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Personality factors affecting an applicant's decision to participate in recruitment for a position below heir skill level

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The article is concerned with an applicant's decision to participate in recruitment for a position that requires lower skills than he/she actually has. The correlates investigated in the research project included recruitment factors related to the candidate's family, financial, and health situation, random choices and personality. A sample comprising 329 people was investigated, and the study was carried out in seven Polish voivodeships: Lublin, Subcarpathian, Masovian, Świętokrzyskie, Łódź, Opole and Greater Poland. During the experiments, candidates were being recruited for the post of a cashier–salesperson. The experiments were performed in groups consisting of 12–19 persons. The Recruitment Decision Scale (RDS), developed by the present author especially for this study, and the International Personality Item Pool–Big Five Markers-20 (IPIP-BFM-20) were used in the study. The results provide a profile of a candidate who decides to apply for a position below his or her qualifications. According to the statistical analyses, the candidates presented low levels of such personality traits as extraversion, emotional stability and agreeableness. The analyses indicated that an important role was played by family and financial factors. Moreover, it was found that the candidate's decision to apply for the job was additionally connected with other people's opinions on the prospective employer and availability of the information on the job offer.

Key words: recruitment and selection; decisions; decision analysis; required lower qualifications; underemployment; Recruitment Decision Scale (RDS).

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays unemployment still continues to be a major psychological and social problem in Poland. According to a survey by the Central Statistical Office, the unemployment rate in 2017 was 4.6% and the number of unemployed registered in labour offices was more than 1,117 000 people. To compare, the unemployment rate in other EU countries, such as Germany, France or the Czech Republic, was 3%. In this context, a good job fit, i.e. a good match between a job and the employee's qualifications and education, becomes a crucial issue. Also, employment planning and providing employees with possibilities of professional development are vital problems that any organization must consider. They are connected with sourcing a sufficient number of employees, which requires operational research on the use and development of human resources, and forecasting as well as overcoming problems resulting from excess workforce (Schulz & Schulz, 2006).

An unemployed person is "an individual deprived of permanent income received as an equivalent for work, who considerably limits utilization of his or her own professional abilities" (Terelak, 1993 p. 268). The definition of unemployment in accordance with the Act of 20 April 2004 on Promotion of Employment and Labour Market Institutions emphasizes also the aspect of the ability and readiness to start full-time employment applicable in a given profession or service or other paid work (Journal of Laws 2008.69415).

People who seek work take part in recruitment and are thus engaged in a process of making a psychological decision. According to Biela, Chlewiński and Walesa (1978), a decision-maker should consciously anticipate future consequences of their present actions and assess whether they can fulfill their expectations in the given motivational conditions. The decision-maker has to answer the following question: which of the possible actions can lead to the fulfillment of his or her expectations in the given motivational and environmental circumstances? In psychology, decision making is always considered in the context of the decision maker (the subject performing the act of decision making) and his/her current situation. Thus, it is important to analyse each action of the subject in terms of the context in which the action occurs i.e. the context of work and development or the situation of an unemployed person (Biela, 2011).

THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS

The theoretical framework of the present study is based on the psychological theory of decision making concerning people who seek work. The situation of decision-making "[...] s a subjective state which occurs in some special motivational conditions. The subject, known as a decision-maker, experiences difficulties concerning behaviour [...]. The decision-maker has a spectrum of possible actions to take in given motivational and environmental conditions [...]" (Biela et al., 1978). Biela (2011) emphasizes that decision making in

psychology is always connected with the subject of the action and the situation in which the subject finds himself or herself. Thus, it is vital to view the actions of the subject in the context of the specific situation, which in this study is participating in a recruitment process. An individual is faced with an uncertain situation, but is willing to take the risk by 'entering' the process (the game), because it is likely that their choice will result in a favourable situation (winning). According to Simon (1994), people who make a decision often choose the strategy of viewing the possible options in a random way and selecting the first one that captures their interest. This strategy is associated with a non-psychological factor—a random choice.

