature enumerates three goals that encourage people to act: achievement striving, status striving, and communion striving[2]. That is why the basis of the research on OCB in that paper is McClelland's human motivation theory in which those motives are named respectively: need of achievement, need of power and need of affiliation. The aim of the paper is to identify the relations between OCB and personal motives that trigger that kind of behaviour.

2. Literature Review

The classic definition of OCB is one coined by D. W. Organ according to whom OCB is "individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly recognized by the formal reward system and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization"[3]. To distinguish that kind of behaviour from others actions of employees one has to check its three features. First of all, OCB is discretionary which means that it is not included in job description and is matter of an individual choice rather than any requirements. What is more, if employees do not take any kind of OCB, they will not be punished as it is an extra-role behaviour so it cannot be demanded. Secondly, the behaviour has to be somehow beneficial for the organisation. The research results show that OCB might improve organisational effectiveness, flexibility or productivity [4]. It may also help in the process of newcomers' adaptation, building loyalty and engagement as well as the sense of organisational belonging. Thirdly, OCB is not recognised in formal reward system so it is more likely to be trigger with intrinsic than extrinsic motives. A person does not expect any credit for OCB so it should be tightly connected to one from the main needs enumerated by McClelland. Even if a person helps somebody out of selfish reasons, there is a chance that also affiliation, power or/and organisational loyalty are important factors that trigger OCB [5].

Although in the literature are different classifications of OCB's dimension, for the purpose of the paper was used classification authored by Podsakoff at al. as it is coherent with questionnaire used for empirical research. The systematisation enumerates the following five dimensions: altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy and civic virtue. Altruistic behaviour is connected with helping others, especially colleagues who were absent recently, who have heavy workloads or problems at work. Altruists are constantly ready to help people in general and often reach helping hand to new employees, even if it is not their duty. Conscientiousness reveals in high work attendance and obeying organisational rules and regulations

even if nobody is watching. Employees don't take extra breaks at work and believe that people should work honestly for honest wage. The next OCB dimension – sportsmanship – is reversely coded as it contains not really beneficial kinds of behaviour. There are the following: wasting huge amounts of time complaining on trivial matters, focusing on faults and problems rather than on positive side of work, exaggerating all problems and putting blame for all mistakes on organisation. Podsakoff at al. measure courtesy within organisation by features like employee's attempts to prevent problems with colleagues, taking into consideration how behaviour and taken actions influence others. What is more, courteous people don't abuse the rights of others and avoid creating problems for other employees. The fifth OCB's dimension is civic virtue which can be perceived as non-obligatory participation in organisational life. People with this feature attend non-mandatory meetings which are considered important, conduct additional functions that have positive influence on company image, keep up with all information and changes within the organisation [6]. Particular kind of behaviour might be a result of different motives dependently on what is important for people and which need they want to satisfy.

Achievement need (*n* Achievement) reveals in desire of doing something well according to personal performance standards, trying to achieve something with use of different means or in reacting with sadness or joy as a result of someone's actions [7]. Individuals with high *n* Achievement act with hope of success and perform better when work conditions are task-oriented. What is more, to work harder they need a moderate challenge [8]. In terms of OCB, people with *n* Achievement might willingly take actions connected to Conscientiousness as they like to use their time efficiently so they often stay long hours to finish a project, don't take extra breaks. To be the best in the company, they also obey all rules independently whether they are watched or not.

People with high need of power (*n* Power) like to work in group because they want to be in the centre of attention. People who work with them should respect them and be loyal supporters. They are likely to take competitive and assertive activities and take actions which may preserve their reputation and prestige [9]. Power motive might lead to OCB in dimension of civic virtue as people who want to influence others have to be well informed and take part in all important events within the organisation. They may also help new employees or people who can't solve emerging problem if they respect them, obey their advice and act in accordance with their expectations.

