

Leaders as representatives of a business entity are assigned responsibility for building and maintaining relationships with different stakeholder groups, and in times of crisis, they are expected to make fundamental changes to the organization that would have a positive impact on the acquisition of knowledge and the participation of employees in developing solutions to existing problems.

The main aim of the study is to explore, characterize, and analyse health-promoting leadership (HPL), including antecedents for the implementation and evaluation of such leadership in professional service firms (PSFs). To explore the health-promoting leadership in depth, three main research questions were asked:

- 1) how to maximise the potential of HPL in professional service firms?
- 2) what are and how to minimize the negative impact of misunderstood health-promoting behaviours?
- 3) how to exploit the optimum potential of employees promoting healthy workplace?

The specific objectives of the project include:

- 1) an overview of the existing HPL construct and organisation, including the culture of professional service firms, in relation to employee health.
- 2) analysing HPL measurements to select and adapt the best of them to the specifics of PSF conditions.
- 3) describing and analysing different views of HPL among managers and subordinates involved in workplace health promotion in PSFs.
- 4) describing and analysing the experiences of a leadership training programme for the development of HPL in PSFs.

To thoroughly examine the problem under investigation, to explore the nature of the experiences of the participants and to extract valuable insights and recommendations, a mixed-method approach was adopted. The research describes a two-phase design. In the first part of the project, qualitative research will be conducted targeting employees of professional service firms operating in Poland. In-depth interviews will collect individual opinions and beliefs. Individual interviews replicated after 6 months with the same interviewees are designed to capture the dynamics that occur during health-oriented practice, including the potential development of leadership competencies in this area or possible changes in the attitudes of employees gaining greater awareness of the impact of such practices. In the second part of the project, a quantitative study will be carried out in companies to verify hypotheses and make comparisons between employee groups within professional service firms.

The study would enhance the knowledge of management science and quality about the processes of shaping effective healthy leaders in different positions and levels of the organization, culturally and socially intelligent, who have a real influence on the direction of the organization's development. It would also include exploration of antecedents of the process, as well as investigating the implications of health-promoting leadership. As a result, ways of introducing effective health-promoting leaders and the expectations of co-creating working environment promoting well-being can be defined, and some guidelines for the policy design towards leadership development can be derived from the research