Decision-making is a complex psychological process which involves psychological and non-psychological elements. Research on making everyday life decisions indicates that a decision-maker's knowledge and experience as well as his or her family situation and health all affect their decision (Svenson, 1992, 2011). Also essential is the assessment of the importance of information on the accessibility of choices (alternatives) (Rohrbaugh & Shanteau, 1999). Whether or not a person enters the decision-making procss, depends on whether they recognize the information they have collected as an important reason for making the choice. What is a relevant item of information depends on the cognitive processes, experience (personality traits) and context (family life, health, financial situation) (Biela, 2008). An individual who is in a problem situation may choose to take no action at all or try to achieve his goal despite the lack of appropriate means, e.g. participate in a recruitment process in spite of not having sufficient qualifications.

The term qualifications derives from the Latin word *qualitas*, which means education, preparation to practise a particular profession (*Dictionary of Foreign Terms*, 1998). In the Lublin Questionnaire on Job Analysis, qualifications are defined as dispositions required in a specific post, which are subgroups representing categories of dispositions to work in a specific post (Biela, 1992). Nowacki (2004, p. 117) defines professional qualifications as "a system of attitudes, health and physical conditions, and sensorimotor, practical and mental skills that allow one to carry out tasks that are part of a particular position dedicated to the performance of a specific type of actions that constitute a profession."

There is not much research on the psychological situation of the underemployed. In the English literature, the notion of applying for the position that is below the applicant's qualifications is defined as seeking work of lower quality or standard than the applicant could do (Feldman, 1996). From this perspective, underemployment means employment which does not meet the abovementioned standards. According to an analysis of psychological and health-related results of underemployment, "[...] the notion is defined in terms of adequacy of exchange between the household [...] and the economic system, which is assessed on the basis of the criterion of justice. The point of reference for these assessments is the minimum of adequacy acceptable in the light of social norms. From this perspective, the exchange can be inadequate

for three reasons: the number of working hours, pay, and the use of qualifications" (Frieland & Price, 2003). In Poland, there is no system that would categorize qualifications acquired through formal and non-formal education or provide a qualifications assessment policy for migration. Therefore, it has been decided that Poland, among other countries, needs its own qualifications framework and the Polish Qualifications Framework has been developed and implemented since 2008.

Barrick and Mount (1991) studied the relationship between psychological personality factors and work criteria for various professions. They obtained different results depending on the work post. Agreeableness was the only personality dimension to show positive relationships with all work criteria in all professions. Extraversion turned out to be an important dimension in jobs that require social interaction such as managers, shop assistants and salespersons. Openness to experience played a vital role in transferring knowledge and in training in all professions analysed. Personality traits that favour coping in stressful situations include openness, extraversion, optimism, positive attitude to others, agreeableness and emotional stability (Antonovsky, 2005). Individuals who possess these features are likely to express their emotions and not to accumulate negative ones. They also tend to use social support. Agreeable people are open to interaction, perceive threat as less prominent, do not focus on emotions, which is reflected by lower levels of misery and hopelessness they experience (Plopa, 1992, 1996).

EXPERIMENTAL

Problem, research question, hypotheses

The research problem investigated in the present study is what personality factors affect a person's decision to participate in recruitment for a position that requires lower qualifications than he/she actually has. A first research question concerns the relationship between personality variables and the decision to participate in recruitment for a post that one is overqualified for.

P 1: Is there a relationship between personality variables and the decision to participate in recruitment for a position that requires lower qualifications than the candidate has?

The following hypotheses were formulated with regard to this research question:

H 1.1: There is a relationship between extraversion and the decision to participate in recruitment for a position that requires lower qualifications than the candidate has.

H 1.2: There is a relationship between agreeableness and the decision to participate in recruitment for a position that requires lower qualifications than the candidate has.

H 1.3. There is a relationship between emotional stability and the decision to participate in recruitment for a position that requires lower qualifications than the candidate has.