The most characteristic behaviour for people with high need of affiliation (*n* Affiliation) is interaction. They like doing things with other people but further research revealed that it does not improve their social skills because need of affiliation is connected with doing things with friends not with strangers or people in general [10]. People with high *n* Affiliation want to be liked and approved of and want to build close, friendly and harmonious relationships with others, they also prefer to work in a group based on cooperation than in one that is based on rivalry [11]. Out of that motive they might be willing to help others in different situations and might be more courteous so avoid creating problems for colleagues, respect rights of others or consider the impact of their behaviour on co-workers.

3. Methodology and Pilot Research Results

Empirical research required joining of two questionnaires: one measuring peoples' motives and the second which measured OCB. To identify which of the three needs is dominant, respondents filled in McClelland's Motive Questionnaire. They were asked to agree or disagree with 30 statements and depending on the answer were divided into three groups of respondents with high need of achievement, affiliation or power. To measure OCB there was used questionnaire developed by Podsakoff at al. that distinguishes five dimensions of OCB described above. It contains 22 questions based on a seven-point Likert-type scale where 1 means "strongly disagree" while 7 – "strongly agree". Thanks to using Google Forms, the research is not limited to Polish employees and contains respondents representing different nationalities like Polish, Ukrainian, German, Murcia, Lithuanian, Portuguese, American, Spanish, Chinese, French and Italian.

Results of pilot study conducted in May 2017 revealed that, within the sample, the highest level for all dimensions of OCB in general have people with high *n* Power which might be surprising especially in the case of altruistic behaviour which seemed to be characteristic for people with high *n* Affiliation. The respondents who take actions connected to all dimensions of OCB the least frequently are people with high *n* Achievement. However, the differences in frequency are not significant, the biggest difference is seen in altruistic behaviour where average for *n* Power is 5,89, for *n* Affiliation - 5,38 and for *n* Achievement - 5,27. Average above 5 situates answers between "I rather agree" and "I agree". The lowest level in general has sportsmanship dimension which was reversely coded. Proximity to central answer – 4 – might mean that respondents, perceiving that kind of behaviour not really beneficial for organisation, preferred to mark the central answer rather than avoid answering those questions at all. Full range of the answers is illustrated in Figure 1.

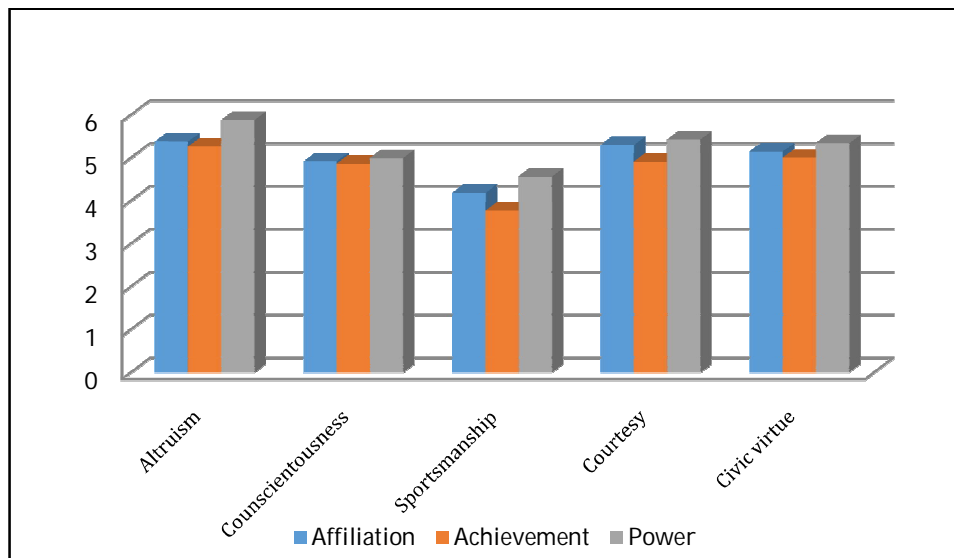


Figure 1: OCB dimensions in general according to the main motive
Source: Based on research result.

Figure 2 is an illustration of OCB dimension called Altruism. It is measured with 5 statements that are connected to helping employees in different situations like employee's absence, heavy workload, adaptation of new employee, problems at work and helping others in general. Average for all answers in this field exceeds 5 which means that respondents often help their colleagues and perceive that behaviour as a proper one. Within the research sample the most willingly in mentioned situations help people with *n* Power which can be seen in the highest agreement with the last sentence: I am always ready to lend a helping hand to those around me (6,14 for *n* Power) as well as with other 3 sentences. People with high need for power like influence others and while helping others, especially new employees, might teach colleagues how they should behave. Only in situation when others have heavy workload the most willing to help are people with *n* Affiliation (5,62) over *n* Power (5,57) and *n* Achievement (5,24). It is worth noticing that all three groups of respondents are the most likely to help in situation when their colleagues have work related problems which suits to all motives as affiliation need might be satisfied by cooperation in solving problems, people with high power motive might realise their needs by showing a proper solution and need for achievement might be fulfilled by realising goals and being excellent in problem solving.

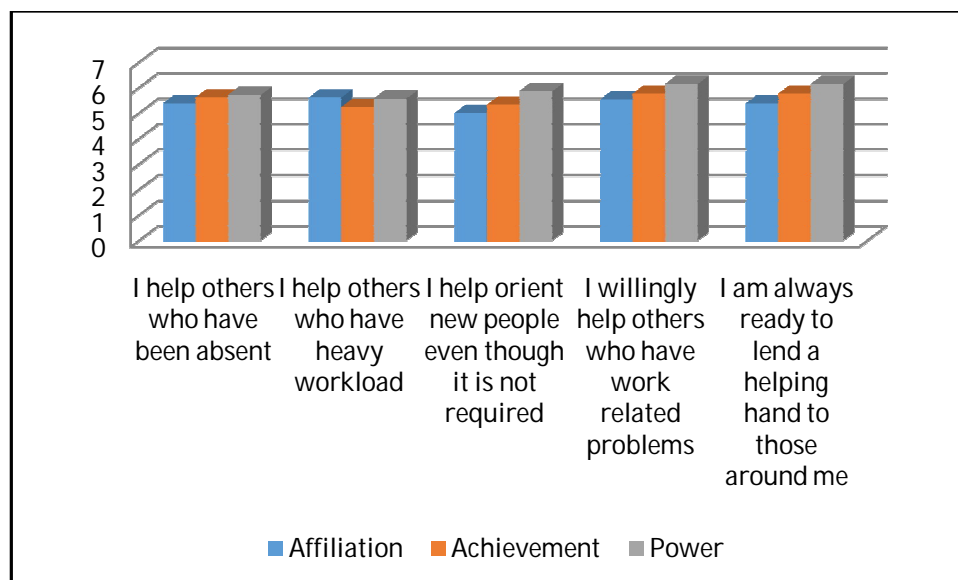


Figure 2: Altruism
Source: Based on research result

The second OCB dimension is Conscientiousness. It is connected to obeying the rules in different situations, additional attendance at work, not making undeserved breaks at work, behaving properly even if no one is watching or deserving the payment through conducting the duties thoroughly. The highest level of agreement with those sentences within the sample have people with *n* Achievement which might be a result of high standard of professional and personal excellence and

persistence in achieving stated goals. A person who wants to accomplish the task in the best possible way often work additional hours, does not have time for extra breaks which distract them from work and independently from being controlled works as well as possible. Characteristic for respondents with all three needs is the lowest level of agreement with the sentence: "I do not take extra breaks" which oscillates around 4.5. Such a close proximity to the central response might mean that they spend some time e.g. surfing the Internet, especially using social media or chatting with co-workers about private life, instead of realising their professional duties. It is likely especially for people with high need of affiliation (4,23) who want to have good relationships with others. The responses are shown in Figure 3.