Some confirmation for the hypotheses can be found in scientific literature. Extroverts aim high in their professional ambitions and are likely to raise standards. Extraversion favours greater job satisfaction and protects individuals from experiencing situational anxiety as well as encouraging them to undertake more attractive actions, maintaining good relations with others and using social support (Brie, 1998, cited by Zalewska, 2009). Agreeableness has also been shown to play a vital role at work. The relationships between the Big Five and work criteria were studied with regard to different professions by Barrick and Mount (1991). Agreeableness, as the only personality dimension, proved to be positively related to all work criteria in all professions. Extraversion turned out to be a significant dimension in occupations that require social interaction such as managers, shop assistants and salespersons. A study by Dunn, Mount, Barrick and Ones (1995) demonstrated that emotional stability was a quality highly desired by prospective employers. Research results show that individuals with low emotional stability may tend to underestimate themselves and seek work that is inconsistent with their skills.

A second research question refers to the relationship between recruitment factors and the decision to participate in recruitment for a postion that requires leower qualifications than the applicant has:

P 2: What is the relationship between recruitment factors and the decision to participate in recruitment for a postion that requires lower qualifications than the applicant has?

Because this question has an explorative character, no associated hypotheses were formulated.

Methods

The survey was performed in the form of an interviewer–respondent interaction using a set of questionnaires with the instructions on how to read and complete them.

Recruitment Decision Scale (RDS). The Recruitment Decision Scale (RDS) was developed by the present author especially for this study according to the test development procedure by Hornowska (2010) and based on the theoretical assumptions desribed earlier in this article (research by Belfield, 2009; Dodey & Prause, 1998). First, items corresponding to each variable of a recruitment decision were formulated (family situation, health, financial situation, random incidents). A total of 29 items were proposed in the first stage. The items were assessed by six competent judges who checked the contents accuracy of the items with regard to the definition presented. Moreover, the items were checked for language. Twelve items with the lowest accuracy were removed and the items which were assessed as linguistically incorrect in the pilot study were rephrased. The revised instrument was tested using factor

analysis, Cronbach's Alpha (reliability) and discriminant analysis, and the scale was rephrased again and three items were removed: (1) "When I look for a job, my relatives have the final say in my choice," (2) "So far, when I've been looking for a new job, there has been a problem of a possible lack of time in my family," (3) "My financial situation is so good that I don't have to undertake work that is consisten with my qualifications." When the unreliable items were removed, a total of 14 statements were included in the final version of the scale with four items each in the Family, Health and Financial subscales and two items in the Random Incidents subscale. The items are rated on a five-point Likert scale from 1—I definitely disagree to 4—I definitely agree. The higher a factor's score on the scale, the more important it is for the person surveyed. The psychometric properties of RDS are satisfactory and allow to utilise it in scientific research. The reliability for the entire scale measured using Cronbach's α was .73.

IPIP-BFM-20. IPIP-BFM-20 is a short questionnaire for measuring personality in line with the broadly used Big Five model. This instrument measures five personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, an intellect) and consists of 20 items. It is a short version of the 50-item Big Five Markers questionnaire from the resources of the International Personality Item Pool, the Polish version of which was developed by Strus, Cieciuch and Rowiński in 2014. Based on the results of a pilot study, a 12-item instrument consisting of items in the subscales of Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Emotional Stability was used in the present study (Conscientiousness and Intellect were not included in the surveys). The items were rated on a five-point Likert scale from 1—very inaccurate, to 5—very accurate. The accuracy (tested using confirmative factor analysis and analysis of correlation of the questionnaire scales with other measures of the five personality traits) and reliability (measured by Cronbach's α = .61) of the questionnaire were satisfactory, allowing its use in scientific research. The results of the research conducted so far suggest that the Polish version of the test is at least as good an instrument for measuring the Big Five personality traits as the original version (Topolewska, Skimina, Strus, Cieniuch, & Rowiński, 2014).