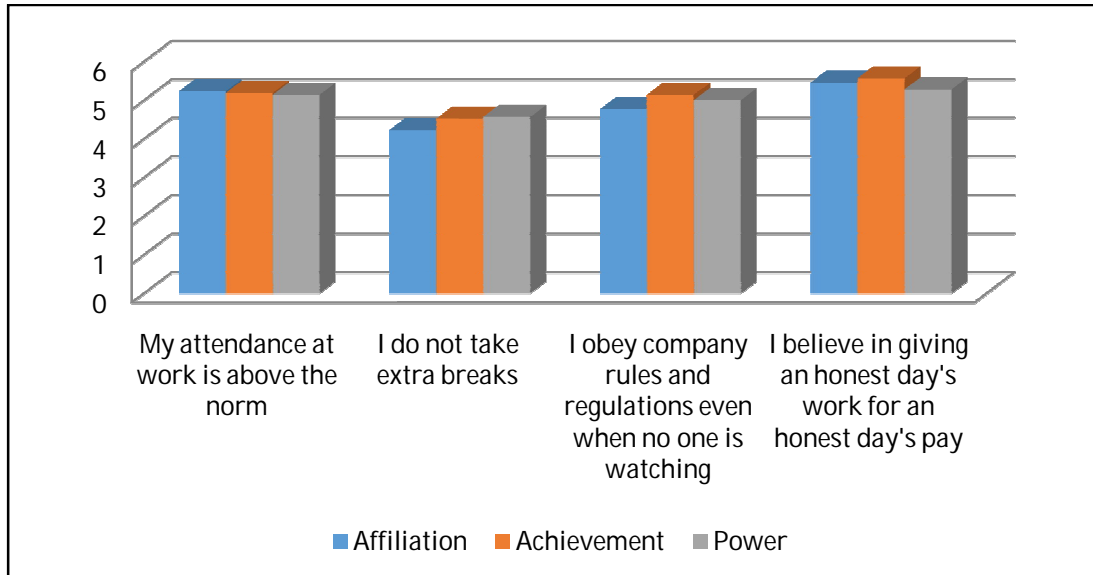


Figure 3: Conscientiousness
Source: Based on research result

The only OCB dimension that was reversely coded is Sportsmanship which reveals in tolerance of not ideal work conditions without complaining. In the case of that dimension agreement with all sentences is below 5 which means that respondents are not likely to complain about the working conditions. Full range of answers is shown in Figure 4. The least popular opinion for *n* Achievement (3,48) and *n* Affiliation (3,54) is "I always focus on what's wrong, rather than the positive side" while amongst people with high need of power this sentence has the highest level of agreement (4,74) from all elements of sportsmanship. Within the sample, the group with the highest level of sportsmanship are people with high *n* Power. The question is whether they can take any actions to improve their organisation's performance or complain without willingness to change situation.

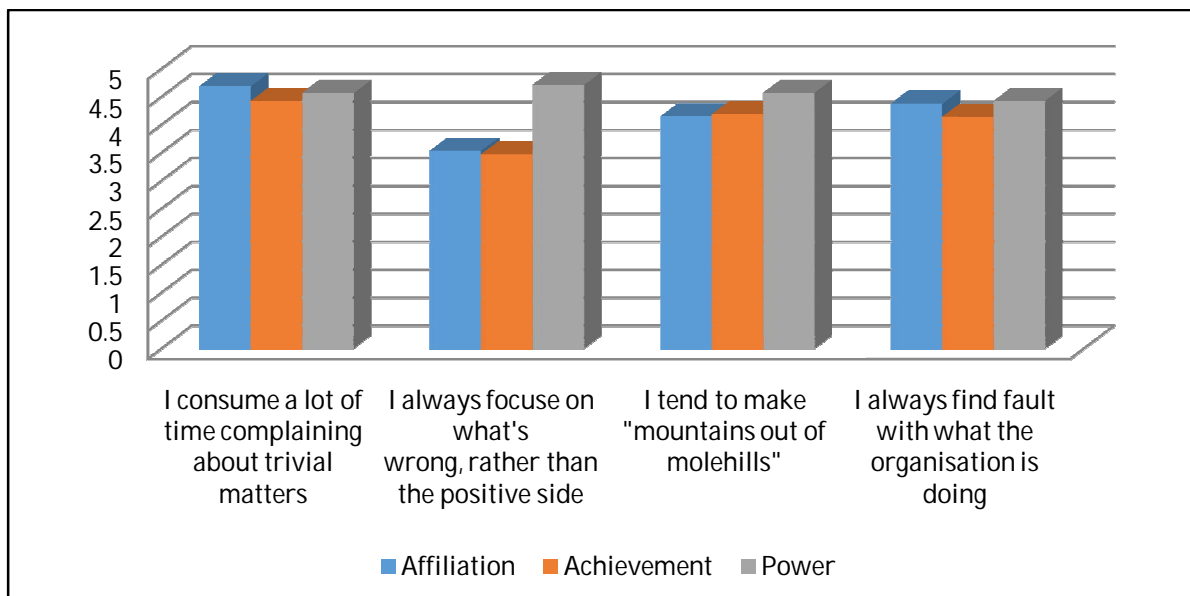


Figure 4: Sportsmanship
Source: Based on research result

Figure 5 illustrates different kind of behaviour connected with Courtesy which in theory of OCB means behaviour that prevents occurring work-related problems. Within the sample courtesy is a dimension with the highest rate of agreement. Respondents with high need for affiliation agree with the sentence: "I do not abuse the rights of others" (6) over high n Power (5,86) and n Achievement (5,52) what situates all answers between I agree and I rather agree. That might mean that for majority of respondents, employees' rights are fundamental and they see their violation as something unacceptable. Respondents with high need of power agree with the sentence: "I am mindful of how my behaviour affects other people's job"(6) which is coherent with willingness for having influence on others as well as with being role models for employees. Out of the same reasons characteristic for high n Power might be considering the impact of their action on co-workers. Courtesy shows that people with high need of affiliation within the sample avoid conflicts as they try to avoid creating problems for co-workers (5,92) and take steps to avoid problems with other workers (5,31).

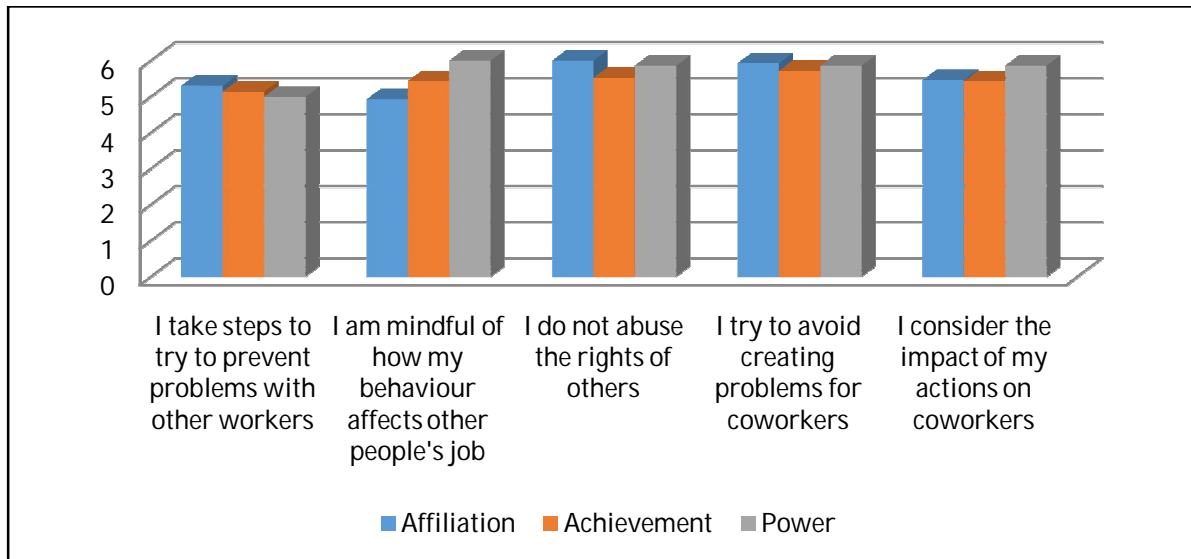


Figure 5: Courtesy
Source: Based on research result

The fifth dimension of OCB is Civic virtue considered as participation and involvement in organisational life as well as being concerned about different events which take place in it, information about the organisation and implemented changes. The most popular element of civic virtue within the sample is being informed about organisational announcements, memos, and so on (n Affiliation – 5,46; n Power – 5,42; n Achievement – 5,38). Independently from dominant motivational factor respondents rather agree with necessity of attending non-mandatory meetings which are considered important because answers oscillate around 5,15. The last two elements of civic virtue which are: attending functions that are not required but help the company image and a breasting of changes within organisation are less important for people with n Affiliation (4,85 for both sentences) then for n Power (5,14; 5,14) and n Achievement (5,14; 5,05) . All answers are shown in Figure 6.