Variables and their operationalisation

The dependent variable in the present study was the decision to participate in a recruitment process. This variable was operationalized on a rank scale with a dichotomous division into two groups (ranges). The variable "decision to apply for a position below the applicant's qualifications" is a sum of education, length of service and experience as assessed by the candidate in the questionnaire. The characteristics of the two study groups are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

The range of the decision to participate in recruitment for a position below and "other than below" a candidate's qualifications

Components of qualifications	The range of the decision to participate in recruitment for a position other than below the candidate's qualifications	The range of the decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications
Education	1–4	5–7
Length of service	1–2	3–4
Experience	0–3	4–9
Scope (sum)	11–20	2–10

The ranges of the two research groups concerning the decision to participate in the recruitment process are shown in Table 1. The first range concerns the decision to participate in recruitment for a job that is other than below the candidate's qualifications, and the second one is the range of the decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications. The group of candidates who applied for a job other than below their qualifications included individuals who applied for positions matching or exceeding their level of skill. The total range of the "below qualifications" group was on a scale from 11 to 20, whereas the range of the "other than below qualifications" group was on a scale from 2 to 10.

Procedure and partcipants

Data were collected using paper-and-pencil questionnaires. A total of $N = 329$ people participated in the study, and $N = 302$ (261 females and 41 males) were included in further analyses. The research was conducted in 7 Polish voivodeships: Lublin, Subcarpathian, Mazovian, Świętokrzyskie, Łódź, Opole and Great Poland, in the following cities: Lublin, Warsaw, Rzeszów, Poznań, Kielce, Łódź, Sandomierz, Opole, Gorzyce and Lipsko. The surveys were adminstered during recruitment for the position of cashier/shop assistant. Study groups comprised 12–19 people. The participants were informed about the scientific aim of the study and its anonymity.

In the first part of the questionnaire, the candidates were asked to provide their sociodemographic data concerning gender, age, place of residence, education, type of study program, employment status, profession, material status, participation in professional development training courses, and history of employment. Next, the participants described their work experience from the last three jobs. The respondents assessed the level of their job (basic, specialist or managerial) and described their responsibilities and work experience in the last three months. This part of the questionnaire allowed to

determine, on a scale from 0 to 9, the level of person–job fit for the 302 candidates. In the next part of the study the participants completed RDS and IPIP-BFM-20 forms. In the last part of the survey, the respondents assessed certain aspects which could affect the decision to participate in a recruitment process such as perceptions of the company offering the job, other people's opinions about the employer, location of the workplace, availability of recruitment information and the manner of submission of application documents. The last question enabled to exclude from the study, people who applied for other positions, including one's that matched their qualifications.

Table 2.

Descriptive statistics of the study group

Variable	Min	Max	Mean (*M*)	Standard Deviation (*SD* %)
City	1	11	6.6	2.9
Professional status	1	2	1.69	0.46
Gender	1	2	1.14	0.54
Age	18	45	26.85	5.62
Place of residence	1	4	2.52	1.21
Education	1	7	34.45	5.89
Type of study program	1	4	1.37	0.75
Position	1	3	1.3	0.49
Material status	1	5	2.78	0.98
Development training	1	2	1.65	0.48
Length of service	1	4	2.87	1.06

The descriptive statistics of the respondents are shown in Table 2. Seventy percent of the surveyed (M = 1.69, SD = 0.46) were unemployed and 30% had a job. As far as work experience was concerned, 37% (M = 2.87, SD = 1.06) of the participants had worked for more than three years, 26% had a work history of one to three years, 24% had work experience of up to one year and 13% had no work experience. A vast majority of the candidates (93%) did physical work at the time of the study, 7% were white collar workers (customer service specialists, secretaries), and none held a managerial position. Also, a predominant part of the respondents (68%) (M = 1.65, SD = 0.48) had not participated in development training courses. Candidates who had taken part in training courses had most frequently chosen computer courses (3%), category B driving courses (4%) and language courses (2%). In terms of material status, the respondents who rated their financial situation as satisfactory constituted the most numerous group at 43% (M = 2.78, SD = 0.98); 38% of the participants rated their economic standing as quite