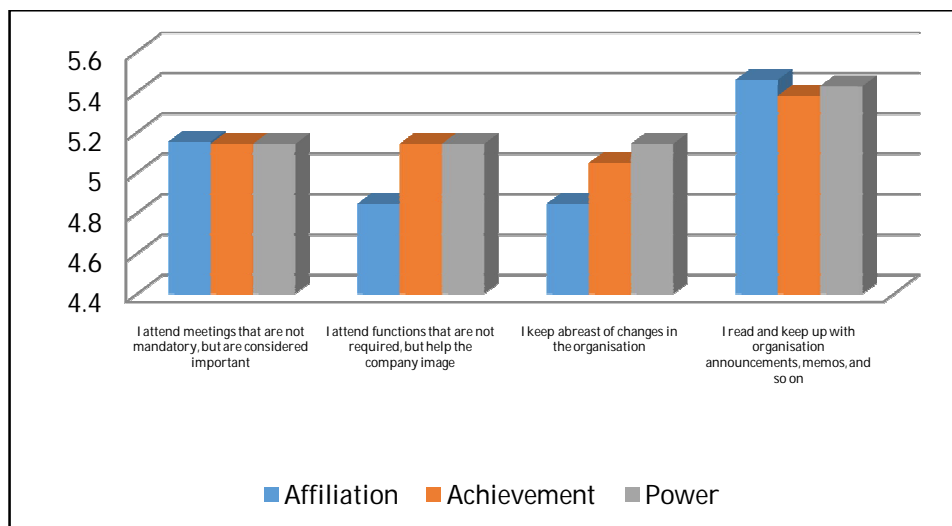


Figure 6: Civic virtue
Source: Based on research result

4. Limitation of the Research

The pilot research on influence of motivating factors on Organisational Citizenship Behaviour had few drawbacks and revealed some possible improvements that could be used in further research on bigger scale. First of all, the small group of respondents that is acceptable for a pilot research, makes impossible any statistical analysis and presentation of generalised conclusions. Out of the same reason there is no use to analyse relations within different sex, age or nationality groups, however in bigger group it might be really interesting analysis. Secondly, fixing age compartments in accordance with generations active on the job market could enable to make conclusions about behaviour characteristic for employees representing each generation. Thirdly, changes in contemporary business are strongly connected with usage of social media which can be a serious distractor at work. That is why adding a question about using social media in work hours to sportsmanship dimension might be beneficial. For young people from Z-generation using social media might not be perceived as undeserved break as they are used to it from early childhood and became important part of their life.

5. Conclusions

As stated above, OCB might be beneficial for organisational performance in many different aspects like staff cooperation, respecting shared norms and rules, better usage of resources or increase in productivity. At the same time, employees, who in contemporary business conditions decide about organisational success, are free to decide whether they want to act as good citizens of the company and take some additional actions or focus only on their duties which are recognised in motivational system. That is why research on motives that lead to OCB might be helpful in finding proper ways to trigger such kind of behaviour and encourage employees to satisfy their needs like power, affiliation or achievement inside the company and at the same time to contribute to organisational performance. The results of the pilot research, although not entitling to generalise conclusions, show that people are willing to take particular types of OCB out of different motives. The highest level of OCB, independently from analysed dimension, have respondents with high need of power while the lowest – people with high need of achievement. It is so even in the case of altruistic behaviour which might be perceived as natural for people with high *n* Affiliation. Definitely the subject is actual, interesting and worth taking further research on a bigger scale either in the field of management, or psychology as creating conditions fostering OCB might result in dynamic development of both employees and organisation.

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