satisfactory and 6% as difficult. As far as the place of residence was concerned, 31% (M = 2.52, SD = 1.21) of the candidates lived in rural areas, 29% in big cities of over one thousand inhabitants and 27% in medium cities below one thousand inhabitants. The least numerous group (13%) lived in towns below ten thousand inhabitants. Regarding education, the majority of the respondents (80%) were not students at the time of the survey, 13.5% were following an extramular program and only 6% studied full-time. As for the level of education, 29% of the surveyed had general secondary education and 25% had technical secondary education. Respondents with higher education constituted 21% of the group researched and 1% were candidates who had primary education or a post-graduate diploma.

RESULTS

Differences between groups regarding the decision to participate in recruitment

The descriptive statistics of the Decisive Factors Scale for the decisive Family, Health and Financial factors and Random Incidents are presented in Table 3.

Table 3.

Descriptive statistics of the Decisive Factors Scale

Variable	Min	Max	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD %)	Skewness	Kurtosis
Family	1	4.5	2.05	0.74	0.76	0.28
Health	1	5	1.48	0.65	1.67	3.29
Financial	1	5	2.00	0.67	0.45	0.48
Random incidents	1	5	1.65	1.01	1.70	2.26

The variables shown in Table 3 are characterised by scores ranging from one to five. The highest mean and standard deviation were obtained for the Family and Financial factors. All variables have a right-handed asymmetry of distribution and are leptokurtic, which means the scores are concentrated around the mean.

The results of an analysis of the mean scores obtained by the two groups of participants for the decisive Family, Health, Financial and Random factors are shown in Table 4.

Table 4.

Aspects of decisive factors in the group of people who decided to participate in recruitment for a position below their qualifications and in the group of people who decide to participate in recruitment for a position 'other than below' their qualifications; Student's t-distribution

Recruitment Decision Scale (RDS)	Decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications *N* = 125		Decision to participate in recruitment for a position 'other than below' the candidate's qualifications *N* = 167		Significance of differences		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p*	Es
Family	1.96	0.71	2.13	0.76	−1.85	.040	.23
Health	1.44	0.63	1.52	0.67	−1.09	.270	.12
Financial	2.16	0.66	1.89	0.67	3.43	.001	.41
Random incidents	1.64	1.05	1.62	0.98	0.13	.900	.02

Significant differences between mean scores were noted for Family factors. Participants who applied for a position below their qualifications were characterised by significantly lower levels of Family factors than the ones who applied for the positions other than below their qualifications (t = -1.85, p = .040, Es = .23). Significant differences were also found for Financial factors, with individuals who had decided to apply for a position below their qualifications scoring significantly higher than the 'other than below qualifications' group (t = 3.43, p = .001, Es = .41). No statistically significant diffrences between the groups were found for Health factors and Random Incidents (t = -1.09, p = .270, Es = .12; t = 0.13, p = .900, Es = .02, respectively).

Differences between groups in selected Personality traits

The descriptive statistics for the IPIP-BFM-20 factors: Extraversion, Agreeableness and Emotional Stability are shown in Table 5.

Table 5.

Descriptive statistics of the IPIP-BFM-20 variables

Variable	Min	Max	Mean (*M*)	Standard Deviation (*SD* %)	Skewness	Kurtosis
Extraversion	6	20	14.99	3.19	−0.41	−0.21
Agreeableness	8	20	17.07	2.74	−0.81	−0.21
Emotional stability	4	20	12.80	2.63	−0.06	0.05

The scores on the variables presented in Table 5 are in the range from four to two, which is identical with the theoretical range. The highest mean was obtained for Extraversion. An analysis of the distribution of results showed that this factor also had the highest standard deviation at 3.19. All variables had a left-hand asymmetry of distribution. The scores for Extraversion and Areeableness were weakly platykurtic, which meant they were less concentrated around the mean, whereas the scores for Emotional stability were weakly leptokurtic.

The mean scores for the personality traits: Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Emotional Stability by position type ('below qualifications' vs. 'other than below qualifications') are shown in Table 6.

Table 6.

Personality traits in the group of people who decided to participate in recruitment for a position below their qualifications and in the group of people who decided to participate in recruitment for a position 'other than below' their qualifications; Student's t-distribution

	Decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications *N* = 125		Decision to participate in recruitment for a position 'other than below' the candidate's qualifications *N* = 167		Significance of differences		
IPIP-BFM-20	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p*	Es
Extraversion	14.73	2.96	15.08	3.38	−0.94	.350	.11
Agreeableness	17.45	2.52	16.88	2.82	1.77	.080	.21
Emotional stability	12.97	2.54	12.65	2.68	1.05	.300	.12

No statistically significant differences between mean scores were found for these personality traits (t = -0.94, p = .350, Es = .11; t = 1.77, p = .080, Es = .21; t = 1.05, p = .300, Es = .12, respecively).

Relationship between the independent variables and the decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications

Correlations between the scales of the RDS (Family, Health, Financial and Random Incidents) and the decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications, quantified as a general score and length of service, work experience and level of education, are presented in Table 7.

Table 7.

Spearman's rank correlation coefficients between the scales of the Recruitment Decision Scale (RDS) and the decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications (cosidered as the general score, length of service, work experience and education)

RDS	Decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications (General score)	Decision to participate in recruitment for the position below the candidate's qualifications (Length of service)	Decision to participate in recruitment for the position below the candidate's qualifications (Work experience)	Decision to participate in recruitment for the position below the candidate's qualifications (Education)
Family	.017*	.055	−.199	.161
Health	.031	−.022	−.092	.129
Financial	.035	.001	−.094	.101
Random incidents	.053	.064	−.116	.124

Note. * $p < .050$, ** $p < .010$, *** $p < .001$.

In the group of people who had decided to participate in recruitment for a position below their qualifications, the stronger the Family factor, the higher was the general score for the decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications. This dependency was not observed for the components of the variable. Also, no relationship was found between the remaining variables: Health, Financial and Random Incident.

The correlations between the scales of the IPIP-BFM-20 and the decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifi-

cations considered as the general score, length of service, work experience and level of education are presented in Table 8.

Table 8.

Spearman's rank correlation coefficients between the scales of the IPIP-BFM-20 and the decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications (considered as the general score, length of service, work experience and education)

IPIP-BFM-20	Decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications (General score)	Decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications (Length of service)	Decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications (Work experience)	Decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications (Education)
Extraversion	−.217*	−.095	−.166	−.116
Agreeableness	−.028*	.132	.064	.137
Emotional stability	−.176*	.085	−.111	−.100

Note. * $p < .050$, ** $p < .010$, *** $p < .001$.

An analysis of the relationships shown in Table 8 in the group of people who had decided to participate in recruitment for a job below their qualifications showed that the lower were the levels of Extraversion, Agreeableness and Emotional Stability, the higher was the general score for the decision to participate in recruitment for a position below one's qualifications. For Agreeableness, the result was on the border of significance ($p = .080$). In the group of people who had decided to participate in recruitment for a position below their qualifications, no correlation was found between Extraversion, Agreeableness and Emotional Stability and their recrutiment decision measured in terms of length of service, work experience and level of education.

DISCUSSION

The first research question concerned the relationship between personality factors and the decision to participate in recruitment for a position that required lower qualifications than the candidate had. It was assumed that there was a relationship between individuals who decided to participate in such recruitment and personality factors such as extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability. The hypotheses regarding the first research question were partially confirmed by the results of the study. The comparison of means

between groups provided no ground for assuming that candidates who chose to apply for a position below their qualifications differed in personality traits from those who sought a job 'other than below' their qualifications. The results of the analyses indicated that the fact of applying did not differentiate the participants in terms of these variables.

In the group of applicants who took part in recruitment for a job below their qualifications, applicants with higher levels of extraversion were less likely to make a decision to apply for that kind of position. Research by Barrick and Mount (1991), Bing and Lounsbury (2000), Lowery and Krilowicz (1994) and Vinchur et al. (1998) indicates that people with a high level of extraversion tend to undertake work that involves contact with other people. They derive professional satisfaction from social interaction and are eager to exchange opinions and seek information. Extroverts aim high in their professional ambitions and are likely to raise standards. They are not afraid to take risk and thus tend to be promoted to managerial positions which involve managing people and being responsible for them. Extraversion favours greater work satisfaction and protects individuals from situational anxiety. Extroverts are willing to take more attractive actions, care for relations with others and use social support (Brie, 1998, cited by Zalewska, 2009). The results of the present study confirm these observations. People who show very low levels of extraversion are more likely to decide to participate in recruitment for a position below their qualifications. The results of the regression analysis for the general score indicate a significant role of extraversion in explaining the dependent variable. The model for the group of people who decided to participate in recruitment for a position below their qualifications contained the variables Extraversion and Prestige. The values of the coefficients suggests that the lower were the participants' scores on Prestige and Extraversion, the more likely they were to go for a job below their qualifications (the general score). The variables explained 7% of the model.

People with high emotional stability scores are calm and stable, do not get easily frustrated and do not have frequent mood swings. Dunn, Mount, Barrick and Ones (1995) point out that emotional stability is the most desired quality among prospective employers. Emotionally stable people can draw satisfaction from their work despite unfavourable working conditions—in this case being underemployed—and do not get disheartened easily. Our results demonstrate that the general score for the decision to participate in recruitment for a position below the candidate's qualifications increases along with a decrease in emotional stability. Candidates with a low level of emotional stability may evaluate their future job from the angle of emotions. Their emotions depend on how they are assessed by others. They can feel insecure if they do not meet the expectations of the future employer or if they are not able to perform the tasks that their new job involves. The results regarding the variable Agreeableness demonstrated that the relationship between agreeableness and the decision to participate in recruitment for a position

below the candidate's qualifications showed a trend toward significance. The lack of correlation between agreeableness and work satisfaction was demonstrated by research conducted among bank employees in Poland (Okoniewska, 2016). The fact that merely a trend toward significance was observed for this variable in the present study may have resulted from an insufficient number of people surveyed. There is a great probability that significance would have been obtained in a more numerous research group.

The second research question had an explorative character and concerned the relationship between recruitment factors and the decision to participate in recruitment for a position that required less skill than the candidate actually had. The results showed that people who opted to accept a position below their qualifications differed from those who decided to participate in recruitment for a position that matched or exceeded their qualifications with regard to Family and Financial factors. The significant differences indicated that in the case of people who participated in recruitment for a position below their qualifications, the family and the financial situation played a vital role in making this decision. The financial factor may have involved the desire to improve their financial situation. The first hypothesis indicates that this group of participants have a low level of emotional stability, which can result in a quick and emotional reaction to the improvement in the standard of living. It can be assumed that the respondents see their future job as a temporary way of earning a living and satisfying their material and living needs here and now, without planning future career development. A job inconsistent with their qualifications is acceptable in the short term, but once they have gained more experience, they will want to get promoted or change their job for one that will match their skills and experience.

The correlation analyses pointed to the importance of the Family factor. As the role of this factor increased, so did the general score for the decision to apply for a position below one's qualifications. The importance of the family and contact with relatives has also been observed in the previous hypotheses.

Research on work–life balance conducted in the USA and Europe (Sirgy & Lee, 2015) points to the great importance of the relationship between people's professional and private lives. A study involving 5,000 graduates of Michigan State University (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), in which 70% of the respondents were in a relationship (marriage or cohabitation), has indicated three spheres of life which are in conflict with people's professional work. They include health, family and leisure time. The results provide an argument for the currently popular belief that work–life-balance is not only about a harmonious realationship between work and family, but also about maintaining an equilibrium between work performance and private life. Researchers point to the importance of support from the family, which allows one to maintain a balance between the role of a spouse or other family member and an employee.

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